



An  
Coimisiún  
Pleanála

**Direction**  
**CD-021581-25**  
**ABP-322690-25**

The submissions on this file and the Inspector's report were considered at a meeting held on 16/12/2025.

The Commission decided to approve the proposed development generally in accordance with the Inspector's recommendation, for the following reasons and considerations, and subject to the following conditions.

**Planning**

**Commissioner:**

  
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Tom Rabbette

**Date:** 16/12/2025

### **DRAFT WORDING FOR ORDER**

#### **Reasons and Considerations**

In performing its functions in relation to the making of its decision, the Commission had regard to:

- (a) Section 15(1) of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, as amended by Section 17 of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, and the requirement to, in so far as practicable, perform its functions in a manner consistent with Climate Action Plan 2024 and Climate Action Plan 2025 and the national long term climate action strategy, national adaptation framework and approved sectoral adaptation plans set out in those Plans and in furtherance of the objective of mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the effects of climate change in the State.

- (b) Directive 2000/60/EC, the Water Framework Directive and the requirement to exercise its functions in a manner which is consistent with the provisions of the Directive and which achieves or promotes compliance with the requirements of the Directive.

The Commission also had regard to the following in coming to its decisions:

- European legislation, including of particular relevance:
  - The relevant provisions of EU Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU (EIA Directive) on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment,
  - Directive 92/43/EEC (Habitats Directive) and Directive 79/409/EEC as amended by 2009/147/EC (Birds Directive) which set the requirements for Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora throughout the European Union.
  
- National and regional planning and related policy, including:
  - National policy with regard to the development of renewable energy infrastructure, particularly the National Planning Framework First Revision 2025 and National Strategic Outcome Number 8 and National Policy Objective 72.
  - The Climate Action Plan, 2025, and should be read in conjunction with Climate Action Plan 2024,
  - The objectives and targets of the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030.
  
- Regional and local planning policy, including:
  - Regional Spatial Economic Strategy for the Southern Region;
  - Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028.
  
- The nature, scale and design of the proposed development as set out in the planning application and the pattern of development in the vicinity.

- The likely consequences for the environment and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area in which it is proposed to carry out the proposed development and the likely significant effects of the proposed development on European Sites.
- The Natura Impact Statement submitted.
- The Environmental Report submitted.
- The distance to dwellings or other sensitive receptors from the proposed development.
  - The planning history of the immediate area.
  - The submissions and observations made in connection with the planning application the response to submissions received in response to same.
  - The report and the recommendation of the Inspector, including the examination, analysis and evaluation undertaken in relation to appropriate assessment.

The Coimisiun performed its functions in relation to the making of its decision, in a manner consistent with section 15(1) of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Act 2015, as amended by section 17 of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, (consistent with Climate Action Plan 2024 and Climate Action Plan 2025 and the national long term climate action strategy, national adaptation framework and approved sectoral adaptation plans set out in those Plans and in furtherance of the objective of mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the effects of climate change in the State).

**Appropriate Assessment: Stage 1:**

The Commission agreed with and adopted the screening assessment and conclusion carried out in the Inspector's report that the River Barrow and River Nore Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 002162), is the only European Site for which there is a likelihood of significant effects.

### **Appropriate Assessment: Stage 2:**

The Commission considered the Natura Impact Statement and associated documentation submitted with the application for approval, the mitigation measures contained therein, the submissions and observations on file, and the Inspector's assessment. The Commission completed an appropriate assessment of the implications of the proposal for the River Barrow and River Nore Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 002162), in view of the site's conservation objectives. The Commission considered that the information before it was adequate to allow the carrying out of an appropriate assessment. In completing the Appropriate Assessment, the Commission considered, in particular, the following:

- i. the likely direct and indirect impacts arising from the proposed development both individually or in combination with other plans or projects,
- ii. the mitigation measures which are included as part of the current proposal, and
- iii. the conservation objectives for the European Site.

In completing the appropriate assessment, the Commission accepted and adopted the appropriate assessment carried out in the Inspector's report in respect of the potential effects of the proposed on the aforementioned European Site, having regard to the site's conservation status.

In overall conclusion, the Commission was satisfied that the proposed development, by itself or in combination with other plans or projects, would not adversely affect the integrity of the European Site, in view of the site's conservation objectives.

### **Proper Planning and Sustainable Development:**

It is considered that subject to compliance with the conditions set out below the proposed development would accord with European, national, regional and local planning and related policy, it would not have an unacceptable impact on the landscape or ecology, it would not seriously injure the visual or residential amenities of the area or of property in the vicinity, and it would be acceptable in terms of traffic safety and convenience, and would make a positive contribution towards Ireland's renewable energy and security of energy supply requirements. The proposed

development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

### **Conditions**

1. The proposed development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application, except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the following conditions. Where such conditions require details to be agreed with the planning authority, the undertaker shall agree such details in writing with the planning authority prior to the commencement of development and the development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed particulars.

