

Culmullin 220kV Substation, Co. Meath

Planning Statement

Energia Solar Holdings

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1. Introduction

This supporting planning statement has been prepared by AECOM on behalf of Energia Solar Holdings Limited (herein referred to as the 'Applicant') to support a planning application under Section 182A of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) to An Bord Pleanála (herein referred to as 'the Board') for a proposed 220 Kilo Volt (kV) loop in substation development and associated infrastructure, (herein referred to as the 'Proposed Development') deemed to be Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) on lands at Woodtown, County Meath (herein referred to as the 'subject site').

A pre-application consultation request was submitted to An Bord Pleanála on 4 August 2021 for determination of SID status. The Board concluded, on 27 June 2022, that the Proposed Development 'Is a Strategic Infrastructure Development' which "...falls within the scope of Section 182A of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and that a planning application should be made directly to the Board", refer to Appendix A.

This document assesses how the Proposed Development sits within the overarching planning framework for the subject site, and addresses planning strategy, policy, and guidance at national, regional and local level. It is intended to be read in conjunction with the plans and particulars submitted with this application. The overarching purpose of the statement is to demonstrate that the Proposed Development is in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. Proposed Development

The Proposed Development comprises the construction of a new 220kV substation compound and underground cable loop in connection to the existing Gorman-Maynooth 220kV overhead line (OHL), comprising:

- (i) A new 220kV substation compound (approximately 22,639.8 square metres (m²)) consisting of:
 - Outdoor AIS equipment rated for the system voltage of 220kV equipped with 4 number 220kV cable bays;
 - 14 lightning protection masts (height 25 metres (m));
 - 2 number oil-filled step-down power transformers positioned within bunded enclosures;
 - 2 number single storey buildings including a control building with ancillary services, and a customer Medium Voltage (MV) module;
 - A 2.6m tall palisade fence.
- (ii) Removal of existing overhead line mast to facilitate the construction of 2 number Line-Cable Interface Masts (LCIMs) (21m in height) in line with the existing 220kV overhead line and installation of 220kV underground cables between the masts and substation.
- (iii) Telecommunication mast within a 225m² enclosure with a maximum height of 36m with a 2.6m tall palisade fence.

In addition to the above the Proposed Development will include the following:

- New site access off the L62051 and internal site access road;
- Car parking;
- 5 Passing Bays on the L62051;
- Drainage infrastructure; and
- All associated and ancillary site development works.

A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) has been prepared in respect of the Proposed Development.

Permission is sought for a 10-year period.

The site boundary and proposed works are laid out below in Figure 2-1.

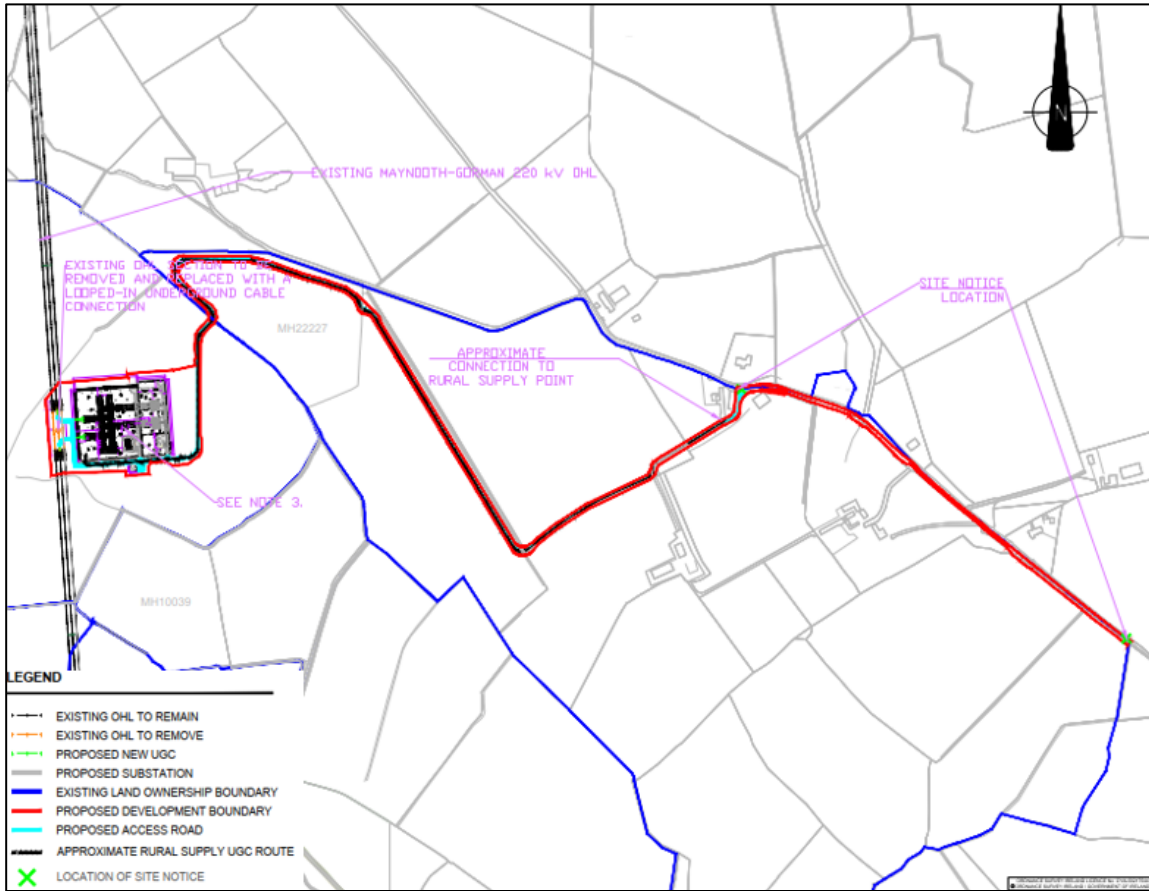


Figure 2-1: Proposed Works and Site Location¹

Figure 2-2 below highlights the layout of the Proposed Development, from an isometric view.

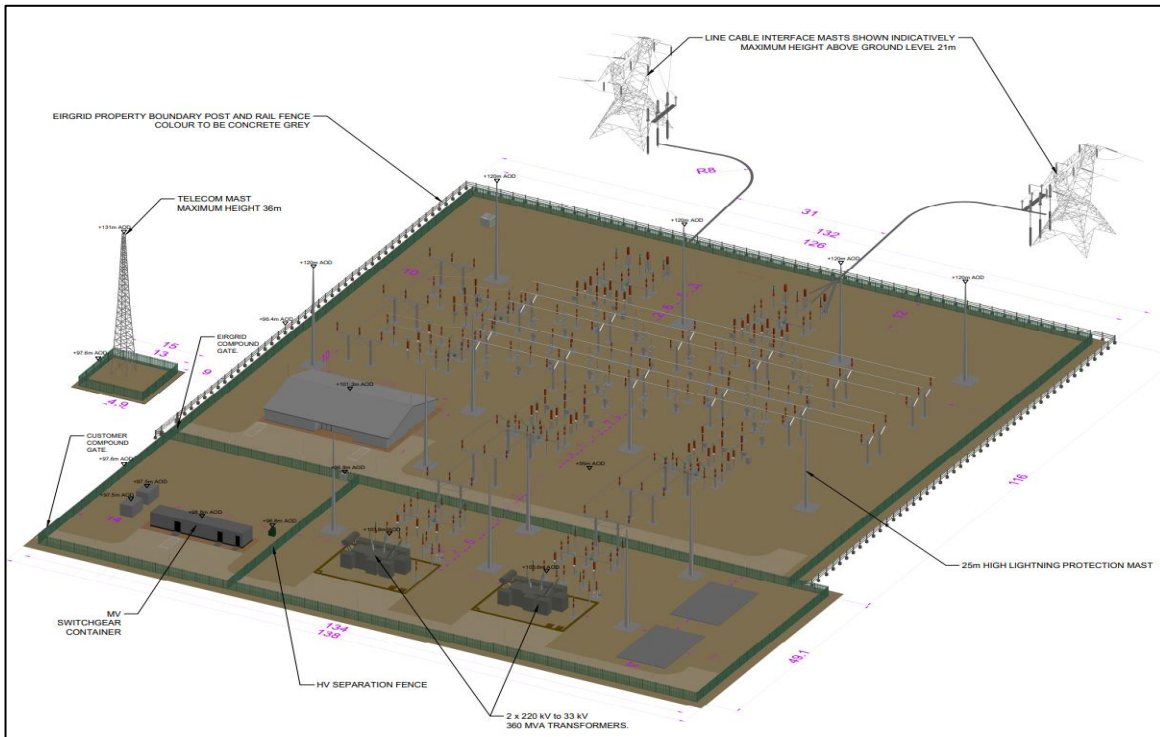


Figure 2-2: Isometric View of the Proposed Development²

¹ Extract from Drawing Ref. 60657534-ACM-DWG-500

² Extract from Drawing Ref. 60657534-ACM-DWG-508

2.1 Site Access

Access to the substation site is currently provided via an existing informal farm track. New access from the public road (R125), through the local L62051, will be provided, connecting to the new internal site road.

Road improvement works along the L62051 including the widening of the carriageway at five locations (five passing bays) are proposed to prevent congestion and improve forward visibility. The passing bays consist of existing paved road, small sections of grassy verges with some open drainage channels.

Temporary access roads and a construction compound of approximately 2,500m² will be located within the Proposed Development boundary. Construction materials will be brought to site by road along the R125 and via the access road through the current farm access (off the L62051). Suitable visibility splays will be in place and operational sightlines will be maintained.

2.2 Substation

The substation will become a new node along the existing circuit forming an integral part of the transmission grid once constructed. The substation and grid connection will be constructed by the applicant to EirGrid specifications and ownership will be transferred to ESB/EirGrid following construction. All works will be contained within the boundary of the subject site. The substation will cover approximately 2.24 hectares (ha) and will be enclosed by 2.6m high palisade fencing. It will also include staff welfare facilities (toilet block).

2.3 Connection to National Grid

The Proposed Development comprises two LCIMs to facilitate the removal of a short section (approximately 60m) of the existing 220kV OHL which traverses the site, to connect the new substation to the grid by approximately 120m of new underground cables. Four 220kV bays are proposed to be provided within the substation (two underground cable bays for EirGrid and two bays for the applicant's transformers).

The two new LCIMs will be constructed under the existing OHL. The existing OHL conductor will be terminated and removed at these points and will then transition to two new 220kV underground cable circuits, constructed between the LCIMs and the cable sealing ends located within the new substation compound to facilitate the OHL loop-in connection for the Proposed Development. The telecoms mast will be constructed outside the southern boundary of the EirGrid/ESB compound, for substation communications between Maynooth and Gorman 220kV substations at either end of the existing 220kV OHL.

2.4 Drainage and Water Services

Temporary drainage will be in place during construction, with permanent (separated) foul and surface water drainage works to be constructed for operation. A sealed drainage system will be present, which will capture any potential leaks/spills from parked vehicles. Interceptors will be present in the surface water drainage system, to protect surface waters from potential pollution from oil spills/leaks from parked cars and storage.

A bunded storage area at the contractor's compound(s) will be present. Drainage from the bunded area shall be diverted for collection and safe disposal. Refuelling of construction vehicles will take place in designated impermeable refuelling areas isolated from surface water drains. Spoil and temporary stockpiles including stone stockpile areas will be positioned in locations distant from drainage systems and retained drainage channels.

Due to the specific nature of the Proposed Development, there will be a very small water requirement for occasional toilet flushing and hand washing and therefore the water requirement of the Proposed Development will be limited. The Applicant has consulted with Irish Water and proposes to connect to the existing water network, subject to a valid connection agreement being put in place prior to project execution.

A holding tank/cesspit will be in place on site to hold wastewater and emptied periodically. Outfall into the existing water course will be used for surface water treatment.

2.5 Landscaping and Lighting

Earthworks will include the excavation and removal of topsoil and the infilling of material for the internal road, compound, and laydown area, followed by appropriate landscaping and reinstatement. The underground cables will be trenched and include installation of appropriate above ground infrastructure including marker posts and communication boxes. The installation of the loop-in line connection will be limited to minimal site clearance, with some excavation..

Landscaping consists of native meadow planting surrounding the compound with native hedgerow planting to the north and woodland planting within the visual screening mitigation planting and berm to the east.

Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) and photomontages are included with this application. There are no residential properties within 850m of the Proposed Development, however there are within a 1km radius. The RVAA concluded that only one out of ten receptors within 1km will have a potential limited view of the Proposed Development but that it will not alter the character of the existing view.

Site lighting will be through strategically placed lighting poles, with hinged mechanisms to allow the light cap to be lowered, moved and angled as appropriate. The lighting poles will stand approximately 25m in height, with the folding mechanisms situated around halfway up.

2.6 Operational Life

The lifespan of the Proposed Development is not defined but it is anticipated that it will be maintained, and periodic upgrading will be undertaken over a long lifetime to meet future demand and upgrades in technology. If the Proposed Development is no longer required over the long-term, then full decommissioning in accordance with prevailing best practice will be undertaken.

3. Need for the Proposed Development

The Proposed Development is required to provide the necessary infrastructure to support, secure and transport the permanent power supply generated from neighbouring solar energy projects, to ensure full utilisation and grid connections. It is intended that three solar energy projects will connect into this substation via underground cables with a maximum voltage of 33kV which are considered to be exempted development under Class 26 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

Details of the forthcoming solar projects to be connected are summarised below in Table 3-1.

Table 3-1: Solar Energy Projects (Approved and Proposed) Dependent on the Proposed Development

Ref. No.	Address	Development	Status
21/2214 ABP-314058-22	Lands including Culmullin, Woodtown, Arodstown & Summerhill, Co Meath	for a solar PV Energy Development with a total site area of 206ha, to include solar panels, 54 No. MV Power Stations, 2 No. Client Substations, 4 No. Temporary Construction Compounds, access tracks, boundary security fencing and security gates, CCTV, landscaping and ancillary works, accessed via two existing accesses along the L62051. The application is accompanied by a Natura Impact Statement (NIS)	Granted Conditional 15/06/2022 Third Party Appealed 21/07/2022 Case under consideration
21/985 ABP-312723-22	Lands including Derryclare, Cloneyemeath, Ballygortagh and Moynalvy, Summerhill, Co. Meath	Permission for a solar PV Energy Development with total site area of 108.68ha to include solar panels, 27 no. MV Power Stations, 3 no. client Substations, landscaping and ancillary work.	Granted Conditional 17/01/2022 Third Party Appealed 14/03/2022 Granted with revised conditions 21/01/23
221508	Culmullin, Curraghtown, Cultromer, Gaulstown, Bogganstown, Cullendragh, Drumree, Co. Meath	A Solar PV Energy Development with a total site area of 171.34ha, to include solar panels mounted on steel support structures, associated cabling and ducting, 47 No. MV Power Stations, 3 No. Client Substations, 3 No. Temporary Construction Compounds, tracks, boundary security fencing and security gates, CCTV, landscaping and ancillary works, with a 40 year operational period. A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) had be submitted to the Planning Authority with the Application. Significant further information/revised plans submitted on this application	Submitted to MCC 18/11/22, F1 submitted 09/05/23, under consideration

4. Site Context

4.1 Site Location

The Site of the Proposed Development is located at Woodtown, Co. Meath (Coordinates: 53°29'33.15"N 6°38'37.32"W). The R154 (regional road) (Trim Road) is approximately 2.9km north, R125 is approximately 2.5km east, R156 is approximately 3.3km south and the L2207 local road is approximately 2.7km to the west (Figure 4-1).

