

Name: _____ James Derrig _____

Address: _____ Mayo Abbey, Claremorris, Co Mayo _____

Date: _____ 30.08.26 _____

An Coimisiun Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

Re: Observation on the proposed Cloonbaul 110 kV substation and grid connection

ACP Case: VA16.324429 | Applicant: Cunlaghfadda Green Energy Limited

I ask the Commission to examine the consequences of an electrical fault, fire or oil release at this rural location.

A 110 kV substation contains major electrical equipment and may contain substantial quantities of insulating oil. The application should demonstrate containment, fire separation, detection, emergency access, firefighting resources, notification procedures and protection of soils, drains and groundwater under severe-weather conditions.

These matters cannot be postponed to an operational plan after permission. They must also be coordinated with the adjacent proposed BESS because simultaneous or cascading incidents and shared access could affect the response. Unresolved emergency risk supports refusal.

I recognise that Ireland needs modern electricity infrastructure and stronger renewable-energy connections. My objection is about appropriate siting, not opposition to the grid in principle.

Cloonbaul combines unresolved enclosure evidence, prehistoric artefact finds, the wider Mayo Abbey historic landscape, wet habitats, karst and drainage sensitivity, rural homes and the cumulative pressure of a wind farm, substation and BESS. These are substantial constraints, not minor details that can all be managed by conditions.

Good climate planning should avoid unnecessary and irreversible harm. Refusing this site would require a better location; it would not reject the public purpose of grid infrastructure. I ask the Commission to protect Cloonbaul and refuse VA16.324429.

I ask that the substation be refused because its habitat and disturbance effects cannot be separated from the proposed wind farm.

The wider project area supports probable breeding Curlew and Lapwing, confirmed breeding Kestrel, Buzzard and Sparrowhawk, and activity by other birds of conservation concern. Construction traffic, trenching, vegetation removal, lighting and permanent infrastructure add to disturbance and habitat fragmentation even though the substation itself has no moving blades.

The Commission must examine the combined loss and disturbance across all related works and breeding seasons. A separate application boundary should not permit the supporting infrastructure to escape the ecological consequences of the project it is designed to serve.

I object because security and operational lighting would introduce another permanent source of light into a presently dark rural area.

Even modest lighting can cause glare for residents and affect bats, insects and other nocturnal wildlife using hedgerows and treelines. Emergency or maintenance lighting may be brighter than ordinary security lighting, and cumulative light from the substation and proposed BESS must be considered together.

Conditions about shielding do not answer the more fundamental question of siting. A development requiring fencing, cameras and lighting is an industrial use and should be directed to a location where dark rural character and wildlife corridors will not be degraded.

Yours faithfully,

James Derrig