

An Coimisiún Pleanála, 64 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1, D01 V902. Date: 14th July 2026 RE: Formal Planning Objection / Observation

Planning Reference: PAX16.324387

Proposed Development: 13 wind turbines (180-metre tip height each), 110kV substation, Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), and associated infrastructure at Muingmore, Doolough, and Tristia townlands, Co. Mayo.

Developer: RWE Renewables Ireland Limited

Objector: Ian Sweeney, 127 Western Avenue, Lincoln, England, LN6 7SZ

To Whom It May Concern:

I wish to formally object to the proposed wind farm development near Geesala, County Mayo.

Although I was born in Lincoln, England, my family's roots are firmly in Erris, my father from Bangor Erris and mother from Binghamstown.

My parents emigrated to England during the 1960s because of the severe economic deprivation and lack of employment opportunities that affected so many families in the west of Ireland. Like countless others, they left not because they wanted to, but because they had no realistic alternative.

Despite being born in England, I have always maintained a deep connection with Erris, its people, its traditions, and its remarkable landscape. The area remains a place of immense personal significance to me and to many members of the Irish diaspora who continue to return and consider it my natural home.

The natural beauty of the Erris peninsula is one of Ireland's greatest environmental and scenic assets. Its sweeping Atlantic coastline, extensive blanket bogs, unspoilt beaches, mountains, lakes, and vast open skies create a landscape of exceptional character. The sense of tranquillity, isolation, and wilderness found in Erris is increasingly rare and is one of the principal reasons why so many visitors are drawn to the area each year.

Equally, it is a source of immense pride and wellbeing for local residents and returning emigrants alike.

The proposed wind farm would introduce an industrial-scale development into this sensitive landscape. The height and number of turbines would dominate the skyline, fundamentally altering important views and permanently changing the character of an area valued for its natural beauty. Once such a landscape has been industrialised, it cannot be restored to its original condition.

I fully support Ireland's transition to renewable energy and recognise its importance in addressing climate change. However, renewable energy projects must be developed in appropriate locations where they do not come at the unacceptable cost of destroying landscapes of outstanding natural beauty, ecological importance, and cultural heritage. Sustainable development requires balancing environmental protection with energy generation, not sacrificing one environmental asset for another.

I am also concerned about the cumulative impact of continued wind farm development throughout Erris. The region has already contributed significantly to Ireland's renewable energy capacity. Each additional development further erodes the distinctive landscape character of the area. The cumulative visual impact should be carefully assessed rather than considering this proposal in isolation.

The planning authority should also give careful consideration to the potential impacts on biodiversity, including habitats associated with blanket bogs, peatlands, bird populations, and wildlife that depend upon these sensitive ecosystems. Peatlands are internationally recognised for their ecological importance and their role in carbon storage, making their protection particularly significant in the context of climate policy.

Furthermore, the economy of Erris depends not only on agriculture and local enterprise but increasingly on tourism. Visitors travel to the region to experience its spectacular scenery, peace, dark skies, and unspoilt environment. These qualities are central to the area's identity and attractiveness. The industrialisation of this landscape risks damaging the tourism sector and reducing the long-term economic value of one of Mayo's greatest natural assets.

As someone whose family was forced to leave Ireland because of economic hardship, it is deeply important to me that future generations inherit an Erris that has retained the qualities that make it unique. Progress should not mean the irreversible loss of our natural heritage. Future generations deserve the opportunity to experience the same unspoilt landscapes that have inspired local people, returning emigrants, artists, walkers, anglers, and visitors for generations.

For all of these reasons including the unacceptable visual impact, cumulative landscape effects, potential impacts on biodiversity and peatlands, the threat to tourism, and the lasting loss of

the unique character of Erris, I respectfully urge the planning authority to refuse permission for the proposed wind farm development.

Yours faithfully,

Ian Sweeney