



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)

Strategic Infrastructure Act 2006

Report as required by Section 37E(4-7) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)

An Coimisiún Pleanála Reference ACP-324113-26

Application Details:

Applicant:	Bord Gáis Energy Limited
Received By GCC:	5 th March 2026
Agent:	McCutcheon Halley Chartered Planning Consultants
An Coimisiún Pleanála Reference Number:	ACP-324113-26
Proposed Development (Summary):	Construction of a 300MW Open Cycle Gas Turbine plant, primarily fuelled by Natural Gas and ancillary development, including a 220kV Substation and 220kV connection from the substation to the existing Cashla 220kV substation.
Site Location:	in the townlands of Rathmorrissy & Pollnagroagh, Athenry, Co. Galway

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

1. PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

Following consultation pursuant to Section 37B of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) (the Act), and following notice issued to the applicant pursuant to Section 37B (4) (a) of the Act, An Coimisiún Pleanála (ACP) (ACP Pre-App Ref.: 320975-24) has determined that the proposed development constitutes Strategic Infrastructure Development within the meaning of Section 37E of the Act. ACP considered the size, scale and location of the proposed Open Cycle Gas Turbine plant development, and to the policy context, and determined that it fell within the definition of energy infrastructure in the Seventh Schedule of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), thereby satisfying the requirements of Section 37E of this Act.

ACP also considered the proposed development to be of strategic importance by reference to the requirements of Section 37A(2)(a) and 37A(2)(b) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) in that the proposed development will be of strategic importance.

Given the development has been determined to be a SID by An Coimisiún Pleanála, the normal mechanism of applying to Galway County Council for planning permission does not apply. Therefore, the development proposal requires a planning application to be made directly to the Bord. Accordingly, Bord Gáis Energy Limited, as required, has applied directly to An Coimisiún Pleanála for planning permission, as per Section 37E of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).

As required under Section 37E (4) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the purpose of this report is to set out the views of the Planning Authority on the effects of the proposed development on the environment and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, having regard in particular to the matters specified in section 34(2) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended). This report will have regard to the following matters specified in section 34(2) of the Act:

- (i) the provisions of the development plan,*
- (ia) any guidelines issued by the Minister under section 28,*
- (ii) the provisions of any special amenity area order relating to the area,*
- (iii) any European site or other area prescribed for the purposes of section 10(2)(c),*
- (iv) where relevant, the policy of the Government, the Minister or any other Minister of the Government,*
- (v) the matters referred to in subsection [34](4),*
- (va) previous developments by the applicant which have not been satisfactorily completed,*
- (vb) previous convictions against the applicant for non-compliance with this Act, the Building Control Act 2007 or the Fire Services Act 1981, and*
- (vi) any other relevant provision or requirement of this Act, and any regulations made thereunder.*
- (aa) when making its decision in relation to an application under this section, the planning authority shall apply, where relevant, specific planning policy requirements of guidelines issued by the Minister under section 28.*

In the interest of clarification, there are no Special Amenity Area Orders (Item ii above) in County Galway. The matters referred to in section 34(4) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) relate to conditions to which may be attached by the Planning Authority during the consideration of a planning application. Sections 34 (2) (b) and (c) are also noted with respect to

legislative provisions referencing adjoining authorities, specific planning policy requirements and developments requiring an IPC or waste license but are not deemed applicable in this instance.

This report shall be submitted to An Coimisiún Pleanála for consideration, as required under Section 37E(4) of the Act. However, prior to submission to An Coimisiún Pleanála, as per Section 37E(5) of the Act, this report shall be submitted to the members of the authority and seek their views on the proposed development. The views of the members will be attached at **Appendix 1**. It is noted that the Planning Authority held an online information workshop on the 15th April 2026, in advance of the Plenary Meeting, for the Oranmore-Athenry MD elected members.

It should be noted that prior to determining any application for permission under 37E of the Act, the Board may, at its absolute discretion and at any time as per Section 37F of the Act:

- *Require the applicant to submit further information, including a revised Environmental Impact Assessment Report,*
- *Indicate it is considering granting permission, subject to the applicant for permission submitted revised particulars, plans or drawings in relation to the development,*
- *Request further submission or observations from the applicant, any person who made submissions or observations, or any person who made submissions or observations, or any person who may, in the opinion of the Board, have information, which is relevant to the determination of the application,*
- *Make any information relating to the application available for inspection, notify any person or the public that information is so available and, if it considers appropriate, invite further submissions or observations to be made within such period as it may specify, or*
- *Hold meeting with the applicant for permission or any other person where it appears to the Board to be expedient for the purpose of determining the application, or where it appears to the Board to be necessary or expedient for the purpose of resolving any issue with the applicant for permission or any disagreement between the applicant and any other party, including resolving any issue or disagreement in advance of an oral hearing.*

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This development application proposes the following components, as per the statutory notices:

- a) *The construction of a proposed power plant which will comprise an open-cycle gas turbine (OCGT) and generator with ancillary equipment including a 30m high stack and emissions monitoring unit, fuel storage and supply systems, cooling and air systems, compressed air and gas handling skids, a grid step-up transformer within a bund, an auxiliary transformer and an emergency diesel generator. The construction of ten buildings on-site including one single-storey administration building (approximately 390sqm), one-single storey ESB Substation building (approximately 32.5sqm), one single-storey workshop building (approximately 750.5sqm), one single storey water treatment plant building (approximately 104sqm), one covered fuel forwarding and unloading area (approximately 104sqm), one single-storey electrical control building (approximately 243.5sqm), one single storey gas analyser kiosk (approximately 6.25sqm), one single-storey boiler house kiosk (approximately 37sqm) including ten boiler flues (approximately 5.67m above ground level), one single-storey ancillary pressure reduction kiosk (approximately 21.7sqm) including four vents (approximately 3.72m high) and a single-storey electrical and instrumentation kiosk*

(approximately 19sqm). The installation of five above-ground tanks including two bunded fuel tanks (approximately 11.1m high), one fire and service water tank (approximately 13m high), one demineralised water tank (approximately 15.4 high) and one demineralised waste tank (approximately 5m high).

- b) Ancillary works including the provision of a new gated vehicular entrance from the L3103, the construction of an access road from the proposed Cashla Peaker Plant site entrance to the proposed new entrance on the L3103, the demolition of one farm outbuilding (in ruin), construction of internal circulation routes, hardstanding, security fencing (2.4m high), CCTV and gates, provision of a wastewater treatment system and associated underground wastewater storage tanks, drainage (foul and storm), soakaway retention pond, propane tank, underground firewater retention tanks, parking (12 no. spaces including mobility and EV Parking) and laydown area, 20 no. cycle parking spaces, landscaping and all ancillary on-site development works.
- c) The construction of a Gas Networks Ireland (GNI) above ground pressure regulating installation, known as an Above Ground Installation (AGI). The AGI (named Rathmorrissy AGI) will connect to the mains transmission gas network which exists within the site. The AGI infrastructure will occupy an enclosed area of approximately 2,500 sq.m. It encompasses five single-storey buildings: a gas analyser kiosk (approximately 6.25 sqm), a boiler house kiosk (approximately 37 sqm) including ten boiler flues approximately 5.67m above ground level and emergency generator, two pressure reduction kiosks – main kiosk (approximately 72 sqm) including nine vents (approximately 5.24m high), and ancillary kiosk (approximately 21.7 sqm) including four vents (approximately 3.72m high) and an electrical and instrumentation kiosk (approximately 19 sqm). Ancillary infrastructure will include a gas meter, filters, heat exchangers, and above-ground pipework. The compound will include lighting, 3 no. parking spaces, internal circulation routes, concrete bases to support the infrastructure, and stone chipped surfacing. It will be secured by an approximately 2.4 m high fence with an access gate.

An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) have been prepared in respect of the proposed development and accompany this planning application.

In addition to the above outlined proposed development, the “project”, subject of the EIAR and NIS, includes the above proposed development and the construction of a 220kV substation compound within the Cashla Peaker Plant site and the construction an underground grid connection route from the proposed ESB Substation in the Cashla Peaker Plant Site to the Cashla 220kV Substation located across the townlands of Rathmorrissy, Pollnagroagh, Moanbaun, Castlelambert, Knocknacreeva, Caraunduff, Caherbriskaun, Lisheenkyle East, Barrettspark, Cashla, Athenry, Co. Galway. The grid connection route traverses approximately 8.1km including along the L7109, L71093, L7108 and L3103 roads. The substation and grid connection will be subject to a separate Strategic Infrastructure Development planning application submitted to An Coimisiún Pleanála. It is noted that the project, subject of the EIAR and NIS, also includes the connection to the existing mains gas network (Mayo–Galway pipeline (BGE/85)) which will be undertaken via a new transmission pipeline (named GNI146) located within the townland of Rathmorrissy, Athenry, Co. Galway. A separate application to obtain approval for the GNI146 gas pipeline will be submitted under section 39A of the Gas Act 1976, as amended. It is anticipated that the substation, grid connection, AGI and gas connection will remain part of the national infrastructure and are not subject to the 2050 operational life end proposed for the Cashla Peaker Plant. The application relates to development

for the purposes of an activity requiring an Industrial Emissions license from the Environmental Protection Agency under the Environmental Protection Agency Act 1992, as amended.

The accompanying documentation outlines that all elements of the Cashla Peaker Plant (subject of this Section 37E application) and associated grid connection works (subject to a separate planning application under Section 182A [ACP-324162-26]), have been assessed as part of the EIAR and NIS lodged.

The planning application pack contains the following documentation:

- SID Planning Application Form;
- Planning Cover Letter;
- Letters of Consent from Landowners;
- EIA Portal Confirmation, ID Number: 2026024 - included with the planning application form;
- Schedule & Copies of cover letters issued to Consultees & Prescribed Bodies;
- EFT Receipt of Payment;
- Site Notice (copy, as erected on site on the 24th February 2026);
- Newspaper Notices – (Publication: Connacht Tribune, 27th February 2026)
- Planning Statement
- Non-Statutory Public Consultation Report
- Planning Application Drawings (Drawing Schedule included)
- Red Line Boundary in DWG format;
- Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR);
 - Volume 1 – Non-Technical Summary (NTS)
 - Volume 2 – Main EIAR (Chapters 1 -19)
 - Chapter 1 – Introduction & Methodology
 - Chapter 2 – Project Description
 - Chapter 3 – Alternatives
 - Chapter 4 – Population and Human Health
 - Chapter 5 – Biodiversity
 - Chapter 6 – Landscape and Visual
 - Chapter 7 – Air Quality
 - Chapter 8 – Climate
 - Chapter 9 – Noise and Vibration
 - Chapter 10 – Traffic and Transportation
 - Chapter 11 – Land, Soils and Geology
 - Chapter 12 – Water
 - Chapter 13 – Cultural Heritage
 - Chapter 14 – Material Assets
 - Chapter 15 – Major Accidents and Disasters
 - Chapter 16 – Cumulative Impacts
 - Chapter 17 – Interactions
 - Chapter 18 – Schedule of Environmental Commitments
 - Chapter 19 – Summary of Residual Impacts
 - Volume 3 – EIAR Appendices
 - Volume 4 – AA Screening and Natura Impact Statement (NIS)

design and mitigation measures. The following sites were considered to have a potential hydrogeological pathway of connectivity to the subject application site in the NIS:

Galway Bay Complex SAC (000268), Inner Galway Bay SPA (004031) and Cregganna Marsh SPA (004142). The designated sites are discussed in detail at Section 7 of this report.

