

OBSERVATION/SUBMISSION TO PLANNING APPLICATION

Case Reference: 324162

Paul and Rachel Ruane
Castlelambert
Athenry
Galway
H65FA33

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

Date: 22 May 2026

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

Location: Rathmorrissy, Pollnagroagh, Moanbaun, Castlelambert, Knocknacreeva, Caraunduff, Caherbriskaun, Lisheenkyle East, Barrettspark and Cashla (Townlands), Athenry, Co. Galway

Applicant: Bord Gáis Energy Limited

Dear Sir/Madam,

I live on a local rural road in Castlelambert (L7108) which is directly impacted by the proposed application (324162) to facilitate the grid connection works associated with the Cashla Peaker Plant. The impacts outlined below are specific, direct, and materially affect my family, my livelihood, and the wider community.

1. Impact on Future Planning for My Children and the Next Generation

The proposed development and associated road closure create long-term uncertainty for the area. I am deeply concerned that the industrialisation of the locality will negatively affect future planning prospects for my children and the next generation. Living beside a major energy infrastructure corridor may restrict their ability to secure planning permission for homes in the area, which is already challenging for young people in rural Galway. This project risks permanently altering the planning context and undermining the sustainability of our community.

2. Impact on Local Community Welfare and Living Conditions

The road closure and construction works will significantly reduce the quality of life for residents. Increased traffic diversions, noise, dust, and disruption will affect daily routines and community cohesion. The area is a quiet rural community, and the scale of this project is incompatible with the established character of the locality. The welfare of residents—particularly older people, school-going children, and those with health or mobility issues—will be adversely affected.

3. Lack of Engagement with the Local Community

There has been insufficient communication and engagement with residents regarding the road closure and the project as a whole. Many of us only became aware of the extent of the disruption through informal channels rather than through meaningful consultation. This lack of transparency has caused significant stress and uncertainty. A project of this scale should not proceed without proper dialogue with those most directly affected.

4. Interruption to My Livelihood as a Dairy Farmer

As a dairy farmer, unrestricted road access is essential for the daily operation of my farm.

The proposed closure will directly interfere with:

- Movement of machinery to and from fields
- Access for contractors, delivery drivers, and couriers
- Milk collection and feed deliveries
- Emergency veterinary access

Any delay or obstruction in these activities has immediate financial consequences.

Farming is time-sensitive, and even short disruptions can result in significant losses. The proposed works place an unfair and disproportionate burden on my livelihood.

5. Disruption to Family Life and School Access

My children are of school-going age, and the road closure will complicate their daily travel. Longer detours, increased traffic on unsuitable back roads, and unpredictable delays will create stress and safety risks. Family routines—school runs, after-school activities, medical appointments—will all be negatively affected.

6. Impact on Local Wildlife and Hedgerows

The proposed grid connection route will disturb established hedgerows and wildlife habitats.

These hedgerows are vital for:

- Biodiversity
- Shelter for birds and small mammals
- Landscape character
- Natural drainage and soil stability

Their removal or disturbance will have lasting ecological consequences that cannot be easily reversed.

7. Emergency Access for Older Neighbours

Several older residents in the area rely on emergency panic buttons that require rapid physical response. The road closure will delay or prevent neighbours, family members, or emergency responders from reaching them in time. This is a serious and unacceptable risk to vulnerable members of our community.

8. Access to the Community AED (Defibrillator)

I am a responder for the local AED (Automated External Defibrillator). In a cardiac emergency, every minute counts. Any delay caused by road closures or diversions could be the difference between life and death. Restricting access to the AED or to the homes of those who may need it places the entire community at risk.

The proposed grid connection and associated road closure will have severe, disproportionate, and long-lasting impacts on my family, my livelihood, and the wider community. These impacts have not been adequately assessed, mitigated, or even acknowledged in the project's documentation.

For the reasons outlined above, I believe the proposed development would have significant adverse impacts on the local community, rural environment, farms, roads, groundwater conditions and surrounding residential areas. In my view, the application has not adequately demonstrated that the proposed development can proceed without unacceptable impacts on rural amenity, traffic safety, environmental protection and community wellbeing. I do not believe the proposal represents proper planning and sustainable development, and I respectfully request that permission be refused.

Yours Sincerely,

Name: Paul and Rachel Ruane

Date: 22 May 2026