



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Commission Direction
CD-000041
PL-500038-CK

The submissions on this file and the Inspector's report were considered at a meeting held on 23 January 2026.

The Commission decided to grant permission generally in accordance with the Inspector's recommendation, as set out below.

Planning Commissioner:

Eamonn James Kelly

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Date:

26th day of January 2026

Reasons and Consideration

Having regard to:

1. European, national, regional and local planning, energy, climate and other policy of relevance, including in particular the following:

European Policy/Legislation including:

- Directive 2014/52/EU amending Directive 2011/92/EU (Environmental Impact Assessment Directive);
- Directive 92/43/EEC (Habitats Directive) and Directive 79/409/EEC as amended by 2009/147/EC (Birds Directive);
- Directive 2000/60/EC (Water Framework Directive);

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);

Regional and Local Planning Policy, including in particular:

- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (2019-2031);
- Cork County Development Plan, 2022-2028;

2. The nature, scale and extent of the proposed development,
3. The pattern of development within the area and context of the receiving environment,

4. Measures proposed for the construction, operation and decommissioning of the development,
5. The range of mitigation measures set out in the Ecological Impact Assessment, Construction and Environmental Management Plan, Glint and Glare Assessment, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Noise Impact Assessment, Archaeological, Architectural and Cultural Impact Assessment, and the Archaeological Impact Assessment,
6. The submission of the Third Party appellant,
7. The documentation submitted with the application and the appeal, and,
8. The Inspector's report and recommendation.

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 would align with the provisions of the Cork County Development Plan, 2022-2028, would make a positive contribution to Ireland's renewable energy and security of energy supply requirements, would not have an adverse impact on the character of the landscape or the cultural or archaeological heritage of the site and surrounding area, would not give rise to flood risk on site or elsewhere downstream, would not result in adverse impacts on water quality, would not seriously injure the residential amenities of the area or otherwise of property in the vicinity, and would not have a significant adverse impact on ecology. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

The Commission reached its decision in accordance with its duties under Section 15(1) of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, as amended, and the requirement to, in so far as practicable, perform its functions in a manner consistent with inter alia the Climate Action Plan 2025 and the furtherance of the national climate objective.

Conditions

1. The development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application and as amended by the further plans and particulars received by the planning authority on the 19th day of August 2025, 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 developer shall agree such details in writing with the planning authority prior to commencement of development and the development shall be carried out and completed 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, the Commission considers it appropriate to specify a period of validity of this permission in excess of five years.

3. All of the environmental, construction and ecological mitigation measures, as set out in the Ecological Impact Assessment, Construction and Environmental Management Plan, Noise Impact Assessment, Archaeological, Architectural and Cultural Impact Assessment and the Archaeological Impact Assessment and other particulars submitted with the application and by way of further information, shall be implemented by the developer 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.

4. This permission shall not be construed as any form of consent or agreement to a connection to the national grid or to the routing or nature of any such connection.

Reason: In the interest of clarity.

5. The MV substation building, energy storage module buildings, inverters and spare parts container shall be painted dark green in colour or other dark colour that shall be agreed with the planning authority. Prior to the commencement of development, the Applicant shall confirm whether the Medium Voltage (MV) control/switching substation will consist of either a single storey block constructed building or the 2 no. modular units, as detailed in the submitted documents.

Reason: In the interest of the visual amenity of the area.

6.

- a. The permission shall be for a period of 40 years from the date of the commissioning of the solar array. The solar array and related ancillary structures shall then be removed unless, prior to the end of the period, planning permission shall have been granted for their retention for a further period.
- b. Prior to commencement of development, a restoration plan, including a timescale for its implementation, providing for the removal of the solar arrays, including all foundations, anchors, inverter/transformer stations, control building, CCTV cameras, fencing and site access to a specific timescale, shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority.
- c. On full or partial decommissioning of the solar farm, or if the solar farm ceases operation for a period of more than one year, the solar arrays, including foundations/anchors, and all associated equipment, shall be dismantled and removed permanently from the site. The site shall be restored in accordance with restoration plan, and all decommissioned structures shall be removed within three months of decommissioning.

Reason: To enable the planning authority to review the operation of the solar farm over the stated time period, having regard to the circumstances then prevailing, and in the interest of orderly development.

