Perigus Energy Ireland Midco Limited

Proposed Greenhills Renewable Energy Park, County Cork

EIA Screening Report

RSK Project No. 605444

AUGUST 2026

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1 Introduction

Ørsted Onshore Ireland Midco Ltd. is proposing to develop a solar farm in the townlands of Knocknagappagh, Barnaviddane, Ballyneague, Ballydaniel, Youghalpark, Ballydaheen and Cornaveigh of County Cork. RSK Ireland have been commissioned to undertake an EIA Screening Assessment of the Proposed Development

The principal requirement of this report is to assist Cork County Council in forming an opinion as to whether or not the proposed solar farm should be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and, if so, whether an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) should be prepared in respect of it.

In general, solar farms do not fall within a prescribed class of projects requiring mandatory EIA as outlined in either Part 1 of Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations.

There are clear prescriptive criteria set out in Schedule 5 Part 2 (3) relating to the Energy Industry including the amendments made to Part 2 by the Planning and Development (Amendment) (No.2) Regulations 2023 (S.I. No. 383 of 2023), which set out threshold criteria for restructuring of land holdings under Schedule 5, Part 2, 1 (a) and (d) as follows:

(a) Projects for the restructuring of rural land holdings, undertaken as part of a wider Proposed Development, and not as an agricultural activity that must comply with the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Agriculture) Regulations 2011, where the length of field boundary to be removed is above 4 kilometres, or where re-contouring is above 5 hectares, or where the area of lands to be restructured by removal of field boundaries is above 50 hectares.

Although some minor field boundary loss will be required, for access track, fencing and cable lay requirements, the Proposed Development will not require the removal of 4km of field boundaries, recontouring of lands above 5 hectares, or the removal of field boundaries above 50 hectares. Hence loss of field boundaries will not trigger a mandatory EIA. Careful design of the solar farm layout ensures this.

In addition, mandatory EIA could be triggered by loss of broadleaf or conifer forest as follows in Schedule 5 Part 2 (1):

(d) (ii) Replacement of broadleaf high forest by conifer species, where the area involved would be greater than 10 hectares.

(iii) Deforestation for the purpose of conversion to another type of land use, where the area to be deforested would be greater than 10 hectares of natural woodlands or 70 hectares of conifer forest.

Again, the initial Proposed Development areas do not indicate loss of broadleaf or conifer forest stands, although it is acknowledged that some trees will likely be lost in hedgerows as a result of access tracks and cable lay construction and for the reduction of shadow on solar panels, if required. The Proposed Development is therefore unlikely to trigger mandatory EIA assuming careful design is followed.

Schedule 5 Part 2, 3 (Energy Industry) also sets out specific criteria for mandatory EIA. The proposed solar development does not fall under any of the criteria listed in this section of the Schedule.

Other classes noted under Schedule 5 Part 2 include infrastructure projects under paragraph 10(dd), “all private roads which would exceed 2000 meters in length”. It should be noted that the access tracks that will be installed for the purposes of the Proposed Development are considered materially different from the definition of roads under the Roads Act 1993, as the purpose of the access tracks for the proposed project are for construction and maintenance, and not for the conveyance of people and vehicles.

In terms of the battery energy storage facility element and 220kV substation element of the Proposed Development, this is not a form of development that is listed in Schedule 5, Part 1 or 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. Schedule 5, Part 1, refers to energy-related development, such as nuclear power plants and associated development. Battery storage does and 220kV substations do not arise in that part of the schedule. Schedule 5, Part 2, Class 3(a) to (j) refers, inter alia to the production of electricity, steam, or hot water with a heat output of 300mw, wind power and hydroelectric installations, again there is no mention of energy storage or 220kV substations. Therefore, these elements of the Proposed Development, do not fall into a class of development that would trigger mandatory EIA.

1.1 Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations

It is important to note that even where specified limits/thresholds are not exceeded with respect to the relevant class of development it is important to assess whether the project would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, having particular regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7 (Criteria for Determining whether development listed in Part 2 of Schedule 5 should be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment). In particular the characteristics of the Proposed Development in terms of size, location, design, cumulative effects with other existing developments, pollution and nuisances and the risks to human health must be examined. In the latter case, the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the Proposed Development, is extremely important.

Two criteria in particular are important with respect to the Proposed Development as follows:

(v) areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 [European sites] areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive and;

(vi) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the European Union and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure.

1.2 Relevant Planning History

There is an established principle supporting renewable energy development as a result of previous planning permissions granted on part of the landholding. There were two previous granted planning applications on the site as follows, providing a foundation for the Proposed Development:

- Planning permission was granted by CCC on the 19th January 2004 under planning application reference 02/4588 for 2 no. wind turbines and all ancillary works.
- A further application for an extension of duration was granted permission by Cork County Council under planning application reference 08/9956, but was not implemented.

Building on this precedent, the current application seeks to integrate new technologies and design solutions while addressing both environmental and community considerations in line with local policy objectives.

1.3 Legislative Context

The principal piece of EIA legislation is:

The EIA Directives: Directive 2011/92/EU codified Directive 85/337 and its three amendments. Directive 2011/92/EU has since been amended by Directive 2014/52/EU. The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive is in place since 1985 (85/337/EEC). This directive along with three amendments was amalgamated into Directive 2011/92/EU in December 2011. Proposed changes to the Directive were adopted by the Council of the European Union in May 2014 with a three-year period to transpose the changes. These changes form the first revision of the Directive 2011/92/EU. S.I. No. 296 of 2018 transposes the Directive into Irish law from 1st September 2018 and 1st January 2019 for certain regulations (Regulations 21, 67(d) and 69(e)).

EIA is a procedure required under the terms of European Union Directives 85/337/EEC and 97/11/EC on assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment. Article 2 of the Directives states that "Member States shall adopt all measures necessary to ensure that, before consent is given, projects likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue, inter alia, of their nature, size or location are made subject to a requirement for development consent and an assessment with regard to their effects." Article 8 then requires that "The results of consultations and information gathered pursuant to [the EIA procedure] must be taken into consideration in the development consent procedure".

The principal Irish legislation pertaining to the requirement for an EIA of various types of development are the Planning and Development Acts 2000 (as amended) and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

Ireland has implemented its obligations by requiring the preparation and submission of an EIAR for projects falling within classes of development prescribed by article 93 of, and Schedule 5 of, the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). These regulations are made pursuant to section 176 of the Planning and Development Act 2000. In essence, every project listed in Part 1 and Part 2 of Schedule 5 must be subject to an EIA (mandatory) and, accordingly, an EIAR must be submitted to the competent authority with an application for development consent in this regard.

Schedule 5, Part 2(3) of the Regulations covers the types of energy industry which requires an EIA to be carried out.

While solar farm development projects are not specifically listed as requiring assessment under the EIA Directive or under the Regulations a Screening for EIA has been prepared for this planning application taking into account the criteria listed in Schedule 7 of The Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (As Amended).

A new set of regulations S. I. No. 383 of 2023. Planning And Development (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2023 came into force on 24 July 2023. These regulations introduced a new class of development into Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), as follows:

"(a) Projects for the restructuring of rural land holdings, undertaken as part of a wider proposed development, and not as an agricultural activity that must comply with the European Communities

(Environmental Impact Assessment) (Agriculture) Regulations 2011, where the length of field boundary to be removed is above 4 kilometres, or where re-contouring is above 5 hectares, or where the area of lands to be restructured by removal of field boundaries is above 50 hectares".

These regulations do not apply to the Proposed Development as the works are not expected to give rise to significant environmental effects and are below the thresholds indicated:

- The length of field boundary to be removed is 106m this is in small sections for access only, below the 4km threshold,
- A total area of 4.7hectares will be re-contoured for the proposed substation, BESS and access track to the proposed substation which is less than the 5ha threshold

The Supreme Court has dismissed an appeal by a group of residents who sought to challenge the validity of a decision by An Bord Pleanála (ABP) to grant planning permission for a photovoltaic solar farm on a site of approximately 90 hectares in Co. Offaly (Concerned Residents of Treascon and Clondoolusk -V- An Bord Pleanala, Ireland and the Attorney General and Elgin Energy Services Limited, [2024] IESC 28). The appeal raised important issues concerning the proper interpretation and application of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive and the domestic legislation that gives effect to it.

2 Methodology

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is the process for anticipating the effects (both positive and negative) from a Proposed Development or project on various environmental receptors. If the anticipated effects are unacceptable, design measures or other relevant mitigation measures can be taken to reduce or avoid those effects. The EIAR is the output which records the details of this assessment.

The first step in the EIA process is 'Screening' which determines if an EIA is required.

- Screening - is the first stage in the process required by the Directive, whereby a decision is made on whether or not an EIA is required. The relevant classes of developments that require EIA are set out in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended.

The EIA screening exercise initially assesses the development for Mandatory EIA using classifications defined in the appropriate legislation.

The data in this report has been generated from desktop studies and site visits. The data has been analysed via a risk matrix to establish the level and likelihood of significant impact on the Site and the wider environment

2.1.1 EIA SCREENING

It should not be necessary to provide specialist studies or technical reports to complete this screening process, rather to investigate where further studies may be required, and where risks, if any, to the integrity of the receiving environment may lie.

2.1.2 CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF SUB-THRESHOLD DEVELOPMENT

Table 4.1: Criteria by which Environmental Impact is evaluated.

CRITERIA	SUMMARY OF LEVEL OF DETAIL	PHASE
Characteristics of the project	a) the size and design of the whole of the development, b) the cumulation with other existing development and/or development the subject of a consent for Development for the purposes of section 172(1A) (b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment, c) The nature of any associated demolition works, d) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity, e) the production of waste, f) pollution and nuisances,	Construction Operation

CRITERIA	SUMMARY OF LEVEL OF DETAIL	PHASE
	g) the risk of major accidents, and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge, and h) the risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution)	
Location of the project	a) the existing and approved land use, b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground, c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas: d) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths; e) coastal zones and the marine environment, f) mountain and forest areas, g) nature reserves and parks, h) areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive and; i) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the European Union and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure; i) densely populated areas; j) landscapes of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.	
Type and characteristics of the potential impact	Taking into account: a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected), b) the nature of the impact, c) the transboundary nature of the impact d) the intensity and complexity of the impact,	Construction Operation

CRITERIA	SUMMARY OF LEVEL OF DETAIL	PHASE
	e) the probability of the impact, f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact, g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or development the subject of a consent for development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment, and h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.	

3 DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

The Proposed Development is located in the townlands of Knocknagappagh, Barnaviddane, Ballyneague, Ballydaniel, Youghalpark, Ballydaheen and Cornaveigh of County Cork. More specifically, it is located adjacent to the R634 road approximately 7km north-west of the settlement of Youghal and 6.5km north-east of Killeagh, see Figure 3-1 below.

The site area is relatively flat and comprises agricultural lands in a rural setting with low population density. The high level of solar irradiance in the southern region of the country makes it ideal for the development of renewable solar photovoltaic projects. The Proposed Development comprises the following components:

The planning application to Cork County Council seeks a 10-year planning permission for the construction of a renewable energy development comprising a solar farm and BESS with an operational life of 40 years.

The Proposed Development, comprises the following components:

The development will consist of:

- A circa 323 ha solar farm with ca. 210 ha of solar panels fixed on ground-mounted frames.
- The provision of 54 no. Inverter/transformer stations placed on concrete pads on hardcore sized 120m^2.
- Site access tracks formed from the provision of circa 5,135m of new site access tracks and the upgrade of circa 7,115m of existing access tracks/roads to facilitate access to all onsite infrastructure.
- The provision of 1 no. new permanent site entrance for construction and operational access, with the addition of a temporary overrun area from the R634 regional road in the townland of Ballydaniel (site entrance 1).
- The permanent realignment of 1 no. existing field access for construction and operational access from the L7806 local road in the townland of Knocknagappagh (site entrance 2).
- The provision of 1 no. new permanent site entrance for construction and operational access from the L3803 local road in the townland of Barnaviddane (site entrance 3).
- The permanent realignment of 1 no. existing entrance for construction and operational access from the L3808 local road in the townland of Youghalpark (site entrance 4).
- The permanent realignment of 1 no. existing entrance for construction and operational access from the L38081 local road in the townland of Cornaveigh (site entrance 5).
- The permanent realignment of 2 no. existing field entrances for construction and operational access from the L7828 local road in the townland of Ballyneague (site entrance 6 and 7).
- The permanent realignment of 3 no. existing field access for construction and operational access from the L7829 local road in the townland of Ballydaniel (site entrance 8, 9 and 10).

