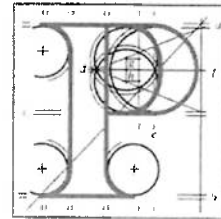


Our Case Number: ACP-324624-26



**An
Coimisiún
Pleanála**

Anna Zukower & Anton Tsernjavski
26 Páirc na hAbhainn
Athenry
Co. Galway
H65 N225

Date: 15 October 2026

Re: Proposed Development in Páirc na hAbhainn, Athenry, Co. Galway

Páirc na hAbhainn, Athenry, Co. Galway

Dear Sir / Madam,

An Coimisiún Pleanála has received your recent submission in relation to the above mentioned proposed development and will take it into consideration in its determination of the matter.

Please note that the proposed development shall not be carried out unless the Commission has approved it with or without modifications.

If you have any queries in relation to the matter please contact the undersigned officer of the Commission at laps@pleanala.ie

Please quote the above mentioned An Coimisiún Pleanála reference number in any correspondence or telephone contact with the Commission.

Yours faithfully,

Lauren Griffin
Executive Officer
Direct Line: 01-8737244

AA02

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64 Sráid Maoilbhríde
Baile Átha Cliath 1
D01 V902

64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

Subject: Personal Submission and Observation Opposing the Proposed Development

09.10.2026

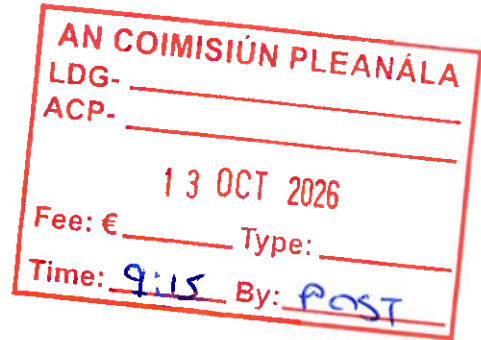
From: Anna Zukower and Anton Tsernjavski

26 Páirc na hAbhainn

Athenry, Co. Galway

H65 N225

Email: azukower@gmail.com



To: The Secretary, An Coimisiún Pleanála

Re: Proposed 16-Unit Residential Development at Páirc na hAbhainn, Athenry, Co. Galway

Case Reference: JP07.324624

Planning Authority: Galway County Council

Application: Section 177AE(4)(a) Application under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) — Part 10 Notice of Proposed Development

Dear Sir/Madam,

We do not intend to repeat all the detailed observations already submitted by the residents of Páirc na hAbhainn, including ourselves, in the collective submission. Many of these issues were also raised in our previous Part 8 objection. Instead, we wish to explain our concerns from a more personal perspective.

Our Experience of Buying and Living in Páirc na hAbhainn

Around 16 years ago, when we were looking to buy a house, we came across Páirc na hAbhainn. By coincidence, we met a representative of Galway County Council whose name we unfortunately cannot remember. He showed us around the estate and helped convince us to buy a house there.

At the time, we were impressed by the design of the houses, particularly their wooden windows and unusual porches. We were told that the estate had been built by Galway County

Council, that it would be maintained by the Council to a high standard, and that natural gas would be coming to the estate. It looked like the perfect place to settle, or at least that was what we believed.

Almost the entire estate was still unoccupied, so we had the opportunity to choose our home. We chose our particular house because of its location, layout and surroundings as they existed at that time.

We did not simply buy a house; we bought into a particular residential environment that we hoped to enjoy for years to come.

Our house is situated further back in the estate, away from traffic, with a field directly behind it. We understood this to be agricultural land used by local farmers for their animals. We had no reason to believe that it would become another residential development, particularly as we understood that the surrounding environment would remain as it was.

We loved looking out over that field. We could see sheep, foxes, birds and other wildlife. It was quiet and peaceful, and that was a significant part of why we chose our particular home.

The History of the Estate and Residents' Efforts

In the years following our purchase, the estate continued to be affected by the recession. As a result, only around half of the houses became occupied, while the remaining vacant houses gradually began to deteriorate.

Residents formed our own Residents' Association to improve the estate and work with Galway County Council. We held several meetings with the Council and still have minutes from some of those meetings. We also created our own website and tried to help the Council promote the houses that were still for sale.

We raised many concerns, including the lack of a proper entrance sign, poor landscaping and the absence of ongoing maintenance. Apart from grass cutting, little was done to improve the estate. Roads were not properly repaired, deteriorating fences were not addressed, and there was no safe pedestrian connection from the estate to the village.

Unfortunately, despite our efforts to work with Galway County Council, very little was done in return. Residents eventually became tired of having to fight for basic improvements and started doing things themselves.

When the remaining houses were eventually sold, residents continued working together for years to keep the estate looking presentable. We organised a Residents' Watch, painted boundary walls, maintained shrubs and landscaping, and created our own signs, all using our collective funds.

During the pandemic, residents also created a small community garden at the front of the estate. Unfortunately, we eventually had to close it because people from outside the estate were damaging things and drinking on our benches.

These experiences have shaped our view of the current proposal.

Why We Object

We have invested a great deal in our home and, like many other residents, have spent years of our own time and money maintaining and improving an estate that residents have too often had to look after themselves. We are concerned that adding another 16 houses would significantly change the character of our established community, particularly if access is provided through our existing roads, placing further pressure on infrastructure that is already a concern for residents.