**Reason:** In the interest of clarity and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. The period during which the development hereby permitted may be carried out shall be 10 years from the date of this Order.

**Reason:** Having regard to the nature of the proposed development, the Commission considered it reasonable and appropriate to specify a period of the permission in excess of five years.

3. The mitigation measures contained in the submitted Natura Impact Statement (NIS), shall be implemented in full.

**Reason:** To protect the integrity of European Sites.

4. All of the environmental, construction and ecological related mitigation measures, as set out in the Environmental Report, Construction and Environmental Management Plan (subject to Condition 5 below), Biodiversity Management Plan and Landscape Management Plan, and other particulars submitted with the application, shall be implemented by the undertaker in

conjunction with the timelines set out therein except as may otherwise be required to comply with the conditions of this Order.

**Reason:** In the interests of clarity and of the protection of the environment during the construction and operational phases of the development.

5. Prior to commencement of development, a detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) for the construction phase shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the planning authority, generally in accordance with the Outline Construction Methodology submitted with the application. The CEMP shall incorporate the following:
  - (a) A detailed plan for the construction phase incorporating, inter alia, construction programme, supervisory measures, noise, dust and surface water management measures including appointment of a site noise liaison officer, construction hours and the management, transport and disposal of construction waste. This shall address any concurrent construction phase of the adjoining permitted Solar Farm and BESS.
  - (b) A comprehensive programme for the implementation of all monitoring commitments made in the application and supporting documentation during the construction period.
  - (c) An Invasive Species Eradication and Management Strategy for the site, to include monitoring post completion of works.
  - (d) An emergency response plan.
  - (e) Proposals in relation to public information and communication. A record of daily checks that the works are being undertaken in accordance with the Construction Environmental Management Plan shall be kept for inspection by the planning authority.
  - (f) The location of any and all archaeological or cultural heritage constraints relevant to the proposed development. The CEMP shall clearly describe all identified likely archaeological impacts, both direct and indirect, and all mitigation measures to be employed to protect the archaeological or

cultural heritage environment during all phases of site preparation and construction activity.

- (g) Details for protection measures for existing water service infrastructure in the area during the grid connection works.
- (h) A detailed Surface Water Management Plan.

**Reason:** In the interest of environmental protection and orderly development.

6. Prior to the commencement of development, the undertaker shall comply with the transportation requirements of the planning authority for such works and services as appropriate. Such requirements shall require provision of a detailed Traffic Management Plan which shall be submitted for the written agreement of the planning authority and shall include the following details:

- (a) Consultation with Transport Infrastructure Ireland and all private and public companies and road authorities.
- (b) Details of haulage routes, control measures for abnormally sized vehicles and an Abnormal Load Assessment.
- (c) A road condition survey of roads and bridges along the haul route to be carried out at the undertaker's expense and to the satisfaction of the planning authority.
- (d) Detailed arrangements for construction damage to be made good by the undertaker to the satisfaction of the planning authority.
- (e) Detailed arrangements for temporary traffic management/controls, to include arrangements for the safe operation of the L6113, L3053 and L3046 and the R725, and protocols to keep residents informed.
- (f) Construction Route Signage.
- (g) Arrangements for the phasing of the development and any concurrent or sequential phase of the Grangeford Solar Farm or cabling in the public road to connect the solar farm to the sub-station.
- (h) Detailed design of the site entrance and site egress onto the R725 and L6113 with provision of sightlines to the satisfaction of the planning authority and recessed entrance gate.

- (i) The appointment of a traffic management coordinator to liaise with similar adjoining developments and to co-ordinate construction timelines and road openings.

**Reason:** In the interest of traffic and pedestrian safety and to minimise traffic disruption in the area.

- 7. (a) The undertaker shall engage a suitably qualified (licensed eligible) archaeologist to monitor (licensed under the National Monuments Acts) all site clearance works, topsoil stripping, groundworks, trenching and the implementation of agreed preservation in-situ measures associated with the development. Prior to the commencement of such works the archaeologist shall consult with and forward to the Local Authority archaeologist and the national Monument's Service as appropriate a method statement for written agreement. The use of appropriate tools and/or machinery to ensure the preservation and recording of any surviving archaeological remains shall be necessary. Should archaeological remains be identified during the course of archaeological monitoring, all works shall cease in the area of archaeological interest pending a decision of the planning authority, in consultation with the National Monuments Service, regarding appropriate mitigation [preservation in-situ/excavation].
- (b) The undertaker shall facilitate the archaeologist in recording any remains identified. Any further archaeological mitigation requirements specified by the planning authority, following consultation with the National Monuments Service, shall be complied with by the undertaker.
- (c) Following the completion of all archaeological work on site and any necessary post-excavation specialist analysis, the planning authority and the National Monuments Service shall be furnished with a final archaeological report describing the results of the monitoring and any subsequent required archaeological investigative work/excavation required. All resulting and associated archaeological costs shall be borne by the undertaker.

