

OBSERVATION/SUBMISSION TO PLANNING APPLICATION

Case Reference: 324162

Caroline and Patrick Harris
RATHMORRISSY, ATHENRY
Rathmorrissey
Athenry
Galway
H65 TR53

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

Date: 25 May 2026

Re: Observation to the proposed development of a 220kV substation, telecommunications mast and underground electricity cable infrastructure with associated works.

Location: Rathmorrissey, Pollnagroagh, Moanbaun, Castlambert, Knocknacreeva, Caraunduff, Caherbriskau, Lisheenkyle East, Barrettspark and Cashla (Townlands), Athenry, Co. Galway

Applicant: Bord Gáis Energy Limited

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are very concerned with the prospect of this development , how the applications have been split , impact on human health, how our private road has been used and the long term impactions for our children and the community

Having reviewed the application documentation, I have outlined my concerns regarding the proposed development

Absence of Standalone Noise Assessment

I am also concerned that no standalone noise assessment appears to have been carried out regarding the proposed grid connection infrastructure, including the substation and associated works. I do not believe

sufficient assessment has been provided regarding potential construction noise, operational noise or the impact on nearby residents located along the proposed cable route and surrounding rural roads.

Cumulative Construction Impact on Health and Wellbeing

I believe insufficient information has been provided regarding the cumulative impact of construction activity, heavy traffic movements, excavation works, noise and prolonged disruption on the health, wellbeing and quality of life of residents living close to the proposed infrastructure works.

Unsuitable Rural Location

I believe the proposed substation and mast are not suitable for this rural location. The development would introduce permanent industrial-scale infrastructure, including a 220kV substation, security fencing, lighting and telecommunications equipment, into an area characterised by homes, farms and open countryside.

Pressure for Further Expansion Near Homes and Communities

I am also concerned that approval of this development could create pressure for further expansion and additional energy infrastructure within the area over time. In my opinion, this type of industrial infrastructure is not appropriate so close to homes, farms, schools and established rural communities.

Disruption to Rural and Residential Communities Along Route

The proposed 8.1km underground cable route would pass through a number of established rural and residential communities, including Rathmorrissey, Castlelambert, Knocknacreeva, Caherbriskaun, Lisheenkyle East and Cashla. These are active farming and residential areas with homes, schools, farms and local businesses located along narrow rural roads. I am concerned about the level of disruption the proposed works would cause to residents, farms, local roads and daily community life.

Cumulative Impact on Community Access Routes

The roads affected by the proposed cable route are important community access routes serving homes, farms, schools and businesses across the wider Athenry area. In my view, the cumulative impact of prolonged construction activity, HGV traffic, road closures and disruption on daily community movement has not been adequately addressed within the application documentation.

EMF Exposure and Long-Term Impact on Animal Health

I am also concerned that insufficient information has been provided regarding the possible long-term impact of major underground infrastructure and electromagnetic field (EMF) exposure on livestock and animal health in an active farming area. In my view, the cumulative impact of prolonged construction works, groundwater disturbance and underground infrastructure on farms and rural properties has not been fully addressed within the application.

Damage to Hedgerows, Root Systems and Roadside Vegetation

The proposed cable route passes through established rural hedgerows, mature roadside vegetation and tree-lined sections which form part of the local biodiversity network and rural landscape character. I am concerned that trenching works and excavation activity could result in long-term damage to hedgerows, root systems and roadside vegetation throughout the area.

Long-Term Landscape Reinstatement and Visual Amenity

I am also concerned that insufficient information has been provided regarding long-term landscape reinstatement and ongoing maintenance responsibilities following completion of the proposed works. In my view, the cumulative impact of vegetation loss, hedgerow disturbance and infrastructure works could have a lasting effect on the visual amenity and landscape character of the surrounding rural area.

Safety Risks Near Lisheenkyle National School

The proposed cable route passes in close proximity to Lisheenkyle National School along narrow rural roads with limited visibility and no proper hard shoulders. I am concerned that trenching works, construction activity, increased traffic volumes and temporary traffic management measures would create additional safety risks and disruption for children, parents and school staff, particularly during school drop-off and collection times.

