

7 August 2026

CASE NUMBER PAX16.324387

OBJECTION TO PROPOSED MUINGMORE WINDFARM DEVELOPMENT

To whom it may concern,

I wish to lodge a formal objection to the above planning application. The reasons for my objection are set out as follows;

1. This proposed Muingmore wind farm project, if it is allowed to proceed, will result in the permanent destruction of an area of outstanding natural beauty causing irremediable environmental and ecological harm. The damage caused can never be reversed. To describe such a project as sustainable development is entirely inaccurate.
2. The proposed development would cause significant negative impact on the unspoiled landscape and visual amenity of the area.
3. This area has for more than 100 years been seen little economic development and limited local employment. In the 1950s and 1960s the area was marred by significant emigration. The arrival of the Wild Atlantic Way has seen great improvement in the growth of tourism and with it the potential for the development of local businesses providing services to visitors from home and abroad. Building a wind farm on the edge of the Wild Atlantic Way, with its 180m tall turbines visible from every beach in the local area would negatively impact the socio-economic benefits that the Wild Atlantic Way has started to deliver. Community benefit funds do not compensate for lost jobs and livelihoods.
4. The CAP targets the achievement of 9GW of onshore wind power by 2030. At some point during this decision-making process, the decision makers in their correct application of considerations of proper planning and sustainable development (as required by the Planning and development Act 2000) will need to review the high regional density of windfarms in Erris and in Co. Mayo, more generally. Erris already has the largest onshore wind farm located at Oweninny, and the Glencastle windfarm, in operation for some years, is a short distance from, and visible from Muingmore. Recent planning decisions have included the planning approval of the Glenora wind farm. The Clydagh and Tirawley wind farm planning applications were submitted in May 2026. The Tirawley application, located in the Ballycastle area, indicates that there are currently 14 operational, consented and proposed windfarms for which planning applications are already submitted within 20km of the proposed Ballycastle site. Applying the principle of proportionality it must be

concluded that Erris and Co Mayo already have an unacceptable regional density of wind farm developments.

5. In the recent Supreme Court judgement in Coolglass Wind Farm Limited v An Bord Pleanala ([2026] IESC 5) at para 118 the Court rejects the developer's interpretation of Section 15.1 of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015 of a 'strong presumption favouring the grant of permission for any renewable energy project, subject only to the considerations of practicability and the exclusion of any other consideration'. Decision makers should note that there is no strong presumption favouring the grant of permission of the proposed wind farm development in the Muingmore/Doolough/Geesala area.
6. The Supreme Court judgement, at para 87, describes a hypothetical situation, the facts of which are very close to the facts of Muingmore/Doolough/Geesala. The paragraph reads as follows;

*'Assume that a particular County Council had designated an entire County as open to wind farm development other than only 10 hectares of high scenic, cultural and amenity value. If we then assume that multiple wind farm developments have already been approved in respect of that County, but an application is subsequently made for permission for a wind farm development in respect of the reserved scenic area. On the approach urged by Coolglass, adopted by the High Court, it appears that permission would nevertheless have to be granted since such a wind farm can be said to be consistent with the achievement of general climate objectives, and there is nothing impracticable in permitting the development. **This however would make a nonsense of the elaborate structure established by the 2015 and 2021 Acts, especially when superimposed on the already detailed and nuanced planning regime created by the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).**'* (Bold emphasis added)
7. In Mayo, as in the scenario described in the above judgement 'multiple wind farm developments have already been approved in respect of that County'. Any grant of permission for the proposed Muingmore/Doolough/Geesala wind farm would clearly 'make a nonsense of the elaborate structure established by the 2015 and 2021 Acts'. This is an area of high scenic, cultural and amenity value and its highly inappropriate development as a wind farm site should not proceed.
8. This application should be rejected.

Yours Sincerely,

David GUNNING