
ACP-323988-26 OCC Submission

From Planning External <planning@offalycoco.ie>

Date Thu 3/19/2026 4:08 PM

To SIDS <sids@pleanala.ie>

 1 attachment (2 MB)

ACP 323988 26 OCC submission 19.03.2026.pdf;

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Good Afternoon,

Please see attached submission from Offaly County Council re ACP-323988-26.

I would be most grateful if you could confirm receipt of this email.

Many thanks,

Ellen Cashen

Oifigeach Foirne | An Roinn Pleanáil
Staff Officer | Planning Department

Comhairle Contae Uíbh Fhailí
Offaly County Council

Áras an Chontae, Bóthar Bhaile an Bhóthair, Tulach Mhór, Co. Uíbh Fhailí R35 F893

Áras an Chontae, Charleville Road, Tullamore, Co. Offaly R35 F893

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nó aon chuid de, a úsáid, a chóipeál, nó a scaoileadh. Má tháinig sé chugat de bharr dearmad, téigh i dteagmháil leis an seoltóir agus scríos an t-ábhar ó do ríomhaire le do thoil.

REGISTERED POST

Administrative Assistant,
An Coimisiún Pleanála,
64 Marlborough Street,
Dublin 1.

Ref:ACP-323988-26

19/03/2026

**Appeal : Proposed new 110kV Substation to connect into the existing Thornsby substation
along with underground cabling at Ballyteige Little, Co. Offaly**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I refer to the above references and to your letter dated 13th of February 2026. Please see details below:

1. Introduction

This report is prepared in response to correspondence from An Coimisiun Pleanala received by the Planning Authority on February 16th, 2026, in relation to an application for a new 110kV substation to connect into the existing Thornsby substation along with underground cabling at Ballyteige Little, Co. Offaly, under Section 182A(1) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended. It is noted that the Planning Authority's submission is not subject to any statutory requirement relating to the formal submission of a CE Report to elected members prior to making a submission to the Commission.

The Planning Authority in making this submission has had regard to the range of issues listed in the Commission's correspondence and reports received from the Councils Tullamore Municipal District, Environment and Water Services Section and the Chief Fire Officer, all of which are attached in Appendix A.

2. Proposed Development

The proposed development for which permission under Section 182A is being sought constitutes the following;

A permanent 110kV Air Insulated Switchgear Substation consisting of:

- 1 No. Compound (c.8733m²) consisting of; 3 No. work areas, CCTV, associated drainage enclosed in 2.6m high palisade fencing and gates;
- 1 No. Eirgrid control building (c.440.15m²), 110kV bay arrangement, 4 No. lightning poles, compound road;
- Crane hardstand, 2 No. transformers and 2 No. auxiliary transformers, 110kV electrical equipment and back-up generator;
- 2 No. Independent Power Purchaser (IPP) control buildings (total 147.3m²) and compound including toilet;
- 2No. grid code compliance equipment, 2No. harmonic filters, car parking and telecoms pole.





Remaining associated infrastructure consists of:

- perimeter fencing;
- Access tracks (upgraded, existing and new);
- Temporary construction compound and tracks
- Temporary and permanent road re-alignment of a section of Wood of O local road;
- c. 7.5km of underground 110kV cabling with joint bays on access track and local roads with associated horizontal directional drilling; and
- c. 610m of medium voltage underground cabling trenching with associated horizontal directional drilling.
- All associated and ancillary site development, excavation, construction, landscaping and reinstatement works and the provision of site drainage.

The site of the proposed development has a total area of 11.02 hectares. This application is a new 110kV Substation to connect into the existing Thornsberry Substation. The Substation is to facilitate the Ballyteige Solar Farm (PA Ref:2198), and the Derrygrogan Solar Farm (PA Ref:22378 and ABP 318041-23).

The applicant is seeking a ten-year permission from the date of consent of the 110kV Substation. A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) has been prepared and accompany this planning application.

3. Relevant planning history relating to the subject site and surrounding area

It is noted that the planning application states that the Substation is to facilitate the Ballyteige Solar Farm (PA Ref:2198), and the Derrygrogan Solar Farm (PA Ref:22378 and ABP 318041-23).

