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29th August 2026

An Coimisiún Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

JOINT SUBMISSION TO AN COIMISIÚN PLEANÁLA

An Coimisiún Pleanála Case Reference: VA16.324429

Proposed Development: 110kV Onsite Electrical Substation, Loop-in Grid Connection and Associated Infrastructure at Cloonbaul, Co. Mayo

Applicant: Cunlaghfadda Green Energy Limited

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are three young adults from the same family and wish to make this joint submission regarding the proposed 110kV substation and associated grid connection infrastructure at Cloonbaul, Co. Mayo.

We are making this submission because decisions concerning major infrastructure in a rural community do not affect only the people who live there today. They also affect the generation that may live, work, raise families and build their futures there for decades to come.

Our family moved from Claremorris to the Knockaunakill near Mayo Abbey with the intention of making this our long-term family home. We embraced that move. We value the peace, rural character and sense of community of Knockaunakill, Mayo Abbey.

The move was also particularly important for our mother because of her medical circumstances. As her children, we understood and supported the decision to move here. We believed we were beginning a new chapter as a family and establishing a home that could remain within our family for another generation.

In the developer's documentation, our family home is identified as H004.

To us, H004 is not a receptor or a number on a technical drawing.

It is our home.

It is where we return from college and work. It is where our family gathers. It is a home into which our family has invested considerable time, effort and money because we believed this rural area would provide a peaceful and secure place for our family into the future.

We are each now at an important stage in our lives.

Adam has completed college and is beginning his working life locally with CBE in Claremorris, where he is continuing to develop his knowledge and experience in IT.

Jack is entering his final year at the University of Limerick and is working towards a future career in pharmaceutical engineering/teaching.

Sarah is entering her second year at the University of Limerick and hopes to progress towards a career in secondary-school teaching.

We mention this because there is frequent discussion about encouraging younger generations to remain in, return to and contribute to rural Ireland. We believe the planning system must also consider what makes young people want to establish their futures in rural communities.

The proposed substation would introduce substantial permanent electrical infrastructure into the rural landscape close to existing homes and would fundamentally change an area which we know as countryside.

We understand that electricity infrastructure and renewable energy are necessary. Our generation will live with the consequences of climate change and will also depend upon a modern and secure electricity network.

However, supporting renewable energy and electricity infrastructure does not mean that every proposed location is appropriate.

We believe infrastructure of this scale must be assessed particularly carefully where it is proposed close to established rural homes and communities. Consideration should not stop at whether individual technical standards can be met. An Coimisiún Pleanála should also consider the cumulative and long-term consequences for the people who actually live in the receiving environment.

For our family, this concern is particularly significant because the proposed substation does not exist in isolation.

It forms part of a much wider concentration of energy infrastructure being proposed within the same rural area. The proposed Cunalghfadda Wind Farm, comprising seven turbines of 160 metres in height together with associated infrastructure, was refused permission by Mayo County Council and is now before An Coimisiún Pleanála on appeal, Case Reference 501853.

In addition, a separate planning application for a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at Cloonbaul was submitted to Mayo County Council on 14th August 2026.

The proposed substation, the refused wind farm now under appeal, and the BESS must therefore be considered not simply as separate developments on individual planning files, but in terms of the combined effect they may have on the people who live in this area.

For us, this raises a very real concern about the gradual transformation of what is presently a quiet rural landscape into an area containing multiple forms of large-scale energy infrastructure.

We understand that renewable energy, electricity infrastructure and energy storage all have a role to play in Ireland's future. Our generation will depend upon a secure and modern electricity system and will also live with the consequences of climate change.

However, supporting renewable energy does not mean that every development is appropriate for every location, nor does it mean that the cumulative effect of several major developments within the same small rural community should be overlooked.

When the proposed 110kV substation is considered alongside the seven-turbine wind farm, which was refused permission by Mayo County Council and is now under appeal, and the BESS application submitted on 14th August 2026, we believe An Coimisiún Pleanála should carefully consider the overall change being proposed for this area and what that will mean for existing homes, families and the younger generation who may wish to remain here in the future.

We are also concerned about the construction phase and the effect that significant construction activity and traffic could have on the narrow rural roads serving this community. These are roads that local residents use every day for work, college, school, farming and ordinary family life.

For young people deciding where they might eventually establish a home and raise a family, the character and quality of the surrounding environment matters.

Our parents' generation has worked to give us opportunities through education and to enable us to build independent and productive lives. We hope to use those opportunities to contribute positively to Knockaunakill, Mayo Abbey, Mayo and to Ireland.

We also hope that doing so does not require us to accept that the rural places we may wish to call home can be progressively transformed by large-scale industrial and electrical infrastructure without sufficient consideration of the people already living there.

Our home and the surrounding community should not simply be regarded as a collection of receptors around a proposed development.

Behind every receptor number is a person, a family and, in many cases, another generation wondering whether this is somewhere they can build their future.

We therefore respectfully ask An Coimisiún Pleanála, when determining this application, to give significant consideration to the proximity of existing homes, the rural character of the area, construction impacts, cumulative impacts with the associated wind-energy development and BESS, and the long-term implications for both present residents and the younger generation who may inherit and continue to live in this community.

For these reasons, **we respectfully object to the proposed 110kV substation and associated grid connection infrastructure at Cloonbaul and ask An Coimisiún Pleanála to refuse permission for the proposed development.**

Yours faithfully,

Adam Gleeson

Date: 29th August 2026

Jack Gleeson

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Sarah Gleeson

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