

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACTS 2000-2010

DECISION under SECTION 34 of the ACT of 2000

Reference Number: 26/61362

Date of Receipt of Application: 07/08/2026

Heron Solar Ltd.
C/O Maire McNamee
41 Baggot Street Lower
Dublin 2
Ireland
D02 NN67

I hereby give you NOTICE that the Galway County Council has by order dated 30th September 2026 decided to REFUSE PERMISSION

to the above named, for development of land, in accordance with documents lodged, namely A 10-year planning permission for the development of a solar farm on a site of 239 hectares consisting of the following: 1,031,319 sq. m. of solar photovoltaic panels on ground mounted steel frames; 32 no. MV stations on associated hardstanding; new internal access tracks; underground cabling and ducting including along public roads L7138, L7141, L3110, L7140, L31085, L3108, L7132, L7131, and L7129; new access points onto public roads L7138, L3110, L7141, L7129, L71383, and upgrades to existing access points are proposed on public roads L7141, L3110, L7140, L7132, L7129, and L71383; limited alterations to existing stone walls including the creation or widening of access openings and reinstatement works; security fencing; CCTV; drainage infrastructure; landscaping and biodiversity enhancement measures; Horizontal Directional Drilling beneath the disused railway line; temporary construction compounds; and all associated ancillary site development works. The proposed development will be operational for 40 years. This development is covered by the provisions of the Renewable Energy Directive III (Directive (EU) 2023/2413) and it is important to note that the planning application may be subject to section 34D of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. When a notice issues in accordance with section 34D(b), the provisions of article 26A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 to 2025 shall apply in the townland of Townlands of Lissaniska, Oakwood South, Cahernaglass, Ryehill Demesne, Carrowmore, Parkacurry, Killaclogher, Ballynaboorkagh, Cashlaundarragh, Corrafaireen, Shantallow, Carrowreagh East, Caherlissakill, and Laragh Beg

for the reasons set out in the Schedule hereto.

In deciding this Planning Application Galway County Council has, in accordance with section 34(3) of the Act, had regard to any submissions or observations received.

Main reasons and considerations on which the decision is based:-

The proposed development has been assessed, within the restrictions imposed by the principles of proper planning and sustainable development and having regard to the policy objectives of Galway County Council as set out in the 2022 – 2028 County Development Plan.

Based on this assessment it is considered that the proposed development would be contrary to the proper planning policies as set out in the County Development Plan.

Signed this 30th day of SEPTEMBER 2026 on behalf of Galway County Council

McKavanagh
pp COUNTY SECRETARY

**SEE ATTACHED SCHEDULE
(REASON(S) 11)**

Please see attached sheet for important Notice regarding Planning Appeals

SCHEDULE REFERRED TO - PLANNING REFERENCE NO. 26/61362

1. Having regard to the sensitive nature of the lands proposed to be developed within the 'Overall Project', the inconsistencies within the technical assessments submitted, the lack of robust technical justification for the development at this location zoned 'Less Likely Viable' in the Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategy (LARES), and overall uncertainty regarding the proposed future application for the grid connection and substation, the Planning Authority cannot confidently assess the viability and integrity of the proposed development in this context. The proposed works are considered premature without the assurance of the viability of the necessary grid connection infrastructure at this location. To permit the development in this context would be premature and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
2. On the basis of the submissions made in connection with the planning application, the Planning Authority is not satisfied that the application has been made by an applicant who has (i) sufficient legal estate or interest in the land the subject of the application to enable the applicant to continue the existing use of, or carry out the proposed works on, the land, or (ii) the approval of the person who has such sufficient legal estate or interest. The applicant has not clearly and efficiently demonstrated all appropriate legal consents, and the development is considered premature on this basis.
3. Based on the details received, the Planning Authority is not satisfied that adverse effects on the integrity of the Lough Corrib SAC [Site Code: 000297] in view of its conservation objectives cannot be excluded. Therefore, if permitted as proposed the development would materially contravene Policy Objective MEQ 2 Protection of the Environment, Policy Objective NHB 1 Natural Heritage and Biodiversity of Designated Sites, Habitats and Species, Policy Objective NHB 2 European Sites and Appropriate Assessment, Policy Objective WR 1 Water Resources, and DM Standard 50 Environmental Assessments of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028. Therefore, to permit the development as proposed, would contravene materially policy objectives and a development management standard contained in the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 and would therefore be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
4. Having regard to the deficiencies identified in the Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report submitted with the application, the inconsistencies within the technical assessments submitted, the lack of robust assessments of the impact of the overall development, and the likelihood of significant effects on the environment having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations, the Planning Authority is not satisfied that the proposed development would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment. In the absence of adequate information to carry out a robust Environmental Impact Assessment screening determination, the Planning Authority consider the proposed development would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
5. It is considered that proposed grid connection works will both directly and indirectly impact the public road carriageway and the scale of these units, combined with the associated infrastructure, would effectively sterilise the public roadway preventing Galway County Council from carrying out essential future works, restrict future new services, drainage upgrades, installation or extension of Group Water Scheme mains, and/or the provision or alteration of house service connections. The Planning Authority considers the proposed unacceptable and to permit the development as proposed, would therefore be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
6. Having regard to the subject site location within a flood zone, and the absence of detailed design requirements for PV panels within sensitive areas, the Planning Authority is not satisfied that the subject site is not at risk of flooding, cause or exacerbate such a risk at other locations or flooding in the future. Therefore, if permitted as proposed, the development would materially

