

OBSERVATION/SUBMISSION TO PLANNING APPLICATION

Case Reference: 324113

Gabriel Freeney
Rathmossissey
Athenry
Galway

To: An Coimisiún Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

Date: 09 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 550m from the proposed site of the Cashla Peaker Plant (Athenry).

I have grown up on our family farm located a few KM from the Proposed Peaker plant site. I build a home with my family on family land that is the closest house located to this proposed development of just 550M. I have 5 children who will be exposed to this plant when running and this has given me grave concern and anxiety over the last 12 month since I first heard about this development. I grew with a huge interest in farming, wildlife and have always enjoyed horse sport. Myself, my wife and all of our 5 children all have horses that we get tremendous enjoyment out of riding in our fields located that is 400 metres from this plant. Every day we look down at the site, and it causes us extreme concerns as to what will be coming out of this 30-meter chimney stack. One of my children (13 Years old) has severe asthma and completing daily takes is a challenged for him without his inhaler and studies have shown that these types of Peaker Plants are known to pose huge health risks, particularly asthma. Furthermore, all my children will attend schools all within 2 to 3 KM of this proposed site.

As the closest house to this development, I am also extremely disappointed with the lack of engagement from Bord Gais as I did not receive any information regarding the Open events held at Raheen Woods Hotel in

May 2025. This is not acceptable and is an important part of any planning process. I am not anti-development in anyway, but this site is not a suitable site, and current does not have access as we live on a private road. This has to be taken into account as there current is not an active Fire Station in Athenry.

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.

Farming & Agricultural Impact

Protection of Agricultural Livelihoods

Farmers are already subject to strict environmental regulation and are required to meet high standards of environmental protection. It is not acceptable that industrial development, including diesel use and associated emissions (until at least 2050), could introduce environmental risks that undermine compliance, damage land quality, or threaten farming livelihoods. Farmers should not be placed in a position where they are penalised for environmental impacts arising from activities outside their control.

Children & Health

Vulnerability to Diesel-Related Air Pollution

Children are particularly vulnerable to air pollutants due to their developing lungs, higher breathing rates relative to body size, and increased time spent outdoors. The intermittent high-output operation of a peaker plant, particularly where diesel is used during start-up or peak demand periods, may expose children to short but concentrated bursts of pollution. Diesel emissions contain fine particulate matter and nitrogen oxides that can penetrate deep into the lungs, potentially affecting lung development and increasing the risk of respiratory illness.

Fire Safety & Major Accident Hazards

Emergency Response and Adequacy of Assessment

There is insufficient information provided regarding emergency response planning, including evacuation procedures, coordination with local emergency services, and the ability to respond effectively to a major incident. This is of particular concern in a rural area with constrained road infrastructure. Taken together, the absence of detailed worst-case analysis and robust emergency planning means it has not been demonstrated that risks to human health and safety have been reduced to an acceptable level.

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.

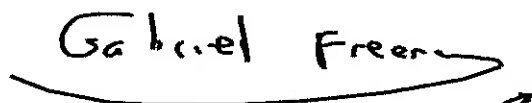
Diesel Use Not Fully Assessed or Limited

Diesel use is not limited to emergency scenarios and may include routine testing and operational requirements. This introduces additional emissions, odours, and environmental risks that have not been fully assessed in the Environmental Impact Assessment. The frequency and impact of diesel use remain unclear, creating uncertainty regarding the overall environmental impact of the development.

Precautionary Refusal Based on Uncertainty and Risk

The proposal raises significant concerns in relation to environmental protection, public health, farming, road safety, and community wellbeing. The level of uncertainty regarding operational frequency, diesel use, and cumulative impacts means that the development cannot be considered acceptable. In the absence of a complete and precautionary assessment, it cannot be concluded that significant environmental effects will not arise. I respectfully request that permission for this development be refused.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gabriel Freaney". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a long, sweeping horizontal line that extends to the right and ends in a small arrowhead.

Name: Gabriel Freaney

Date: 09 April 2026