- The permanent realignment of 1 no. existing entrance for construction and operational access from the L38032 local road in the townland of Knocknagappagh (site entrance 11).
- Underground electrical ducting and cabling, including 3 no. road crossings (local roads L7829, L3803 and L78281) and 3 no. culvert crossings on the L3808.
- The provision of 5 no. Temporary construction compounds of which there will be 1 main temporary construction compound (Compound No. 1 located in Ballyneague) ca. 5,200m^2 with associated temporary offices, staff facilities parking and security fencing, and 4 no. additional temporary laydown areas of ca. 2,000m^2 each located in the townlands of Ballydaniel, Barnaviddane, Cornaveigh and Youghalpark.
- Landscaping works encompassing the removal of 395m hedgerow, the planting of 1,400m of new hedgerow and up to 31,000m of linear hedgerow and mosaic hedgerow as required all included in a Landscape Mitigation Plan.
- The provision of Biodiversity Enhancement Areas.
- The construction of a ca. 7,800m^2 Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) compound including 56 no. Battery Container Units, 7 no. Inverter Twin Skid Units each consisting of 2 no. Inverters and 1 no. Transformer housed in Modular Enclosures, Communications Building housing switchgear and controls, House Transformer, Back-up Generator and Fuel Supply located in a Bunded Reinforced Concrete Plinth Area, Control Building, Internal Access Tracks, Security Fencing, CCTV, Lighting, Drainage any all other ancillary infrastructure.
- All ancillary development such as drainage infrastructure (clean water cut off drains), security fencing, CCTV, weather stations and storage containers for spare parts.
- A separate planning application for the on-site 220kV AIS Substation and loop in Grid Connection (Pre-Application no. 25-322687) will be submitted to An Coimisiún Pleanála under S182A of The Planning Act 2000 (As Amended).

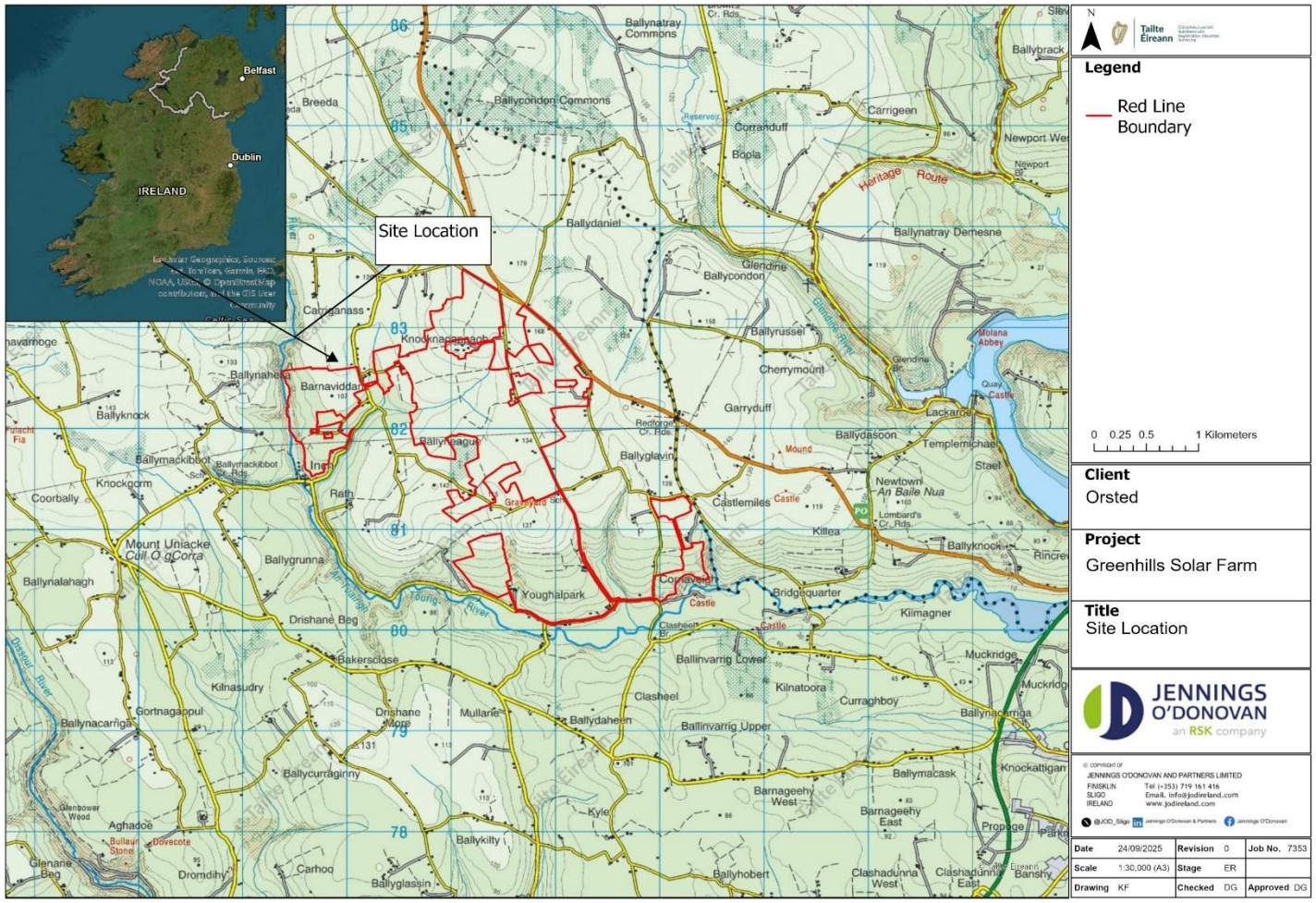

Figure 3-1: Proposed Development Location

3.1 Solar Array Element

The solar array element of the Proposed Development will cover an area of circa 323ha. and will consist of ground mounted solar panels on supporting table arrays. The solar array field areas will be aligned with the site topography throughout, see **Figure 3-2**. The ground mounted frames will be installed by simple screw or pile driving following geotechnical assessment, thereby minimising ground disturbance. Where ground conditions require, concrete or ballast footing may be required, though this is expected to be minimal. These will be removed upon decommissioning of the solar farm and taken off-site for disposal to a licenced waste facility.

The maximum height of the table arrays above ground will be dependent on underlying ground topography but in all cases the solar photovoltaic (PV) panels will be set on angled racks fixed to the frames spanning a minimum height of 0.7m and a maximum height of up to 3.4m. The tables will range in height from 0.7m to 1.5m from the ground.

The panels themselves will have no moving parts, will be installed with a tilt angle of 10-25 degrees, depending on local topography and will be oriented southwards to maximise solar radiation capture. Solar array field areas will be connected to the proposed 220kV AIS Substation via 33kV underground cabling.

Installations of the interconnector cable comprise trenching for an underground medium voltage electrical cable and associated joint slabs and infrastructure. Cabling will be installed, along the Youghal Park (L-3808) public road and turning North along the L-7829 and 2,299 metres in length along the solar farm land, with the remainder installed within the solar farm access tracks and offroad locations.

Multiple solar panel manufacturers exist globally, with new optimised design and technology variations being released to market on a regular basis. Therefore, individual panel dimensions may vary but overall table array dimensions shall remain as described here regardless of final solar panel selection. The below permutations are assessed in each of the technical assessments.

Solar panel modules will be sized 1.1m to 1.5m by 2m to 2.5m. Panels may be fixed in either a landscape or portrait orientation, depending on detailed engineering design and contractor preference. A landscape orientation would typically involve from 4 up to 8 panels aligned in a column. A portrait orientation would typically involve from 2 up to 4 panels aligned in a column. Regardless of final configuration selected, overall table array dimensions shall remain as per the details described here. The angle of the panels will range from 10-25 degrees. These are shown in Planning Drawing No. 7353-PL-501.

Pitch (distance between the back of one table to the back of the adjacent table) between the tables will range from 6.5m to 14m and the angle (10-25 degrees) will allow light to reach the ground and vegetation to grow underneath.

3.2 Inverters/Transformers

A solar inverter takes the direct current (DC) electricity generated by solar panels and converts it to alternating current (AC) electricity. String inverters will be sized 0.7 to 1m, by 1 to 1.5m by 0.36m and located on the table arrays.

A total number of 54 invertor combiner kiosk / transformers have been incorporated into the layout with concrete pads on hardcore, sized at 120m^2. Each hardstand will have either 1 no. 40ft container or 2 nos. 20ft containers placed upon concrete ground beams. These incorporate

transformers, inverter/transformer interface kiosks and/or inverters as required. These units are manufactured offsite and delivered installation ready. Load bearing crane hardstanding areas of 170m^2 are required adjacent to each invertor combiner kiosk / transformer hardstand during construction to support the cranes as they lift the inverter / transformers from the delivery vehicles. The hardstand will be constructed from Class 6F1 or Class 1A Stone Material, capped with 50mm of Cl 804 material.

Ring Main Unit (RMU) are also included in the layout, this will be located on a hardstanding sized 15m by 8m (stone finish).

3.3 Cabling

The proposed 220kV AIS substation is located in the townland of Ballyneague. The solar farm comprises a main solar array area with additional separate areas located in the southeast, southwest and west of the Proposed Development in the Townlands of Knocknagappagh, Ballydaniel, Ballyneaguue, Barranaviddane, Ballyglavin, Youghal Park and Cornaveigh. The solar PV arrays will be connected to the proposed substation via single and double 33kV circuits. The southwest area will require one circuit of 33kV underground cabling (UGC) and the southeast area will require one circuit of 33kV UGC within the public road and land area. Where these two routes meet on the L-7829, the two circuits will enter private lands, run in parallel up adjacent to the road, before entering back onto the public road, until they will be ducted offroad into the main solar array area and then to the substation Independent Power Producer (IPP) switchgear room. In the main array areas themselves, the 33kV cabling from the solar array areas will be ducted through private farm lands.

