POWERCAPITAL
renewable energy

Power Capital Renewable Energy
86-88 Leeson Street Lower, Dublin 2, D02 A668

01st September 2025

Dear Mr Cronin,

RE: Bellville Solar Project Public Consultation

Thank you for your letter dated 22nd August 2025. We welcome the opportunity to respond and provide clarify on the points you have raised.

At the outset, I can confirm that Power Capital Renewable Energy (PCRE) are wholly and absolutely committed to engagement with the community around the proposed Bellville Solar Project. We understand that feedback from local stakeholders is vital as we continue the preparation of a planning application for this project.

Our Consultation Approach and Methodology

For this project, we are adopting a two-stage approach to engagement with each consultation stage having distinct aims and objectives. The first stage involves introducing the project concept, gathering broad feedback and understanding initial positions. The second stage allows us to reflect feedback received to date and present a more detailed design for the project, which has been informed by community engagement and the ongoing work of our project design team of experienced consultants.

This consultation exercise is non-statutory but is being undertaken voluntarily in advance of the planning submission. PCRE is committed to ensuring that the engagement process is accessible and considers feedback received from all interested stakeholders including residents, local groups and elected representatives.

Separately to the community consultation, our project design team is working proactively with all relevant statutory agencies at pre-application stage. These agencies will also be formally consulted once a planning application is submitted.

We can also commit to meaningful engagement continuing beyond the submission of the planning application and during any future construction and operational phases of the project, subject of course to necessary consents and approvals.

Consultation to date

PCRE facilitated a public consultation event in the Fr Sammon Centre in Monivea on 26th June 2025 between 12-2pm and 4-8pm. This drop-in session provided the opportunity for people to call in and view information

on display as well as speak with members of the project team. There was a significant attendance of circa 100 people throughout the day.

A letter providing notification of the project, and this event, was posted via An Post to properties in proximity to the proposed solar farm site in advance. Using GIS mapping we identified just over 500 properties falling within a 1km radius around the proposed site location. This radius was chosen as we decided to double the 500m recommended radius as set out within the Irish Solar Energy Association Best Practice Guidance. For clarity, no residential properties fall within the red line boundary of the proposed solar farm as indicated in your letter.

Over and above postage of letters, we also informed all elected representatives for the area and as well as local groups via email about the event (alongside an invitation to meet). Furthermore, a public notice was placed in the Tuam Herald on Wednesday 18th June 2025.

While we cannot account for whether every household received the letter, and we appreciate from our own conversations that some residents appear not to have received a letter, we are confident that we made a significant effort to advertise the event.

Aside from the public event itself, we established a project website and virtual consultation room containing all the information which was on display at the public event. This online consultation also provides a feedback function.

We have received a significant amount of feedback both verbally at the event, in writing via the feedback forms provided and through our online consultation. In the intervening period, we have been collating and analysing all feedback while also seeking to provide responses to any questions which have been raised. We have also provided a series of call backs and house visits to residents as well as posting hard copies of information as requested.

Overall, the attendance at the event itself, as well as the volume of feedback received demonstrates a high level of awareness of the project and we are satisfied that the consultation to date has been robust and meaningful.

As detailed above, we have planned and utilised physical, online and remote methods of consultation to ensure that information is accessible to all.

Consultation planned

For the next stage of consultation, we intend to facilitate a further public drop-in session for the local community in advance of the submission of a planning application. Once a date is confirmed, we will again write out to residents using the 1km radius (over and above the best practice guidance).

Alongside this, we will continue to use multiple communication channels, including:

- Hard copy project brochure to be posted to residents
- Public notice and adverts placed in the *Tuam Herald*

- Updates to the project website and virtual consultation
- Direct emails to elected representatives and local groups (including AMASS, sporting organisations, and other groups)
- Individual meetings offered to key stakeholders; including landowners, residents and elected representatives.
- Remote consultation as requested (e.g. call backs / posting hard copy information)

Provisional 14th August Venue Booking

As outlined to you previously, a provisional booking of the Fr Sammon Centre was made for 14th August 2025, using the online booking system, to ensure the venue would be available if required.

For the event to proceed on that date, updated information from the first consultation, such as a detailed site layout, technical material, and responses to community feedback, would have needed to be ready. As this information is still being prepared, we concluded it would not have been in anyone's interests to proceed with a second event at that time.

In advance of 14th August, we advised elected representatives and local groups, and yourself as AMASS Chairman (by phone call on 31st July 2025 and via email on 6th August 2025) that an event would not be taking place in August. We also confirmed our commitment to holding a further public consultation before the submission of a planning application.

I would again stress that the 14th August date was a provisional booking only using an online booking system and had not been confirmed or communicated in any other way. To state that a date was confirmed, and then cancelled with no notice, is unfortunately not accurate.

Should we need to liaise with other members of AMASS as well as yourself to ensure information of this kind is passed on, please provide relevant contact details.

Offer to Meet AMASS Committee

Prior to a second consultation event taking place, PCRE would extend an offer to meet with members of the AMASS committee. To ensure a constructive meeting, we propose that an agenda and attendee list are agreed by both sides in advance. This approach will help structure the discussion and ensure meaningful dialogue.

To allow us to work constructively together, the basis for future engagement with AMASS will have to include the withdrawal of the serious and inaccurate claims made by AMASS about PCRE including but not limited to:

i. that we have taken forward unauthorised works on site without planning consent,
ii. that we have trespassed on private lands or sought to intimidate landowners and

iii. that we provided no notice in advance of the removal of 14th August provisional venue booking.

Please confirm if AMASS committee members would be agreeable to such a meeting and we can liaise on appropriate arrangements.

Commitment to accurate dissemination of information

While we are increasingly concerned at the number of inaccurate claims which appear to have been made around this project, we would like to make a firm commitment to truthful and accurate dissemination of information at all times. Moving forward, we hope you will commit to this principle as well.

To conclude, we believe we can work with the local community to enable this project to deliver significant benefits including decarbonisation, strengthening the electricity grid, local homes benefitting from clean, secure and affordable electricity, community empowerment through a Community Benefit Fund, diversification for landowners and biodiversity net gain.

I look forward to hearing from you and you have my contact details if you would like to discuss directly.

Yours Sincerely,

[redacted]

CC

Mr. Liam Hanrahan, Director of Services (Planning), Galway County Council lhanrahan@galwaycoco.ie

Mr. Seán Canney, Minister of State and Teachta Dála for Galway East sean.canney@oireachtas.ie

Mr. Albert Dolan, Teachta Dála for Galway East albert.dolan@oireachtas.ie

Mr. Louis O'Hara, Teachta Dála for Galway East louis.ohara@oireachtas.ie

Mr. Peter Roche, Teachta Dála for Galway East peter.roche@oireachtas.ie

Cllr. Sean Broderick sbroderick@cllr.galwaycoco.ie

Cllr. James Charity jcharity@cllr.galwaycoco.ie

Cathaoirleach David Collins davidcollins@cllr.galwaycoco.ie

Cllr. Peter Feeney pfeeney@cllr.galwaycoco.ie

Cllr. Tomas Grealish tgrealish@cllr.galwaycoco.ie

Cllr. Cillian Keane cilliankeane@cllr.galwaycoco.ie

Cllr. Martin McNamara mmcnamara@cllr.galwaycoco.ie