

Marion Sweeney

Geesala

Co.Mayo

Date ; 31.07.2026

The Inspector
An Coimisiún Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

Re: Proposed Muingmore Wind Farm Development
Planning Reference: PAX16.324387 (An Coimisiún Pleanála Ref. 324387)

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you to voice my concerns and observations of the above referenced Windfarm. I am 45 years old and I am resident of Geesala Village. My husband and I built our house here in 2010. I am originally from Belmullet town and had been living in Dublin for 10 years and decided to sell my house in Dublin to come home to Erris. My decisions to do this were two fold. One to be near my parents and two to build a home in the country with the hopes of a quaint, quiet life.

In 2010 Geesala was a different village to what we live in now. We did not have a functioning Community centre. Teach Erris Hotel was closed down. On the road where I live we did not have a footpath or streetlights. Fast forward to the present day where we now have the most amazing community centre which is home to the Boxing Club, the Rowing club, launderette, meals on wheels, a GTEIC Hub and a coffee shop. We now have the 'Erris Coast Hotel' (formally Teach Iorras) boasting multiple function rooms, spa and golf simulator facility. We now have a playground in the village for our young residents and visitors. We have had additional footpaths built and streetlighting to compliment them. Since 2010 we have seen a lot of families return to the Geesala area from abroad to set their own roots down and raise their families and no wonder, it is the most fabulous place to raise a family as I now know.

On hearing that there was a Wind Farm seeking planning permission in our locality, over 1km away from our village, I felt nothing but disbelief. How could this be true that a Wind Farm could think that they could locate directly in front of people's homes in Mount Jubilee, directly behind the homes of residents in Doolough and Geesala and on the Wild Atlantic Way. Yes, I understand that the wind speeds are high but we are people. People who were here a long time before any turbine ever existed. We live here. **Visual Impact** to our area is the obvious observation. The proposed Wind Turbines are Monstrous. As my children described them, 'They will look like something out of Roald Dahl's BFG!', except this is not a children's fictional book, this is our real life nightmare. Instead of our beautiful landscape that we are met with every morning when we open our blinds, we will now be met with industry, ugly, gigantic turbines. Oweninny Windfarm in Bellacorrick is located 30km from our house as the crow flies over the Bangor hills and imagine that we can still see those turbines from that far away and now this, turbines on our doorstep.

After reading RWE's planning application I was stunned that all the research and statistics that they had submitted about the wind turbines were based on the smaller sized turbines. All the health information they had gathered quoting that there will be very little negative health affects were based on outdated surveys on smaller turbines. The proposed turbine is 180 metres tall, times that by 13, located behind family homes, in front of family homes. Of course there will be negative health effects. It was proven in Highcourt last year that a Wexford based windfarm had delivered negative health effects and now some of those turbines are turned off. These turbines in Bunclody measured 120 metres in height, a considerably smaller sized turbine in comparison to 180 metres. This just shows us that there should be new legislation in place, that these Windfarm should not be located anywhere near any residential housing and definitely not near towns or villages where we have schools especially.

I fully support renewable energy and reducing our carbon footprint but I think firstly, Mayo has homed more than enough windfarms to the present date and maybe now it is time for other counties to come to the fore. There has to be better locations for these windfarms. I am a Primary school teacher. I have been an advocate of the 'Discover Primary Science Project', now known as 'Curious Minds', since 2004 in which I teach children about renewable energy and the importance of it but I did not think I would be facing the reality of a Windfarm wanting to locate on my own doorstep.

All this said, I worry about the future of our beautiful village if the windfarm is granted. The house and home that we have built will be worthless. If the turbines affect us negatively either through noise, shadow flicker we will be prisoners in our own home. We cannot leave because the house probably won't sell and if it does it will be at a price a fraction of what it would be worth if we did not have the turbines in our area. All our years spent creating our dream home for our family and going to work everyday to pay off the mortgage for what? It seems unfair, yes? I moved here for a quiet peaceful life, not expecting a gem of our Wild Atlantic Way to be turned into a Windfarm. I shudder to think how these monstrous turbines will actually manage to arrive into our locality. The roads are not fit for purpose, not to mention the roadworks that will be involved. RWE state that works will be 'Temporary'. I don't think a couple of years of roadworks and heavy haulage is 'Temporary'. It took 6 months of roadworks to connect a few metres of cable in Bellacorrick for the Oweninny Windfarm in 2023/24.

As a mother, I am worried for my children. I worry that they will be affected by shadow flicker, vibration and noise. I worry that they will be so negatively affected by the turbines on a whole throughout their childhood that when they grow older and go to college that they will be embarrassed to bring friends home to their village that once was thriving, will be heavily impacted negatively by a windfarm visually and economically. I worry that they will have lost the love that they carry now for their village. They speak so fondly of building their own homes here when they grow older which is any parent's delight but the reality is they might not want to return back home if there is a windfarm here. In a nutshell, I am worried about their future affinity to their area and the future demographics in our locality.

