

Liam and Irene Higgins  
Castlelambert  
Athenry  
Co. Galway  
22<sup>nd</sup> April 2026

We are writing to formally object to the proposed gas-fired peaker plant at Cashla, Athenry, Co. Galway. We live approximately **780 metres from the proposed site**, and this development would directly and significantly affect our home, family, and way of life. We are also concerned that the close proximity of a large industrial energy facility would lead to a devaluation of our property and home. At this distance, the proposed plant would be a dominant feature of our immediate environment, with daily consequences for our quality of life.

The introduction of this large peaker plant would bring a permanent industrial presence into close proximity to our home and farm, including emissions, noise, lighting, and continuous operational activity. The construction phase alone would result in prolonged disruption, including heavy goods traffic, dust, noise, and increased pressure on local rural roads used by families, school transport, and farm operations. Road closures during the cable laying phase would be a particular inconvenience, with diversions likely required for extended periods of time.

The proposed plant would emit nitrogen oxides and other pollutants associated with gas combustion. While these emissions may be within regulatory limits, living just 780 metres from the site gives rise to serious concern. Children are particularly vulnerable due to developing respiratory systems and higher breathing rates, especially during exercise. There is concern regarding long-term exposure and the potential exacerbation of respiratory conditions such as asthma. Within a short distance of the site there is a high concentration of schools, childcare facilities, and extensive sports facilities for GAA, soccer, camogie, and athletics.

Noise and disturbance are also significant concerns. During construction, there would be increased heavy goods vehicle traffic, noise, dust, and general disruption affecting our home and farm. Once operational, the plant would introduce intermittent turbine noise and start-up events, which at this proximity would be clearly audible and intrusive, particularly during evenings and quieter periods.

The proposed development must also be considered in the broader context of the excessive amount of proposed and granted energy infrastructure in East Galway, particularly in the area between Athenry and Kilconly, including proposed wind energy developments and large-scale solar farms. From our perspective as residents and land users, this represents a drastic shift away from a rural agricultural landscape towards a more industrialised energy landscape. The cumulative effect of these developments places a growing burden on the local area without evidence of a fully coordinated spatial planning approach.

We are concerned about the long-term direction this development represents, particularly the continued reliance on fossil fuel-based generation in close proximity to homes, schools, and community infrastructure. We also note that while a minimum mandatory running time of 18 hours per year is referenced, there appears to be no clear upper cap on operational hours.

This lack of a defined upper limit raises concern that operational activity could be significantly greater than implied.

Given our very close proximity to the site, our long-standing family farming connection to the land, the concentration of children and schools in the area, and the uncertainty surrounding long-term environmental and health impacts, we believe a precautionary approach is necessary. This proposal would have a real and lasting impact on our lives, our farm, and our community. It would change our living and working environment, introduce ongoing disturbance, and contribute to the increasing concentration of energy infrastructure in our rural community.

For all of these reasons, we submit that this development is inappropriate for this location and we request that An Coimisiún Pleanála refuse permission for the proposed development.

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