



EIA Screening Statement – Killymallaght BESS

The proposal is for the installation of up to 50MW battery energy storage system (BESS) on lands north-west of Trench Rd, Londonderry and approximately 500m north-west of Killymallaght Substation. The proposed development comprises of the installation of an energy storage system, including battery enclosures, power conversion units, transformers, substation buildings, grid connection infrastructure, vehicular access and associated works.

It is noted that that Battery Energy Storage development is not specifically mentioned within the Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017, it is considered that regulations have a broad scope. It is noted however that 10(a) of the regulations is relevant.

Upon review of the regulations, as noted above, the proposed development does not fall within Schedule I of the Regulations. However, it does fall within Schedule II of the regulations, under;

10 (a) Industrial estate development projects – in that the development exceeds 0.5 hectares in area.

The proposed development has been assessed under Selection criteria referred to in Article 4.3 of the Directive of Schedule 3 as per below;

1. Characteristics of development.

The characteristics of development must be considered having regard, in particular,

to: -

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| a the size of the development; | The site area does not exceed 3.88ha wherein the BESS compound equates to less than 1ha, with the remainder of the site being landscaping, access tracks or attenuation ponds. It is thought that the impacts will only be experienced in the immediate vicinity, with impacts diminishing the further you get from the development. It is thought that the size and scale of the development will not have significant detrimental impact on the environment. A Drainage Assessment |
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has been provided and the mitigation contained within it is done to an acceptable levels. The site is an agricultural field with low biodiversity value, the development intends to enhance the biodiversity through additional landscaping and the introduction of the pond.

- b the cumulation with other development;

The site is located as close to existing telecommunications infrastructure and is as close as possible Killymallaght substation as possible whilst avoiding flood constraints, noise constraints, protecting residential and visual amenity. A detailed LVIA concludes that overall, it is considered that the proposed development incorporates a robust landscape mitigation strategy that is included as an inherent part of the scheme. This will avoid or minimise potential adverse effects.
- c the use of natural resources;

The development has been designed to ensure that any use of natural resources will be used in a sustainable manner, where it will not put the environment or habitats at risk.
- d the production of waste;

No waste is expected to be produced on site during operation.
- e pollution and nuisances;

The proposal is sited and design such that noise nuisance is minimised for receptors (application includes a detailed acoustic impact report). Overall, the risk of pollution is thought to be low. Detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan and Drainage Assessment have been developed to ensure such.
- f the risk of accidents, having regard in particular to substances or technologies used.

During the preliminary design, efforts have been made to mitigate, minimise, and prevent any fire hazard on site by incorporating specific design factors as described in Fire Risk Statement. During detailed design and following battery product selection, a project specific fire risk appraisal will be used to verify the strategy presented in the Fire Risk Statement and an emergency response plan will be developed through liaison with the local fire service.

Key principles of the NFCC Grid Scale Battery Energy Storage System planning – Guidance for FRS, 2023 are addressed through the mitigations identified within the Fire Risk Statement. As such it is considered that risk to environment and human health is thought to be low.

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| g | The risks to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution). | Overall, the risk of pollution is thought to be low The Construction Environmental Management Plan, Fire Risk Statement and Drainage Assessment have been developed to ensure risks to human health (through pollution of otherwise) are minimised. |
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2. Location of development

The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by development must be considered, having regard, in particular, to: -

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| a) | the existing land use; | Agricultural field used for grazing with a low Bio-diversity value. |
| b) | the relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area; | It is thought natural resources will not be detrimentally impacted. With the intention is enhance the biodiversity of the site. |
| c) | the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:- | |
| | i.) wetlands; | The proposal is not located within and will not have a detrimental impact on the environment of this habitat; |
| | ii.) coastal zones; | The proposal is not located in and will not have a detrimental impact on the environment of this habitat; |

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| iii.) mountain and forest areas; | The proposal is not located within and will not have a detrimental impact on the environment of this habitat; |
| iv.) nature reserves and parks; | The proposal is not located within and will not have a detrimental impact on the environment of this habitat; |
| v.) areas classified or protected under EEA states' legislation; areas designated by EEA states pursuant to Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds (a) and Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (b); | The proposal is not located within and will not have a detrimental impact on the environment of this habitat; |
| vi.) areas in which the environmental quality standards laid down in Community legislation have already been exceeded; | The proposal is not located in such an area |
| vii.) densely populated areas; | Population within nearest settlements will not suffer significant environmental detriment by this proposal. |
| viii.) landscapes of historical, cultural or archaeological significance. | A detailed Heritage Statement accompanies application covering proposed site and adjoining field noted a low potential for the Site to contain unknown archaeological resources due to the lack of known heritage assets within the Site boundaries, and the lack of known heritage assets within the Site's vicinity. The impacts of the Site on known assets is considered 'No Change', with the potential for unknown heritage assets to be low.
The proposal is not located in such an area |

3. Characteristics of the potential impact

The potential significant effects of development must be considered in relation to criteria set out under paragraphs 1 and 2 above, and having regard in particular to: -

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| a) the extent of the impact (geographical area and size of the affected population); | The impact of this proposal will be limited to its immediate surrounds. The extent of the impact is thought not to be significant. |
| b) the nature of the impact; | The nature of the impact will be throughout certain times of the day during construction but will not be continuous. Within the construction period certain nuisances will be more prevalent, but thought not to be significant. A detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan accompanies application. |
| c) the transboundary nature of the impact; | It is not considered there will be any transboundary impacts for a project of this size and scale. |
| d) the intensity and complexity of the impact; | The proposal may be likely to have an environmental impact. However, this is not considered to be significant in terms of its range or complexity, therefore an Environmental Statement should not be required. An Ecological Impact Assessment -EclA accompanies application. |
| e) the probability of the impact; | <p>Overall, the proposal would result in a biodiversity enhancement. The habitat mosaic that will be created will offer a greater floral diversity and provide increased shelter and foraging opportunities for a range of fauna. Impacts from the construction or operational phases of the Scheme would not result in any of the following significant negative residual effects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Undermine the conservation objectives or condition of designated sites and their features of interest;• A change in ecosystem structure and function; and,• Threaten the conservation status of undesignated habitats or protected and notable species. <p>A detailed Ecological Impact Assessment -EclA accompanies application.</p> |

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| f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact; | As mentioned the proposal is likely to result in the biodiversity enhancement of the area. Screening bunds will be used for long term soil storage, which can be used for decommissioning of the system at a later date if required, returning the field to its current state.
Details of construction working hours and duration can be found in the Construction Environmental Management Plan which accompanies application. |
| g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved development; | Visually the proposal will be integrated into the existing setting. Cumulative impacts thought not to be significant. |
| h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact. | By following best practice during construction period will ensure the impact will not go beyond that above. In addition, mitigation measures will be put in place to aid in reducing impact. Details of all mitigation methods can be found in accompanying reports (all of which conclude impacts to be low: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LVIA• ElcA• Acoustic impact assessment• Heritage statement• Drainage management• Fire Risk Statement• Construction Environmental Management Plan• Transport statement• Bio-Diversity Checklist• Arboricultural Impact Assessment |

Through initial screening of the proposal and discussion with a number of consultants, the view is that the environmental impacts of the project are thought not to be so significant as to warrant an Environmental Statement under current EIA legislation. Cumulative impacts with other existing and Energy Storage developments in the area are thought not to be significant.