

January 8th, 2025

To Each Member of Committee

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are requested to attend a Meeting of the
Mid and East Antrim Planning Committee to be held on

Thursday, 9th January 2025 at 10:00 am in Council Chamber, The Braid, 1-29 Bridge Street,
Ballymena and via remote access.

Yours sincerely



Valerie Watts
Interim Chief Executive, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council

Agenda

1 NOTICE OF MEETING

2 APOLOGIES

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and Officers are invited to declare any pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests, including gifts and hospitality, they may have in respect of items on this Agenda.

4 SCHEDULE OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

4.1 Planning Application No. LA02/2023/1577/F - Lands approx. 950m SE of Ballylumford Power Station and approx.40m south of No's 87 & 89 Ballylumford Road, Islandmagee - circulated. Presentation circulated 07.01.25

Proposed erection of a Battery Energy Storage System Facility 100MW (BESS) and associated 33kV transformers, including 2 no. switch houses with control rooms, lighting and Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) columns, new site boundary fencing and landscaping proposals, new site access and laneway, and ancillary development works.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval

Lead Officer: Gary McGuinness

Speakers:

(4 minutes split in support of Officers' recommendation)

- Mr T Stokes, Mr D O Callaghan, Ms C Bradley and Mr D Adamson

 [LA02.2024.1577.F BESS Ballylumford.pdf](#)

Page 1

 [BESS Islandmagee.pdf](#)

Page 21

4.2 Planning Application No. LA02/2024/0768/F - Larne Football Club, Inver Park, Inver Road, Larne - circulated. Presentation circulated 07.01.25

Replacement of main stand and upgrade of existing facilities and consolidation of previous planning permissions to provide; new covered terrace stand, supporters/visitors areas (to include bar and restaurant) toilets, ancillary rooms and associated works (amendment to previous approval LA02/2021/0088/F).

RECOMMENDATION: Approval

Lead Officer: Henry McAlister

Speaker:

(4 minutes in support of Officers' recommendation)

- Ms G Jobling, Agent

📄 [LA02.2024.0768F Larne FC .pdf](#)

Page 31

📄 [LA02.2024.0768.F Larne FC.pdf](#)

Page 42

5 PLANNING APPEALS UPDATE

5.1 New Appeals

LA02/2023/1346/F - 80m west of 45 Carnearney Road, Ballylummin, Ahoghill - Proposed extension to existing farm holding to provide modern facilities to include silage pits, general purpose shed, slurry processing machinery shed, ration mixing area, meal bins and office/toilets

5.2 Appeal Decisions

LA02/2022/0630/O - 20m South of 113 Loughbeg Road Toomebridge - Dwelling and domestic Garage

Appeal Dismissed

LA02/2022/0623/O- 70m approx. SE of 109a Kilgad Road, Moorfields - Site for dwelling and garage

Appeal Dismissed

LA02/2024/0092/LBC - 76-82 Main Street, Portglenone - Extension to car park (serving Fullan's supermarket and other premises on Main Street), including demolition of short section of wall to enable vehicular access to the extended car park (retrospective application)

Appeal Dismissed

LA02/2024/0090/F- 76-82 Main Street, Portglenone - Extension to car park (serving Fullan's supermarket and other premises on Main Street), including demolition of short section of wall to enable vehicular access to the extended car park (retrospective application)

Appeal Dismissed

LA02/2023/0419/CA/2 - 2024/E0003 -76-82 Main Street, Portglenone - Alleged unauthorised car park

Enforcement notice upheld

LA02/2023/0419/CA/1 - 2024/E0004 -76-82 Main Street, Portglenone - Alleged unauthorised car park

Enforcement notice upheld

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council – Planning Committee