Tourism:

I hold a strong belief that if the Proposed Wind Farm is to be granted permission that it would destroy tourism in our locality and in the Erris region. I come from background of Tourism where I

was brought up in a modest Guest House in Belmullet in the 1980's,90's and 00's. There were no hotels in the area at this time. I witnessed my parents work hard to establish and be part of groups such as 'Erris Tourism' and 'Iorras Domhnann', to spearhead different ways in which to attract Tourism to our unspoilt, rugged, remote Gem that is the Barony of Erris. This was hugely successful and continues to grow today with the promotion of the 'Wild Atlantic Way'. The 'Wild Atlantic Way', has brought a phenomenal amount of tourists to our area and especially to the Geesala area where the Wind Farm is proposed. Geesala is a unique, quaint, beautiful village surrounded by the most amazing beaches which are Doolough, Doohoma and Dooyork. We are proud of our peaceful walking routes which attract so many walkers and cyclists alike to our village. Imagine positioning 13 monstrous Windmills in the middle of this area. Automatically the uniqueness that we once had is wiped away by industry. We now have four beautiful hotels in Erris because so much effort was put into promoting tourism since the 80's. We are so lucky to have the 'Erris Coast Hotel' in Geesala. It has enhanced our beautiful village so much with their impressive reception room for weddings, spa and golf simulator facility. I worry that this hotel will be negatively impacted as we will definitely not have the amount of tourists that are currently visiting and that the hotel's existence would be in jeopardy. When we or tourists go to the beach, imagine looking to your left or right and seeing these wind turbines instead of the Mount Jubilee hill that we could once see. Imagine going for a round of golf in Carne Golf Links, to take a shot, walk up a dune and look over to what once was a breathtaking view of Erris but now to be looking ahead at a Windfarm. Imagine going for a walk on Blacksod pier after visiting Blacksod lighthouse, steeped in History and then look to your left over the UNESCO protected bay that is 'Blacksod Bay' and see 13 ridiculously sized turbines spoiling the view. Imagine going for a walk in the Wild Nephin National Park Ballycroy and looking to the west to see Turbines. Visually they will be seen from so many parts of Erris and Achill. Shocking!

Another attraction to our area is 'Dark Skies Ireland'. We are proud to be part of this which attracts vast amounts of tourists each year to our area. The local schools engage in projects with the Dark skies to raise awareness in our younger generation informing them of the importance of the darkness to certain local species whilst also evoking interest in Space, looking out for our star and solar systems. But the darkness is vital for this. The installation of the aviation lighting on the Turbines will impact our Dark Sky status hugely in turn affecting our nocturnal wildlife. This aviation lighting will make it more difficult for planet seekers to identify what they are looking for therefore deter the tourists from returning.

We have to admit here that our country did get the 'Wild Atlantic Way' right. The whole west coast of Ireland's Tourism Industry has benefitted so much from it. The thought that anybody could propose a 'Wind Farm' right slap bang on the Atlantic way, just a few metres from the coastline and a village baffles me. We have spent years trying to enhance our locality and now we are faced with the deminishment of tourism if this Windfarm is granted. In 2014 Erris was voted Irish Time's 'Best Place to Go Wild' for what it has to offer as a tourism destination along the Wild Atlantic Way. If this windfarm is granted is our future in Erris the 'Best Place to locate Windfarms'????? We have homed enough windfarms. This is not the correct location, there are other places, more suitable places for windfarm locations. The New Mayo County Council Development plan ratified on the 13th July 2026 states that no turbines should be located in this area along the 'Wild Atlantic Way'. This particular area of Geesala/Muingmore is deemed unsuitable for a Wind Farm project. In RWE's own EIAR report in Chapter 10, they themselves deem this area as unsuitable.

Culture and Heritage:

“There's the sound of one of them twittering yellow birds do be coming in the spring-time from beyond the sea, and there'll be a fine warmth now in the sun, and a sweetness in the air, the way it'll be a grand thing to be sitting here quiet and easy smelling the things growing up, and budding from the earth”. This is a quotation from none other than the famous playwright John Millington Synge. J.M Synge had a close affinity to the Geesala area. It was of course the location where he set and penned his most famous play ‘The Playboy of The Western World’. ‘The Playboy of the Western World’, has just recently finished its term on the WestEnd stage in London. This quote depicts the nature that surrounds us here. The Kestrel birds, Owls, whooping swan, snipe duck, mallard, widgeon, teal, cuckoo, curlew, pine martin, sea otters (who travel the water ways up to the lakes from the sea up to the study area for food) live and breed in the area of Geesala/Muingmore where the proposed windfarm wants to locate. The majority of these animals are all protected animals under Irish and European law. The excavation of the peatland and woodland and water ways will destroy these creatures natural habitats. The majority of this ground is untouched ground and hasn't been cut on in over 40 years contrary to what RWE stated in the planning application that it is cut over bog. This statement is false.

Geesala village prides itself on the worldwide fame of ‘The Playboy of the Western World’. It is part of our literary culture and heritage not just locally but internationally as I stated above. We want to preserve that culture and heritage as much as we can so that it will live on in the future. We do not want the legend of J.M Synge to be overshadowed by Windturbines and industry. We want our heritage and culture to remain. I will leave you with one last quotation from J.M Synge's ‘The Playboy of The Western World’. A quotation which depicts what a truly wonderful place Geesala and its surrounds were in 1906 when this play was written. One hundred and twenty years on, it is still just as magnificent and we want to keep it that way.

“One wonders in these places why anyone is left in Dublin, or London, or Paris, when it would be better, one would think, to live in a tent or hut with this magnificent sea and sky, and to breathe this wonderful air,” J.M SYNGE, ‘The Playboy of The Western World’.

In conclusion, I would like to say that I fully support Renewable Wind Energy. I am a teacher who makes our younger generation aware of how important it is but the proposed location of Muingmore/Geesala is not the correct location for this project. It is too close to our homes, our school, our beaches, our unspoilt landscape and our dark sky. It will destroy tourism and nature in our locality. It will affect people's health both mentally and physically. It will make the future for us residents and our children very uncertain. It will overshadow our unique culture and heritage. Please consider my above observations carefully of why I think this RWE Windfarm should be refused.

Yours sincerely,

Marion Sweeney.