7. Archaeology

Prior to any development commencing, the developer shall engage a suitably qualified archaeologist (licensed under the National Monuments Acts) to carry out pre-development archaeological testing targeting anomalies identified in geophysical survey, especially Ref:M1 as per report of ACSU Archaeology Consultancy Services Unit and shall submit an archaeological impact assessment report for the written agreement of the planning authority, following consultation with the National Monuments Service, in advance of any site preparation works or groundworks, including site investigation works/topsoil stripping/ site clearance/ dredging/underwater works and/or construction works. The report shall include an archaeological impact statement and mitigation strategy. Where archaeological material is shown to be present, avoidance, preservation in-situ, preservation by record archaeological excavation and/or monitoring may be required. Any further archaeological mitigation requirements, including minimum buffer zone around anomaly Ref:M1 specified by the planning authority, following consultation with the National Monuments Service, shall be complied with by the developer. No site preparation and/or construction works shall be carried out on site until the archaeologist's report has been submitted to and approval to proceed is agreed in writing with the planning authority. The planning authority and the National Monuments Service shall be furnished with a final archaeological report describing the results of any subsequent archaeological investigative works and/or monitoring following the completion of all archaeological work on site and the completion of any necessary post-excavation work. All resulting and associated archaeological costs shall be borne by the developer.

b. All mitigation and recommendations in ACSU Archaeology Consultancy Services Unit report submitted as Further Information shall be implemented in full, except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with planning condition (a).

The planning authority and the National Monuments Service shall be furnished with final archaeological report describing the results of any archaeological investigative work/ excavation required, following the completion of all archaeological work on site and any necessary post-excavation specialist analysis. All resulting and associated archaeological costs shall be borne by the developer.

c. Prior to any commencement of development, the Construction & Environmental Management Plan shall be updated to reflect completed archaeological assessment and submitted for written agreement of the planning authority.

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. Existing field boundaries, including trees and hedgerow, shall be maintained and supplemented in accordance with the details submitted.
- b. All proposed landscaping and planting shall take place in the first planting season following commencement of development and in accordance with the details proposed. The landscaping and screening shall be maintained at regular intervals. Any trees or hedgerow that are removed, die or become seriously damaged or diseased within five years from planting shall be replaced within the next planting season by trees or hedging of similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the planning authority.
- c. All solar panels within the permitted development shall include an Anti-Reflective Coating.
- d. A timber post stockproof fence shall be installed inside the perimeter of the site.

Reason: In the interest of the visual and residential amenity of the area.

9. Prior to the commencement of development, the applicant shall submit a revised Site Layout Plan and Landscape Rationale for the written approval of the planning authority, showing:
 - a. Minimum 10m wide 'development free' corridor for potential future greenway,
 - b. 3-4 metre wide proposed new hedgerow outside minimum 10 metre corridor for potential future greenway running parallel with eastern site boundary, and,
 - c. Changes sought on foot of archaeological testing and/or associated buffer zones.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity and built heritage.

10. The Applicant shall submit a detailed landscape plan for the proposed site entrance which clearly identifies the alignment and specifications of the proposed replacement hedgerow. The replacement planting shall include the provision of native trees. The landscape plan shall also include an finalised elevation of the realigned boundary and shall include the detail of any access gates at this location. The plan shall be agreed with the planning authority prior to the commencement of development

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity and built heritage.

11. Protective fencing in accordance with BS 5837, shall be installed to protect all trees identified to be retained. The fencing shall be

installed in such a manner as to provide protection to the critical root zone of trees to be protected and it shall be retained on site until all construction works are completed. No soil, spoil, construction material or waste will be stored or tipped within the fenced off area and no construction plant or vehicles will be parked within the spread of trees/hedgerows identified to be retained. The fencing shall be retained until such time as works are completed.

Reason: To protect biodiversity.

12. Water supply and drainage arrangements, including the attenuation and disposal of surface water, shall comply with the requirements of the planning authority for such works.

Reason: In the interest of environmental protection and reducing run-off from the site.

13. The solar panels shall be fixed in place by way of driven pile or screw pile foundations only, unless otherwise authorised by a separate grant of planning permission.

Reason: In the interest of the long term viability of this agricultural land, and in order to minimise impacts on drainage patterns.

- 14.