The nearest residential settlements (towns and villages) to the Site are Summerhill, approximately 6km to the southwest, Trim approximately 12km to the northwest, Dunshaughlin, approximately 7km to the northeast, and Dunboyne approximately 13.5km to the southeast.

The redline boundary of the Proposed Development covers an approximate area of 7.3ha, with the substation boundary covering approximately 2.24ha, and the telecoms mast compound, which is separate to the substation, is 225m².

The location of the Proposed Development in the context of the surrounding environment is shown in Figure 4-2 below.

Figure 4-1: Site Location³

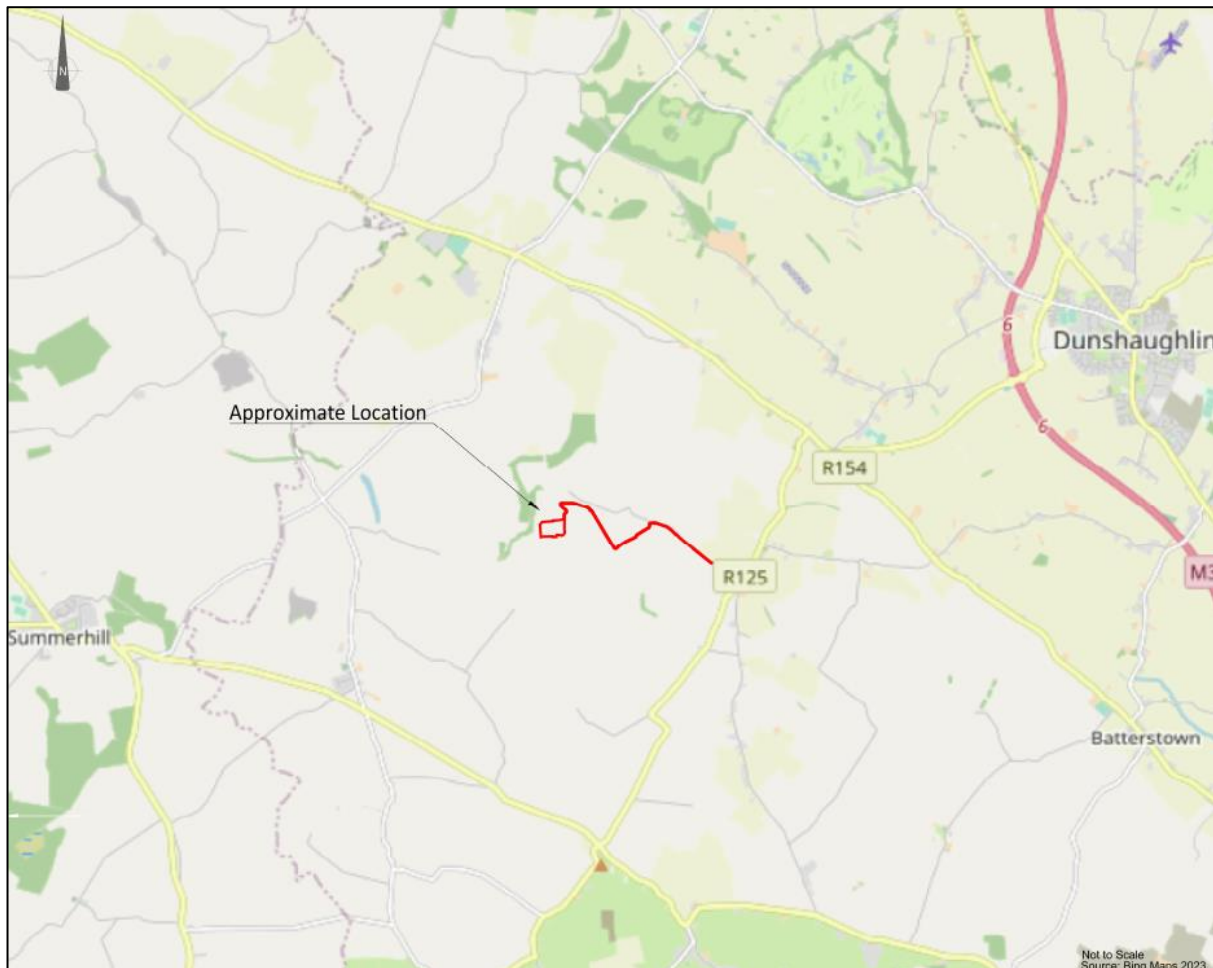


Figure 4-2 below presents the Proposed Development, within its wider regional locale. The surrounding environment is vastly rural in nature, except for dispersed residencies and agriculture.

³ Source: Bing Maps (2023).

Figure 4-2: Site Location and Surrounding Environment⁴



4.2 Site Description

The subject site, as highlighted in Figure 4-2, is approximately 7.3ha and is situated primarily within an agricultural field, with surrounding hedgerows. Access to the subject site is via an existing informal farm track, located approximately 50m to the west, connecting to a residential property, approximately 500m southwest on the L62051.

Batterstown Clay Pigeon Club (CBC) shooting range is approximately 750m to the north of the subject site. The Maynooth – Gorman 220kV overhead cable line transects the site to the east (Figure 4-3 below), flowing in a north – south direction. The land is predominately flat with hedgerows delineating field boundaries. One-off housing and agricultural buildings are present in the wider vicinity.

Figure 4-3 below highlights the siting of the Proposed Development and showcases its wider environs, as well as the route of the overhead 220kV cables, to which the Proposed Development will connect.

⁴ Source: GoogleEarth (2023)

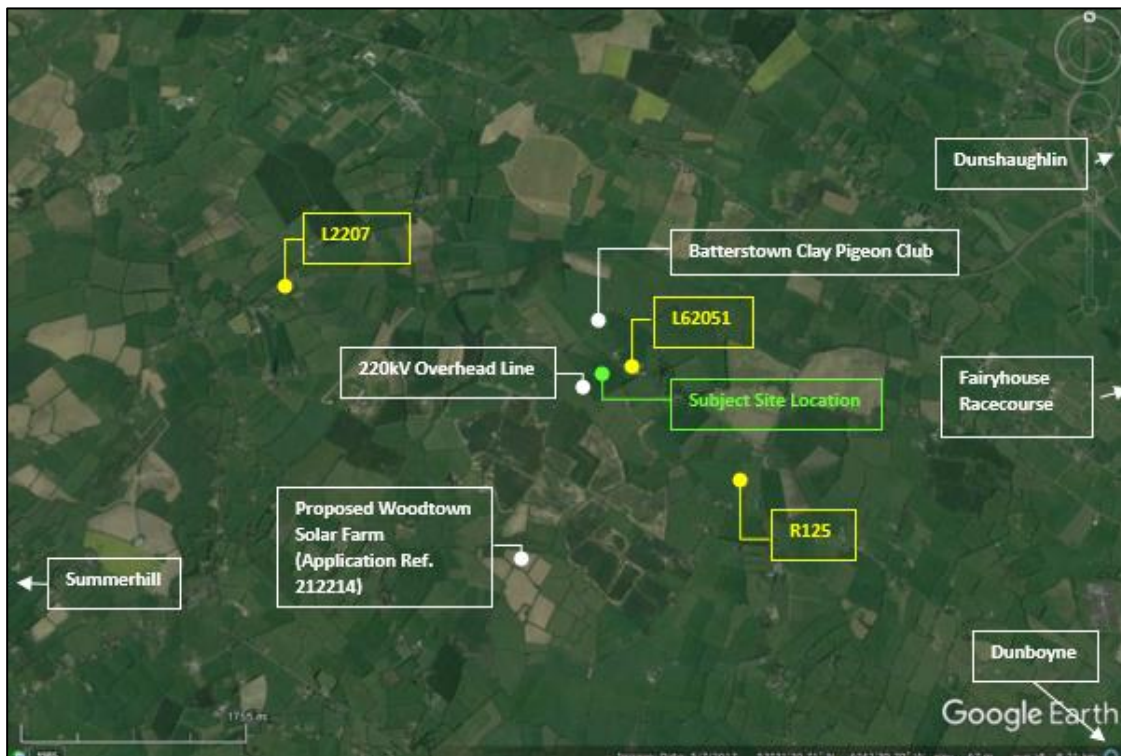


Figure 4-3: Subject Site within its Surrounding Environs [Google Earth Pro – Annotations Added]

4.2.1 Existing Land Use and Zoning

The subject site is currently agricultural land. Lying outside of any designated settlement boundary it falls under an 'RA – Rural Area' designation, within the Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027, as per Figure 4-4 below, which has an objective "To protect and promote in a balanced way, the development of agriculture, forestry and rural-related enterprise, biodiversity, the rural landscape, and the built and cultural heritage".

The zoning guidance for this designation states:

"The primary objective is to protect and promote the value and future sustainability of rural areas. Agriculture, forestry, tourism, and rural related resource enterprises will be employed for the benefit of the local and wider population. A balanced approach involving the protection and promotion of rural biodiversity, promotion of the integrity of the landscape, and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage will be adopted."

'Sustainable Energy Installations' and 'Utility Structures' are deemed permitted uses, offering acceptability for the Proposed Development and so it is to be viewed as a 'rural related resource enterprise'.

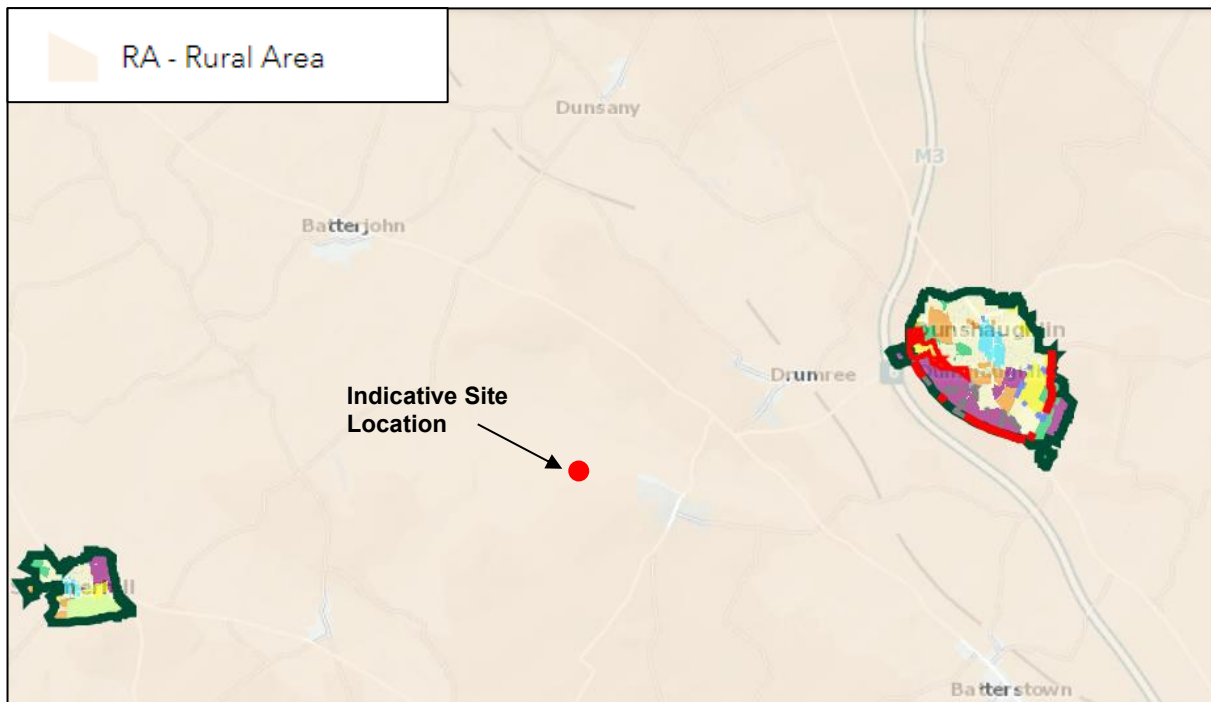


Figure 4-4: Site Zoning⁵

4.2.2 Planning History

A desktop review of Meath County Council's online planning portal, MyPlan.ie's National Planning Application database and An Bord Pleanála's online portal was undertaken on 2 June 2023 and assessed the subject site and the immediate surrounding environs. The relevant applications relate to those identified in Table 3-1. A further detailed history is presented in Appendix B, providing details on relevant planning applications within a 5km radius of the subject site.

In summary, the planning history showcases that, whilst the surrounding environs retain a rural character, there has been a recent increase in industrial, agricultural, tourist and energy-based developments, providing precedent for larger scale developments. In addition to the relevant solar developments in the immediate environs, as per Table 3-1 above, five more solar applications have been granted/proposed within the wider 5km radius, offering further insight into the emerging character and pattern of development. The majority of new residential applications are beyond a 2km radius and, as stated above, the RVAA concluded that only one out of ten receptors within 1km will have a potential limited view of the Proposed Development. There is, therefore, likely to be no risk of impact upon emerging residential development.

It is to be considered that the Proposed Development remains in line with the emerging pattern of development in the area, as well as representing proper planning and sustainable development. In consideration to this it is considered that the Proposed Development will prove compatible with the immediate and surrounding environs.

4.2.3 Natural Heritage

The subject site does not include any environmental designations, including no Natural Heritage Area(s), Special Area(s) of Conservation, Candidate Special Areas of Conservation(s) or Special Protection Area(s), as highlighted below in Figure 4-5.

