

Article 1: Editorial piece

The push for wind energy

By Joe Kramer

Bord Na Mona is a company that has seen a major rebrand recently. As the national body managing the peat industry, they have been one of the biggest suppliers of fossil fuels in Ireland. They have made a statement on their official webpage, saying they want to contribute to Ireland's new plan to be climate neutral by 2050. This has been planned to be achieved in most part due to the wind farms that are being put up in peat bogs all around the country, using 108 million euro funded by the Cabinet. This is a great step in the right direction, since the company is finally stopping their peat mining which is harmful to the environment. But there are other issues at play here, such as the sustainability of the turbines and the effects on the surrounding ecosystem.

Some of the new wind farms have been heavily petitioned against with many valid concerns, such as the commercialization of energy, noise pollution, wildlife disturbances and turbines being near some homes. These are obviously problems that should be addressed by the management of Bord Na Mona. They have held some meetings with representatives of the communities discussing where to build turbines in relation to homes, but there are other factors affecting their surrounding environment which require consideration.

Wind farms are a threat to endangered bird species which are being actively conserved such as Curlews, which live exclusively in the bog and Barn Owls. The wind turbines are a threat to many other birds and even Bats.

Noise pollution from wind turbines is a huge problem that has been a well debated topic for a while now. The noise has been recognized by the World Health Organization as a Health Hazard, owing to sleep deprivation, hearing problems and cardiovascular disease. Another factor that isn't so well known is the 'flicker effect.' There isn't too much research on this for wind turbines but there are many other similar things that cause this, such as helicopter rotors and LED lights. Helicopter pilots are told not to look up on a sunny day since the light rapidly flickering through the rotating blades make them nauseous and give them headaches. The moving shadows cast over surrounding property by wind turbines are a potential risk which needs further research.

Wind Farms property rights have often been sold to private companies in other countries. This is a big issue, since most private companies have shown they are not buying them with the environment solely in mind. In the UK in 2011, for example, two thirds of the wind farms were owned by foreign investors which has caused concern because of the large input of UK government subsidies that went into building them. Subsidies that were derived originally from

the UK taxpayer end up being funneled overseas with the profits produced from the wind farms. There will always be the need to consider profit turnover in the decision-making process of these companies, but the risk is that environmental and sustainability concerns may get lost in the drive for profits. Bord Na Mona is currently a semi state body and has not shown any plans to sell their wind farms, but the potential concern still stands.

Another point worth mentioning is the incredible amount of money and resources needed to construct the wind farms. This is not really a concern most of the public would consider but turbines require metal and fossil fuels to create which there is a finite amount of. To build all of these you will need fossil fuels for the heavy machinery you will need, plus the amount of raw metal needed that must be melted using coal. Service roads for the turbines and extensive ground works for the foundations require further fossil fuel and have an impact on local wildlife.

The solution to a great many of the problems listed would be to start constructing these wind farms offshore. This has proven the most effective way of harnessing wind power by far. Onshore wind farms can produce 2.5 to 3 megawatts, but offshore wind farms are able to produce 3.6 megawatts. Onshore wind farms are more unpredictable as well since wind levels on land are less consistent in general. As said before, there are endangered species living in some of the proposed areas and there's not much that conservationists can do to stop them from being killed by the turbines. Offshore wind farms are built miles out at sea where they won't obstruct people's quality of life or damage the ecosystems of Irish land.

There are sustainability challenges with all implementations of renewable energy. Many other countries as well as Ireland are finally taking action about the environment, and it paints a hopeful picture for humanity. People need to think more about where all this magical electricity is coming from. The truth is that most people can easily say that they want countries to invest in wind power as long as it's far away from them. In conclusion, Bord Na Mona haven't breached any law with their planning proposals, but for future developments Offshore wind farms are the best for both the eventual goal of climate neutrality and welfare of all living beings.

<https://www.ballivorwindfarm.ie/>

<https://www.bordnamona.ie/climate-solutions/infrastructure/>

<https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/2aae1-cabinet-approves-108m-funding-for-groundbreaking-bord-na-mona-bog-rehabilitation-plan-minister-ryan-also-announces-that-47-more-projects-in-the-midlands-totalling-278m-are-approved-under-the-just-transition-fund/>

<https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/munster/arid-40808340.html>

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Article 2: Current events (tabloid)

Spike in attacks on women

Ashling Murphy's murder has started a wave of attacks on women across the country

For some backstory, Ashling Murphy was a 23-year-old primary school teacher. On January 12th She was murdered while jogging in broad daylight along the Grand Canal just outside Tullamore County Offaly.

