

Brian Flynn
Carmel Flynn
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Mayo Abbey / Dromady
Co. Mayo

31 August 2026

To: An Bord Pleanála

Re: Objection to Proposed 100kV Substation (ACP Reference 324429)

Dear Sir/Madam,

We wish to make a formal objection to the proposed **100kV substation** (ACP Reference 324429).

We are residents and farming families who have lived and worked in the Mayo Abbey, Kilbride, Knocknakill and Dromady areas for many years. We have a strong connection to the land and are concerned about the permanent environmental, agricultural, landscape and heritage impacts of the proposed development.

1. The Need for the Substation

Our principal concern is the fundamental relationship between the proposed 100kV substation and the separate application for seven wind turbines under Mayo County Council Planning Ref. 2660398 which is being appealed to An Bord Pleanála (ACP Reference 501853).

The proposed substation is intended to facilitate the grid connection of the associated renewable energy development. Its justification and need are therefore directly linked to that wind farm.

If planning permission for the seven proposed wind turbines is not granted, the need for this particular substation would not arise.

We therefore respectfully ask An Bord Pleanála to consider whether it is appropriate to determine the substation application independently of the outcome of the associated wind farm application.

The Board should establish whether there is a genuine, independently demonstrated need for this substantial piece of infrastructure in the absence of the proposed wind farm. We are concerned that approving the substation could effectively facilitate infrastructure for a development which may ultimately not receive planning permission.

2. Flooding, Drainage and Agricultural Land

There are significant existing flooding concerns in the surrounding area, particularly around Kilbride and Knocknakill.

The area has experienced recurring flooding following periods of heavy rainfall, including significant events in 2009, 2014 and 2024. During these events, roads providing access to farmland have become extremely difficult or impossible to use.

The construction of a large substation, access roads, hardstanding and associated infrastructure has the potential to alter existing drainage patterns, disturb ground conditions and increase surface-water runoff.

This could have serious consequences for local agricultural land, access to farms and the welfare of livestock.

We therefore ask that the Board give full consideration to the hydrological and cumulative drainage impacts of the substation together with the proposed wind farm and all associated infrastructure. See below photo evidence of same:

Flooding Winter 2014:





Photos from 2024:





3. Landscape, Residential Amenity and Mayo Abbey

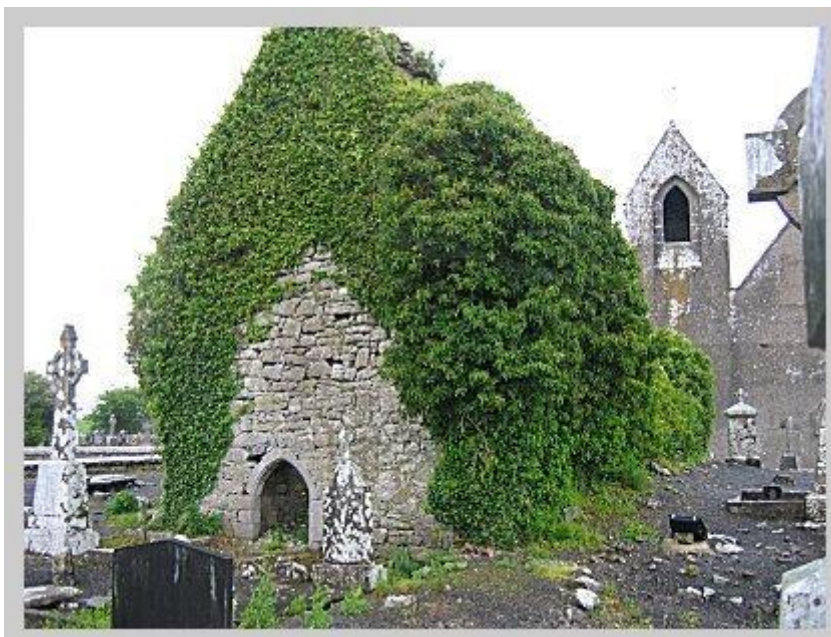
The proposed substation would introduce significant industrial-scale infrastructure into an established rural landscape.