⁵ Extract from Meath CDP online GIS Viewer – Annotations Added

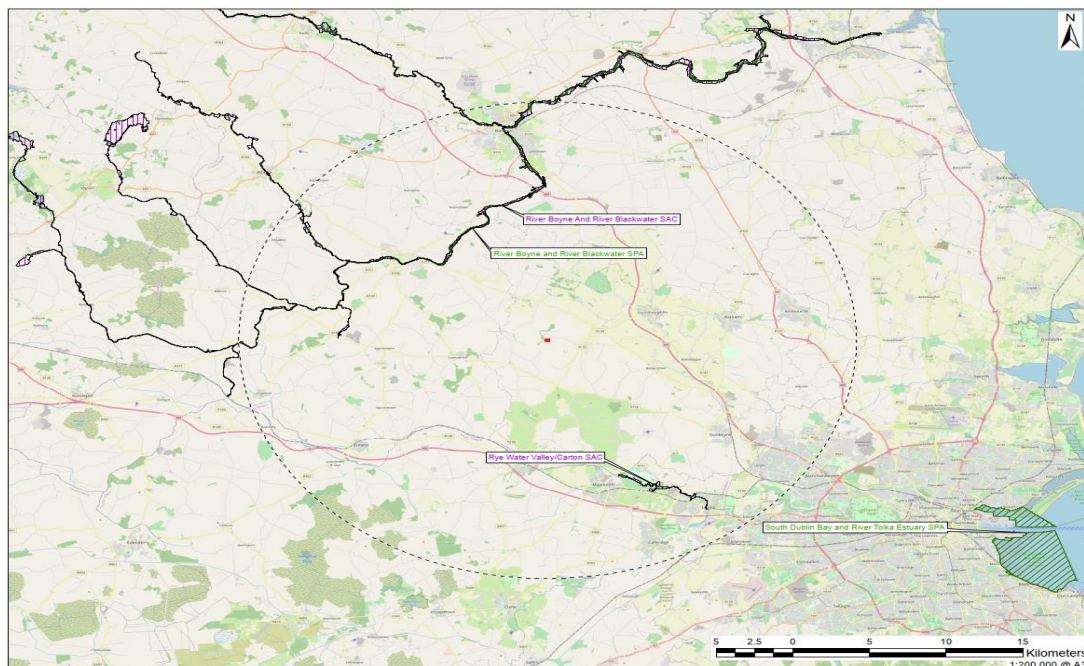


Figure 4-5: Protected Sites Within the Zol of the Proposed Development [Source: EPAMaps.ie, 2022]

Three designated sites are, however, situated within the designated 15km Zone of Interest (Zol) of the subject site, as presented in Table 4-1.

Table 4-1: Designated Sites within the 15km Zol of the Subject Site

Site Code	Site Name	Distance from Subject Site
002299	River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC	c.9.4km northwest of the substation site
004232	River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA	c.9.4km northwest of the substation site
001398	Rye Water Valley/Cartron SAC	c.12.3km southeast of the substation site

Source: EPAMaps.ie, 2023

4.2.4 Architectural, Archaeological and Cultural Heritage

A desktop review of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage’s Historic Environment Interactive Map Viewer provides access to the records of the National Monuments Service and the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. It is noted that no recorded findings were found within the boundary of the subject site however Figure 4-6 demonstrates the indicative boundary of the subject site and proximity of any identified findings in the surrounding environs.

There are no National Monuments within the subject site or the study area. The subject site does not form part of an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), nor are any ACAs located within the study area. There are no buildings recorded on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) Building Survey and no gardens or designated landscapes recorded on the NIAH Gardens Survey, located within the subject site or study area.

The Site extends into one Zone of Notification. The western extent of Layby 2 (Midpoint CH 249.90) extends into the Zone of Notification for the site of the ruined medieval parish church of Culmullin (ME043-017) and a five-sided graveyard (ME043-017001). Layby 2 does not cross over into the presently marked boundary of the graveyard, only into the Zone of Notification.

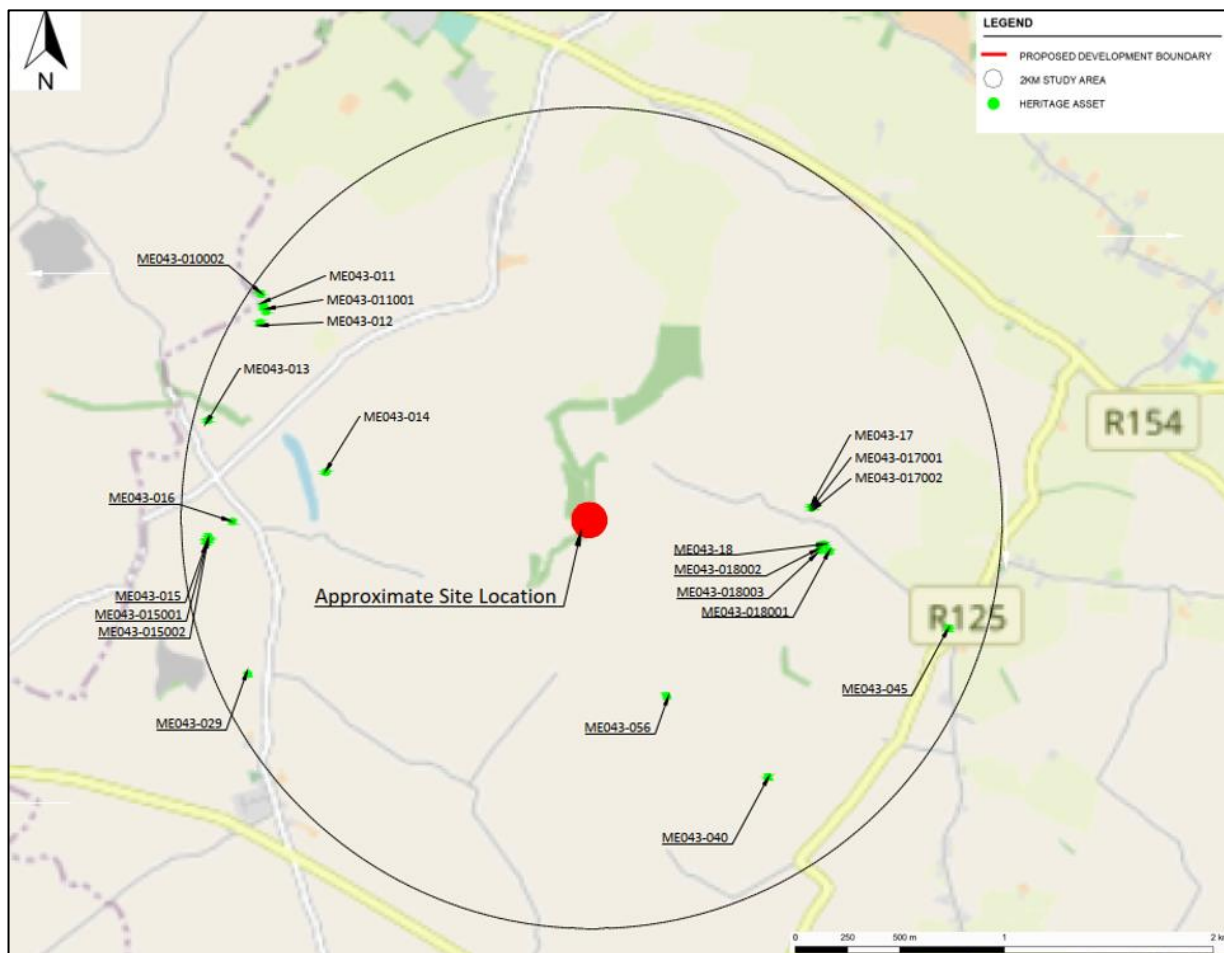


Figure 4-6: Built Heritage Features in Proximity of the Proposed Development [Source: Archaeology.ie, 2023 – Annotations Added]

There are 22 assets recorded on the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) located within the 2km study area. Whilst none are directly within the site boundary of the substation, Old Culmullin Graveyard (ME043-017001), ME043-017002 (Font) and Culmullin Church (ME043-017) are all located approximately 200m east of the proposed site entrance. The western extent of Layby 2 extends into the Zone of notification for the site of Culmullin Church and its graveyard which will require submission of notification of proposed works to the National Monument Service 2 months prior to works commencing.

Table 4-2 lists the identified recorded monuments and protected structures within a 2km radius of the subject site. Further details are provided in the Archaeological Report appendixes to the submitted Environmental Considerations Report (ECR).

Table 4-2: Identified Recorded Monuments within 2km of the Subject Site

Record of Monuments and Places (Monument No.)	Designation
ME043-056	Barrow
ME043-014	Ringfort (Rath\Cashel)
ME043-029	Earthwork Site
ME043-030	Ringfort (Rath\Cashel)
ME043-018	Motte
ME043-018002	Building
ME043-018003	Stone Stoup
ME043-013	Earthwork (Burial Mound)
ME043-010	Church
ME043-010001	Graveyard

Record of Monuments and Places (Monument No.)	Designation
ME043-010002	Bullaun stone
ME043-011	Castle Site
ME043-011001	Bawn
ME043-017	Church
ME043-017001	Graveyard
ME043-017002	Font
ME043-018001	Font
ME043-015	Church
ME043-015001	Graveyard
ME043-015002	Cross
ME043-016	Tower House
ME043-045	Ritual Site - Holy Well

4.2.5 Flood Risk Identification

The OPW Flood Hazard Maps Website (www.floodmaps.ie) provides available historical or anecdotal information on any flooding incidences or occurrence in the vicinity of the Proposed Development. A desktop review of the Office of Public Works (OPW) national flood information portal was undertaken to ascertain whether there is a risk of flooding and, if so, to qualitatively assess the level of risk.

No flood events have been recorded within the subject site, nor have any records of historical flooding been recorded within a 2km radius, as per Figure 4-7. The subject site lies within Flood Zone C, as per the Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027’s Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, which determines a low probability of flooding. “This zone defines areas with a low risk of flooding from rivers and the coast (i.e., less than 0.1% probability or less than 1 in 1000”.

A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) was carried out and further details are provided in Appendix B of the Environmental Considerations Report (ECR) submitted with the application.

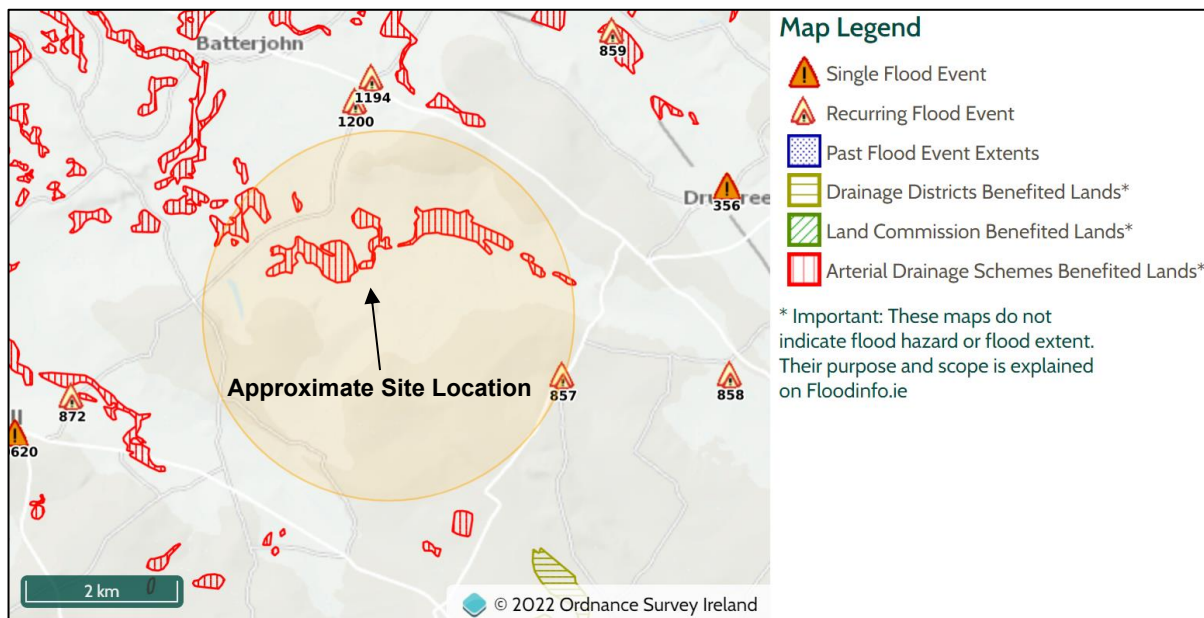


Figure 4-7: Flood Risk Report (2km Radius) [Source: floodmaps.ie, 2023 – Annotations Added]

5. Legislative Context

The applicant has engaged with An Bord Pleanála under Section 182E of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) to determine if the proposed 220kV substation is considered to be strategic infrastructure under the definition contained in Section 182A of the Planning and Development Act 2000:

182A.-(1) Where a person (hereafter referred to in this section as the ‘undertaker’) intends to carry out development comprising or for the purposes of electricity transmission, (hereafter referred to in this section and section 182B as ‘proposed development’), the undertaker shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, an application for approval of the development under section 182B and shall apply to the Board for such approval accordingly.

(9) In this section ‘transmission’, in relation to electricity, shall be construed in accordance with section 2(1) of the Electricity Regulation Act 1999 but, for the purposes of this section, the foregoing expression in relation to electricity, shall be construed as meaning the transport of electricity by means of—

(a) a high voltage line where the voltage would be 110 kilovolts or more, or

(b) an interconnector, whether ownership of the interconnector will be vested in the undertaker or not.

The definition of electricity transmission in section 2(1) of the Electricity Regulation Act 1999 has been provided below:

“Transmission”, in relation to electricity, means the transport of electricity by means of a transmission system, that is to say, a system which consists, wholly or mainly, of high voltage lines and electrical plant and which is used for conveying electricity from a generation station to a substation, from one generating station to another, from one substation to another or from any interconnector or to final customers but shall not include any such lines which the Board may, from time to time, with the approval of the Commission, specify as being part of the distribution system but shall include any interconnector owned by the Board.

5.1 SID Determination

A SID determination meeting was held with the Board 22 November 2021. An overview of the Proposed Development was presented. Potential impacts and further use of the substation, in reference to Board queries, were discussed along with discussions around the necessity for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The applicant then provided details on the solar developments reliant upon the Proposed Development and the view that the works would be SID under Section 182A of the Planning Act, adding that the substation would form a node, before highlighting the intended approach and planned assessments. The Board’s representatives stated a preliminary opinion that the development would be SID, adding that it would likely require an EIAR given the nature and extent of the Proposed Development and the wording of Class 3(b) of Schedule 5 Part 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations (as amended) which refers to the transmission of electrical energy by overhead cables where voltage would be 220kV or more.

