

1<sup>st</sup> August 2026

To An Coimisiun Pleanála

I wish to formally object to Strategic infrastructure Development Application No 324387 by RWE Renewables (Ireland) Ltd. For the proposed wind farm development at Muingmore, County Mayo.

The proposal comprises 13 wind turbines together with associated infrastructure including a substation, battery energy storage system and associated works.

My family and I retired to Muingmore because of its unique peace, tranquillity and outstanding rural landscape. We invested our life savings in our home with the intent of enjoying a quiet retirement and providing a welcoming place for our children and grandchildren to spend holidays.

The proposed industrial scale wind farm would fundamentally change the character of the area and significantly reduce our quality of life.

### **Residential Amenity**

The planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires that planning decisions have regard to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Residential amenity is a fundamental planning consideration. I believe this development would have an unacceptable impact on the enjoyment of our home through continual turbine noise, the movement of turbine blades, aviation lighting and overall industrialisation of what is currently a peaceful rural landscape.

### **Noise**

Although the developer may state that the proposal complies with applicable noise guidance, compliance with guideline limits does not necessarily remove the real impact of nearby residents. In a quite rural environment, continuous turbine noise, including low frequency and amplitude modulated noise has the potential to disturb sleep, reduce enjoyment of outdoor spaces and diminish residential amenity.

### **Shadow Flicker**

Shadow flicker is a recognised planning issue in Ireland's Wind Energy Development Guidelines and must be carefully assessed where homes may be affected. The repetitive flickering caused by the rotating turbine blades has the potential to interfere with normal enjoyment of our property and create stress and disturbance for residence.

### **Health and Wellbeing**

I am concerned about the effects that continuous noise, shadow flicker and constant presence of large turbines may have on the health and wellbeing of my family.

Regardless of whether all health impacts are conclusively established, the planning authority should carefully consider the effects of sleep disturbance, stress and reduced quality of life on residents living in close proximity to the development.

### **Landscape and Visual Impact**

The landscape around Muingmore is one of the greatest assets. The introduction of turbines approaching 200 metres in height would permanently alter the character of the area, replacing an attractive rural landscape with a large industrial energy development. They would adversely affect not only residents but also visitors and tourism in the area.

### **Protection of rural Communities**

National planning policy supports renewable energy but also requires balanced decision-making that protects established communities.

The National Planning Framework and regional policy recognise the importance of sustaining vibrant rural communities and protecting quality of life. Existing residents should not bear a disproportionate burden arising from infrastructure intended to deliver national benefits.

### **Precautionary Principle**

Where uncertainty remains regarding the cumulative impacts of noise, shadow flicker, landscape change the residential amenity, the precautionary principle should apply.

In circumstances where there is doubt regarding long-term effects on residents, that doubt should weigh against granting permission for development of this scale in such close proximity to homes.

### **Environmental Assessment**

I respectfully request that An Coimisiun Pleanála critically examine.

- Whether the Environmental impact Assessment adequately assesses cumulative impacts.
- Whether alternatives with fewer impacts on nearby residents were fully considered.
- Whether mitigation measures genuinely eliminate impacts or merely reduce them.
- Whether sufficient weight has been given to the existing residential environment.

### **Irish Planning Policy**

I respectfully request that An Coimisiun Pleanála carefully consider this application having regard to:

- The **Planning Development Act 2000 (as amended)**, require proper planning and sustainable development.
- The **Wind Energy Development Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2006)**, particularly in relation to residential amenity, noise, shadow flicker and landscape impacts.

- The **Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028**, including policies that seek to protect residential amenity, landscape character and the quality of life of rural communities, while balancing renewable energy development with the rights of existing residents (Geological Survey Ireland)

While I recognise the importance of renewable energy in addressing climate change, renewable energy projects must be located where they do not impose unacceptable impacts on nearby communities. In this case I believe the scale, proximity and cumulative effects of the proposed development would have an unacceptable impact on my home, my family's wellbeing and the peaceful rural environment that led us to choose to take early retirement in Muingmore.

## **Conclusion**

I respectfully submit that this proposal conflicts with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development because it would:

- Result in unacceptable loss of residential amenity.
- Introduce significant noise into an otherwise quiet rural environment.
- Expose nearby homes to shadow flicker.
- Cause substantial visual intrusion and industrialisation of the landscape.
- Diminish the peaceful environment that attracted residents to retire and raise families in Muingmore.
- Place the interests of a large-scale commercial development ahead of the rights of established communities

For those reasons, I respectfully request that An Coimisiun Pleanála refuse planning permission for Application No. 324387

**Martin Butler**

Muingmore

County Mayo