

Michael Oates
Knockroe
Mayo Abbey
Claremorris
Co. Mayo
F12 P9N3

26th August 2026

To:

The Planning Section,
An Coimisiún Pleanála,
64 Marlborough Street,
Dublin 1,
D01 V902.

RE: Planning Submission / Objection regarding Case Reference 324429

Proposed Development: Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) for a 110kV Substation and associated grid connection infrastructure at Cloonbaul, County Mayo.

Applicant: Cunlaghfadda Green Energy Limited.

Dear Sir / Madam,

I am writing to you as a concerned local resident to formally object to the Strategic Infrastructure Development planning application submitted by Cunlaghfadda Green Energy Limited for the construction of a 110kV electricity substation and related grid connection assets at Cloonbaul.

I respectfully request that An Coimisiún Pleanála **refuse planning permission** for this infrastructure, based on the substantial planning, environmental, and community grounds outlined below:

1. Lack of Proper Project Integration & Prematurity

- **Dependent Infrastructure:** The proposed 110kV substation is entirely dependent upon, and inextricably linked to, the parent Cunlaghfadda Wind Farm development.
- **Prior Refusal:** Mayo County Council has already robustly refused planning permission for the underlying 7-turbine wind farm project.
- **Project Splitting Concerns:** Proceeding to assess or grant a substation while its source generation facility stands rejected constitutes bad planning practice and inappropriate project splitting. A final decision on the grid connection should be deemed premature until the core generation dispute is legally settled.

2. Excessive Visual Impairment & Landscape Impact

- **Industrialisation of Rural Landscape:** The sheer scale of a 110kV substation installation—including tall steel gantries, heavy transformers, security fencing, and

overhead lines—will introduce harsh industrial infrastructure into a scenic, rural landscape.

- **Contrary to County Development Guidelines:** The physical presence and visual profile of this complex will permanently damage the visual amenities of local properties and undermine the rural character explicitly protected under the Mayo County Development Plan.

3. Proximity to Residential Properties & Amenity Degradation

- **Unacceptable Incursion:** The proposed footprint is located in immediate, unacceptable proximity to residential homes.
- **Noise and Light Pollution:** Continuous operational hum, structural vibrations, and high-intensity security lighting required for a 110kV asset will directly degrade the peace, quiet, and day-to-day residential amenity of surrounding families.

4. Project Hyper-Concentration & Negative Cumulative Impacts

- **Industrial Over-Saturation:** The local community surrounding Mayo Abbey is currently facing a disproportionate, aggressive influx of three major energy applications at once: the 7-turbine wind farm, this 110kV substation, and an additional Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at Cloonbaul.
- **Flawed Environmental Assessments:** The Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) fails to properly address the true, long-term cumulative environmental, social, and structural strain that placing all three massive industrial facilities in one small rural pocket will cause.

5. Destructive Archaeological & Ecological Impact

- **Disregard for Documented Heritage:** The wider Mayo Abbey area holds profound, internationally recognized early Christian and medieval ecclesiastical heritage. The applicant's desktop archaeological assessments completely fail to appreciate the high subterranean potential of this landscape.
- **The 1995–1996 Archaeological Survey:** We draw the Commission's attention specifically to *An Archaeological Survey of the Parish of Mayo Abbey (1995–1996)*, a comprehensive field study published by the Mayo Abbey Heritage Committee under the supervision of archaeologist Leo Morahan. This landmark study explicitly designated the **Cloonbaul townland** as a critical zone containing significant concentrations of newly discovered ancient monuments and historical earthworks.
- **Irreversible Threat:** Heavy excavation, structural piling, and deep trenching for a 110kV industrial substation subvert the protective buffer zones established by decades of local preservation work and pose an irreversible threat to unexcavated, highly sensitive archaeological features in Cloonbaul.
- **Ecological Disruption:** Local wildlife corridors and natural habitats face permanent damage, with critical concerns remaining over the local population of protected species such as the Curlew and Marsh Fritillary.

6. Elevated Risk of Flooding and Altered Hydrology (With Photographic Evidence)

- **Creation of Impermeable Surfaces:** The construction of a 110kV substation compounds concrete foundations, hardstanding areas, and security access roads, instantly converting natural, absorbent agricultural soil into a massive impermeable footprint. This drastic reduction in natural drainage will generate substantial surface water runoff, directly worsening the severe, localized flooding issues already experienced in this immediate catchment area.
- **Annual Flooding at Knockroe:** The adjacent area of **Knockroe suffers from severe flooding every single year**. The local road infrastructure and surrounding lands are repeatedly submerged during periods of heavy rainfall. I have enclosed clear **photographic evidence showing the worst of these recurring floods** as an appendix to this letter, which unequivocally demonstrates the existing hydrological vulnerability of the local topography. I also have video evidence of flooding at the front of my house and the back should you wish to see it. Will my house be under a greater flood risk if this substation gets planning permission?

Conclusion

The Cloonbaul and Mayo Abbey communities are not opposed to balanced renewable targets. However, the industrial scale, inappropriate positioning, lack of cohesive integration, and severe cumulative pressure of this project represent an unacceptable burden on our local environment and families.

For the reasons detailed above, I urge An Coimisiún Pleanála to uphold proper planning practices, protect our rural landscape, and **refuse permission** for this development.

Please find enclosed the statutory submission fee of €50, alongside the photographic evidence of the Knockroe flooding. I look forward to receiving your formal acknowledgment of this submission.

Yours faithfully,

Michael Oates

Enclosures:

1. Statutory Submission Fee of €50
2. Photographic Appendix: Evidence of Recurring Flooding at Knockroe



