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Date: 31st October 2026

The Secretary
An Coimisiún Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

RE: Planning Observation Case File Reference VA04.324632
Applicant: Perigus Energy Ireland Midco Ltd
Proposed Development: 220kV Air Insulated Substation, grid connection, and associated works
Location: Ballyneague, Ballydaniel and Knocknagappagh, Co. Cork

Submitted via the An Coimisiún Pleanála online portal

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to submit an observation regarding the planning application referenced above. While I understand the need to improve and expand Ireland's electricity network, I believe this particular development raises serious concerns for local residents, the environment, and the surrounding rural landscape.

I respectfully ask An Coimisiún Pleanála to carefully consider the issues outlined below before making a decision on this application.

Unsuitable Location and Access Concerns

In my view, the proposed site is not an appropriate location for infrastructure of this scale. The substation would be situated behind approximately one mile of narrow private tracks that pass through a proposed solar farm before reaching the site.

These routes appear wholly unsuitable for the volume of heavy construction traffic that would be required during both the construction phase and future maintenance works. Part of the route includes an underpass originally intended for livestock movement rather than large industrial vehicles. This raises serious questions about safety, practicality, and long-term access to the facility.

Emergency Services Access

The isolated nature of the site also creates concerns regarding emergency response.

If an electrical fire, equipment failure, chemical leak, or other serious incident were to occur, emergency services would have to travel a considerable distance along a restricted access route before reaching the facility. Delays in accessing a high-voltage installation could have significant implications for public safety, nearby residents, and the local environment.

Risk to Local Water Sources

One of my main concerns relates to water quality.

The land contains several natural springs that feed into the River Tourig catchment. This river system ultimately contributes to the public water supply serving the Youghal area.

The construction and operation of a large electrical substation carries risks associated with fuel spills, oil leaks, contaminated runoff, and sediment entering local waterways. Any pollution incident could have serious consequences for both the environment and public health. Given the importance of these watercourses, a precautionary approach should be taken.

Flooding and Drainage Issues at Cronin's Bogs

The proposed development is located in an area locally known as Cronin's Bogs, which has long functioned as a naturally wet area that absorbs and stores water.

Large-scale excavation works, foundations, road construction, and extensive hard surfaces would inevitably alter how water moves through this landscape. Reducing the land's natural ability to absorb rainfall could increase flood risk elsewhere in the area, particularly during periods of heavy rain. This concern deserves much closer examination before permission is considered.

Impact on Archaeological Heritage

The site is located approximately 700 metres from Rath Fort, a locally important archaeological feature.

The fort is understood to have underground souterrains extending away from the main structure. Given the scale of excavation and construction required, there are legitimate concerns that vibration from heavy machinery could damage these features.

Before any permission is granted, an independent assessment should be carried out to determine whether construction activity could affect the fort, its underground structures, or its wider setting.

Impact on Wildlife and Biodiversity

The countryside surrounding the proposed development provides important habitat for local wildlife including foxes, badgers, bats, birds of prey, and many other species.

Construction activities, increased traffic, noise, earthworks, and vegetation clearance have the potential to disturb or displace wildlife from areas they currently rely on for feeding and shelter.

Of particular concern is the effect of high-voltage infrastructure, security lighting, and ongoing operational noise on nocturnal species such as bats. Birds of prey may also face increased risks from overhead electrical infrastructure. Once habitats are disturbed or lost, the damage can be difficult or impossible to reverse.

Visual Impact Not Properly Presented

I am concerned that the visual information submitted with this application does not provide a complete picture of how the development would appear in the landscape.

While the Environmental Impact Assessment Report includes a number of viewpoints, many of the images appear to minimise or obscure the presence of the proposed substation and associated electrical infrastructure. As a result, the true visual impact of the project is difficult to assess.

Decision-makers and local residents should be provided with accurate and fully representative photomontages showing exactly what the development would look like from all established viewpoints.

Cumulative Development in the Area

This proposal should not be considered in isolation.

There is already significant energy-related infrastructure in the wider area, including the Lyrenacarriga wind farm substation and associated Battery Energy Storage System located approximately four kilometres away.

The combined effect of existing and proposed developments must be fully assessed. The concentration of large-scale energy infrastructure within what has traditionally been a rural landscape could result in substantial changes to the area's character, increased industrialisation, additional noise, and further pressure on local habitats.

Impact on Local Homes and Property Values

Many families have chosen to live in this area because of its rural character and peaceful environment.