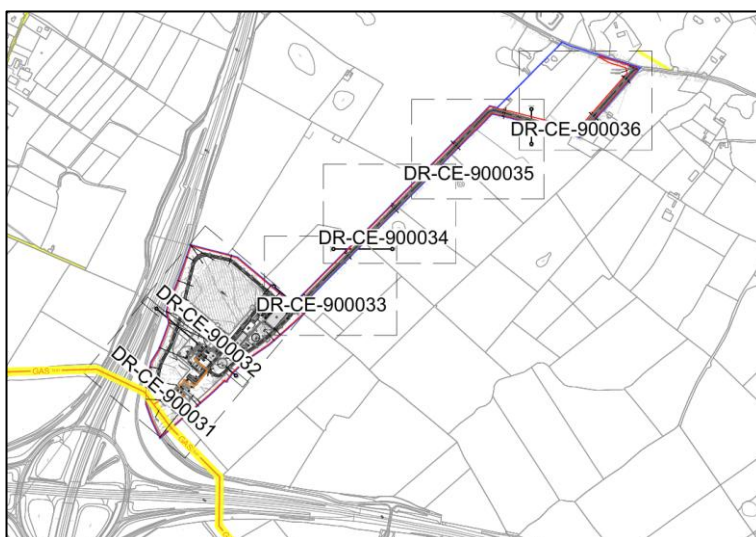
There are no recorded archeologically significant monuments within the subject site application boundary however, 10 no. protected monuments are located within close proximity (c.250m) of the proposed project site boundary.

Justification for the overall proposed project is stated as; *to provide additional electricity generating capacity, ensuring security of supply during periods when electricity demand is higher than average and cannot be met by existing renewable energy technologies on the system. It is proposed that the project will operate It is proposed that the Peaker Plant will operate until 31 December 2050.*

It is stated that the proposed project (Cashla Peaker Plant) generator produces electricity for transmission via the proposed onsite 220 kV air-insulated substation to EirGrid’s network at the Cashla substation (as outlined in Section 2.2 of the submitted EIAR). The electricity transmission infrastructure will form a separate SID application to ACP, as provided in section 182A of the Act. The GNI gas pipeline is subject to a separate consenting process under section 39A of the Gas Act 1976, as amended.

The associated grid connection will consist of an underground cable that will connect the proposed Peaker Plant on-site 220 kV AIS via an underground grid connection cable to the existing Cashla 220 kV Substation. The electricity for the Plant’s electrical equipment will be supplied via a Unit Auxiliary Transformer which shall either be supplied from electricity generated by the gas turbine generator when in operation or from imported power from the 220 kV grid connection when the gas turbine generator is not in operation.

The proposed gas turbine development is expected to have an Export Capacity ranging from 325 MW or 334 MW depending on the technology used.



Map 2 – Site Layout Keyplan extract (Source: Planning Application Documents)

4. PLANNING POLICY

Galway County Council are cognisant of a range of national, regional and local planning policies and strategies in considering the gas turbine development, these include, but are not limited to the below non-exhaustive list:

- National Planning Framework – First Revision (April 2025);
- National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) 2021-2030 (updated 2024);
- Electricity and Grid Infrastructure Guidance;
- Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/2326 of 30 November 2021 establishing best available techniques (BAT) conclusions, under Directive 2010/75/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, for large combustion plants
- National Energy Security Framework (NESF) (April 2022)
- Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021
- Circular Letter PL 12.2021 & Government Policy Statement on Security of Electricity Supply (2021)
- Ireland Climate Action Plan 2025;
- All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021 -2025;
- National Biodiversity Action Plan (2023–2030);
- Northern and Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) 2020 -2032;
- Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028; and
- Galway County Council Climate Action Plan 2024 – 2029.

Specific Planning Local Policy;

Galway County Development Plan 2022- 2028 (CDP): This plan is the overarching plan with respect to land use in the County and outlines the overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of County Galway.

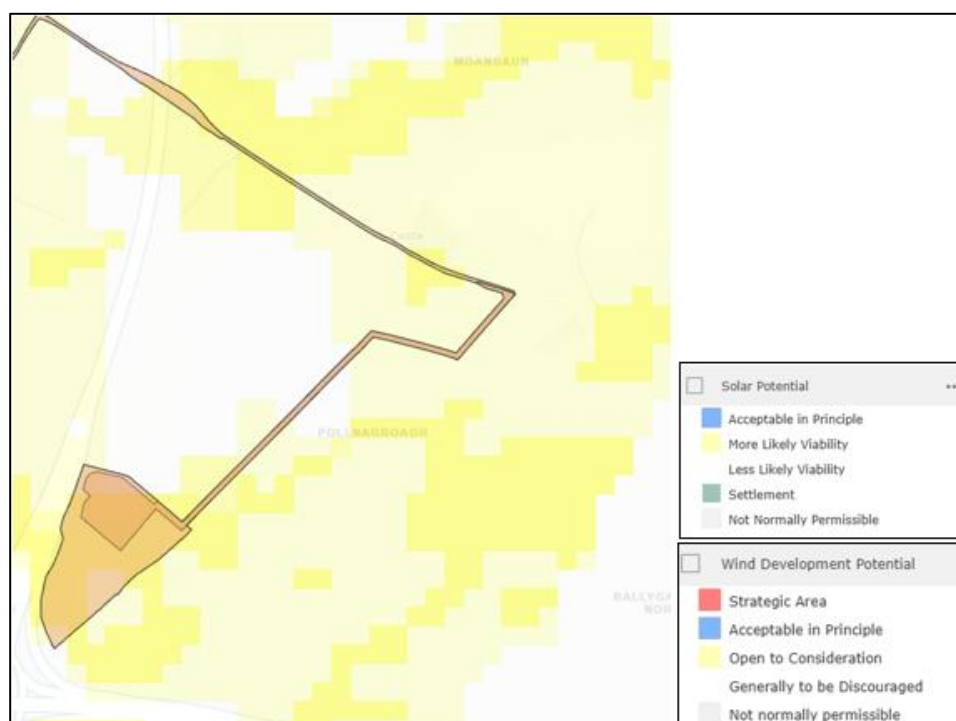
Core Strategy: Chapter 2 of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2022 sets out the Core Strategy for County Galway. The Core Strategy sets out the anticipated population and household growth of County Galway to continue to advance the economic and social growth of the County. Over the plan period, the population is projected to grow by at least 18,655 persons, which will necessitate the delivery of 10,738 additional houses to accommodate same. In addition, the Metropolitan Area of Galway City and Environs, including the settlements of Oranmore, Barna and Claregalway, form part of the Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP), which will operate as a key economic and service centre for the north western region and a key driver in regional development therein, as set out in the NPF/RSES and the Galway County Development plan. To accommodate the anticipated population and economic growth in Galway, it is imperative that there is a security in the supply of energy in the coming years.

The Government has set an ambitious target of 80% of electricity to be generated from renewable sources by 2030. A secure and resilient supply of energy is critical to a well-functioning economy, being relied upon for heating, cooling, and to fuel transport, power industry, and generate electricity. The proposed Cashla

Peaker Plant will assist in improving the security of supply. The proposed development will contribute to making Ireland’s energy supply more stable and secure.

Landscape Character Assessment: As set out in the Landscape Character Assessment (Appendix 4 of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028), the subject site is located within the GCTPS area of the Central Galway Complex Landscape Character Area and is classified as having a Class 1 Low landscape sensitivity. Furthermore, the subject site is not identified as being within the vicinity of any designated scenic routes, or protected viewpoint angles.

Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy: To facilitate the sustainable growth of renewable energies a ‘Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy’ (LARES) has been prepared for the county and is included as Appendix 1 of the CDP. The subject site majority is considered “*Open to Consideration*” in terms of wind and solar development potential, as per the LARES, however this strategy also recognises that natural gas, particularly renewable and indigenous gas, will continue to have a role to play in the transition to a low carbon economy and that renewable energy developments may require support from such sources in times of high energy demand, with the gas network playing a key role as part of the supporting infrastructure for renewable energy developments.



Map 3 - Extract of GIS LARES Layer for Solar and Wind Development Potential from Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028

Policy Objectives: The relevant sections and policy objectives of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028, namely Chapter 7 and Chapter 14, which have most significance to the principle of the proposed development are reproduced immediately below, with other relevant policy objectives to a development of this nature are listed/named under the various chapters of the plan.

Chapter 7: Infrastructure, Utilities and Environmental Protection

Electricity and Gas Policy Objectives:

- **EG1 Enhancement of Electricity Infrastructure** - Support and promote the sustainable improvement and expansion of the electricity transmission and distribution network that supply the County, while taking into consideration landscape, residential, amenity and environmental considerations.
- **EG 2 Delivery of Electricity and Gas Infrastructure** - Support the provision and extension of electricity and gas transmission networks within the County which are critical to the economic development of the County subject to environmental quality, landscape, wildlife, habitats or residential amenity.
- **EG 3 Power Capacity** - To support and liaise with statutory and other energy providers in relation to power generation, in order to ensure adequate power capacity for the existing and future needs of the County.
- **EG 4 Irelands Grid Development Strategy** - Support the implementation of Ireland's Grid Development Strategy, while taking into account landscape, residential, amenity and environmental considerations.

Chapter 14: Climate Change, Energy and Renewable Resource

Electricity and Gas Network Policy Objectives:

- **EG 1 Gas Network and Generating Capacity** - To support the development of the gas network and associated generating capacity in order to sustainably support and augment renewable electrical energy generated in County Galway.
- **EG 2 Electricity Transmission Networks** - (a)To support the development of the transmission grid network in order to sustainably accommodate both consistent and variable flows of renewable energy generated in County Galway.
(b)Proposed renewable energy generation projects shall fully consider the capacity of the existing transmission grid network in determining the optimal grid connection for the project, in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
(c)In respect of proposed renewable energy developments, transmission grid capacity should be considered as a constraint where the Transmission Development Plan, or any other equivalent plan of the TSO, does not identify infrastructure reinforcement measures unless transmission grid capacity can be demonstrated.
(d)Notwithstanding ecological and environmental considerations, grid connection routing for development proposals should show all alternative routes that were considered, and should avoid materially impacting the road network, where possible. Undergrounding should be considered where it will significantly negate any identified impacts.
(e)It is important that the necessary transmission and distribution infrastructure is facilitated and put in place in order to maximise the renewable energy potential of County Galway. Liaison with Eirgrid, as a TSO, and alignment with their transmission plans and strategies will be of vital important in this respect.

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- **EG 3 Natural Gas and Synthetic Networks** - To facilitate the delivery and expansion of the Natural Gas and Synthetic Gas infrastructure for storage, transmission and energy generation throughout the County for both domestic and business/industry use and to have regard to the location of existing gas infrastructure pipeline in the assessment of planning applications.

4.1 Strategic Assessment & Principle of the Proposed Development

The subject application site for the Cashla Peaker Plant is 11.54 ha in area and located within the Oranmore/Athenry MD. The application site is located approximately 1.8km west of the Key Town settlement of Athenry and approximately 8.1km to the northeast of the settlement of Oranmore, Co. Galway. The subject site is located northeast of the M18 and M6 junction. Access to the application site is off the local road L-3103 in the townland of Pollnagroagh, which runs to the north of the site. A new access road off the L-3103 is proposed comprising new gated vehicular entrance, the demolition of one farm outbuilding and the construction of internal access roads at the subject site.

The strategic assessment of the proposal is governed by inter alia the national, regional and local policy as stated above in Section 4. Notably Policy Objectives EG1, EG2, EG3, EG4 and EG5 in Chapter 7 of the GCDP 2022-2028 and Policy Objectives EG1, EG2 and EG3 of Chapter 14 provide the policy basis supporting the principle of the proposed development. In addition, consideration is also afforded to the most relevant national policy position.

The proposed development meets a need for electricity generation that has been signalled by government as being an urgent and appropriate response to the transition to a renewables-based national energy need. The project is also proposed on a site that is characterised by having a combination of distinctive advantages which include it being located at the intersection of the existing gas transmission lines and electricity grid infrastructure, land availability and lack of significant environmental constraints. It is considered that the principle of the use of the subject site for electricity generation would be fully consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area as well as with the totality of Government's most up-to-date policy on climate change, facilitating the transition to increased renewable energy outputs, energy efficiency and the imperative requirement for decarbonising of the country's electricity generation system.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

The planning authority highlights that there are no planning applications for development within the boundary of the proposed development area of the subject site. There are a number of applications in the vicinity of the full subject site relating to one-off residential and agricultural developments, particularly along the public roadways where the cable connection is proposed.

6. ENFORCEMENT INFORMATION RELATING TO THE SUBJECT SITE

There are no enforcement cases relating to the subject site identified on the Internal Planning Viewer.

