

Vera Carey
Geesala
Ballina
Co Mayo

5th August 2026

The Secretary
An Coimisiun Pleanala
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

Re: Muingmore Wind Farm
Case Reference: PAX16.324387

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to make a formal observation in relation to the proposed Muingmore Wind Farm (Case Reference PAX16.324387).

My name is Vera Carey. I am 56 years of age and I live in Geesala, Co. Mayo.

Apart from the six years I spent away studying at university, I have lived all my life in Erris. When I completed my education, I made a deliberate and conscious decision to return home. I wanted to build my home here, raise my three children in this community and contribute to the place that has always been part of my identity and has shaped me into the person I am today.

I could have chosen to settle elsewhere, but I chose Erris because nowhere else compares to the beauty of this landscape. Every day I look out from my home towards Achill Island, the Mullet Peninsula and the Atlantic Ocean. Those uninterrupted views, together with the blanket bogs, coastline and dark skies, are part of what makes this place unique. They are not simply attractive scenery; they are the reason my family has made its life here.

After carefully reading the planning documentation, I respectfully ask An Coimisiún Pleanála to refuse permission for this development because I believe it would permanently alter the character of this area and could have significant consequences for its protected peatlands, landscape and community.

Scale of the Development

This proposal is far more than the construction of thirteen wind turbines. It also includes a 110kV substation, a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), new access roads, crane hardstands, underground cabling, drainage infrastructure and extensive construction works. Together these elements represent a major industrial development within a predominantly rural and

environmentally sensitive landscape.

The proposed turbines, reaching approximately 180 metres in height, would become dominant features across the landscape. Their scale would permanently alter the open character of Erris but especially our community, affecting views, dark skies and the sense of place that so many of us value and treasure.

Planning Policy and the Mayo Renewable Energy Strategy

While I recognise and support Ireland's transition towards renewable energy, I also believe that renewable energy developments must be located in places where they do not compromise landscapes and habitats of exceptional value.

I note that the applicant's own Planning Statement acknowledges that the proposed Muingmore Wind Farm is located within an area identified in Mayo County Council's updated Wind Suitability Mapping as 'Unsuitable' for wind energy development. I respectfully submit that this planning designation should carry significant weight. In my opinion, the Council's designation is entirely consistent with the environmental sensitivity, peatlands and outstanding landscape of Erris.

Annex I Habitat 7130 – Blanket Bog

My principal concern relates to Annex I Habitat 7130 – Blanket Bog.

Blanket bog is recognised throughout Europe as an increasingly rare habitat and active blanket bog is protected as a priority habitat under the Habitats Directive. Even where peatland has been modified or degraded, it may still qualify as Annex I habitat and retain significant restoration potential.

I respectfully ask An Coimisiún Pleanála to independently verify the conclusions reached regarding the extent, condition and conservation value of Habitat 7130. In my view, the environmental sensitivity of this peatland reinforces the Council's conclusion that this landscape is unsuitable for industrial-scale wind energy development.

The construction of turbine foundations, access tracks, crane pads, drainage systems and underground cables would require substantial disturbance of peat soils. Peatlands are extremely fragile ecosystems and once excavated or drained they cannot simply be restored to their previous ecological condition. I am also concerned about impacts on natural drainage, streams and downstream water quality.

Noise, Shadow Flicker and Lighting

I have also concerns about the long-term impact of turbine noise, shadow flicker and aviation lighting. One of the qualities I treasure most about Erris is its dark night skies. From my home I

regularly enjoy uninterrupted views across the Atlantic and, on suitable nights, the stars and the Northern Lights. Permanent aviation lighting would fundamentally alter that experience.

Roads and Construction Traffic

Like many local residents, I rely on these rural roads every day. I travel out of Erris for work every day and have experienced the disruption and chaos that the transportation of the turbine blades heavy loads which we had to endure when the wind farm at Bellacorrick was established.

The roads around Geesala and the wider Erris area were never designed to accommodate prolonged heavy construction traffic, abnormal loads carrying turbine components or frequent concrete lorries. I believe a comprehensive assessment of traffic management, road safety and community disruption is essential. As we live in a community that requires the majority of us to use the road network to commute to work this development would have huge implications for us.

Landscape and Community

I returned to Erris because of its landscape, its peace and its community. The open boglands, panoramic coastal views and unspoilt Atlantic scenery are central to our identity, to my childhood growing up and also my children's childhood and to tourism. I fear that a development of this scale would permanently change that character. We truly are one of the most unspoilt scenic areas in North Mayo for now!

Conclusion

I returned to Erris because I wanted my children to grow up surrounded by the same landscape that shaped my own childhood. I fully support the need for renewable energy, but I do not believe every location is suitable for industrial-scale development.

In my opinion, the combination of the Council's Renewable Energy Strategy, the presence of Annex I Habitat 7130 (Blanket Bog), the exceptional landscape of Erris and the potential impacts on local residents demonstrates that this proposal is in the wrong place.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that An Coimisiún Pleanála refuse permission for the proposed Muingmore Wind Farm.

Yours faithfully,

Vera Carey