

**An Coimisiún Pleanála - Case reference: PA07.324113**

Observation made by

Orla and John Stevens

Lisheenkyle East, Oranmore, Co. Galway

H91 A6X3.

We wish to make an observation (objection) regarding case 324113 – the construction of an open-cycle gas turbine power plant located in Pollnagroagh and Rathmorrissy Townlands, Athenry, Co. Galway.

Both Orla and I are locals and moved to this area for the rural environment that the area promised, and this development will be less than 2.5km from our house. Our children attend school, socialise and play sport in the town of Athenry, and both Orla and I are involved in sports clubs located in Athenry, namely the Athenry Athletics Club and the Athenry Swans Hockey Club. Athletics club members run extensively on the roads in and around Athenry town, including the L3103 where the proposed site entrance will be located and heavy goods vehicles will operate. This is also the route of the school bus our children take and is our route into the town for all activities including getting the train, going to sports practice and meeting friends. Our local sports clubs, and many others in the area, are located 2.5 to 4km directly in the path of the prevailing wind of the proposed development, thus will get significant downwind emissions from the proposed development.

With the above taken into consideration, this development will have significant and direct negative impact on our family and our friends in the following ways:

- 1) The large volume of construction and operational HGVs using the L3103 road, which is narrow, has no hard shoulder, and has many dips and blind corners. The hundreds of HGV movements from this development will not only disrupt local traffic but will significantly increase the hazards presented to local runners from the running club, cyclists, and all other road users including many school busses, tractors and farm vehicles.
- 2) The open cycle gas power plant will produce harmful emissions within close proximity to our home, or children's schools, or local sports clubs, our friends houses, and our town where we often shop, socialise and exercise/play sport. The intermittent but high intensity operation of a peaker plant, combined with periodic diesel use (that has no upper limit set) will result in repeated short-term spikes in air pollution that will be felt by the whole town of Athenry and its surrounding population.

There is also no clear or enforceable limit on how often or how long the plant will operate, nor how often it can operate using its alternative fuel – diesel, which produces more particulate emissions than natural gas. As per the SEAI's Energy Report 2025, the amount of imported electricity has increased significantly in 2023 and 2024 and was projected to increase yet again in 2025. This continued net increase in electricity imports (which is now at approximately 16% of Irelands utility electricity supply) suggests that demand for this plant to operate will only increase, putting into question the “normal” operational scenarios referenced in the Environmental Impact Assessment for this proposed development. Thus noise, emissions and traffic levels may all be significantly greater than predicted in the development proposal, increasing the effects that this development will have on the local environment and its people.

We respectfully request that permission for this development be refused as we feel it will significantly and negatively impact us, our children, our friends, our sports clubs, and our whole rural and townland area in terms of health and safety.

Yours sincerely

John and Orla Stevens

Lisheenkyle East