

Eimear Holmes
Doolough
Geesala
Ballina
Co. Mayo
F26 E1C7
05 August 2026

An Coimisiún Pleanála

64 Marlborough Street

Dublin 1

D01 V902

Case Reference: PAX16.324387

Re: Proposed development of Muingmore Wind Farm — 13 wind turbines, 110kV substation, battery energy storage system (BESS) and associated infrastructure, townlands of Muingmore, Doolough, Tristia, Moneynierin and Bangor, County Mayo.

Applicant: RWE Renewables Ireland Limited.

A Chara,

I wish to submit the following observation in respect of the above-named planning application, in accordance with Section 37E of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Article 217 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

1. MY DETAILS

Full Name: Eimear Holmes

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2. SUBJECT MATTER AND OBSERVATION

Residential Amenity

My home looks directly onto the proposed turbine layout. I do not want, and should not be asked to accept, an industrial wind farm of this scale built within direct view of my house. The turbines proposed are up to 180 metres in tip height — amongst the tallest structures ever proposed in this country — and at this proximity they will dominate every view from my home and garden, every day, for the rest of their operational life. The resulting impact on my residence, quality of life and enjoyment of my home would, in my view, be severe and wholly unacceptable.

I have built a home here for my child, have spent years paying a mortgage and still continue to do so. If this development goes ahead I believe it would significantly reduce the value and marketability of my home, and instead of the safe haven I envisaged for her I will instead be passing on a property that is significantly diminished in value and desirability.

I am raising these concerns not only for myself but for her also. This development puts her future at risk.

Although I was born and raised in this area I lived elsewhere in Ireland and abroad for about twenty years. Just over 25 years ago I made the decision to return to live in this community, mainly because of all the things it has to offer – a naturally beautiful, tranquil, picturesque environment surrounded by beaches, nature, wildlife, dark skies and the perfect place to raise a family in a close knit community. This development threatens the qualities that drew me back to this community and have kept me here ever since.

I have spent the last several years studying a variety of healing modalities at considerable personal cost, with the intention of developing a dedicated healing space at my home. This work depends entirely on stillness, quiet, and a calm natural setting. The noise, visual dominance, and constant operational presence of an industrial wind farm directly in view of and within earshot of my home will fundamentally undermine my ability to establish the quiet, restorative environment on which this work depends. Unlike a temporary construction project, this proposal would fundamentally alter the environment in which I live for decades. The effects on my home, family and daily life would be experienced every day throughout the operational life of the development.

Noise

I spend many hours in my garden, and the noise generated by these turbines, at this distance, would be a constant source of anxiety and irritation to me in my own home and on my own land. I have learned that the applicant's own noise survey data shows that five of the seven noise monitoring instruments used to establish the baseline for this application failed basic calibration checks. I therefore have little confidence

that the resulting assessment provides a reliable basis for predicting the impacts that my family will experience.

I note that in 2025 the High Court made orders in proceedings brought by Raymond Byrne and Lorna Moorhead concerning operational impacts associated with the Gibbett Hill Wind Farm near Bunclody in Co Wexford. In that case three of the six wind turbines were ordered to cease operating. The turbines in question were 80m tall and approximately 1050m from the claimant's home. The closest turbine in the proposed Muingmore windfarm will measure 180m tall and would be 720m from my home. That is 100 meters taller and over 300 meters closer to my home. The anxiety I already feel around this is immense.

Landscape and Visual Impact

I am an avid cyclist, walker, runner and swimmer and spend a significant amount of time outdoors throughout the year using the local roads and particularly the loop surrounding the proposed wind farm site. It deeply saddens me to think that I may no longer be able to enjoy these activities in the peaceful natural environment that has always been such an important part of my daily life. Instead, I would have to endure the visual impact of thirteen industrial-scale turbines, together with the operational noise and vibration associated with them.

Dark Skies

As a keen stargazer, I am also extremely concerned about the aviation warning lighting required on turbines of this height. This will destroy the quality of the night sky that I currently enjoy, in a county that prides itself on the Mayo Dark Sky Park and the protection of its dark skies as a tourism and amenity asset. This impact would occur every night for the operational lifetime of the development. Furthermore, it is my understanding that local communities and Mayo County Council are currently working towards achieving Ireland's first Dark Sky County-wide reserve in Mayo. Erris plays a very important role in that aim and I fail to see how it will be achieved should this proposal be approved.

