

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	PROJECT DOLMEN SOLAR PV
Project Number:	2024-0743
Country:	Ireland
Project Description:	The Project consists of the construction and operation of a portfolio of four solar power plants in Ireland, totalling ca. 395 MWp and its ancillary facilities, such as the grid interconnection lines and substations (the "Project").

E&S Risk Categorisation:	Medium risk
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	Yes

Environmental and Social Assessment

The Project is likely to have limited adverse environmental, climate and/or social impacts and risks that might be addressed through the application of mitigation measures for which the competent authorities in the host country have determined that the preparation of an EIA report is not required.

Environmental Assessment

The Project consists of the construction and operation of a portfolio of four solar power plants, totalling 395MWp, and their ancillary facilities, i.e. interconnection lines and substations.

PROJECT	MWp	Location	Interconnection
Manusmore	99.5	Ballyvonnavaum, Coolshamroge, Cloonmore, Deerparkvand Manusmore, Ennis, Co. Clare	New build substation 33/110 kV. Underground in 110kV (0.3km) to an existing line Drumline – Ennis 110 kV
Ballinacloogh	15.5	Ballinacloogh, 4km of Wicklow Town, Co Wicklow	Between 5.6km and 3.3km underground connection in 10kV
Tullabeg 2	181.6	Tullabeg (3km of Camaleen, 1km of Ballycanew) Co. Wexford	New build substation 33/110 kV and 110kV under the fence line to existing adjacent substation Tullabeg I at the project site
Barnaleen Cauteen	98	7.7km north of Tipperary town, Co. Tipperary	New build substation 33/110 kV and 0.15km in 110kV underground line to existing Cauteen substation

¹ Only projects that meet the scope of the Carbon Footprint Exercise, as defined in the EIB Carbon Footprint Methodologies, are included, provided estimated emissions exceed the methodology thresholds: 20 000 tonnes CO2e/year absolute (gross) or 20 000 tonnes CO2e/year relative (net) – both increases and savings.

Due to their technical characteristics, the solar PV plants fall under the Annex II of the EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) Directive (Directive 2014/52/EU amending the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU), therefore leaving it to the competent authority to determine according to Annex III of the said Directive whether an EIA is required. Each PV plant of the Project (and associated infrastructure) has been subject to an EIA screening and the authorities concluded that the projects do not fall within the thresholds requiring an EIA, as per national law requirements. Therefore, the projects have been screened out.

The anticipated environmental impacts associated with the Project have been assessed in the context of the EIA screening process. Key impacts and corresponding mitigation strategies across all plants include:

- Visual and landscape impacts: potential effects such as glint and glare are systematically mitigated through the strategic use of screening vegetation and appropriate design.
- Construction phase disturbance: impacts including noise, dust, vibration, and increased traffic are addressed via robust construction management plans and standard traffic control measures.
- Ecological and biodiversity: potential impacts to hedgerows or habitats due to land occupation by the solar plants, mitigated with measures such as the retention or enhancement of hedgerows, habitat creation and the implementation of biodiversity action plans are employed to safeguard local ecosystems.
- Surface water management: risks related to water pollution and runoff are mitigated through engineered drainage systems and pollution prevention protocols.
- Archaeological heritage protection: groundworks are conducted under archaeological supervision.
- Decommissioning and site restoration: each plant is subject to a comprehensive decommissioning strategy, including full site restoration upon cessation of operations.

On top of the aforementioned identified impacts and mitigation, specific impacts and mitigation measures for each of the plants are listed below:

Ballinacloough Solar PV Plant

A mature treeline will be removed with potential impacts on landscape and habitats. Mitigation measures include habitat replacement, installation of gates within perimeter fencing to facilitate mammal movement and the provision of bat boxes to support roosting.

Manusmore Solar PV Plant

The main potential environmental impacts include alterations on landscape, ecological effects in water, hydrology and habitats, as well as traffic disturbances, flood risks impacts, glint and glare, physical impact to archeological elements and noise, among others. Mitigation measures for the most relevant impacts include pre-construction breeding bird surveys and protective measures for overwintering bird species. Construction-related impacts such as noise, dust, and vibration are subject to continuous monitoring. Water pollution mitigation includes defined buffer zones and secure oil storage protocols. All external lighting installations must comply with the guidelines set forth by Bat Conservation Ireland.

