

**Date:** 07 August 2026

**Submission from:** Sean & Patricia Ginty, Geesala, Ballina, Co.Mayo

**Submission reference: Case Number PAX16.324387**

**Planning Application:** The proposed development consists of 13 wind turbines, a 110kV substation, battery energy storage system (BESS) and all associated infrastructure

I wish to make a written submission with observations on the above planning application in relation to Wind Farm Development including 13 turbines and all associated works reference case Number PAX16.324387.

I strongly request that the Inspector and the Board considers all of the points listed in my submission below.

### **1. Renewable Energy**

The state is committed to generating up to at least 70% of electricity through renewable energy up to 2030. There is a huge demand on the National Grid System with the increase on data centres throughout the country. There needs to be a transformative approach to renewable energy and a consideration of all forms of renewable energy such as Biomass and Solar and not just a focus on onshore wind energy. No alternative options for green energy were included in the submission.

Carbon emissions and climate change are of huge concern and we understand the need to take action to help reduce emissions and move towards renewable energy. Offshore wind energy should be considered further as part of renewable energy requirements. The Programme for Government commits to the development of at least 5000mw of off shore energy by 2030. The enactment of the Marine Area Planning Act 2021 is key to offshore development proceeding and to meet defined set targets. I believe there are many benefits to offshore energy, areas are not populated, no Shadow Flickering on houses or Noise Impacts, Visual impacts are less intrusive and less destruction to biodiversity. Offshore Wind Energy also has the potential to generate much higher amounts of energy with higher wind speeds than low capacity inland turbines will generate. Consideration needs to be given by RWE Renewables Ireland Limited for alternative options.

## 2. Health effects

### Evidence base for Health effects-

- A number of studies have been carried out around the world in regards to adverse health effects as a result of living near Wind Turbines. A settlement for high court damages for the Kelleher Family in Cork was secured in 2021 where the children and their family became ill as a result of living near the turbines and had to leave their home in Cork. Noise, vibrations and shadow flicker all resulted in the family suffering various illnesses. An out of court settlement was agreed.
- In 2017 a group of families in North Cork settled an action in the high court against wind turbine operators Enercon Windfarm Services Limited and Carrigcannon Windfarm limited where they suffered adverse health effects and the Companies admitted liability and a settlement was provided.
- A French couple Christel and Luc Fockaert were also awarded a settlement over health problems caused by Windfarms. The couple experience a range of health problems including headaches, insomnia, heart irregularities, depression, tinnitus.
- Recent research by Anne Dumbrille, Robert Y MC Murtry and Carmen Maria Krog sets down and indicates how occurrences of adverse health effects from living and working near turbines and being exposed to audible and inaudible noise annoyance can lead to adverse conditions. Their analysis concluded that living near or working near wind turbines can result in adverse health effects in both people and animals.

1. <https://www.irishtimes.com/business/energy-and-resources/siblings-who-became-ill-next-to-wind-farmsettle-case-1.4184636>
2. <https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/arid-30793550.html>
3. <https://www.news-europe.fr/countries/france/2021/11/08/french-couple-wins-legal-fight-over-windturbine-syndrome/>
- 4.

The above evidence shows that the risk of adverse health effects should be considered further before more and more wind energy developments are approved in populated areas.

The local community particularly in the Erris area have schools that have special needs units. The adverse effects on children with sensory needs are not taken into consideration in this proposal nor are the occupants of the households within the 2km area or wider where property owners have children with special needs, sensory issues, people who suffer from headaches, have tinnitus or other conditions that may have adverse effects on their health. No mitigation measures are put in place to show how families that may be affected by Health related concerns following the introduction of these turbines will be met. The Board and Inspector must take all of the above points into consideration when reviewing the proposal and seek mitigation measures for health effects.

### **3. Transportation and Roads**

The sheer volume of traffic that will go to and from the proposed site over the proposed construction phase is immense. Consideration needs to be given to the local roads which is not fit for large lorries and a full engineering should be commissioned to be undertaken by an Independent Engineer. The submission showed no direct contact with the local schools who will be effected by this increased traffic causing a bottle neck during drop off and pick up times and the Health and Safety aspects associated with the volume of large lorries travelling by the school during peak times.

### **4. Biodiversity**

There are a number of species listed within the proposal that have been seen and recorded.