7. DESIGNATED SITES

Special Protected Areas (SPAs) & Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Potential Impact of the Proposed Development

There are no European Sites within the subject lands delineated for the proposed development. There are no protected sites within close proximity to the application site. The European Sites whose connectivity

or ecological continuity can be affected by the project are determined as Galway Bay Complex SAC (000268), Inner Galway Bay SPA (004031) and Cregganna Marsh SPA (004142).

AA Screening and Natura Impact Statement:

A Screening for Appropriate Assessment Report and Natura Impact Statement (dated February 2026) was carried out by AtkinsRéalis on behalf of the applicant Bord Gáis Energy. The report identified the above listed SAC and SPAs; Galway Bay Complex SAC (000268), Inner Galway Bay SPA (004031) and Cregganna Marsh SPA (004142) as being within the potential likely zone of impact of the site and were screened in, on the basis of source-path-receptor relationships. In the screening and NIS submitted, both the subject site of the Peaker Plant and grid connection were considered.

Designated Site	Qualifying Interests	Potential Pathway
	SACS	
Galway Bay Complex SAC (000268) Located c. 7km South West of the Subject Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] • Coastal lagoons [1150] • Large shallow inlets and bays [1160] • Reefs [1170] • Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] • Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] • Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] • Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330] • Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] • Turloughs [3180] • <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands [5130] • Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (* important orchid sites) [6210] • Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> [7210] • Alkaline fens [7230] • Limestone pavements [8240] • Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355] • Phoca vitulina (Harbour Seal) [1365] 	<p>Yes</p> <p>A potential hydrogeological pathway exists via the Clarinbridge and the GWDTE Galway Bay Complex Fens ground waterbodies.</p>

Designated Site	Qualifying Interests	Potential Pathway
	SPAs	
Inner Galway Bay SPA (004031) Located c. 9km South West of the Subject Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black-throated Diver (<i>Gavia arctica</i>) [A002] • Great Northern Diver (<i>Gavia immer</i>) [A003] • Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017] • Grey Heron (<i>Ardea cinerea</i>) [A028] • Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] • Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052] • Red-breasted Merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>) [A069] • Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] • Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] • Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142] • Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] • Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] • Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160] • Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] • Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) 	<p>Yes</p> <p>A potential hydrogeological pathway exists via the Clarinbridge and the GWDTE Galway Bay Complex Fens ground waterbodies.</p>

	[A169] • Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] • Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182] • Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] • Wigeon (<i>Mareca penelope</i>) [A855] • Sandwich Tern (<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>) [A863] • Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	
Cregganna Marsh SPA (004142) Located c. 8km South West of the subject Site	Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395]	Yes A potential hydrogeological pathway exists via the Clarinbridge and the GWDTE Galway Bay Complex Fens ground waterbodies.

See www.npws.ie for the further detail on conservation objectives of the above sites.

Galway County Council outline the relevant Articles of the Habitats Directive for the assessment of the proposed development:

- Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive requires that any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the sites conservation objectives.
- Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive allows for derogation (exception) for plans or projects affecting Natura 2000 sites, even with a likely significant negative impact, if they are justified by Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI), such as human health, public safety, or important socio-economic benefits, provided that compensatory measures ensure the overall coherence of Natura 2000 and no damage to the site's conservation status.

Galway County Council note that a Natura Impact Assessment (NIS) has been submitted as part of the application. As the competent authority for this application, An Comisiún Pleanála should be satisfied that the proposal has demonstrated that the development can be implemented without adverse effects on the integrity of the European Sites network.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIAR)

The proposed development falls within the definition of a project under the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by EIA Directive 2014/52/EU and falls within the scope of Class 3 (a) under Part 2 Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended) as the proposed infrastructure consists of industrial installations for the production of electricity, steam and hot water not included in Part 1 of this Schedule with a heat output of 300 MW or more. The Proposed Project exceeds the output threshold, proposing a 325MW or 334 MW (depending on the technology used) gas-fired Peaker Plant, and therefore is subject to a mandatory EIAR.

Galway County Council note that an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) has been submitted as part of the application. An Comisiún Pleanála is the competent authority with regard to assessing the EIAR and should, therefore, ensure that the submitted EIAR is sufficient to make a determination in accordance with Directive 2014/52/EU. Where An Comisiún Pleanála are minded to grant permission, they

should be satisfied that the proposed development would not have a significant effect on the receiving environment.

9. WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE

Chapter 12 of the EIAR comprises compliance assessment with the Water Framework Directive. An Comisiún Pleanála is the competent authority with regard to assessing the Water Framework Directive and should, therefore, ensure that the submitted application documentation is sufficient to make a determination. Where An Comisiún Pleanála are minded to grant permission, they should be satisfied that the proposed development would not have a significant effect on the receiving water bodies.

10. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of Development & Consideration of Alternatives

The proposed Cashla Peaker Plant site is largely characterised by areas of flat land used for agricultural pasture and is located adjacent to major road infrastructure at the junction of the M18 and M6 roadways. The wider surrounding area is rural in nature and principally characterised by one off housing and farm clusters. The Cashla substation (of which the proposed Peaker Plant is to be connected) is located c.3.5km to the west of the application subject site. Additionally, the subject site is located within the GCTPS area of the Central Galway Complex Landscape Character Area and is classified as having a Class 1 Low landscape sensitivity. Furthermore, the subject site is not identified as being within the vicinity of any designated scenic routes, or protected viewpoint angles.

Chapter 3 of the submitted EIAR analyses Site Location Alternatives for the proposed project. It is stated that the subject site was chosen for the proposed Peaker Plant development due to the location within the vicinity of an existing gas pipeline and existing substation to connect to the national grid, both of which are required for the Peaker Plant to operate efficiently and connect to an existing gas supply network. It is noted that several sites east of Galway City where suitable gas and electricity infrastructure exists were examined against environmental, planning, engineering, and availability constraints. Following this assessment, the selected site near Athenry was identified as the most suitable option. Following a review of all identified potential sites it was determined that the Proposed Project site location was the best performing site option, specifically due to the intersection of the existing gas transmission lines and electricity grid infrastructure, land availability and lack of significant environmental constraints.

Justification for the overall proposed project is stated as; *'...to provide additional electricity generating capacity, ensuring security of supply during periods when electricity demand is higher than average and cannot be met by existing renewable energy technologies on the system'*. Furthermore, it is stated in the submitted EIAR that *'...the plant is designed to accommodate future changes to lower-carbon gases, in line with national plans for gas network decarbonisation. GNI has developed its Pathway to a Net Zero Carbon Network, which outlines how the national gas network can transport 100% renewable gas by 2045, playing an essential role in transitioning the electricity sector to climate neutrality'*.

The Planning Authority consider that the principle of the proposed use of the subject site for electricity generation would be fully consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area as well as with Government's most up-to-date policy on climate change, facilitating the transition to

increased renewable energy outputs, energy efficiency and the imperative requirement for decarbonising of the country's electricity generation system.

Public Consultation

The applicant has submitted a non-statutory Public Consultation Report which details the public consultation process undertaken by the applicant in order to inform the local community and stakeholders about the proposed Peaker Plant project and to obtain public and stakeholder feedback.

Galway County Council is satisfied that the applicant has sought to engage with stakeholders and the public in an appropriate and transparent manner in their duties to carry out public consultation ahead of the submission of their planning application.

Visual Impact, Design and Layout

The proposed development of the Peaker Plant site comprises an agricultural open pasture field, bounded by a stone wall and a line of trees to the north, a stone wall to the east and a fence to the west and south. The subject site surrounding context comprises; pasture farmland to the immediate north and east, the M17 motorway to the west, M6/ M18 & M17 motorway junction to the southwest, and the M6 motorway to the south.

Chapter 6 of the submitted EIAR assesses the impact of the proposed development of the Peaker Plant on the landscape and visual receptors. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) prepared by Digital Dimensions is submitted within Chapter 6 of the EIAR and drawings, verified views and photomontages are submitted within Appendix 6.1 of the EIAR.

The LVIA assessment states that there are no highly distinctive views from the local and regional roads and motorways within the study area and the value of views is therefore judged to be low with low to medium impact susceptibility. Visual impact on the dispersed one-off settlements within the area is stated to be medium for residents which already have views towards motorways and/ or pylons and high for residents which already have mostly unspoilt rural views.

Galway County Council consider that the LVIA of the proposed development gives a clear indication that it will result in an intensification of industrial development within this landscape context when analysed cumulatively with existing and proposed energy developments within the cumulative study area. Galway County Council highlight that the proposed development site is located within the GCTPS area of the Central Galway Complex Landscape Character Area and is classified as having a Class 1 Low landscape sensitivity. The subject site is not identified as being within the vicinity of any designated scenic routes, or protected viewpoint angles.

Within the context of the proposed energy development which is designed to accommodate future changes to lower carbon gases, in line with national plans for gas network decarbonisation; Galway County Council consider the findings within the *Coolglass Windfarm Limited v. An Comisiún Pleanála IEHC 1 [2025]* judgement, which highlights that *'...the overriding interests of renewable energy targets should take precedent over local landscape and visual impact considerations'*. The judgement also refers to similar cases; *Shannon LNG v. An Comisiún Pleanála [2024] IEHC 555, [2024]* and the *Nagle View Turbine Aware*

Group v. An Comisiún Pleanála [2024] IEHC 603, where it was considered that ‘...the legally binding EU and National energy targets take precedent over local policies regarding visual impact, including the expectation that the visual context of an area cannot be expected to remain unchanged within the context of a climate emergency’.

Access and Traffic Safety – Roads and Transportation

Chapter 10 of the EIAR includes an assessment of the impact on traffic and transport and Chapter 16 and 17 of the EIAR analyses the material assets and effects on the local road network as a result of the proposed project during construction and operational phases. Access to the site is proposed via a newly proposed 1.15 km long access road connecting to the L3103, approximately 1 km east of the M17 motorway. It is noted that the construction period is the only period within which any perceptible impact is expected on the local transportation network, noting limited vehicular movements during the operational phase.

The GCC Roads and Transportation Department have reviewed the relevant documentation and have made the following comments with regard to traffic and transport impacts:

Road Safety Traffic Concerns:

Road Safety Auditing, Sightlines, Stopping Sight Distances & Forward Visibility.

- Sightlines and stopping sight distances for substation development entrance are not demonstrated. The Applicant shall submit the following in longitudinal and revised site layout plan onto a topographical survey with sufficient detail and background mapping to clearly demonstrate the full sightlines and stopping sight distances of 90m can be achieved at proposed Permanent substation Entrance. The clear sightline triangle should be assessed from a distance of 2.4 metres back from the road edge. Supporting photographs shall be submitted. This should include where required setback of the front boundary roadside wall is behind the sightline envelope. Note that reducing hedge heights is not allowable or satisfactory insofar through road users shall be able to see to the form of the new junction for the full sightline distance. All stationary objects such as overhead services poles are to be setback behind the sightline envelope. The vertical envelope of visibility (i.e. intervisibility) has not been demonstrated in accordance with TII standards, in particular the provisions of visibility requirements as stated within DN-GEO-03031 Rural Road Link Design, May 2023– Section 2 Sight Distance, Figure 2.1.
- The Applicant is to highlight on the revised Site Layout Plan and site location map any boundaries belonging to adjacent landowners that will require setback to achieve the sightlines required. These boundaries shall be shown setback and shall be highlighted and labelled on the revised drawing. Written permission to setback and maintain any boundaries outside the ownership of the applicant is required along with supporting folios and maps to demonstrate ownership.
- In the absence of a recommended Road Safety Audit Stage 1 / 2 to reflect the entire scheme including new vehicular accesses onto the public road network and significant scale of roadside interventions being proposed in accordance with TII Road Safety Audit guidelines GE-STY-01024.

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- The Applicant shall address all problems raised with the Stage 1/2 Audit in full and submit revised Site Layout Plans to include the recommendations of the Audits.
 - The applicant has not submitted a detailed Traffic and Transport Assessment in accordance with TII publications - PE-PDV-02045, where a comprehensive review of all current potential transport impacts relating to the development including information pertaining to generated trips to and from shall be further assessed. Any recommendations arising from the assessment, or alternative measures proposed therein by the developer, shall be incorporated into the final design of the development at the expense of the developer.
 - The Traffic and transport assessment shall fully assess any potential indirect adverse impacts on road safety (including the impact of on-site **20m public lighting mast** and in absence of lux contouring reports/ & glare assessments of the proposed development) to ensure compliance to the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012), sub section 3.7 Avoiding adverse impacts on existing and future roads.

