

Variation of Wind Energy Policy in 2018-2024 CDP

Dear Sir,

I write with regard to the proposed policy changes Council are making to the County Development Plan with respect to wind turbines. Wind farms are a divisive issue which have for far too long destroyed community spirit up and down the country. I am saddened by the frequency of which my own area of Glenties has been targeted for many years by windfarm developers.

Thus, I thank the Council for finally allowing the public to have a say on an issue that has had such a negative impact on our landscape. The gap in policy for the past three years has been hugely detrimental. It is a well-known fact that Donegal has more turbines than any other county and the time is surely here to call a halt to any new on shore wind farm developments. Donegal in recent years has become perhaps the most popular visitor destination on the Wild Atlantic Way and that is a landscape reputation we should not blemish with further expansion of wind farm projects. Lonely Planet, British Royals, cruise ship visitors, Hollywood film crews, walkers and mountain trekkers all have Donegal on their wish list of somewhere to visit. Has anyone ever said they are coming to see our turbines?

Hence, I approve of the safeguards in the proposed variation and the balance struck by putting somewhat more emphasis on augmentation of actual existing but redundant wind farms. I approve of putting turbines ten times their height from homes. This can only lead to better protection for people having to endure living beside large industrial windfarms, and will help reduce secondary effects of wind induced noise, ill health or annoyance.

I note particularly the exceptions laid out in Policy E-P-23 that wind farms shall not be acceptable in the proximity of Glenveagh National Park, in the Gweebarra, in areas of Extremely High Scenic Amenity, in the fresh water pearl mussel rivers or in St John's Point. I whole heartedly applaud these significant exclusion zones. These truly are amongst the grandest of Donegal's remaining wilderness areas. Thus, what Council should encourage is no further greenfield wind farm sites. There is much opportunity in repowering many of our dated turbines with very low output power.

Thank you for considering my views and I would appreciate an acknowledgement.

Signature: Cariona Mc Elhinney
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Date: 31/5/22 Personal Information redacted