**Reason:** To ensure the continued preservation either in situ or by record of places, caves, sites, features or other objects of archaeological interest.

8. (a) The landscaping scheme shown on drawing number LD.KLLSTWNSBST 1.0 (Landscape and Ecological Mitigation Plan), as submitted to the An Coimisiun Pleanála on the 27th day of May 2025 shall be augmented to provide for:
- i. additional semi-mature planting to the perimeter of the substation hereby permitted;
  - ii. a berm along the northern and eastern boundaries of the substation hereby permitted.

The details of which shall be submitted for written agreement with the planning authority.

- (b) The scheme shall be carried out within the first planting season following substantial completion of external construction works. All planting shall be adequately protected from damage until established. Any plants which die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, within a period of five years from the completion of the development, shall be replaced within the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the planning authority.

**Reason:** In order to screen the development, in the interest of visual amenity.

9. (a) Noise and vibration during the construction phase, at sensitive receptors, shall be limited to the levels recommended in BS 5228-1:2009+A1:2014.
- (b) During the operational phase of the substation, the noise level arising from the development, as measured at noise sensitive locations shall not exceed:
- (i) An  $LeqT$ , value of 55 dB(A) during the period 0700 to 2200 hours from Monday to Saturday inclusive. [The T value shall be one hour]

- (ii) An Leq, 15 min value of 45 dB(A) at any other time. [The T value shall be 15 minutes]. The noise at such time shall not contain a tonal component.
- (c) At no time shall the noise generated on site result in an increase in noise level of more than 10 dB(A) above background levels at the boundary of the site. All sound measurement shall be carried out in accordance with ISO Recommendation 1996:2007: Acoustics - Description and Measurement of Environmental Noise.
- (d) Prior to the commencement of development, the undertaker shall agree with the planning authority a protocol for the monitoring of noise from electrical apparatus within the sites. This protocol shall include provision for the shielding or removal of any such apparatus in the event of the exceedance of agreed noise limits as perceived at identified receptors.

**Reason:** To protect the amenities of property in the vicinity of the site.

10. The undertaker shall comply with the following requirements:

- (a) No additional artificial lighting shall be installed or operated on site unless authorised by a prior grant of planning permission.
- (b) CCTV cameras shall be fixed and angled to face into the site and shall not be directed towards adjoining property or roads.
- (c) Cables within the site shall be located underground.
- (d) All fencing, gates and exposed metalwork shall be dark green in colour. The roofs of the buildings within the substation compound shall be dark grey or black and the external walls shall be finished in neutral colours such as grey or off-white.

**Reason:** In the interest of clarity, of visual and residential amenity.

11. All road surfaces, water infrastructure, culverts, watercourses, verges, and public lands shall be protected during construction and, in the case of any

damage occurring, shall be reinstated to the satisfaction of the planning authority at the undertaker's expense.

**Reason:** In order to protect the road network

12. Site development and building works shall be carried out only between the hours of 0700 to 1900 Mondays to Fridays inclusive, between 0800 to 1400 hours on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays or public holidays. Deviation from these times will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances where prior written approval has been received from the planning authority.

**Reason:** In order to safeguard the amenities of property in the vicinity.

13. Drainage arrangements, including the attenuation and disposal of surface water, shall comply with the requirements of the planning authority for such works and services.

**Reason:** In the interest of public health and surface water management.

14. Prior to commencement of development, the undertaker shall lodge with the planning authority a cash deposit, a bond of an insurance company, or such other security as may be acceptable to the planning authority, to secure the satisfactory reinstatement of the site on cessation of the project coupled with an agreement empowering the planning authority to apply such security or part thereof to such reinstatement. The form and amount of the security shall be as agreed between the planning authority and the undertaker or, in default of agreement, shall be referred to An Coimisiún Pleanála for determination.

**Reason:** To ensure satisfactory reinstatement of the site.

### **Schedule of Costs**

In accordance with the provisions of section 182B of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, the amount due to be reimbursed to the applicant is **€64,876**