



OBSERVATION/SUBMISSION TO PLANNING APPLICATION

Case Reference: 324113

Lisheenkyle Pre-School and after School
Lisheenkyle
Oranmore
Galway
H91YR20

To: An Coimisiún Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902
Date: 18 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,

On behalf of Abbie Preschool and after School, Athenry, we wish to formally object to the proposed Cashla Peaker Plant at Rathmorrissy. Our school is 2.81km from the proposed site of the Cashla Peaker Plant Athenry.

As a preschool and after school serving children aged 4–12, approx. 50 children weekly, we have a duty of care to protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of the pupils entrusted to us. We are deeply concerned about the risks this



development poses to children in our school and the wider Athenry community.

1. Failure to assess schools, including Abbie Pre School and After School

The applicant's Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) acknowledges that schools exist in Athenry, yet fails to assess any school — including Abbie Pre School and after school as a specific receptor for air quality, noise, or traffic impacts.

This is a serious omission. A school is not equivalent to a standard residential receptor. It is a place where large numbers of children spend prolonged periods, including time outdoors, and therefore requires specific assessment.

2. Health and wellbeing of children

Young children are particularly vulnerable to air pollution. Emissions from a gas and diesel-fired plant — including nitrogen oxides and particulate matter — are associated with respiratory illness, reduced lung function, and long-term health effects.

The EIAR itself recognises that children have high sensitivity to air quality and noise due to their developing lungs, organs, and immune systems. However, despite acknowledging this vulnerability, it does not assess any Athenry school. As a school community, we are concerned that children would be exposed to pollution in the very place where they should be safest — their learning environment.

3. Outdoor play and learning environment

Outdoor activity is a core part of primary education. Children regularly engage in play, physical education, and outdoor learning during the school day.

Polluted air, industrial emissions, and increased traffic would compromise our ability to provide a safe and healthy outdoor environment. Parents would understandably be concerned about their children playing and exercising in proximity to such a development.

Our children deserve to learn and play in a clean, safe, and healthy environment.



4. Noise and disruption to education

A primary school requires a calm, safe, and supportive atmosphere for teaching and learning. Noise from construction, industrial activity, and increased traffic has the potential to disrupt concentration, affect comfort, and undermine the learning environment.

The EIAR does not assess any school as a noise-sensitive receptor, despite schools being recognised as such. This represents a failure to consider the real impact on classrooms and children's ability to learn.

5. Traffic and safety concerns

The proposed construction phase will bring increased traffic, including heavy goods vehicles, to local roads. The EIAR confirms that these routes lack pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.

This raises clear safety concerns for pupils, parents, and staff travelling to and from school. While the applicant proposes avoiding deliveries during the "school run", this does not address risks during the wider school day.

The safety of children travelling to school must be a primary consideration.

6. Location and long-term exposure

Athenry town is located approximately 2 km from the proposed development. Prevailing winds mean emissions are likely to travel toward the town.

The plant is permitted to operate until 2050, meaning multiple generations of children could be exposed over its lifetime. Even limited annual operation represents a long-term cumulative exposure for a school community.

7. Impact on families and community

Our school is part of a growing community of young families. A large industrial development of this nature is not compatible with an area where children live, learn, and play.

As expressed in community submissions, parents are deeply concerned about raising children in an environment affected by pollution, noise, and industrial activity.

This proposal risks undermining the wellbeing of families and the attractiveness of Athenry as a place to raise children.

8. Fire and Explosion Risk

The proposed development includes a gas turbine facility with natural gas



infrastructure and significant on-site diesel storage. Facilities of this nature carry an inherent risk of fire or explosion, however low the likelihood may be. For a pre-school and after-school service caring for very young children, even a low-probability, high-impact risk must be treated with the utmost seriousness. In the event of an incident, potential consequences could include:

- Fire or explosion hazards
- Smoke, fumes, or toxic emissions
- The need for emergency evacuation or shelter-in-place procedures

Abbie's Pre-School and After School Service cares for children across a wide age range, including very young children who require constant supervision and assistance. In an emergency situation, children would not be capable of responding independently, and safe evacuation would depend entirely on staff managing large groups under pressure.

This presents clear and significant challenges in ensuring the safety of all children in the event of an incident.

The EIAR does not provide any pre-school or childcare-specific assessment of major accident risk or its potential impact. There is no evidence of:

- Consultation with local childcare providers
- Consideration of evacuation procedures for pre-school settings
- Assessment of how an incident could affect children during care hours

The introduction of a facility involving combustible fuels and industrial processes in proximity to a community with childcare services raises serious safety concerns.

In addition, the perception of such risk is important. Parents should not have to consider the possibility — however remote — of a fire or explosion hazard near a setting where their young children are being cared for.

9. Climate and our Responsibilities.

Ireland has legally binding obligations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Developments (Amendment) Act 2021 and EU climate frameworks. The continued development of gas-fired generation, including peaker plants, will result in additional carbon dioxide emission over the lifetime of the project. This raises concerns regarding consistency with national carbon budgets and States's ability to meet its climate target.

Conclusion

Abbies Pre School and after School strongly objects to this development on the



grounds that:

- No school in Athenry has been properly assessed in the EIAR
- Children, despite being identified as highly sensitive, have not been adequately considered
- The development poses risks to health, safety, and the learning environment
- Traffic and construction impacts create additional safety concerns
- The long-term presence of a fossil fuel industrial facility is incompatible with a school community

For these reasons, we respectfully request that permission for the proposed development be refused.

Yours Sincerely,

Abbie Harris

Name: Lisheenkyle Pre-School and after School

Date: 18 April 2026