contravene Policy Objectives FL 1, FL 2 and FL 18 of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 and the Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities and Best Practice Planning Guidance Report for Large Scale Solar Energy Development in Ireland (ISEA) and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

7. The Applicant has not referenced or submitted evidence of any consultation with the ESB/EirGrid regarding the proposal presented in this planning application in relation to the overhead lines traversing the subject site in accordance with the Guideline Clearances for Solar Farm to DSO Overhead Network. Having regard to the submitted Site Layout Plan, which does not accurately demonstrate every location of all overhead lines traversing the site or demonstrate the appropriate separation distances required from the proposed ground-mounted PV layout, if permitted as proposed, the development would represent a safety hazard and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
8. Having regard to the submission received from Uisce Eireann, the proposed development layout includes the potential to build over multiple existing public infrastructure assets and does not adhere to the separation distances as per Uisce Eireann's Standards Codes and Practices. Therefore, if permitted as proposed, the development would represent a health and safety hazard and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
9. Having regard to the proposed development access points, traffic and haulage routing being proposed onto/from public local road network where considerations of public road capacity, width, alignment, surface and structural condition/composition of this pavement, in conjunction with future maintenance requirements, would render the road network or any part of it, unsuitable to carry the additional HGV/ articulated rigids traffic likely to result from the proposed development(s). These matters, in conjunction with the suitability of the proposed external and internal traffic circulation regime and the potential for conflicting traffic movements to occur directly and indirectly to the local public road network due to restricted vehicle manoeuvrability within and adjoining the site which may negatively impact public road and vulnerable road users' safety. The Planning Authority considers that if permitted as proposed, the development would endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard, obstruction of road users or otherwise, contrary to CDP policy objectives NNR2, and DM Standards 28, and DM standard 33a of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028.
10. The Glint and Glare Assessment submitted is considered inefficient due to direct and indirect impacts have not been satisfactorily addressed with due consideration to the control of development potentially affecting National Roads, as outlined in the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012). Therefore, if permitted as proposed the development would endanger public safety by obstruction of road users or otherwise and would materially contravene DM Standard 70: Solar Energy of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
11. Having regard to the submission received from the DHLGH, the submitted Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Assessment is not in accordance with National Policy for protection of the archaeological resources and it is considered that the assessment process submitted is deficient and incomplete. Therefore, if permitted as proposed, the development would materially contravene DM Standard 61: Archaeological Conservation and Preservation of the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Footnote:

An appeal against a decision of a Planning Authority under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) may be made to An Coimisiún Pleanála, 64 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1, D01 V902. (Tel. (01) 8588100) during office hours.

1. You have four weeks beginning on the date the planning authority makes its decision. This is a strict time limit.
2. You must put your appeal in writing (either typed or handwritten).
3. You must clearly state your own name and address. If someone is acting for you, like a planning agent they must clearly state their own name and address as well as your name and address.
4. You must give enough details to allow An Coimisiún Pleanála to identify the application you wish to appeal.
5. You must provide your planning grounds of appeal (reasons and arguments) for your appeal and any items you wish to support your grounds of appeal.
6. If you are a third party, you must include the written acknowledgement given to you by the planning authority to confirm it received your submission at planning application stage.
7. You must pay the correct fee.

For more information on how to make an appeal see www.pleanala.ie