



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Direction
CD-022313-26
ACP-323988-26

The submissions on this file and the Inspector's report were considered at a meeting held on 09/07/2026 and 16/07/2026.

The Commission decided to approve the proposed development under section 182A of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, for the following reasons and considerations and subject to the conditions set out below.

The Commission also determined under section 182B of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, the sum to be paid to the applicant in respect of costs associated with the application, is €84,200.

Planning

Commissioner:


Patricia Calleary

Date: 09/07/2026

DRAFT WORDING FOR ORDER

Reasons and Considerations

The Commission made its decision consistent with 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 and with the requirement to exercise its functions in a manner which is consistent with the provisions of Directive 2000/60/EC, the Water Framework 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:

(a) 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).

(b) National Policy and Guidance, including

- Project Ireland 2040: National Planning Framework ("NPF"), First Revision of the NPF,
- National Development Plan 2021-2030,
- The objectives and targets of the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030,
- Policy Statement on Security of Electricity Supply (November 2021),
- National Energy Security Framework (April 2022). National Energy and Climate Action Plan (2021-2030).

(c) Regional and Local Planning Policy, including in particular:

- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midlands Region 2019-2031
- Offaly County Development Plan 2021 - 2027.

- (d) The location, nature, scale and layout of the proposed development and the pattern of development in the vicinity
- (e) The range of mitigation measures set out in the Natura Impact Statement.
- (f) The range of mitigation measures set out in the proposal including the
 - Ecological Impact Assessment
 - Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan,
 - Preliminary Construction Traffic Management Plan,
 - Outline Construction Methodology 110 kilovolt Grid Connection
 - Archaeological and Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment
 - Flood Risk and Drainage Impact Assessment
- (g) The submissions and observations received in relation to the application.
- (h) The Inspector's report and recommendation including the examination, analysis and evaluation undertaken in relation to appropriate assessment.

Appropriate Assessment: Stage 1:

The Commission completed an Appropriate Assessment screening exercise in relation to the potential effects of the proposed development on European Sites, taking into account the nature, scale and location of the proposed development, the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report submitted with the application and the Inspector's Report.

The Commission agreed with the screening assessment and conclusion carried out in the Inspector's Report that the Charleville Wood Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 000571) is the only European Site in respect of which the proposed development has the potential to have a significant effect in view of the conservation objectives for the sites and that Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is, therefore, required.

Appropriate Assessment: Stage 2:

The Commission considered the Natura Impact Statement and associated documentation submitted with the application, the mitigation measures contained therein and the Inspector's Report.

The Commission completed an Appropriate Assessment of the implications of the proposed development for the Charleville Wood Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 000571), in view of the conservation objectives of the sites.

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 either 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 Sites.

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 development on the aforementioned European Sites, having regard to the conservation objectives of the sites.

In overall conclusion, the Commission was satisfied that the proposed development, either by itself or in combination with other plans or projects, would not adversely affect the integrity of the Report.

The Commission completed an Appropriate Assessment of the implications of the proposed development for the Charleville Wood Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 000571), in view of the conservation objectives of the sites.

Proper Planning and Sustainable Development

It is considered that, subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, the proposed development would be in accordance with European, national, and regional renewable energy policies and with the provisions of the Offaly County

Development Plan 2021 - 2027, would not seriously injure the visual or residential amenities of the area or otherwise of property in the vicinity or have an of unacceptable impact on the character of the landscape or on cultural or archaeological heritage, would not have a significant adverse impact on ecology, would be acceptable in terms of traffic impacts and safety and would make a positive contribution to 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 commencement of development and the proposed development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed particulars.

Reason: In the interest of clarity.

