

# OBSERVATION/SUBMISSION TO PLANNING APPLICATION

Case Reference: 324113

Caitriona & Conor Crehan

Ballydavid South

Athenry

Galway

To: An Coimisiún Pleanála

64 Marlborough Street

Dublin 1

D01 V902

Date: 15 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 4.23km from the proposed site of the Cashla Peaker Plant (Athenry).

We wish to formally object to the proposed development of a gas and diesel peaker plant in our locality. We are a family of four residing in Athenry and this peaceful suburb has been our home for the past 15 years. We have two young children who attend Lisheenkyle primary school which is situated in very close proximity to the proposed site. Our children access many of the wonderful amenities in our local area and as parents, we are deeply concerned about the potential health and environmental impacts this development may have on our children and the wider community.

In particular, our son suffers from asthma, and we are extremely worried about how emissions and air quality changes associated with the operation of a peaker plant could exacerbate his condition. The prospect of introducing a source of intermittent but potentially intensive air pollution so close to both residential homes and many preschool, primary and secondary schools raises serious concerns about long-term public health, especially for vulnerable children.

We respectfully urge the relevant authorities to carefully consider the potential risks posed by this development and to prioritise the health, safety, and wellbeing of the families and children who live and learn in this community.

## **Human Health & Air Pollution**

### **High-Intensity Emissions and Diesel Impacts**

Air pollutants, including nitrogen oxides (NOx) and fine particulate matter (PM2.5 and PM10), are well established as contributors to respiratory irritation, reduced air quality, and long-term environmental degradation. A peaker plant operates intermittently but at very high output during periods of peak electricity demand, resulting in concentrated bursts of emissions, particularly during start-up and ramp-up phases. Where diesel is used as a backup fuel or during start-up, emission levels may be significantly higher, as diesel combustion produces elevated levels of nitrogen oxides, sulphur dioxide, particulate matter, and other combustion-related pollutants compared to gas. These pollutants can penetrate deep into the lungs and bloodstream, contributing to respiratory and cardiovascular illness. Vulnerable groups, including children, older people, and individuals with pre-existing respiratory conditions, are particularly at risk. Fine particulate matter can travel significant distances and accumulate over time, extending the area and duration of exposure. This creates a risk of both immediate and long-term health impacts and raises concerns under Directive 2008/50/EC on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe.

## **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.

## **Community Engagement**

### **Lack of Clear, Accessible, and Effective Communication**

There appears to have been insufficient and ineffective community engagement in relation to this project. Many residents did not receive any direct communication or notification regarding the development. While some individuals report receiving a flyer or attending an information event, the material provided was highly technical and difficult to understand without specialist knowledge. This significantly limits meaningful participation. Effective consultation requires that information is accessible, clearly explained, and actively communicated to all affected members of the community. In this case, the level of detail and technical complexity of the documentation creates a barrier to understanding, meaning that many people are unable to fully assess the potential impacts of the development.

## **Planning & Assessment**

### **Failure to Properly Assess Cumulative and Long-Term Impacts**

The Environmental Impact Assessment does not adequately assess cumulative impacts, including the combined effects of emissions, noise, traffic, diesel use, and environmental disturbance over time. These impacts may interact and intensify, particularly during peak operational periods. The long-term (until at least 2050) and cumulative nature of these impacts has not been fully considered, limiting the ability to understand the true environmental burden of the development. This represents a significant gap in the assessment.

### **Operational Uncertainty and Lack of Enforceable Limits**

There is no clear or enforceable limit on how often or how long the plant will operate. As a demand-led facility, operation may be more frequent or prolonged than assumed in the Environmental Impact Assessment. This includes diesel use during start-up and operation. If this occurs, impacts such as emissions, noise, and traffic may be significantly greater than predicted. This uncertainty raises concerns regarding the accuracy of the assessment.

### **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,

Conor & Caitriona  
Crehan.

Name: Caitriona & Conor Crehan

Date: 15 April 2026