- 21/98: Permission granted to Renewable Energy Systems (RES) Ltd for a period of 5 years to construct and complete a solar PV energy development with a total site area of 60.53 hectares, to include a single storey electrical substation building, inverter substations, modules, solar PV ground mounted on support structures, a temporary construction compound, internal access tracks, security fencing, electrical cabling and ducting, CCTV and other ancillary infrastructure, drainage, additional landscaping and habitat enhancement as required and associated site development works relating to the access of the site. the solar farm will be operational for 35-years
- 22/378 and ABP 318041-23: Permission granted to Renewable Energy Systems (RES) Ltd for a period of 10 years to construct and complete a solar PV energy development with a total site area of 73.9 hectares, to include a control building, inverter substations, modules, solar PV ground mounted on support structures, temporary construction compounds, internal access tracks, security fencing, electrical cabling and ducting, CCTV and other ancillary infrastructure, drainage, additional landscaping and habitat enhancement as required and associated site development works relating to access of the site. a natura impact assessment (nis) has been submitted with this application. the solar farm will be operational for 35 years.

4. Main relevant Development Plan Provisions relating to the subject site and surrounding area

It is noted that the subject site is located within;

- ‘Rural Area Under Strong Urban Influence’
- ‘Low Landscape Sensitivity Area’

In relation to the surrounding area, it is noted that the subject site is;

- Lies adjacent to the ‘Grand Canal’ Area of High Amenity and the Grand Canal pNHA.
- 330 metres from the ‘Other Eskers’ Area of High Amenity.





5. Relevant national, regional and local policies

It is noted that the applicants have included an extensive list of national, regional and local policies in their planning report, notwithstanding this, the Planning Authority consider that the following national, regional and local policies are particularly relevant to the type of development proposed.

Climate Action Plan 2025

The Climate Action Plan 2025 (CAP25) is the third annual statutory update to Ireland's Climate Action Plan under the *Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021*. CAP25 builds on previous Climate Action Plans by refining and updating the measures required to deliver carbon budgets and sectorial emission ceilings. It provides a roadmap for taking action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 51% by 2030 and achieve climate neutrality by no later than 2050.

It is noted that Section 11.2.1.1 'Progress on Actions' states that;

"A renewables-led system is at the core of Ireland's plan to radically reduce emissions in the electricity sector, protect our energy security, and ensure our economic competitiveness. This requires the accelerated and increased deployment of new renewable electricity generation capacity and related infrastructure".

First Revision of National Planning Framework, April 2025

The proposed development complements National Strategic Outcome 8 'Transition to a Carbon Neutral and Climate Resilient Society', which states that; *"New energy systems and transmission grids will be necessary for a more distributed, renewables-focused energy generation system, harnessing both the considerable on-shore and off-shore potential from energy sources such as wind, wave and solar and connecting the richest sources of that energy to the major sources of demand"*.

It is also considered that the uses proposed under this application are consistent with the following National Policy Objectives;

NPO 71 – *Support the development and upgrading of the national electricity grid infrastructure, including supporting the delivery of renewable electricity generating development.*

NPO 73 – *Support the co-location of renewable technologies with other supporting technologies and complementary land uses, including agriculture, amenity, forestry and opportunities to enhance biodiversity and promote heritage assets, at appropriate locations which are determined based upon the best available scientific evidence in line with EU and national legislative frameworks.*

It is also considered that the proposed development will support NPO 75 (see below) by contributing to the Eastern and Midlands Target Power Capacity (MW) allocation as outlined in Table 9.1 (see below).

NPO 75 – *Local Authorities shall plan for the delivery of Target Power Capacity (MW) allocations consistent with the relevant Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, through their City and County Development Plans.*





Table 9.1 | Regional Renewable Electricity Capacity Allocations

Region	Energised capacity 2023 (MW)	Additional Renewable Power Capacity Allocations (MW)	Total % of National Share in 2030	Energised Capacity 2023 (MW)	Additional Renewable Power Capacity Allocations (MW)	Total % of National Share in 2030
	Onshore Wind			Solar PV		
Eastern and Midlands	284	1,966	25%	306	3,294	45%
Northern and Western	1,761	1,389	35%	0.3	959	12%
Southern	2,622	978	40%	138	3,302	43%
Total	4,667	4,333		445	7,555	

Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region 2019-2031

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region 2019-2031 sets out an integrated policy to enable the creation of sustainable regions with the capability to be resilient to future climate change. The Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) contained in the RSES are designed to promote efficiencies in energy use and the move towards a low carbon economy. Relevant RPOs include:

- **RPO 4.84:** Support the rural economy and initiatives in relation to renewable energy so as to sustain the employment opportunities in rural areas.
- **RPO 6.9:** Ensure that the Midlands is well positioned to address the challenges posed by the transition to a low carbon economy and renewable energy.
- **RPO 10.20:** Support and facilitate the development of enhanced electricity and gas supplies, and associated networks, to serve the existing and future needs of the Region and facilitate new transmission infrastructure projects that might be brought forward in the lifetime of this Strategy.
- **RPO 10.22:** Support the reinforcement and strengthening of the electricity transmission and distribution network to facilitate planned growth and transmission/ distribution of a renewable energy focused generation across the major demand centres to support an island population of 8 million people.





Offaly County Development Plan 2021 – 2027

Chapter 3: Climate Action and Energy

Electricity Transmission and Distribution

CAEP-01: It is Council policy to support and facilitate the development, reinforcement, renewal and expansion of the electricity transmission and distribution grid, including the development of new lines, pylons and substations as required to provide for the future physical and economic development of Offaly.

CAEP-03: It is Council policy that proposals for new electricity distribution lines 38 kV or above along with transmission lines 110 kV or above will be considered subject to the protection of Designated and Non Designated Sites as outlined in Objectives BLO-02 to BLO-06 and landscape considerations as outlined in objectives BLO-22 Areas of High Amenity, BLO-24 Landscape and BLO 26 and BLO-27 Protection of Key Scenic Views, Prospects and Key Amenity Routes.

CAEP-05: It is Council policy to support the reinforcement and strengthening of the electricity transmission and distribution network to facilitate planned growth and transmission/ distribution of a renewable energy focused generation across the major demand centres. This includes:

- Facilitating trans-boundary networks into and through the County and Region to ensure the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy can be delivered in a sustainable and timely manner;
- Facilitate the delivery of the necessary integration of transmission network requirements to allow linkages of renewable energy proposals to the electricity transmission grid in a sustainable and timely manner; and
- Support the safeguarding of strategic energy corridors from encroachment by other developments that could compromise the delivery of energy networks.

Energy Storage

CAEP-06: It is Council policy to promote the use of efficient energy storage systems and infrastructure that supports energy efficiency and reusable energy system optimization, in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.

Reasonable Alternatives and Existing Infrastructural Assets

CAEP-23: It is Council policy to require that environmental assessments should address reasonable alternatives for the location of new energy developments, and where existing infrastructural assets such as sub-stations, power lines and roads already exist within the proposed development areas, then such assets should be considered for sustainable use by the proposed development where the assets have capacity to absorb the new development.

Renewable Energy

CAEP-27: It is Council policy to ensure that whenever possible, community benefits are derived from all renewable energy development in the county such as near-neighbour benefit funds and general community benefit funds, which may take the form of contributions in kind to local projects, assets and facilities such as public amenities on the renewable energy site, measures to promote energy efficiency or a local energy discount scheme.





Chapter 4: Biodiversity and Landscape Policies

Designated and Non-Designated Sites

BLP-01: It is Council policy to protect, conserve, and seek to enhance the county's biodiversity and ecological connectivity.

BLP-04: It is Council policy to protect and maintain the conservation value of all existing and future Natural Heritage Areas, proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Nature Reserves, Ramsar Sites, Wildfowl Sanctuaries and Biogenetic Reserves in the county.

BLP-05: It is Council policy to ensure that development does not have a significant adverse impact, incapable of satisfactory avoidance or mitigation, on plant, animal or bird species protected by law.

Areas of High Amenity

BLP-35: It is Council policy to protect and preserve the county's Areas of High Amenity namely the Slieve Bloom Mountains, Clonmacnoise Heritage Zone, Durrow High Cross, Abbey and surrounding area, the River Shannon, Lough Boora Discovery Park, Grand Canal, Croghan Hill, Raheenmore Bog, Pallas Lake, Clara Bog, Clara eskers, Eiscir Riada and other eskers. Notwithstanding the location of certain settlements, or parts of, for which there are settlement plans (Towns, Villages, Sráids), within the Areas of High Amenity, it is not the intention of this policy to hinder appropriate sustainable levels of development (as set out in the plans and subject to proper planning). Further, it is policy to facilitate the sustainable extension and expansion of existing visitor, tourist related or other rural enterprises within the Areas of High Amenity, where such development is appropriate and where it can be demonstrated that it gives 'added value' to the extending activity and to the immediate area which is the subject of the 'Area of High Amenity' designation.