The culprit has been identified as a 31 year old Jozef Puzka, who was seen to at St James Hospital with unexplainable injuries. He was charged with her murder the day after.

This event has had a profound impact not only on spreading awareness to the violence against women, but also seemingly on a trend of attacks made against them in the following weeks since her death.

One of these attacks was on a young Cork Woman in her early 20s. The incident happened in Cork south city's center. She was attacked without warning while walking in Evergreen Street just before 11:30pm. She was punched several times in the attack but luckily her injuries were not serious, although a garda said the attack was particularly nasty.

A 17-year-old girl was injured in an assault in Kilkenny, after which she was hospitalized. She said to the gardai that the attacker was a white man with an Irish accent and in his 40s. The girl said she did not know the man, so it is believed to have been an attempted abduction

These are not the only attacks on women lately and they won't be the last. Women cannot feel safe walking alone when there is a constant risk of being attacked or worse.

Sligo Rape Crisis Center CEO David Madden has spoken out against the sexual violence and rape culture.

"The number of callers is going up, the number of counselling hours is going up, the number of referrals is going up, the length of time people are staying with us is going up, the level of fear and anxiety is going up, and Covid has added another dimension to it as well."

Mr. Madden said the level of violence is "unacceptable" and that "Everyone has the right to be safe on the streets and in their own homes."

<https://www.sundayworld.com/crime/irish-crime/gardai-probe-another-violent-assault-after-woman-attacked-as-she-walked-home-in-cork-41300202.html>

<https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/arid-40800033.html>

Article 3: TV review (broadsheet)

Review of Peaky Blinders

Director: Anthony Byrne

Starring Cillian Murphy

Episode run times: 50 – 60 minutes

There are 5 seasons currently out and a 6th is set for release sometime this spring in 2022.

Tommy Shelby (Cillian Murphy) steals a cargo crate full of machine guns, creating the main conflict in the show, between the Shelbys and an Inspector named Campbell, as he tries to find out where the guns went. You quickly realize as the plot progresses through the season, that there are no good people in this show, although you will find yourself rooting for the Shelby family despite their bad deeds, such as fixing races and beating up rivals.

You can clearly see that Tommy has PTSD and built-up trauma from fighting in the first world war, which is a big part of his character. He states many times that he lost a part of himself back then. Although highly smart when dealing with his business, Tommy struggles with making connections with people. His attitude is somber and cold even with his closest allies, which is indicative of his fear of losing control of his feelings.

One of the big selling points of the show must be its incredible writing and acting, which creates some truly memorable, high stakes scenarios. Every new episode ramps up the antics of the season to its eventual climactic resolution. Cillian Murphy plays Tommy very well and there were few weak performances throughout the whole cast.

The cinematography is great. The streets of Birmingham are gloomy, smokey and full of atmosphere. There are interesting camera angles and lighting that work well to make the tone of the show clear.

I overall got hooked on this show. Each season has something unique going on and I will be looking out for the last season, set for release this year.

Article 4: Gaming review (magazine)

Bloodborne review

Developer: FromSoftware Inc.

Release date: 2015

Bloodborne is a fantasy roleplaying game (RPG) that is a spinoff to the titular Souls series by the same developers. A new game in the series is slated for release this year called Elden Ring which will make a visit to previous Souls like games including Bloodborne worth your while.

Bloodborne is brutal as it is beautiful. You play as a mute Hunter of the player's creation who must kill beasts that have taken over the dark, gothic streets of Yharnam, a fictional Victorian London. The game immediately drops you into the deep end when you must kill a werewolf creature only five minutes into the game. This is representative of how Bloodborne wants you to make mistakes and learn from them, since many people do not realize that you can find a weapon to fight the werewolf and die to this first creature many times.

Aside from the difficult learning curve of the game, the second thing that strikes you is the beautiful art style, which never gets boring as you continue to fight new Lovecraftian monsters and Bosses. Bosses are a highlight in the game. Dangerous, tough, and often several times your size, they will put you to the test. They will force you to put everything you have learned when killing smaller enemies into practice.

To some people, the thought of replaying sections over and over might sound tedious, but Bloodborne gives you an amazing feeling of accomplishment when you get past a particularly treacherous stage.

Article 5: Lifestyle piece

Radio broadcast

DESMOND:

Good morning, everyone at home to Today FM talking hour. My name is Desmond Mooney, and I am joined today by Benson Boot who will be talking to us all about the effect environment has on a person to help with screen addiction.

BENSON:

It's a pleasure to be here with you Desmond.

DESMOND:

So, Benson, what got you into all of this?

