

OBSERVATION/SUBMISSION TO PLANNING APPLICATION

Case Reference: 324162

Edel & Sean Monahan

Gloves South

Athenry

Galway

H65TY89

To: An Coimisiún Pleanála

64 Marlborough Street

Dublin 1

D01 V902

Date: 26 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, Castletambert, Knocknacreeva, Caraunduff, Caherbriskaun, Lisheenkyle East, Barrettspark and Cashla (Townlands), Athenry, Co. Galway

Applicant: Bord Gáis Energy Limited

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Edel Monahan (née Gardiner). I am originally from Clarke Street, Athenry, located just over 3km from the site of the proposed development associated with planning application reference 324162 and the wider connected Cashla Peaker Project. Although I no longer live directly within the immediate area, I maintain strong and ongoing family, farming and community ties to Athenry and its surrounding rural landscape.

I have close family living locally, including my two sisters and their families, and I regularly visit and remain closely connected to the area and wider community. I am married to Sean Monahan, a full-time dairy and sheep farmer, and farming is central to our livelihood, our family life and our future.

I have close family members living in the immediate vicinity of the proposed development infrastructure. My niece and her husband, together with their two young children, live in Pollnagroagh, approximately 800 metres from the proposed development area and associated infrastructure. Given their proximity, they would be directly affected by the cumulative impacts associated with the proposed substation, underground grid

infrastructure and wider connected peaker plant development.

These children will attend local schools within the area and regularly use the surrounding rural road network, including the L3103, L7108 and L7109, which are narrow rural roads already heavily used by local residents, school traffic, agricultural vehicles, cyclists and local businesses. I am deeply concerned regarding the cumulative impact that prolonged construction activity, increased heavy goods vehicle traffic, trenching works, temporary traffic management systems and associated infrastructure works could have on road safety, daily community life and the wellbeing of children and families living within the area.

I am also deeply concerned about the potential impact of emissions, air pollution and environmental disturbance on the health and wellbeing of children, older persons and nearby residents, both now and into the future. I worry for my family members living closest to the development, and I know that these concerns are shared by many within the local community.

My niece and her husband are also actively engaged in farming within the area, and their livelihood, like ours, depends on a safe, stable and environmentally sustainable rural environment. In addition to concerns regarding air quality and health, I am also concerned about the visual impact and industrialisation of the surrounding countryside arising from the introduction of large-scale energy infrastructure into this rural agricultural landscape.

I am further concerned regarding the potential impact on local roads and infrastructure, particularly given the constrained nature of the surrounding rural road network and the limited capacity of these roads to safely accommodate prolonged construction activity and increased heavy vehicle movements. Increased traffic levels would affect road safety, farming activity, pedestrians, cyclists and children using these roads daily.

I also visit Athenry regularly and remain closely connected to the community. Through regular interaction with family, friends and the wider local community, I have become increasingly aware of the level of concern and uncertainty surrounding this proposed development. Many people I have spoken with were not fully aware of the scale or implications of the wider connected project until relatively recently.

While the Athenry Peaker Plant Concern Group has made considerable efforts to inform the community, it is my understanding that engagement by the applicant has been limited, with many residents beyond the immediate vicinity of the site not adequately informed or consulted regarding the cumulative impacts of the wider connected development.

My own children intend to continue farming, remain living locally and raise their families within this area. For this reason, I am particularly concerned regarding the long-term impact that industrial-scale infrastructure, environmental disturbance, groundwater risks and increasing infrastructure concentration may have on rural family life, farming sustainability and the long-term attractiveness of the area for future generations.

I am also concerned regarding the potential risk of groundwater contamination and impacts on agricultural land, drainage systems and local water sources. Clean water is essential for livestock, food production and the long-term sustainability of farming enterprises and rural communities.

In addition, I am concerned regarding the potential risks associated with the concentration of strategic energy infrastructure within close proximity to homes, farms and rural communities, including risks associated with major infrastructure incidents, fire events or emergency response pressures.

Athenry is a beautiful heritage town with a strong sense of identity, history and community. The surrounding

rural landscape forms an important part of its wider setting and character. In my view, the introduction of industrial-scale energy infrastructure of this nature raises serious concerns regarding its compatibility with the heritage, rural character, environmental quality and long-term amenity of the area.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that An Coimisiún Pleanála refuse planning permission for the proposed development.

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

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.

Incompatible with Rural Character and Galway CDP

In my view, the scale, appearance and industrial nature of the proposed infrastructure are not compatible with the surrounding residential and agricultural landscape. I do not believe the proposal is consistent with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development or with the protection of rural character and landscape objectives contained within the Galway County Development Plan.

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.

Delays to Emergency Response and Defibrillator Access

The proposed works could cause significant delays and disruption for emergency vehicles, home-support services, school transport, agricultural traffic and daily commuters. I am also concerned about possible delays in accessing community defibrillators and emergency response assistance in rural areas where rapid access can be critical for medical emergencies.

Groundwater and Drainage in Karst Limestone Geology

I believe insufficient consideration has been given to the possible impact trenching and excavation works could have on groundwater movement, field drainage systems and soil conditions along the route. The proposed works pass through an area of sensitive karst limestone geology where groundwater flows, drainage pathways and subsurface conditions can be complex and unpredictable. Given the nature of karst geology, I believe a precautionary approach should be applied regarding excavation activity, groundwater protection and potential impacts on surrounding lands, wells and drainage systems under the EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC).

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.

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.

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edel & Sean Monahan', written in a cursive style.

Name: Edel & Sean Monahan

Date: 26 May 2026