

OBSERVATION TO AN COIMISIÚN PLEANÁLA

Following section 37E of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), as applied by the European Union (Planning and Development) (Renewable Energy) Regulations 2025 (S.I. No. 274 of 2025)

Case Reference:	PAX01.324426
Proposed development:	10-year permission for an Anaerobic Digestion (AD) facility and ancillary development at Powerstown, Milford, County Carlow
Applicant:	Greengate Biogas 001 Limited
Observer:	Colette Dermody
Address:	Powerstown, Milford, Co. Carlow, R93 TR25
This document:	PAX01.324426.CD02

1. Who I am and what I own

I am Colette Dermody. I own and live in my home on the L3045 at Powerstown, and I own and work the farm around it. I have lived here since the house was built in 1992 - thirty-four years.

The farm is worked as pasture. I keep sheep on this land. My house and my farm depend entirely on private well water. There are no mains alternative available to me. Everything that lives here; household and livestock; drinks from the same supply.

2. How we farm, and what it has produced

We keep a very strong nature-aligned approach on this farm. We use no pesticides. We use only natural manure. We cut hay. The hedgerows are fully intact.

That way of farming has results you can see and hear. There is an abundance of wildflowers across the land. We have sparrowhawks and pipits. A corncrake has been heard - a bird I understand is now among the rarest in Ireland. I mention it for what it is: something I heard in the vicinity of on my own land, no more and no less.

I am not making a scientific claim. I am telling the Commission what lives on this farm because of how it is farmed, so that what is at stake is understood.

3. Water - the single point of failure

Any contamination of the water supply affects everything here at once: the house and the livestock together. There is no fallback.

The proposed facility would store, move and process very large volumes of slurry, feedstock and digestate near my land and my water. If anything from that operation ever reached the groundwater, the damage would not be an inconvenience. It could kill everything on the farm and make it impossible to keep this land as pasture. That is the plain truth of how exposed a well-dependent farm is.

4. My entrance onto the L3045

Driving out of my entrance is a complete nightmare. It is blind in both directions. When the passing vehicle is a truck, there is no leeway at all - if you are partially out on the road, there is nowhere to go.

There have been numerous near misses over the years. At times in the past, my gates have been clipped - by something passing, or by vehicles using the recess at my entrance to pull in. The damage has since been repaired, so there is nothing left to photograph; but it happened, and I can stand over that.

I want the Commission to understand why vehicles use my gateway. When cars meet an oncoming truck at the bridge, there is no room for both. The cars are forced to reverse the whole way back from the bridge - a distance of fifty to seventy metres - and my gate recess is the refuge they reverse into. My private entrance is, in practice, the passing bay for that bridge.

5. The Barrow Towpath - what people actually see

I walk the Barrow Towpath, from Milford Bridge towards Leighlinbridge, usually turning back around Tomard. The walk from Milford Bridge to where the M9 passes over is about a mile; from there it is about another mile to the Rathvinden weir.

From about two hundred yards beyond the M9, the banks are almost totally clear, with little or no tree cover or high vegetation. The riverbank in front of the proposed facility is only three to four hundred yards from the path. The area where the planned facility is to go, and the banks of the closed dump, are clearly visible for most of the walk.

This path is within the River Barrow and River Nore Special Area of Conservation. It is very widely used - by locals, by people from Leighlinbridge, and by many tourists, who typically come with campervans at Milford.

I say this as someone who uses this path; the people who use it will see this facility plainly, across open banks, for a long stretch of their walk.

6. My house in the applicant's own model

I understand that my home was one of the specific points the applicant's own air quality study modelled - matched, I am told, to within a few metres. I have never been told what the model said about my house. Only a general "worst case" figure for a different point has been published.

I find that a strange position to be put in. My home was considered precisely enough to be a named point in the applicant's assessment, but not openly enough for me to be told the result.

7. What I ask of the Commission

I ask the Commission to refuse this application.

If, despite everything, the Commission is minded to grant it, I ask at minimum for conditions that protect what I have described: baseline testing of the private wells before anything is built, ongoing water monitoring with the results given to the well owners as of right, enforceable routing that keeps heavy vehicles off the eastern section of the L3045 past my entrance, and binding obligations for pest and vermin control from the first day of operation.

I am aware that a detailed technical observation has been submitted by Vincent Dermody addressing the assessments and their methodology. I write separately, in my own name, as the owner of a farm and a home that will live with the consequences.

Signed: 

Date: 14th August 2026