The impact should not be considered solely in terms of the footprint of the substation. The Board should consider the cumulative effect of the substation, grid infrastructure, turbines, access roads, construction activity and associated works.

There are also concerns regarding the impact on the historic landscape surrounding Mayo Abbey, an important archaeological and cultural heritage site from which County Mayo derives its name. The proposed turbine development is located approximately 2 kilometres from Mayo Abbey. Such close proximity raises serious concerns regarding the preservation of the historic setting, landscape character and cultural significance of this unique heritage asset.

We also respectfully ask An Bord Pleanála to consider the full extent of the archaeological and historical significance of the Mayo Abbey area, and in particular the lands in and around the area where the proposed development is planned.

Mayo Abbey is an important archaeological and cultural heritage site with a history extending back to the early medieval period. However, its significance is not confined to the surviving ruins of the Abbey itself. (See attached photo).



The wider landscape forms an important part of its archaeological setting and historical context.

There is evidence of ringforts and other features of historical and archaeological significance within the surrounding landscape. We are concerned that ground disturbance associated with the proposed substation, access roads, foundations, cabling and other infrastructure could adversely affect archaeological features which may not yet have been fully identified or recorded.

We therefore ask the Board to ensure that a comprehensive archaeological assessment of the wider development area is undertaken, taking account not only of recorded monuments but also the potential for previously unidentified archaeological remains.

In particular, we ask that the Board consider whether the proposed development could result in the direct or indirect loss, disturbance or degradation of archaeological features and the historic landscape setting of Mayo Abbey.

The introduction of substantial electrical infrastructure into this historically significant landscape requires careful consideration of both the known archaeological record and the potential for further discoveries during construction.

4. Biodiversity and Wildlife

The surrounding lands support a range of wildlife and important habitats.

In particular, Whooper Swans regularly winter in fields and nearby lake habitats in the locality, while Curlew have also been observed in the area. Curlew are a species of significant conservation concern.

We are concerned that construction works, ground disturbance, changes to drainage, increased activity and the permanent introduction of infrastructure could adversely affect wildlife and their habitats.

There are also concerns regarding Japanese Knotweed within and around the wider development area. Ground disturbance associated with construction could result in the spread of this invasive species unless it is properly identified, controlled and monitored.

The Board should therefore ensure that the biodiversity assessment properly addresses the cumulative impacts of the substation and the associated wind farm development.

5. Cumulative Impact

We respectfully submit that the proposed substation cannot reasonably be viewed as an isolated development.

Its potential impacts must be assessed alongside the associated seven-turbine development and all related infrastructure. This includes the combined effects on landscape, drainage, agriculture, biodiversity, cultural heritage and residential amenity.

Conclusion

We recognise the importance of renewable energy and Ireland's transition to a lower-carbon energy system. However, such development must be appropriately located and properly justified.

In particular, we ask An Bord Pleanála to give careful consideration to the fact that the proposed 100kV substation would not be required for its stated purpose if the associated seven-turbine wind farm does not receive planning permission.

We therefore respectfully request that the Board:

1. Consider the necessity and justification for the proposed substation in the event that the associated wind farm does not proceed;
2. Assess the cumulative impacts of the substation and wind farm as interconnected developments;

3. Give particular consideration to flooding, drainage and agricultural impacts;
4. Fully assess impacts on biodiversity, including Curlew, Whooper Swans and the potential spread of Japanese Knotweed; and
5. Properly assess the landscape and cultural heritage impacts, including the setting of Mayo Abbey.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that An Bord Pleanála refuse permission for the proposed 100kV substation and associated infrastructure.

Yours faithfully,

Brian Flynn – Kilbride, Mayo Abbey, Claremorris, Co. Mayo (Also farms land owned in Knocknakill, Mayo Abbey)

Carmel Flynn – Kilbride, Mayo Abbey, Claremorris, Co. Mayo

Sean Flynn – Dromady, Claremorris, Co. Mayo F12 N611

Siobhán O'Hara – Shinanagh, Mayo Abbey, Claremorris, Co. Mayo (new house in construction)