Site-Specific Grid Connection Infrastructure Drawings

- The Joint Bay Layout x 10 number as proposed for the grid connection works are shown to be constructed within the public road carriageway and further indicate extensive bay dimensions of 8.0m in length and 2.5 m in width, with a communications duct and a C2 Communications precast chamber located externally to this footprint with a depth of 1.850m approx. below road level. The scale of the unit, combined with the associated infrastructure, would effectively sterilise the public roadway. This would prevent Galway County Council from carrying out essential future works, including drainage upgrades, installation or extension of Group Water Scheme mains, and the provision or alteration of house service connections.

Relocation of Joint Slabs

- Joint Slabs must be relocated off the public road and positioned within adjacent lands under the applicant's control. It has not been demonstrated that no off carriageway alternative is practical in addition to the feasibility and construction of placement of such joint slabs within strategic passing bays.
- For joint bay structures that interface with national roads, technical acceptance Report Technical Acceptance of joint bay structures beneath regional and/or local roads and which do not interface with national roads should be carried out in accordance with DOT Circular RW 10/2021.
- A Technical Acceptance Report (TAR) shall record the agreed basis and criteria for the detailed design of the joint bay structure; and Certification by the Design/Assessor/Checker confirming that the design, assessment, specification or construction works complies with the TAR.
- Any potential Joint bays that adjoins the carriageway or within public road margins shall conform to standards required by the Roads Authorities include clarification of lid type (concrete) being proposed or otherwise.
- Construction shall be in accordance with relevant TII publications.

- All backfill around these structures to be placed and compacted in accordance with the Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads and/or the TII document "Requirements for the Reinstatement of Openings in National Roads CC-PAV-04007" as a minimum.
- Responsibility for the maintenance of Link Box / chamber lids remains with the Asset Owner or their successors.

Haulage Route Analysis

Submit a full haulage route analysis clearly outlining any required works, such as:

- Amendments to existing junctions (e.g., widening, thus all physical alterations to the public road margins).
- Road widening, signage, edge strengthening, and tree/hedge clearance.
- Include articulated and reflective abnormal load auto track swept path analysis.

Construction Traffic Route

- Regarding Grid connection works - Provide details of the construction traffic route, including concrete, tarmacadam, stone delivery routes.
- A draft construction programme setting out timelines for:
 - construction of the ducting
 - construction of joint chambers
 - transport of cabling
 - pulling of cabling
 - jointing of cablingOf which, shall be submitted for comment to the Road Authority in order to minimise disruption to the road user.

- The applicant shall further revise the grid connection traffic management plan to reduce extensive time periods of proposed road closures and impact to the public road margins whereby mitigated through alternative techniques, methodology insofar where grid connections works shall consider cabling jointing works in strategic passing bay locations in order to enable traffic to continue their routes during the construction phase and thus reduce impact on narrow local diversions routes.

Transport Load Assessment

- The laden weight of the HGV and articulated rigids transporting the abnormal loads shall be assessed with route suitability, particularly for culvert and bridge crossings.

Directional drilling in proximity to Motorway Bridges

- A detailed structural survey is required for any works where directional drilling is proposed.

Culvert Installation Restriction

- Note that ducting installations over culverts within the public road will not be permitted by Galway County Council.

Road Opening Licence (ROL) Requirement & Road Closure

- Any works affecting the public road network, including junctions and grid connection infrastructure, will require a Road Opening Licence and possibly a Road Closure.
- Preliminary trial holes under a ROL are required to confirm the cable route.
- A separate ROL and possible Road Closure will be required for the main construction works.

Where An Coimisiún Pleanála are minded to grant permission, Galway County Council's Roads and Transportation Department have recommended a number of conditions which are enclosed at Section 11 of this report.

Site Services –Water and Wastewater

Chapter 12 of the EIAR assesses the potential impacts of the proposed development of the Peaker Plant on the surrounding water environment, comprising assessment of: hydrology, flood risk, hydro-ecology, hydrogeology and drainage.

The bedrock aquifer beneath the proposed site is designated as a Regionally Important Aquifer. There is potential for Karst formations at the site. Groundwater quality at the site is good. There are no public water supply abstractions in the area. Part of the development is underlain by the Galway Bay Galway Bay Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystem (GWDTE), which is connected to a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). There is no evidence of risk for pluvial or fluvial flooding within the vicinity of the site. Where An Coimisiún Pleanála are minded to grant permission, they should be satisfied that the proposed development would not have a significant effect on the receiving water bodies.

Furthermore, where An Coimisiún Pleanála are minded to grant permission, it is recommended that the applicant is required to enter an agreement in respect of water supply. Similarly, a condition in respect of the proposed wastewater treatment system is recommended.

Flooding

The submitted site-specific Flood Risk Assessment concludes that the proposed development of a Peaker Plant is not at significant flood risk and that no historic flooding was identified, no alluvium deposits were present on-site, and OPW mapping places the site in Flood Zone C. Where An Coimisiún Pleanála are minded to grant permission, they should be satisfied that the proposed development would not have a significant effect on the receiving environment and flood risk.

Dust and Emissions

Chapter 7 of the EIAR assesses the potential impacts of the proposed development on air quality. The EIAR states that the proposed development of a Peaker Plant will not have a significant effect on air quality due to the required application of dust mitigation measures for each development. Where An Coimisiún Pleanála are minded to grant permission, they should be satisfied that the proposed development would not have a significant effect on the receiving environment and mitigation measures are complied with in full.

Notwithstanding the relevant licences and consents pertaining to dust and emissions, Galway County Council recommend that a condition in respect of a monitoring of dust and emissions is attached in the event of a grant of permission.

Noise & Vibrations, Operational Phase/ Hours of Operation

Chapter 9 of the EIAR assesses the potential impacts of the proposed development on noise & vibration. It is stated in the EIAR that the primary sources of outward noise in the operational context are long term and will comprise plant noise from the proposed gas turbine and that predicted operational noise levels are mitigated to comply with applicable standards.

The EIAR states that during the construction phase of proposed development there will be some impact on nearby noise sensitive properties due to noise emissions from site traffic and other activities, however the overall predicted noise levels are well within the adopted criteria due to the distance between the site works and the nearest noise sensitive locations (NSLs). The application of noise limits and hours of operation, along with implementation of appropriate noise and vibration control measures, will ensure that noise and vibration impact is kept to a minimum. The residual noise effects will be negative, slight to moderate and short term in nature. Where An Comisiún Pleanála are minded to grant permission, they should be satisfied that the proposed development would not have a significant effect on the receiving environment and mitigation measures set out in the EIAR are complied with in full. Conditions to this effect are recommended in the event of a grant of permission.

Fuel Storage

An emergency low sulphur diesel generator is required for the facility in the event that the facility was to be disconnected from the EirGrid transmission network, enough for an estimated 24 hours operation in an emergency situation. The low sulphur diesel generator is stated to contain a quantity of low sulphur diesel fuel (1000 L) in co-located tanks on site.

Furthermore, safety testing includes:

- Mandatory testing on the low sulphur diesel backup fuel is anticipated to occur for up to 18 hours per annum in accordance with EirGrid (the Transmission System Operator) Grid Code.
- Low sulphur diesel storage tank with automatic leakage detectors and regular external inspections to detect any deficiencies in the secondary outer containment tank.
- Seveso Requirements under the “lower tier” COMAH establishment, as it will store hazardous substances in excess of the Lower Tier thresholds identified in Part 2 of Schedule 1 of the COMAH Regulations 2015.

The EIAR states that fuel is required to be pumped to the gas turbine fuel control valve using electrically driven fuel pumps. This necessary low sulphur diesel fuel will be offloaded on site from road tankers in a hard standing area with provision to collect any spilled low sulphur diesel to prevent any discharge to ground. It is stated that the ‘...low sulphur diesel will be offloaded into two steel double skinned full containment tanks contained within a sealed concrete bunded area for storage. The tanks will contain a combined quantity of ca. 5470 tonnes (or 6670m³) of low sulphur diesel fuel. The tanks will be designed in accordance with EN 14015 inclusive of all safety features required by the standard and as the result of safety design reviews during the detailed design stage’.

Galway County Council acknowledge that the Proposed Project will be a Lower tier Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) site and will be subject to COMAH Regulations, as detailed further in the COMAH report, Appendix 15-1 of the submitted EIAR. Galway County Council have reviewed the submitted documentation and note that licensing and consents are required to ensure the safe construction, operation and decommissioning of the proposed Peaker Plant facility.

Furthermore, it is stated that the proposed development of a Peaker Plant will be subject to an Industrial Emissions Licence, which will be required for the facility to operate and is issued and regulated by the EPA. As part of an Industrial Emissions Licence, air emissions from the stack will be monitored continuously any time the plant is in operation.

Other relevant consents

The Planning Authority note that the granting of planning permission by An Coimisiún Pleanála does not relieve the developer of the responsibility of complying with any requirements under other codes of legislation affecting the proposal and the applicant is required to secure separate consents in order to implement their development, including but not limited to: Fire Safety Certificate; Road Opening Licence, under the Roads Act; Industrial Emissions Licence/Integrated Pollution Control licence from EPA; Waste Licence; Environmental Health and Public Health codes; Archaeological licences under the National Monuments Acts (*non-conclusive list). It is recommended that in the event of a grant of permission from An Coimisiún Pleanála, the applicant is advised of same.

Operational Waste

During the operation phase, it is stated that the waste will comprise office waste, wastewater from turbine maintenance, and water treatment by-products, furthermore adding that all waste will be stored safely and removed regularly by licensed contractors. Conditions to ensure of proper waste disposal should be attached where An Coimisiún Pleanála are minded to grant permission.

Decommissioning Phase

Galway County Council note the operational lifetime of the Peaker Plant is until 31st December 2050, whereas the EirGrid Substation and GNI infrastructure (subject to separate consents) shall be maintained. The Planning Authority have no objection in principle to the duration of the operation. Furthermore, the Planning Authority note that under IE Licence requirements the applicant would be required to prepare and maintain an Environmental Liabilities Risk Assessment (ELRA) and/or a Closure, Restoration and Aftercare Management Plan (CRAMP), notwithstanding this, the Planning Authority would welcome clarity on the duration and details of the decommissioning phase, and would suggest in the event of a grant of permission, An Coimisiún Pleanála would attach a condition to this effect.

Community Gain

Having regard to the scale and nature of the proposal and the provisions of section 37(G)(7)(d) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the Planning Department are of the view that it would

be appropriate for An Coimisiún Pleanála to require the applicant to provide and implement a community gain proposal. In the event of a grant of permission, a condition to this effect is recommended.

Section 11. Recommended Conditions

1. The development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application, except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the following conditions.

REASON: In the interest of clarity.

2. The period during which the development hereby permitted may be carried out shall be 10 years from the date of this order.

REASON: In the interest of clarity and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3. The operational life of the natural gas-fuelled electricity generation plant shall be up to and including 31st December 2050, unless planning permission has been granted for its continued operational use for a further period. The natural gas-fuelled electricity generation plant shall be decommissioned in accordance with a decommissioning strategy that shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Planning Authority within 5 no. years of the date of the grant of permission.

REASON: To enable the Planning Authority to review its operation in the light of the circumstances then prevailing and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

4. (i) The development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with all of the mitigation measures and monitoring proposals and in accordance with any timelines as set out in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and appendices.

(ii) The services of a suitably qualified and experienced environmental professional shall be retained to oversee and supervise the entirety of the construction works, and to provide monthly electronic reports to the planning authority (Planning and Environment Sections) detailing the stage of the works, and compliance with EIAR (including appendices). They shall be responsible for preparing and submitting quarterly reports to the Planning Authority during construction phase, detailing the results of any proposed monitoring, including the cleaning maintenance and inspection of the on-site systems including the site drainage system and hydrocarbon prevention measures. When site development works are completed, the suitably qualified and experienced environmental professional shall lodge with the planning authority, a certificate indicating completion and compliance with the planning permission. All reports shall be forwarded in electronic format and shall be available to the public on request.