BLP-36: It is Council policy, to ensure that issues of scale, siting, design and overall compatibility (including in particular with regard to environmental sensitivities) with a site's location within an Area of High Amenity are of paramount importance when assessing any application for planning permission. The merits of each proposal will be examined on a case-by case basis.

Landscape

BLP-38: It is Council policy to protect and enhance the county's landscape, by ensuring that development retains, protects and where necessary, enhances the appearance and character of the county's existing landscape.

BLP-40: It is Council policy to ensure that consideration of landscape sensitivity is an important factor in determining development uses.

Section 4.17 Biodiversity and Landscape Objectives

Designated and Non-Designated Sites

BLO-02: It is an objective of the Council that no plans, programmes or projects giving rise to significant cumulative, direct, indirect or secondary impacts on European sites arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans, programmes, etc. or projects6).





BLO-03: It is an objective of the Council that all projects and plans arising from this Plan7 will be screened for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. A plan or project will only be authorised after the competent authority has ascertained, based on scientific evidence, Screening for Appropriate Assessment, and subsequent Appropriate Assessment where necessary, that: 1. The plan or project will not give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary effects on the integrity of any European site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects); or 2. The plan or project will have significant adverse effects on the integrity of any European site (that does not host a priority natural habitat type/and or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000; or 3. The plan or project will have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of any European site (that hosts a natural habitat type and/or a priority species) but there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons for overriding public interest, restricted to reasons of human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest. In this case, it will be a requirement to follow procedures set out in legislation and agree and undertake all compensatory measures necessary to ensure the protection of the overall coherence of Natura 2000.

(6) Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. there must be: a) no alternative solution available, b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the project to proceed, and c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.

(7) Such projects include but are not limited to those relating to: agriculture; amenity and recreation; contaminated sites; electricity transmission; flood alleviation and prevention; forestry; mineral extraction; renewable energy projects; roads; telecommunications; tourism; wastewater and discharges; and water supply and abstraction.

BLO-04: It is an objective of the Council to ensure that the impact of development within or adjacent to national designated sites, Natural Heritage Areas, proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Ramsar Sites and Nature Reserves likely to result in significant adverse effects on the designated site is assessed by requiring the submission of an Ecological Impact Assessment prepared by a suitably qualified professional, which should accompany planning applications.





Areas of High Amenity

BLO-22: It is an objective of the Council to ensure that new development, whether individually or cumulatively, does not impinge in any significant way on the character, integrity and distinctiveness of or the scenic value of the Areas of High Amenity listed in Table 4.17. New development in Areas of High Amenity shall not be permitted if it;

- Causes unacceptable visual harm;
- Introduces incongruous landscape elements; and
- Causes the disturbance or loss of (i) landscape elements that contribute to local distinctiveness; (ii) historic elements that contribute significantly to landscape character and quality such as field or road patterns; (iii) vegetation which is a characteristic of that landscape type and (iv) the visual condition of landscape elements.

Landscape

BLO-24: It is an objective of the Council to have regard to the Landscape Sensitivity Areas in Tables 4.18, 4.19 and 4.20 in the consideration of planning applications.

For information purposes, Table 4.18 is shown below;

LOW SENSITIVITY AREAS

Low sensitivity areas are robust landscapes which are tolerant to change, such as the county's main urban and farming areas, which have the ability to accommodate development.

Characteristics:

County Offaly is largely a rural county which comprises of a predominantly flat and undulating agricultural landscape coupled with a peatland landscape. Field boundaries, particularly along roadside verges which are primarily composed of mature hedgerows typify the county's rural landscape.

Sensitivities:

- These areas in general can absorb quite effectively, appropriately designed and located development in all categories (including: telecommunication masts and wind energy installations, afforestation and agricultural structures).
- Within the rural areas, development shall be screened by appropriate natural boundaries that are sympathetic to the landscape generally, where possible.
- New housing proposed in rural areas should respect Offaly County Councils Rural Housing Design Guidelines, together with conformity with development standards.