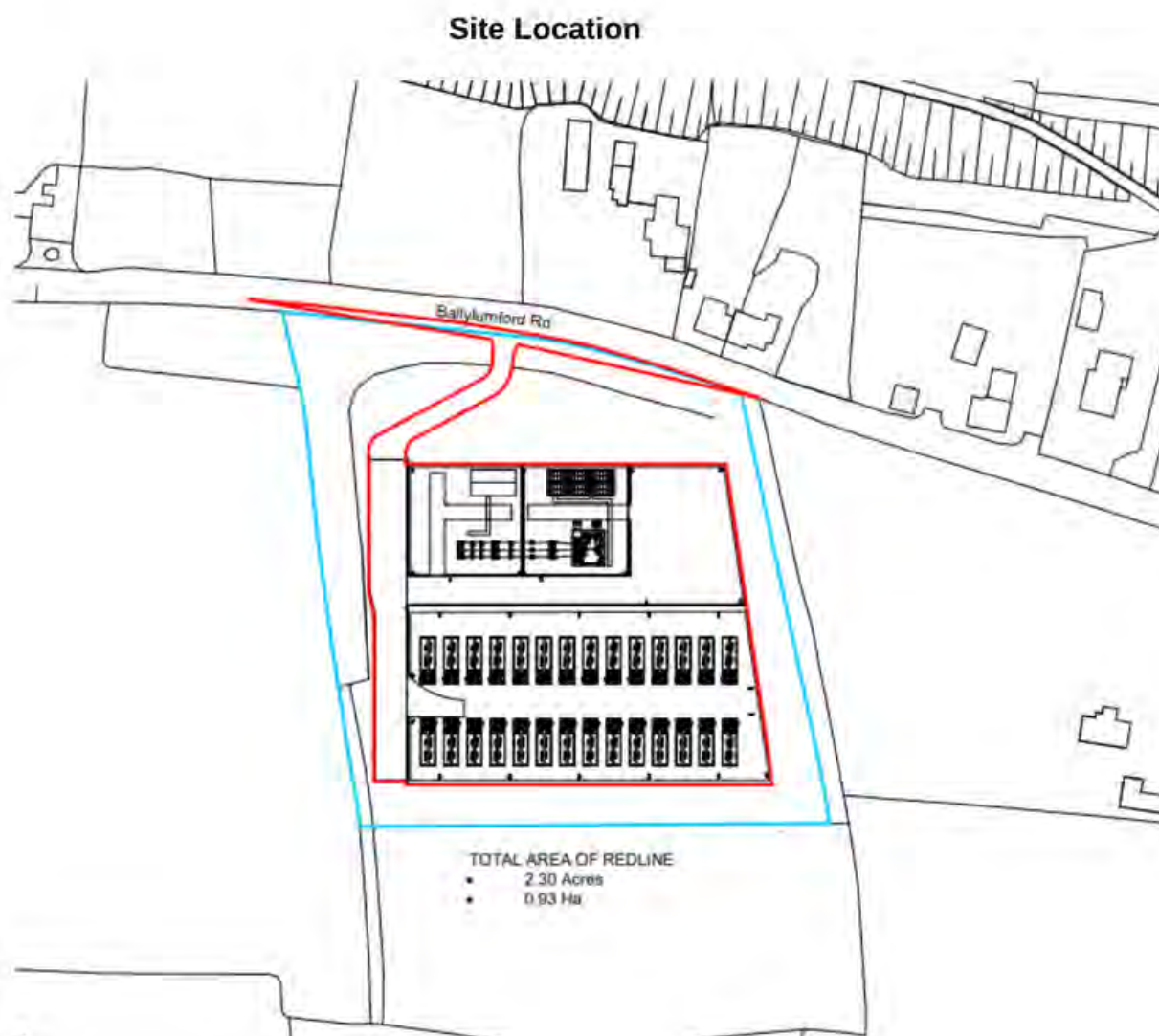
Application Ref:	LA02/2023/1577/F
Application type:	Full Application
Publication Status:	Open meeting
Date of Committee:	9 th January 2025
Case Officer:	Henry McAlister
Email:	henry.mcalister@midandeantrim.gov.uk
Telephone:	02825633225
Proposal:	Proposed erection of a Battery Energy Storage System Facility 100MW (BESS) and associated 33kV transformers, including 2 no. switch houses with control rooms, lighting and Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) columns, new site boundary fencing and landscaping proposals, new site access and laneway, and ancillary development works.
Location:	Lands approx. 950m SE of Ballylumford Power Station and approx.40m south of No's 87 & 89 Ballylumford Road, Islandmagee
Applicant:	Heron Storage Ltd
Agent:	TSA Planning
Objections:	27
Support:	
Recommendation:	Approve

