

# OBSERVATION/SUBMISSION TO PLANNING APPLICATION

Case Reference: 324113

Ann & Joe Burke

15 Ard Aoibhinn

Monivea

Galway

To: An Coimisiún Pleanála

64 Marlborough Street

Dublin 1

D01 V902

Date: 12 April 2026

**Re: Observation to the proposed development of open-cycle gas turbine (OCGT) and generator with ancillary equipment.**

Location: Pollnagroagh and Rathmorrissy (Townlands), Athenry, Co. Galway

Applicant: Bord Gáis Energy Limited

Dear Sir/Madam,

My residence is 10.54km from the proposed site of the Cashla Peaker Plant (Athenry).

We are gravely concerned about the proposed application and the cumulative impact it will have on our family and the community of Athenry in terms of health and general welfare. Our daughter, son-in-law and three young grandchildren reside in close proximity to the site of the development and our grandchildren currently attend preschool and national school in the locality. My family use the L3103 road numerous times a day and I am worried about the increased risk of using the road due to the nature and volume of vehicles that will be required to service the site on an on-going basis.

Therefore we are opposed to the application on the following grounds:

## **Human Health & Air Pollution**

### **Cumulative Health Impacts Over Time**

The intermittent but high-intensity operation of a peaker plant, combined with periodic diesel use, can result in

repeated short-term spikes in air pollution. While individual emission events may appear limited in duration, repeated exposure over time (until at least 2050) creates a cumulative health burden. Pollutants such as nitrogen oxides and fine particulate matter can worsen asthma, trigger respiratory symptoms, and contribute to long-term health impacts, including chronic respiratory disease and cardiovascular conditions. The cumulative effect of these emissions over the operational lifespan of the development has not been fully assessed, particularly in relation to long-term exposure pathways and sensitive populations living nearby.

## **Children & Health**

### **Exposure During Daily Activities and School Times**

Children living or attending school near the site may be exposed to elevated air pollution during peak operation periods, which may coincide with times when children are outdoors, including school drop-off, break times, and after-school activities. During physical activity, children breathe more rapidly, increasing their intake of pollutants. This raises concerns about repeated exposure to harmful emissions during critical stages of development.

## **Local Roads, Safety & Schools**

### **School Safety and Peak-Time Risks**

Positioning the site entrance at this location on the L3103 introduces extreme risk to road users. This treacherous section of the road is entirely devoid of a hard shoulder and is physically too narrow for two HGVs to pass one another safely. Furthermore, severely compromised sightlines caused by blind dips and sharp corners make this access point highly perilous. It is imperative that these severe, compounding traffic hazards are urgently mitigated before any development is permitted.

Additional traffic associated with the development may significantly increase risks near schools and residential areas, particularly during peak periods such as morning and afternoon school times. The interaction between heavy vehicles, farm machinery and local traffic creates a heightened risk of accidents, particularly for children and other vulnerable road users. This is especially concerning given the existing constraints and hazards on this section of road.

## **Fire Safety & Major Accident Hazards**

### **Proximity and Worst-Case Scenario Risks**

The proposed site is in proximity to residential dwellings, agricultural lands, and local infrastructure. In this context, even a low-probability but high-impact event could result in serious consequences for public safety, property, and rural economic activity. The Environmental Impact Assessment does not clearly demonstrate that worst-case scenarios, including fire spread, explosion impact zones, and fuel ignition events, have been fully assessed. Without this information, the true scale and severity of potential impacts remain uncertain.

## **Protection of Community, Health, and Environment**

This proposal raises real and valid concerns for people, public health, agriculture, and the local environment. The complexity of the documentation and limitations in community engagement have made it difficult for the public to fully participate in the decision-making process. Communities should not be exposed to uncertain and potentially significant environmental impacts. I strongly urge that planning permission is not granted.

Yours Sincerely,

Ann Burke

Name: Ann & Joe Burke

Date: 12 April 2026