A second meeting was held with the Bord on Wednesday 27 April 2022. Here the evolution of the Proposed Development’s design and scheme amendments reflecting constituent elements such as two new line cable interface masts, circa 120 metres of new underground cables to connect into the existing overhead line, an adjacent telecoms mast along with other elements (such as the four feeder bays and ancillary works) which formed part of the original proposal. The prospective applicant noted that new overhead lines no longer formed part of the proposed development. AECOM recapped on the reliant solar projects, updating on the new proposals for Bogganstown. AECOM also advised that an EIAR will not accompany the subsequent planning application as it was concluded that the proposed development is unlikely to cause significant effects on the environment; an ECR and NIS would, however, accompany the planning application. Access, sightlines, and wastewater disposal were confirmed by the Applicant and that the telecoms mast was for the substation only.

Following the conclusions of these meetings, the Board determined on 27 June 2022 (refer to Appendix A)) that the proposed substation development came under the provisions of Section 182A of the 2000 Act, and as such was considered to be strategic infrastructure, with a full planning application to be made to the Board.

5.2 Community Engagement

To inform residents about the proposed Culmullin 220kV Substation, the Applicant distributed information and contact details to households within a radius of just over 1km of the proposed application site boundary. The information distributed to each household consisted of an information brochure on the Proposed Development. Residents were also given a letter inviting them to a drop-in public information event which was held on 10 November 2022.

Residents were also given a letter inviting them to a drop-in public information event, which was also advertised in the Meath Chronicle for two consecutive weeks. Engagement is continuous. Local representatives were also contacted.

Further community engagement was carried out by the client in the form of a brochure. Steered by Energia's Solar Project Manager and Community Liaison Officer, it was sent to householders in the surrounding area highlighting the intent of Energia to submit an application for the Proposed Development. A copy is submitted with this planning application.

Succinct and clearly laid out, it was split into 12 Chapters, across an 11-page spread, these being 'Meet the Team', 'Proposed Substation Location', 'Project Overview', 'About the Site', 'Planning Process', 'Map of the Proposed Substation & Solar Developments', 'Project Website', 'What Happens Next', 'Working with Communities', 'Working with Schools', 'FAQs' and 'Contact Us'.

Within these a description of the site, development and need for it was laid out, alongside maps and figures. The Planning Process chapter clearly laid out the locations, including the website, where the application documents could be viewed. The implementation of a Traffic Management Plan was also highlighted to ease any queries/concerns on associated impacts on the surrounding road network. Direct contact details for the Community Liaison Officer were also presented.

The Applicant held a public information drop-in event in Moynalvey GFC Hall on the 10th of November 2022. Brochures and larger maps were available for attendees to take home. There were additional documents available to view, including photomontages and engineering drawings. The Energia project team that were on hand to answer questions included electrical engineers, planning officers, project managers and community liaison officers.

Energia's construction and community engagement teams will also liaise with residents and businesses to minimise disruption throughout the construction process (assuming grant of approval), whilst committing to community project grants and school workshops/classroom talks once the site is operational.

Energia Renewables launched a stand-alone project website for the Culmullin 220kV Substation www.culmullinsubstation.ie to keep members of the public informed about the Proposed Development.

In response to concerns raised at consultation stage, amendments were made to the initial design to incorporate planting and a landscape berm to minimise any visual impact associated with the development. Passing bays were also incorporated in response.

6. Planning Policy Context

The receiving planning policy environment for the Proposed Development is largely outlined in the following pertinent planning documents. A general overview of relevant policy and guidance on a European, National, Regional, and Local levels that are assessed in this planning statement are listed in Table 6-1.

Table 6-1: Overview of Pertinent Planning Documents

Level	Document	Period
European	The Renewable Energy Directive (Revised)	2009
	Climate and Energy Framework	2030
	Energy Roadmap	2050
National	National Planning Framework	2018 - 2040
	National Development Plan	2021 - 2030
	Ireland's National Energy and Climate Plan	2021 - 2030
	Climate Action Plan	2023
	The Government White Paper: Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future	2015 – 2030
	EirGrid Grid Development Strategy	2020 – 2025
	Policy Statement on Security of Electricity Supply	2021
Regional	Eastern and Midlands Region – Regional Spatial Economic Strategy	2019 - 2031
Local	Meath County Council Development Plan	2021 - 2027
	Meath County Council Climate Action Strategy	2019 - 2024

6.1 European Policy

6.1.1 The Renewable Energy Directive (Revised)

The Renewable Energy Directive 2009/28/EC committed Member States to setting their own targets within a context of an overarching EU target of producing 20% of its energy from renewable sources by 2020. This has been revised to ensure a target of at least 27% is met by 2030. This target will be fulfilled through individual

Member States' contributions guided by the need to deliver collectively for the EU. The Proposed Development is required to facilitate a number of proposed renewable solar schemes within the vicinity to enable the benefits of connecting these renewables to the grid to be fully realised and contribute towards Ireland's energy goals.

6.1.2 Climate and Energy Framework 2030

The 2030 Framework proposes new targets and measures to make the EU's economy and energy system more competitive, secure and sustainable. Promoting self-sufficient schemes are in line with EU directives. Actions required across all sectors include increased energy efficiency and renewable energy. Key targets include:

- At least 40% cuts in GHG emissions (from 1990 levels)
- At least 32% share for renewable energy; and
- At least 32.5% improvement in energy efficiency.

The Framework demonstrates the importance of associated grid infrastructure. The Proposed Development, therefore, is to be seen as compliant, in its requirement to facilitate and support the proposed solar developments. Without it, the benefits of these renewable developments cannot be realised.

6.1.3 Energy Roadmap 2050

The Energy Roadmap 2050 was published by the European Commission (EC) in 2012, examining the challenges faced while delivering the EU's decarbonisation objective by 2050 and ensuring security of supply and competitiveness is maintained. The Roadmap aims to demonstrate that the planned low-carbon goal can also be economically feasible. It further outlines structural changes required for transformation.

"One challenge is the need for flexible resources in the power system as the contribution of intermittent renewable generation increases". The Roadmap acknowledges that improved infrastructure and energy storage will alleviate demand on the Grid, with a need for a more integrated approach and new technologies to achieve the 2050 target of emission-free electricity production. The Proposed Development has been brought forward in recognition of this, to utilise the potential of the identified proposed solar developments and their grid connections.

6.2 National Policy

6.2.1 National Planning Framework 2018 - 2040

The National Planning Framework (NPF) is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of Ireland to 2040. The ambition of the NPF is to create a single vision, through a shared set of goals, expressed in the NPF as National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs). The most applicable are:

National Strategic Outcome 3: Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities

"The Rural Regeneration and Development Fund will, combined with wider urban and village renewal, housing and community development initiatives, create a virtuous cycle of progressive planning for, investment in and economic diversification of our rural towns and villages, re-purposing them to meet the challenges of the future".

National Strategic Outcome 8: Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society

"New energy systems and transmission grids will be necessary for a more distributed, more renewables focused energy generation system, harnessing both the considerable on-shore and off-shore potential from energy sources such as wind, wave and solar and connecting the richest sources of that energy".

It is a key action under NSO 8, to *"reinforce the distribution and transmission network to facilitate planned growth and distribution of a more renewables focused source of energy"*, whilst acknowledging the roll-out of the National Smart Grid Plan will enable new connections, grid balancing, energy management and micro grid development.

There is a significant support throughout the NPF for the need to move towards low carbon futures, more energy efficient development and the roll out renewable energies. *"The Government recognise that Ireland must reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the energy sector by at least 80% by 2050"*. The Proposed Development clearly contributes towards *"Harnessing the potential of the region in renewable energy terms across the technological spectrum"* by supporting permanent power supply generated from neighbouring solar energy projects.

The NPF has further delivered a series of National Policy Objectives (NPOs). Of relevance and in support of the Proposed Development are:

- **NPO 54:** Reduce our carbon footprint by integrating climate action into the planning system in support of national targets for climate policy mitigation and adaptation objectives, as well as targets for greenhouse gas emissions reductions.
- **NPO 55:** Promote renewable energy use and generation at appropriate locations within the built and natural environment to meet national objectives towards achieving a low carbon economy by 2050.

Solar energy is identified as one of four areas of renewable energy potential. Consequently, the principle of the Proposed Development is supported by the overarching planning framework in the Country and the Proposed Development both acts as and supports sustainable development and renewable energy targets for the immediate and wider environs in facilitating the utilisation of proposed solar developments.

6.2.2 National Development Plan 2021 – 2030

The National Development Plan (NDP) clarifies that *“In the electricity sector, major elements of capital expenditure requirements over 2021 -2030 will come from the private sector in the area of grid scale electricity generation and storage”* and recognises that the reliability of electricity supplies will be strengthened through investment in the electricity transmission and distribution grid, with investment set aside for the delivery of a resilient electricity system. Ireland aims to cut greenhouse emissions by 51% by 2030. Current electricity generation is strongly reliant on fossil fuels. It is imperative, therefore, that schemes that can facilitate cleaner energy generation on the grid are accommodated, as clarified in Chapter 13 of the NDP , with the Proposed Development required to secure and support such, in connecting to the identified proposed solar developments.

The NDP explicitly states that *“Ensuring security of electricity supply will also require investment in grid infrastructure, interconnection and storage”*. Consequently, the principle of the Proposed Development is supported by the overarching planning framework for Ireland in providing Grid connections for solar energy.

6.2.3 Ireland’s National Energy and Climate Plan 2021 – 2030

The National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) was prepared in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1999, to collectively deliver a 30% reduction in GHG emissions, from 2005 levels, by 2030. In it is confirmed Ireland’s commitment to energy resilience. Its aim is to make Ireland one of the leading countries tackling climate change. It states, *“Ireland’s objectives are to maintain and, where necessary, facilitate the enhancement of resilience of the gas and electricity networks”*. Relevant key objectives identified in the plan include:

- *“Increase electricity generated from renewable sources to 70%”*
- *“Support efforts to increase indigenous renewable sources in the energy mix, including wind, solar and bioenergy”*.
- *“Facilitate infrastructure projects, including private sector commercial projects, which enhance Ireland’s security of supply and are in keeping with Ireland’s overall climate and energy objectives”*.

The NECP recognises that *“as Ireland transitions itself to a low carbon economy, the gas and electricity networks must be planned and developed to make the transition as smooth as possible”*. Harnessing and utilising Ireland’s renewable energy resources will play a key role in the transition towards a sustainable, secure, and competitive energy system. The Proposed Development complies with the direction and pursuits of the NECP.

6.2.4 Climate Action Plan 2023

The Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2023 sets out the roadmap to deliver Ireland’s climate target ambitions including a more rapid build-out of renewable generation. It is acknowledged that the electricity sector is facing an ‘immense challenge’ to meet its requirements. There is a drive *“to increase the deployment of renewable energy generation, strengthen the grid, and meet the demand for flexibility”*. Electricity network upgrades and construction will be required, as confirmed within Chapter 12 of the CAP, alongside *“supporting infrastructure at key strategic locations”*.

The primary need for the Proposed Development is to support, secure and transport the supply of solar energy onto the Grid. It is, therefore, considered that the Proposed Development would be compliant with the identified actions of the CAP.

6.2.5 Ireland’s Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future (White Paper) 2015 – 2030

This White Paper sets out the Government’s energy policy framework for the period 2015 – 2030. This framework is based on the ‘three pillars’ to ensure a sustainable, secure and competitive energy system for Ireland. The Paper

states that the Government will “*incentivise the introduction of sufficient renewable generation*” which the Proposed Development will facilitate.

The long-term development and deployment of Ireland’s abundance of renewable resources defines this Paper, where “*support for renewable energy is vital from both an economic and environmental perspective*”. Consequently, the Proposed Development is seen to be wholly supported by the contents of the White Paper.

6.2.6 EirGrid Development Strategy 2020 – 2025

The objective of the strategy is shaped by two key factors: tackling climate change and transforming the electricity sector. It is underpinned by the requirement for transforming the electricity sector towards sustainability and decarbonisation. Delivering this will require a “*significant transformation*” of the Grid and its infrastructure to allow it to perform reliably, secure the supply and facilitate the penetration of renewables. It reiterates, throughout, the need for renewable energy provision and distribution and the need for innovative technologies to support this. EirGrid determines the “*need to connect up to 10,000 megawatts of additional renewable generation to the electricity system*”. Innovative, yet proven, technology such as the Proposed Development will help deliver on this, in the face of growing demand.

6.2.7 Policy Statement on Security of Electricity Supply 2021

The Policy Statement was adopted as part of the Programme for Government, setting out updates to national policy in the context of the Programme for Government’s commitments relevant to the electricity sector, planning authorities and developers. The Government has committed that up to 80% of electricity consumption must come from renewable resources by 2030. In support of the Proposed Development, security of supply is recognised as a key priority for the Grid. “*The development of new conventional generation is a national priority and should be permitted and supported in order to ensure security of electricity supply and support the growth of renewable electricity generation*”. Addressing inadequate supplies of storage, grid infrastructure and interconnection is identified which the Proposed Development seeks to alleviate whilst diversifying supply and transmission.

6.3 Regional Policy

6.3.1 Eastern and Midlands Region – Regional Spatial Economic Strategy 2019 – 2031

The RSES provides regional level strategic planning and economic policy in support of the implementation of the National Planning Framework. The RSES confirms “*Development of the energy distribution and transmission network in the Region will enable distribution of more renewable sources...enabling new connections, grid balancing, energy management and micro grid development.*” The Proposed Development provides for the future connection of solar energy onto the Grid, diversifying the supply. The RSES supports an increase in the amount renewable energy sources in the Region and aims to “*Pursue climate mitigation in line with global and national targets and harness the potential for a more distributed renewables-focussed energy system*”. In addition, the RSES has provided a range of Regional Policy Objectives (RPO) that set the context for planning policy in the region. Table 6-2 lists the RPOs that are considered relevant to the Proposed Development.

