

OBSERVATION/SUBMISSION TO PLANNING APPLICATION

Case Reference: 324162

Conor Burke
Castlelambert
Athenry
Galway
H65A259

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

Date: 23 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, Castlelambert, Knocknacreeva, Caraunduff, Caherbriskaun, Lisheenkyle East, Barrettspark and Cashla (Townlands), Athenry, Co. Galway

Applicant: Bord Gáis Energy Limited

Dear Sir/Madam,

Dear Sir/Madam,

To whom it may concern,

My name is Conor Burke and my wife's name is Sheila Burke. I am 35 years old, my wife is 33 years old. We live in Castlelambert, Athenry. We were married in April 2025. I am a teaching principal of a primary school in Dunmore, Co. Galway, my wife is a physiotherapist in Portiuncla Hospital in Ballinasloe, Co. Galway. We moved into our newly built house in February this year, I grew up 4 kilometres from this site. I went to college in Dublin and worked there for 8 years but Athenry has always been my home. This is the best place in the country to grow up. We have amazing people, land, schools, sports facilities and community spirit. We bought our site in April 2024 and completed this self-build in February this year. It was a massive project in building our forever home. Our home has a heat recovery and air to water system as is required in all modern homes. These are significant costs in a new home. We wish for a better and greener environment locally and globally for generations to come and we are happy to invest in this, we are putting solar panels on our home also. The use of fossil fuels in powering a Peaker plant less than one kilometre from our home is a slap in the face to anyone who now follows these planning guidelines that are focused on creating a 'greener

future'. I cannot see how such a pollution risk can be placed so close to a populated area for our generation and the next. There is no benefit from this project to our great community.

We have major concerns around the road in front of our house being closed for 6 months and torn up for the cable that will connect the Peaker Plant to the Coshla power station. As it stands; two cars currently cannot pass each other on this road. It is wholly unsuitable for such works to be carried out no matter the mitigation in place. The proposed development is going to severely damage the lives of people in this community. The location of the Peaker Plan is the cheapest location for capital gain for Bord Gáis, that is clear for all to see. For this project to be approved would show a clear lack of awareness from An Comisiún Pleanála of the reality of the state of the road prior to the works even beginning. The state of the road for the proposed cable installation in itself proves that location of the proposed development is completely unsuitable. An approval to this project creates a health and safety nightmare on our local roads and will likely result in accidents during construction.

I also note in the maps that a sump/join box for the Peaker cable will be located outside my front gate. We have been given no notification or contact from anyone regarding this work. Our water and other underground connections are located here also. Is there a health and safety plan to prevent damage to these vital services being disrupted/damaged in the process?

I have noticed some of these underground join boxes installed local to our area for a nearby Solar farm. The road has been left in a treacherous state, I fear this is what will happen in our case also. The least we deserved was some consultation of this being outside our homes? This is just another example of this entire project being a profit making exercise by Bord Gáis with no care for the people impacted.

Lastly, the evidence of respiratory illnesses associated with living close to Peaker Plant is a frightening prospect for young people and their children. We are expecting our first child in July 2026. Who will be held responsible if this happens to us or our children?

We both understand the need for 'energy security' for our country. However, energy security should not trump the health and safety of an entire community for generations to come. What good is energy security to an ailing community? The location is completely unsuitable for this proposed project.

Yours sincerely,

Conor and Sheila Burke

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

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, Castletambert, 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.

Prolonged Trenching, Road Closures and HGV Traffic

I believe insufficient consideration has been given to the impact prolonged trenching works, excavation, road occupation, traffic management systems and heavy construction traffic would have on narrow rural roads and the communities that rely on them daily. The application documentation confirms significant road closures, stop/go traffic systems and substantial HGV movements during construction, which could result in serious

disruption and ongoing inconvenience for local residents and road users.

Karst Geology and Constrained Road Network

The proposed cable route would involve major construction activity through established rural areas with ribbon development, homes, farms, schools and businesses located along the route. In my view, the cumulative impact of prolonged roadworks, rock-breaking, excavation activity and construction traffic has not been fully addressed within the application documentation, particularly given the sensitive karst limestone geology and constrained nature of the local road network.

Long-Term Road Reinstatement Concerns

I am also concerned regarding the long-term standard of road reinstatement following completion of the proposed works. Similar utility infrastructure works in nearby areas have resulted in uneven road surfaces, raised utility covers and poor reinstatement quality. Given the scale and duration of the proposed trenching works, I believe binding commitments should be provided regarding full road restoration, ongoing maintenance responsibility and reinstatement to an appropriate long-term standard for local communities.

Narrow Roads, HGV Traffic and Increased Congestion

The roads surrounding Lisheenkyle National School are already heavily used by local traffic, school transport and agricultural vehicles. These roads are narrow, have restricted visibility and lack proper public hard shoulders. The only widened sections are private parking bays located outside newer houses, which remain the responsibility of homeowners and are not intended for pedestrian use or roadside safety. The introduction of heavy construction traffic, HGVs and stop/go traffic systems would significantly increase congestion and road safety risks for schoolchildren, residents and all road users.

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.

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.

Insufficient Information on Cumulative Impact

In my view, local residents have not been provided with sufficient information regarding the cumulative impact of the wider project, including traffic disruption, prolonged construction activity, environmental impacts, road closures and long-term industrial infrastructure within established rural communities.

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.

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.

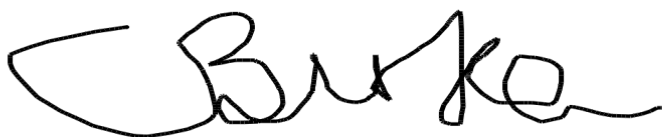
Likely Scale and Duration of Disruption Not Fully Reflected

I am concerned that the application does not fully reflect the likely scale, duration and intensity of disruption associated with prolonged construction works, trenching activity, traffic management systems, road restrictions, rock-breaking and associated infrastructure works across multiple rural communities. Given the nature of the local road network and surrounding residential areas, I believe the likely impact during the construction phase has been significantly underestimated.

Conclusion

In my view, the cumulative impact of the proposed substation, mast and underground cable route has not been adequately assessed within the planning documentation. Significant concerns remain regarding the likely effects on residents, agriculture, groundwater protection, biodiversity, traffic safety and rural amenity. I do not believe sufficient information or mitigation has been provided to address these concerns, and I respectfully request that this application be refused.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Conor Burke'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'C' and 'B'.

Name: Conor Burke

Date: 23 May 2026