1. Description of site and surroundings

The application site is located on the south western side of the Ballylumford Road, Islandmagee approximately 950m SE of Ballylumford Power Station and consists of a roadside agricultural field that falls away gradually from the road towards Larne Lough. Site boundaries are marked by fairly mature trees and hedges. The site lies outside of any defined settlement in the extant Local Development Plan – The Larne Area Plan 2010. The total site area is 0.9 hectares.

Surrounding land uses are predominately agricultural with a dispersed pattern of development. Roadside development is quite common along the Ballylumford Road with a small ribbon of development opposite the application site and a recently constructed dwelling located to the east of the site. Large electricity pylons run from Ballylumford Power station past the southern side of the site along the shore with Larne Lough. The Moyle Interconnector is located approximately 200m to the north of the site on the opposite side of the Ballylumford Road and the Belfast Gas

Transmission Pipeline operated by Mutual Energy runs underground from Ballylumford Power Station to Belfast via Carrickfergus past the site.



2. Proposed Development

Proposed erection of a Battery Energy Storage System Facility 100MW (BESS) including 28 storage units and associated 33kV transformers, including 2 no. switch houses with control rooms, lighting and Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) columns, new site boundary fencing and landscaping proposals, new site access and laneway, and ancillary development works.

3. Relevant Planning History

None.

4. Planning Policy Context

Larne Area Plan 2010

The Departmental Development Plan that provides land use planning designations and policies for the development of the former Larne Borough Council area.

Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS)

The SPPS sets out strategic planning policy for a wide range of planning matters. It provides the core planning principles to underpin delivery of the two-tier planning system with the aim of furthering sustainable development.

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council Local Development Plan 2030 – Plan Strategy.

A plan-led framework for making decisions to help the Council deliver sustainable growth and development including future housing provision.

5. Consultations

NI Water No objections.

Northern Ireland Electricity No objections.

NIEA Water Management Unit No objections.

NIEA Natural Heritage No objections.

NIEA Industrial Pollution and Radiochemical Inspectorate No objections.

DFI Roads Service No objections, subject to conditions.

Rivers Agency No objections following submission of Drainage Assessment.

Shared Environmental Services No objections, subject to conditions.

Historic Environment Division No objections.

Environmental Health No objections, subject to conditions

NI Fire and Rescue Service No objections, subject to conditions.

Mutual Energy No objections

Health and Safety Executive No objections

6. Representations

27 objections were received.

Objections

The main points raised by objectors relate to the following:

- Safety issues should there be a fire at the Battery Energy Storage System including the safety of residential properties and the potential impact on the gas pipeline.
- Water run-off including water used in fire fighting and the resultant impact on Larne Lough.
- Visual impact, including the cumulative impact of the proposal when read in conjunction with existing and approved energy infrastructure in the Islandmagee area.
- Road safety concerns
- Light pollution.
- Impact on archaeological remains.
- Lack of consultation with local residents.

Several individuals submitted multiple objections and referenced various social media campaign pages and external petitions which the Council can give little weight to. Neighbours / objectors have been advised to submit all objections either online through the Planning Portal or directly to the Planning Department.

All representations have been fully considered through the following assessment.