Tullabeg II Solar PV Plant

At Tullabeg II, the main potential impacts include alterations on landscape, glint and glare, disturbances on traffic, physical impact to archeological and heritage elements, effects in water, and ecology. Ecological mitigation involves the retention of existing hedgerows and supplementary planting. Security fencing is designed to include gates or underpasses to facilitate wildlife movement. Visual impacts are reduced through the use of dark-coloured equipment, underground cable routing and strategic placement of CCTV cameras away from residential properties. Excavated material must be managed in accordance with the construction management plan, which also outlines protective measures for roads, culverts, watercourses, verges and public land.

Following the screening process, each project was required to submit a Natura Impact Statement (NIS). The relevant NISs were submitted and in all cases, it was concluded that, with the implementation of the relevant mitigation measures, no significant effects are anticipated on any Natura 2000 designated sites within the respective zones of influence. Below is a summary of the minimum distance of Natura 2000 within the zone of influence of the PV plants.

	Minimum distance to Natura 2000 closest area	Protected area
Manusmore	0.3km	IE0004077 (River Shannon&River Fergus Estuaries SPA)
Ballinaclough	3.4km from the plant 1.2km from the interconn. line	IE0000717 (Deputy's Pass Nature Reserve SAC)
Tullabeg 2	1.9 km	IE0000781 (Slaney River Valley SAC)
Barnaleen Cauteen	2.75 km from (1) 4.10 km from (2) 5.70 km from (3)	1. IE0001847 (Philipston Marsh SAC) 2. E0002137 (Lower River Suir SAC) 3. IE0002165 (Lower River Shannon SAC)

Subject to the implementation of the aforementioned specific measures, the permits concluded that the projects will not have adverse impact on the environment.

Climate Assessment

Climate change mitigation

The Project substantially contributes to the climate change mitigation and pollution prevention objectives.

Paris Alignment of projects

The Project has been assessed for Paris alignment and is considered to be aligned with low carbon and resilience goals set out in the Climate Bank Roadmap and the Bank's Energy Lending Policy.

Climate change adaptation

Residual risks from physical climate hazards are deemed low.

Paris Alignment for Counterparties

The Borrower (Special Purpose Vehicle) is fully owned by Power Capital Renewable Energy Ltd., therefore in scope of the PATH framework. The PATH assessment has been performed at the level of the single shareholder. Being the Promoter a renewable energy producer, not operating in high emitting sectors or activities, it is screened-out of PATH. Therefore, no further actions are required.

EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise

Estimated annual emissions related to the project:

- 0 ktonnes of CO2 equivalent per year for absolute emissions.
- -114 ktonnes of CO2 equivalent per year for relative emissions.

Calculated in accordance with the Bank's current "Carbon Footprint Methodology", based on the avoidance of electricity generation from a combination of existing and new power plants in Ireland (combined margin for intermittent generation).

For the annual accounting purposes of the EIB Carbon Footprint, the Project emissions will be prorated according to the EIB lending amount signed in that year, as a proportion of Project cost.

Social Assessment

All of the land plots required for the Project are private and have been already secured via bilateral agreements, including those for the evacuation lines.

Public reports are pointing out the possibility of use of forced labour in the supply chain of solar PV panels. The Promoter has its own set of policies, including a Business Partner Code. Amongst other measures, all major construction and supply contracts contain comprehensive provisions against modern slavery.

The Promoter shall make reasonable efforts to assess and address the labour risks associated with the solar PV panels used in the Project, including throughout the supply chain, as required by the EIB E&S Standards.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

The project's information disclosure has taken place in line with the requirements of the environmental permitting process in the country.

The Promoter has in place a mechanism to contribute to a community benefit fund, supporting the long term local needs that enhance well-being, create educational opportunities and improve social and environmental outcomes.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The Promoter is deemed to have sufficient E&S (Environmental and Social) capacity to implement the Project in line with EIB's requirements.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Environmental and Social Conditions

The Project shall comply with the relevant provisions of the Bank's labour standard, which foresees zero tolerance for the use of forced labour. The Promoter will be required to make reasonable efforts to carry out appropriate due diligence throughout its supply chains, with the aim of preventing the use of forced labour in the supply chains of the solar panels that will be used for this project. The outcome will be reported to and reviewed by the Bank.

The Promoter shall store and keep up to date all documents relevant for the Project supporting the compliance with the provisions of EU environmental legislation, permits and environmental approvals, and shall promptly upon request deliver such documents to the EIB.

Based on the information available and with appropriate conditions and monitoring, the Project is acceptable for EIB financing in environmental and social terms.