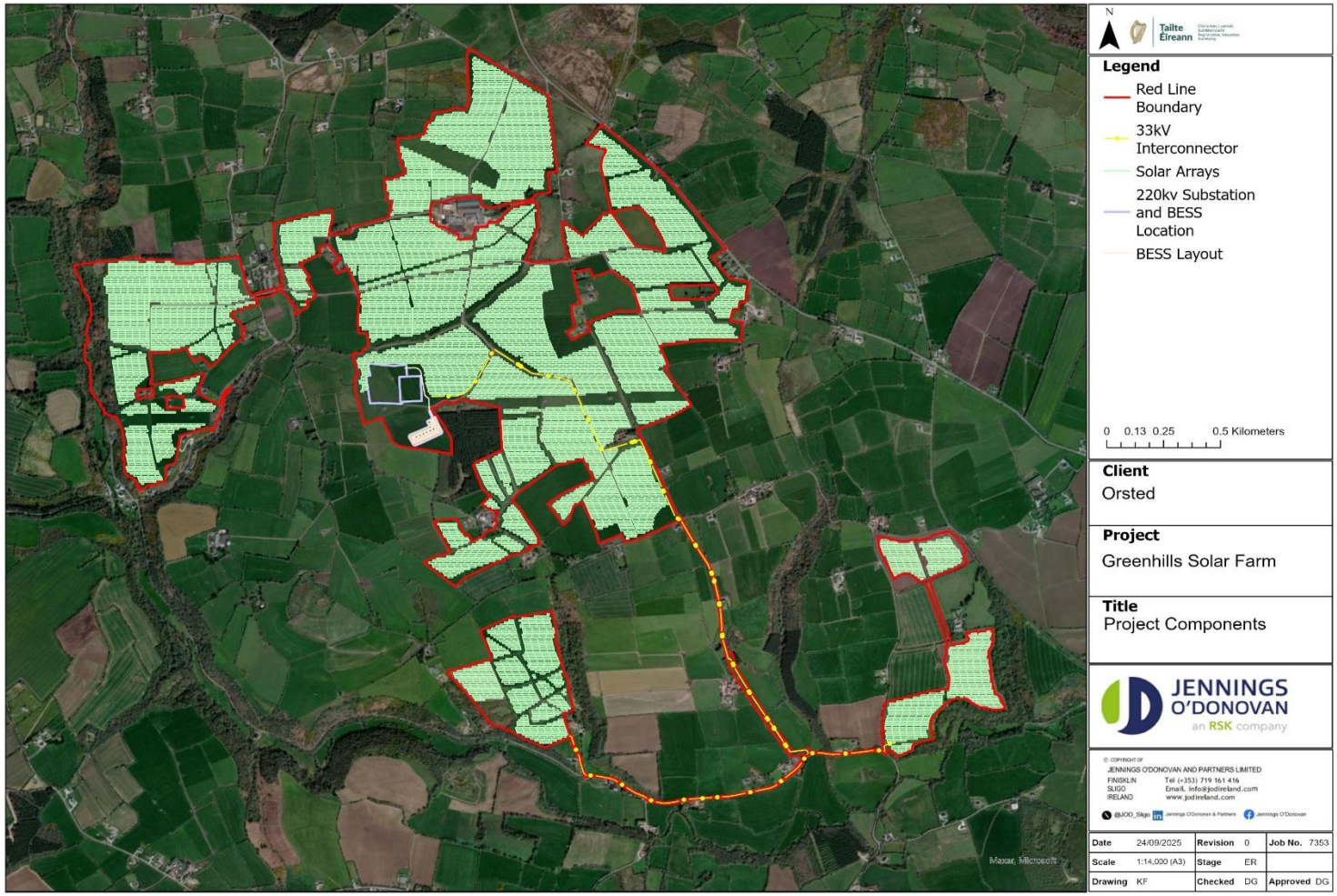

Figure 3-2: Proposed Development Main Components

3.4 Haul routes and access to the Proposed Development

Access to the Proposed Development will be from 11 no. site entrance points located on the regional and local road network, as listed below.

- Site access 1 will be located on the R634 regional road.
- Site access 2 will be located on the L7806 local road.
- Site access 3 will be located on the L3803 local road.
- Site access 4 and 5 will be located on the L3808 local road.
- Site access 6 and 7 will be located on the L7828 local road.
- Site access 8, 9 and 10 will be located on the L7829 local road.
- Site access 11 will be located on the L38032 local road.

The location of the site entrance points to the Proposed Development are shown on Figure 3-3

A compacted gravel access track up to 4 metres wide will provide internal access to the solar arrays and associated infrastructure. It is intended to utilise the existing farm trackways for site access during construction, operation and decommissioning. Where required, some upgrading of these will take place.

The Proposed Development includes circa 7,775m of existing track and circa 5,380m of new access tracks.

A new access track will also be constructed from the R634 to the substation and BESS locations to facilitate abnormal load delivery and heavier construction elements (site access 1). This will also serve as the main site entrance for construction purposes. From this access point, an access track will be constructed utilising the existing internal site trackways and onwards to the proposed 220kV substation and the BESS area..

All heavy goods vehicle (HGV) deliveries will access the Proposed Development from the R634 regional road and use the site entrances shown on **Figure 3-3**

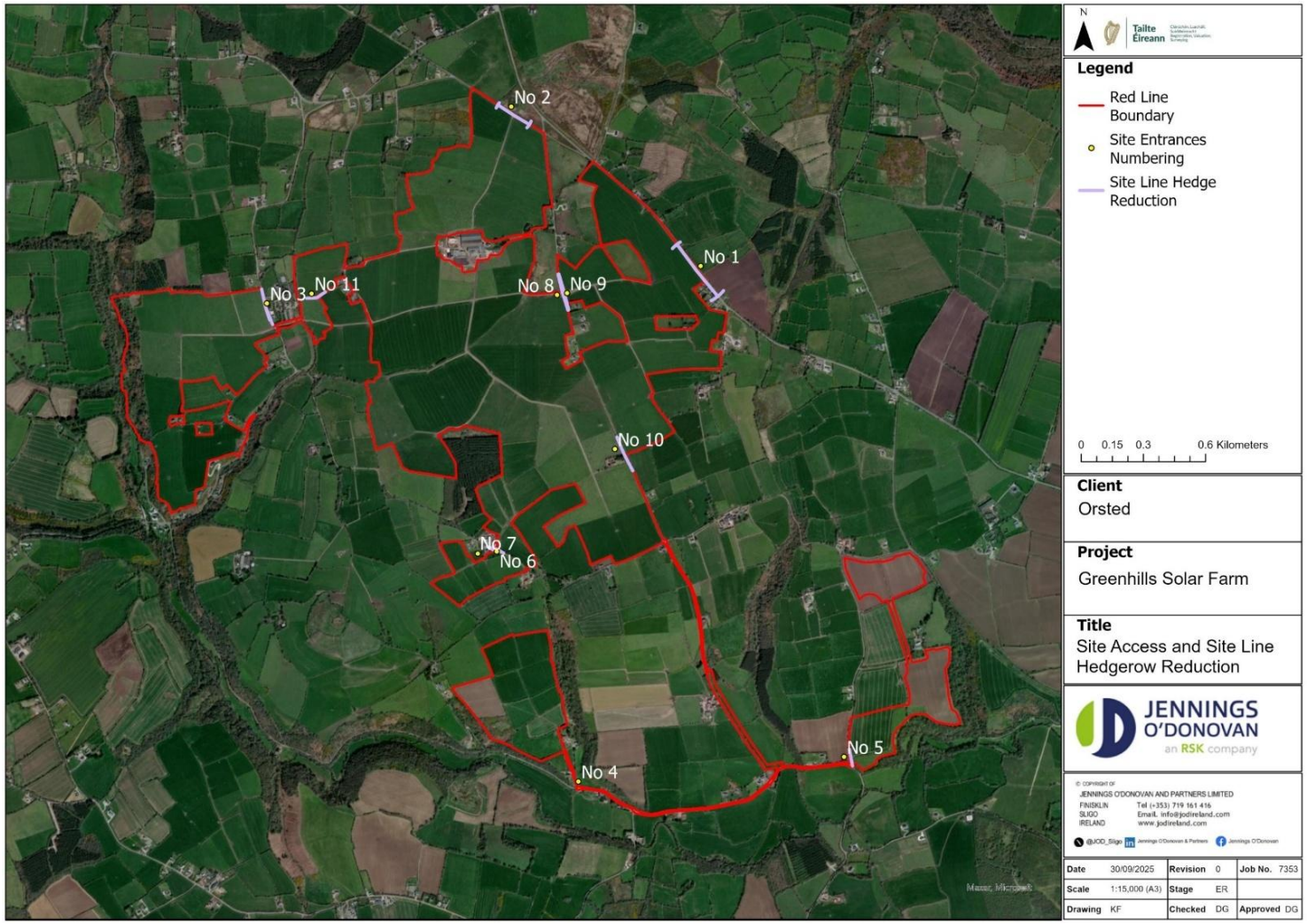

Figure 3-3: Proposed Development Site Entrances

3.5 BESS Location and Size

The Proposed Development will consist of a grid-scale BESS (see Planning Drawing No. 300101185-DR-203) constructed on a footprint of circa 7,760 m^2, see **Figure 3-4**.

The proposed BESS electrical plant will consist of 7 no. inverter twin skid (2 inverters + 1 transformer + 1 RMU) units with 4 no. associated electrical plant batteries per inverter (each unit consists of a skid and 4 battery pods). In total, there will be 56 no. battery container units within a fenced compound adjacent to the proposed 220 kV AIS substation.

3.5.1 BESS Fundamental Components

A list of the fundamental BESS components are as follows:

- Modular skids containing electrical and control command centre, cooling / heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment, lithium-ion (or equivalent) battery cells, power control system hardware, associated cabling.
- Inverter units and transformers in modular enclosures.
- Communications building housing switchgear and controls.
- Concrete plinths for equipment and container units.
- House transformer, back-up generator and fuel supply in a bunded reinforced concrete plinth area.
- Ancillary infrastructure, including internal access tracks, security fencing, CCTV, lighting, and drainage.
- Temporary construction compound in the area allocated to future EirGrid expansion.
- Electrical UGC connection to the proposed 220kV AIS substation.

The BESS area will be hardcored with the battery container units (5.3m in width x 4.47m in height), arranged in linear groups on concrete plinths. The battery container units will be fixed to concrete plinths within the hardcored area. The BESS area is L-shaped with the main dimensions being 139m in length and 49m in width, with an additional area for parking and storage containers (28.4m x 36m), see Planning Drawing No. 30010118-DR-202. The IPP control building extends into this additional area and will be constructed adjacent to the BESS units. A 4m wide access road will be included around the equipment with a 6m gap from the road to the fence to facilitate crane installation and maintenance.

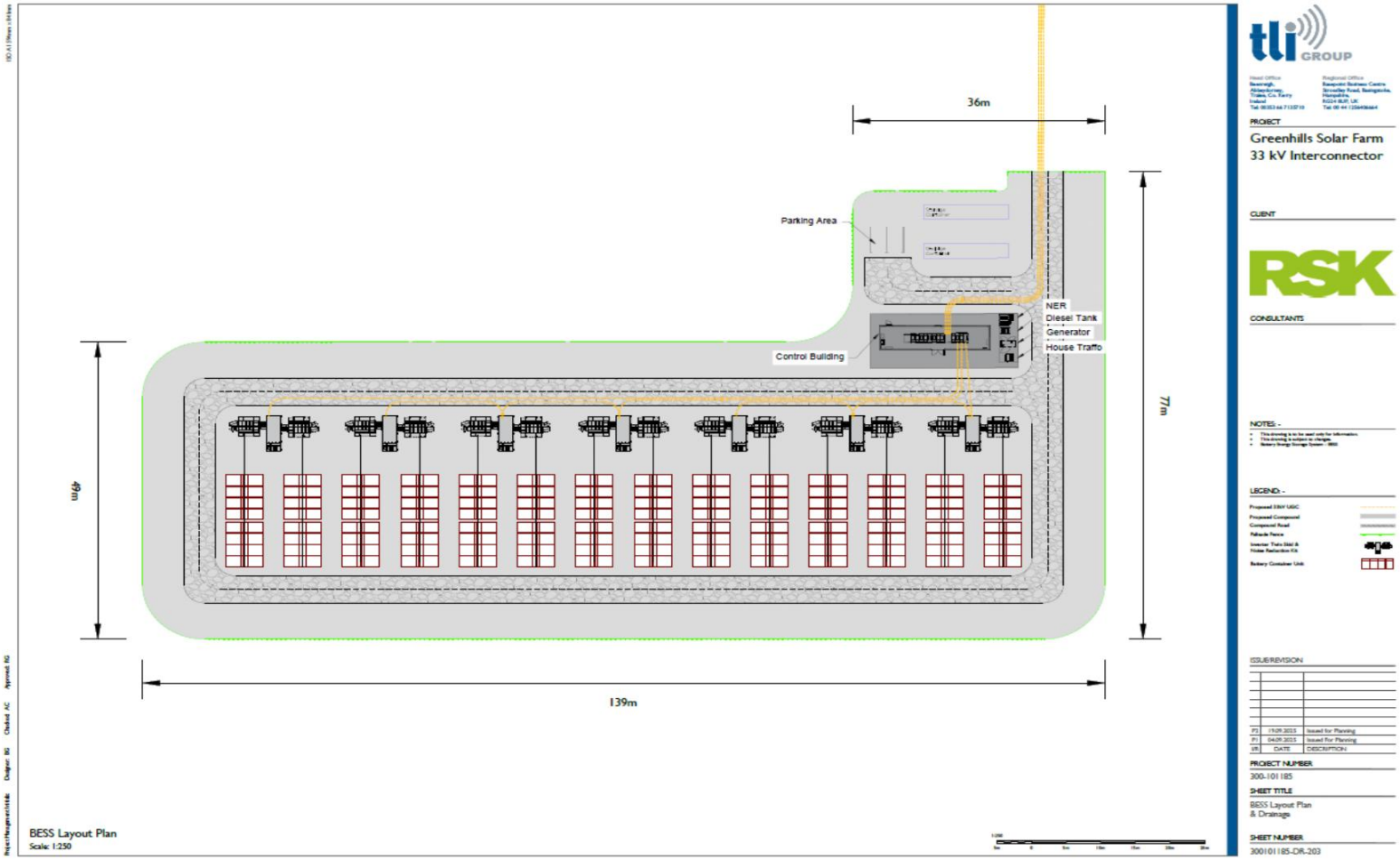

Figure 3-4: Proposed Development Battery Energy Storage System

3.6 Proposed 220kV AIS Substation

Electricity from the solar array areas will be ducted to an on-site new 220kV AIS substation, which will be connected to the national grid via a loop-in grid connection to the existing Knockraha-Cullenagh 220kV overhead line, which runs through the middle of the site. The proposed 220kV AIS substation, loop-in grid connection and BESS compound are located in the townland of Ballyneague, circa 6.5 kilometres north of Killeagh.

