

From: Pat Hartigan [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday 13 November 2020 14:37
To: forwardplan
Subject: Development Plan Review

Dear Sir/Madam,

I would like to make a submission for your consideration on your County Clare Development Plan. My submission is in relation to your planned location for wind farms in the county and in particular your designation of Meelick/Ardnacrusha and surrounding areas as "strategic" for future wind farm locations, as you have highlighted on your wind farm locations map in your development plan. You have designated areas of Meelick as being "strategic" or "acceptable" and I would like to know on what basis are you determining these areas as ("strategic") for wind farm developments? Meelick is a highly populated area and is totally inappropriate for the location of wind farms.

You seem to be encouraging the building of a network of turbines/wind farms on this side of the county, close to the Ardnacrusha power plant (proximity to grid)? Everyone knows that wind is stronger by the coast and weakens as it comes inland. Your irrational designation of the Meelick locality as strategic for wind farms has helped to create anger, fear and anxiety in our community, not to mention help create a growing community divide. You have been in contact with farming groups who represent farmers/land owners and wind farm companies, planning this strategy over the last number of years. You have knowledge of impending planning proposals, while the community is left listening to rumours.

There is a growing public awareness and anger of what has actually happened over the last ten or more years, in destroying areas of County Clare's picturesque landscape. The Irish government have been sold a scam by the wind industry under the convenient banner of "green energy", then gets the County Council to do the dirty work. In reality it has been a fraud against the taxpayer and the wind developers financially destroy householders who live close to these wind farms, where their property/house values are wiped-out and they still have their mortgages. It's even more alarming that there is no requirement for an independent environmental impact study to be conducted before deciding on planning permission.

While technology has moved on, and while the recognised best course for future wind turbines is now in off-shore developments, you as a council are still continuing with plans to further destroy the County Clare landscape. It just doesn't make sense why you continue to take the risk of destroying the landscape for future generations to come, while we now know that new developments in energy are changing the approach that should be taken, for example; Off-shore wind turbines can be built larger and taller than their onshore counterparts, allowing for more energy collection. Off-shore turbines tend to be located far out at sea, meaning they are much less intrusive, allowing for larger farms to be created per square mile, with less environmental impact. There is much higher wind speed/force allowing for more energy to be generated at sea. Wind farms at sea have a relatively negative impact on the environment. They are not built in shipping lanes, fishing areas or in a delicate environment. There are no physical restrictions such as hills that could block the wind flow. Offshore winds are typically stronger during the day, allowing for a more stable and efficient production of energy when consumer demand is at its peak. Most land-based wind resources are stronger at night, when electricity demands are lower. Lots of European countries have stopped building onshore farms. This debate is already happening at the moment regarding future developments around the best approach for wind and solar developments. I find it hard to see how you could justify granting permission for further on-shore wind farms, damaging the landscape for at least a generation to come, while the future of energy including wind is quickly going in a different direction.

The public are now fully aware that the wind developers successfully lobbied politicians, farming groups and county councils. They persuade land owners with generous payments. They try and bribe local community clubs and groups with tempting lump sums, all this funded with the enormous subsidies they receive. County councils are in the tricky situation of being significantly funded with the enormous annual rates paid by the wind industry....The public are beginning to seriously question why you acted to protect the landscape and environment over past generations, but

you are now actively encouraging the location of wind farms in inappropriate locations; for example...the most recent house to be built where I live was by a local man and his family, he has lived in this area all his life, he was granted planning permission but one of the planning conditions was and I quote from the planning document...

"A revised house design which shows a reduction in height of the proposed house by 1 meter"

"Reason: To reduce the impact of the proposed house on the landscape in the interest of visual amenity"

You as a council are absolutely contradicting yourself by now encouraging wind farms to be built in the exact same location??

Finally, in my submission, I am asking you as a council to re-designate the locations Meelick/Ardnacrusha as inappropriate locations for wind farms. I am asking you to stand up for what is right, protect the landscape and communities like your office has done for generations and not be under the influence of wind developers, farming organisations, government bodies or a central government that has been conned. The public is beginning to fight back and rural Ireland now sees the enormous Wind Developers profits and realise the huge expense to the tax payer through subsidies.

<https://www.independent.ie/business/greencoat-renewables-buys-clare-wind-farm-for-354m-38963299.html>

<https://www.independent.ie/business/irish/brookfield-renewable-does-deal-to-sell-an-irish-wind-portfolio-for-140m-39716274.html>

The great Irish Wind scam has created division in communities, is destroying our natural landscape, kills our rare species and birds and has a general negative impact on the environment, eg. Noise pollution and light flicker etc. It lines the pockets of the few at the expense of our communities, handing on a destroyed landscape to our children. Is Clare County Council (I don't mean the politicians) brave enough to stand up and say enough is enough? Are you brave enough to say you are not going to continue being party to the wind developer's financial scam? I ask you, would you grant permission for one of these wind farms in your own locality, at the back of your own house? I urge you to act ethically, protect Clare's beautiful landscape that we all inherited. Lastly, I ask you to have consideration for people who live in the communities where you are encouraging wind farm development.

Yours Sincerely,

Pat Hartigan