These consist of nesting habitats, mammals, birds, bats etc. It's important that these species are all protected and considered fully during this proposal review. Corncrakes are a protected species in Ireland. It is a national offence to cause disturbance to these species including the twite, kestrel, curlew and they should not be interfered with in anyway. An assessment of direct habitat loss is required. Birds were recorded

flying over the Wind Farm Site and within 500m of the proposed turbine layout. The potential for displacement exists. There is a high risk of collision with potential turbines if they are constructed. The cuckoo can be heard from my back door during the summer months. As they are declining in Ireland their existence should also be protected. Geese are seen during the winter months and pass over my house and other houses in the area and many on a daily basis before crossing the proposed wind farm area. All these birds are at high risk of collision if the turbines go ahead. A number of mammals also occupy the site area where the turbines will be located in particular Badgers. Disturbance to badger sets and habitats will occur where excavation at site locations take place. Wind

turbines can cause chronic stress in Badger S(see Journal reference from May 17, 2016 in footer).

I urge the board to commission and engage a specialist and a Nest Protection Officer to do a full survey of the area before any decision is made on the application including during nesting time. The National Parks and Wild Life Services should also be commissioned to do a full review of the area to ensure that this area is protected and that turbines are not constructed in these areas to allow birds a better chance of nesting and rearing young chicks before they become further extinct.

A full independent review of biodiversity should be undertaken.

## **5. Forests**

Forest will be felled to allow for site development and this will in turn effect roosting bats who use the high trees in the woodland habitats. Bats are protected and the large numbers recorded in the proposal will be disturbed during construction and felling.

## **6. Visual Impacts**

My house and property is located inside the mapped area. The vast skyline of the proposed wind farm will be behind my property with no mitigation for visual impact due to the open nature of the areas. I will be adversely effected visually as a result of this windfarm development. Cumulative landscape and visual impacts is a huge concern to me and the wider community who are also impacted visually by the proposed development due to the scale and size of the proposed turbines. The landscape

behind our property is low lying. There are no tall trees, hedges or other structures that will block the view from our property. No mitigation measures are made for properties like mine. These will be some of the highest Wind Turbines in the county.

Ireland is steeped in splendid historical buildings, great estates and scenic landscape which are the forefront of our tourism market where cultural heritage and our natural landscape should be preserved for future generations. Heritage shapes our identity and it becomes part of who we are as a county. It's the heart of our tourism industry. We don't want large scale industrial turbines visually seen in the background of our designated heritage areas ruining our magnificent landscape and structures where turbines will be visible. A full independent review should be taken of the impacts these will have on heritage areas.

The Cumulative visual impact within the area are not addressed appropriately in particular around the cumulative impact that the windfarm will have on the landscape and skyline and the additional visual impact this will also have on households in the

area. The scale of both layouts situated side by side will cause visual clutter. The magnitude of impact visually of other proposed windfarms in the **area will** be strongly adverse.

## **7. Noise and shadow flickering & Transport.**

Noise levels are predictions and do not a true reflection of how noise will occur if the construction and operation of the development takes place. There is a current requirement for statutory Guidance in relation to permissible noise levels. Windfarms should not be considered until Government agree a review and put into law a proper statutory guidance.

Studies on noise do not take into account agricultural farms in the areas where livestock would be effected by noise, It does not take into account any local school or outdoor community groups that would also be impacted by noise or increased traffic during

construction or noise that would affect children with intellectual disability or people with tinnitus. Vibration from construction of turbines may cause structural damage to houses and properties in the area also roads, rivers and peatlands surrounding the area and could cause subsidence. More consideration around the impacts are required. As predicted noise levels are an indication only it is noted that there will be worst case levels of noise predicted and will be limited to some properties. It should be noted that not all properties in the area have the same noise threshold levels, some houses have old style windows, are timber based and may not block out the noise levels that could occur. Each property in the proposed area should have an individual assessment of noise impacts prior to construction as background noise and wind direction based on a property location will be different depending on wind type.

## **8. Property Valuations**

The impact that the windfarm will have on my property is of grave concern. There is a huge risk that my property and many other in the area will be devalued as a result of the turbine development. No compensation for devaluation of farm land or property will be considered by Windfarm providers or the State. This is disappointing at a time that national governments are requesting us to value our properties and increase our property tax values when the reality is that our homes and land adjacent to these structures will devalue significantly with no mitigation measure for property devaluation.

I would urge the Board to consider all aspects set down above as part of our observation on the planning application number **PAX16.324387** made to An Bord Pleanala.

Yours sincerely,

Sean & Patricia Ginty