

Anne Monaghan,  
Rosebury  
Athenry  
Co Galway  
H65 WP23

To: An Coimisiún Pleanála  
64 Marlborough Street  
Dublin 1  
D01 V902

Date: 24/05/2026

Re: Planning Reference VA07.324162 for 220kV Substation and 220kV Underground Electricity Cabling Connecting to Existing Cashla 220kV Substation, Athenry

Dear Sir/Madam

As a resident of Moanbaun, Athenry, Co Galway, I wish to lodge an objection to the above planning application for the reasons outline below.

### 1. Inadequate Assessment of Cumulative Impacts

I object to this application on the basis that the proposed grid connection infrastructure and the proposed Cashla peaker plant are functionally interdependent projects yet are being assessed under separate planning applications. The grid connection exists solely to facilitate the operation of the proposed gas-fired peaker plant.

Separating the projects prevents a full and transparent cumulative assessment of:

- Traffic impacts
- Construction disruption
- Biodiversity impacts
- Noise and vibration
- Landscape and visual impacts
- Long-term infrastructure burden on the area

The planning authority should require a comprehensive cumulative assessment of the entire development before determining this application.

### 2. Serious Traffic and Road Closure Impacts

The applicant's own documentation confirms prolonged road closures and substantial disruption to local residents, farms, schools, businesses, walkers and cyclists.

The proposal includes:

- Up to 5 months closure of the L7108
- Up to 3.5 months closure of the L7109
- Approximately 7 weeks of stop/go traffic management on the L3103
- Approximately 142 HGV movements per day during construction

These are narrow rural roads not designed for prolonged heavy construction traffic or extended closures. The application does not provide adequate contingency planning for:

- Emergency vehicle access
- School transport
- Farm access
- Pedestrian and cycling safety
- Alternative diversion routes

The documentation also acknowledges the potential for additional delays arising from karst limestone excavation conditions and gas infrastructure constraints. I believe the actual disruption is likely to exceed the durations stated in the application.

### 3. Structural and Engineering Concerns Relating to Castlelambert Bridge

The application documentation indicates that the applicant's own engineers determined the Castlelambert Overbridge to be structurally unsuitable for certain project loads. Despite this, the proposed cable route and associated infrastructure remain in the same corridor.

I am concerned that:

- No integrated structural assessment has been provided for the interaction between trenching works and the bridge structure
- No adequate explanation has been provided regarding long-term infrastructure safety in this location
- The planning authority does not appear to have sufficient evidence demonstrating that the works can proceed safely without structural risk

Given the acknowledged engineering limitations in this area, further independent structural assessment should be required before any consent is considered.

### 4. Noise, Vibration and Potential Structural Damage

The application confirms that a 22-tonne rock breaker may be used during construction works in karst limestone geology.

I am concerned that:

- No property-specific vibration assessments have been carried out
- No baseline structural surveys have been offered to affected homeowners or farmers
- No detailed assessment has been provided regarding risks to older dwellings, farm structures, stone walls or agricultural buildings

The proposed works are in close proximity to occupied residential properties and farmland. Without baseline surveys and vibration monitoring, residents would have limited protection if structural damage occurs during construction.

#### 5. Biodiversity and Protected Species Concerns

The documentation confirms the presence of seven protected bat species along the route corridor, including species protected under the EU Habitats Directive.

I am concerned that:

- Bat surveys were limited in duration
- The ecological assessment may not adequately reflect seasonal activity patterns
- Permanent lighting and the proposed telecommunications mast could disrupt bat foraging and commuting routes
- Hedgerow removal will permanently affect biodiversity corridors used by bats and bird species

The mitigation measures proposed do not appear proportionate to the ecological sensitivity of the area. The planning authority should require a more robust ecological assessment and stronger biodiversity protections before any approval is considered.

#### 6. Lack of Adequate Noise and EMF Assessment

I am concerned that no comprehensive baseline noise survey appears to have been undertaken for residential receptors along the route.

In addition:

- No detailed EMF modelling appears to have been provided for nearby homes or farms
- Residents and landowners have not been given sufficient information regarding potential operational impacts
- The application does not adequately demonstrate how nearby residential and agricultural receptors will be protected

Given the scale of the proposed 220kV infrastructure, these matters should be fully assessed prior to any determination.

#### 7. Deficiencies in Community Consultation

I do not believe the applicant has demonstrated meaningful engagement with all affected residents and landowners.

In particular:

- Many affected residents were not individually consulted
- Insufficient information was provided regarding construction impacts
- No meaningful discussions regarding long-term infrastructure impacts appear to have taken place

- The application does not adequately address the concerns of those living and farming along the affected roads

For a project of this scale and duration, the level of consultation appears inadequate.

#### 8. Incompatibility with Rural Character

The proposed development introduces substantial industrial-scale infrastructure into a rural agricultural landscape, including:

- A major 220kV substation
- Permanent underground strategic infrastructure
- A 36m telecommunications mast
- Permanent lighting infrastructure

I believe the proposal would adversely affect the rural character and visual amenity of the area and is inconsistent with the existing landscape and residential character of the locality.

For the reasons outlined above, I respectfully request that An Coimisiún Pleanála refuse permission for Planning Reference VA07.324162 or alternatively require substantial further information and reassessment before any determination is made.

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