We may not be able to prevent the development from proceeding in its entirety. However, after years of raising concerns about issues affecting our estate, we are not prepared to accept access being routed through our existing residential roads without proper consideration of the resulting impacts and alternative access arrangements.

We also strongly object to the new development being given the name Páirc na hAbhainn and presented as an extension of our existing estate. The proposed 16 units constitute a separate development and should have a separate name and identity.

Based on our 16 years of experience, we are concerned that the proposed development could eventually face similar maintenance problems and a lack of attention from Galway County Council. This could place further pressure on an estate whose infrastructure is already deteriorating.

We also wish to make clear that neither we nor many other residents have agreed to a pedestrian walkway through our estate to provide access to the future camogie pitches.

Residents have raised concerns about passers-by looking into properties and vehicles, as well as incidents of damage to our community garden that ultimately led to its closure. There have also been concerns about vehicles driving around the estate in circumstances that residents have found worrying.

We are concerned that creating additional routes through our established residential community, or connecting it to further developments, could increase these concerns and adversely affect residents' privacy, security and quality of life.

Cumulative Development and Road Safety

Another important issue is the cumulative impact of development in the surrounding area.

A further 49 houses are already being developed in the nearby townlands of Baunmore and Gortnahown, in the wider area around the R348/R347 junction and the route towards our estate. Future camogie pitches have also been approved in the vicinity.

The R348/R347 junction is already difficult to navigate due to its sharp turn and the lack of clarity about who has right of way. This can make it challenging for drivers to approach and negotiate the junction safely. The nearby graveyard creates an additional concern, as large funerals can cause traffic obstruction due to insufficient parking, temporarily making an already difficult junction even more challenging to navigate.

The additional 49 houses, the future camogie pitches and the proposed development of another 16 houses will inevitably generate more traffic in the surrounding area and place further pressure on this junction and the existing road infrastructure. This increased traffic must be considered alongside the junction's existing layout and the difficulties that already arise. It is important that the combined impact of these developments is properly assessed rather than considering each proposal in isolation.

It is also important to note that there are no pedestrian footpaths or adequate lighting along the route between Páirc na hAbhainn and the junction. This raises serious concerns about pedestrian safety, particularly for children and other vulnerable road users who may have to share the road with increasing numbers of vehicles.

Given the existing difficulties at this junction, including the sharp turn, uncertainty about right of way, traffic obstruction during funerals and the lack of safe pedestrian infrastructure, we believe that adding another 16 houses without properly addressing these concerns would place an unreasonable additional burden on an already challenging road network.

The safety of existing residents and all other road users must be given proper consideration before any decision is made.

Environmental Impact and European Sites

We would also like to highlight the potential environmental impact of further development on the remaining green space and surrounding wildlife.

With additional houses already under development nearby, together with the planned camogie pitches, the cumulative effects of further construction and activity should be carefully considered.

We are concerned not only about general pollution generated by additional households but also about increased noise and light pollution and their potential effects on the surrounding area and wildlife.

We are also concerned about the possible impact of this development on nearby protected natural areas. We understand that environmental assessments have been prepared as part of the application, and we hope these assessments will carefully consider whether the proposed development, together with other developments in the area, could affect nearby European sites and the wildlife they support.

The remaining green space provides a valuable natural environment for local wildlife and contributes to the character and quality of the surrounding area. We believe its importance should be fully considered before any decision is made. Providing additional housing is important, but so too is protecting nature, preserving green spaces and maintaining the natural environment for the benefit of both current residents and future generations.

Our Position and Conclusion

In our opinion, adding another 16 houses to an area already experiencing substantial development would be excessive without proper consideration of the combined impact on residents, road safety, local infrastructure and the surrounding environment.

The residents of Páirc na hAbhainn are an established community with direct experience of the issues affecting our estate. We have worked together over the years to maintain and improve our surroundings, often having to take matters into our own hands. I was previously a member of the Residents' Association, and I am confident that many residents would be prepared to organise collectively again if necessary to protect our interests and our community.

Please take this as our clear position regarding the proposed development and its access arrangements:

There should be no access to the proposed development through the existing Páirc na hAbhainn estate, and the name of our established estate should not be extended to include the additional 16 residential units.

We have lived here for many years and are determined to protect the homes and residential environment we have worked hard to maintain. We will continue to raise our concerns through the appropriate channels to protect our interests, the interests of our neighbours and the established character of our estate.

We wish to make clear that we are not opposed to appropriate and sustainable housing development in Athenry. However, the need for housing must be balanced with the safety and quality of life of existing residents, the capacity of local infrastructure and the protection of

the natural environment. The impact of these additional houses must be considered alongside the wider development taking place in the area, rather than in isolation.

We ask An Coimisiún Pleanála to give proper consideration to alternative access arrangements that would not compromise our existing estate. We also believe that this remaining piece of greenfield land could potentially provide a valuable community amenity, such as a small park or green space, benefiting local residents and wildlife.

We respectfully ask An Coimisiún Pleanála to consider the concerns raised in this submission and ensure that the interests of the existing community, road safety and the surrounding environment are given proper consideration before a decision is made.

Thank you for considering our observations.

Kind regards,

Anna Zukower



Anton Tsernjavski