Table 6-2: Eastern and Midlands RSES – Relevant RPOs

Policy Objective Ref.	Compliance with Objective
RPO 10.20 Support and facilitate the development of enhanced electricity and gas supplies, and associated networks, to serve the existing and future needs of the Region and facilitate new transmission infrastructure projects that might be brought forward in the lifetime of this Strategy. This includes the delivery of the necessary integration of transmission network requirements to facilitate linkages of renewable energy proposals to the electricity and gas transmission grid in a sustainable and timely manner subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process.	The Proposed Development is directly relevant to this policy. The proposed new transmission infrastructure will provide the necessary infrastructure to support the permanent power supply generated from neighbouring proposed solar energy projects. The Proposed Development is required to support, secure, and transport the supply of electricity from these projects, identified in Table 3-1 of this supporting statement, reliant upon it and is required to utilise their full potential. As set out in this planning application, the Proposed Development was designed with due consideration to appropriate environmental assessment.
RPO 10.22 Support the reinforcement and strengthening of the electricity transmission and distribution network to facilitate planned growth and transmission/ distribution of a renewable energy focused generation across. Facilitate the delivery of the necessary integration of transmission network requirements to allow linkages of renewable energy proposals to the electricity transmission grid in a sustainable and timely manner.	The Proposed Development shall act as an enabling feature for the wider solar farm, and three others, ensuring increased security and support for renewables on the electricity network, providing additional reinforcement and strength through facilitating renewable energy supply and allow the full utilisation of these approved developments.

“In order to ensure security of electricity supply the Strategy must address this increased demand for electricity in such a way as to strike a balance between addressing the need for a significant shift towards renewable energy and enabling resources to be harnessed in a manner consistent with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.” The principle of the Proposed Development directly supports these key policies and will assist in the implication of the targets set out within the RSES, through the provision of required infrastructure to support and secure the solar energy from the proposed renewable solar schemes *“to accelerate a transition to a greener, low carbon and climate resilient region”*. *“Support for the development of a safe, secure and reliable supply of electricity and the development of enhanced electricity networks as well as new transmission infrastructure projects will serve the existing and future needs of the Region and strengthen all-island energy infrastructure and interconnection capacity.”*

The RPOs contained in the RSES are designed to promote efficiencies in the energy sector and a move towards a low carbon electricity system, supporting a modal shift towards cleaner energy options. The Proposed Development is a key requirement in providing this, in its nature as a facilitating substation.

6.4 Local Policy

6.4.1 Meath County Development Plan 2021 – 2027

The Meath County Development Plan (CDP) 2021-2027 provides a vision for Meath, promoting sustainable development and facilitating stable economic growth. In consideration of the strategic potential of the Proposed Development the CDP states, in Section 6.15, that *“This Development Plan has an overarching role in progressing a sustainable energy future for the County”*. The CDP was developed in compliance with the objectives of the NDP, NPF and RSES, which have proven wholly supportive of the Proposed Development and the proposed solar schemes reliant upon it.

6.4.1.1 Principle and Design

The CDP *“fully supports the enhancement of the energy sectors...encouraging diversification”*. Section 4.5, furthermore, confirms Meath’s commitment to *“Facilitating relevant energy suppliers regarding the availability of clean and reliable sources of energy”* which the Proposed Development will enable. The CDP aims to *“recognise and develop the full potential of green energy including the export of green electricity to the national grid”*. The Proposed Development is required to facilitate such.

The Proposed Development is seen to be supportive of/supported by key policies and objectives within this section, namely:

- **ED POL 15:** To seek to support and facilitate both existing and new businesses who seek to maximise the re-use and recycling of resources, create new business models and promote innovation and efficiency.
- **ED POL 19:** To support and facilitate sustainable renewable energy and other rural enterprises at suitable locations in the County.

Additionally, ED POL 26 states that *“Meath County Council shall positively consider and assess development proposals for the expansion of existing authorised industrial or business enterprises in the countryside where the resultant development does not negatively impact on the character and amenity of the surrounding area”*. The subject site was selected due to its proximity to the proposed solar farm (Planning Ref. 21/958 and 312723-22), in order to minimize the number and length of the 33kV underground electrical circuits leaving the substation and to maximise energy efficiency. The subject site poses minimal visual impact and will utilise connections to the existing regional road network.

6.4.1.2 Infrastructure

The Proposed Development compliments the policies and objectives of this section, namely:

- **INF POL 34:** To promote sustainable energy sources, locally based renewable energy alternatives, where such development does not have a negative impact on the surrounding environment (including water quality), landscape, biodiversity, natural and built heritage, residential or local amenities.
- **INF POL 35:** To seek a reduction in greenhouse gases through energy efficiency and the development of renewable energy sources utilising the natural resources of the County in an environmentally acceptable manner consistent with best practice and planning principles.
- **INF POL 46:** To support and facilitate the development of enhanced electricity and gas supplies, and associated networks, to serve the existing and future needs of the County and to facilitate new transmission infrastructure projects that may be brought forward during the lifetime of the plan including the delivery and

integration, including linkages of renewable energy proposals to the electricity transmission grid in a sustainable and timely manner.

- **INF POL 48:** To ensure that energy transmission infrastructure follows best practice with regard to siting, design and least environmental impact in the interest of landscape protection.
- **INF OBJ 39:** To support Ireland's renewable energy commitments outlined in national policy by facilitating the development and exploitation of renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, geothermal, hydro and bio-energy at suitable locations within the County where such development does not have a negative impact on the surrounding environment (including water quality), landscape, biodiversity or local amenities so as to provide for further residential and enterprise development within the county.
- **INF OBJ 41:** To promote the generation and supply of low carbon and renewable energy alternatives, having regard to the opportunities offered by the settlement hierarchy of the County and the built environment.
- **INF OBJ 50:** To seek the delivery of the necessary integration of transmission network requirements to facilitate linkages of renewable energy proposals to the electricity transmission grid in a sustainable and timely manner.

All of the above policies reference the harnessing of renewable energies and integration onto the Grid in a sustainable manner, with best practice and siting. As set out in this planning application, the Proposed Development was designed with due consideration to appropriate environmental assessment and sited so as to minimise visual impact. Mitigation to climate change and the facilitation of renewable energy developments are two of the cross-cutting themes of the CDP and the Proposed Development seeks to facilitate connection and utilisation of proposed solar developments, facilitating linkages, in line with the above policies and objectives.

INF POL 47, furthermore, recognises a need "*To ensure that energy transmission infrastructure follows best practice with regard to siting, design and least environmental impact in the interest of landscape protection*". The Proposed Development site was selected due to its favourable position in proximity to the proposed solar developments. The associated cabling will be undergrounded in compliance with INF POL 50. Appropriate Assessment Screening and a Nature Impact Statement (NIS) were carried out in line with INF OBJ 45. Copies are submitted with this application and summaries are provided in Section 7.1 and Section 7.2 of this supporting statement. The residual impact of traffic will be negligible, as confirmed in the accompanying Transport Statement.

6.4.1.3 Cultural and Natural Heritage

HER POL 31 sets out "*To ensure that the ecological impact of all development proposals on habitats and species are appropriately assessed by suitably qualified professional(s) in accordance with best practice guidelines – e.g. the preparation of an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA), Screening Statement for Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment, Natura Impact Statement (NIS), species surveys etc. (as appropriate)*". A Screening Statement for Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report and all relevant ecological surveys were carried out with mitigation identified where appropriate, within an Environmental Considerations Report (ECR). Copies are submitted with this planning application package, with summaries presented in Section 7 of this supporting statement.

An Ecological Impact Assessment⁶ (EclA) has, additionally, been submitted with the application which takes account of HER POL 27 of the CDP, which seeks "*To protect, conserve and enhance the County's biodiversity where appropriate*", as well as HER POL 35 which requires "*ecological assessment by suitably qualified professional(s)*". The EclA undertook all necessary surveys and assessments concluding, "*the Proposed Development is anticipated to result in negligible (not significant) effects on ecological features*", with beneficial effects achievable via native planting and hedgerow retention, as per the EclA, in accordance with HER POL 28 which sets out "*To integrate in the development management process the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and landscape features wherever possible, by minimising adverse impacts on existing habitats (whether designated or not) and by including mitigation and/or compensation measures, as appropriate*". In addition, compliance is achieved with HER POL 37 which seeks "*To encourage the retention of hedgerows and other distinctive boundary treatments in rural areas*" and HER POL 38 "*To promote and encourage planting of native hedgerow species in new developments*".

No notable or protected species were recorded within the site, with no protected sites within a 2km radius. The Proposed Development will not result in any physical impact upon heritage features within the study area, with their settings not extending into the subject site. Regarding landscape, and in satisfying HER POL 52, "*Landscape and visual effects and their significance during construction works will be temporary and the development site will integrate in the overall pattern of the surrounding landscape*" as per the ECR.

⁶ Appendix E of the ECR (AECOM report reference 60657534_ACM_RP_EN_CM_001)

6.4.1.4 Rural Development

Relevant objectives/policies laid out under this Section include:

- **RUR DEV SO 1:** To support the continued vitality and viability of rural areas, environmentally, socially, and commercially by promoting sustainable social and economic development.
- **RUR DEV SO 4:** To recognise the strategic roles the county will play in the regional and national context in terms of natural resources and to ensure compatibility between this plan and regional and national strategies.
- **RUR DEV SO 6:** To protect and enhance the visual qualities of rural areas through sensitive design.
- **RUR DEV SO 9:** To ensure that plans and projects associated with rural development will be subject to an Appropriate Assessment Screening and those plans or projects which could, either individually or in-combination with other plans and projects, have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site (or sites) undergo a full Appropriate Assessment.
- **RD OBJ 9:** To promote the retention of field boundaries and mature trees and hedgerows to protect the rural character of the area.

A review of national and local planning approvals confirm that such substations are not uncommon within rural locales. The Proposed Development is a necessity to support and realise the potential of the proposed rural based solar projects listed in Table 3-1 of this statement and its setting will be sensitive to its location.

It is noted that the subject site is located within the landscape character area 'Tara Skryne Hills'. The site is also within an area designated as 'Exceptional Landscape Value' and determined to be of 'High Sensitivity'. The Meath Landscape Character Assessment describes the siting as having "*Medium potential capacity to accommodate overhead cables, substations and communication masts due to the complexity of the area, which has a variety of land uses and a robust landscape structure*". The Site and the study area do not contain protected views and prospects recognised by the CDP at county level. Landscape and visual effects and their significance during construction works will be temporary and non-significant as the development site will integrate in the overall pattern of the surrounding landscape. The hedgerows and natural boundaries that encase the wider area, are to be retained and protected ensuring sensitive siting of the Proposed Development, as confirmed in the accompanying ECR, providing compliance with DM POL 8 "*To require the provision of high quality, durable, appropriately designed and secure boundary treatments in all developments*", DM POL 9 "*To support the retention of field boundaries for their ecological/habitat significance, as demonstrated by a suitably qualified professional*" and DM OBJ 11 "*Existing trees and hedgerows of biodiversity and/or amenity value shall be retained, where possible*". The nearest property is located approximately 900m northeast of the Site. Dwellings located within a 1km radius have been assessed for a Residential Visual Amenity Assessment RVAA (see Appendix H of the ECR). A submitted set of photomontages further highlights the minimalistic impact.

The Proposed Development is located within a rural area. The rural settlements that do exist within the study area are not located within the vicinity of the Proposed Development. Impacts on noise, dust emissions, air quality and soil were also determined to be negligible to non-existent as highlighted within the ECR. The submitted NIS concludes that, based on objective information, the Proposed Development will not result in adverse effects on any European site, either individually or in-combination with other plans or projects. An outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and Traffic Management Plan have been prepared to further ensure sensitive adaptation and to mitigate any potential impacts.

As per the requirements of DM OBJ 5 all waste arising during the construction phase will be managed and disposed of in accordance with the provisions of the Waste Management Act 1996 and associated amendments and regulations. A Waste Management Plan will be prepared by the contractor prior to the commencement of construction following the hierarchy, outlined within Article 4 of the Waste Framework Directive 2008/98/EC.

6.4.1.5 Climate Change

Climate change mitigation/adaptation is a cross-cutting theme of the CDP, with Chapter 10 dedicated to it. The CDP is focused on efficiency through compact sustainable growth and the promotion of alternative energy measures. Sustainable electricity development is deemed a necessity for transitioning Ireland toward a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050, with the CDP providing full support for developments which "*facilitate measures which seek to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases in the Electricity sector*". The Proposed Development is in compliance with climate policy throughout the CDP, being necessary infrastructure to support supply generated from proposed neighbouring solar projects connecting to the grid.

An oCEMP, NIS, ECR, EclA, Traffic and Transport Assessment, Landscape and Visual Assessment and Flood Risk Assessment are submitted with this planning application and summarised in Section 7 of this statement proving no negligible impact from the Proposed Development in construction or operation. The ECR concludes that "*On the*

basis of the embedded mitigation measures, no potentially significant operational phase impacts have been identified, and potential impacts arising from the Proposed Development are considered not significant”.

6.4.1.6 Zoning Designations

It is noted that ‘Sustainable Energy Installations’ and ‘Utility Structures’ are both deemed to be permitted uses, as per Table 6-3, under the ‘RA – Rural Area’ zoning designation.

Table 6-3: Land Use Zoning Guidance and Permitted Uses

Guidance	Permitted Uses	Open to Consideration
The primary objective is to protect and promote the value and future sustainability of rural areas. Agriculture, forestry, tourism and rural related resource enterprises will be employed for the benefit of the local and wider population. A balanced approach involving the protection and promotion of rural biodiversity, promotion of the integrity of the landscape, and enhancement of the built and cultural heritage will be adopted.	Agriculture, Agricultural Buildings, Agri-Tourism, Boarding Kennels (Where the use is ancillary to the use of the dwelling as a main residence), Burial Grounds, Extractive Industry/Quarrying, Equestrian, Farm Shop (Only where the bulk of the produce is produced on the farm), Forestry related activities, Horticulture, Caravan and Camping Park (No static mobile homes or permanent structure unless ancillary to the operation of the campsite shall be permitted), Golf Course, Open Space, Research and Development (Rural related research and development only), Residential (Subject to compliance with the Rural Settlement Strategy), Restaurant/Café (Only where ancillary to tourism uses or conversion of protected or vernacular structures), Sustainable Energy Installations, Utility Structures.	Community Facility, Cultural Facility, Education, Garden Centre, Micro Businesses (Refer to the Economic Chapter), Playing Fields, Recreational Facility, Sports Club, Telecommunication Structures, Workshop (only where ancillary to an existing dwelling where it is demonstrated that the proposed activity is carried out by a resident of the dwelling, with no visiting members of the public), Veterinary Clinic.

Overall, the Proposed Development is compliant with the relevant planning policies and site-specific land use zoning objectives set out by Meath County Council.

6.4.1.7 Summary

Energy efficiency is a prominent pursuit within Meath, with a major emphasis on adaptation and mitigation of renewable energies. The Proposed Development seeks to provide the necessary substation and associated infrastructure to support, secure and transport the permanent power supply generated from neighbouring proposed solar energy projects, acting as enabling development for the penetration of green solar energy onto the Grid, a reiterated objective of the CDP.

