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25 July 2026

**The Secretary
An Coimisiún Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902**

**Re: Proposed Muingmore Wind Farm
Case Reference: PAX16.324387**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I would like to make a number of observations on the proposed Wind Farm in Muninmore .

I am a native of Erris. I lived in the village of Geesala until my late teens, throughout my twenties I lived and worked in the UK. I came home to my Parents house on holidays, twice yearly. I built my own home in Geesala and returned from England and started my family in 2000. I choose this location to settle down because I loved everything about home and I wished my children to enjoy the same idyllic rural scene I enjoyed as a child. I feel strongly about protecting the place that has given my family and I such a good quality of life.

Because of its rural, unspoilt nature, our region inclines many to be active outside. I personally enjoy running, cycling and pursuing many outdoor activities. Because of our rural isolation we are able to enjoy the quiet roads, open countryside, wildlife and coastal views. These have become a significant part of my life. My greatest fear is that this development would be detrimental to enjoying these experiences in the future.

The proposed site is connected through its streams, drains, bogs and watercourses to the wider environment around Blacksod Bay. The Mullet/Blacksod Bay Complex is protected as a Special Area of Conservation under site code **000470**, while Blacksod Bay/Broad Haven is protected as a Special Protection Area under site code **004037**.

These protected areas support a wide range of wildlife, including otters, harbour seals and grey seals. They also support protected birds such as the Great Northern Diver, Red-throated Diver, Curlew, Dunlin, Common Scoter and Bar-tailed Godwit.

The environmental effects of the wind farm cannot be considered only within the red line of the development site. Water moves through the bog, drains, streams and rivers before reaching the wider bay. Any increase in sediment, peat runoff or pollution during construction could travel beyond the immediate works area and affect habitats further downstream.

While there are many issues of concern regarding this proposal, the one I am particularly concerned with is with regard to the scale of construction on blanket bog. Blanket bog is recognised under the EU Habitats Directive as habitat code **7130**. It is an important habitat that stores carbon, holds water and supports plants, birds and other wildlife.

This development would require the excavation of peat for turbine foundations, access roads, cable routes, the substation and the battery storage compound. Excavation through the peatland and impact on the natural drainage could affect much greater consequences for the region than the direct footprint of the actual construction site. The natural drainage would most certainly be adversely affected and would lead to flooding and loss of natural bio-diversity habitats.

Due to the naturally occurring contours of the area, any impact on natural drainage systems may cause the peat to become heavily saturated after long periods of rain, which are common in Erris. This raises a genuine concern about peat movement, slope failure and the possibility of a landslide.

An issue of great interest for me is with regard to whether a detailed investigation has been carried out at each turbine location, along every new road and cable route, and at the proposed substation and BESS compound. The day of offering general assurances regarding peat stability is long past. The risks for each and every component of the proposed project must be properly assessed prior to any planning decision being made.

I have a further concern with regard to some important design and construction elements which may be left to be decided at a later date. The final foundation designs, piling methods, drainage details and water protection measures should be available for the public and An Coimisiún Pleanála to examine now. These matters could have a major effect on many of the issues raised above and also the negative impact it may have on water quality for the communities in the vicinity.

As our region is part of the Wild Atlantic Way tourist route, a major development of this type will impact negatively on the tourism industry in Erris. When my children were teenagers, they worked in local hotels and bars. These jobs gave them valuable experience and income and are very important for young people growing up in rural areas.

Local hotels, pubs, cafés, restaurants and accommodation providers depend on people choosing to visit Erris. Visitors come here for the scenery, the coast, the wildlife, the walking and cycling routes, and the peace and quiet. Erris still has a wild and authentic character that is becoming difficult to find in many other places.

The proposed construction of Thirteen turbines, reaching approximately 180 metres in height, would be visible across the wider region. This, in conjunction with the development of new roads, compounds, security fencing, lighting, substation and battery storage facility, this development would introduce a major industrial presence into our rural landscape.

