

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT SPECIAL MEETING OF LIMERICK CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL
HELD ONLINE, ON FRIDAY, 29TH MAY 2026 AT 10.00 A.M.**

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR:

Leas Phríomh Chomhairleoir, Councillor M. Collins

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mayor Moran

Councillors Butler, Carey, Collins (B), Conway, Daly, Foley, Galvin, Gavan, Hartigan (S), Hickey-O'Mara, Keary, Kiely, Kilcoyne, Leddin, McSweeney, O'Donoghue, O'Donovan, O'Sullivan (O), Pond, Ruddle, Ryan (E), Ryan (M), Scanlan, Secas, Slattery, Stokes, Talukder, Teefy, Ward.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Director General (Dr. P. Daly), Deputy Chief Executive and Director, Corporate Services, Human Resources and Organisational Development, (Mr. J. Delaney), Director, Finance, Investment and Governance (Mr. M. White), Director, Planning, Heritage and Ryder Cup, (Mr. S. Duclot), Director, Economic, Tourism, Culture, Property and Corporate Buildings (Mr. S. Lenihan), Director of Service, Transportation, Mobility and Public Realm, (Ms. P. Liddy), Meetings Administrator (Ms. C. Farrell), Senior Planner, Development Management (Ms. N. O'Connell), Senior Executive Planner, Development Management (Ms. G. O'Keeffe), Senior Engineer, Mid West Road Design, (Mr. T. Fitzgerald), A/Senior Executive Officer, (Ms. K. White), Staff Officer, Corporate and Customer Services, (Ms. L. Creamer), Assistant Staff Officer, Corporate and Customer Services, (Ms. S. Carroll), Executive Engineer, Central Services, Traffic and Roads, (Mr. T. Carmody), A/Senior Executive Engineer, Roads, Traffic and Cleansing (Mr. D. Corcoran), Administrative Officer, Development Management (Ms. M. O'Brien).

Strategic Infrastructure Development – Carrow Wind Farm. ACP 26-324164

The Members were advised that the Council was being asked to consider the Director General's Report under Section 37E of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) following on from the submission of a Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) to An Coimisiún Pleanála, known as Carrow Windfarm.

The Senior Executive Planner, with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, updated the Members on the Director General's Report. The Members thanked the Planning and Roads Departments for their work on this Strategic Infrastructure Development application.

The Elected Members expressed serious concerns regarding the grid connection route, highlighting the potential impact of this application on rural development and local infrastructure. They expressed the view that the scale of proposed development and impact of infrastructure warranted a wider Options Report highlighting that alternative options should be more thoroughly investigated.

Members expressed disappointment at the level of community engagement and consultation raising concerns about the lack of public awareness of the proposed development locally.

The Members made the following comments in relation to the proposed Strategic Infrastructure Development:

Route Selection and Options

- Members considered that there were deficiencies in the options report for route selection, and other options should be explored which could result in less environmental and social impacts.
- Members queried if a more cost-effective alternative to the proposed 37km route was examined.
- Members suggested the following options to reduce the impact on local and regional roads:
 - Examining the potential of using grass margins and hard shoulders to provide easy access to the proposed cable infrastructure for future developments. This could minimise traffic disruption during the construction phase of the project.
 - Connect to N24 at a different, earlier point in the road network.
 - Upgrade the Cauteen substation located at proximity to the proposed development in County Tipperary.
 - The National Roads Authority should be consulted regarding a more direct route.

Roads and Infrastructure

- Members expressed serious concerns regarding the ability of the Council to maintain roads and undertake general works, provide service connections or improvements to the road infrastructure.
- They noted that the situation is particularly acute in locations such as Cappamore and Doon Villages, where existing road corridors are already heavily serviced and significantly constrained.
- Members were concerned that the introduction of additional underground infrastructure is likely to result in service conflicts and repeat excavations, would increase disruption for residents and road users including local businesses and presents risks to road integrity and safety.
- Members discussed the consequent constraints on Uisce Éireann and local group water schemes in delivering critical services if the development went ahead.

Future Planning and Rural Development

Members were concerned that the proposal conflicted with local and regional development objectives to achieve sustainable population growth and balanced regional development. They examined the potential impacts on future generations in the area and discussed the following issues:

- The development would effectively sterilise sections of the road network which could directly impact rural development especially in towns and villages, planning for one-off housing, agricultural development and connections and infrastructure upgrades.
- The development could limit future opportunities in these areas and undermine efforts to grow rural communities and that the proposal risked placing a long-term constraint on the very communities that require support to remain viable and to grow.

Community Benefit Scheme

Members considered that, if permission was granted by An Coimisiún Pleanála, a Community Benefit Scheme should be required to ensure the community receives long-term social and economic benefits alongside the delivery of national renewable energy targets. It was suggested that any scheme should include the following:

- Local employment and training opportunities.
- Binding commitments regarding road maintenance and infrastructure along the route and its vicinity.
- Environmental and biodiversity enhancement measures along the route and its vicinity.
- Ongoing community engagement throughout the project lifecycle.

General

- The Members considered that insufficient information was submitted to allow for proper assessment of the impacts on the local and regional road network. They highlighted the lack of detailed site-specific design which demonstrated how the proposed cabling and associated infrastructure could be safely accommodated within the existing constrained road corridors.
- The Members were concerned that the impacts on rural populations and communities in future planning had not been adequately addressed.
- The Members emphasised the lack of engagement with local communities throughout the application process.

In reply to Members' queries, the Senior Planner noted the Members' comments and confirmed that written submissions would be included with the Director General's Report as an addendum.

On the proposal of Councillor Ryan (M), seconded by Councillor Teefy, it was agreed that the Members did not support the Strategic Infrastructure Development proposal as presented and that the views and observations made by the Elected Members be submitted to An Coimisiún Pleanála.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed:

Leas Phríomh Chomhairleoir

Date:
