FORMAL OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION VA04.324632
Proposed 220kV Air Insulated Substation and Loop-in Grid Connection at Greenhills Solar Farm, County Cork

To: An Coimisiún Pleanála

Claire Kennedy,
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Co. Cork
P36 FW70

26th October 2026

Case Reference: VA04.324632
Applicant: Perigus Energy Ireland Midco Limited

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to formally object to the proposed development under planning case reference VA04.324632, concerning the proposed 220kV Air Insulated Substation (AIS) and associated loop-in grid connection at the Greenhills Solar Farm in County Cork.

I am a resident living less than 5 kilometre from the proposed development. I therefore am worried regarding the potential impacts of this substantial electrical infrastructure on the surrounding environment, water resources, landscape, archaeological heritage, road network, emergency access and local community.

Despite living in such close proximity, **I was not personally consulted by Ørsted or Perigus Energy regarding the proposed substation and associated grid infrastructure**.

I am concerned that the proposed development raises significant questions about the suitability of the site, the adequacy of the environmental assessments, the protection of local water resources, the potential impact on archaeological heritage, emergency access and the cumulative industrialisation of the surrounding rural landscape.

I respectfully request that An Coimisiún Pleanála carefully examine the following grounds before making a decision.

1. Archaeological heritage, Rath Fort and potential noise and vibration impacts

I have serious concerns regarding the potential impact of construction noise and ground-borne vibration on **Rath Fort, located approximately 700 metres from the proposed development**.

A rath is an important archaeological feature, and its cultural significance extends beyond the physical boundaries of the monument itself. Its setting and surrounding landscape also contribute to its heritage value.

The construction of a major electrical substation is likely to involve excavation, foundations, earthmoving, heavy machinery, construction traffic and other civil engineering activities. Depending on the methods used and the underlying ground conditions, these activities may generate noise and vibration.

I am concerned that the potential effects on Rath Fort and its wider archaeological setting require particularly careful consideration, including whether the assessment adequately addresses the proximity of the monument and the likely construction methods.

I request that the Commission examine:

- The distance between the proposed works and Rath Fort.
- The geological and ground conditions between the site and the monument.
- The potential transmission of ground-borne vibration.
- The potential effects of construction noise on the monument's setting.
- Whether the construction methodology is appropriate given the proximity of the archaeological feature.
- Whether independent archaeological advice and a site-specific vibration assessment are required.

The absence of predicted structural damage would not, in itself, establish that there could be no adverse effect on the monument's setting or heritage value.

I ask that the applicant demonstrate that the archaeological heritage of the area will be adequately protected before permission is granted.

2. Flooding

I have serious concerns about the suitability of the proposed site for a major electrical substation.

The proposed development would introduce a substantial engineered compound incorporating foundations, buildings, hardstanding, electrical equipment, access infrastructure and drainage systems. Such works can alter natural drainage patterns, groundwater movement and the rate at which water enters surrounding land and watercourses.

The applicant's drainage proposals include soakaways, surface-water drainage, silt traps and oil/water separators. Certain elements are indicated as to be confirmed at detailed-design stage.

I am concerned that reliance on drainage infrastructure that has not been fully finalised may leave important questions unanswered about the site's long-term hydrological performance.

The Inch Area suffered extreme flooding just 3 over years ago, October 2023.

I ask that the suitability of this particular site be established through robust, site-specific evidence rather than assumptions about the effectiveness of proposed drainage measures.

3. Suitability of the site and principle of development

The location of the proposed substation is a fundamental concern.

This is not a minor electrical installation within an established industrial area. It is a substantial piece of electrical infrastructure proposed within a rural landscape, forming part of a much larger renewable-energy development.

The proposed substation compound and its associated transformers, buildings, electrical equipment, fencing, access arrangements and lightning-protection structures will introduce an industrial character into the surrounding landscape.

The fact that the substation is intended to serve a renewable-energy development should not remove the requirement to establish that the proposed location is environmentally acceptable.

4. Visual impact

I have significant concerns regarding the adequacy of the visual assessment undertaken for the wider Greenhills project and its associated electrical infrastructure.

I request that the Commission examine whether the submitted viewpoints and photomontages accurately and comprehensively represent the proposed development.

In particular, I request specific visual assessments from:

- Nearby public roads and surrounding residences.
- Elevated viewpoints from which the substation may be visible.
- Relevant locations around Rath Fort and other heritage features.
- Locations within the surrounding rural landscape and River Tourig area.
- Viewpoints from which the substation would be seen together with the solar farm and other renewable-energy infrastructure.

The assessment should include the actual dimensions, heights and locations of the proposed structures, rather than relying on images that principally illustrate the lower-profile solar panels.

5. Water pollution

I am extremely concerned about the potential effects of the proposed development on local water resources.

The construction and operation of a major electrical substation can present risks to groundwater and surface water through excavation, soil disturbance, sediment runoff, concrete and cement residues, construction fuels, oils and accidental spills.

