

TEMERITY WINE ESTATE

Geesala, County Mayo | The First Zweigelt Open-Air Commercial Vineyard in County Mayo

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7 August 2026

An Coimisiún Pleanála

64 Marlborough Street

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D01 V902

Case Reference: PAX16.324387

Re: Proposed Muingmore Wind Farm — 13 Wind Turbines, 180m Tip Height, Townlands of Muingmore, Doolough, Tristia, Moneynierin and Bangor, County Mayo

Applicant: RWE Renewables Ireland Limited

A Chara,

I write on behalf of Temerity Wine Estate to formally submit this observation in opposition to the proposed Muingmore Wind Farm. Temerity Wine Estate is the first Zweigelt open-air commercial outdoor vineyard in County Mayo. We are established in Geesala, directly in the landscape that this development would permanently alter. We have a direct, specific, and material interest in this planning application.

Who We Are

Temerity Wine Estate was established in 2022 by Brian and Orla Bakeberg in Geesala, County Mayo. We currently cultivate more than 250 Zweigelt vines — a red wine varietal, a crossing of St. Laurent and Blaufränkisch, chosen for its capacity to produce wines of rich character in Ireland's Atlantic climate. We are committed to organic practices and sustainable winemaking. We expect to bottle our first wines for commercial resale in 2027.

We are not a hobby project. We are a commercial agricultural enterprise making a long-term investment in the landscape of north Mayo. We have invested significantly in establishing the vineyard, in developing our brand, and in building the visitor proposition that makes Temerity Wine Estate something more than a winery — it is a destination. That destination depends entirely on the landscape in which it is situated.

Temerity is, to our knowledge, the only red wine open-air commercial vineyard in County Mayo. It is the kind of enterprise that requires, above all else, a stable, undisturbed, natural environment. The applicant's own Environmental Impact Assessment Report does not identify Temerity Wine Estate as a sensitive receptor, a tourism asset, or an agricultural enterprise affected by this development. It should. We are putting that on the record now.

Why This Development Threatens Our Enterprise

Thirteen wind turbines at 180 metres tip height, visible from the vineyard, dominating the skyline in multiple directions, with mandatory aviation warning lights flashing through the night, would fundamentally and permanently change what visitors experience when they arrive at Temerity. This is not a minor aesthetic concern. It is a direct threat to the commercial proposition of a tourism and agricultural enterprise that has been built around the landscape as it currently is.

Grapevines depend on pollination. Zweigelt in particular — a high-fertility varietal requiring careful management to prevent wilting and ensure successful fruit set — is sensitive to environmental stressors at the point of pollination and ripening. The applicant's environmental impact assessment does not address infrasound effects on agricultural crops or viticulture. There is no assessment anywhere in the applicant's documentation of the potential impact of wind turbine infrasound on a vineyard located within the development's zone of influence. That is a material omission.

The Applicant Has Not Assessed Temerity Wine Estate

The applicant's Chapter 4 (Population and Human Health) and its wider economic impact assessment do not identify Temerity Wine Estate as a receptor. This may be because the vineyard had not yet achieved full commercial status at the time the assessment was prepared. It does not alter the fact that Temerity Wine Estate is an established, operating, invested agricultural and tourism enterprise that will be directly affected by this development for the full 35-year operational life sought by the applicant.

We formally request that An Coimisiún Pleanála require the applicant to identify Temerity Wine Estate as a sensitive agricultural and tourism receptor, and to provide a specific assessment of the potential impacts of wind turbine noise, infrasound, shadow flicker, and visual dominance on the vineyard's commercial operation, crop production, and visitor proposition before any determination is made on this application.

The Landscape Is Our Product

We chose the name Temerity — meaning bold, audacious confidence — because what we are doing in Geesala requires exactly that. Nobody had grown Zweigelt commercially in County Mayo before or in Ireland. We took that risk because we believed in this place and in what it could produce.

Our wines, when we bottle them in 2027, will carry the story of this landscape. The label will describe Geesala. The tasting notes will speak of the Atlantic terroir. Every bottle will be, in a real sense, made from this place. If that place is industrialised — if the skyline our visitors look out at from the vineyard is dominated by 13 turbines at 180 metres, and the silence of our summer evenings is replaced by the constant operational noise of an industrial wind farm — the product changes. Not just commercially. Fundamentally.

Formal Request

Temerity Wine Estate formally requests that An Coimisiún Pleanála refuse permission for the proposed Muingmore Wind Farm. We do so on the grounds that the development would cause material harm to an established agricultural and tourism enterprise, that the applicant has failed to assess the impacts of wind turbine infrasound and shadow flicker on vineyard crops and plant-pollinator interactions, and that the visual and acoustic character of the landscape on which Temerity's entire commercial proposition depends would be permanently and irreversibly altered.

Mise le meas,

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