

**From:** [REDACTED] Personal Information Redacted  
**To:** [PLANNING CPU](#)  
**Subject:** Wind Energy Variation  
**Date:** Friday 27 May 2022 13:50:41

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I appreciate the opportunity to contribute to this critical process.

### **I am worried that the changes proposed are:**

- By adding roughly a 3km diameter exclusion zone around every dwelling in the county (as opposed to the 1km National guideline) and effectively excluding/discouraging huge swaths of the upland areas are shutting the door to most community owned renewable projects
- Most likely will have no impact on private development of wind farms because it convolutes the planning process favouring deep pockets but also enriching the existing private wind farm owners by promoting the enlarging of existing sites.
- Is overly apologetic about the development of the God given resource the county is blessed with (in Meath there are more dairy cows than in Donegal because that is what its land and climate are suited for – similarly Donegal has more wind farms than Meath)
- Is expanding the zone of influence of Glenveagh continuing the work of cruel landlord Adair and keeping the long-term inhabitants of these expansions in poverty and forcing their children into emigration/migration. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The park is a fantastic asset but is underused apart from the castle and interpretive centre and offers little or nothing to young people seeking adventure or in fact to the disabled.

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- Is overly optimistic on offshore wind development which is effectively ten years away and only viable if close to and visible from shore. In the 20 years I have been following the industry has made little progress on the shores of Ireland and is still apparently 10 years away and unless energy prices rise drastically is not economically viable. It is an easy out for the anti-wind farm lobby as it does not exist yet, they have not seen them or the impact they will certainly have on the environment and views from shore. These offshore sites will be incredibly vulnerable to storms of immensity that we have not seen yet due to climate change.
- **With an overall effect in Donegal of:**
  - Reducing the use of the most valuable green energy sites in the world
  - Reducing overall contribution to green energy
  - Further enrich private corporate developers like Amazon
  - Further alienate the public perception of the renewable energy sector
  - **Donegal itself fails to meet the carbon zero targets which would be unforgivable given our resources**

**These are critical times for the planet, for Europe and for Donegal.**

### **The Planet:**

If we don't move to green energy millions more will be forced into famine, to move and create world unrest.

## Europe:

If we don't wean off Russian (and Saudi Oil) we are actually paying to support a child killer Putin (reinforce the power of murdering Prince of Saudi Arabia) and it will not stop at the Ukraine borders. It has been proven that Putin was prepared to fund an all-out war in Spain offering 10000 troops and \$5 billion.

**Putin is certainly involved in sowing discontent in Northern Ireland as I know people being intimidated by young thugs in fast expensive vehicles. This is fertile ground for sewing a split in Europe and he certainly funded Brexit.**

## Donegal:

If we turn our back on Donegal's greatest green resource, we will be continuing to say goodbye to your children /grandchildren as they are forced to go abroad just to make a living. For those working poor in our community we will drive them further into poverty. Having had to move abroad myself I can assure you that leaving behind a family network and support system comes with huge risks and with tragic consequences for some. It sets young families back about five years. Of course, for some cases it creates great opportunities.

It is a sign of a **failed state** if they cannot support their children at home. This is nothing new as the book Dialann Deorai – An Irish Navvy - described life in London for Irish Construction workers in the 50s. In many worst-case scenarios, our young people end up on the streets and in other more tragic cases are coming back in body bags.

Last summer I paddled the Rideau Canal in Ontario built by pre-famine Irish Navies. They built this epic 200 km canal in 5 years finished in 1832. This included the second highest water dam in the world, at the time, at Jones Lock. This same dam is now used to produce many Megawatts of hydroelectric power. The Rideau Canal is now a UNESCO site. **So, by turning our back on our own resources we are also losing our most valuable resource, our young ambitious men and women. In the past we blamed colonisation, now we have only ourselves to blame.**

This year I attended the St Patricks' Day banquet in Toronto, and met some of the thousands of young Irish people who have settled in Toronto. When I spoke to some of them, they said they would never come back. I think that is incredibly sad for a country rated as the 6<sup>th</sup> richest in the world.

Those of you with Family abroad know all the heartache involved. Some thrive but it is my opinion they would have done equally well here if provided the opportunity. Ireland's loss. As people get older abroad it actually becomes emotionally too hard to come home even for holidays.

If you have children who do not have to emigrate because of your network please understand the situation your children's friends find themselves in .

If you don't have children of your own or you have moved here, into an old farmers cottage, from elsewhere please understand that the affordable housing is on the back of families who have had to emigrate /migrate

## Risk of Landslide

### The wind energy map is based on risk of landslide

I firmly believe the risk of landslides are over stated and that the landslides associated with wind farms are just reckless engineering mistakes.

We have been building main roads and bog roads for centuries in Donegal and all around the country up and down and across mountain bog and have not caused landslides. [REDACTED] built many wind farms on mountain sides using local contractors without any landslides.

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In August 2008, as a senior fire officer in [REDACTED] I managed a Major Emergency event involving multiple landslides in the Glen area. I know first hand how much damage they can do. On this night they were not attributed to windfarms but a climate change event where heavy clouds hung over the Glen and rained for approximately 12 hours – climate change has caused storms to move more slowly dumping more water in one location.

