

Aidan Kelly
Castlelambert
Athenry
Co. Galway
H65X738

26th May 2026

An Coimisiún Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

Re: Formal Observation/Objection – Application Reference ACP-324162 – Proposed Cable Route, Cashla Peaker Plant, Athenry, Co. Galway

Dear An Coimisiún Pleanála,

I am writing as a directly affected resident of Castlelambert, Athenry, Co. Galway (Eircode H65X738), which lies on the route of the proposed cable associated with the above-referenced application. I wish to formally and strongly object to this application on the following grounds.

1. COMPLETE LOSS OF ACCESS — CABLE JUNCTION BOX AT THE ENTRANCE TO OUR ROAD

I wish to draw An Coimisiún Pleanála's attention to a matter of the utmost seriousness. The applicant's proposals include the installation of a major cable junction box at the top of the small residential road on which our home is located. This junction box, combined with the associated cable laying works, would effectively cut off all vehicular access to and from our road for the duration of the construction works — estimated at six months.

This is not a matter of reduced or inconvenient access. Our road would be completely impassable. My family and our neighbours would be unable to leave or enter our homes by vehicle for up to six months. This is an extraordinary and wholly unacceptable situation that I do not believe has been adequately assessed or addressed in the applicant's documentation.

I call on An Coimisiún Pleanála to require the applicant to:

- (a) Confirm explicitly in writing how vehicular access to Castlelambert will be maintained at all times during works;
- (b) Demonstrate that the positioning of the junction box at the entrance to this residential road is the only viable option and that alternative locations have been fully assessed; and
- (c) Submit a comprehensive, independently verified Traffic and Access Management Plan specifically addressing the Castlelambert road prior to any decision being made.

2. SEVERE AND PROLONGED DISRUPTION TO A RESIDENTIAL ROAD

Even setting aside the junction box issue, the proposed cable route would require works on the public road serving Castletambert and surrounding properties for an estimated period of six months. This is an entirely disproportionate and unacceptable imposition on the residents of this road.

I would request that An Coimisiún Pleanála require the applicant, Bord Gáis Energy, to demonstrate unequivocally that:

- (a) This duration of works is strictly necessary and cannot be reduced;
- (b) A phased or alternative construction methodology has been fully assessed and ruled out; and
- (c) All alternative routing options, including routes that avoid residential roads, have been comprehensively considered.

We have kids being collected at 12/1.30 and 2.30 from Lisheenkyle National School. This is going to be a 15 minute delay each way three times a day. That's an extra 1.5 hours in the car for us

3. DIRECT AND SERIOUS IMPACT ON A REGISTERED HEALTHCARE SERVICE FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

This is a matter I wish to bring to An Coimisiún Pleanála's particular and urgent attention.

My wife is a qualified and registered Occupational Therapist who operates a clinical practice from our home at Castletambert, Athenry. The company is called Functional Occupational Therapy. Her clients are children — many of whom have disabilities, developmental delays, autism spectrum conditions, and other complex additional needs. These are among the most vulnerable members of our community and their families depend on regular, uninterrupted access to our home for scheduled therapeutic appointments.

Complete loss of road access to Castletambert for six months would directly and totally prevent these children and their families from attending therapy. Interruption to occupational therapy programmes for children with disabilities can have serious and lasting developmental consequences. Therapeutic progress is cumulative and time-sensitive; enforced gaps in treatment can undo months of hard-won gains for vulnerable children.

Furthermore, in the event of a medical emergency during the works, the inability of emergency vehicles to access our road due to the junction box installation could have life-threatening consequences.

I am not aware that the applicant has conducted any assessment of the impact of the proposed works on home-based healthcare services along the route. This is a significant and unacceptable omission in the applicant's Environmental Impact Assessment Report.

4. INAPPROPRIATE FRAGMENTATION OF A SINGLE PROJECT INTO SEPARATE APPLICATIONS

I wish to raise a serious concern regarding the manner in which this project has been brought before An Coimisiún Pleanála. The Cashla Peaker Plant and its associated cable route are, in substance, a single integrated energy infrastructure project. They have, however, been submitted as two separate planning applications — ACP-324113 (the Peaker Plant) and ACP-324162 (the Cable Route) — with separate documentation, separate Environmental Impact Assessment Reports, and separate observation processes.

This fragmentation is deeply problematic for the following reasons:

- (a) It makes it extremely difficult for affected communities and members of the public to understand the full cumulative impact of the project as a whole. Each application in isolation presents an incomplete picture of what is actually being proposed;
- (b) It places an unreasonable and disproportionate burden on local residents and community groups who wish to engage meaningfully with the planning process. Concerned residents must now review, understand, and respond to two separate sets of complex planning documentation — often running to hundreds of pages — within the same timeframe;
- (c) It imposes doubled professional costs on any community group or residents' association seeking expert planning, legal, or technical advice in order to make informed submissions. A single integrated application would require one set of professional assessments; two fragmented applications require two;
- (d) It imposes a doubled financial burden on individual residents. Each observation requires a separate €50 fee per application per person. Residents living on modest incomes who wish to have their voices heard on a project that will directly and severely affect their daily lives are effectively penalised twice for the applicant's decision to split this project into separate applications; and
- (e) The fragmentation prevents An Coimisiún Pleanála itself from assessing the full cumulative environmental, traffic, and community impact of the project in a single, coherent process.

I submit that the splitting of this project into two separate applications has the effect — whether intentional or not — of undermining the integrity of the public participation process. I call on An Coimisiún Pleanála to give serious consideration to whether these two applications should be assessed together as a single integrated project, and to consider what weight, if any, should be given to the fragmented manner in which they have been presented.

5. INADEQUATE CONSULTATION WITH DIRECTLY AFFECTED RESIDENTS

I do not believe that meaningful consultation has been carried out with residents who are directly on the proposed cable route. The scale, duration, and severity of impact — including the complete loss of road access — warranted a comprehensive, door-to-door consultation process with all affected households. I am not satisfied that this occurred.

6. FAILURE TO DEMONSTRATE NECESSITY OF THE PROPOSED ROUTE AND JUNCTION BOX LOCATION

I call on An Coimisiún Pleanála to require the applicant to provide clear evidence that:

- (a) The routing of the cable along the road at Castlelambert is the only viable option;
- (b) The positioning of the cable junction box at the entrance to our road is strictly necessary; and
- (c) Alternative locations for the junction box that would not sever access to a residential road have been genuinely and thoroughly assessed.

7. CONCLUSION

For the reasons set out above, I strongly urge An Coimisiún Pleanála to:

- (a) Refuse permission for the cable route and junction box as currently proposed; or alternatively
- (b) Require the applicant to substantially revise the routing and junction box location to ensure unobstructed vehicular access to Castlelambert is maintained at all times throughout construction;
- (c) Require a full independent assessment of the impact on healthcare and emergency services accessing properties along the route;
- (d) Require a robust, resident-agreed Traffic and Access Management Plan, approved by Galway County Council, prior to any commencement of works; and
- (e) Consider whether applications ACP-324162 and ACP-324113 should be assessed together as a single integrated project, given that they relate to what is in substance one development.

The complete severance of access to a residential road for six months — on which a registered healthcare clinic for vulnerable children operates — is, in my submission, wholly incompatible with proper planning and sustainable development. The fragmented manner in which this project has been presented to An Coimisiún Pleanála and to the public further compounds these concerns.

Yours faithfully,

Aidan Kelly

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