7. Consideration and Assessment

Section 45(1) of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 (the Act) requires regard must be had to the Local Development Plan (LDP), so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. Section 6(4) of the Act states that where regard is to be had to the LDP, the determination must be made in accordance with the Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Planning Act (NI) 2011 establishes a plan-led planning system which gives primacy to the plan in the determination of planning applications unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council adopted the Local Development Plan 2030 Plan Strategy on 16th October 2023. The Plan Strategy became effective from the date of adoption and is relevant to the consideration of the above planning application. The Council has yet to adopt its LPP, so in the interim, decisions fall to be made in light of current circumstances.

The Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (as amended) (Regulations) makes provision for the preparation of a LDP by a Council. Part 9 and the Schedule contain the arrangements for the transition from departmental development plans made under the Planning (Northern Ireland)

Order 1972 or the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991 to the new council local development plans.

It also defines what constitutes an LDP during the transition period until the council has fully adopted its own LDP. In line with the transitional arrangements set out in the Schedule to the Regulations, the LDP is currently a combination of the departmental development plan (DDP) and the Plan Strategy read together. Any conflict between a policy contained in the DDP and those of the Plan Strategy must be resolved in favour of the Plan Strategy.

The Larne Area Plan comprises the DDP for this proposal. The site contains no particular zoning on the DDP and is located outside of any designated settlement in the Plan.

The Spatial Growth Strategy in the adopted Plan Strategy seeks to facilitate sustainable development in the open countryside, balancing the need to protect the environment and rural character while sustaining a strong and vibrant rural economy.

Policy CS1 - sets out the opportunities for sustainable development that **may** be acceptable in the countryside and this includes certain utilities, telecommunications or infrastructure development.

Policy TEI1 – Telecommunications and Electricity Infrastructure

The Plan Strategy states that modern utilities such as electricity infrastructure are essential and beneficial elements of everyday living for everyone who lives, works or visits the borough. Being home to Kilroot and Ballylumford power stations, Mid and East Antrim occupies a key strategic location in relation to the Northern Ireland energy network.

A proposal for electricity infrastructure including overhead cables together with any necessary enabling works will be permitted where it meets the General Policy and accords with other provisions of the LDP. The applicant is required to demonstrate that all of the following criteria are met:

(a) There is a need for the proposed development at that location.

The application site is located at Ballylumford Road, Islandmagee to the south east of Ballylumford Power Station, a gas fired generating station which has operated at this location since the 1940s. The purpose of the proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) is to store electricity when there is a surplus supply and then to discharge electricity into the network when a deficit occurs either through high demand or when production is lower – for example when wind or solar sources cannot operate to full capacity.

The technology involved with energy infrastructure is ever-evolving and BESS facilities are seen as important elements in providing additional support in terms of electricity production, storage and supply in order to meet Northern Ireland's commitments in achieving Net Zero carbon emissions by 2050.

The BESS facility works by absorbing the electricity, converting it to chemical energy and storing it until additional supply is needed, at which stage it is re-converted to electrical energy.

As the BESS requires a connection to the electricity grid, this becomes an important factor in site selection and the proximity to Ballylumford Power Station appears to be the main consideration and alternative locations have not been considered. The submitted Supporting Planning Statement by the applicant suggests that the fields closest along the Ballylumford Road closest to the Power Station were unavailable due to being required for future expansion of the sub-station by NIE, being required by Mutual Energy for the operation of the gas pipeline or being in the ownership of Islandmagee Energy, the company behind the Larne Lough gas storage project. The application site is approximately 950m away from the Power Station complex and located within an area where energy infrastructure is a common feature of the local landscape.

(b) The proposal minimises visual intrusion.

There will be some visual intrusion associated with the proposed BESS facility however this would not be significant and the overall design and layout includes mitigation measures to reduce the overall impact.

The main public views of the application site will be from the Ballylumford Road frontage and from nearby residential properties. Due to the sloping landform of the immediate surroundings and the presence of mature trees and hedges to field boundaries, the localised views are fleeting.