The proposed 220kV AIS substation (centre co-ordinates x = 602704.4, y = 582070.1) will comprise the following main components:

- EirGrid control building including welfare facilities
- IPP control building including welfare facilities
- Diesel generator & tank
- Space for future filter and reactive compensation equipment
- Up to 2x 220 kV transformers
- Surge arrestors
- Disconnects
- Combined current/voltage transformers
- Circuit breakers
- Busbar
- 2x gantry
- Neutral earthing resistor
- Associated internal cabling
- 18 m lightning masts
- Typical lighting poles
- 36m telecom mast
- Palisade fence
- Post and rail fence
- Internal site access roads
- Associated site development plant equipment
- Four storage containers
- Drainage details (including surface water and foul wastewater drainage)
- Temporary set down compound

The substation site has an elevation ranging from approximately 97 – 113m above sea level and the BESS compound has an elevation ranging from approximately 119 – 122m.

The dimensions of the substation are as follows:

- IPP area: 143.6m x 51m

- EirGrid Area: 132m x 116m

A site construction compound will be utilised (circa 45m x 65m of level crushed rock base) to house a canteen, toilet facilities, office modules, parking facilities and material laydown area.

The telecoms mast located within the substation will be 36m in height, the lightning protection mast will be 18m in heigh and the palisade fencing will be 2.6m in height.

Adequate lighting will be installed around the compound on the lighting masts. Lightning protection masts of approximate height 18m will be installed to protect the station from direct lightning strikes.

The proposed substation development will include a temporary site construction compound, on an area set aside for potential future EirGrid extension, of circa 45m x 65m of level crushed rock base, to house a canteen, toilet facilities, office modules, parking facilities and material laydown area. These built elements will result in some small areas of reprofiling to accommodate the flat compounds and will result in some areas of cut and fill.

3.6.1 Landscape

The Proposed Development is located in a robust rural landscape and is not contained within a susceptible high value landscape designation. When identifying constraints, the existence of some degree of scenic amenity was taken into account, principally relating to views across the River Blackwater in the opposite direction of the site. Also taken into consideration was the Scenic View S45 'Road Between Youghal and Tallow' which is located northeast of the site. The site visits also identified that there are some locally elevated parts of the landscape present with a higher degree of scenic amenity where open views are afforded across the surrounding rural landscape.

3.6.2 Ecology

The Proposed Development does not form part of any Natura 2000 designated area. It is located circa 2km to the west of the of the Blackwater Estuary SPA and circa 2km west of the Blackwater River (Cork Waterford) SAC, see Figure 2.4. There are proposed Natural Heritage Areas with 15km of the Proposed Development.

Hydrologically, the Proposed Development is connected to the Blackwater Estuary SPA (Site Code 004028) and the Blackwater River (Cork Waterford) SAC (Site Code 002170) by the Tourig River, whose tributaries drain the Proposed Development area, see Figure 2.6. The Natura 2000 sites, pNHAs and hydrological connection were taken into account in designing biodiversity surveys and identifying appropriate buffer distances for the Proposed Development components.

3.6.3 Hydrology and Flood Risk

Historic mapping was reviewed and field walkover surveys conducted to identify and map drainage features on site. The field surveys identified the main hydrological connectivity to the Tourig River flowing west of the site which connects to the designated areas.

The Proposed Development area is drained by the Carrignass Stream, Knocknappagh Stream, Ballyneague Stream, Youghalpark Stream and Ballyglavin stream (all tributaries of the Tourig River), as well as internal local drainage connected to these. All watercourses and significant artificial drains which were identified were avoided though incorporation of appropriate buffers into the overall design.

No flood zones were identified within the site. A flood area is located along the Tourig water course (EPA 18T03), located to the west of the northern area of the site and south of the southern and southeast areas, though this appears to be limited to the main channel.

3.6.4 Cultural heritage and Archaeology

Desk-based research and site walkovers were completed to identify potential impacts. Based on this, no direct effects are predicted on world heritage sites, architectural conservation areas, national monuments, historic parks and gardens, known underwater cultural heritage, or any buildings listed on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS).

All recorded archaeological sites and Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) zones on the sites and monuments record have been identified and either excluded from site boundary or an appropriate buffer has been placed around them as mitigation to avoid harmful direct effects. No direct effects are predicted on any buildings recorded on the national inventory of architectural heritage (NIAH).

The Proposed Development area does not contain a high level of historic field boundaries, but the design approach has been that surviving historic field boundaries will generally be preserved in situ and enhanced where possible.

No significant effects are predicted on the settings of any historic structures listed on the record of protected structures. No significant effects are predicted on the settings of any buildings recorded on the NIAH.

Surviving 19th century historic structures (that are not recorded by the National Monuments Service (NMS), NIAH or Cork County Council) have been identified, with buffer zones proposed to mitigate potential effects during both construction and operational phases.

3.6.5 Site Access, Roads and Trackway Network

The Proposed Development is served primarily by the N25 national primary road, N72 national secondary road, R634 regional road and the L7829, L7806, L3803, L38032, L7828 and L3808 local roads.

The Proposed Development Area is a working agricultural grassland with some tillage areas an There are a number of existing access points to the proposed development areas off the local road network.

3.6.6 Electrical Infrastructure

The existing Knockraha-Cullenagh 220kV overhead line runs through the site in an east-west direction, and a buffer zone along this line has been incorporated into the design. Buffers have also been incorporated where the proposed loop-in towers are located that intersect the existing 220kV Overhead Line (OHL).

Medium voltage (10kV and 20kV) and low voltage (230V and 400V) distribution lines also run across parts of the site and appropriate buffers are included for these as well.

To avoid the need for a long grid connection utilising the public road network in the area, the option to export power from the Proposed Development by loop-in to the existing Knockraha-Cullenagh 220kV overhead line, which passes through the development site in an east-west direction was adopted. This has the advantages of both minimising impact and disruption along the public road network and reducing the length of grid connection required.

3.6.7 Fencing and Security

A perimeter fence up to 2.4m in height will be erected to provide security and restrict unauthorised entry. This fence will be stock proof in nature and sympathetic to the agricultural character of the Site. The footings for the fence will either be pre-moulded or localized in-situ concrete, to be determined once a contractor is appointed. The installed fencing will incorporate mammal friendly access, with a maximum 200 mm gap retained at the bottom between the fence and the ground, as per the submitted technical plans. Fencing will prevent access of members of the public and prevent any potential incidents of vandalism. There will be no perimeter lighting at the solar farm, the inverter/transformers at the solar farm will require minimal lighting inside the containers used for maintenance purposes and only turned on only as required.

3.7 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

3.7.1 The Size and Design of the Whole of the Proposed Development

The Proposed Development is located in the townlands of Knocknagappagh, Barnaviddane, Ballyneague, Ballydaniel, Youghalpark, Ballydaheen and Cornaveigh of County Cork. More specifically, it is located adjacent to the R364 road approximately 7km north-west of the settlement of Youghal and 6.5km north-east of Killeagh, see **Figure 3-1** above.

The Proposed Development will consist of a circa 323 ha solar farm with ca. 210 ha of solar panels fixed on ground-mounted frames, 54 no. Inverter/transformer stations placed on concrete pads on hardcore sized 120m2, associated hardstands, provision of new site access tracks and upgrading of existing access tracks, the provision of 11 site entrances, (3 new and 9 existing) which will be upgraded, underground electrical ducting and cabling, including 3 no. road crossings (local roads L7829, L3803 and L78281) and 3 no. culvert crossings on the L3808, 5 no. Temporary construction compounds of which there will be 1 main temporary construction compound (Compound No. 1 located in Ballyneague) and 4 no. additional temporary laydown areas of ca. 2,000m2 in the townlands of Ballydaniel, Barnaviddane, Cornaveigh and Youghalpark, landscaping works encompassing the removal of 395m hedgerow, the planting of 1,400m of new hedgerow and bolstering of up to 31,000m of linear hedgerow and mosaic hedgerow, a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) including 56 no. Battery Container Units, 7 no. Inverter Twin Skid Units each consisting of 2 no. Inverters and 1 no. Transformer housed in Modular Enclosures, communications building Security Fencing, CCTV, Lighting, Drainage any all other ancillary infrastructure. It also includes a new 220kV AIS Substation and Loop-in Grid Connection to the existing Knockraha – Cullenagh 220kV Overhead Line.

3.7.2 Cumulation with Other Existing Development and Consented Development Under Section 172(1A)(B) and Subject to EIA

A search was conducted of planning applications (projects) within the vicinity of the Proposed Development, using the Cork County Council and Waterford City and County Council planning portals map viewer, the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government EIA portal map viewer and An Coimisiún Pleanála Planning Map Search tool. The search was limited to the five-year period preceding the date of issue of this report and excluded retention applications (i.e. typically local-scale residential or commercial developments where an impact has already occurred), incomplete, withdrawn or refused applications.

A number of projects within 2km of the Proposed Development pose potential to interact with the Proposed Development. However, only one project appears to have likely in-combination

interactions to consider. The remaining projects are small-scale housing developments with significant separation distances. The relevant Project with potential for interactions with the Proposed Development is

- Planning Reference PA04.309121 Turbine Delivery Route and Wind Farm Development ((Lyrenacarriga Wind Farm, Co. Cork) 1.19km (from Turbine Delivery Route works) The proposed development, covering an area of approx. 724 hectares, straddles the administrative boundaries of Co. Waterford and Co. Cork. Two clusters of turbines are proposed. The cluster in Waterford consists of 11 turbines (T1-T11) and that in Cork consists of 6 (T12-T17)..

3.7.2.1 Construction

Apart from the Lyrenacarriga Wind Farm, Co. Cork turbine delivery route works, other planned or permitted projects in the area consist mainly of applications for new domestic properties or alterations to existing domestic properties. These are unlikely to lead to cumulative construction phase impacts with the Proposed Development due to their scale.

3.7.2.2 Operational Phase

Any cumulative effects with the Lyrenacarriga Wind Farm, will be during the operational phase and take the form of effects on landscape and visuals. Lyrenacarriga is located to the east and is unlikely to have cumulative visual impacts due to distance. The Proposed Development will be heavily contained by the surrounding layers of mature vegetation, which will be further consolidated as part of the proposed landscape mitigation strategy.

Given the nature and scale of the Proposed Development, the limited visibility of the Site and the Planning Applications in the vicinity, it is not considered that the addition of the Proposed Development Farm will generate significant negative cumulative effects.

