

To:

An Coimisiún Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

Marian Gaughan

Muingmore

Belmullet

Co.Mayo

F26 TR74

04.07.2026

Re: Observation on the Proposed Muingmore Wind Farm

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An Coimisiún Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

Re: Observation on the Proposed Muingmore Wind Farm

Case Reference: PAX16.324387

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to make a formal observation regarding the proposed Muingmore Wind Farm development. I respectfully request that permission for this development be refused.

My home is approximately **1,300 metres from the nearest proposed wind turbine**. I was born and raised in this area. Although I moved to the United Kingdom for a period of my life, I made the decision to return home so that I could raise my own family here.

This area is my home. It is where I grew up, where my memories were formed and where I chose to bring up my children. I have a deep attachment to the landscape, the rivers, the wildlife and the peaceful rural way of life.

I now also have grandchildren who regularly visit and stay with us. I am deeply concerned about how this development could affect our home, our family, the local environment and the safety of our grandchildren.

My lifelong connection to Muingmore

My connection to Muingmore goes back to my childhood.

I remember the river flowing down from Muingmore and passing under the bridge. As a child, I remember the water being extremely clear. There were plenty of fish in the river, and the river was an important and memorable part of growing up in this area.

These rivers and streams are not simply drainage channels. They are part of the natural environment and part of the history and identity of the local community.

I have a very strong interest in nature, wildlife and the protection of the countryside. I am deeply worried that the construction of turbines, roads, foundations, drainage systems, cables, a substation and a battery storage compound could damage the streams and rivers that flow through and from the Muingmore area.

Rivers, streams and water quality

The proposed development would involve major construction works on peatland and wet ground.

I am concerned that excavation, peat disturbance, drainage works, heavy machinery, concrete works, road construction and the movement of soil and stone could lead to peat sediment and polluted runoff entering local drains, streams and rivers.

Even a relatively small amount of sediment entering a clear stream can affect water quality, fish, aquatic insects and other wildlife.

The river I remember from my childhood was clear and full of life. I am deeply concerned about the possibility of this water becoming discoloured, polluted or damaged because of construction activity.

The assessment must properly consider:

- The risk of peat sediment entering streams and rivers.
- Runoff from turbine foundations and access roads.
- Fuel, oil, concrete and chemical spillages.
- Changes to natural drainage patterns.
- The effect of culverts and stream crossings.
- The effect of heavy rainfall on disturbed peat.
- Long-term changes to the water table.
- The effect on fish and aquatic wildlife.
- The cumulative effect of all construction works across the site.

This is an exposed area where heavy and prolonged rainfall is common. Drainage and pollution-control measures that may appear adequate on paper may not be sufficient during periods of extreme rainfall.

The protection of these rivers and streams must not be left until after planning permission is granted. The Commission must be satisfied now that the development would not damage water quality or aquatic habitats.

Fish and aquatic life

My childhood memories of fish in the river are especially important to me.

Healthy fish populations depend on clean, oxygenated water, suitable riverbeds and a stable aquatic environment. Peat sediment can cover river gravels, reduce water quality and interfere with feeding and spawning habitats.

Polluted runoff could also affect aquatic insects and other small organisms that fish depend upon.

I am concerned that the environmental assessment may underestimate the importance of these smaller rivers and streams because they are not large watercourses. However, small streams can be extremely important for fish, wildlife and the wider catchment.

The condition of the river should be independently recorded before any works take place. There should also be clear, enforceable water-quality limits and independent monitoring throughout construction and operation.

Monitoring after damage has occurred would not restore a river to its previous condition.

Noise from the wind turbines

Our home is approximately 1,300 metres from the nearest turbine, and we are extremely concerned about operational noise.

This is a quiet rural area, particularly during the evening and at night. Background noise levels can be very low.

The turbines would introduce a new source of repetitive aerodynamic and mechanical sound. Depending on wind direction, weather conditions and turbine operation, this noise could be experienced for long periods.

A calculated average noise level does not necessarily reflect what it would be like to experience turbine noise in a quiet home.

The assessment must consider the worst-case wind directions and weather conditions, not only average conditions.

Concern for our grandchildren

Our grandchildren regularly visit and stay in our home.

One of the grandchildren is particularly sensitive to noise affecting their ears. We are very worried that turbine noise, construction noise and heavy traffic could cause distress or discomfort when the child is staying with us.

Children should be able to visit their grandparents, sleep peacefully and play outside without being affected by continuous industrial noise.