6.4.2 Meath County Council Climate Action Strategy 2019 – 2024

The vision of the strategy is “*To make County Meath a climate friendly region*”, with key targets to reduce County emissions by 40% by 2030 and to increase resilience to adapt to the impacts of climate change. Protecting and promoting climate resilient infrastructure is reiterated throughout, with it noted that “*Energy use is changing fast. The shift to renewable sources, however, needs to happen faster*”. Acting as enabling infrastructure for key proposed solar developments the Proposed Development offers a key contribution to this shift. Relevant policies include:

- **Policy P1.8:** To support Ireland’s renewable energy commitments by promoting the use of renewable technologies, as per policies and objectives listed in the County Development Plan.
- **Policy P8.3:** To support the development of pilot schemes which promote innovative ways to incorporate energy efficiency.

For Meath to become a sustainable region, there is a recognised need to dramatically increase deployment of low carbon technologies, including supporting infrastructure and substations for renewable energies. Consequently, the Proposed Development is seen to be wholly supportive of such moves.

7. Supporting Documents

This section sets out the findings of supporting documents and assessments that have been carried out as part of the application process for the erection of the Proposed Development.

7.1 Appropriate Assessment

A screening report has been prepared for the Proposed Development, as required under the Habitats and Birds Directive (92/43/EEC and 79/409/EEC) and is included as a stand-alone report. The AA (Appropriate Assessment) screening report document forms part of the SID application. It concludes

“In view of best scientific knowledge and on the basis of objective information, it is concluded that likely significant effects from the Proposed Development on any European site, whether individually or in combination with other plans or projects, beyond reasonable scientific doubt, can be excluded.

There is consequently no requirement to proceed to the next stage of Appropriate Assessment”.

7.2 Natura Impact Assessment

Due to the proximity of the proposed adjacent solar farm development and potential cumulative interactions of the Proposed Development, a precautionary approach was adopted and a Natura Impact Statement undertaken. The Arodstown watercourse is separated from the Proposed Development by extensive areas of land, agricultural fields and woodlands. Any pollution generated by the construction of the Proposed Development would be unlikely to reach the watercourse due to natural filtration.

“This NIS therefore concludes that, on the basis of objective information, the Proposed Development will not result in adverse effects on any European site, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects”.

7.3 Environmental Impact Assessment Screening

An EIA screening has been completed for the Proposed Development under Directive 2014/52/EU (the ‘EIA Directive’) and Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001(as amended) and is included as a stand-alone report.

The EIA Screening concluded:

“Due to the type and size of the Proposed Development and with the implementation of an approved contractors CEMP which will include inherent environmental controls, regulatory controls and best practice measures, no likely significant impacts are anticipated to human health during the construction or operational phase of the Proposed Development”.

No likely significant impacts to the environment are anticipated as a result of the Proposed Development and as such an EIA would not be required.

7.4 Environmental Considerations Report

An Environmental Considerations Report (ECR) was prepared with a copy submitted with this application, highlighting the environmental impacts associated and determining appropriate mitigation measures providing detailed conclusions of the Proposed Development’s non-detrimental impact on the areas of Population and Human Health, Land, Soils & Geology, Water, Air Quality, Climate, Noise & Vibration, Material Assets, Cultural Heritage, Landscape & Visual and Traffic & Transport.

No potentially significant operational phase impacts have been identified, and potential impacts arising from the Proposed Development are considered not significant. It is noted that, regarding the development of the proposed solar developments as identified, there is “*potential for cumulative impact during the construction phase. The consented developments however will implement mitigation measures and controls to protect the environment during the construction phase to mitigate these impact*”. For the remaining areas it is not anticipated that these projects will have a significant cumulative impact with the Proposed Development.

7.5 Flood Risk Assessment

An FRA was undertaken for the Proposed Development and concluded the following:

- The flood risk from fluvial flooding is low as the Proposed Development is approximately 2.5 km from the Clonmeath River. The Proposed Development is located within Flood Zone C
- The pluvial flood risk to the Proposed Development is low
- The groundwater flood risk to the Proposed Development is low

“As the FRA demonstrated the overall flood risk to the Proposed Development to be low, a Stage 2 Flood Risk Assessment was not progressed”.

7.6 Additional Assessments

An Ecological Impact Assessment concluded an anticipated negligible effect on ecological features, following mitigation. An outline CEMP was also prepared which will be adopted into a full CEMP by the contractor and reviewed/updated accordingly. A RVAA concluded the Proposed Development will not alter the character of existing views. A Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) seeks to implement an approved traffic management plan to minimise potential for traffic and transport impacts during construction activities. Copies of each are submitted with the application package.

8. Planning Assessment

8.1 Policy Summary

Section 6 of this supporting statement has proven the Proposed Development to be compliant with the overarching planning policies from European to local level. Policy encourages the penetration and provision of renewable energy onto the Grid and recognises the importance of infrastructure that helps accommodate this. The proposed solar farms identified, approved with consideration of these policies, are fully reliant upon the approval of the Proposed Development to ensure full utilisation of their potential and security of their supply.

It is important to recognise the range of new and developing technologies that can contribute to securing a greater proportion of energy from renewable sources, including substations. *“In order to ensure security of electricity supply...must address this increased demand for electricity in such a way as to strike a balance between addressing the need for a significant shift towards renewable energy and enabling resources to be harnessed in a manner consistent with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development”.* Meath County Council has determined, within the CDP, its endeavour to fully facilitate developments which support renewable energy.

Sustainability and moves to reduce the impact of climate change are firmly embedded at the heart of policy. In its nature and support of the previously identified solar farms, in Table 3-1, the Proposed Development represents sustainable practice and the provision of infrastructure that will aid the diversification and support of electricity generation on the Grid, providing effective and necessary infrastructure to help achieve these aims and fuel the *“fundamental shift in the means by which we supply, store and use energy.”*, in a way that will *“reinforce the distribution and transmission network to facilitate planned growth and distribution of a more renewables focused source of energy across the major demand centres”.*

It is acknowledged that Green Infrastructure development involves a holistic approach, and the Proposed Development should be provided as an integral component of sustainable development/renewable energy utilisation if the County is to maximise its benefit from natural resources associated with the proposed and forthcoming solar developments that will connect to the substation.

Overall, in lieu of the policy analysis, it is to be considered that the Proposed Development is in accordance with climate action, sustainable development, and energy (storage, generation, and transmission) objectives at all levels. Whilst the substation itself does not act as renewable energy generation it is required to fully realise the benefits of such schemes and to ensure their connection to the National Grid.

8.2 Principle of Development

The Proposed Development is necessary to support the permanent supply of identified proposed solar generated electricity onto the Grid. In line with the CDP, it is additionally determined to be economically viable, with a recognition of *“a strong economic dimension to the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient economy”.* The benefits of these schemes cannot be fully realised without the provision of the Proposed Development and the Council's appreciation of the need for a holistic approach to green infrastructure development.

The accompanying environmental documentation and reports have confirmed the Proposed Development's lack of impact upon the various considerations, both individually and cumulatively. Being suitably sited away from sensitive receptors, sites, and areas of flood risk it will furthermore have no potentially significant operational phase impacts, and potential impacts arising from the Proposed Development are considered not significant, as confirmed within the ECR, meaning it can be suitably and readily accommodated with no complications.

The location of the underground transmission lines minimise impact on existing underground services and provide the least disruption to the surrounding environs. It is noted that the location and design of the proposal has been carefully considered in line with EirGrid specifications. Past precedents, both nationally and internationally, offer

repeated precedent for the suitability of agricultural lands for solar energy developments. Sections of the landscape character, north and south, in proximity of the Proposed Development have already been altered significantly in recent years due to the 220kV electrical line which runs through the application site and study area, the introduction of which has added a light industrial appearance to the surrounding landscape character which was previously predominately rural in nature. The Proposed Development will, therefore, result in a fortification of the prevailing landscape character of the subject area and is appropriately scaled and massed.

9. Conclusion

This supporting statement has set out the contents of the planning application, site description and location of the Proposed Development, along with an evaluation of the planning history and relevant planning policy. It has been demonstrated throughout this supporting statement, and accompanying documentation, that the Proposed Development positively supports the objectives and policies of the pertinent European through to Local policy documentation, as well as complying with the pattern of development in the area and pertinent land uses and designated zoning.

Incorporating renewable energy within Ireland's energy supply will improve the resilience of energy infrastructure. The Meath CDP confirms that *"The strengthening of the national grid is important for a number of reasons including improving security of supply for the domestic, residential and enterprise"*. The proposed substation and loop-in infrastructure will allow direct distribution, onto the National Grid, for the identified proposed solar developments referenced throughout this supporting statement.

This supporting statement has demonstrated that the subject site is an appropriate location for such development in terms of land use planning policy and that it shall cause no adverse harm (as per the environmental evaluations) and so represents proper planning and sustainable development.

In reading of this supporting statement and associated plans and particulars it is contended that the Proposed Development, if permitted, will provide essential infrastructure intended to connect the proposed solar developments identified in Table 3-1 above, to the Grid, in a sound and proper manner.

The Proposed Development is very clearly in the interest of the common good, in compliance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and acceptable on environmental grounds. It is, therefore, respectfully requested that the Board grant approval for the Proposed Development.

Appendix A SID Determination



An
Bord
Pleanála

Board Direction
BD-010929-22
ABP-311020-21

At a meeting held on 27/06/2022, the Board considered the report of the Inspector, and the documents and submissions on file generally, in relation to the proposed development, consisting of a 220kV substation and associated grid connection to the Maynooth-Gorman 220kV overhead power line in the townland of Woodtown, County Meath.

The Board decided that the proposed development, as set out in the plans and particulars received by An Bord Pleanála on the 4th day of August 2021 and elaborated upon at the meetings of 22nd November 2021 and 27th April 2022, falls within the scope of section 182A of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and that a planning application should be made directly to the Board

Board Member:

Dave Walsh

Date: 27/06/2022

Appendix B Detailed Planning History

A desktop search of proposed and existing planning applications was carried out on 8 September 2022 (and subsequently updated on 6 June 2023). The search used publicly available data from the MyPlan.ie's 'National Planning Application' database, ABP database and Council Planning Portals.

The scope of the search was based within a 5 km radius from the approximate Centrepont of the Proposed Development. A specified criteria informed the search and omitted any planning applications greater than five years old, refused, invalid and withdrawn applications. The criteria then focused on foreseeable developments to be considered in line with the Proposed Development. In respect of this, any small scale residential and extension type developments along with minor amendments, changes of use and small-scale farming / agricultural applications were omitted. Only reasonably foreseeable developments were considered.

The findings show the majority of planning applications for adjoining lands consist of mainly agriculture and rural dwelling related developments, however recent applications have shown a rise in renewable energy, recreational and tourism related development.

Table 9.1. Planning Search (5km Radius)

Planning Authority	Reference	Address	Proposed Development	Grant / Due Date	Distance from Subject Site
Meath CC	221508	Culmullin, Curraghtown, Cultromer, Gaulstown, Bogganstown, Cullendragh, Drumree, Co. Meath	a Solar PV Energy Development with a total site area of 171.34ha, to include solar panels mounted on steel support structures, associated cabling and ducting, 47 No. MV Power Stations, 3 No. Client Substations, 3 No. Temporary Construction Compounds, tracks, boundary security fencing and security gates, CCTV, landscaping and ancillary works, with a 40 year operational period. A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) had been submitted to the Planning Authority with the Application. Significant further information/revised plans submitted on this application	24/07/2023	c.2.5km east
Meath CC	23527	Drumree Road, Readsland, Dunshaughlin, Co. Meath	the construction of 62 no. residential units comprising: - 27no. 2-storey houses (10 no. 3-bed and 17 no. 4-bed) and 35 no. apartments (14 no. 1-bed, 16 no. 2-bed and 5 no. 3-bed units) in a part 5-storey part 4-storey apartment building situated adjacent to the R125 Dunshaughlin link Road, with balconies on all elevations. And all associated site development, landscape and boundary works, including: - a new 4-arm roundabout junction on the R125 Dunshaughlin Link Road, connecting with an extended Dun Rioga Avenue to the southeast of the existing Dun Rioga estate providing new vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access and egress from the west, without alteration to the existing estate entrances at the Drumree Road; 1. 8m high acoustic fence to the west of the proposed apartment block extending c.50m in length alongside the R125; 98 no. car parking spaces; 83 no. secure bicycle parking spaces; public open space of c. 3,660 sq.m. including new children's playground; private communal open space of c. 233 sq.m. serving the apartments; private and communal bin stores; 1no. ESB substation	11/07/2023	c.5km northeast
Meath CC	23236	Martinstown, Crossakiel, Co Meath A82 F2C4	(1) construct a new building to be used as office space, welfare facilities and storage, (2) install a new proprietary effluent treatment system and percolation area and (3) all associated site services	01/06/2023	c.3.9km northwest
Meath CC	221664	Woodridge Stables, Killeen, Dunsany, Co Meath	(a) construction of a lunging ring, loading ramp, wash down area and machinery shed (b) erection of solar/pv panels (c) provision of internal staff facilities into one bay of existing barn to be connected to existing 6-8 person wastewater treatment system and polishing filters (d) the provision of all associated site works to upgrade existing farm complex including proposed internal service roads, beech hedging, timber fencing, general paddocks, nursery paddocks, all weather areas with individual horse shelters, external all	01/06/2023	c.5km northeast

