

Planning Objection to the Proposed Wind Farm Development at

Muingmore Wind Farm in County Mayo - Case No PAX16.324387

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To: An Coimisiún Pleanála - Case No PAX16.324387

I would like to submit a formal objection to the proposed wind farm development at Muingmore, Trista in North Mayo. Case No PAX16.324387

We are located approximately 4-5 km from the proposed development

I strongly oppose this proposed development due to the detrimental impact and irreversible damage it would have on our unique environment.

The sheer scale of the development of 13 huge turbines, the 110v Substation, Battery Energy Storage System, Drainage and ancillary roads and compounds are wholly inappropriate in an open rural landscape. This ill thought out project would irreversibly alter the landscape of our area

An area recognised for its unique dark skies status and unspoilt beauty

The proposed development would seriously impact on our unique biodiversity, landscape, local communities and in my opinion would be detrimental to the future economy of our region.

This objection reflects not only our own concerns but also the widespread local concern shared by a large majority of local residents in the area. Personally, Having worked nearly all our lives in the hospitality sector in our Erris region of North Mayo, huge strides have been made to advance tourism in the region and with a chronic shortage of industrial or multinational manufacturing jobs in the area, tourism is a vital source of employment in our area and we believe a development of this scale would be a disaster from a tourism point of view. Our area is gaining a reputation for its exceptional natural beauty, unspoilt landscapes, dark skies and unique ecological attractions, that a very viable tourism could further be built on

As parents of three school going children in Our Ladys' Secondary School, Belmullet, We believe the development, essentially would force our children to have to emigrate to find employment.

The scale and height of the proposed turbines at over 180metres high, would visually alter the whole character of this area. It would seriously affect our picturesque area.

This huge industrial development would furthermore have devastating long lasting, consequences for wildlife, habitats and also the people who live and work here. The real affects of shadow flicker, noise pollution from these huge turbines is well documented and of serious concern, to households within a close proximity and all for the prospect of a relatively short life span of the turbines, the negatives of granting planning permission to this development, in our opinion , would far outweigh the positives and would ask that permission would be refused

We are seriously concerned at the devastating Environmental Impact on our very unique, diverse Flora, and Fauna of the area . The proposed development is in a Protected Habitats ,SAC and poses serious risks to one of Ireland's most environmentally significant coastal landscapes. Our area contains extensive blanket bogs, peatlands, coastal heath, sand dune systems, estuaries and wetlands, many of which are protected under Irish and European environmental Special Area Of Conservation.

Having grown up hearing stories from my dad and neighbours who worked in the original “grassmeal “ “ and “peatpower “ manufacturing industries that were operating there in the 1970s and 1990s , some areas within this proposed area of development are swamplands, bottomless bogland that we believe if disturbed would result in mudslides and peat runoff that would pollute the streams, drainage systems and ultimately the bay (entering Blacksod Bay at Doolough , Dooyork , Geesala, Coolaba coastland , etc) which would be an ecological disaster as this bay, which incidentally runs at the end of our farmland is very rich in all types of fish , shellfish, seaweeds and sea life. Construction of turbine foundations, Turbines, Battery Storage (BESS site), access roads and associated infrastructure would disturb fragile peatlands that have taken thousands of years to develop , settle and are sensitive, volatile ecosystems . As is evidenced in other areas of this country, Damage to peatlands can: Alter natural drainage patterns. Increase life choking, peat sediment entering drains, rivers and streams. The nearby Lakefield lough that supports nesting swans and other very rare birdlife , animals such as otter, badger, weasel and other protected species , would inevitably be polluted by run-off from peat and silt. Disruption to this natural habitat could potentially never be restored

The excessive amount of peat and silt runoff would invariably damage rare plant and flora species on land including bog mosses (Sphagnum species), , bog asphodel, sundews and other peatland species of plants as well as multiple sea life upon reaching the sea. These habitats are extremely difficult, if not impossible, to restore once disturbed and virtually impossible to stop if mudslides and runoff occurs. We would ask that a proper and comprehensive independent study and assessment be carried out on the blanket bog and sensitive waterways within the site, studies undertaken and the effects of any excavation or disruption, before any planning decision is made

The impact to our diverse wildlife, Birds, Animals and Plants could be immeasurable. We are located in a SPA-Blacksod/Broadhaven SPA; Site code 004037 for rare birds. – Unique birds to the area (Red Diver, Great NORTHERN Diver, Brent Goose, Barnacle Goose, CURLEW, CORNCRAKE, Snipe, Gannets , Wood Grouse to name a few

As regards Animals- from walking and cycling close to the proposed site area I have personally observed Red Deer , Fox , Hare , Badger , Otter and small rodents etc. and have personally seen an extremely rare white owl ,one evening resting on the roadside that passes the old Peatpower storage building and the building also houses various rare bats and other rare mammals and birds

The proposed site is also within Special Area of Conservation (SAC;Site Code 00470 and nearby Trista bog NHA – site code 001566

Even the proposed citing of the Battery Energy Storage System of 120 battery containers and 15 power inverters of an area of over 150m squared seems unduly excessive for 13 turbines and given the delicate nature of the surrounding area would ask that more extensive study be considered to avoid damage to environmental risks of explosion , fires etc

We are in no ways opposed to progress and renewable energy, but in the right area. We have embraced renewal technology ourselves , over 20 years ago we were one of first in our area to in install Heat Pump geothermal with a collection areas in our garden. In recent years we have also installed Solar Panels to help reduce our Electricity consumption and carbon footprint .

Progress is important but not to the determinate of local economy, nature and the local community.