Acceptability of Development for consideration: A wide range of development subject to appropriateness / conditions

Need for Landscaping and Appropriate Design: High.

6. Any Special Area Amenity Order which may be affected by the proposed development

There exists no Special Area Amenity Orders within the vicinity of the site or indeed Co. Offaly.





7. European designations, Natural Heritage Areas, which may be affected by the proposed development (whether in or proximate to same)

It is noted that the substation and underground cabling does not lie within any European designated sites, the nearest European Designated sites to the proposed site are Raheenmore Bog Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Charleville Woods Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

It should be noted however that the proposed underground cabling is to be run under Local Tertiary Road, L-6005-1, alongside the Grand Canal pNHA, for a distance of 840 metres. The proposed cabling is to be installed via horizontal directional drilling on a section of an agricultural field underneath the dry canal. The Grand Canal pNHA comprises the canal channel and the banks on either side of it. The canal supports important habitats such as hedgerows, tall herbs, calcareous grassland, reef fringe, open water, scrub and woodland. Diverse ranges of species use the site including the Annex II species such as otter and white-clawed crayfish. The ecological value of the canal lies more in the diversity of species it supports along its linear habitats than in the presence of rare species. Associated canal structures and buildings also contribute to the setting and historic character of the canal.

It is an objective (BLO-04) of the Offaly County Development Plan “to ensure that the impact of development within or adjacent to national designated sites, Natural Heritage Areas, proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Ramsar Sites and Nature Reserves likely to result in significant adverse effects on the designated site is assessed by requiring the submission of an Ecological Impact Assessment prepared by a suitably qualified professional, which should accompany planning applications”. It is noted that an Ecological Impact Assessment (ECIA) has been submitted with this application which concludes that while potential ecological and hydrological connectivity exists with The Grand Canal pNHA, there will be no adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites or non-statutory designated sites as a result of the proposed development. It is noted that the ECIA as a precaution, details several integral design and standard best practice measures in Table 2-12 to reduce any potential on European sites or any non-statutory designated sites.

Comment: Please apply the following conditions to any grant of permission for the proposed development;

1. In the event of a grant of permission, the mitigation measures contained in the submitted Natura Impact Statement (NIS) and Ecological Impact Assessment (ECIA) shall be implemented in full.
2. Prior to commencement of development, the developer shall submit to, and agree in writing with, the Planning Authority a schedule of these mitigation measures and monitoring commitments, and details of a time schedule for implementation of these. The results of the monitoring and reports arising shall be made available to the Planning Authority, Inland Fisheries Ireland and the National Parks and Wildlife Service.



8. Protected Structures, Architectural Conservation Areas etc.

It is noted that the applicants have submitted an archaeology and architectural heritage impact assessment which states that;

- there are no recorded sites within the RMP, RPS and NIAH that are within or adjacent to the Proposed Substation Site that could be physically impacted by the Proposed Development.
- It is acknowledged that there exists a protected structure comprising a group of three bridges (Odlums Bridge, Tongs Bridge and Wood of O Bridge) situated to the north and east and at distances between c. 0.32 – 0.93km from the nearest points of the Proposed Substation Site. Indirect effects upon these protected structures are anticipated to be Low to negligible for Tong's Bridge (NA03) and Negligible for Odlum's Bridge (NA01) and Wood of O Bridge (NA04) as views and intervisibility with the proposed substation site will be heavily screened by the presence of intervening woodland, mature treelines and vegetation.
- no features of potential archaeological significance were identified within the site during the investigations, including the baseline analysis and site walkover survey.
- it is recommended that as a minimum, all groundworks associated with the preparation and construction of the substation be monitored by a qualified archaeologist during the construction stage.

Comment: Please apply the following conditions to any grant of permission for the proposed development;

- All ground works associated with the proposed development shall be monitored under licence by a suitably qualified archaeologist.
- In the event that further archaeological material is found during the course of works, the work on the site shall be stopped pending a decision as to how best to deal with the archaeology. The developer shall be directed by the National Monuments Service with regard to any necessary mitigating action (e.g. preservation in situ, or excavation) and should facilitate the archaeologist in recording any material found.

