

Gráinne Leneghan
Muingmore,
Belmullet,
Co. Mayo
grainneleneghan@gmail.com

An Coimisiún Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street,
Dublin 1,
D01 V902

[Case reference: PAX16.324387](#)

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am lodging this submission against the proposed Muingmore Wind Turbine development.

I am horrified that this is even being considered for this beautiful, unspoilt part of Co. Mayo. I am from Muingmore and generations of my family have lived there and hopefully will continue to in the future.

Muingmore, like many other rural towns and villages in Ireland saw a decrease in the population with its people immigrating to the UK, USA but it is where these people still call home.

Every summer we welcomed our relatives from overseas and as the years went by and families grew new cousins visited, getting to see the 'homestead' for the first time. They love coming to escape the big cities they live in. It's quiet, peaceful, clean and beautiful. Close to perfect beaches, quiet county roads to go for a walk or even spend a day in the bog.

Something like this industrial sized development will ruin the landscape forever. No longer will we have unspoilt views, quiet roads and peace. The area is predominately made up of bog and forestry. Both are vital for the biodiversity and habitats in the locality. Some of the species that I am aware of are:

Red Deer,

Frogs,

Common lizards,

Swans,

Ducks,

Owls,

Bats,

Otters,

Pine Martins,

And most importantly The Corncrake – discovered in field belonging to my Dad a number of years ago in Muingmore.

Birdwatch Ireland have numerous reserves in the Belmullet area and have described it as 'a powerful example of how habitat restoration and effective conservation can help bring species back to landscapes they once depended on. Remarkably, Belmullet represents the species (red-necked phalarope) most southerly breeding location anywhere in the world'

My question is – what will 13 enormous wind turbines do to these poor birds? Kill them? Frighten them away? Undo all the hard work that people have spent years on trying to conserve and protect them. How many ground nesting birds will be disturbed to dig the foundations for these monstrosities?

As for the bog, it is vital for carbon capture, some of it has remained untouched forever. It would be home to a huge array of species all of which are vital to the biodiversity in the area.

Belmullet is even home to the rare Great Yellow Bumble Bee, one of the few places in Ireland that it lives. It is classified as endangered on Ireland's Red List.

I find it ironic that the EU and the Department of Agriculture are giving farmers grants to delay mowing to protect the creatures living in the fields and then it is ok to destroy the bogs and forestry, take lorry loads of peat and soil away and fill the ground with concrete and steel!

Now for the effect on the people. The list is endless, shadow flicker, infrasound, noise, vibrations, depreciation of property all lead to stress, headaches, insomnia. I dread to think how people with sensory issues would cope living surrounded by these monstrosities.

Professor Ken Mattsson's research has found that infrasound from turbines can spread at least 10km; I would imagine that because of the area that these are planned for being bogland this would spread a lot further as the foundations wouldn't be stable or absorb the pulsating vibrations.

The population in the immediate area would be predominately elderly, some of which already have medical issues. I think it is unfair that this is being forced upon people and expected to put up with it.

I have heard from residents in Cloughan in Co. Offaly who are living a nightmare because of the wind turbines in their area. Kids taking sleeping pills! Constant headaches. They are effected by shadow flicker and noise. Unsurprisingly the company involved – Statkraft, a Norwegian multinational hasn't responded to the people whose lives are being ruined. I would imagine the same would be the case in Muingmore as RWE is German based and again will not care about the local residents only the profits.

This beautiful part of Mayo was voted The Best Place to Go Wild in Ireland in 2014 by the Irish Times. Describing it as 'A glorious, wild, uniformly unspoilt and stunning little-known area' was the verdict of Irish Times feature writer Rosita Boland after her research trip to Erris'

Erris's primary industry - tourism - depends on the raw, unspoiled landscapes and peaceful ambiance that define its unique appeal. The visual impact of industrial-sized turbines towering over the natural terrain 'would shatter the sense of place and wildness', potentially driving tourists away and threatening countless local businesses reliant on visitor spending.

A new tourism strategy was launched earlier this year by the Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment, together with Fáilte Ireland, to support sustainable tourism growth across North Mayo. The plan aims to extend the tourism season, spread economic benefit across the region and strengthen the visitor experience over the next five years.

I hope that some of the points I have raised will make you aware of how unsuitable this area is for this development.

I am hoping that the Government will issue the promised updated guidelines as the current ones are 20 years old and the size and scale of the turbines have doubled since then.

Mayo already has the biggest on-shore wind turbine farm in Europe, I think the county has done enough in this regards and has received no benefit.

Please do the right this and reject this application.

'Once destroyed, nature's beauty cannot be repurchased at any price'

Kind regards

Gráinne Leneghan