Interestingly, there have been several landslides on the same mountain attributed to reckless engineering practices around windfarm development with one death and charges laid on that basis.

**A few simple precautions can minimise the risk of it occurring:**

- Map out the existing stable water flow pattern with peak flow rates across the site
- Plan to ensure no water will be built up against a wall of peat and all the natural drainage paths are maintained obstruction free
- Plan road and turbine layout to not cause the above or water pooling and to disturb the normal water flow patterns on the mountain
- Once the road is planned per the above criteria – measure the maximum flow in any natural stream or drain and select the right size pipe allowing for rainfall to increase beyond current maximums to take the max flow and lay these pipes where the road/turbine foundation will be.
- Build the road on and off the horizontal across the road so that it is constantly shedding water all along its route and not creating a new water way forcing large volumes of water into the bog.
- Remove from the site all excavated bog
- Do not disturb any or the root system on the remaining bog
- Sew heather on the excavated face of the bog
- Hire local contractors who know the terrain and have a vested interest in the community
- Encourage community owned wind farms who actually care about the landscape

**Full Disclosure:**

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I am part owner of a 1000-acre site [REDACTED] with one of the most valuable wind resources in Europe. Developers recognised and measured the resource in 2000 but there was no grid to take it away. I returned from Canada to form a coop to develop the site in 2007. Unfortunately my only daughter was nearly killed in a road traffic accident and we had to return to Canada so that she could be with her older brothers.

I want to offer my share as part of coop owned wind farm on further condition that the access road and infrastructure pathways be:

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1. As a world standard mountain bike venue to attract the lucrative international mountain bike event but also to divert young people from road racing cars to mountain biking. I am very familiar with the carnage on Irish roads and its impact – I was a senior fire officer in [REDACTED] I had worked solidly for 5 years on road safety initiatives until my own daughter came close to losing her life as a child getting off a public bus and struck by a speeding vehicle travelling at 80 km /hr in a 40km/hr – a very preventable accident. She was unconscious for 3 days. The good news is that after the incredible care she received here and in Canada she is now on the leading edge of controlling methane emissions on oil and gas industry sites. She has written personal accounts of our experience trying to get this coop off the ground. We returned to Canada so that she could be closer to her two older siblings during her long recovery.
2. That the site will also be used so that anyone can enjoy the spectacular views at the top of this mountain. This will be fully accessible by electric carts run by the coop and hiring young people to operate these guided tours.

**I fully appreciate how divisive wind farms have been locally and I think most of it is explained**

above for the most part.

**Before you come to any conclusion on this submission, please consider the following:**

Look at how an entire village in Scotland benefited when it asked the local developer to erect one turbine for them on the adjacent site . They paid for it and reaped the financial reward. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2009/may/10/windpower-energy>

**I suggest in our case we the village/coop own all the turbines on our site.**

Our site has a 52% capacity factor the highest in the world – most offshore Danish wind farms have a capacity factor of only 26%

Our site could contribute:

- Over Euro 1,000,000 annually in rates in perpetuity to Donegal County Council
- A return of Euro 8,000,000 annually after the turbines are paid for in 7 years after all expenses including large contingency funds This could be in perpetuity a recurring cycle.
- A return of up to Euro 15,000,000 annually from a world standard mountain bike trail similar to one built in Wales + significant tourism revenue for the adjoining community
- Significant employment and tourism to fully accessible tours to the top of the mountain to catch breathtaking views and sunsets and sunrises.
- We would only allow small electric carts which adds employment opportunities. These views should be afforded universally to persons of all abilities. The disabled community do a lot of networking and if Donegal offers this sort of attraction, it attracts a whole tranche of people with disable family members. Remember of course there will be a time when this applies to each of us.
- By allowing this wind farm this area would be a center of excellence with locally owned private and community owned models and using locally developed talent including on the leading edge of green hydrogen production.
- Renewable energy industry is hundreds of years old in Donegal , as most of our commercial towns in this part of Donegal were built around water driven mills.
- Donegal could lead in the move to Electric Vehicles, instead of taking up the rear on this crucial climate change strategy.
- Support long term exciting job and sporting prospects for our youth that only compliment our attraction as a tourist destination.
- Last but by no means least help reduce the road carnage, the wide swath of human misery and heartache associated with this terrible part of our culture and offer our youth adventure sports in the form of mountain biking. Believe me mountain biking on a challenging course is one of the most exciting sports in the world.

Thank you again for this opportunity to share a 20-year dream.

Joseph McCole

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**PS:** after cycling for several hundred km around the Rosses this month I would like to compliment Donegal Co Council on the accommodating of safer cycling routes, especially the fantastic cycle /walking path all the way from Dungloe to Glenties. I did have a few close encounters with drivers who come very close and fast and the tyre marks in many places clearly show the boy racers are certainly active. I had to accompany many parents to where their children died or were severely injured in my career. It has affected me forever and from meeting many parents who lost children.

**ANYTHING that gets these kids into healthier pastimes than racing on public roads is well worth the investment.**