

An Coimisiún Pleanála,
64 Marlborough Street,
Dublin 1,
D01 V902.

Date: 04/08/2026

Planning Application Reference Number: PAX16.324387

Development Description: Proposed Wind Farm Development and Associated Infrastructure in Muingmore County Mayo.

Observer Details:

- **Name:** Zoe Cosgrove
- **Address:** Muingmore Bunnahowen F26C6H2

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to submit a formal objection and observation regarding the above-referenced planning application for a wind farm development in Muingmore County Mayo.

As a local resident who purchased a home in this specific area to enjoy its untouched natural beauty, exceptional wildlife, and undisturbed scenery, I am deeply saddened and concerned that this industrial development if permission is granted, will permanently ruin my family's future, our quality of life, and the protected habitats surrounding us.

I request that An Coimisiún Pleanála **refuse planning permission** based on the following substantial environmental, technical, and planning grounds:

Severe Threat to Land and Geological Hazards

The proposed development site is located within/adjacent to an incredibly dense network of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) protected under European law. The excavation of such a large amount of ground (per turbine) and introduction of such heavy machinery pose catastrophic risks to these delicate ecosystems:

- **Land Slippage and Bog Bursts:** Industrial excavation and heavy-vehicle access tracks threaten the structural integrity of the peat. North Mayo has a documented history of catastrophic peat failures, notably the historic landslide events in Pullathomas/Glengad. This project introduces an unacceptable risk of repeating such environmental disasters involving land subsidence and peat disruption.
- **Disruption of natural water flow:** The construction of such extensive access roads will act as artificial dams and drains. This will permanently disrupt the delicate water flow required to sustain active, living blanket bogs, resulting in irreversible habitat degradation and the destruction of a vital carbon sink.

Disruption to Protected Avian and Aquatic Species

The development directly threatens red-listed, legally protected species under the EU Birds and Habitats Directives:

- **Ground-Nesting Birds (Corncrake):** To hear the beautiful sound of the corncrake on a quiet summer's sunrise is just magical. The quiet, undisturbed grasslands required by these highly endangered Corncrake will be dramatically compromised. Continuous

operational noise of large machinery, human footfall activity, and the rotating blades themselves will cause severe habitat displacement, driving them from their primary breeding grounds.

- Collision Mortality: Birds including the Red-listed Kestrel, Hen Harrier, and Peregrine Falcon, face direct blade-strike injury and mortality while inhabiting these open boglands. Such birds are already known to be at risk due to environmental changes such as large agricultural farming and rough grass shortages. Independent local tracking has already highlighted this and also the inaccuracy of RWE's report of this.
- Pollution and Aquatic Harm: The proposed development directly threatens my family's subsistence and our health and safety. Heavy excavation of the surrounding ground material will release massive amounts of suspended solids and inorganic particles. These particles such as silt and sand will drain directly into the local stream running immediately adjacent to my property, which also serves as a primary drinking water source for local cattle. Because this stream directly enters Blacksod Bay, any upstream industrial pollution creates a direct link that will flush silt, algae and contaminants straight into the protected waters of the Blacksod Bay / Broadhaven Bay SAC. This poses immediate, and unprecedented risk to Mayo's world renowned atlantic salmon habitats and the destroying of protected freshwater mussels.

Personal Impact: Noise, Shadow Flicker, and Family Well-being

The close proximity of these industrial turbines to residential homes presents serious risks to human health and local quality of life:

- Impact on Young Children: As a parent of a young child living nearby, I am deeply concerned by the lack of peer-independent, long-term research funded by the Irish government regarding the physiological impacts of low-frequency noise and infrasound on humans and especially growing children. As a nurse myself, I have based my career on evidence-based knowledge and research and so to have to accept a report on the effect of wind turbines on health that is 20 years old, is inaccurate outdated and unacceptable.
- Inaccurate Research and Assessments: RWE's Environmental Impact Assessment Reports in this region have previously shown severe deficiencies, such as copy and pasting identical window dimensions across homes rather than conducting actual accurate, individualised shadow flicker surveys. Continuous rhythmic flicker and low-frequency noise will destroy our residential amenity and destroy Muingmores natural beauty.
- Corporate Detachment- The fact that RWE did not provide information on planning or general communication in the Gaelic language is not only disrespectful to the community in Erris, but is also alarming at their lack of inclusion for a fair democratic process for planning and its process. Erris alone makes up nearly 20% of the Gaeltacht in the country and so this oversight is highly questionable.