We are concerned that noise limits based only on what may be considered acceptable for the general population may not adequately protect a child who has particular sensitivity to sound.

The Commission should apply a precautionary approach where children and noise-sensitive individuals may be affected.

We should not have to worry about whether our home will remain a comfortable and peaceful place for our grandchildren.

Shadow flicker

We are also very concerned about shadow flicker.

Shadow flicker can occur when the rotating blades pass between the sun and a home, creating repeated flashes or moving shadows through windows and across rooms.

This could interfere with reading, watching television, resting, eating meals or simply sitting in a room.

We are particularly concerned about the effect on children staying in the house. Repeated flashes and moving shadows could be upsetting or distressing.

Residents should not be expected to keep curtains or blinds closed to avoid shadow flicker. People have a right to natural daylight and the normal enjoyment of their homes.

Any shadow-flicker control system must operate automatically and prevent flicker before it affects a home. Residents should not have to experience repeated incidents and make complaints before a turbine is shut down.

The assessment must consider all windows, rooms, gardens and outdoor areas, not simply a selected point on a house.

Construction traffic

We are extremely concerned about the volume of construction traffic that would use local roads.

The construction of 13 turbines, access roads, foundations, compounds, a substation and a battery storage system would require a very large number of heavy-goods vehicle movements.

There would also be abnormal loads carrying turbine blades, tower sections and other large components.

Our local roads are rural roads. They were not designed for prolonged use by large volumes of heavy construction traffic.

The condition of all affected roads should be independently surveyed before any work takes place. This should include photographs, measurements and structural surveys.

It is not sufficient for the developer to inspect the roads after construction and decide whether damage has occurred.

Any damage must be repaired promptly and to a proper standard. Local residents and Mayo County Council should not be left responsible for the long-term cost of repairing roads damaged by a private development.

Safety while walking

We love to walk in the area. Walking on the local roads and through the countryside is an important part of our lives.

Our grandchildren also walk with us when they visit.

We are deeply concerned about whether it would remain safe for us and our grandchildren to walk on these roads during the construction period.

Many local roads are narrow and do not have footpaths or safe pedestrian areas. When large vehicles approach, pedestrians may have very little space to move out of the way.

Children may not always be able to judge the speed, size or turning movements of heavy vehicles.

The safety of local residents cannot depend on pedestrians stepping into drains, boggy verges or private entrances to avoid construction traffic.

A traffic management plan agreed after planning permission would not be sufficient. The safety arrangements must be clearly assessed and presented before any decision is made.

If these roads cannot safely accommodate both local users and construction traffic, the development should not be permitted.

Quality and structure of the roads

We are concerned not only about visible road damage but also about the underlying structure of the roads.

Some local roads pass through or beside boggy and peatland areas. They may not have been built to carry repeated heavy loads over a long construction period.

Heavy vehicles could cause settlement, cracking, edge collapse and damage that may not become fully apparent until months or years later.

The applicant should be required to provide detailed structural information about the roads and bridges that would be used.

The Commission should not accept a general promise that the roads will be repaired later. Proper surveys, weight assessments and enforceable repair obligations must be in place before construction begins.

Landscape and view

The proposed turbines would permanently alter the landscape we have known throughout our lives.

At approximately 180 metres in height, the turbines would be extremely large structures. They would be visible from homes, roads and walking routes throughout the area.

The moving blades would continuously draw attention and introduce an industrial character into an open rural landscape.

A photomontage cannot properly show what it would be like to live near these turbines every day.

Conclusion

I was born here. I remember the clear river coming down from Muingmore, flowing beneath the bridge and supporting plentiful fish.

I moved away to the United Kingdom, but I returned home because I wanted to raise my family in this area.

I am extremely concerned that the proposed development could damage the rivers and streams, disturb fish and wildlife, increase noise, create shadow flicker and make local roads unsafe for residents and grandchildren.

Our home is approximately 1,300 metres from the nearest proposed turbine. We are worried about the effect on our sleep, peace, health, view and quality of life.

We are particularly concerned about one of our grandchildren, who is sensitive to noise affecting their ears.

We are also deeply worried that the construction traffic could make it unsafe for us and our grandchildren to walk on the local roads.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that An Coimisiún Pleanála refuse permission for the proposed Muingmore Wind Farm.

I ask the planning inspector to visit the area, examine the roads, rivers, streams, homes and walking routes, and give proper weight to the lived experience of the people who have spent their lives here.

Yours faithfully,

Marian Gaughan