Shadow Flicker

I am separately concerned about shadow flicker. My home is approximately 720m from the closest proposed turbine. I have learned that the applicant's own shadow flicker modelling data assigns an identical, templated window width, depth and height to every single window on every single property assessed — 368 separate window entries across 92 properties, all with exactly the same dimensions. My home and its windows were never individually surveyed or measured for this purpose. I do not accept that an assessment built on generic assumptions can give any genuine assurance about the shadow flicker I will actually experience in my own home.

Water Environment

I am also gravely concerned about the impact of this development on the natural environment that surrounds my home. The site sits on deep bog that drains, via the Doolough Stream, directly into Blacksod Bay. I have learned that the applicant's own Water Framework Directive assessment confirms that the Doolough Stream — the watercourse that runs past my own townland — is already classified as being of 'Poor' ecological status and 'At Risk', due to existing sediment and nutrient pressures from agriculture and peat extraction. Under the applicant's own cited regulations, a watercourse in this condition must be restored to good status, not subjected to further pressure. Construction of thirteen turbine foundations, an access track network, and extensive drainage works on this bog has the potential to release sediment, peat, and construction runoff directly into a stream that is already failing, and from there into Blacksod Bay itself — a bay of international importance for its wildlife and habitats. I do not believe this risk has been properly addressed or that this project is in full compliance with the EU Habitats, Birds, and Nature Restoration Law requirements.

Community

Having worked in community development in the Erris region for twenty years, I have spoken with many people from across the community and it is clear to me that concern regarding this proposal is widespread. This region is already home to Ireland's largest windfarm in Oweninny, and many people believe that we now have enough turbines in the area. Many residents feel that the Erris region has already made a significant contribution to Ireland's renewable energy targets through the existing Oweninny Wind Farm. One of the most common complaints is that the community hasn't benefited from the windfarm already established. Yes there is a community benefit fund but it does not benefit private individuals in the community, the ones who have to live with effects of the windfarm, it does not reduce the cost of electricity for anyone, and even the community groups that do apply for funding complain that because of the size of the fund and the way in which it is administered it does not adequately help deliver projects that really matter in the community. Many residents therefore question if the community benefits associated with this proposal are proportionate to the scale and long-term impacts of the development.

This is not a short-term project: a 50-year operational and decommissioning cycle means that the consequences of this decision will be borne not by me alone, but by my children, and by their children after them.

I understand that Ireland needs to work towards meeting its targets in generating clean energy and I am very much in favour of working towards a cleaner, greener Ireland. However, I believe this should be done in collaboration with communities in order to strengthen community spirit and actually benefit households

living in those communities in a real way, and not solely for the benefit of private developers and investors who have no regard for rural Ireland or the people who have chosen to live there.

3. CONCLUSION

I note that, during the public consultation period for this application, Mayo County Council adopted Variation No. 2 to the Mayo County Development Plan 2022–2028, incorporating the Renewable Energy Strategy for County Mayo on 13 July 2026. The applicant's Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), Chapter 10, acknowledges that the proposed development is located within an area identified as 'Unsuitable' for wind energy development under the adopted strategy. In my view, this means the proposed development materially contravenes the current County Development Plan. Under Section 37(2)(b) of the Planning and Development Act, An Coimisiún Pleanála may only grant permission for a development that materially contravenes a development plan where the statutory tests are satisfied and clear justification is provided. I am not aware of any such justification having been demonstrated in this application..

For the reasons outlined above, and having regard to the significant impact on my home, my quality of life and the enjoyment of my property, the concerns regarding the applicant's environmental assessments, the site's designation as 'Unsuitable' under the adopted Renewable Energy Strategy, and the material contravention of the current County Development Plan, I respectfully request that An Coimisiún Pleanála refuse permission for the proposed Muingmore Wind Farm.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eimear Holmes', written in a cursive style.

Eimear Holmes

05 August 2026