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 development, An Coimisiún Pleanála considers it appropriate to specify a period validity of the permission in excess of 5 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. Prior to commencement of the development, the undertaker shall submit and agree in writing with the planning authority a Biodiversity Management Plan which shall include the location, extent and details of:
- (a) planting and management of native species, indigenous to the area in replacement of hedgerows proposed for removal including the hedgerow to be removed to the east of the substation and as augmentation of hedgerows impacted by works.
 - (b) management of self-seeded, species rich native grassland in areas surrounding the proposed substation compound.
 - (c) Buffer zones for the protection from construction activities and post construction of hedgerows, trees, watercourses and drains.
 - (d) Details of other biodiversity enhancement measures proposed including bat boxes.

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

5. All of the environmental, construction and ecological mitigation measures, as set out in the Planning statement, Ecological Impact Assessment, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Archaeological and Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment, Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Drainage Impact Assessment (DIA), Construction Traffic Management Plan, Construction and Environmental Management Plan, Outline Construction Methodology 110 kilovolt Grid Connection, 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 in order 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.

6. Drainage arrangements, including the attenuation and disposal of surface water, shall comply with the requirements of the planning authority for such works and services and shall otherwise comply with submitted Flood Risk and Drainage assessment. A Drainage Management Plan shall be developed for the construction and the operational phases of the development to include details of the proposed access routes and drains and is to be submitted to the planning authority for approval prior to commencement of development.

Reason: In the interests of environmental protection and flood prevention.

7. All road surfaces, 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. Prior to commencement of development, a condition survey of haul routes and the route of the underground electricity line and adjoining private entrances and boundary structures with structural surveys where necessary shall be carried out to provide a basis for reinstatement works. Details in this regard shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development.

Reason: In order to protect the road network

8. 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 and shall include the following details:
- (a) Consultation with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and all private and public companies and road authorities.
 - (b) Any proposed deviations from TII Specification for Road Works.
 - (c) Final locations of joint bays as agreed with the Electricity Supply Board (ESB) and the planning authority.
 - (d) Details of haulage routes, control measures for abnormally sized vehicles and an Abnormal Load Assessment.

- (e) Detailed arrangements for construction damage to be made good by the undertaker to the satisfaction of the planning authority.
- (f) Detailed arrangements for temporary traffic management/controls, to include arrangements for safe operation, and protocols to keep residents informed.
- (g) Construction Route Signage.
- (h) Road Opening Licences that will be required.
- (i) Arrangements for the phasing of the development and any concurrent or sequential phase of the associated Solar Farms and cabling in the public road to connect these or other solar farms to the sub-station.
- (j) Detailed design of the temporary and permanent works proposed to the public road and site entrance, to the satisfaction of the planning authority and recessed entrance gate.

Reason: In the interest of traffic and pedestrian safety.

9. Prior to commencement of development, a finalised 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, road condition and structural surveys, construction programme, supervisory measures, noise, vibration, 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 projects in the area.
- (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) A Resource Waste Management Plan (RWMP) as set out in the Environmental Protection Agency's Best Practice Guidelines for the Preparation of Resource and Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects (2021)
- (e) An emergency response plan
- (f) 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.

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

10. The undertaker shall engage a suitably qualified archaeologist to monitor (licensed under the National Monuments Acts) all site clearance works; topsoil stripping or groundworks associated with the development of the substation. Prior to the commencement of such works the archaeologist shall consult with and forward to the local authority archaeologist or the National Monuments Service as appropriate a method statement for written agreement. The method statement shall describe 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 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. 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. 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 of places, caves, sites, features or other objects of archaeological interest

11. 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) Cables within the site shall be located underground.
- (c) External finishes to fencing, gates and exposed metalwork (non-galvanised/subject to EirGrid requirements), roof and external walls of substation, shall comply with the requirements of the planning authority.

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

12. Prior to the commencement of development, details of CCTV cameras shall be submitted to the planning authority for written agreement. These shall be fixed and angled to face into the site and shall not be directed towards adjoining property or roads.

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

13. 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 reinstatement of public roads which may be damaged by construction and/or the transport of materials to the site, coupled with an agreement empowering the planning authority to apply such security or part thereof to the satisfactory reinstatement of the public road. 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: In the interest of traffic safety and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.