

Re: Formal Objection to the Proposed Wind Farm Development at Muingmore, County Mayo

Ref PAX16.324387

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to submit my formal objection to the proposed wind farm development at Muingmore, County Mayo.

While I recognise the importance of renewable energy in addressing climate change and reducing dependence on fossil fuels, I believe that this proposal is inappropriate for its proposed location due to the significant environmental, ecological, and community impacts it is likely to have.

My concerns are as follows:

1. Scale of the Development

The proposed wind farm represents an industrial-scale development within a predominantly rural and environmentally sensitive landscape. The height and number of turbines, together with associated infrastructure such as access roads, substations and grid connections, would fundamentally alter the character of the area. The cumulative visual impact would be substantial and would permanently change the landscape that is valued by local residents and visitors alike.

2. Noise Impacts

The continual operation of large wind turbines has the potential to generate both audible noise and low-frequency sound. Residents living in proximity to the development may experience disturbance, particularly during nighttime hours when background noise levels are lower. The long-term effects on health, wellbeing and quality of life should be carefully assessed, particularly where homes are located within the zone of influence.

3. Shadow Flicker

Shadow flicker caused by rotating turbine blades can create repeated flashing effects within nearby homes and outdoor spaces. This phenomenon can cause annoyance, interfere with normal daily activities and negatively affect residents' enjoyment of their properties. The potential extent and duration of shadow flicker should be fully evaluated, with appropriate setbacks considered where necessary.

4. Impacts on Wildlife and Biodiversity

The proposed development raises serious concerns regarding its impact on local wildlife and biodiversity. The area supports valuable habitats that are important for birds, mammals, insects and other protected species. Construction activities, habitat fragmentation, increased human disturbance and turbine operation all have the potential to adversely affect local ecosystems.

In particular, I am concerned about the potential impact on the **Corncrake**, a species of exceptionally high conservation concern in Ireland. Any disturbance to breeding or feeding habitats could have significant consequences for this already vulnerable bird. The risk of collision for other protected bird species, along with displacement from traditional nesting and feeding grounds, must also be fully assessed through comprehensive ecological surveys conducted over appropriate seasons.

5. Peatland and Bog Damage

The proposed site contains areas of peatland and bog habitat that provide important ecological functions, including carbon storage, water regulation and biodiversity support. Construction of turbine foundations, crane hardstands and access roads may require significant excavation and drainage of peat.

Disturbance of peatlands can release substantial quantities of stored carbon into the atmosphere, potentially undermining some of the climate benefits associated with renewable energy generation. There is also a risk of erosion, sedimentation of nearby watercourses and peat instability, all of which could have long-lasting environmental consequences.

6. Ecological Concerns

The ecological value of this area extends beyond individual species. The habitats within and surrounding the proposed development form part of an interconnected ecosystem that supports flora and fauna of regional importance. Construction and ongoing maintenance activities may result in habitat loss, fragmentation and disturbance that cannot easily be mitigated.

Particular consideration should be given to protected habitats, breeding birds, bats, amphibians and other species that may be affected throughout the construction and operational phases of the project. Any Environmental Impact Assessment should be thorough, transparent and based on robust, up-to-date field surveys.

Conclusion

Renewable energy is essential to Ireland's future, but developments must be located in areas where environmental and community impacts can be minimised. In my view, the proposed wind farm at Muingmore is not an appropriate location due to the scale of the development, the likely impacts on nearby residents, the risks to peatland habitats, the potential disturbance to protected bird species including the Corncrake, and the wider ecological consequences.

I respectfully request that the planning authority carefully considers these concerns and refuses permission for this proposal unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the development will not result in unacceptable environmental, ecological or community impacts.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Yours faithfully,

Audrey Geraghty

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Ballina,

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