- No 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 the road.
- c. Cables within the site shall be located underground.

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

15.

- a. Noise levels emanating from the operational phase of the proposed development when measured at Noise Sensitive Locations shall not exceed 55 dBA (30 minute LAR) between 0700 hours and 1900 hours, 50 dBA (30 minute LAR) between 1900 hours and 2300 hours and 45 dBA (15 minute Leq) between 2300 and 0700 hours.
- b. The acoustic fencing shall be installed around the inverter/transformers at a 2 metre setback distance from the unit to allow for air flow, circulation and access around the units prior to first commissioning and a noise monitoring survey shall be carried out within 3 months of commissioning of the proposed development. The extent and timing of the survey and monitoring sites used shall be agreed with the planning authority in advance. The results of the survey shall be submitted to the planning authority within one month of completion of the survey.
- c. The developer shall carry out at their own expense such additional noise mitigation measures to comply with noise limitations in this condition.

Reason: In the interest of residential amenity.

16. The construction of the development shall be managed in accordance with a finalised Construction and Environmental Management Plan, which shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development. The finalised CEMP shall provide details of intended construction practice for the development, including:

- a. location of the site and materials compound(s);
- b. location of areas for construction site offices and staff facilities;
- c. details of site security fencing and hoardings;
- d. details of on-site car parking facilities for site workers during the course of construction;
- e. details of the timing and routing of construction traffic to and from the construction site and associated directional signage, to include proposals to facilitate the delivery of abnormal loads to the site;
- f. measures to obviate queuing of construction traffic on the adjoining road network;
- g. measures to prevent the spillage or deposit of clay, rubble or other debris on the public road network;
- h. details of appropriate mitigation measures for noise, dust and vibration, and monitoring of such levels;
- i. containment of all construction-related fuel and oil within specially constructed bunds to ensure that fuel spillages are fully contained; such bunds shall be roofed to exclude rainwater;
- j. off-site disposal of construction/demolition waste and details of how it is proposed to manage excavated soil;

- details of on-site re-fuelling arrangements, including use of drip trays;
- I. details of how it is proposed to manage excavated soil;
- m. means to ensure that surface water run-off is controlled such that no deleterious levels of silt or other pollutants enter local surface water drains or watercourses.
- n. Hours of construction.

Reason: In the interest of environmental protection, amenities, public health and safety.

17. Prior to commencement of development, a Resource Waste Management Plan (RWMP) as set out in the EPA's Best Practice Guidelines for the Preparation of Resource and Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects (2021) shall be prepared and submitted to the planning authority for written agreement. The RWMP shall include specific proposals as to how the RWMP will be measured and monitored for effectiveness. All records (including for waste and all resources) pursuant to the agreed RWMP shall be made available for inspection at the site office at all times.

Reason: In the interest of reducing waste and encouraging recycling.

18. Cutting or removal of trees, hedgerows and clearance of ground vegetation shall not be undertaken between the 1st of March and 31st August.

Reason: To protect biodiversity.

19. 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 and 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 residential amenities of property in the vicinity.

20. Prior to commencement of development, the developer 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, 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 developer or, in default of agreement, shall be referred to An Coimisiún Pleanála for determination.

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory restoration of the site in the interest of visual and residential amenity.

21. The developer shall pay to the planning authority a financial contribution in respect of public infrastructure and facilities

benefiting development in the area of the planning authority that is provided or intended to be provided by or on behalf of the authority in accordance with the terms of the Development Contribution Scheme made under section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. The contribution shall be paid prior to commencement of development or in such phased payments as the planning authority may facilitate and shall be subject to any applicable indexation provisions of the Scheme at the time of payment. Details of the application of the terms of the Scheme shall be agreed between the planning authority and the developer or, in default of such agreement, the matter shall be referred to An Coimisiún Pleanála to determine the proper application of the terms of the Scheme.

Reason: It is a requirement of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, that a condition requiring a contribution in accordance with the Development Contribution Scheme made under section 48 of the Act be applied to the permission.

Note

The Commission noted the Inspector's recommendation in relation to mammal gates. However, in the absence of a clear rationale outlining why such an approach was more favourable towards mammals than the 200 mm gap at the base of the security fence as proposed by the developer, the Commission preferred the arrangements proposed by the developer and amended the relevant condition accordingly.