(iii) The operational phase of the development shall be overseen by an appropriately qualified environmental professional to ensure that the operational mitigation measures as set out in the EIAR are fully implemented. Yearly monitoring reports shall be submitted to the planning authority by the annual anniversary of the grant of permission and shall detail the results of any monitoring proposed during operation.

(iv) In the event of any incident which poses a significant risk to surface water quality the developer shall immediately notify Inland Fisheries Ireland, the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Environment Section of Galway County Council.

REASON: in the interest of clarity and protection of the environment during the construction and operational phases of the proposed development.

5.(i)The development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with all of the mitigation measures as set out in the Natura Impact Statement. If there is a conflict between the EIAR, CEMP and the Natura Impact Statement (NIS), the provisions and mitigation measures in the Natura Impact Statement shall take precedence.

(ii) During the enabling works/construction stage of the proposed development, the appointed contractor shall adhere to Mitigation Measures as set out NIS. A suitably qualified ecologist shall oversee the implementation of the construction, operation and decommissioning mitigation measures set out in the NIS and shall list and certify that the construction mitigation measures as set out in the NIS have been carried out in full and that all operational mitigation measures are in place. This certification shall be submitted to the planning authority for written agreement prior to the commissioning of any turbine.

REASON: In the interest of ensuring the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and in order to protect Natura 2000 sites.

6. The external finishes, materials and colours of the proposed buildings shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of any works on site.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and orderly development.

7. The planning authority shall be informed in writing of the date of commencement of the site development works and they shall be given at least two weeks notice of same.

REASON: In the interest of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and to protect the amenity of the area.

8. The developer shall enter into water connection agreements with Uisce Éireann, prior to commencement of development.

REASON: In the interests of clarity and public health.

9. (a) The proposed wastewater treatment system and percolation area shall be designed, installed and operated in accordance with the manufacturer details submitted with the planning application and shall be in accordance with the requirements of the document “Code of Practice Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (p.e<10)”, Environmental Protection Agency). Any change to an equivalent and equal system shall be agreed in writing with the planning authority prior to works being started and the system being installed and shall be in accordance with the Environmental Protection Agency publication “Code of Practice: Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems (Population Equivalent ≤10), 2021”.

(b) The proposed polishing filter shall maintain a minimum separation distance of 10 metres from any house, other percolation area/polishing filter, existing or proposed land drain or watercourse or third-party infiltration area.

(c) Immediately following installation, the developer shall submit to the Planning Authority, a report from a suitably qualified person with professional indemnity insurance certifying that the wastewater treatment plant has been installed and commissioned in accordance with the approved details and is working in a satisfactory manner and that the proposed polishing filter is constructed in accordance with the standards set out in the Environmental Protection Agency document.

(d) A maintenance contract for the treatment system shall be entered into and paid for in advance and shall be kept in place at all times. Signed and dated copies of the contract shall be made available to the Planning

Authority on request.
(e) Any soil / fill material being imported on site must be free of invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed, Ragwort, Gunnera and Rhododendron.

Reason: In the interest of public health.

10. Prior to commissioning of the Peaker Plant, the Irish Aviation Authority shall be informed of the co-ordinates of the 30 m high Gas Turbine Stack. Any lights or warning devices required by the Irish Aviation Authority shall be placed on the turbines in accordance with the details to be agreed in writing with the planning authority prior to commissioning of the development.

REASON: In the interest of public safety.

11. Prior to the commencement of development, the development shall lodge with the planning authority a cash deposit/bank bond or other such security as may be acceptable to the planning authority, to secure the satisfactory reinstatement of the site on cessation of the project coupled with an agreement empowering the planning authority to apply such security or part thereof to such reinstatement. The form and amount of security shall be as agreed between the planning authority and developer or, in default of agreement, shall be referred to An Comisiún Pleanála for determination.

REASON: To ensure the site is restored to a satisfactory condition.

12. Prior to commencement of development, the developer shall submit to and agree in writing with the Planning Authority a noise compliance monitoring programme for the subject development, including any mitigation measures. All noise measurements shall be carried out in accordance with International Organisation of Standardisation Recommendation R 1996 “Acoustics – Description, measurement and assessment of environmental noise” as amended by IOS Recommendations R 1996-1. The results of the initial noise compliance monitoring shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority within six months of commissioning of the Peaker Plant.

REASON: In the interest of residential amenity.

13. Prior to commencement of development, the developer shall submit to and agree in writing with the Planning Authority a dust and emissions monitoring programme for the subject development, including any mitigation measures. All noise measurements shall be carried out in accordance with International Organisation of Standardisation Recommendation R 1996 “Acoustics – Description, measurement and assessment of environmental noise” as amended by IOS Recommendations R 1996-1. The results of the initial noise compliance monitoring shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority within six months of commissioning of the Peaker Plant.

REASON: In the interest of residential amenity.

14. All liquids, hydrocarbons, chemicals, oils, etc. shall be stored in a dedicated, waterproof bunded area of sufficient volume to hold 110% of the volume of the largest tank within the bund. All valves on the tanks shall be contained within the bunded area. All operations involving the loading and unloading of hydrocarbon products shall take place in a bunded area in such as manner as to safeguard the amenities of the area and prevent water pollution.

REASON: To avoid pollution of waters

15. All construction waste generated on site shall be disposed of through appropriately licenced collection and disposal contractors.

REASON: To safeguard the amenities of the area.

16. Construction work shall take place between 0800 hours and 1800 hours Monday to Friday and the hours of 0800 and 1400 on Saturday. No works shall take place outside of these hours or on Sundays or Bank Holidays, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Planning Authority.

REASON: To protect the residential amenities of the area.

17. Construction and demolition waste shall be managed in accordance with a construction waste and demolition management plan, which shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development. This plan shall be prepared in accordance with the “Best Practice Guidelines for the Preparation of Resource & Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects”, published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in 2021.

REASON: In the interest of sustainable waste management.

18. The applicant shall submit details to the planning authority for written agreement to provide and implement a community gain proposal, including any the financial commitments set out therein, which is considered a community gain in accordance with section 37 (G)(7)(d) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. In default of agreement on any of these commitments, the matter shall be referred to An Comisiún Pleanála for determination.

REASON: To offset the impacts on the local community in the construction phase and to maximise the long-term benefits of the proposed facilities to local residents.

19. Prior to the commencement of development, unless otherwise agreed in writing, the applicant shall pay a financial contribution to the Planning Authority, unless a phased payment schedule has been agreed in writing with the Planning Authority. This charge shall be calculated using the Development Contributions Scheme adopted by Galway County Council in accordance with the provisions of Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

REASON: So that the developer shall pay an equitable portion of the cost of the services which facilitates and/or which will facilitate the proposed development.

20. Prior to commencement of development, details of the following shall be submitted to, and agreed in advance with the area engineer and agreed in writing with, the planning authority:

(i) Technical & structural pavement analysis such as level 1 and Level 2 pavement analysis that includes recommended Falling Weight Deflectometer (FWD) Testing, Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) and core logs shall be provided to assess the pavement stress and strains at the critical design locations as required are to be calculated on proposed regional and local road trafficked routes, including number of axles to failure calculation requires verification.

(ii) Structural evaluation of all trafficked regional and local road network structures shall be evaluated and assessed for trafficked abnormal loads being generated by development.

(iii) The Applicant shall submit the following in support of the proposed development:

(iv) A comprehensive and detailed traffic and transport assessment in accordance to TII publications PE-PDV-02045.

(v) On site overhead lighting report assessed in line with the adverse impacts of indirect luminaire spill in accordance with National Spatial guideline publications (2012).

(vi) Prior to commencement of the development, the applicant shall commission a road safety audit (stage 1 / stage 2 audit) . Recommendations arising from the audit, or alternative measures proposed therein by the developer and accepted by the auditor, shall be incorporated into the final design of the development at the expense of the developer. The audit shall be completed by an independent road safety auditor, at the developer's expense, and shall be submitted the planning authority.

(vii) Prior to commencement of the development, A design report shall be submitted to Roads & Transportation Dept and to the satisfaction of the Area Engineer in accordance to TII standards 'DN-GEO-03030 Design Phase Procedure for Road Safety Improvement Schemes, Urban Renewal Schemes and Local Improvement Schemes' whilst on receipt of detailed design works to public road physical alterations including swept path analysis Road widening, Road make up materials, specifications and finishes that includes Drainage infrastructure and necessary visibility works which shall be further assessed as part of the Road Safety Audit Report.

(viii) Prior to commencement of development, and to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority, The applicant shall Submit a revised site layout plan to demonstrate sight distance triangles from new substation trafficked junction onto LP 3103 clearly showing details of both exit and entry sightline triangles and details of the vertical alignment available in the form of a longitudinal section in order to depict the existing road profile sightlines in both directions in respect of vehicular entrances. The required visibility from the proposed entrance and access to/from the LP-3103 local road network should strictly comply with Galway County Development plan 2022-2028 per DM Standard 28 and TII standards, in particular the provisions of visibility requirements as stated within Table 5.4 and Table 5.5 of TII Publications - DN-GEO-03060 Geometric Design of Junctions (priority junctions, direct accesses, roundabouts, grade separated and compact grade separated junctions) May 2023 for the design speed of the road from an x-distance 2.4m setback from the road edge and measured along the y-distance to the nearside road edge at specified object height from the dwell area to the sightline distance in accordance to TII standards. Forward visibility and stopping sight distances pertaining to right hand turning movements shall also be presented in both directions for each entrance in accordance with TII standards. The current extents of current hedgerow and/or boundary walling shall be set back to achieve clear and unobstructed sightlines in both directions and replaced with soft landscaping with new roadside passively safe boundary treatments proposed.

(ix) A letter(s) of consent from any adjoining landowner and relevant third parties consenting to set back their boundary in order to permanently achieve clear and obstructed required sight distances where current sight distance y- splay traverses through adjoining third party boundary is required.

(x) The applicant shall demonstrate that any adjoining lands to achieve required sight distance triangles as referred to above are within their control i.e. sightlines triangles outside the applicants red line boundary shall be outlined in blue on a revised site location map as per Article 22 (2)(b)(ii) of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended).

(xi) Sight distance triangles shall be maintained and kept free from boundary walling, vegetation, overhead poles or other obstructions that would reduce the minimum visibility required.

(xii) Grid connection Joint Slabs must be relocated off the public road and repositioned within adjacent lands under the applicant's control. It has not been demonstrated that no off carriageway alternative is practical in addition to the feasibility and construction of placement of such joint slabs within alternative /strategic passing bays.

(Xiii) A technical acceptance Report Technical Acceptance of joint bay structures beneath regional and/or local roads and which do not interface with national roads should be carried out in accordance with DOT Circular RW 10/2021 and TII standards. Technical Acceptance Report (TAR) shall record the agreed basis and criteria for the detailed design of the joint bay structure; and Certification by the Design/Assessor/Checker confirming that the design, assessment, specification or construction works complies with the TAR.

(xiv) Third party Networks shall be contacted prior to construction of any works shall be consented in advance by each service provider.

REASON: In interest of Traffic Safety

21. (i) All surface water generated by this development shall be disposed of within the site and shall not be discharged onto the public road or the adjoining property.

(ii) Proposed development vehicular entrance(s) onto the public road and any tie into the existing road margin shall be cleared, graded, levelled and surfaced to a standard suitable for use to the satisfaction of the Area Engineer to prevent unbound material (loose stone) entering onto the public road. Proposed roads make up and tie in to include suitable drainage infrastructure to collect and dispose of surface water runoff from the existing public road. The provisions shall not increase the likelihood of flooding to the development property, the road or adjoining properties.

REASON: In the interests of road safety and proper planning and sustainable development to the area.