Planning Authority	Reference	Address	Proposed Development	Grant / Due Date	Distance from Subject Site
			weather sand arena, cross country area, hunter & pony all weather area, trailer and horse box parking area, vegetable garden and external hen & pig area		
Meath CC	221505	Drumlargan, Kilcock, Co. Meath	development will consist of (a) modification of the existing agricultural field entry from the public road to accommodate the proposed development; (b) construct new equestrian facilities including horse stables building, barn building, manure pit/dungsted and associated seepage tanks, horse walker unit, lunge arena, gallops, sand arena, fenced paddocks and surface water system; (c) construct a part single-storey, part two-storey detached dwelling house, detached domestic garage, wastewater treatment system and landscaping; and (d) associated site works. Significant further information/revised plans submitted on this application	25/05/2023	c.4.8km southwest
Meath CC	221550	Woodland , Batterstown, Co. Meath	The development will consist of: 1. Installation of outdoor Air Insulated Switchgear (AIS) electrical apparatus, including an associated extension to the hardstand compound (approximately 4 hectares) to facilitate same. This includes: a. installation of an extension to both sides of the existing 400 kV busbar, with provision of an associated wing coupler at either end of the existing 400 kV busbar. b. additional apparatus and associated works to the two existing busbars to create what is known as sectionalising bays. c. relocation of existing transformer connections from existing busbar to adjacent location on new busbar. d. an associated single-story extension (approximately 80 m2) to the existing control building. 2. The erection of four new lightning masts and relocation of one existing mast (each approximately 45m high). 3. Two bays on opposite sides to the newly extended 400 kV busbars at the southern end of the substation, each bay to incorporate breakers, reactive compensation devices and cable sealing ends. These bays will facilitate the connection of the new 400 kV underground cable links from Dunstown and Belcamp substations respectively. 4. Renewal, alteration and/or removal of associated 400 / 220 kV electrical apparatus and equipment. 5. All ancillary site development works including site preparation works, site clearance and levelling; provision of hardstanding, internal access tracks and temporary construction compound; associated underground cabling and earthgrid; associated extended surface water drainage network including a soakaway; associated palisade fencing and gates (approximately 2.65m high); lighting poles and landscaping as required to facilitate the development. Planning Permission is sought for a period of 10 years. Significant further information/revised plans submitted on this application	25/05/2023	c.5km southeast
Meath CC	221505	Drumlargan, Kilcock, Co. Meath	The development will consist of (a) modification of the existing agricultural field entry from the public road to accommodate the proposed development; (b) construct new equestrian facilities including horse stables building, barn building, manure pit/dungsted and associated seepage tanks, horse walker unit, lunge arena, gallops, sand arena, fenced paddocks and surface water system; (c) construct a part single-storey, part two-storey detached dwelling house, detached domestic garage, wastewater treatment system and landscaping; and (d) associated site works. Significant further information/revised plans submitted on this application	25/05/2023	c.3.3km southwest
Meath CC	23136	Creemore & Belshamstown, Batterstown, Co. Meath	permission for development at a c. 14.14 ha site, located at Creemore and Belshamstown, in Batterstown, Co. Meath, as permitted under MCC Reg. Ref. 22837 (which permitted a new battery energy facility and synchronous condenser.). The	16/05/2023	c.4.6km southeast

Planning Authority	Reference	Address	Proposed Development	Grant / Due Date	Distance from Subject Site
			proposed development will consist of amendments to the previously permitted development (MCC Reg. Ref. 22837) including amendments to the previously approved internal access road layout; amendments to the previously approved attenuation pond to the south of the site and associated piped infrastructure, ducting and drainage arrangements. In addition, a previously permitted earthen berm to the centre of the site is to be omitted. No changes are proposed to the permitted vehicular access to the R154. Any associated amendments to changes in level and all associated site development, hard and soft landscaping and excavation works above and below ground are also included. Planning permission is sought for a period of 10 years.		
Meath CC	23263	Crumpstown or Marshallstown, Kilmessan, Co. Meath	an equestrian holiday centre, which will comprise four holiday cottages made up of conversion of two stable buildings each to a one-bedroom single storey dwelling, conversion of a shed to a two-bedroom single-storey dwelling, and refurbishment of a stone cottage to a two-bedroom single-storey dwelling, with a new sewage treatment system, three stable blocks containing four, six and nine horse cubicles respectively and associated site development works, outdoor riding arena, horse walker and associated site development works, access will be via the existing entrance serving the existing farmyard and dwelling	03/05/2023	c.4km northwest
An Bord Pleanála	ABP-312723-22	On lands including Derryclare, Cloneymeath, Ballygortagh and Moynalvy, Summerhill, Co. Meath.	Solar energy plant and ancillary equipment. Associated site development works. Significant Further information/Revised plans submitted on this application. NIS submitted with FI.	27/01/2023	c.5.0km west
Meath CC	221320	12 Loughmore Walk , Killeen Castle Demesne, Dunsany, Co. Meath	development comprising of alterations to design of 1 no. permitted 2 storey 5-bedroom C-type detached house & garage and associated site development and landscape works, with a site area of 0.28ha, at 12 Loughmore Walk, Killeen Castle Demesne, Dunsany, Co. Meath, being part of a previously permitted residential development of 22 houses at Loughmore Walk/The Burrows (Ref RA/191174). Alterations to include new rear extension, internal layout changes at ground and upper floors, attic conversion with new stairs, revisions to elevations of house and garage, new velux roof lights, extended garage with gym, new door and covered carport link to house, the vehicular access is as previously permitted via the existing internal roads & entrances to Killen Castle Demesne. All within the overall site of approx. 255 ha. (a protected structure)	20/01/2023	c.5km northeast
Meath CC	221209	Killeen Castle Demesne (a protected structure), Dunsany, Co Meath	the change of use for a temporary period of 4 years of 6 no. of the 22 no. courtyard dwellings (referred to as Hunters Yard) permitted under Reg Ref DA/802774 (as extended by Reg Ref RA/180960) from residential to ancillary hotel accommodation facilitating short term lettings in the form of 24 no. bedrooms (6 no. keys) in 6 no. 2 storey 4 bedroom units. To accommodate this temporary change of use, the following modifications are also required:- Amendments for all 6 no. units include: The replacement of permitted kitchen to facilitate 1 no. accessible double bedroom with ensuite and inclusion of a small kitchenette facility in the permitted study's, Solar Panels omitted, Chimneys omitted, Corner Lightbox/Lanterns omitted, Amendments for 4 no. units (House Type HY1, HY1H and HY3, HY3H) include: Omission of internal door, a Balcony column support added, Suite 1 walk in wardrobe replaces with ensuite bathroom, Walk in wardrobe with ensuite included for Suite 2 , Total 12 no. car parking spaces to be	19/12/2022	c.5km northeast

Planning Authority	Reference	Address	Proposed Development	Grant / Due Date	Distance from Subject Site
			provided. Selected stone cladding removed from upper storey of House Type HY1, HY1H and HY3, HY3H, A minor change of Finished Floor Levels on site. The development also includes all associated landscape and site development works. There is no change to the building footprint or house design to those units permitted under Reg. Ref. DA/802774 (as extended by Reg Ref RA/180960). The design is in keeping with all other residential units proposed within the Killeen Castle Demesne. The vehicular access is as otherwise permitted via the existing internal road network and entrances to Killeen Castle Demesne		
Meath CC	22752	Augherskea, Drumree, Co Meath	the development consists of land recovery operation (being) reclamation of agricultural land and all associated site works comprising of the importation of natural materials of clay, silt, sand, gravel or stone and which comes within the meaning of inert waste, through deposition for the purposes of the improvement or development of land Class 5 of the waste management (Facility Permit and Registration) Regulations 2007-2008. A 5 year planning permission is requested and during the duration of this period 62,490 tons of inert soil and stone will be imported for the purpose of land reclamation. Entrance to the site will be via the existing farm road on adjoining site the subject of current Planning RA/170057 and WFP-MH17/0006/01	16/12/2022	c.2.4km northeast
Meath CC	221194	Teagasc Grange Research Facility, Derrypatrick Grange, Dunsany, Co. Meath C15 PW93	development will consist of the proposed green energy initiative development consisting of the alterations to an existing building unit consisting of the installation of Photovoltaic Panels on the existing roof structure, together with all associated site works	07/12/2022	c.3.5km north
Meath CC	22837	Creemore & Belshamstown, Batterstown, Co. Meath	the proposed development constitutes a new battery energy storage facility & synchronous condenser, with associated change of use on lands currently in agricultural use. The proposed development will comprise of rechargeable battery units with grid forming inverters contained within 253 no. 40 foot containers on site. (An associated Strategic Infrastructure Development planning application will be made to An Bord Pleanala in relation to a 220 kV Gas Insulated Substation and associated development on the adjoining lands to the east of the proposed development site, located at Creemore & Woodland, in Co. Meath, in accordance with Section 182A of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended). In addition, the proposed development includes a synchronous condenser within a c.983 sqm building (ranging in height from c. 11 to 13 m), with associated compound & plant; oil separator & collection pit; transformers; circuit breakers; underground cabling ducts & cable. The proposed development includes underground cable which will connect the new battery energy storage facility to the adjoining proposed 220 kV Gas Insulated Substation (the subject of the associated Strategic Infrastructure Development planning application as reference above). The proposed development will also include a battery storage control building (c. 400 sqm, 6.86 m in height); security gates & boundary treatments; hard & soft landscaping; well; bollards; plant & water storage tank; wastewater treatment system; SuDs; attenuation pond; installation of earthen berms; piped infrastructure & ducting; culverts; street lighting; lighting masts & CCTV columns; car parking; stoned access roads & the upgrading of the existing vehicular access to the R154; changes in level & all associated site development & excavation works above & below ground. Planning Permission is sought for a period of 10 years. Significant further information/revised plans submitted on this application	07/12/2022	c.4.6km southeast

Planning Authority	Reference	Address	Proposed Development	Grant / Due Date	Distance from Subject Site
Meath CC	22629	Shanks Mare Public House, Collegeland and Arodstown, Summerhill, Co. Meath	the development consists of the erection of four 51.5 sqm. detached pods, each of which would be 3 metres tall and which would provide two bedrooms and a combined kitchen/ dining area, as well as bathroom accommodation, along with the use of these four structures for tourist accommodation purposes; The retention of an existing 54 sqm. timber log cabin which already occupies the site (whose removal is required under condition no. 4 of permission reg. RA/191557) and the use of this two-bedroom plus living area building for short-term residential occupation. The proposal also includes the decommissioning of a septic tank (which was permitted under reg. RA191557), the provision of a new soakaway, the installation of a mechanical aeration sewage treatment system and the construction of a 300 sqm. soil polishing filter, the closure of an existing entrance and upgrade works to an existing access which serves the adjacent Shanks Mare development and its use in connection with this proposal, a new turning circle for fire services and an extra parking area accommodating 11 new bays, which are in addition to the 21 spaces on the subject land. The application includes all site works, such as the removal of an existing stone wall, the raising of the land at Gate 1 by 300mm, the creation of a gravel surface, the provision of a wheelie-bin store and the removal of a gas tank. This development will be held in common ownership with the Shanks Mare development and will not be sold or leased separately. Included in this are all associated site works and services. Significant further information/revised plans submitted on this application	17/11/2022	c.2.9km northwest
An Bord Pleanála	ABP-314071-22	Boycetown, Dunsany, Co. Meath	Importation of materials for land reclamation and all associated site works. NIS and EIAR are included	15/11/2022	c.4.5km north
An Bord Pleanála	ABP-314058-22	On lands including Culmullin, Woodtown, Arodstown & Summerhill, Co Meath	Solar PV energy development and associated site works. NIS submitted to Planning Authority.	14/11/2022	c.800m southwest
Meath CC	22497	Knockmark, Drumree, Co Meath	The erection of a new dwelling and garage with associated site works	08/09/2022	c.3.7km northeast
Meath CC	22425	Derrypatrick , Drumree, Co. Meath	the development will consist of the following: (a) Construction of a new access road from existing farmyard to new farmyard (b) Construction of a new milking parlour, dairy, external milk silo & ancillary rooms, drafting & handling facilities, waiting yard, meal bin, water storage tank & underground slatted reception tank adjacent to existing circular overground slurry storage tank (c) Construction of agricultural livestock shed comprising of calving area, cubicles and underground slatted slurry reception tanks (d) Construction of calf rearing shed (e) Construction of 2 no. silage pits, maize pit & dungstead and all associated site works	15/07/2022	c.2.2km northwest
Meath CC	22425	Derrypatrick , Drumree, Co. Meath	The development will consist of the following: (a) Construction of a new access road from existing farmyard to new farmyard (b) Construction of a new milking parlour, dairy, external milk silo & ancillary rooms, drafting & handling facilities, waiting yard, meal bin, water storage tank & underground slatted reception tank adjacent to existing circular overground slurry storage tank (c) Construction of agricultural livestock shed comprising	15/07/2022	c.1.8km northeast

Planning Authority	Reference	Address	Proposed Development	Grant / Due Date	Distance from Subject Site
			of calving area, cubicles and underground slatted slurry reception tanks (d) Construction of calf rearing shed (e) Construction of 2 no. silage pits, maize pit & dungstead and all associated site works		
Meath CC	22338	Plot 13, Loughmore Walk, Killeen Castle Demesne, Dunsany, Co. Meath	alterations and extension to previously approved two storey detached dwelling and detached garage and associated site development/landscaping works, with a site area of 0.29 Ha, being part of a previously permitted residential development of 22 houses at Loughmore Walk/The Burrows, (Reg. Ref.: RA/191174). The alterations will consist of A) omission of bay windows in living room (west elevation) and drawing room (south elevation) resulting in a reduction in floor area of 7.57sq/m, B) length of ground floor study and first floor bedroom 5 increased by 1.8 m at front (east elevation) resulting in additional floor area of 18 sq/m, C) increase in width and depth of detached garage (additional floor area of 8.7 sq/m) with covered area to rear (west) of garage and covered link between house and garage, D) additional windows and door on side (north) elevation, E) increase in width of bedroom no. 5 window at front (east) elevation and F) increase in height of window of bedroom no. 5 window at front (east) elevation and F) increase in height of window of bedroom 2 at rear (west) elevation. The vehicular access is as previously permitted via the existing internal roads and entrances to Killeen Castle Demesne. All within the overall site of approx. 255Ha (a Protected Structure)	23/06/2022	c.5km northeast
Meath CC	212179	Boycetown, Dunsany, Co. Meath	The development will consist of the importation of natural materials of topsoil, soil or stone for the purposes of land reclamation for a beneficial agricultural afteruse (5.6 hectares), temporary Wheel Wash, Weighbridge, Office, access track, landscaping and all ancillary site development infrastructure. The project provides for the importation of topsoil, soil and stone to provide an access track and final landscaping under Article 27 as defined by the EPA for land reclamation and reinstatement purposes. The application is accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), Natura Impact Statement (NIS) and associated documents. The application relates to a reclamation development for the purpose of an activity requiring a Waste Permit to be issued by the Meath County Council. Significant further information/revised plans submitted on this application	17/06/2022	c.4.5km north
Meath CC	212214	On lands including Culmullin, Woodtown, Arodstown & Summerhill, Co Meath	For a solar PV Energy Development with a total site area of 206ha, to include solar panels mounted on steel support structures, associated cabling and ducting, 54 No. MV Power Stations, 2 No. Client Substations, 4 No. Temporary Construction Compounds, access tracks, boundary security fencing and security gates, CCTV, landscaping and ancillary works, accessed via two existing accesses along the L62051. The application is accompanied by a Natura Impact Statement (NIS).	15/06/2022	c. 800m southwest
An Bord Pleanála	ABP-311760-21	Clonmeath, Summerhill, Co Meath.	Solar PV development. NIS lodged at application stage.	24/05/2022	c.4.80km west
Meath CC	2250	Killeen Castle Demesne, Dunsany, Co Meath	alterations to 13 no. 2 storey detached house types (permitted Plot Nos. 62-74) and development for associated site development and landscape works of a previously permitted residential scheme under Reg Ref DA/802274 (as extended by Reg Ref RA/180960) comprising overall of 135 no. dwellings (comprising 83 no. detached dwellings, 49 no. courtyard house and 3 no. gate lodges). The development now proposed comprises alterations to 13 no. of the already permitted detached houses now	29/04/2022	c.5km northeast