It is my belief that the possible negative long term effect on tourism and local employment must to be taken seriously. The real value of Erris must not be measured in what can be taken out if it

in power generation. The intangible value lies in its unspoilt landscape and natural environment. These already support local businesses and provide employment for families and young people.

One of my greatest concerns regarding to this development is the proposed Battery Energy Storage System, or BESS. The application describes a compound containing **120 battery containers and 15 inverter containers**, within an area measuring approximately **156 metres by 99 metres**.

This part of the proposed project is considerable in its own right and demands a clear explanation as to why a battery facility of this scale is required for thirteen turbines. It must be ascertained as to whether it is intended primarily for the Muingmore Wind Farm or if it ties into a future planned expansion of this proposed project.

The risks associated with the BESS must also be fully considered. These include the possibility of fire, thermal runaway, noise from cooling equipment, security lighting, polluted firefighting water and the ability of the local emergency services to deal with a serious incident.

Based on the above points I believe the public should be able to access a full emergency response plan prior to any permission being granted. The details must include access for fire services, water supplies, containment of contaminated water and procedures for protecting nearby residents and the environment.

Having had an opportunity to study the applicant's shadow-flicker maps, it appears that my house may experience some shadow flicker.

As this would affect me directly, I would like to know precisely for how many hours my home could be affected, what time of day it could happen and during which months of the year? The assessment should be based on the final turbine model, blade size and exact turbine locations.

Any promises pertaining to subsequent turbine shut down post shadow flicker occurrence does not alleviate my concern. Local residents must be appraised prior to permission being granted what the likely effect will be on their homes and daily lives.

As my family is now grown up, a number of them wish to stay in the area and my final concern is with regard to their future. As like mine, many local families hope that their children or grandchildren will be able to build homes near their families.

For this reason there needs to be a clear unambiguous determination on whether the wind farm operator will have the authority to object to future planning applications because a proposed home might be affected by turbine noise, shadow flicker or separation distances.

To my mind it would be nothing short of criminal if a young local person was prevented from building near their family home because the wind farm had been given priority. I strongly propose that the possible effect of this development on future rural housing should be examined as part of the present application, rather than being dealt with years later when local families apply for planning permission.

Another issue of major concern regarding this proposed development is construction traffic. The roads around Geesala, Doolough and the surrounding areas are narrow, have soft edges and pass over bog or weak ground. They were not built to carry large numbers of heavy construction vehicles.

The development would involve concrete lorries, stone trucks, cranes, abnormal turbine loads and other heavy vehicles. The weight and volume of this traffic could cause road damage, subsidence and broken road edges.

The same roads are used every day by residents, school buses, farm vehicles, cyclists, walkers and emergency services. I regularly walk and cycle locally, and I would not feel safe sharing these narrow roads with a constant flow of heavy construction traffic.

The applicant should provide a detailed structural survey of every road that would be used. This should be completed before permission is granted and should be available to the public.

There should also be clear information on the number of daily vehicle movements, the hours when deliveries would take place, noise pollution from construction and service vehicle associated, possible road closures and how residents would safely travel to work, school, shops and medical appointments.

Repairing roads after construction would not undo years of disruption or remove the danger created during the works. The safety and structural ability of the road network should be proven before the development is allowed to proceed.

While I support renewable energy and understand the need to reduce carbon emissions. I would strongly assert that renewable energy projects must be placed in suitable locations and must not create unacceptable effects on local homes, peatlands, wildlife, tourism and the future of rural communities.

Having considered the size and location of this proposal, the risks to the blanket bog and water environment, the possible effect on protected sites, the impact on local roads and tourism, the size of the BESS facility and the effect on nearby homes, I do not believe this is a suitable development for this location.

I respectfully ask An Coimisiún Pleanála to refuse permission for the proposed Muingmore Wind Farm under case reference **PAX16.324387**.

Yours faithfully,

Patrick McDonagh