BENSON:

I used to spend a lot of time on social media feeling bad about myself. I was unhealthy and unhappy. Then I decided to start walking outdoors 10 minutes every day where I couldn't check my phone and realized that I felt way better after.

DESMOND:

Yeah, totally.

BENSON:

It's got a lot to do with just rewiring your brain to be less dependent on all this constant stimulation, you know?

DESMOND:

And where has this change in routine got you to right now Benson?

BENSON:

I have an Instagram account which I allow myself to catch up on once a week for half an hour. This has a lot to do with preventative behavior that I have enforced on myself.

DESMOND:

Tell me, what do you mean by that Benson?

BENSON: So, one of the reasons I've found so much success with walking and not wanting screens is because I would have to go so far out of my way to find one when I'm doing what I'm doing. This doesn't stop at just walking, if you find yourself on your phone in bed then put it somewhere that is an inconvenience to go to.

DERMOT:

Right, gotcha

BENSON: to summarize everything I've said so far, I feel environment and tricking your brain into not thinking of screens by making it inconvenient makes all the difference

DERMOT:

Thank you for that Benson and to all of you at home for tuning into this Today FM talking hour. See you after the break.

Article 6: international news event (tabloid)

Possible World War 3 as Russia stays on Ukraine borders

The entire world has been gripped with fear since Russia deployed 130,000 of its troops on the borders of Ukraine, ready for imminent invasion.

Russian Premier Vladimir Putin has denied any plans to attack Ukraine, but US intelligence has suggested otherwise, saying Russia will attack as soon as today on the 16th of February. US President Joe Biden has addressed Putin on the matter telling him to withdraw his troops or there will be grave consequences.

"I don't know that he knows what he's going to do, and I think he has to realize that it would a gigantic mistake for him to move on to Ukraine. The impact on Europe and the rest of the world would be devastating and he would pay a heavy price"

It's thought that Russia will Lightning raid the city of Kyiv first if invasion starts. Foreign citizens have been urged to evacuate the country as soon as possible, as well as embassy personnel

In another chilling move, Russia have joined forces with China. Russia does not seem plan to stop invasion at Ukraine either, with videos of Russian troops doing training drills in Belarus.

Despite all this, the UK and US have insisted that "there is a window for diplomacy and are continuing to attempt to reason with Russia while the US are sending 3,000 troops to support Ukraine.

Russia has said as of the 16th of February that their drills are over, and they are withdrawing troops from the border. NATO however have said that Russia haven't removed any of their troops and that they are still flowing on to the border.

This situation paints a bleak picture and unless resolved soon, a World War breaking out seems likely.

<https://www.rte.ie/news/world/2022/0214/1279628-ukraine-russia/>

<https://www.thesun.ie/news/8366657/world-war-latest-news-ukraine-russia-tensions/>

<https://www.rte.ie/news/world/2022/0216/1281089-ukraine-russia/>

Article 7: Sports event (broadsheet)

Djokovic will not defend his titles If vaccines will be mandatory

Novac Djokovic, the world champion tennis player, was deported from Australia while about to compete in the Australia Tennis open. His visa was canceled earlier this year because he didn't have the covid 19 vaccination. While compliant with the ruling, his opinion has not changed on the matter one month later.

Djokovic has said he is not going to defend his Wimbledon or French open titles If there are mandatory vaccinations for players.

When asked by BBC If he'd sacrifice taking part in the competitions he said, "That is the price I'm willing to pay."

"I say that everybody has the right to choose or act or say or feel whatever is appropriate for them." Djokovic has distanced himself from the anti-vaccination movement, saying "I am not part of that movement."

"I was never against vaccination... But I've always supported the freedom to choose what to put in your body."

"The principles of decision making on my body are more important to me than any title or anything else. I'm trying to be in tune with my body as much as I can."

Djokovic is "keeping [his] mind open" about the possibility of getting vaccinated at a later time.

The interview from the BBC has received heavy criticism from freelance consultant, Dan Barker for pushing an “anti-vaccination agenda.”

He said that they were pushing this story way more than their other ones and it wasn't important enough to be world news. He said that they are intentionally promoting Djokovic headlines over updates about the conflict between Russia and Ukraine

Djokovic will play in the Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships, which do not require mandatory vaccination. The championships start on the 21st of February.

<https://www.rte.ie/sport/tennis/2022/0215/1280869-djokovic-jab/>

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1567128/bbc-novak-djokovic-antivax-campaign-tennis-vaccine-australia>

<https://news.sky.com/story/novak-djokovic-prepared-to-miss-wimbledon-and-french-open-if-he-is-forced-to-have-covid-vaccine-12542554>