22. Prior to commencement of development, details of the following shall be submitted to, and agreed in advance with the Area Engineer and agreed in writing with, the planning authority:

(i) An independent vehicular Lazer road condition pavement survey for all surrounding local roads and bridges along the grid connection route, abnormal load routes, haul routes shall be carried out at the developer's expense by a suitably qualified person/firm during pre and post construction of the proposed development. This survey shall include a schedule of required works to enable the haul routes to cater for construction-related traffic. The extent and scope of the survey and the schedule of works shall be agreed to the satisfaction of the area engineer prior to

commencement of development. The survey shall give a description of the local road network including each chainage section, lane, survey direction and measured length for each section. GPS co-ordinates at the beginning and end of each section shall also be tabulated with a clear map of start point of survey / chainage 0m-10m etc and shall include pavement surface condition index (PCSI), structural index and surface index results for each 10 meter section surveyed. Results shall include details of any pavement distress including type, severity and quantity within each 10m intervals sections of local road surveyed. Post construction phase, Road Condition Pavement survey shall then be repeated in order for the Planning Authority to assess any damage of the public road network that may arise during the development works.

- (ii) Within three months of the cessation of the use of each public road/haul route to transport material to and from the site, aforementioned road survey and scheme of works detailing works to repair any damage to these routes shall be agreed in advance with the area engineer and shall be submitted to the planning authority.
- (iii) All works arising from the aforementioned arrangements shall be completed to the satisfaction of the area engineer at the developer's expense within 3 months of the cessation of each road's use as a haul route or other for the proposed development.

REASON: In the interests of road safety.

23. All necessary measures shall be taken by the applicant to prevent the spillage or deposit of clay, rubble or other debris on adjoining roads during the course of the works.

REASON: In the interests of road safety.

- (i) A revised detailed Traffic Management Plan to incorporate existing road conditions., grid connection and cabling/ jointing works including detailed design of temporary traffic measures and signs for roadworks shall be submitted prior to development commencement and agreed in advance with the Area Engineer, which sets out proposed measures and best practice to be implemented during the construction phase of development. The outline TMP should address the following: Site Access and Egress, Traffic Management Signage, Stop/Go or road closure/diversion arrangements, Traffic Management Speed Limits, Road Cleaning, Road Condition, Implementation of Traffic Management Plan. It shall include details of construction traffic routing, the number of trips generated for deliveries and collections of materials from the site, provision for a storage compound and parking provision within the site, wheel washing and measures for control of dust and other pollutant materials the installation of which shall be the responsibility of the applicant.
- (ii) A road opening license and an abnormal load license shall be obtained from Galway County Council, with aforementioned TMP & accompanying detailed Traffic management Design in accordance with Traffic Signs Manual (Chapter 8 - Temporary Traffic Measures and Signs for Roadworks), to be further agreed with Local Area Engineers including a phasing programme of the works indicating the timescale within which it is intended to use each public route to facilitate construction of the proposed development.

(iii) Regarding abnormal delivery routes, the Motorway/National Dual Carriageway Clearance shall be sought For abnormal loads exceeding 3 metres in width, the applicant shall contact TII's Motorway Traffic Control Centre via email at abnormalload@mtcc.ie

(iv) The applicant is advised that under a separate process, formal consent under Section 53 of the Roads Act, 1993 (as amended), for the proposed crossing of the M6 & M17 Motorway. Prior to the commencement of any development to implement this permission, the applicant shall submit to Galway County Council documentary evidence that Section 53 consent has been approved for the proposed M6 & M17 Motorway Crossing.

(v) Public Road including areas within Public Road Margins backfill and reinstatements including finished road levels shall be in accordance with Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads (Purple Book – April 2017) as amended and shall be to the **satisfaction of the Area Engineer.**

(vi) Backfilling and reinstatement of excavations to be in accordance with the DOT's Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads and in the case of National Roads, TII's publication CC-PAV-04007 "Requirements for the reinstatement of Openings in National Roads". Additional ground improvement measures may be required, derived from the site investigations carried out. **Where local road width is 6m or less, a full width of pavement reinstatement is required.** This will include reconstruction of the DBM binder base and subbase on roads significantly impacted. In addition, certain roads may require additional strengthening in the form of geotextiles and shall be placed at the cost of the applicant as deemed applicable by the Roads Authority.

REASON: In the interests of road safety.

24. Prior to commencement of development, the developer/applicants shall lodge a transportation bond with the planning authority of a cash deposit amount to the sum to be agreed with the Planning authority, or other cash amount or form of security, as may be acceptable to the relevant planning authority, to secure the reinstatement of the public road and road markings which may be damaged by the transport of materials to the site, to secure the provision of existing drains, open space and other services required in connection with the development coupled with an agreement empowering the relevant planning authority to apply such security or part thereof to the satisfactory reinstatement of the public road network which includes any identified diversion routes.

REASON: In the interest of traffic safety and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

25. On completion of the development, a stage 3 road safety audit shall be completed by an independent road safety auditor, at the developer's expense, and submitted for the written approval of the planning authority. Any safety issues highlighted in the audit shall be reviewed and addressed by the developer at their expense.

REASON: In the interests of road safety

Jade Power

Jade Power, Executive Planner 20.04.2026

C. Cosgrave

Ciara Cosgrave, Senior Executive Planner 20.04.2026

Appendix 1 - THE VIEWS OF THE MEMBERS OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

Appendix 2 – Presentation to the Members of the Oranmore/Athenry MD on 15th April 2026

Appendix 3 – Galway County Council’s Roads and Transportation Report

Submission added by Plenary Council $\frac{27}{4}$
26

As members of Galway County Council representing the Athenry Municipal District, we are aware of the importance of our area in the context of infrastructure investment, industrial development and balanced regional development. We are aware of the need for a sustainable, secure energy supply and a robust electricity grid network.

To that end, Galway county has played a significant part in developing our energy supply. We host a number of wind and solar farms with more in the pipeline. We have an existing large gas powered electricity plant and an application for another. The possibility of offshore wind development remains, despite recent decisions.

Regarding the present proposal, the Cashla Peaker Plant, SID Case Ref 324113 we have a number of serious concerns regarding its development.

– Environmental concerns

The proposed site is in close proximity to Athenry town. Prevailing winds would direct any emissions towards a growing town of 5,000 people with daily student numbers of 3,500 in five schools. There is significant residential zoning in the adjacent townland of Ballygurrane which will have the effect of extending the town towards the Peaker Plant site.

We are conscious that this project is made up of 3 separate applications 1) the plant 2) the substation and pipeline and 3) the gas pipeline. We request that An Coimisiun Pleanala considers the cumulative impact of the entire project in making its decision. We also request that An Coimisiun considers the emission levels in the context of the 700ha of land earmarked for industrial development within a 10km radius of the site. Will the operation of the Peaker Plant restrict development on these lands in the future under the cumulative effect provision? These lands are located at Ballygurrane (Athenry), Tubberoe (Athenry) IDA and Department of Defence (Oranmore), Galway Airport site (Carnmore).

In addition, a gas-fired peaker plant was refused planning permission in the same general area in 2009 on concerns regarding air pollution, among others. We request that this decision be taken into account in the consideration of this application.

– Economic Corridor

The site is located in the Galway – Athenry economic corridor (Galway County Development Plan) which has had major investment over the decades in transport, industrial development sites and housing. We are concerned that siting one of the largest power plants of its type in the centre of this corridor will diminish the attractiveness of this nationally important area to significant projects and investments.

– **IDA Site**

Some of the closest lands to the Peaker Plant site is owned by the IDA. There has been significant investment in this site and an adjoining section of the IDA lands is the subject of a €300m multinational investment. We have concerns that this wider land holding will have its value and attractiveness eroded by the proximity of the power station.

– **Local Services**

We have concerns that the level of emergency services in the area are inadequate to deal with any emergencies on-site. The storage of 6.2 million litres of diesel in conjunction with a major gas main creates a considerable fire risk and would challenge greatly the local fire services. This site will be a Lower Tier COMAH site under the Seveso Directive, resulting in a higher requirement for both emergency planning and capacity to deal with any emergency which may occur.

– **Impact on Local Roads and Road Safety**

While the site is adjacent to the motorway it is served by local roads only. We have concerns around the construction and operation of the plant and the impact it will have on the L roads serving the site, the HGVs using the route and the increased road and safety issues which will arise.

We request that An Coimisiun Pleanála take the above concerns into account in arriving at its decision on a project which would have a significant impact on the local area, local residents and the economic development of this key area of Galway.

Proposed Cllr C Keane & Agreed by Council.
Seconded Cllr P Feeney
Add Cashla Peaker Plant Pp Ref No.
to this report.

L Council 27
4
26



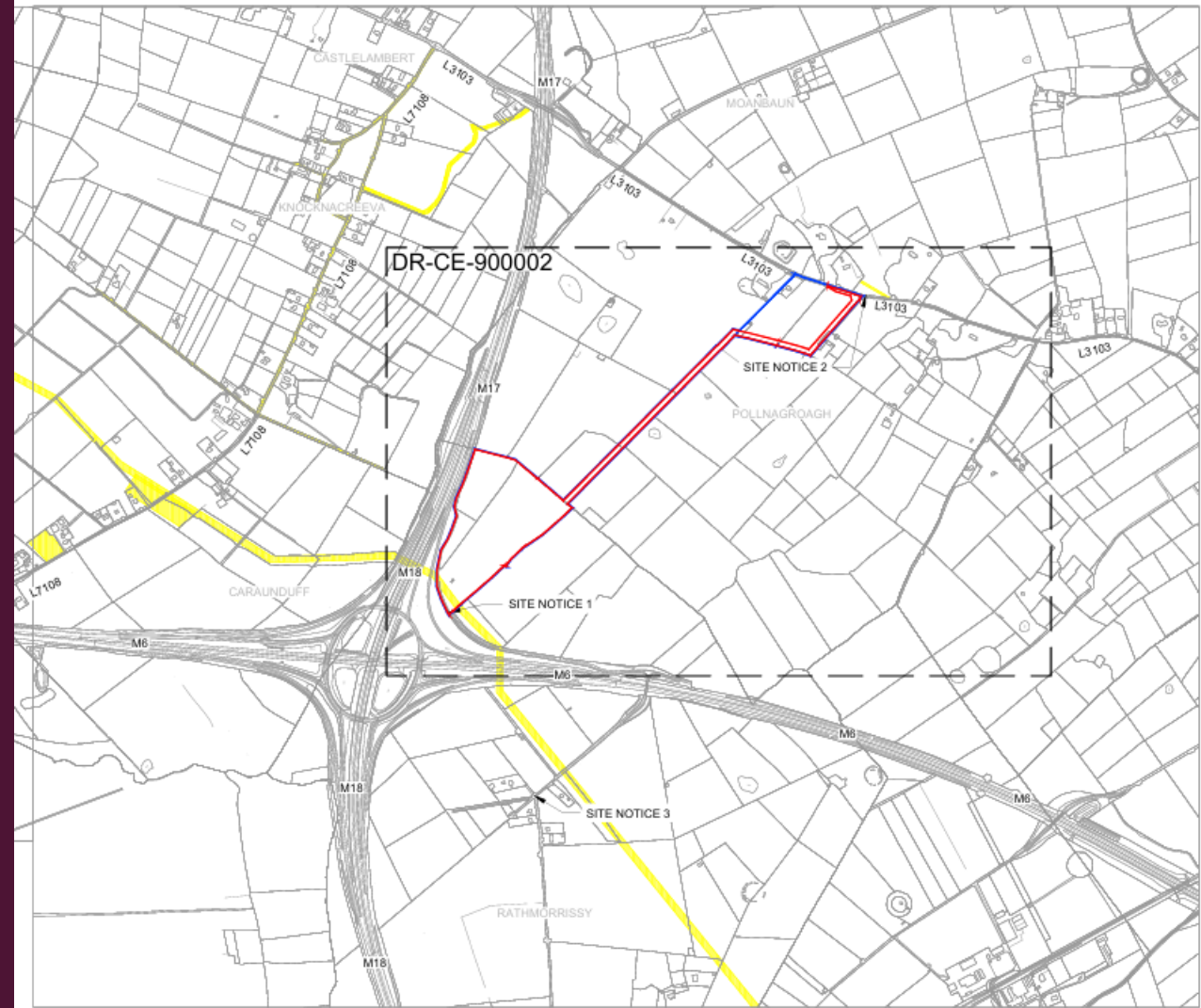
Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

CASHLA PEAKER PLANT

ACP-324113-26

**REQUIREMENTS OF
SECTION 37E(4) – (7) OF
THE PLANNING AND
DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000
(AS AMENDED)**

LOCATION OF DEVELOPMENT



DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT (AS PER STATUTORY NOTICES)

- a) The construction of a proposed power plant which will comprise an open-cycle gas turbine (OCGT) and generator with ancillary equipment including a 30m high stack and emissions monitoring unit, fuel storage and supply systems, cooling and air systems, compressed air and gas handling skids, a grid step-up transformer within a bund, an auxiliary transformer and an emergency diesel generator.