9. Availability and capacity of public surface water drainage facilities and any history of flooding relevant to the site

Notwithstanding that the subject site is not located within an area prone to flooding, the applicants have included a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Drainage Impact Assessment (DIA) as part of this application. The FRA and DIA conclude that the proposed development will not increase flood risk during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases. It is noted that It is proposed to construct a network of rainwater harvesting tanks and two soakaway pits/infiltration drains within the Proposed Substation Site in addition to proposing laydown areas are unpaved and constructed from local stone.

The Councils Environment and Water Services Section are satisfied impose a number of conditions on the proposed development in relation to surface water should permission be granted.





10. Assessment of landscape status and visual impact, as appropriate

According to Section 4.14.1 of the Offaly County Development Plan ‘the sensitivity of a landscape is the measure of its ability to accommodate change or intervention without suffering unacceptable effects to its character and values’. As set out in Table 4.18 of the Offaly County Development Plan, low sensitivity landscapes areas can accept some form of development subject to appropriateness and conditions.

Having regard to this low sensitivity landscape classification and as the proposed substation site is at a distance removed from the Grand Canal Area of High Amenity and will be heavily screened by the presence of intervening woodland, mature treelines and vegetation, the visual impact of the proposed works are considered not to be significant.

11. Carrying capacity and safety of road network serving the proposed development

It is noted that the proposed cabling is to travel under the Local Tertiary Road, L-60051-1, for 840 metres and then along the Local Primary Routes, L-1025-3 and L-1024-2, for approximately 6.3 km until it reaches the Thornsberry Substation. The applicants have submitted a preliminary construction traffic management plan.

The Councils Municipal District have not indicated objections to the proposed development and proposed a number of conditions should permission be granted.

Comment: Please apply the following conditions to any grant of permission for the proposed development;

- Prior to the commencement of works on the public roads, the Developer shall obtain a road opening license from Offaly County Council.
- Prior to the commencement of works, the Developer shall submit for the written agreement with the Local Authority, details of cable installation including a works programme, construction details, cross-sections for each road showing location of trench in road and existing road width, existing services.
- Where road closures are required to facilitate the permitted works, an application shall be submitted to the Local Authority, at least 8 weeks in advance of works commencing.
- The Developer is required to submit for the written agreement with the Local Authority, traffic management plans for each stage of the works. in advance of works commencing.
- Cables and joint bays to be located within the verge. except at road crossings, culvert crossings, or as agreed in writing with the Local Authority. prior to installation. Communications chambers to be located in the verge where possible.
- Prior to the commencement of works, the Developer shall submit for the written agreement with the Local Authority, pre-condition survey of cable routes, consisting of a video survey of the full route and photographs at every entrance and boundary structure. Any damage caused to the road or adjacent properties shall be repaired to its previous condition or, where this is not possible, to an equivalent or better condition.
- Pre-condition structural surveys on adjacent properties shall be carried out where necessary.
- All works shall be in accordance with the Transport infrastructure Ireland Specification for Road Works unless otherwise specified .





- Reinstatement of the trench in local and regional roads shall be in accordance with the latest version of "Guidelines for the Opening, Backfilling and Reinstatement of Trenches in Public Roads" (The Purple Book), except where noted otherwise. Trench reinstatement in poor ground conditions may require special consideration and shall be agreed in writing with Local Authority prior to the commencement of works.
- After temporary reinstatement of the trench a full width overlay shall be provided on all local roads.
- Where a full width overlay is provided, this shall consist of minimum 75mm AC 20 dense bit in accordance with Clause 906 of the Specification for Road Works and inverted double surface dressing (special application), designed and applied in accordance with IAT Guidelines for Surface Dressing in Ireland, Third Edition, or equivalent as agreed with Offaly County Council. Tie into existing entrances by regressing and surfacing with materials to match existing. Build up verges to new road level where required. Adequate drainage shall be provided where necessary at entrances. All works shall be to the satisfaction of the Local Authority.
- Prior to the commencement of works, the Developer shall submit for the written agreement with the Local Authority, detail of all permanent restoration.
- Ironworks shall be raised and reset as necessary and road markings and road studs reinstated to the satisfaction of the Local Authority.
- Prior to the commencement of works, the Developer shall submit for the written agreement with the Local Authority, details of all existing crossings/bridges and designs indicating how these will be crossed.
- A defects liability period of 2 years shall apply. This shall commence when written notification has been given by the Developer to the Local Authority that the permanent reinstatement/overlay has been completed.
- Prior to the commencement of works on the public roads, the Developer shall carry out a structural analysis of any existing culverts located on the L1024 & L1025. This analysis shall include a photographic record, record of specification, detailed measurements, structural conditions of the culvert and surrounding masonry. channels etc., invert and crown levels at each side of the culvert and road levels for 25m each side of the culvert. The survey shall be carried out by a competent Structural Engineer. Any damage caused to the culvert during cable installation shall be repaired to its previous condition.
- 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 reinstatement of public roads which may be damaged by the transport of components to the site and the undergrounding of cabling, coupled with an agreement empowering the local 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 in writing between the planning authority and the developer or, in default of agreement, shall be referred to An Coimisiún Pleanála for determination.