Long range views of the site are available from the opposite side of Larne Lough. The site is located approximately 1.5KM from Curran Point in Larne Harbour and approximately 2.5KM from the Larne-Belfast railway line which runs along the coast at Glynn. From this distance the landscape of the Islandmagee coastline is dominated by the extensive built form of Ballylumford Power Station and it is highly unlikely that the addition of the proposed development would have any significant impact in terms of visual impact. The addition of proposed landscaping in the form of native species trees and hedges would further reduce the visual impact over time.

Built structures are to be single storey and set back from the site boundaries with extensive levels of native species planting proposed.

The application site generally slopes away from the Ballylumford Road and falls towards Larne Lough to the south west. At present the roadside boundary is marked by a post and wire fence with a line of fairly mature trees along with hedges. Whilst some tree and hedge removal would be necessary in order to provide the necessary vehicular access arrangements, a planting plan includes new planting to all of the site boundaries in the form of native species trees – alder, hazel, willow, birch, pine and holly and native species hedges. Security fencing is to be green coloured palisade fencing to reduce visual impact when read with the existing and proposed planting.

The actual built structures involved with the proposed BESS are low level and include two single storey switch buildings, a switch house for use by SONI / NIE and a switch house for use by the operator. The larger of these buildings

measures 17m x 6m, with the smaller measuring 8.5m x 4.5m. Both buildings are to have pitched roofs with a ridge height of 6m and they are set back from the road frontage by approximately 15m. A transformer adjacent to the switch rooms would be around 8m in height.

The battery storage compound is located on the lower part of the site, away from the road and is to consist of 28 containers, each measuring 9m x 3m, arranged in two banks of 14no battery units set 13m apart with a 2m gap between each unit. Each unit is approximately 2m in height and consists of a battery module, inverter and cooling system.

The built form of the proposal is to be set back from the road frontage, and due to the change in levels with the bulk of the site being below road level, the visual impact would not be unacceptable. With maturing landscaping, the visual impact would reduce over the medium-long term.

(c) The proposal avoids sensitive locations or features, unless it is clearly demonstrated to the satisfaction of Council as to why this cannot be achieved.

The application site consists mainly of a grassed agricultural field with some fairly mature vegetation along the roadside boundary. There are no water courses or built structures within the site and the site is not affected by flooding

This area of Islandmagee contains various established elements of energy infrastructure including Ballylumford Power Station, the Moyle Interconnector and the Gas Pipeline with a nearby BESS being granted under application reference LA02/2023/1283/F at Quarterland Road to the north of the site. Large pylons with overhead electricity lines run along the western shore of Islandmagee from the power station adjacent to the site.

An Archaeological Evaluation and an Archaeological Impact Assessment was submitted along with the application. This established that there were no significant archaeological remains within the site and that there would be no impact on the setting of a monument in state care – the Druid's Altar (ANT 041:007). The Historic Environment Division were consulted and are satisfied that no further archaeological mitigation is necessary and have offered no objections to the proposal.

The Biodiversity Checklist submitted with the application indicates that the development of the site as proposed would not impact upon protected species and whilst some tree and hedge removal would be necessary in order to provide a safe means of vehicular access, the extensive planting proposed would provide mitigation in terms of habitat creation as well as providing visual screening. NIEA have not offered any objections.

There are European designated sites associated with Larne Lough, the North Channel SAC and the East Coast Marine pSPA. The site is not located within any of these designated sites and there is a separation distance of at least 160m from boundary of the site to Larne Lough. Having carried out an appropriate assessment of the proposal, including the impact of dealing with

surface water run-off following an outbreak of fire at the site, Shared Environmental Services have concluded that the proposal would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European site.

There are no specific zonings or designations in the extant departmental Development Plan – the Larne Area Plan affecting the site.

A Special Countryside Area (SCA) has been designated in the Mid and east Antrim Borough Council Local Development Plan, Plan Strategy. This is associated with the Gobbins coast and is intended to protect the exceptional landscape, unique amenity value and the environmental assets of the natural and built heritage of the area. The application site is outside of this designation and development of the site as proposed would not impact on the SCA.

