



Observation on a Strategic Infrastructure Development Application

Observer's details

1. Observer's details (person making the observation)

If you are making the observation, write your full name and address.

If you are an agent completing the observation for someone else, write the observer's details:

(a) Observer's
name

Brendan and Colette Mannion

(b) Observer's
postal address

Clogherbeg, Claremorris, Co Mayo.

Agent's details

2. Agent's details (if applicable)

If you are an agent and are acting for someone else **on this observation**, please **also** write your details below.

If you are not using an agent, please write "Not applicable" below.

(a) Agent's name

Not Applicable

(b) Agent's postal
address

Not Applicable

Postal address for letters

3. During the process to decide the application, we will post information and items to you or to your agent. For this **current application**, who should we write to? (Please tick ✓ one box only)

You (the observer) at the postal address in Part 1

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The agent at the postal address in Part 2

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Details about the proposed development

4. Please provide details about the **current application** you wish to make an observation.

- (a) **An Coimisiún Pleanála case number for the current application (if available)**

(for example: 300000)

VA16.324429

- (b) **Name or description of proposed development**

110KV Substation at Cloonbaul, Co Mayo

- (c) **Location of proposed development**

(for example: 1 Main Street, Baile Fearainn, Co Abhaile)

Cloonbaul, Co Mayo

Observation details

5. Grounds

Please describe the grounds of your observation (planning reasons and arguments). You can type or write them in the space below. There is **no word limit** as the box expands to fit what you write.

You can also insert photographs or images in this box. (See part 6 – Supporting materials for more information).

1.Introduction

We are writing to submit a formal observation on the proposed 110kV Substation development at Cloonbaul, Co. Mayo. We reside in immediate proximity to the subject site.

Our household includes our 12-year-old son, who is non-verbal, sensory-seeking, and autistic. He relies on a safe, predictable, and sensory-stable home environment. We strongly object to this development based on the profound impact it will have on our family, residential amenity, local flora and fauna, flood risk, community heritage, and overall landscape character.

2. Grounds of Observation

A. Special Human & Residential Impact (Sensory Vulnerability)

- **Acoustic Distress & Low-Frequency Humming:** Electrical substations produce continuous, low-frequency hums from transformers. Low-frequency tonal noise cannot be "tuned out" and triggers extreme physical discomfort, anxiety, and distress in autistic individuals with sensory processing sensitivities.
- **Construction & Security Risks:** Ground vibrations, heavy machinery, and sudden noises will severely disrupt our son's health and routine. Furthermore, as a sensory-seeking child, proximity to high-voltage equipment poses a vital safety concern.

B. Flora, Fauna, Biodiversity & Bat Habitats

- **Impact on Protected Species:** Cloonbaul and the surrounding Mayo hinterlands host vital wildlife corridors, including protected bat species (such as Pipistrelle and Daubenton's bats) that rely on local hedgerows, tree lines, and unlit flight paths for foraging and echolocation.
- **Light and Noise Pollution:** Artificial site lighting and high-voltage electromagnetic interference (EMF) severely disrupt bat navigation, night-foraging patterns, and local bird nesting habitats.

5. Grounds

- **Habitat Fragmentation:** The clearance of mature boundary trees, native scrub, and hedgerows to make way for heavy industrial foundations will cause irreversible destruction of local biodiversity networks.

C. Scale, Cumulative Impact & Piecemeal Development

- **Inappropriate Industrial Scale:** A 110kV substation is an industrial-scale utility that is fundamentally incompatible with the rural residential zoning and agricultural character of Cloonbaul.
- **Cumulative Development:** This proposal must not be assessed in isolation. The Board must evaluate the cumulative impact of this substation alongside existing/proposed grid connections, overhead lines, and nearby renewable energy or commercial projects. Approving this proposal sets a precedent for the industrialization of a residential rural area.

D. Flood Risk & Micro-Climate / Hydrology Impacts

- **Surface Water Runoff:** Converting greenfield agricultural land into large concrete pads, transformer bases, and hardstanding surfaces drastically reduces natural soil permeability.
- **Increased Localized Flooding:** Increased runoff poses a direct flood risk to neighbouring properties and lower-lying lands, particularly during heavy rainfall events which are increasingly common in Co. Mayo.

E. Fire Safety, Hazardous Materials & Risk Management

- **Thermal Runaway & Oil Spills:** Major electrical substations carry significant fire and explosion hazards due to high-voltage equipment and oil-filled transformers.
- **Emergency Isolation:** Cloonbaul's rural road network is narrow and ill-equipped for swift emergency vehicle response in the event of a high-voltage industrial fire or chemical containment breach (toxic smoke, dielectric oil leaks).

F. History, Local Heritage & Landscape Visual Impact

- **Visual Intrusion:** The visual impact of heavy steel gantries, high-voltage lines, and security structures will permanently mar the rural Mayo landscape and destroy scenic views.
- **Impact on Local Heritage:** The site and its surroundings form part of an established rural community with historical field boundaries and local heritage. Replacing this with an industrial footprint destabilizes

5. Grounds

the character, culture, and residential amenity of the local community.

Conclusion

We ask An Coimisiún Pleanála / An Bord Pleanála to **refuse permission** for this high-voltage infrastructure development and take into consideration the specific vulnerabilities of nearby residents and their mental health. This safe haven that our son enjoys will be eradicated if this proposed project is allowed to progress.

Thank you for your time and for reading our observations on the proposed 110kv substation at Cloonbaul, Co Mayo.

Supporting materials

6. If you wish, you can include supporting materials with your observation.

Supporting materials include:

- photographs,
- plans,
- surveys,
- drawings,
- digital videos or DVDs,
- technical guidance, or
- other supporting materials.

You can insert photographs and similar items in your observation details: grounds (part 5 of this form).

If your supporting materials are physical objects, you must send them together with your observation by post or deliver it in person to our office. You cannot use the online uploader facility.

Fee

7. You **must** make sure that the correct fee is included with your observation.

Observers (except prescribed bodies)

- strategic infrastructure observation is €50.
- there is no fee for an oral hearing request

Oral hearing request

8. If you wish to request the Coimisiún to hold an oral hearing, please tick the “Yes, I wish to request an oral hearing” box below.

You can find information on how to make this request on [our website](#) or by contacting us.

If you do not wish to request an oral hearing, please tick the “No, I do not wish to request an oral hearing” box.

Yes, I wish to request an oral hearing

☐

No, I do not wish to request an oral hearing

☐

Final steps before you send us your observations

9. If you are sending us your observation using **the online uploader facility**, remember to save this document as a Microsoft word or PDF and title it with:

- the case number and your name, or
- the name and location of the development and your name.

This also applies to prescribed bodies sending an observation by email.

If you are sending your observation to us by post or delivering in person, remember to print off all the pages of this document and send it to us.

For Office Use Only

FEM – Received		SIDS – Processed	
Initials		Initials	
Date		Date	

Notes