The presence of proposed drainage controls does not, by itself, establish that local springs and downstream watercourses will be adequately protected in all circumstances.

I request that the Commission require the applicant to establish:

- The locations and characteristics of springs within and around the site.
- The direction and nature of groundwater flow.
- Whether these springs feed the River Tourig or connect to other watercourses.
- Whether there is a pathway through which pollutants could reach drinking-water sources.
- The potential effects of excavation, foundations and drainage infrastructure on groundwater.
- The adequacy of measures to prevent and respond to oil spills, sediment runoff and other contamination incidents.
- The cumulative effects of the substation and wider solar-farm development on local water resources.

6. Emergency access, fire safety and the proposed access route

I have very serious concerns about emergency access to the proposed substation.

The proposed substation is approximately one mile along a private, off-road route. This raises questions about whether emergency services could reach the site promptly and safely during a serious incident.

Potential incidents include electrical fires, transformer fires, explosions, oil spills, flooding, medical emergencies and other events requiring an urgent response.

I request that the Commission require the applicant to demonstrate:

1. That the access route is suitable for the emergency vehicles required to attend the site.
2. That the route can accommodate the relevant vehicle dimensions, weights and turning requirements.

3. That access will remain available throughout the construction and operational phases.
4. That appropriate emergency plans and arrangements for electrical and transformer incidents are in place.

I request that emergency access and safety be independently assessed and that the adequacy of the proposed arrangements be demonstrated before permission is granted.

Fire Emergency Services in Ireland are not trained to deal with large fires resulting from Solar Farms or the likes which is extremely concerning should one happen.

7. Cumulative effects of Lyrenacarriga Wind Farm, substation and BESS

The proposed Greenhills substation must not be assessed in isolation from other renewable-energy developments in the surrounding area.

The Lyrenacarriga Wind Farm and associated battery energy storage system (BESS) and substation infrastructure are approximately four kilometres away.

The presence of substantial energy infrastructure at both locations raises concerns about the combined effects on the rural landscape and the local environment.

These effects may include:

- Cumulative visual and landscape impacts.
- Construction traffic and pressure on local roads.
- Noise during construction and operation.
- Emergency access and fire-response requirements.
- Groundwater, drainage and water-quality impacts.
- Biodiversity and habitat effects.
- The cumulative industrialisation of the surrounding rural landscape.
- The combined demands placed on local emergency services and infrastructure.

The Commission should assess the combined effects of the Greenhills and Lyrenacarriga developments, including their associated electrical infrastructure and battery storage, rather than considering each development in isolation.

I request that the applicant demonstrate how these cumulative effects have been identified, assessed and addressed, including whether the combined demands on emergency response and public infrastructure can be adequately accommodated.

8. Lack of direct public consultation and community engagement

I am particularly concerned about the adequacy of consultation with residents in the immediate vicinity of the proposed substation.

I was not personally consulted by Ørsted or Perigus Energy regarding the proposed substation and associated grid infrastructure. I rang the phone number on their website and was transferred to a switch board in the UK who really didn't know who to transfer me to so that's where the phone call ended.

Given my proximity to the development, I am concerned that I was not directly made aware of, or personally consulted about, this significant electrical infrastructure proposal.

The substation is a substantial development in its own right. Its specific location, scale, construction methods and potential environmental effects warrant clear communication with the surrounding community.

As a resident living near, I would have welcomed the opportunity to understand the proposal and raise concerns regarding noise, vibration, visual impact, groundwater, springs, flooding, emergency access and the cumulative effects of the wider development.

I therefore ask An Coimisiún Pleanála to examine the applicant's public-engagement report and consultation records and establish:

1. Which residents were directly contacted about the substation.
2. What geographical area was used to identify potentially affected residents.
3. Whether residents living within one kilometre of the development entrance were specifically contacted.
4. What information about the substation and grid connection was provided.
5. Whether the substation was clearly presented as a separate and substantial element of the wider project.
6. How concerns relating specifically to the substation were recorded and addressed.
7. Whether the consultation undertaken was sufficiently comprehensive given the scale, location and permanent nature of the proposed infrastructure.

9. Request for refusal or further assessment

Taken together, the concerns outlined above raise important questions about the suitability of the proposed site and the adequacy of the assessment of the development's potential environmental and community impacts.

These concerns relate to:

- The protection of Rath Fort and its archaeological setting.
- Potential construction noise and vibration.
- The suitability of land.
- Flooding, groundwater and natural drainage.
- Local springs, the River Tourig and potential drinking-water impacts.
- Visual impact and the adequacy of representative viewpoints.
- Emergency access, fire safety and operational risks.
- The cumulative effects of the wider Greenhills development and Lyrenacarriga infrastructure.
- The adequacy of consultation with nearby residents, including my own experience of not being personally consulted.

The long-term protection of local water resources, archaeological heritage, rural landscape and the safety and interests of the surrounding community must be fully considered in determining this application.

I respectfully request that An Coimisiún Pleanála carefully assess these matters and refuse permission for the proposed development.

Yours faithfully,

Claire Kennedy