3.7.3 The Nature of Any Proposed Demolition Works

No buildings will be demolished as part of the Proposed Development.

3.7.4 The Use of Natural Resources, In Particular Land, Soil, Water and Biodiversity

The Proposed Development will occupy circa 323ha of land once constructed. This is currently used for agriculture, mainly grazing with some areas of arable agriculture. Panels will be laid out in arrays on ground mounted frames and anchored largely by shallow piles, causing minimal ground disturbance. Where ground conditions require, concrete or ballast footing may be required, though this is expected to be minimal. These will be removed upon decommissioning of the solar farm and taken off Site for disposal at a licenced facility. Both can be removed completely without damaging soils and the land take is reversible at the solar farm. The solar farm design allows multi-purpose use of the land by enabling ongoing sheep grazing at the solar farm if suitable. This helps to diversify the income of the landowners and farmers involved in the Proposed Development. The land for underground cabling will be reinstated for the operational phase.

The Site of the Proposed Development is located in an area underlain by Acid Deep Well Drained Mineral (AminDW) with some minor pockets of AminSW, AminPD, AminSRPT and AlluvMIN. There is no peat on the Site. The amount of soil requiring off-site removal will be minimal, and likely zero. Excess soils will be used in landscaping and reinstatement wherever possible.

The Proposed Development will require a water supply for welfare facilties at tehproposed substation. It is proposed to provide this through a new bored well located adjacent to the proposed substation site

Historic mapping was reviewed and field walkover surveys conducted to identify and map drainage features on site. The field surveys identified the main hydrological connectivity to the Tourig River flowing west of the site which connects to the designated areas.

The Proposed Development area is drained by the Carrignass Stream, Knocknappagh Stream, Ballyneague Stream, Youghalpark Stream and Ballyglavin stream (all tributaries of the Tourig River), as well as internal local drainage connected to these.

The WFD status of river water bodies associated with the Tourig_SC_10 Sub Catchment ranges from "Good" to "Moderate". However, there are noted significant pressures on water quality from Agriculture[1]. A summary of WFD status of relevant surface water bodies hydrologically connected to the Site is presented in the table below. The WFD risk (cycle 3) for the river water bodies shows the Lower Blackwater M Estuary / Youghal Harbour is at risk with significant pressures from Agriculture.

Table 3.1: WFD status and risk

Name	Overall status (2010-2015)	Overall status (2013-2018)	Overall status (2016-2021)	Risk Status	WFD pressures
Glenville GWB	Good	Good	Good	Not at risk	N/A
Tourig_020	Good	Good	Good	Not at risk	N/A
Lower Blackwater M Estuary / Youghal Harbour	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	At risk	Agriculture

No flood zones were identified within the site. A flood area is located along the Tourig water course (EPA 18T03), located to the west of the northern area of the site and south of the southern and southeast areas, though this appears to be limited to the main channel

The flood risk on site is likely low but there is some flooding downstream therefore mitigation measures to reduce surface water runoff will be implemented.

The Site is mostly flat or slightly undulating with elevations from 74m A.O.D to 90m A.O.D, the topography of the Site and surrounding area generally fall from west to east. Rivers and streams in the wider area are shown on **Figure 3-5.**

[1] https://catchments.ie/wp-content/files/catchmentassessments/18%20Blackwater%20(Munster)%20Catchment%20Summary%20WFD%20Cycle%203.pdf [Accessed: 11/07/2025]

Figure 3-5: : Waterbodies in the vicinity of the development.

3.7.5 The Production of Waste

No significant waste is expected to be produced as a result of the Proposed Development. The majority of the material excavated for the substation and Bess will be reused as part of the cut and fill construction and for berm construction and used on site to reinstate those areas post construction.

3.7.6 Pollution and Nuisances

During construction of the Proposed Development, there is potential for nuisance from dust generated during excavations, though this will be temporary and can be mitigated by good general housekeeping and damping down surfaces where dust can potentially become friable.

The Proposed Development has the potential to generate noise nuisance during construction from machinery. Noise generated during construction will be temporary in nature.

The operational noise of the Proposed Development is not expected to be significant.

There is potential for pollution of nearby watercourses or groundwater during construction from accidental spillages of hydrocarbons, cement and sediment from excavations. Mitigation measures will be implemented to ensure that the potential for water pollution is minimised. During operation, the Proposed Development will not lead to any pollution of nearby watercourses or groundwater.

3.7.7 Residues and Emissions

No change in residues is expected as a result of the Proposed Development. The purpose of the Proposed Development is to create renewable solar energy. This will ultimately help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reduce the use of fossil fuels in electricity generation. Emissions levels from conventional electricity generation would be expected to decrease as our electricity consumption switches to renewable resources and our dependence on fossil fuels decreases. The Proposed Development will facilitate this transition.

3.7.8 The Risk of Major Accidents, And/Or Disasters Relevant to the Project, Including Climate Change

There is a slight risk of concrete used for the inverter/transformer and RMU hardstands entering watercourses. It is envisaged that no concrete batching will take place on-site but will be trucked to Site from a nearby supplier. Where concrete is delivered to the Site, only the chute need be cleaned, using the smallest volume of water possible. No discharge of cement contaminated waters to the construction phase drainage system or directly to any artificial drain or watercourse will be allowed. Chute cleaning water is to be tanked and removed from the Site to a suitable, licensed waste facility.

There is potential for accidents from plant and machinery used during construction to result in hydrocarbon pollution of surface watercourses or groundwater. It is envisaged that refuelling will take place at the contractor's temporary compound and spill kits will be provided on all plant used during construction.

Accidents on construction Sites are a constant risk. However, a Project Supervisor Design Process (PSDP) will be appointed, and a Project Supervisor Construction Stage (PSCS) will be appointed to ensure the effectiveness in addressing and co-ordinating health & safety matters throughout the project. Best Practice Health & Safety procedures will be followed on Site.

An Ecological Clerk of Works and an Environmental Clerck of Works will be appointed to ensure that all buffer zones are adhered to during construction and that all staff are familiarised with the site and the requirements of any mitigation set out in the Proposed Development Planning documentation. This will include Toolbox talks and site initiation for all site workers and any personnel entering the Site for the first time. All site workers will have a valid Safe Pass. No change in risk of accidents is expected as a result of the Proposed Development.

3.7.9 Risks to Human Health

There is potential for air pollution from dust generated during construction, although given the distance from sensitive receptors and the implementation of mitigation measures, this is not expected to be a significant effect. During operation of the Proposed Development there will be no effects from air pollution.

During the construction of the Proposed Development, there is potential for pollution of watercourses and/or groundwater from excavations or accidental hydrocarbon spillages and release of cementitious materials. These will be mitigated as outlined in previous sections. During operation there is no potential for risks to human health from water pollution.

3.8 Location of the Proposed Development

3.8.1 The Existing and Approved land use

The current land use on-site predominantly comprises agricultural grazing with a small area of arable farming.

3.8.2 Abundance, Quality and Regenerative Capacity of Natural Resources (Including Soil, Land, Water & Biodiversity) in the Area & its Underground

3.8.2.1 European and National Sites

A precautionary approach was adopted when identifying relevant European sites, assessing all European sites within a 15km radius of the Proposed Development as well as more distant sites where potential hydrological linkage exists (OPR, 2021), see **Figure 3-6.**

As presented in Table 3.2 below, seven European sites were identified for assessment in relation to the Proposed Development: specifically, four SPAs and three SACs. Two sites have hydrological connectivity to the Proposed Development (Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC and Blackwater Estuary SPA).

Table 3.2: Internationally Designated sites within the ZoI of the Proposed Development.

Site code	Site name	Distance to Proposed Development (km)	Hydrological Distance (km)
Special Area of Conservation			
002170	Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC	2.01	3.50
000077	Ballymacoda (Clonpriest and Pillmore) SAC	6.26	-
002123	Ardmore Head SAC	14.38	-

Site code	Site name	Distance to Proposed Development (km)	Hydrological Distance (km)
Special Protection Area			
004028	Blackwater Estuary SPA	2.09	3.50
004023	Ballymacoda Bay SPA	6.28	-
004192	Helvick Head to Ballyquin SPA	15.8	-
004237	Seas off Wexford SPA	61.20	-

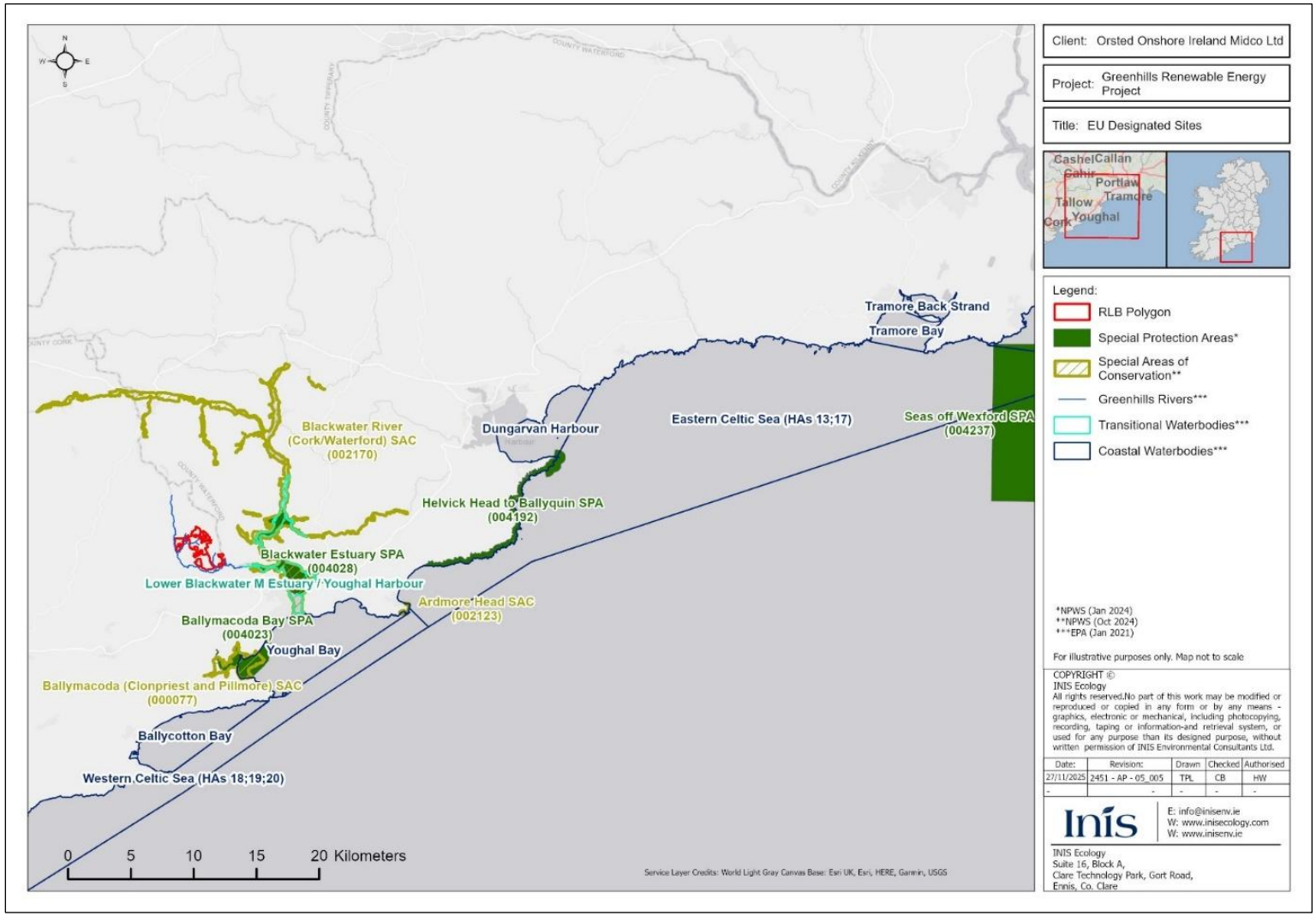

Figure 3-6: EU Designated Sites

As presented in Table 3.3 below, 10 pNHAs were identified for assessment in relation to the Proposed Development, no NHAs were identified within the ZoI. One site has direct hydrological connectivity to the Proposed Development (Blackwater River and Estuary pNHA), see **Figure 3-7**.

The remaining relevant nationally designated sites located within the precautionary ZoI were determined not to have any potential pathway with the Proposed Development.

Table 3.3: Nationally Designated sites within the ZoI of the Proposed Development.

Site code	Site name	Distance to Proposed Development (km)	Hydrological Distance (km)
Proposed Natural Heritage Area			
000072	Blackwater River And Estuary pNHA	2	3.5
000078	Ballyvergan Marsh pNHA 4.08km	4.08	-
000077	Ballymacoda (Clonpriest And Pillmore) pNHA	6.26	-
001235	Ballyquirk Pond pNHA	6.36	-
001183	Clasharinka Pond pNHA	8.85	-
000670	Tallow (Disused Church) pNHA	10.42	-
000083	Capel Island And Knockadoon Head pNHA	10.75	-
000446	Loughs Aderry And Ballybutler pNHA	10.91	-
000076	Ballycotton, Ballynamona And Shanagarry pNHA	12.35	-
001042	Carrigshane Hill pNHA	14.39	-

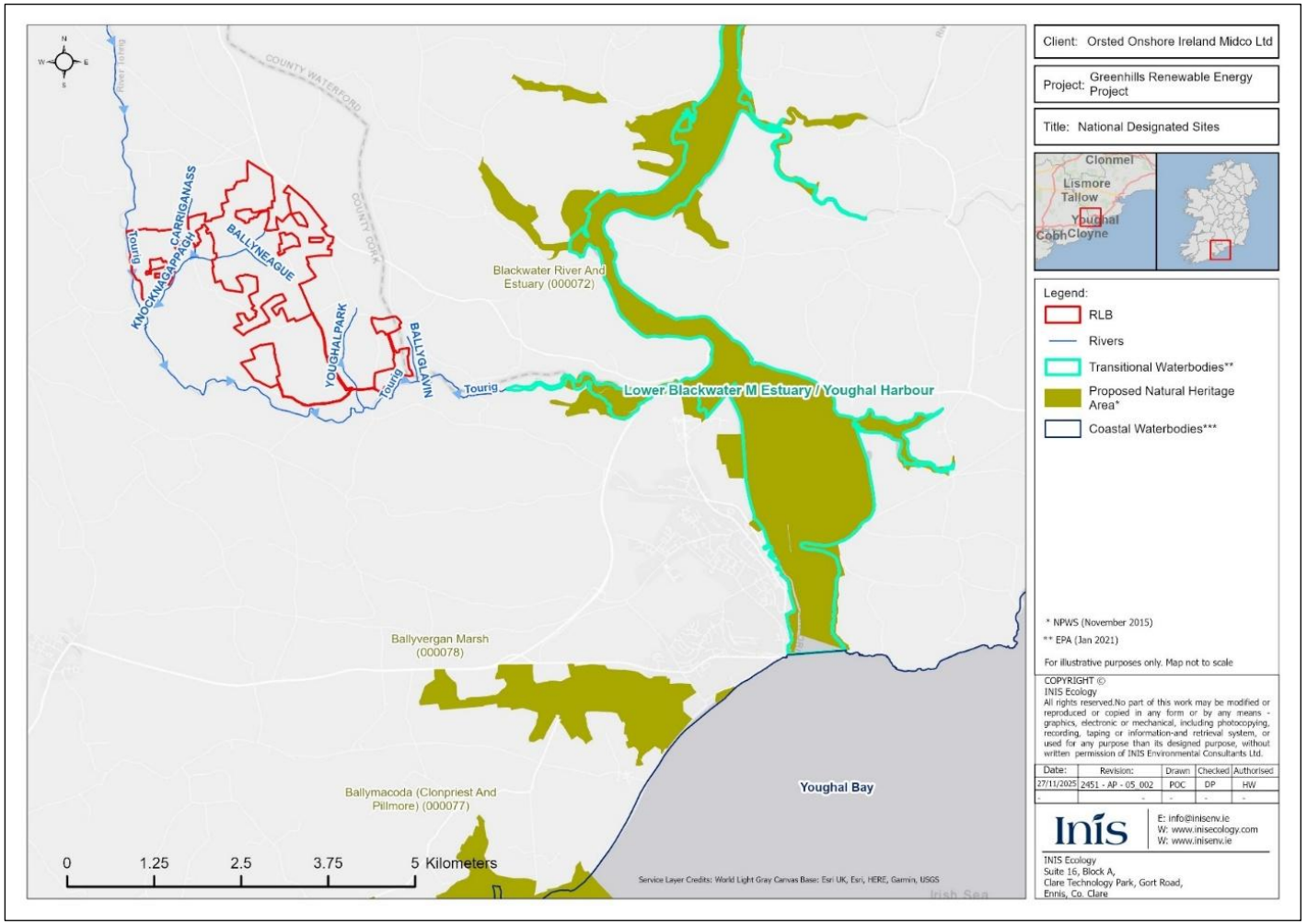

Figure 3-7: Overview of National Sites.

3.8.2.2 *Interconnector cabling*

The lengths of circuit required to connect the southeast and southwest solar array areas to the IPP switchgear room are shown in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Circuit Lengths to Connect the Southeast and Southwest Solar Arrays

Section	Type	Description (all lengths are approximate and to be confirmed at detailed design stage)
Section 1	Single circuit from the southwest area along the L-3808 to the start of the L-7829	The single 33kV underground circuit runs for approx. 1,287 meters from the SW parcel in the public road, L-3808, before joining with the single circuit from the SE Parcel. The cable crosses 2 culverts and an approx. number of 1 joint slab will need to be installed..
Section 2	Single circuit from the southeast area along the L-3808 to the start of the L-7829	The single 33kV underground circuit runs for approx. 387 meters from the SE parcel in the public road, L-3808, before joining with the single circuit from the SW Parcel. The cable crosses 1 culvert and there is no need for cable joining on a joint slab to be installed in this section.
Section 3	Double circuit along the field to the L-7829	The double circuit from the southern parcels runs in a northerly direction off road before it heads to the local road L7829 for approx. 590 meters. The cable crosses one open drain and one joint slab will need to be installed for each circuit.
Section 4	Double circuit along the L-7829 to the solar farm	The double circuit runs along the local road L-7829 for approx. 714 meters before entering in the Solar Farm field. One joint slab will need to be installed for each circuit.
Within the solar farm lands	Solar farm lands to IPP switchgear room	The double circuit run for approx. 1,685 meters from the local road L-7829 to the IPP Switchgear room on the solar farm lands. Two joint slabs will need to be installed for each circuit
Total circuit length		1,674m of single circuit 33kV Underground Cable 2,989m of double circuit 33kV Underground Cable

There are a number of small watercourse crossings located along the route which will be crossed either in the road decking above existing culverts or by dam and flume methodology at appropriate times of the year and in accordance with Inland Fisheries Ireland Guidance.

3.8.2.3 *Access to the Proposed Development*

Access to the Proposed Development will be 11 in number, as listed below.

- Site access 1 will be located on the R634 regional road.
- Site access 2 will be located on the L7806 local road.
- Site access 3 will be located on the L3803 local road.
- Site access 4 and 5 will be located on the L3808 local road.
- Site access 6 and 7 will be located on the L7828 local road.
- Site access 8, 9 and 10 will be located on the L7829 local road.
- Site access 11 will be located on the L38032 local road.

The location of the site entrance points to the Proposed Development are shown on Figure 3-3.

3.8.2.4 Land

The Site will cover an area of circa 323ha (area of the redline boundary). The solar array is split into four main areas, connected underground cabling.

No significant change will result from the Proposed Development. The Proposed Development is estimated to result in the reversible loss of 118.9ha of agricultural land. After decommissioning the land can be reinstated to its original agricultural uses.

3.8.2.5 Soil

The proposal involves the removal of materials from within the Site boundary including soils and subsoils. The volume of excavated soils is expected to be low and will be used on the Site wherever possible. This is not considered to be a significant negative impact.

3.8.2.6 Biodiversity

Biodiversity field surveys and desktop reviews identified that the site consists of large areas of improved agricultural grassland connected by a network of treelines and hedgerows with areas of scrub also present. The southeast section has areas of arable farming present. There is not expected to be a significant negative impact on European Designated Sites in the vicinity of the Site. There is not expected to be any significant effect on any mammal species currently present on Site. Due to biodiversity enhancement including new hedgerow planting, new native woodland planting and hedgerow bolstering where needed a potential positive effect is expected. An Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) have been produced for the Proposed Development to accompany and support the planning application.

3.8.2.7 The Absorption Capacity of the Natural Environment

- The Proposed Development will not have a significant negative effect on any wetlands, riparian areas or river mouths.
- The Proposed Development is unlikely to have any significant effects on coastal zones or the marine environment given the scale of the development and the distance to the coastal area from the Proposed Development.
- The Proposed Development will not result in any significant negative effects on mountains or forested areas given the location of the Proposed Development in a lowland area, no forestry will be felled as part of the development. A very small loss of hedgerow will occur

with the removal of 260m due to site entrances and a further 135m due to access track improvement, gates and fences.

- There are no nature reserves or parks in the vicinity of the Proposed Development and so there will be no significant negative effects.
- There is not expected to be a significant negative impact on European Designated Sites in the vicinity of the Site.
- The Proposed Development is not located in an area where there has been a failure to meet environmental standards laid out by the European Union.

3.9 Types and Characteristics of Potential Impacts

3.9.1 Extent of the Impact (Geographical Area & Size of the Affected Population)

Any potential impacts will be confined to the Site area. Provided best practice construction methods are employed during the construction of the Proposed Development, no environmental impacts, such as sedimentation to local watercourses, are envisaged.

Given the nature of the Site and its environs and as the Proposed Development will be contained within the existing field pattern, and screened with existing treelines and hedgerows which will be enhanced as part of a comprehensive mitigation strategy, it is unlikely to have any significant impact on the landscape of the area. A Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been prepared to support this planning application.

3.9.1.1 Biodiversity

In terms of biodiversity, the design of the Proposed Development has incorporated avoidance of areas of higher ecological value, including minimisation of hedgerow loss through use of existing field tracks and access points, especially higher value hedgerows and those surrounding the Site to retain the natural screening provided.

Areas under panels will be seeded with grasses, the spacing between the panels and the angle will allow vegetation to grow underneath. Once operational, sheep grazing or periodic cutting, if grazing is not possible, will assist in maintaining the habitat as grassland.

The ecological Impacts of the Proposed Development are unlikely to give rise to any significant impacts on flora and fauna.

A total of six potential Badger setts were recorded during ecological walkover surveys, four of which were recorded within the Proposed Development site boundary. The design was amended to avoid these and leave a suitable buffer. A footprint belonging to Otter was recorded within the Proposed Development site boundary on the Tourig River and sightings of Red Fox also occurred. Mitigation measures have been proposed in the EcIA Report to ensure no impact occurs. No other mammals or signs of mammals were recorded during the surveys although suitable habitat was identified for Irish Hare, Pine Marten, Hedgehog and Pygmy Shrew with limited habitat for Irish Stoat and Red Squirrel. No impacts to mammals are predicted.

Limited suitable habitat was recorded for amphibians within the Proposed Development in the form of drainage ditches (FW4) with both slow flowing and static water and flooded areas (Table B.3). However, no amphibians were recorded during field surveys and it is unlikely that either of these species are utilising the Proposed Development as a spawning habitat. Furthermore, no presence of indicator species was recorded.

Small Tortoiseshell *Aglais urticae* were recorded during a field assessment survey along suitable hedgerow and treeline mosaic habitat. Potential loss of habitat has been mitigated by proposed new hedgerow planting and bolstering of existing hedgerows.

