

FORMAL SUBMISSION TO AN COIMISIÚN PLEANÁLA

Martin Anthony Munnelly

Tristia
Mount Jubilee,

Bangor Erris,

Ballina,

Co. Mayo

F26V006

06.08.2026

Planning Reference: PAX16.324387

Proposed Development: Muingmore Wind Farm

Applicant: RWE Renewables Ireland Limited

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to object to the proposed Muingmore Wind Farm. I respectfully request that permission not be granted for this development.

I have lived all my life in Mount Jubilee with my family. Both Mount Jubilee and Muingmore have been a significant part of my life, as generations of my family have come from this area.

Our family home, identified as House 32, is situated on a rise directly overlooking the site of the proposed wind farm. From the front of our home, we have extensive and beautiful views across the areas surrounding Blacksod Bay on the Erris Peninsula, as well as the nearby villages of Geesala, Meadoran, Doolough, Shraigh, Muingmore, and Lakefield. At night, we can see the lights of all these villages from our home.

From the application submitted by RWE, we have identified that our home is situated approximately 1.5 km from the nearest proposed wind turbine, while the proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) would be approximately 2.7 kilometres away.

To some people, a distance of 1.5 km may appear reasonable on paper. However, it must be remembered that this is a very open landscape, and the construction of a wind farm in this location would have a significant negative visual and environmental impact.

There are a number of concerns that I have regarding this proposed project, which I will outline below.

Shadow Flicker

Our home is identified as House 32 in the Shadow Flicker Report, and I have serious concerns as we are identified as being affected.

The people living within the area of this proposed development are entitled to know exactly what this means and how they would be impacted in their homes. We need clear information regarding the times of day and periods of the year when shadow flicker would occur.

When people have lived peacefully in an area for generations and a proposal of this scale is brought forward, there is a genuine need for detailed information to be provided to those who will be affected.

Statistics presented in a table are not adequate, nor do they explain what it is like to experience the shadow of rotating turbine blades repeatedly passing through windows and into a home. I believe the people of this community deserve better than this.

Another issue that I, along with many others, have significant concerns about is the fact that the final turbine model has not yet been selected. Having looked into this matter, I understand that different turbine models can produce different types and levels of noise. Because of this, I find it difficult to understand how the applicant can assure the community of the level of noise we will experience when the turbine model has not yet been chosen.

I hope one day to build my own home in either Mount Jubilee or Muingmore. I am also aware of situations where wind farm companies have objected to local people seeking planning permission to build homes on their own land.

The information provided by the applicant should have been more precise before this application was submitted. The uncertainty surrounding the final turbine model and the associated noise levels is, in my opinion, a significant weakness in the application and supports its refusal.

Roads and Construction Traffic

I also have major concerns regarding the roads in this area. In particular, the road between Mount Jubilee and Muingmore is extremely narrow. On many occasions while driving, I have to pull into the side of the road to allow an oncoming vehicle to pass. The road edges are soft in many places, and I would have serious concerns for my own safety and that of others when meeting large construction vehicles.

The roads in this area were built to serve local traffic. They were never designed to accommodate hundreds of heavy vehicles, including concrete lorries, stone trucks, and the transport of turbine blades and tower sections.

Repeated heavy traffic also poses a significant risk of damage to road edges, culverts, and verges, particularly given the changing weather conditions throughout the year.

As these roads are unsuitable, this development would have a major impact on those who rely on them every day, including commuters, school traffic, farmers travelling to feed their cattle, and local residents.

The people of this community should not have to endure repeated disruption, delays, and safety risks so that a large industrial development can be constructed around their homes and land.

Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and Substation

I also have serious concerns regarding the proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS). Our home is located approximately 2.7 kilometres from the proposed facility.

This is not simply a small battery beside a wind turbine. The application submitted by RWE describes a substantial compound containing 120 battery containers, 15 inverter containers, together with other electrical equipment, cooling systems, lighting, fencing, and internal roads.

The proposed compound is approximately 156 metres long and 99 metres wide. This would constitute a substantial industrial development within the rural communities surrounding Mount Jubilee (Tristia), Muingmore, Lakefield, and Doolough.

As stated previously, the final turbine model has not yet been selected. Likewise, the final battery supplier and exact battery technology have also not been determined.

I cannot understand why these important matters were not finalised before an application for planning permission was submitted, particularly when homes are located nearby. In my view, this demonstrates a disregard for the people living within the affected communities.

