
Observation on additional information

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Rebecca Pallas
Brittas Bay
Co. Wicklow

OBSERVATION ON ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2

ABP Reference: ABP-319864

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to make the following observation regarding the additional information submitted by Sure Partners Limited in relation to the Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2 application.

My name is Rebecca Pallas, and I live and work in Brittas Bay, County Wicklow. I previously made an observation on this application because I am concerned that a very large industrial development is proposed on a shallow and dynamic offshore sandbank close to beaches, dunes, protected habitats and coastal communities.

I have a strong personal and professional connection to this coastline. It is not only where I live but also where I work, and I see every day how important the natural environment is to local residents, visitors, wildlife and businesses. The beaches, dunes and surrounding marine environment are a vital part of our community and should be protected for future generations.

I want to make it clear that I support the development of renewable energy. I recognise the importance of transitioning to cleaner sources of energy and reducing carbon emissions. However, I believe this particular development is proposed in the wrong location. I do not believe the additional information submitted has removed the significant uncertainty surrounding the potential long-term impacts of placing a large-scale offshore wind farm on Arklow Bank.

One of my main concerns is the potential environmental impact of the project. Arklow Bank is part of a dynamic coastal system, and I remain concerned that disturbing the seabed through construction, piling, cable installation and other works could affect sediment movement, beaches, dunes and nearby protected habitats. If these coastal processes are altered, the consequences could extend far beyond the immediate development area and affect Brittas Bay and other parts of the Wicklow coastline over many years.

I am also concerned about the impact on marine wildlife and protected species. This coastline supports seabirds, marine mammals, fish and sensitive habitats that are internationally recognised for their ecological importance. I am not satisfied that the additional information provides sufficient certainty that these habitats and species will not be adversely affected throughout the lifetime of the project.

Another important concern for me is noise. Both the construction phase and the long-term operation of the wind farm have the potential to generate underwater and above-water noise. I worry about the effect this may have on marine mammals and fish, as well as on the peaceful character of the area that local residents and visitors value. Brittas Bay is known for its natural beauty and tranquillity, and I believe these qualities deserve careful protection.

I also remain concerned that many of the conclusions presented by the applicant rely heavily on computer modelling. While modelling is an important tool, it cannot predict every possible environmental change over the full lifetime of a project that may remain in place for more than three decades. I do not believe the additional information has demonstrated with sufficient certainty that there will be no significant long-term effects on the coastal environment.

In my view, where uncertainty remains and where the potential consequences could be serious or irreversible, the precautionary principle should apply. Monitoring after construction cannot undo damage if important habitats, beaches or coastal processes are adversely affected.

I respectfully ask An Coimisiún Pleanála to carefully consider whether the applicant has demonstrated beyond reasonable scientific doubt that this project can proceed without causing unacceptable harm to the environment, wildlife, coastal processes and the natural character of Brittas Bay and the wider Wicklow coastline.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that permission for Arklow Bank Wind Park Phase 2 be refused in its current location and that offshore renewable energy developments be directed towards locations where the environmental risks are lower and where they can be developed with greater confidence that our coastal environment will be protected.

Thank you for considering my observation.

Yours faithfully,
Rebecca Pallas