No other target invertebrates were recorded during survey efforts and the low activity of invertebrates reflects the habitats within the Proposed Development are of limited suitability and use for invertebrates (improved grassland). The Proposed Development is not predicted to have the potential to result in significant negative impacts to invertebrates.

The Site has relatively low ecological interest reflecting its current status largely as intensely managed agricultural lands. It is noted that there are no habitats on-site that are examples of those listed on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive. There are no designations for these habitats on or surrounding the Site. The dominant habitats included fields of improved agricultural grassland and arable crops. These comprised 84.47% and 9.6% of the total area of the Proposed Development site boundary. The Site has relatively low potential to support mammal species due to the intensive agricultural land use practices. The Site supports a good diversity of bird species associated with a pastoral agricultural landscape.

An Ecological Impact Assessment has been completed for the Proposed Development. It found that following consideration of the predicted residual impacts (post-mitigation), the Proposed Development is unlikely to result in any significant impacts on the identified ecological receptors. The potential for impacts on European designated sites is fully described in the Natura Impact Assessment report (Inis Environmental Consultants Ltd., 2025). Impacts to Nationally designated sites were regarded as unlikely or not significant.

Following a precautionary approach, potential impacts to ecological receptors present at the Proposed Development were identified and evaluated.

In conclusion, the Proposed Development, either individually or in-combination with other plans or projects is unlikely to result in significant impacts on the ecological receptors of conservation or biodiversity value to the baseline.

The Proposed Development will also have positive residual effects for the local environment, on the basis of the following:

- Creation of grassland in place of intensively managed improved grassland and arable land.
- Elimination of fertilisers, herbicides and pesticides applied to the Site area for lifetime of project.
- Implementation of a Biodiversity Enhancement Management Plan
- Landscape Mitigation Plan which will create new hedgerows and new natural woodland and enhance identified existing hedgerows within Site through a planting scheme.

The Tourig River, Ballyneague River and Knocknagappagh River run through the Proposed Development site boundary to the west, the Youghal Park and Ballyglavin Rivers flow south of the Proposed Development site southern boundary. The Carriganass River (18C30) flows through the Proposed Development from the north. The Proposed Development is located 2.01km from the Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC and 2.1km from the Blackwater Estuary SPA. These rivers are part of the Tourig_020 sub-basin and there is a potential indirect hydrological pathway between the Proposed Development and the European sites via surface run-off into the Tourig river, which is connected to the European sites, and ex-situ pathways for mobile species and ex-situ aquatic

habitats. As such an AA Screening and Natura Impact Statement has been prepared for the proposed development. It was determined that, following the implementation of mitigation measures for the protection of designated QIs, on the basis of best scientific evidence and in the absence of any reasonable scientific doubt, that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with any other development, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European site.

3.9.1.2 Archaeology

Two historic 19th century farmyards located inside the site boundary survive as upstanding ruins today. One of these is located in the northern part of Ballydaniel townland in the north-eastern part of the Site to the west of the modern R634 road. It comprises a small stone farmhouse and yard. The second is located in the southern part of Ballydaniel townland in the central part of the Site to the west of the Park Hill road. It comprises a farmhouse and outbuildings in a small rectangular farmyard. In addition, Roisin, a 19th century vernacular house (39/47), is recorded on land within 5 m of the Site boundary and its curtilage.

A full Archaeological assessment report has been prepared as part of the planning application. This indicates that there will be no direct physical effects from the Proposed Development on any World Heritage Site, National Monument, Architectural Conservation Area, Protected Structure, Recorded Monument or Historic Building Recorded by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. Therefore, the construction, operational and decommissioning phase of the Proposed Development will have a No Change direct effect on these types of heritage assets. In relation to direct effects, the significance of effect on these types of heritage assets will be neutral.

A programme of geophysical survey undertaken during the assessment identified four discrete anomalies that may represent archaeological features, including possible enclosure and ring-ditch type remains. The archaeological potential of these anomalies is considered sufficiently important to warrant a precautionary avoidance strategy. Embedded mitigation has therefore been incorporated into the design through the use of non-intrusive above-ground gabion basket/ballasted foundation systems and associated stand-off buffers. This approach avoids excavation and preserves any surviving archaeological remains in situ. Elsewhere across the Site, the geophysical survey identified a limited number of linear anomalies that are interpreted as former field boundaries or historic land divisions together with isolated anomalies of uncertain origin. These features are largely capable of being preserved beneath the proposed solar infrastructure and are assessed as experiencing effects that are Imperceptible to Not Significant.

The Proposed Development may have a long term (during the operational phase) Low effect on the setting of one Protected Structure (Roisin) It should be noted that at the time of the site visit for this assessment, the building appeared had been gutted by a recent fire which had destroyed the thatch roof and the building appeared to be uninhabitable. Assuming this structure is restored, the Proposed Development will likely have an adverse indirect effect on the significance of this Protected Structure and its curtilage. However, the significance of this effect will be at worst slight adverse (an effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the historic environment without affecting its sensitivities). This effect could be mitigated by the planting of native hedgerow vegetation around the part of the Site boundary which borders the curtilage of this Protected Structure. These effects will be reversed once the Proposed Development is decommissioned.

3.9.1.3 Construction

The Site is well served by the national and local road network. The Proposed Development is served primarily by the N25 national primary road, N72 national secondary road, R634 regional road and the L7829, L7806, L3803, L38032, L7828 and L3808 local roads. The development will use nine existing field entrances and two new site entrances – there are therefore 11 entrances for the solar farm. It was considered that a higher number of entrances were required due to the enclosed nature of the field system at the Site and the location of the proposed substation.

Standard traffic management measures will be implemented to minimise impacts on the public road network and users of that network. This includes:

- Construction traffic will use the designated haul routes with appropriate signage
- Roads will be closed where needed through an application to Cork County Council

A traffic impact assessment has been completed for the Proposed Development. It found that the mitigation measures as laid in the Planning and Environmental Report will minimize any potential impacts on the road network from the Proposed Development. This will help to protect the health and safety and the local amenity of the local area. The residual impact of the Proposed Development on Traffic and Transport has been assessed as being slight negative and short term during the construction and decommissioning phases and imperceptible during operation.

3.9.1.4 Landscape and Visual

In terms of landscape impacts, the proposed development is of a sizable scale, comprising several landholdings; however, it is considered to have only a modest physical impact as it is consolidated within the existing hedgerow network and will not require significant excavation works to construct either the solar panels or the access and maintenance tracks. Nonetheless, there will be some localised excavation works to facilitate the proposed site compounds for the substation and BESS development, both of which will require areas of cut and fill and will result in localised modifications to the existing terrain.

In terms of impacts on landscape character, the solar array will hug the ground plane and be consolidated within the existing field pattern, which will be enhanced as part of a comprehensive mitigation strategy. Indeed, the comprehensive landscape mitigation proposals, which comprise new areas of woodland, new and enhanced hedgerows, and the management of grasslands for biodiversity purposes, will result in some localised positive landscape effects.

Furthermore, whilst the proposed development is relatively broad in scale and comprises several distinct solar parcels, the most notable of these being the central parcel, the full scale and intensity of the entire development will never be fully apparent due to the dispersed nature of the site and the dense layers of intervening vegetation located between each of the proposed parcels. In fact, the most notable landscape effects will occur at the site scale and within its immediate surrounding landscape; thus, the greatest landscape effects generated by the proposed development will be localised to the immediate environs of the site. It should also be noted that where the proposed development will result in the most pronounced effects on landscape character, these areas present as modified, typical working rural settings that are neither highly rare nor particularly susceptible to change. Indeed, as evidenced by the broad-scale field patterns within the central parts of the site, this landscape has undergone large-scale change over the past century due to agricultural practices, with historical maps highlighting a previously more intricate field network

The overall significance of operational-stage landscape effect is deemed to be 'Moderate' and of a Negative quality within the immediate surrounds of the site, reducing to Slight and Imperceptible within the wider surrounding study area. Overall, while the proposed development will, due to its scale and extent, result in some higher-ranging landscape and visual effects, these effects will tend to be localised to the immediate vicinity of the site. However, appropriate mitigation measures have been incorporated throughout the site to diminish the development's residual effects at surrounding receptors, in line with the policies and objectives outlined in the current Cork County Development Plan (CDP). Indeed, it is considered that the development is suitably sited within a robust rural context and does not conflict with landscape or visual-related policy in the current Cork County Development Plan.

3.9.2 The Nature of the Impact

The nature of any potential impacts will be low given the size and spatial extent of the Proposed Development.

3.9.3 Transboundary Nature of the Impact

There will be no transboundary impacts associated with the Proposed Development.

3.9.4 Intensity & Complexity of the Impact

Impacts from the Proposed Development are not likely to be significant.

3.9.5 Probability of the Impact

The probability of significant impacts from the Proposed Development are likely to be low.

3.9.6 Expected Onset, Duration, Frequency and Reversibility of the Impact

Impacts from the Proposed Development are likely to be minor. The Project can be fully reversed upon decommissioning.

3.9.7 Cumulation of the Impact with Other Existing Development and/or Development Under Section 172(1A)(B) of the Act and/or Development Subject to EIA

A search of An Coimisiún Pleanála case map shows that the proposed 17 turbine Lyrenacarriga Windfarm (Ref 309121) is located adjacent to the Proposed Development and will use the R634 regional road for access. Windfarm construction has the potential to generate significant volumes of traffic during the construction of access roads and hardstands and during the construction of turbine foundations. During the construction of a turbine foundation, approximately 120 HGV's may visit the site throughout the day and may be combined with approximately 30 HGV's delivering granular materials.

Traffic analysis carried out shows that the R634 / L7829 junction will continue to operate within capacity but vehicles joining the R634 from the L7829 will experience increased delays during peak hours on six days during the construction of Lyrenacarriga Windfarm when turbine foundation works are taking place on the section of the windfarm to the west of the R634. The analysis assumes that concrete delivery to Lyrenacarriga Windfarm will use the R634 / L7829 junction and the L7806 to access the windfarm site. In the event that the construction of the Proposed Development does coincide with concrete pours at Lyrenacarriga Windfarm, traffic management

can be put in place to reduce turning manoeuvres at the R634 / L7829 junction. Mitigation is set out in the Traffic and Transport Assessment Report accompanying the planning application.

In terms of Landscape and Visual Impacts, a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been prepared and is submitted with this planning application. This report concludes that the proposed development is of a sizable scale, comprising several landholdings; however, it is considered to have only a modest physical impact as it is consolidated within the existing hedgerow network and will not require significant excavation works to construct either the solar panels or the access and maintenance tracks. In terms of impacts on landscape character, the proposed development represents the introduction of a new and relatively unfamiliar form of built development into a rural setting. Nevertheless, the solar array will hug the ground plane and be consolidated within the existing field pattern, which will be enhanced as part of a comprehensive mitigation strategy. Indeed, the comprehensive landscape mitigation proposals, which comprise new areas of woodland, new and enhanced hedgerows, and the management of grasslands for biodiversity purposes, will result in some localised positive landscape effects. Furthermore, whilst the proposed development is relatively broad in scale and comprises several distinct solar parcels, the most notable of these being the central parcel, the full scale and intensity of the entire development will never be fully apparent due to the dispersed nature of the site and the dense layers of intervening vegetation located between each of the proposed parcels. It should also be noted that where the proposed development will result in the most pronounced effects on landscape character, these areas present as modified, typical working rural settings that are neither highly rare nor particularly susceptible to change.

With regard to potential cumulative landscape effects generated by the proposed development, the LVIA notes that the project area encompasses no other relevant solar farm developments. Nonetheless, a permitted wind farm development (ACP Ref. 309121-21) is located to the north of the site, with the nearest turbine situated approximately 1.8 km north of the nearest section of the proposed development. The farthest consented turbine associated with the development is located over 5.5 km northwest of the proposed development site. The LVIA concludes that cumulative landscape and visual effects generated by the proposed development are Not Significant.

3.9.8 The Possibility of Effectively Reducing the Impact

Potential impacts associated with the Proposed Development are identified in the Planning and Environmental Report which will accompany the planning application.

