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An Coimisiún Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street,
Dublin 1,
D01 V902

Case Reference: VA04.324082

Subject: Submission of Concerns – Proposed Battery Energy Storage Facility in Ballynanelagh, Knockraha, Co Cork

Dear Sir / Madam,

We are writing to formally submit our concerns regarding the proposed Battery Energy Storage System facility planned for development at Ballynanelagh, Knockraha, Co Cork by Galettech Energy Services, Clondargan, Stradone, Co Cavan H12NV06

While we recognise the importance of renewable energy infrastructure and the transition toward lower-carbon energy systems, we have significant concerns about the suitability of this particular site and the potential impacts on us and our rural community.

1. Fire Risk and Safety Concerns

Battery storage facilities, particularly large-scale lithium-ion systems, carry a documented risk of thermal runaway and fire. Such incidents, although statistically infrequent, can be extremely difficult to control and may burn for extended periods.

Given the rural nature of this location:

- Local fire services may have longer response times.
- There may be limited access to specialist firefighting equipment.
- Nearby homes, agricultural buildings, and livestock could be placed at risk.
- Potential release of toxic fumes could impact residents and wildlife.

Clear, publicly available emergency response plans and independent safety assessments should be provided before any approval is granted.

2. Proximity to Residential Properties

The proposed development is near residential dwellings.

Concerns include:

- Continuous low-frequency noise from cooling systems and inverters.
- Visual impact on landscape character.
- Light pollution from security lighting.

- Loss of rural amenity and tranquillity.

This rural area is valued for its quiet environment and landscape character. Industrial-scale infrastructure is not in keeping with the existing setting.

3. Environmental Impact

The site may impact:

- Local wildlife habitats.
- Protected species (if present).
- Surface water drainage and flood risk.
- Soil quality and agricultural land use.

A full ecological survey and flood risk assessment should be independently reviewed. Rural land should not be industrialised without compelling justification.

4. Traffic and Construction Impact

During construction and ongoing maintenance:

- Increased heavy goods vehicle (HGV) traffic may damage narrow rural roads.
- Road safety risks could increase for pedestrians, cyclists, and farm vehicles.
- Noise and disruption may affect residents and livestock.

A detailed traffic management plan is essential.

5. Cumulative Impact

If other energy infrastructure projects exist or are planned nearby (solar farms, substations, pylons), the cumulative industrialisation of the countryside must be considered. The combined impact may be significant even if individual projects appear modest.

6. Property Values and Insurance

There is concern that proximity to a battery storage facility may:

- Reduce property values.
- Increase insurance premiums.

- Make properties harder to sell.

These economic impacts on residents should not be dismissed.

7. Alternative Sites

Battery storage facilities are essential infrastructure, but more appropriate locations may exist, such as:

- Brownfield sites
- Existing industrial estates
- Areas closer to grid infrastructure and away from housing

Rural greenfield sites should be a last resort.

Conclusion

I respectfully request that the planning authority:

- Require full transparency on fire safety measures.
- Commission independent environmental and safety reviews.
- Carefully assess the suitability of this rural site.
- Consider refusal of planning permission if risks and impacts cannot be satisfactorily mitigated.

We support responsible renewable energy development; however, it must not come at disproportionate cost to rural communities.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Yours sincerely,

Noel & Margaret Foley
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Knockraha,
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25/3/26