Direct Clash with the County Mayo's Development Plan

The scale of modern turbines (up to 180 metres) directly violates the Landscape Character Units (LCUs) and Policy Areas established by Mayo County Council:

- **(Montane Vista):** The council strictly regulates development here to avoid interrupting primary ridgelines against the open sky.
- **(River Moorland Environments):** These open plains lack vertical features like tall trees and mountains. In these flat landscapes, industrial turbines suffer from extreme visual exposure, making them appear disproportionately larger and dominant in the horizon.
- **(Coastal Areas):** The visual intrusion of these massive turbines will dominate the low-lying, wide-horizon aesthetics of the Wild Atlantic Way, a direct source of vast tourism and company income for the Erris and Mayo area. It severely devalues our local tourism economy and encroaches on landscapes previously nominated for UNESCO World Heritage status, such as the Céide Fields and North Mayo boglands. Carne golf course is world renowned and was this year voted number 63 in the "Golf Digests World Famous Golfclubs". Erris and its ferocious natural beauty are world renowned and keeping it that way is always the goal for this outstanding community.

Critical Infrastructure Deficiencies and Public Safety Risks

The local infrastructure of our small community is completely incapable of absorbing the immense logistical pressures of a large-scale industrial construction project. Our area is highly vulnerable due to severe structural limitations:

- **Sole Access Route:** Our community relies on only one road in and out. The introduction of hundreds of heavy goods vehicles, wide-load turbine transporters, and concrete mixers will cause severe traffic gridlock. Any accident, road blockage, or structural damage to this single route will completely cut off our community from the rest of the county. Knock airport is currently Ireland's fastest growing airport, with 946,000 passengers using its service last year. The Erris community rely on this route for the nearest airport, train station, hospitals, even just the local Tesco supermarket. It is vast and it is remote and needs a clear route in and out at all times.
- **Compromised Emergency Response:** Our area is highly isolated, with no local hospital and limited fire and rescue facilities nearby. In the event of a medical emergency or a serious industrial accident on the wind farm site, response times are already dangerously long for our community. Gridlock on our sole access road will completely block emergency vehicles, putting the lives of local families and young children at immediate life or death risk.
- **Prohibitive Structural Scale:** The rural road network was never designed or engineered to bear the weight and physical dimensions of modern 180-metre turbine components and their transporters. Forcing these massive loads through our small community will cause widespread long term structural damage to roads, bridges, and roadside properties, permanently disrupting our daily lives.

Outdated Guidelines for Planning

It is a matter of public record that the Irish government has delayed updating the Wind Energy Development Guidelines since 2006. Planning decisions are being granted using a 20 year old framework that is completely outdated and never intended for modern 180-metre turbines. Local people in Erris have been declined planning permission time and time again on home extensions for their young families, outhouse buildings for their animals, renovations of beautiful derelict properties for young couples trying to start their lives, with many being told their plans are due too visually obtrusive or out of character for the location, disturbing natural beauty or damaging to scenic routes and heritage sights. Allowing an ugly, not fit for purpose development of this large scale to proceed in the beautiful location of Muingmore, in the absence of updated health effects data, safe distances, and government backed baseline data on wildlife and geographical risk constitutes a massive regulatory failure that leaves our community entirely vulnerable and quite frankly disgusted at the thought. According to Wind Energy Irelands report, Ireland this year alone was unable to use 15% of the energy already created by current windfarms due to the electricity grid being unable to carry the power. Oweninny Wind farm is just 18 miles away from our home and turbines are frequently not switched on because Ireland cannot handle the amount of power they are generating, how does this make any sense to build more?

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, the severe threat of bog bursts, the destruction of protected European habitats, the visual degradation of the Wild Atlantic Way, and the unquantified health impacts on myself and my family and the lack of critical infrastructure I respectfully urge An Coimisiún Pleanála to uphold the principles of environmental protection and sustainable planning by **refusing planning permission** for this development.

Please find enclosed the statutory observation fee of €50. I look forward to receiving formal acknowledgment of this submission and being notified of the Board's final decision.

Yours faithfully,

Zoe Cosgrove

Muingmore