The design of the Proposed Development has, to date, taken environmental constraints into consideration in that it has avoided ecologically sensitive areas and known archaeological features, is located in a sparsely populated area with setbacks to dwellings and roads.

Mitigation by design was incorporated into the Proposed Development with buffer zones and set back areas coupled with landscape mitigation planting, Biodiversity Enhancement Management proposals and Invasive Species Management proposals being incorporated into the overall design.

4 Summary of impacts

Table 4.1: Summary of Impacts

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT			
Potential Impact	**Low**	**Medium**	**High**
Construction and Operation of the Proposed Development			
The size of the Proposed Development	323ha		
Cumulative effects with other permitted solar farms in the area.	Increased traffic and transport effects design & mitigation measures	Increased landscape & visual effects potential – design & mitigation measures	
In-combination effects with other Proposed Developments	Low		
Nature of demolition works	No demolition works proposed		
The use of natural resources, in particular land, soil and biodiversity	Low		
The production of waste	Low		
Pollution and nuisances		Medium -Construction phase (estimated 21 months) design to mitigate.	
The risk of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge.	Low – Construction and operation - design to mitigate.		

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT			
Potential Impact	**Low**	**Medium**	**High**
The risks to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution).	Low		
Impacts on traffic from works on roads and bridges along the proposed route.	Low – temporary works.		
Impacts on traffic on the local and regional road network from construction traffic.	The construction of the Proposed Development will last approximately 21 months. The peak traffic generated by the development will occur between months 2 and 14 of the construction period when maximum traffic volumes could potentially reach 25 HGV arrivals and 60 LGV arrivals on a daily basis during this period. Outside this period HGV traffic volumes will reduce to approximately 3 HGV trips per day. The results of the traffic analysis show that increased traffic volumes associated with the construction of the Proposed Development will result in short term delays for local traffic on the road network and the overall impact has been assessed as being slight negative		

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT			
Potential Impact	**Low**	**Medium**	**High**
	and short-term during the 21-month construction period.		
Location of Proposed Development			
The existing and approved land-use	Low.		
The relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, water, land and biodiversity) in the area and its underground.	Low.		
The absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:	Low		
Wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths	Low		
Coastal zones and the marine environment	Low		
Mountain and forest areas	Low		
Nature reserves and parks	Low		
Areas classified or protected under National Legislation; Natura 2000	Low		
Areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards, laid down in European Union legislation and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure	N/A		
Densely populated areas	NA		
Landscapes and Sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance	Low		

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT			
Potential Impact	**Low**	**Medium**	**High**
Type and Characteristics of Potential Impacts			
The likely significant effects of the project on the environment must be considered in relation to criteria set out in the two sections above with regard to the impact of the project on the factors specified in Article 3(1), taking into account:			
The magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (e.g. geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	Low		
The nature of the impact	Low		
The transboundary nature of the impact	N/A		
The intensity and complexity of the impact	Low		
The probability of the impact	Low		
The expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact.	Low		
The cumulative impact	Low		
The in-combination impact with other existing and/or approved projects	Low		
The possibility of effectively reducing the impact			High

5 Considerations where no EIA is required

5.1.1 Conclusion

As evidenced in this report, there is no reason to anticipate that the Proposed Development would lead to significant negative environmental impacts either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects in the area.

An AA screening and NIS has been prepared for the planning application. The NIS concludes;

> *This NIS has been prepared to provide sufficient objective scientific information in support of the Proposed Development, in order to identify and address potential adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites (also referred to as Natura 2000 sites) from the Proposed Development, alone and/or in-combination with other plans or developments.*
>
> *Stage 1 Screening of LSEs on European sites identified within a ZoI for the Proposed Development evaluated potential likely significant effects on the QIs of Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC which could not be excluded (i.e. screened out) at this stage.*
>
> *The Screening for LSEs determined, on the basis of objective information, that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, would not have a likely significant effect on the following six European sites due to separation distances through the relevant pathways and absence of ranges supporting ex-situ ranges for the respective QI/SCI species to be receptors of effects:*
>
> - *Ballymacoda (Clonpriest and Pillmore) SAC;*
> - *Ardmore Head SAC;*
> - *Blackwater Estuary SPA;*
> - *Ballymacoda Bay SPA;*
> - *Ballycotton Bay SPA; and*
> - *Cork Harbour SPA.*
>
> *As such, by virtue of the requirement for protection or provision of mitigation measures required during construction of the Proposed Development, the recommendation of the screening process was to proceed to Stage Two of the AA process for one European site (Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC).*
>
> *In particular, consideration was given to the potential for significant ex-situ effects via contamination, spread of invasive species, disturbance, and displacement during the Proposed Development's construction phase, and via disturbance and displacement during the operation and decommissioning phase. Thus, the above elements were brought forward for further critical examination during Stage 2 AA. This identified requirements for further mitigation measures during the construction and operation of the Proposed Development.*
>
> *Cumulative and In-combination effects are presented and considered in detail in Section 8 of this NIS. Provided adherence to the overarching policies and objectives of the plans and programmes and best practice and mitigation measures are implemented for individual projects, there is no potential for the mentioned plans and projects to have a cumulative impact to features of biodiversity interest, in combination with the Proposed Development. All Proposed Developments considered in the ZoI of the Proposed*

Development are subject to the statutory planning process and where required are accompanied by the requisite planning and environmental assessment documentation, including AA, EIA and EIAR. To that end, other projects, programmes and plans within the project zone of influence have been developed under the consideration of potential impacts and effects to their receiving and surrounding environment and are tasked with avoiding and minimising such impacts, through the AA and EIA processes.

It is determined that, following the implementation of mitigation measures for the protection of designated QIs, as outlined in Section 9, on the basis of best scientific evidence and in the absence of any reasonable scientific doubt, that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with any other development, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European site.

In accordance with good environmental practice, a Planning and Environmental Report has been prepared to assess and outline the potential environmental impacts that could be associated with the Proposed Development in combination with other plans and projects in the area.

The mitigation measures for the Proposed Development works has been summarised in the Planning and Environmental Report and associated documents which will prevent any potential significant impacts from the Proposed Development, either alone, or in combination with other plans and projects.

The Planning and Environmental Report concludes that;

- An Ecological Impact Assessment has been completed for the Proposed Development. It found that flowing consideration of the predicted residual impacts (post-mitigation), the Proposed Development is unlikely to result in any significant impacts on the identified ecological receptors. The potential for impacts on European designated sites is fully described in the Natura Impact Assessment report (Inis Environmental Consultants Ltd., 2025). Impacts to Nationally designated sites were regarded as unlikely or not significant. Following a precautionary approach, potential impacts to ecological receptors present at the Proposed Development were identified and evaluated. In conclusion, the Proposed Development, either individually or in-combination with other plans or projects is unlikely to result in significant impacts on the ecological receptors of conservation or biodiversity value to the baseline. The Ecological Assessment concluded that the Site has a relatively low ecological value at present, and overall, it is considered that the Proposed Development will have a positive residual effect for the local environment by creation of grassland in place in intensively managed agricultural area, improved grassland and commercial forest habitats, elimination of fertilisers and pesticides from Site area for lifetime of the Proposed Development.
- The Proposed Development will not lead to significant long-term loss of agricultural land as a resource to future generations. This is due to the positioning of the solar panels and the proposed installation methods. Panels will mainly be secured to the ground by steel piles, with occasional ballast footing where ground conditions or archaeological constraints are required. These cause limited soil disturbance and can both be removed in the future without damaging the agricultural land quality. The areas around and under panels will be seeded with grasses and allowed to develop as a grassland. Access to farmland has been incorporated in to the design of the Proposed Development to allow ongoing agricultural activities over the life of the Proposed Development.

- The Flood Risk assessment concludes that the Proposed Development does not lie within probable flood zones likely to be susceptible to flooding. While there are some anecdotal reports of off-site downstream flooding, there has been no on-site flood risk identified. The magnitude of potential net increase in runoff as a function of the Proposed Development at the Site is considered an adverse moderate effect. The proposed development has included in its design the latest best practice guidance to ensure that flood risk within or downstream of the Site is not increased as a function of the Proposed Development, i.e., a neutral impact at a minimum. This means that the attenuation capacity in the constructed drainage network associated with the Proposed Development will have capacity to attenuate the calculated net increase during a 1 in 100 year storm event. A detailed Drainage Management Plan has been prepared to ensure surface water runoff at the site is managed effectively and does not exacerbate flood risk to the surrounding areas upstream and downstream. The proposed drainage measures, which will exist in-situ for the lifespan of the Proposed Development, will attenuate the run-off (and any excess run-off produced) to the specific greenfield run-off rate. The Proposed Development will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere in the catchment and indeed is likely to improve on the baseline. Based on this information, the Proposed Development complies with the appropriate policy guidelines for the area and is at no risk of flooding. There is no risk of increasing flood risk on-site and no risk of exacerbating flood risk to downstream receptors.
- Based on the landscape and visual effect judgements provided throughout this LVIA, the proposed Greenhills Renewable Energy Park comprising the solar farm, BESS, substation and grid connection, underground cabling and other ancillary development is not considered to give rise to any significant residual effect. Instead, landscape effects are not considered to exceed ‘Moderate’ significance, even in the immediate context of the site and residual visual effects are not considered to exceed ‘Substantial-moderate’ significance, with a large majority of visual effects classified as 'Moderate-slight' or less. The also LVIA concludes that cumulative landscape and visual effects generated by the proposed development are Not Significant.
- Based on the findings of a glint and glare assessment, it can be concluded that there will not be any significant nuisance effects from glint and glare at dwellings within the study area, nor is there likely to be any hazardous glint and glare effects upon either road or aviation receptors.
- Sufficient setbacks have been implemented from all sensitive receptors including adjacent dwellings.
- Following assessment of the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development on the public road network, it has been concluded that the Quality of effects will be neutral with increased traffic flows during the construction and decommissioning of the Proposed Development with no permanent changes to the horizontal or vertical geometry of the public road network and its associated junctions. The significance of the effects on the public road network where traffic management / two-way traffic flows can be maintained during works has been assessed as slight. It has been concluded that the duration of effects relating to increased HGV traffic flows in the vicinity of the Site have been assessed as temporary and may last up to 21 months during the construction of the Proposed Development, the maximum effects from increased HGV traffic flows will occur during 13 months of the 21 month construction period.

- The assessment Recorded Heritage Assets (direct effects and indirect effect) indicates that there will be no direct physical effects from the Proposed Development on any World Heritage Site, National Monument, Architectural Conservation Area, Protected Structure, Recorded Monument or Historic Building Recorded by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. Therefore, the construction, operational and decommissioning phase of the Proposed Development will have a No Change direct effect on these types of heritage assets. In relation to direct effects, the significance of effect on these types of heritage assets will be neutral. The Proposed Development may have a long term (during the operational phase) Low effect on the setting of one Protected Structure. This is Roisin, a 19th century vernacular house (39/47), which is recorded on land within 5 m of the Site boundary and its curtilage. It should be noted that at the time of the site visit for this assessment, the building appeared had been gutted by a recent fire which had destroyed the thatch roof and the building appeared to be uninhabitable. Should this structure be restored, the Proposed Development will likely have a slight adverse indirect effect on the significance of this Protected Structure and its curtilage. This effect could be mitigated by the planting of native hedgerow vegetation around the part of the Site boundary which borders the curtilage of this Protected Structure. These effects will be reversed once the Proposed Development is decommissioned.
- The changes in views during the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development are considered to have a long term Negligible to Low effect on the settings of four NIAH Structures (excluding Protected Structures) and their curtilages.

It is therefore considered that an EIA is not required to be carried out on the Proposed Development, due to the fact that it is a solar farm application, which are not covered in the Regulations. Additionally, the Proposed Development in the context of relevant Environmental Impact Assessment Directives and Regulations (Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2024), there is no reason to anticipate that the Proposed Development will lead to significant environmental impacts. Therefore, the preparation of a full EIAR is not required for this project.