The people of Mount Jubilee (Tristia), Muingmore, Lakefield, and Doolough should not be expected to accept such a large battery installation without knowing the exact technology involved, the safety measures that will be implemented, and the emergency procedures that would apply should an incident occur.

Peatlands, Birds and Water

Both My grandfather's and my father and other family members have spent many years working on the boglands in this area. This land is naturally wet, soft, and highly sensitive to drainage. It cannot be treated in the same way as ordinary ground.

This project would require new roads, turbine foundations, crane hardstands, drainage works, and the excavation and storage of significant quantities of peat.

Once peat is excavated, drained, or covered with stone, it cannot be restored to its original condition. It should also be recognised that altering the natural flow of water in one location can have significant consequences over a much wider area. One section of bog may dry out while another becomes increasingly waterlogged due to altered drainage patterns.

Peatlands store carbon, retain water, and provide important habitats for wildlife.

On the lands owned and managed by my father, he has always taken great care to protect the natural environment. Every year he preserves areas of wetland to ensure that bird habitats are not disturbed. He also leaves sections of grassland uncut to allow wildflowers to grow naturally, encouraging biodiversity and supporting local wildlife.

Should this project proceed, construction traffic, excavation, lighting, and noise would inevitably disturb these habitats. The construction of roads and drainage works would also have a significant impact on the areas used by birds and other wildlife.

It must also be recognised that water from the proposed development site drains through a wider drainage network connected to Doolough Stream and Blacksod Bay. There is a significant risk that disturbed peat, silt, oil, fuel, or concrete-contaminated water could enter these drains and subsequently be carried downstream.

Blacksod Bay is a protected coastal and marine area with multiple environmental designations relating to birds, wetlands, and sensitive marine habitats. Such an important environmental area should not be placed at unnecessary risk from pollution associated with a major inland construction project.

The application relies on mitigation measures such as silt fencing, settlement ponds, and drainage controls. While these measures may reduce risk, there remains a real possibility that they could become blocked, overflow, or fail, particularly given the heavy rainfall and saturated ground conditions experienced in this area.

The applicant should have clearly explained to the local community how these control measures would function during prolonged periods of rainfall and what contingency measures would be implemented should any of them fail.

Community Engagement Concerns

The applicant's consultation process did not provide the community with the opportunity of meaningful or accessible public engagement. Instead of holding a properly advertised public meeting where residents and other concerned people could hear the same information, ask questions, and receive responses in an open forum,

engagement relied on an information day, appointments, and individual conversations. For a project of this scale, affecting homes, roads, schools, the environment, and local heritage, this approach was inadequate.

The main engagement event was held on a Wednesday during the working week, to add it was appointment only, with limited notice.

There was also insufficient engagement with local community groups that were reviewing the application and representing residents' concerns. Key issues—including turbine noise, shadow flicker, traffic, water quality, wildlife, peat stability, the battery energy storage system (BESS), and aviation lighting—were not addressed through a structured, transparent process before the application was finalised.

Consultation took place only after the main design decisions had already been made, leaving little opportunity for local knowledge to influence the project. Residents' understanding of local flooding, road conditions, school transport, and wildlife should have informed the design at an earlier stage.

Finally, the application lacks a complete record of the consultation process. It does not fully document engagement events, attendance, issues raised, responses provided, or how community feedback influenced the project. Overall, the consultation was limited, poorly timed, insufficiently transparent, and failed to provide effective public participation in the planning process.

Conclusion

There remain important aspects of this development that are uncertain. The final turbine model has not been selected. The exact battery technology has yet to be determined. The proposal relies heavily on future monitoring, software systems, management plans, and mitigation measures. In my opinion, these matters should all have been resolved before the application was submitted.

These omissions weaken the application and leave the people of the surrounding communities carrying an unacceptable level of uncertainty and risk.

I wish to make it clear that, in making this observation, I do not seek to diminish the importance of renewable energy development. Rather, I respectfully request that the Commission ensure that this proposed development fully complies with the requirements of the Planning and Development Acts, the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive, and the Habitats Directive.

Where material uncertainties remain regarding the environmental assessment or the effectiveness of the proposed mitigation measures, I respectfully request that An

Coimisiún Pleanála find that the statutory tests have not been satisfied and **refuse permission for this application.**

I would like to thank you for taking the time to read this observation. I trust it will assist An Coimisiún Pleanála in its assessment of this important application.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Martin Anthony Munnelly". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the text.

Martin Anthony Munnelly