

Derrydonnell North
Oranmore
Co. Galway
H91 HPY6

An Coimisiun Pleanala
64 Marlborough Street
Rotunda
Dublin 1
D01V902.

Re: Planning Reference Number 324113

Project Name: Cashla Peaker Power Plant Athenry

Date: 20th April 2026

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you as a deeply concerned resident of the area living in close proximity to the Cashla Peaker Power Plant in Athenry. In addition to this my farmland and the home of my parents is in extreme close proximity to the proposed plant. Therefore I wish to state in the strongest terms possible, the absolute opposition which my own family and my parents have in regards to this proposed power plant.

We are vehemently opposed to this project based on the following:

1. Our Families Health

Air pollutants, including nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5} 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.

2. The Impact on the ongoing viability of our farm and its compliance with Agricultural schemes

Farmers are required to meet strict environmental standards under schemes such as ACRES and nitrates derogation rules. If emissions, atmospheric deposition, or runoff from this peaker plant, including diesel-related pollutants, increase nitrate levels or environmental pressure, farmers could be pushed out of compliance through no fault of their own. As an ACRES farmer, any increase in pollution linked to this development could directly affect compliance with scheme requirements, leading to penalties, financial loss, or exclusion from environmental programmes. This creates an unfair situation where farmers are held responsible for environmental impacts arising from activities beyond their control.

We 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.

3. The health concerns for our children.

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.

Fine particulate matter can travel significant distances and accumulate over time, meaning children may be exposed not only during peak events but also through repeated low-level exposure. The cumulative effect of these exposures is particularly concerning during key stages of physical development, where long-term impacts on lung function and overall health may arise.

4. Access and road safety

The placement of the proposed site entrance on the L3103 raises severe safety concerns due to the inherently hazardous nature of this specific stretch of road. The carriageway is critically narrow, struggling to safely accommodate two passing Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs), and completely lacks a hard shoulder to allow for any margin of error. Compounding these dangers are the presence of blind dips and corners, which significantly reduce visibility and sightlines for all road users. These critical safety deficiencies create an unacceptable traffic hazard that must be comprehensively addressed.

In addition, the proposed development will result in increased traffic on local roads, including heavy goods vehicles, construction traffic, and fuel deliveries such as diesel tankers. These roads are rural in nature, often narrow with limited visibility, and are already used by residents, agricultural machinery, and school-related traffic. The introduction of additional heavy vehicle movements significantly increases the risk of collisions and creates a more hazardous environment for all road users.

As is clearly noted above, there are a plethora of reasons as to why this site is wholly unsuitable for such a development. There appears to have been little care taken or indeed respect for the health and livelihoods of people living in the area when this site was proposed for development. From health grounds and economic impact to the very basics of being able to access our homes, the impacts are massive and all are predominantly negative. We, once again, wish to voice our absolute opposition to the project.

Yours sincerely,

Joe and Siobhan Kelly (H91 HPY6)

JJ and Geraldine Kelly (H65 RP23)