Additional Safety Risks for Young People and Vulnerable Road Users

Children and teenagers regularly use these roads to travel to school, sports training and other local activities. I am concerned that prolonged construction works, trenching activity, temporary road restrictions and increased heavy goods vehicle traffic associated with the proposed cable route would create additional safety risks for young people, cyclists, pedestrians and other vulnerable road users throughout the area.

Long-Term Impact on Rural Development Patterns and Amenity

I believe insufficient consideration has been given to the long-term impact that concentrating large-scale energy infrastructure within the area could have on future rural development patterns, residential amenity and the character of the local community. The proposed development would introduce permanent industrial-scale infrastructure into an established rural landscape and could undermine the sustainable growth of the surrounding rural community, including the future use and development potential of nearby residential properties and landholdings.

Cumulative Industrialisation of the Wider Cashla Peaker Project

In my view, the cumulative industrialisation associated with the wider Cashla Peaker Project, including substations, underground infrastructure, lighting, fencing and associated works, would have a significant negative impact on rural amenity, residential character and the long-term sustainability of surrounding rural communities. I am also concerned about the long-term effect this level of industrialisation could have on the quality of life, enjoyment of property and future viability of surrounding homes and agricultural landholdings.

Facilitating Fossil Fuel Infrastructure Against Climate Policy

The proposed substation, mast and underground cable infrastructure are intended to support the operation of new gas-fired electricity generation infrastructure. I am concerned that the proposed development would facilitate long-term fossil fuel energy infrastructure at a time when national and EU climate policy requires significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and greater transition towards sustainable and lower-carbon energy systems.

Broader Climate and Sustainability Implications of Grid Infrastructure

Although this application relates to associated grid infrastructure rather than the generating station itself, the proposed substation and underground cable route are necessary components of the overall energy development. I believe the broader climate and sustainability implications of the infrastructure should therefore be fully considered as part of the planning assessment process.

Inadequate Consultation Across Connected Applications

I do not believe adequate consultation or engagement has taken place with residents and communities affected by the wider Cashla Peaker Project. Although the peaker plant, substation and cable route are being progressed through separate applications, they form part of one overall development with significant impacts on the surrounding area.

Residents and Landowners Not Individually Engaged

I am concerned that many residents, landowners and businesses affected by the proposed development were not individually engaged regarding the practical impact the project could have on homes, farms, local roads, property access and daily community life. No clear information appears to have been provided regarding issues such as noise, vibration, road closures, rock-breaking, groundwater impacts or future maintenance requirements.

Cannot Be Assessed in Isolation from the Wider Development

Although this application relates to grid connection infrastructure, I believe the proposed substation, mast and cable route cannot be properly assessed in isolation from the wider connected energy development to which it relates. The planning documentation does not adequately assess the combined and cumulative impact of the proposed infrastructure on the surrounding rural area, road network, residential amenity, agricultural activity and local environment in accordance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.

Scale of Disruption and Infrastructure Pressure Underestimated

In my view, insufficient consideration has been given to the practical impact this development would have on local communities, rural roads, farms, traffic movement, groundwater conditions and the overall character of the surrounding area. Residents and road users would experience the development as a significant and prolonged infrastructure project rather than as isolated standalone works. I believe the scale of disruption and infrastructure pressure associated with the proposed development has been underestimated within the planning documentation.

Conclusion

I believe the proposed development is not suitable for this rural location and would contribute to the long-term industrialisation of the surrounding countryside. The likely impacts on homes, farms, schools, local roads, biodiversity and community life have not been fully addressed or adequately mitigated within the application documentation. For these reasons, I do not believe the proposal is consistent with proper planning and sustainable development, and I respectfully request that permission be refused.

Yours Sincerely,

CHerry

Name: Caroline and Patrick Harris

Date: 25 May 2026