The introduction of a major industrial electricity facility in close proximity to residential properties raises understandable concerns regarding property values, quality of life, and the long-term attractiveness of the area as a place to live. Residents who have invested their lives and savings in their homes should not be expected to bear these impacts without proper consideration.

Lack of a Clear National Framework

The scale of this project is significant, yet it is being proposed at a time when Ireland is still developing policy and planning approaches for large-scale electricity infrastructure operating alongside other energy developments.

Proceeding with a development of this magnitude before clearer national guidance is in place risks creating a precedent that may have implications for similar developments across the country.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, I believe this proposed development would have unacceptable impacts on local water resources, drainage and flood management, wildlife, archaeological heritage, landscape character, residential amenity, and public safety.

I therefore respectfully request that An Coimisiún Pleanála refuse planning permission for Case File Reference VA04.324632.

Alternatively, I ask that substantial Further Information be requested from the applicant to address the serious concerns raised by local residents regarding environmental, safety, access, and heritage impacts.

This is a major industrial development proposed within a rural farming area. If approved, it would permanently change the character of the countryside around Killeagh and Inch. Furthermore, granting permission could encourage additional large-scale energy developments in the area, leading to further industrialisation of agricultural land that has traditionally been used for farming.

I would appreciate being kept informed of any updates, reports, recommendations, or decisions in relation to this application.

The prescribed observation fee of €50 has been paid through the online portal.

Yours faithfully,

Deirdre Cliffe

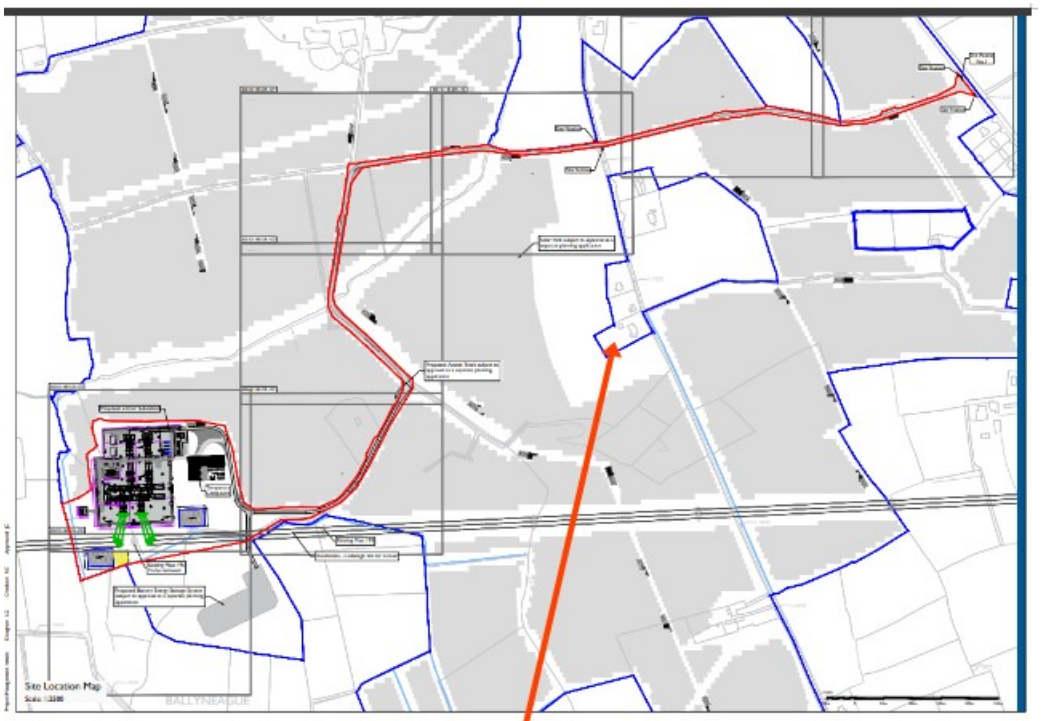


Supporting Photographs and Maps

I have included supporting documents with this observation, including a site map showing the location of my home in relation to the proposed development site.

I have also provided photographs taken from my property which demonstrate the existing rural landscape and indicate where the proposed infrastructure is expected to be located if this development proceeds.

Map showing substation, and proximity to my house



Location of my house
Proposed substation will be approximately 600m away from house

Current View to South West from my House



Image showing view to South West from my house with Substation in proposed position