Planning Authority	Reference	Address	Proposed Development	Grant / Due Date	Distance from Subject Site
			proposed to comprise of 2 no. 4 bedroom 2 storey detached dwellings (House Type D) each with a detached single storey garage (c. 34sqm each) and on individual plots of between c0.24-c.0.25ha, 2 no. 4 bedroom 2 storey detached dwellings (House Type DC), each with an attached single storey garage/study (c.34sqm each) and on individual plots of between c 0.27-c 0.29ha, 6 no. 5 bedroom 2 storey detached dwellings (House Types A & C) each with a detached single storey garage(c 34sqm each) and on individual plots of between c 0.26-c.0.32ha, 3 no. 5 bedroom 2 storey detached dwellings (House Types AC & CC), each with an attached single storey garage/study (c 34sqm each) and on individual plots of between c 0.27-c. 0.35ha. Each unit is served by 2 no. carparking spaces (26 no. in total) and associated site development and landscape works to include; boundary treatments and adjustments to permitted plot boundaries at two no. house plots (permitted House Plot Nos. 62 and 74). The vehicular access is as otherwise permitted via the existing internal road network and entrances to Killeen Castle Demesne. All on a site of approximately c 3.63ha within the overall approx. 255ha Killeen Castle Demesne (a protected structure), Dunsany, Co Meath		
Meath CC	22264	Drumree, Co Meath	To construct a single storey dwelling house, detached garage, new wastewater treatment system and percolation area, new well, new entrance from public road and all associated site development works	21/04/2022	c.4.7km east
Meath CC	212144	Pelletstown, Drumree, Co Meath	A single storey detached dwelling and domestic garage, new domestic entrance onto public road, septic tank and percolation area, landscaping and all associated works	13/04/2022	c.5km northeast
Meath CC	212208	Knockmark, Drumree, Co. Meath	The development will consist of a) Demolition of existing agricultural sheds, b) Construction of a new farmyard entrance in place of existing roadside entrance, c) Construction of a stable & straw storage shed, d) Construction of a dungstead e) Construction of a machinery shed, f) Erection of a meal bin, g) Construction of a livestock shed & handling area with underground slatted slurry storage tanks and all associated site works	11/04/2022	c.4.4km east
Meath CC	22198	Branganstown, Kiltale, Co Meath	EXTENSION OF DURATION OF PLANNING PERMISSION REF TA/161305 - construction of 3 no. dormer/storey and a half style agri-tourism accommodation dwellings, accessed via existing private laneway, install proprietary waste water treatment systems and percolation areas and all associated site works. Significant further information/revised plans submitted on this application	11/04/2022	c.4.8km north
Meath CC	211844	Newtownrathganley, Kilcock, Co. Meath.	Construction of A) 2 no. new pig houses B) extension to 3 no. existing pig houses and C) 4 no. ancillary overground /underground storage tanks together with all ancillary structures and associated site works (to include an upgrading of the existing site entrance, the provision of an on-site wastewater treatment system and percolation area, and an on-site storm water attenuation swale), arising from the above development. The proposed works are to be completed in preference to, or in lieu of, any outstanding developments previously approved under planning ref DA101175, but not constructed to provide for and ensure higher environmental standards in line with BAT requirements, and improved animal welfare standards). The application relates to a development which is for the purposes of an activity requiring a Licence underpart IV of the Environmental Protection Agency (Licensing) Regulations 1994-2013. An Environmental Impact	05/04/2022	c. 5.0km southwest

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			Statement Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (N.I.S) is submitted with this application.		
Meath CC	212117	Teagasc Grange Research Facilities , Grange, Dunsany, Co. Meath	The demolition of existing agricultural structures and construction of three new agricultural buildings consisting of a new slatted floor cattle feeding house, a new calf rearing unit and a new agricultural services store coupled with all associated site works	17/02/2022	c.3.1km north
Meath CC	212004	Tullaghmedan, Drumree, Dunsany, Co Meath	The removal of an existing telecommunications pole attached to a farm shed with a total height of 12 metres above ground level together with telecommunications equipment on it and replacement with a new 17.5 metres telecommunications structure carrying antennas, dishes, associated equipment, together with ground-based equipment cabinets, fencing and all associated site development works for wireless data and broadband services	31/01/2022	c.2.5km north
Meath CC	211982	Knockstown, Moynalvy, Summerhill, Co. Meath	A new two-storey detached dwelling and associated landscaping and site works including a new waste waterwastewater treatment system and percolation area and upgrading the existing site entrance onto the public road.	21/01/2022	c.3.2km southwest
Meath CC	21985	On lands including Derryclare, Clonemeath, Ballygortagh and Moynalvy, Summerhill, Co. Meath	A Solar PV Energy Development with a total site area of 108.68ha, to include solar panels mounted on steel support structures, associated cabling and ducting, 27 no. MV Power Stations, 3 No. Client Substations, 3 No. temporary construction compounds, access tracks, boundary security fencing and security gates, CCTV, landscaping and ancillary works.	17/01/2022	c.5.0km west
Meath CC	211424	Clonmeath, Summerhill, Co. Meath	The development will consist of two storey dwelling, detached domestic garage, entrance and driveway. The development also includes the installation of new proprietary wastewater treatment system and polishing filter together with all associated site works.	16/12/2021	c.4.0km west
Meath CC	211220	Clonmeath, Summerhill, Co. Meath	Two storey dwelling, detached domestic garage, entrance and driveway. The development also includes the installation of new proprietary wastewater treatment system and polishing filter together with all associated site works.	11/11/2021	c.4.0km west
Meath CC	21546	Clonmeath, Summerhill, Co Meath	Permission for Solar Photovoltaic (PV) development within the townland of Clonmeath, Summerhill, Co Meath. Planning permission is sought for the construction and operation of a solar PV farm consisting of solar arrays on ground mounted steel frames, with a maximum overall height of 3 metres, over an area of 91.9 ha and ancillary equipment including up to 30 no. medium voltage power stations, 1 no. modular Battery Energy Storage Compound (comprising up to 5 no. battery containers) and all other associated site development works and services, including, internal solar PV farm, underground electrical cabling and ducting, 2 no. temporary construction compounds, security fencing, CCTV camera stands, replacement of an existing site entrance with a new gated site entrance via the L2210 local road, provision of new internal access tracks including the upgrading and installation of span bridge structures, site drainage and landscaping, as required to facilitate the development. Planning permission is sought for a period of 10 years with an operational life of 35 years from the date of commissioning. The application	29/09/2021	c.4.80km west

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			is accompanied by a Natura Impact Statement (NIS). Significant Further information/Revised plans submitted on this application.		
Meath CC	RA201932	Leonardstown, Drumree, Co. Meath	Development will consist of a new two-storey detached dwelling house, a single-storey detached garage, proprietary wastewater treatment system and percolation area and all associated siteworks to include a new vehicular access from public road. Significant Further information /Revised plans submitted on this application.	05/07/2021	c.4.0km northeast
Meath CC	21141	Ballygortagh, Summerhill, Co. Meath	Storey and a half type dwelling house, detached garage, new wastewater treatment system and percolation area to proposed site, removal of existing septic tank and percolation area on site and to relocate adjoining dwelling house located to the west and all associated site development works. Significant further information/revised plans submitted on this application.	24/06/2021	c.4.0km southwest
Meath CC	RA201202	Kiltale Group Water Scheme , Pumping Station, Kiltale, Dunsany, Co. Meath C15 T923	The relocation of the existing entrance to the north eastern boundary of the site grounds. The development will include the construction of an in-situ concrete retaining wall along the site road boundary with palisade fence on top of the boundary wall with a land drain to its base with a petrol interceptor connected. Significant further information/revised plans submitted on this application.	14/04/2021	c.4.0km north
An Bord Pleanála	PL17.3080 34	Knockmark, Drumree, Co. Meath	Importation of uncontaminated soil and stones for the improvement of lands for agricultural purposes	02/03/2021	c.4.5km northeast
Meath CC	RA200607	Curraghtown, Drumree, Co. Meath	The development will consist of: 1. New dwelling and detached garage. 2. New domestic entrance. 3. Oakstown Wastewater Treatment system with Percolation area. 4. Landscaping & all associated site works.	17/12/2020	c.2.0km east
Meath CC	RA191754	Rathkilmore, Kilcock, Co. Meath	A new two storey dwelling with single storey living and lounge area to the west, associated domestic garage, open new vehicular entrance to site, new secondary wastewater treatment unit and polishing filter together with all associated site development works. Significant further information/revised plans submitted on this application.	27/11/2020	c.3.5km south
Meath CC	RA200497	Rathkilmore, Kilcock, Co Meath	A single storey dwelling & domestic garage. Permission is sought to upgrade existing agricultural entrance to facilitate shared domestic entrance and for the installation of a packaged wastewater treatment system and polishing filter and all associated site works.	24/11/2020	c.3.5km south
Meath CC	RA191502	Knockmark, Drumree, Co. Meath	The development will consist of the importation of uncontaminated soil and stones for the improvement of ground levels in rear garden to existing dwelling, in order to carry out landscaping works, gardens & lawns. Subsequent to planning a Certificate of Registration will be sought from Meath County Council Environment/Waste Section for the duration of the infilling process. Significant further information/revised plans submitted on this application.	24/09/2020	c.4.5km northeast
Meath CC	RA191557	Shanks Mare Public House,, Collegeland & Arodstown,, Summerhill, Co. Meath	The development consists of retention of the partly-complete works for the conversion of the upper ground level of "Shanks Mare" Public house from a public house to four apartments for tourist accommodation (rental) purposes (291.46 sq.m.). Retention permission is also being sought for a covered patio (17.52 sq.m.) which has been	14/09/2020	c.2.80km west

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			constructed to the west of the existing building, along with elevational changes to this structure, which was permitted under permission Reg. No. 71/598. The application also includes future works for the completion of the conversion of the upper ground floor of Shanks Mare to living accommodation, comprising of two number two-bedroom apartments and two number one-bedroom apartments, along with the use of these units for tourist rental purposes. These works shall include the provision of private deck areas to the rear (north-facing) elevation of these dwellings and associated elevational changes. Permission is sought for the change of use of store area (63.54m ²) to a function room at lower ground floor level. Under this arrangement the lower ground floor and the uppermost levels within this building will remain in use for public house and residential purposes, respectively. Permission is sought to remove three unauthorised features which occupy the site comprising a perimeter fence, a log cabin and existing signage. Permission is also sought for a new proprietary effluent treatment system and polishing filter to replace the existing septic tank (to be decommissioned) and the closure of an existing entrance and upgrade works to an existing access, together with all associated site works. Significant further information/revised plan submitted on this application.		
An Bord Pleanála	ABP-307458-20	Shanks Mare Public House,, Collegeland & Arodstown,, Summerhill, Co. Meath.	Retention of the partly-complete works for the conversion of the upper ground level of "Shanks Mare" Public house from a public house to four apartments for tourist accommodation (rental) purposes.	28/08/2020	c.2.80km west
An Bord Pleanála	PL17.3070 21	Roestown, Readsland & Knocks, Dunshaughlin, Co. Meath	Amendments to a permitted residential scheme (Reg. Ref. DA120987, An Bord Pleanala Reg. Ref. PL17.241988), overall comprising of a 142 residential scheme, a creche and associated site services.	27/07/2020	c.5km east
Meath CC	RA200003	Arodstown , Summerhill, Co. Meath	A two-storey dwelling house, domestic garage, creation of new entrance, private well, domestic wastewater treatment plant and all ancillary site works.	03/04/2020	c.1.7km northwest
An Bord Pleanála	PL17.3052 08	Larchill Stud, Newtownrathganley & Phepotstown, Kilcock, Co. Meath	New entrance and access road from the L6215 and associated upgrade works of the L6215 from the proposed new entrance to the junction with the R125.an activity requiring an Industrial Pollution Prevention and Control Licence (Now replaced by an Industrial Emissions Licence).	20/12/2019	c.5km south
Meath CC	RA180853	Curraghdoo, Summerhill , Enfield, Co. Meath	A two-storey dwelling with detached domestic garage, a domestic effluent treatment system, a well, new site entrance and all associated site works.	17/04/2019	c.4.0km west
Meath CC	RA181075	Bogganstown , Drumree , Co. Meath	Single storey replacement dwelling with detached domestic garage, a domestic effluent treatment system, new site entrance and all associated site works. The existing single storey dwelling is to be used as a farm office.	07/02/2019	c.3.0km southeast
Meath CC	RA180994	Glen Road,, Moynalvy , Kilcock, Co. Meath	A two-storey dwelling, detached domestic garage, wastewater disposal system, domestic site entrance and all associated site works.	05/12/2018	c.2.0km southwest
Meath CC	RA180692	Merrywell, Drumree, Co. Meath	Construction of a two-storey dwelling with domestic garage, proprietary wastewater treatment system, percolation area, new entrance off public road and all associated site works.	15/11/2018	c.4.0km southeast

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Meath CC	TA180245	Martinstown, Kiltale, Co. Meath	Single storey dwelling incorporating domestic garage to rear, upgrade of existing entrance to form new shared dual entrance, driveway, connection to main water and sewerage together with all associated site works.	01/11/2018	c.4.0km northwest
Meath CC	RA170766	Knockstown & Clarkstown, Summerhill, Co. Meath	The development will consist of the following: Photovoltaic solar farm on a site of 23.6 hectares (58 acres) with an export capacity of approximately 8MW, comprising photovoltaic panels on ground mounted frames; 4 no. inverter stations; 1 no. interface substation; ducting and underground electrical cabling; perimeter fencing; pole mounted CCTV cameras; screen planting/landscaping; closing up of existing vehicular entrance and creation of a new vehicular entrance on the local road (L6215); new internal access track from the new vehicular entrance to connect with existing internal farm tracks, and all ancillary works necessary to facilitate the development. Significant further information/revised plans submitted on this application.	01/06/2018	c. 4.70km southwest