The construction of ten buildings on-site including one single-storey administration building (approximately 390sqm), one single storey ESB Substation building (approximately 32.5sqm), one single-storey workshop building (approximately 750.5sqm), one single storey water treatment plant building (approximately 104sqm), one covered fuel forwarding and unloading area (approximately 104sqm), one single-storey electrical control building (approximately 243.5sqm), one single storey gas analyser kiosk (approximately 6.25sqm), one single-storey boiler house kiosk (approximately 37sqm) including ten boiler flues (approximately 5.67m above ground level), one single-storey ancillary pressure reduction kiosk (approximately 21.7sqm) including four vents (approximately 3.72m high) and a single-storey electrical and instrumentation kiosk (approximately 19sqm). The installation of five above-ground tanks including two bunded fuel tanks (approximately 11.1m high), one fire and service water tank (approximately 13m high), one demineralised water tank (approximately 15.4 high) and one demineralised waste tank (approximately 5m high).

b) Ancillary works including the provision of a new gated vehicular entrance from the L3103, the construction of an access road from the proposed Cashla Peaker Plant site entrance to the proposed new entrance on the L3103, the demolition of one farm outbuilding (in ruin), construction of internal circulation routes, hardstanding, security fencing (2.4m high), CCTV and gates, provision of a wastewater treatment system and associated underground wastewater storage tanks, drainage (foul and storm), soakaway retention pond, propane tank, underground firewater retention tanks, parking (12 no. spaces including mobility and EV Parking) and laydown area, 20 no. cycle parking spaces, landscaping and all ancillary on-site development works.

c) The construction of a Gas Networks Ireland (GNI) above ground pressure regulating installation, known as an Above Ground Installation (AGI). The AGI (named Rathmorrissy AGI) will connect to the mains transmission gas network which exists within the site. The AGI infrastructure will occupy an enclosed area of approximately 2,500 sq.m. It encompasses five single-storey buildings: a gas analyser kiosk (approximately 6.25 sqm), a boiler house kiosk (approximately 37 sqm) including ten boiler flues approximately 5.67m above ground level and emergency generator, two pressure reduction kiosks – main kiosk (approximately 72 sqm) including nine vents (approximately 5.24m high), and ancillary kiosk (approximately 21.7 sqm) including four vents (approximately 3.72m high) and an electrical and instrumentation kiosk (approximately 19 sqm). Ancillary infrastructure will include a gas meter, filters, heat exchangers, and above-ground pipework. The compound will include lighting, 3 no. parking spaces, internal circulation routes, concrete bases to support the infrastructure, and stone chipped surfacing. It will be secured by an approximately 2.4 m high fence with an access gate.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT AND NATURA IMPACT STATEMENT

The “project”, subject of the EIAR and NIS, includes the development subject to this application, in addition to **the construction of a 220kV substation compound within the Cashla Peaker Plant site and the construction an underground grid connection route from the proposed ESB Substation in the Cashla Peaker Plant Site to the Cashla 220kV Substation** located across the townlands of Rathmorrissy, Pollnagroagh, Moanbaun, Castlelambert, Knocknacreeva, Caraunduff, Caherbriskaun, Lisheenkyle East, Barrettspark, Cashla, Athenry, Co. Galway.

***Permission for the substation and underground electricity cabling and associated works are subject to a concurrent application under ACP-324162-26 – under S182 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).**

FOR INFORMATION: S182 APPLICATION

The application is currently on public display. Any submission or observation must be made directly to ACP no later than 5:30 p.m. on 26th of May 2026.

The proposed development will consist of:

- a) The construction of a 4-bay 220kV electrical substation comprising of: one single-storey 220kV Air-Insulated Switchgear (AIS) Substation Building (approximately 388sqm) with welfare facilities, transformer, all associated electrical plant and apparatus, one telecommunication mast (approximately 36m high), security fencing, entrance gate, lighting, lightning masts, internal tracks, drainage (foul and storm), carparking (4 no. spaces), watermains and all ancillary works.
- b) The installation of 220kV underground electricity cabling connecting the proposed 220kV electrical substation to the existing Cashla 220kV substation within a trench, consisting of underground cabling and ducting, 10 no. joint bays and associated communication chambers and link boxes, 2 no. crossings of the M6 motorway and 1 no. crossing of the M17 motorway by way of horizontal directional drilling, and all associated site development and reinstatement works.
- Link to application documentation - [324162 | An Coimisiún Pleanála](#) –

Note: There is no statutory requirement to submit a managers report to the elected members prior to the Local Authority making a submission to ACP

APPLICATION DOCUMENTATION

What Does the Application Include?

- Planning Application Form, Statutory Notice & Consents
- Drawing Pack
- Planning Statement
- Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) including NTS and Appendices
- Natura Impact Statement

Where Can I View the Application Documentation?

- A dedicated project website is available at: www.cashlapeakerplantsid.ie
- Galway County Council Planning Counter
- Office of An Coimisiún Pleanála

THE ROLE OF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL

- In accordance with Section 37E (4) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the Planning Authority are required to submit to the Board a report setting out the views of the authority on the effects of the proposed development on the environment and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
- The report will outline the relevant policy objectives contained in the Galway County Council Development Plan 2022 – 2028.
- Galway County Council will not be determining the application.

THE ROLE OF THE ELECTED MEMBERS

- Prior to submission to An Coimisiún Pleanála, as per Section 37E(5) of the Act, a report shall be submitted to the members of the authority and seek their views on the proposed development. The views of the members at the April Plenary Meeting will be recorded and attached as an appendix to the report.

ANY QUESTIONS





Roads & Transportation
Department Report:

PLANNING AUTHORITY
REFERENCE NUMBER:

ACP-324113-26
ACP-324162-26

Note: the following report is based on information available at the time the report was prepared and denotes the observations and recommendations of the Roads & Transportation Department at that time.

Address of proposed development:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Located within the townlands of Rathmorrissy, Pollnagroagh, Moanbaun, Castlelambert, Knocknacreeva, Caraunduff, Caherbriskaun, Lisheenkyle East, Barrettspark, Cashla, Athenry, County Galway 	
Brief Description of proposed development:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case reference: ACP-324113-26 -Bord Gáis Energy Limited; Construction of an open-cycle gas turbine power plant (named 'Cashla Peaker Plant'), primarily fueled by Natural Gas, Above Ground Installation and ancillary development. Case reference: ACP-324162-26 – Bord Gáis Cashla Peaker SID - 220kV Substation and 220kV underground electricity cabling connecting to the existing Cashla 220kV substation 	
Road Network Ref:	Speed Limits applicable:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery Route: L3103, R339, R347, M6 and the M17. The Grid connection Route proposes the use of the LS-7109, LT-71093, LS-7108. LT-71082 & LP-3103 to New Substation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 120kph Motorways 100kph Nationals 80kph Regionals 60Kph Locals

Road Safety Traffic Concerns:

Road Safety Auditing, Sightlines, Stopping Sight Distances & Forward Visibility.

- ✓ *Sightlines and stopping sight distances for substation development entrance are not demonstrated. The Applicant shall submit the following in longitudinal and revised site layout plan onto a topographical survey with sufficient detail and background mapping to clearly demonstrate the full sightlines and stopping sight distances of 90m can be achieved at proposed Permanent substation Entrance. The clear sightline triangle should be assessed from a distance of 2.4 metres back from the road edge. Supporting photographs shall be submitted. This should include where required setback of the front boundary roadside wall is behind the sightline envelope. Note that reducing hedge heights is not allowable or satisfactory insofar through road users shall be able to see to the form of the new junction for the full sightline distance. All stationary objects such as overhead services poles are to be setback behind the sightline envelope. The vertical envelope of visibility (i.e. intervisibility) has not been demonstrated in accordance with TII standards, in particular the provisions of visibility requirements as stated within DN-GEO-03031 Rural Road Link Design, May 2023– Section 2 Sight Distance, Figure 2.1.*
- ✓ *The Applicant is to highlight on the revised Site Layout Plan and site location map any boundaries belonging to adjacent landowners that will require setback to achieve the sightlines required. These boundaries shall be shown setback and shall be highlighted and labelled on the revised drawing. Written permission to setback and maintain any boundaries outside the ownership of the applicant is required along with supporting folios and maps to demonstrate ownership.*

- ✓ *In the absence of a recommended Road Safety Audit Stage 1 / 2 to reflect the entire scheme including new vehicular accesses onto the public road network and significant scale of roadside interventions being proposed in accordance with TII Road Safety Audit guidelines GE-STY-01024.*
- ✓ *The Applicant shall address all problems raised with the Stage 1/2 Audit in full and submit revised Site Layout Plans to include the recommendations of the Audits.*
- ✓ *The applicant has not submitted a detailed Traffic and Transport Assessment in accordance with TII publications - PE-PDV-02045, where a comprehensive review of all current potential transport impacts relating to the development including information pertaining to generated trips to and from shall be further assessed. Any recommendations arising from the assessment, or alternative measures proposed therein by the developer, shall be incorporated into the final design of the development at the expense of the developer.*
- ✓ *The Traffic and transport assessment shall fully assess any potential indirect adverse impacts on road safety (including the impact of on-site **20m public lighting mast** and in absence of lux contouring reports/ & glare assessments of the proposed development) to ensure compliance to the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012), sub section 3.7 Avoiding adverse impacts on existing and future roads.*

Site-Specific Grid Connection Infrastructure Drawings

- ✓ *The Joint Bay Layout x 10 number as proposed for the grid connection works are shown to be constructed within the public road carriageway and further indicate extensive bay dimensions of 8.0m in length and 2.5 m in width, with a communications duct and a C2 Communications precast chamber located externally to this footprint with a depth of 1.850m approx. below road level. The scale of the unit, combined with the associated infrastructure, would effectively sterilise the public roadway. This would prevent Galway County Council from carrying out essential future works, including drainage upgrades, installation or extension of Group Water Scheme mains, and the provision or alteration of house service connections.*

Relocation of Joint Slabs

- ✓ *Joint Slabs must be relocated off the public road and positioned within adjacent lands under the applicant's control. It has not been demonstrated that no off carriageway alternative is practical in addition to the feasibility and construction of placement of such joint slabs within strategic passing bays.*
- ✓ *For joint bay structures that interface with national roads, technical acceptance Report Technical Acceptance of joint bay structures beneath regional and/or local roads and which do not interface with national roads should be carried out in accordance with DOT Circular RW 10/2021.*
- ✓ *A Technical Acceptance Report (TAR) shall record the agreed basis and criteria for the detailed design of the joint bay structure; and Certification by the Design/Assessor/Checker confirming that the design, assessment, specification or construction works complies with the TAR.*
- ✓ *Any potential Joint bays that adjoins the carriageway or within public road margins shall conform to standards required by the Roads Authorities include clarification of lid type (concrete) being proposed or otherwise.*
- ✓ *Construction shall be in accordance with relevant TII publications.*
- ✓ *All backfill around these structures to be placed and compacted in accordance with the Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads and/or the TII document "Requirements for the Reinstatement of Openings in National Roads CC-PAV-04007" as a minimum.*

- ✓ Responsibility for the maintenance of Link Box / chamber lids remains with the Asset Owner or their successors.

Haulage Route Analysis

- ✓ Submit a full haulage route analysis clearly outlining any required works, such as:
- ✓ Amendments to existing junctions (e.g., widening, thus all physical alterations to the public road margins).
- ✓ Road widening, signage, edge strengthening, and tree/hedge clearance.
- ✓ Include articulated and reflective abnormal load auto track swept path analysis.

