



Energy for generations



MIDDLETON HOUSE SOLAR FARM

Issue 2 – September / October 2024

Middleton House Solar Farm Newsletter

Middleton House Solar Farm is a new renewable energy project located to the west of Killashee, Co. Longford. It is being developed by ESB Solar Ireland. See www.middletonhousesolarfarm.ie for full details on this project.

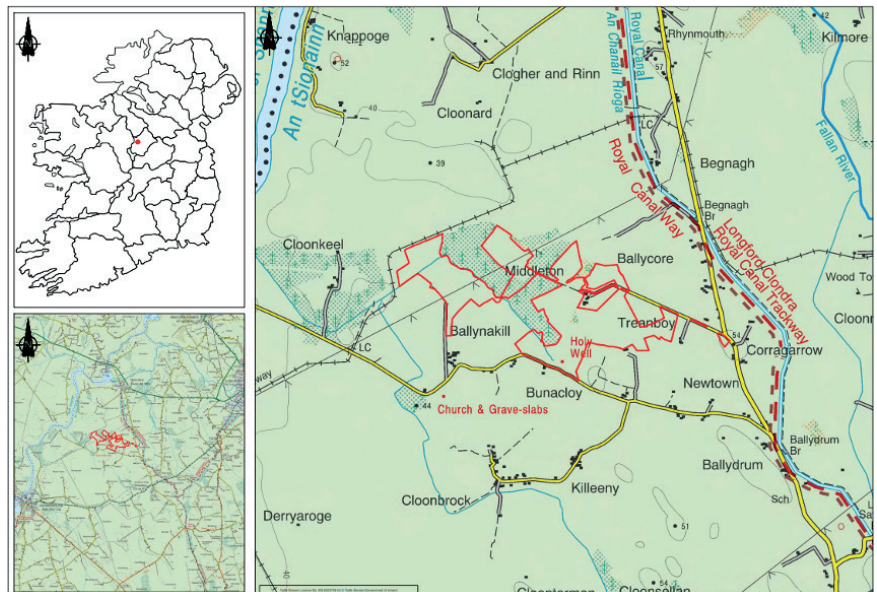
The project has received full planning permission to generate 56.6 MW (megawatts) of clean electricity that will have enough capacity to power over 15,000 homes.

As part of this project, we are committed to engaging closely with the local communities surrounding the site to ensure the successful delivery of Middleton House Solar Farm by 2025.

Three separate planning applications were granted for the project by Longford County Council for the original Solar Farm project in 2018 (reference PL-18/135). A subsequent extension to the site footprint in 2021 (reference PL-21/225) with the grid route and transformer compound in May 2023 (reference PL-22/275).

The project successfully secured a capacity contract in the RESS 2 (Renewable Electricity Support Scheme) auction in June 2022.

Middleton House Solar Farm will connect to the electricity grid at Lanesborough 110 kV (kilovolts) substation. A 5.7 km (kilometers) underground cable will connect the Solar Farm to a new transformer compound on the former Lough Ree Power Site which in turn will connect to the existing grid infrastructure at Lanesborough 110 kV substation.



Development Progress

Construction of this project commenced in January 2024, with an initial enabling works package now substantially complete. These works have provided access to the Solar Farm site with the construction of access tracks and a new bridge structure.



Figure 1: Access tracks



Figure 2: New bridge structure

Next steps

The electrical connection for the works will commence in September 2024 and the Construction of the Solar Farm will commence in October 2024.

Construction of the Solar Farm will involve the installation of ground mounted solar panels on light steel frames and the installation of associated underground cabling.

The electrical connection will consist of a 5.7 km underground cable to connect the Solar Farm to a new transformer compound constructed at Lough Ree Power Site which in turn will connect to the existing grid infrastructure at Lanesborough 110 kV station. Construction of the Solar Farm and grid connection is scheduled to be complete by the end of 2025.



Figure 3: Typical Solar Farm layout

Traffic Management

Where will the site access be?

For the works a detailed traffic management plan has been agreed with Longford County Council prior to commencement of the next phase of works and will be maintained throughout the construction programme. The main site entrance for the Solar Farm will be accessed from the L1162 with other entrances at Middleton House and on the L11623 to the south of the Solar Farm site.

The underground cable and grid connection works will be accessed from the main Lough Ree Power site entrance in Lanesborough and from the L52652 at Cloonbony and the L1 1623 at Ballynakill close to the Solar Farm site.

Once constructed and operational, the only traffic to occur will be for occasional maintenance visits. The impacts of such traffic will be negligible.

Solar components for delivery?

The solar panels and ancillary components are relatively small and are transported in pallets before being assembled on site. The pallets will be delivered in 40-foot containers that are transported by articulated lorries.



Will there be traffic diversions & delays?

Diversions and delays will be kept to a minimum when the detailed traffic management plan is put in place. The project will arrange leaflet updates and communications on this.



Community Benefit Fund?

The Middleton House Solar Farm project will have a Community Benefit Fund which will distribute grants to organisations in the local area once the Solar Farm is operational. The fund is to be used for the wider economic, environment, social and cultural wellbeing of the local community. ESB has an independent dedicated administrator for Wind and Solar Farm Community Funds, and they are called SECAD. This is their application portal website: www.communitybenefitfunds.ie and there is a help section on the site that communities may find helpful, including links to webinars. While the solar fund is not operational yet, we encourage you to start thinking about the kind of projects you might submit and the supporting information SECAD require.



Current development timeline

January '24	Enabling works on site commenced.
Autumn '24 – Autumn '25	Grid works duration.
Autumn '24 – Autumn '25	Solar Farm construction works.
Winter '25	Commissioning and project operational.

Contact Us

The project team is committed to keeping the local community up to date with the construction of Middleton House Solar Farm.

Our Community Liaison Officer (CLO) Garry Keegan and members of the project team are available to meet you to discuss all aspects of the project at your convenience. We will provide regular updates through the project website as the project progresses.

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