12. Environmental carrying capacity of the subject site and surrounding area, and the likely significant impact arising from the proposed development, if carried out

It is noted that the Councils Environment and Water Services Section have no objections to the proposed development subject to all the existing conditions of the original planning file 21/98 must be adhered to in addition to conditions relating to foul sewerage, surface water, waste management, environmental nuisance and biodiversity and landscape.

General

1. All development work shall be carried out in accordance with Recommendations for Site Development Works for Housing Areas, DECLG,1998

Foul Sewerage

1. Prior to construction commencing on site, the developer is requested to provide details of how effluent will be collected & treated during the construction phase.
2. In the event that foul waste is to be removed regularly from site by a contractor during construction phase, the developer shall submit a signed maintenance contract with an Authorised Waste Collector and all foul waste must be transported to an Authorised Waste Facility.

Surface Water

1. Surface water run off from the roofs, roads and hardstanding areas shall be collected and disposed of within the site to soakaways or proposed attenuation overflowing to the adjacent watercourse. No such surface water run off shall be allowed to flow onto the public roadway or other adjoining properties;
2. Soakaways shall not be built within 5m of buildings, percolation areas, roads, etc. as per Section 1.5.8 of the Building Regulations 2010, Technical Guidance Document H, Drainage and Waste Water Disposal.
3. The applicant shall maintain/preserve any existing riparian corridor/drain present within and/or adjacent to the site by implementing a buffer zone where no development is permitted in accordance with Offaly County Council's, Development Plan 2021-2027.

Waste Management

1. All wastes arising from/at the proposed development shall be managed in accordance with the Waste Management Acts 1996 as amended. While awaiting removal, all waste materials shall be stored in designated areas protected against spillage or leachate run-off.
2. The applicant is required to obtain an Integrated Pollution Control licence from the EPA prior to any extraction/excavation of peat and any associated Works such as drainage



3. All uncontaminated soil and stone imported onto the site shall comprise ^{offaly.ie} non-waste by-product, in accordance with Article 27 of the European Communities (Waste Directive) Regulations 2011, S.I. Nó. 126 of 2011
4. No development shall commence prior to registration with the Environmental Protection Agency of the material to be imported onto the lands, in accordance with Article 27 of the European Communities (Waste Directive) Regulations 2011, S.I. Mo. 126 of 2011
5. Prior to commencement of development, details regarding the origin/source of proposed soil & stone to be imported onto the site shall be submitted for the written agreement of the Planning authority
6. All mitigation measures as outlined in the submitted Resource & Waste Management Plan shall be implemented for the construction phase of the development.

Environmental Nuisance

1. Noise emissions at the nearest noise sensitive location (such as dwellings, schools, places of worship or areas of high amenity) shall not exceed the following:

L _{Aeq} (60 minutes)	55dB(A)	8am to 8pm
L _{Aeq} (15 minutes)	45dB(A)	8pm to 8am
2. Audible tonal or impulsive components should be minimised at any noise sensitive location;
3. The Applicant shall take reasonable measures to mitigate any environmental nuisance (noise and dust) which may arise during construction. Construction shall take place during working hours 7am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 1.30pm Saturday unless otherwise authorised by the Planning Authority;
4. Dust suppression shall be undertaken under dry and windy conditions to ensure that dust deposition does not exceed 350mg/m²/day.

13. Planning Authority view in relation to decision to be made by the Commission

The Planning Authority has no matters to raise which warrant a refusal of permission for the proposed development. The Commission is respectfully request to consider this report and the conditions recommended.

14. Planning Authority view on community gain conditions which may be appropriate

It is noted that the construction phase of the Proposed Development is anticipated to cover a period of 12- 18 months. During this period, there will be a combination of HGVs for the component deliveries and cars/vans for construction staff causing significant impact to local residents during this period.





Comment: Notwithstanding community benefit funds associated with nearby solar farms, the Planning Authority considers having regard to the significant impact of the construction phase of the proposed development, particularly;

- the impacts on the residual road network from diversions, detours and motorists avoiding HGV's on identified haul routes;
- long term operational presence; and
- construction disturbance,

that a Community Benefit Fund should be established for 5 years, linked to construction value or installed capacity.

15. Details of relevant Section 48/49 development contribution scheme conditions which should be attached

It is noted that the Draft Offaly County Council Development Contribution Scheme 2026-2032 is due for adoption at the Offaly County Council meeting on March 23rd. Upon its adoption, the 2026-2032 scheme will apply to any grant of permission for the proposed development.

The applicable development contribution for the proposed development is from Table 1, Section 15 of the Scheme and is based on the floor area of the proposed buildings on site;

Area of Eirgrid Control Building – 440.15m²

Area of 2 No. Independent Power Purchaser (IPP) control buildings - 147.3m², to which a commercial rate of €18.75 is applied.

Please note having regard to the sites rural location, a contribution in relation to surface water infrastructure works is not required (apply to Tullamore, Birr, Edenderry, Portarlinton, Clara, Banagher, Daingean, Kilcormac, and Ferbane. Urban Areas only).

	Class of Infrastructure	€ per m ² of floor area industrial / commercial development
A	Open spaces, recreational and community facilities and amenities and landscaping works, including land acquisition.	€6.25
B	Refer to Section 4 Classes of Public Infrastructure and Facilities – items (c) to (g) inclusive.	€12.50
	Total Contribution required.	€18.75 x 587.45 m ² = €11,014.69





Comment:

Please apply the below development contribution from Draft Offaly County Council Development Contribution Scheme 2026-2032 to any grant of permission for the proposed development;

	Class of Infrastructure	€ per m ² of floor area industrial / commercial development
A	Open spaces, recreational and community facilities and amenities and landscaping works, including land acquisition.	€6.25
B	Refer to Section 4 Classes of Public Infrastructure and Facilities – items (c) to (g) inclusive.	€12.50
	Total Contribution required.	€18.75 x 587.45 m ² = €11,014.69

16. Details of any special contribution conditions which should be attached along with detailed calculations and justification for the conditions

It is noted that Section 48(2)(c) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, allows for a planning authority, in addition to the terms of a scheme, to require the payment of a special contribution in respect of a particular development where specific exceptional costs not covered by a scheme are incurred by any local authority in respect of public infrastructure and facilities which benefit the proposed development. The Councils Tullamore Municipal District have examined the proposed development, in particular, the impact of the construction phase, and have requested a Special Contribution of €327,770 for works required to the local road network.

Comment: It is noted that Offaly County Councils Municipal District have requested a Special Contribution of €327,770 for works required to the public road network to accommodate the proposed development. The calculations justifying this sum are as follows:

Calculation for Ballyteige Solar Limited	Road	Length	Width	Area	Treatment	Rate	Total
	L60051-1	850	2.7	2295	Macadam inlay	40	€91,800.00
	L1025-2	1750	5.2	9100	Macadam inlay	40	€364,000.00
	L1025-3	3000	5.2	15600	Macadam inlay	40	€624,000.00
	L1024-2	1180	4.9	5782	Macadam inlay	40	€231,280.00
							€1,311,080.00
						Bond @ 25%	€327,770.00





17. RED III

RED III (the revised Renewable Energy Directive, 2023/2024) expands the definition of renewable energy project infrastructure to include “related grid infrastructure” required to connect renewable generation to the transmission or distribution system. As the substation and grid connection are necessary to connect a renewable energy project, the Commission is requested to consider whether the proposed 110kV substation and cabling falls within RED III definitions and should be processed accordingly.

Comment: As the substation and grid connection are necessary to connect a renewable energy project, the Commission is requested to consider whether the proposed 110kV substation and cabling falls within RED III definitions and should be processed accordingly.

Yours faithfully,

PP Ellen Coshen

Administrative Officer
Planning Department