Construction Traffic Route

- ✓ Regarding Grid connection works - Provide details of the construction traffic route, including concrete, tarmacadam, stone delivery routes.
- ✓ A draft construction programme setting out timelines for:
- ✓ construction of the ducting
- ✓ construction of joint chambers
- ✓ transport of cabling
- ✓ pulling of cabling
- ✓ jointing of cabling

Of which, shall be submitted for comment to the Road Authority in order to minimise disruption to the road user.

- ✓ The applicant shall further revise the grid connection traffic management plan to reduce extensive time periods of proposed road closures and impact to the public road margins whereby mitigated through alternative techniques, methodology insofar where grid connections works shall consider cabling jointing works in strategic passing bay locations in order to enable traffic to continue their routes during the construction phase and thus reduce impact on narrow local diversions routes.

Transport Load Assessment

- ✓ The laden weight of the HGV and articulated rigids transporting the abnormal loads shall be assessed with route suitability, particularly for culvert and bridge crossings.

Directional drilling in proximity to Motorway Bridges

- ✓ A detailed structural survey is required for any works where directional drilling is proposed.

Culvert Installation Restriction

- ✓ Note that ducting installations over culverts within the public road will not be permitted by Galway County Council.

Road Opening Licence (ROL) Requirement & Road Closure

- ✓ Any works affecting the public road network, including junctions and grid connection infrastructure, will require a Road Opening Licence and possibly a Road Closure:
- ✓ Preliminary trial holes under a ROL are required to confirm the cable route.
- ✓ A separate ROL and possible Road Closure will be required for the main construction works.

Observations:

- See above

If Deemed Conditional:

In the event of conditional grant permission, it is considered as a minimum that the following conditions should be attached on Behalf of the Road Authority:

- ✓ *Prior to commencement of development, details of the following shall be submitted to, and agreed in advance with the area engineer and agreed in writing with, the planning authority:*
- ✓ *(i) Technical & structural pavement analysis such as level 1 and Level 2 pavement analysis that includes recommended Falling Weight Deflectometer (FWD) Testing, Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) and core logs shall be provided to assess the pavement stress and strains at the critical design locations as required are to be calculated on proposed regional and local road trafficked routes, including number of axles to failure calculation requires verification.*
- ✓ *(ii) Structural evaluation of all trafficked regional and local road network structures shall be evaluated and assessed for trafficked abnormal loads being generated by development.*
- ✓ *(iii) The Applicant shall submit the following in support of the proposed development:*
- ✓ *(iv) A comprehensive and detailed traffic and transport assessment in accordance to TII publications PE-PDV-02045.*
- ✓ *(v) On site overhead lighting report assessed in line with the adverse impacts of indirect luminaire spill in accordance with National Spatial guideline publications (2012).*
- ✓ *(vi) Prior to commencement of the development, the applicant shall commission a road safety audit (stage 1 / stage 2 audit) . Recommendations arising from the audit, or alternative measures proposed therein by the developer and accepted by the auditor, shall be incorporated into the final design of the development at the expense of the developer. The audit shall be completed by an independent road safety auditor, at the developer's expense, and shall be submitted the planning authority.*
- ✓ *(vii) Prior to commencement of the development, A design report shall be submitted to Roads & Transportation Dept and to the satisfaction of the Area Engineer in accordance to TII standards 'DN-GEO-03030 Design Phase Procedure for Road Safety Improvement Schemes, Urban Renewal Schemes and Local Improvement Schemes' whilst on receipt of detailed design works to public road physical alterations including swept path analysis Road widening, Road make up materials, specifications and finishes that includes Drainage infrastructure and necessary visibility works which shall be further assessed as part of the Road Safety Audit Report.*
- ✓ *(viii) Prior to commencement of development, and to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority, The applicant shall Submit a revised site layout plan to demonstrate sight distance triangles from new substation trafficked junction onto LP 3103 clearly showing details of both exit and entry sightline triangles and details of the vertical alignment available in the form of a longitudinal section in order to depict the existing road profile sightlines in both directions in respect of vehicular entrances. The required visibility from the proposed entrance and access to/from the LP-3103 local road network should strictly*

comply with Galway County Development plan 2022-2028 per DM Standard 28 and TII standards, in particular the provisions of visibility requirements as stated within Table 5.4 and Table 5.5 of TII Publications - DN-GEO-03060 Geometric Design of Junctions (priority junctions, direct accesses, roundabouts, grade separated and compact grade separated junctions) May 2023 for the design speed of the road from an x-distance 2.4m setback from the road edge and measured along the y-distance to the nearside road edge at specified object height from the dwell area to the sightline distance in accordance to TII standards. Forward visibility and stopping sight distances pertaining to right hand turning movements shall also be presented in both directions for each entrance in accordance with TII standards. The current extents of current hedgerow and/or boundary walling shall be set back to achieve clear and unobstructed sightlines in both directions and replaced with soft landscaping with new roadside passively safe boundary treatments proposed.

- ✓ *(ix). A letter(s) of consent from any adjoining landowner and relevant third parties consenting to set back their boundary in order to permanently achieve clear and unobstructed required sight distances where current sight distance y- splay traverses through adjoining third party boundary is required.*
- ✓ *(x). The applicant shall demonstrate that any adjoining lands to achieve required sight distance triangles as referred to above are within their control i.e. sightlines triangles outside the applicants red line boundary shall be outlined in blue on a revised site location map as per Article 22 (2)(b)(ii) of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended).*
- ✓ *(xi) Sight distance triangles shall be maintained and kept free from boundary walling, vegetation, overhead poles or other obstructions that would reduce the minimum visibility required.*
- ✓ *(xii). Grid connection Joint Slabs must be relocated off the public road and repositioned within adjacent lands under the applicant's control. It has not been demonstrated that no off carriageway alternative is practical in addition to the feasibility and construction of placement of such joint slabs within alternative /strategic passing bays.*
- ✓ *(Xiii).A technical acceptance Report Technical Acceptance of joint bay structures beneath regional and/or local roads and which do not interface with national roads should be carried out in accordance with DOT Circular RW 10/2021 and TII standards. Technical Acceptance Report (TAR) shall record the agreed basis and criteria for the detailed design of the joint bay structure; and Certification by the Design/Assessor/Checker confirming that the design, assessment, specification or construction works complies with the TAR.*
- ✓ *(xiv) Third party Networks shall be contacted prior to construction of any works shall be consented in advance by each service provider.*

REASON: In interest of Traffic Safety

- ✓ *(i)All surface water generated by this development shall be disposed of within the site and shall not be discharged onto the public road or the adjoining property.*
- ✓ *(ii) Proposed development vehicular entrance(s) onto the public road and any tie into the existing road margin shall be cleared, graded, levelled and surfaced to a standard suitable for use to the satisfaction of the Area Engineer to prevent unbound material (loose stone) entering onto the public road. Proposed roads make up and tie in to include suitable drainage infrastructure to collect and dispose of surface water runoff from the existing*

public road. The provisions shall not increase the likelihood of flooding to the development property, the road or adjoining properties.

REASON: In the interests of road safety and proper planning and sustainable development to the area.

- ✓ Prior to commencement of development, details of the following shall be submitted to, and agreed in advance with the Area Engineer and agreed in writing with, the planning authority:
- ✓ (i) An independent vehicular Lazer road condition pavement survey for all surrounding local roads and bridges along the grid connection route, abnormal load routes, haul routes shall be carried out at the developer's expense by a suitably qualified person/firm during pre and post construction of the proposed development. This survey shall include a schedule of required works to enable the haul routes to cater for construction-related traffic. The extent and scope of the survey and the schedule of works shall be agreed to the satisfaction of the area engineer prior to commencement of development. The survey shall give a description of the local road network including each chainage section, lane, survey direction and measured length for each section. GPS co-ordinates at the beginning and end of each section shall also be tabulated with a clear map of start point of survey / chainage 0m-10m etc and shall include pavement surface condition index (PCSI), structural index and surface index results for each 10 meter section surveyed. Results shall include details of any pavement distress including type, severity and quantity within each 10m intervals sections of local road surveyed. Post construction phase, Road Condition Pavement survey shall then be repeated in order for the Planning Authority to assess any damage of the public road network that may arise during the development works.
- ✓ (ii) Within three months of the cessation of the use of each public road/haul route to transport material to and from the site, aforementioned road survey and scheme of works detailing works to repair any damage to these routes shall be agreed in advance with the area engineer and shall be submitted to the planning authority.
- ✓ (iii) All works arising from the aforementioned arrangements shall be completed to the satisfaction of the area engineer at the developer's expense within 3 months of the cessation of each road's use as a haul route or other for the proposed development.

REASON: In the interests of road safety.

- ✓ All necessary measures shall be taken by the applicant to prevent the spillage or deposit of clay, rubble or other debris on adjoining roads during the course of the works.

REASON: In the interests of road safety.

- ✓ (i) A revised detailed Traffic Management Plan to incorporate existing road conditions, grid connection and cabling/ jointing works including detailed design of temporary traffic measures and signs for roadworks shall be submitted prior to development commencement and agreed in advance with the Area Engineer, which sets out proposed measures and best practice to be implemented during the construction phase of development. The outline TMP should address the following: Site Access and Egress, Traffic Management Signage, Stop/Go or road closure/diversion arrangements, Traffic Management Speed Limits, Road Cleaning, Road Condition, Implementation of Traffic Management Plan. It shall include details of construction traffic routing, the number of trips generated for deliveries and collections of materials from the site, provision for a storage compound and parking provision within the site, wheel washing and measures for control of dust and other pollutant materials the installation of which shall be the responsibility of the applicant.

- ✓ (ii) A road opening license and an abnormal load license shall be obtained from Galway County Council, with aforementioned TMP & accompanying detailed Traffic management Design in accordance with Traffic Signs Manual (Chapter 8 - Temporary Traffic Measures and Signs for Roadworks), to be further agreed with Local Area Engineers including a phasing programme of the works indicating the timescale within which it is intended to use each public route to facilitate construction of the proposed development.
- ✓ (iii) Regarding abnormal delivery routes, the Motorway/National Dual Carriageway Clearance shall be sought For abnormal loads exceeding 3 metres in width, the applicant shall contact TII's Motorway Traffic Control Centre via email at abnormalload@mtcc.ie
- ✓ (iv) The applicant is advised that under a separate process, formal consent under Section 53 of the Roads Act, 1993 (as amended), for the proposed crossing of the M6 & M17 Motorway. Prior to the commencement of any development to implement this permission, the applicant shall submit to Galway County Council documentary evidence that Section 53 consent has been approved for the proposed M6 & M17 Motorway Crossing.
- ✓ (v) Public Road including areas within Public Road Margins backfill and reinstatements including finished road levels shall be in accordance with Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads (Purple Book – April 2017) as amended and shall be to the **satisfaction of the Area Engineer.**
- ✓ (vi) Backfilling and reinstatement of excavations to be in accordance with the DOT's Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads and in the case of National Roads, TII's publication CC-PAV-04007 "Requirements for the reinstatement of Openings in National Roads". Additional ground improvement measures may be required, derived from the site investigations carried out. **Where local road width is 6m or less, a full width of pavement reinstatement is required.** This will include reconstruction of the DBM binder base and subbase on roads significantly impacted. In addition, certain roads may require additional strengthening in the form of geotextiles and shall be placed at the cost of the applicant as deemed applicable by the Roads Authority.

REASON: In the interests of road safety.

- ✓ Prior to commencement of development, the developer/applicants shall lodge a transportation bond with the planning authority of a cash deposit amount to the sum to be agreed with the Planning authority, or other cash amount or form of security, as may be acceptable to the relevant planning authority, to secure the reinstatement of the public road and road markings which may be damaged by the transport of materials to the site, to secure the provision of existing drains, open space and other services required in connection with the development coupled with an agreement empowering the relevant planning authority to apply such security or part thereof to the satisfactory reinstatement of the public road network which includes any identified diversion routes.

Reason: In the interest of traffic safety and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

- ✓ On completion of the development, a stage 3 road safety audit shall be completed by an independent road safety auditor, at the developer's expense, and submitted for the written approval of the planning authority. Any safety issues highlighted in the audit shall be reviewed and addressed by the developer at their expense.

Reason: In the interests of road safety

Report prepared by:

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Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

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