It is therefore considered this criteria of Policy TE11 has been complied with.

(d) The proposal meets the ICNIRP guidelines for public exposure to electromagnetic fields.

ICNIRP guidelines relate to telecommunications infrastructure and are not applicable to this proposal.

Policy TE1 also requires applicants to ensure that upon decommissioning, all above ground redundant structures, plant, buildings and associated infrastructure shall be removed and restored to an agreed standard appropriate to its location. These matters will need to be agreed with Council before planning permission is granted and appropriate conditions applied to any approval. This aspect of the policy will be secured by way of planning condition numbers 12 and 13.

Policy GP1 – General Policy for all Development states that planning permission will be granted for sustainable development where the proposal accords with the LDP and there is no demonstrable harm to interests of acknowledged importance. All development proposals in the countryside will be assessed against general policy criteria (a)-(f).

(a) Criteria relating to Design Quality and Respecting Local Character and Distinctiveness

This proposal involves the development of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) facility on a 0.9 hectare area. This would introduce a new form of development into this rural site which historically has been used for agricultural pasture and there would be localised views of the site from residential properties to the south and east, and fleeting views from the Ballylumford Road. The undulating topography of the local landscape and the presence of numerous mature trees and native species hedging along the retained field boundaries will however help to reduce the overall visual impact. Significant levels of additional planting is also proposed to all site boundaries in the form of native species trees and hedges which will help with screening of the development and allow integration into the landscape.

Longer range views from the opposite side of Larne Lough are available of the application site however from this range, the surrounding landscape is dominated by the established Ballylumford Power Station buildings, cooling towers and associated infrastructure. The introduction of low level buildings and container structures as per the proposal would be appropriate at this location and would not be unduly prominent, particularly when read with the rising ground levels and mature trees to the north and east of the site.

This particular area of Islandmagee contains other established elements of energy infrastructure with Ballylumford Power Station, the gas pipeline, the Moyle Interconnector and large scale electrical pylons and overhead lines all within several hundred metres of the site. The proposal would be compatible with surrounding land uses and neither the use or the built form would detract from the visual amenity, landscape quality, local distinctiveness and inherent quality of the locality.

There would be no anticipated issues with adverse impacts on features of the historic environment or natural heritage.

Criteria (a) has been complied with.

(b) Criteria relating to Safeguarding Residential Amenity:

There are existing residential properties at 85, 87 and 89 Ballylumford Road, immediately opposite the site boundary and access point. A recently constructed detached dwelling is now occupied at 44 Ballylumford Road, with a separation distance of approximately 70m to the site boundary.

The separation between the proposed built form switch room buildings and the closest existing dwelling (87) is approximately 40m.

There would be no impacts with overlooking or over shadowing of neighbouring properties.

Whilst there would be some disturbance associated with the construction phase of the development this would be a temporary scenario. Once developed, this type of infrastructure would not be likely to attract large numbers of vehicular traffic or people. In practice, occasional visitors would be involved in the ongoing maintenance of the facility.

A Noise Impact assessment has been submitted and following consultation with the Environmental Health Department, the Council are satisfied that there would be no significant adverse impact on residential amenity due to the low noise levels produced and the separation distances involved. Condition numbers 7 and 8 relate to noise levels associated with the proposal and will ensure that nearby residential properties are not adversely affected.

Lighting forms part of the proposal and includes 27no 6m high lighting columns which would only be in use to allow maintenance staff to access the site outside daylight hours. An External lighting Analysis has been carried out and it shows an average illuminance of 20.7 lux across the site. With the

separation distances involved to neighbouring properties, light spill would not be a significant issue and Condition Number 10 secures this.

Appropriate boundary treatment in the form of native species hedges and trees will screen the proposal over time from neighbouring residential dwellings and will help with mitigating any potential impacts with light spill or noise.

Criteria (b) has been complied with.

(c) Criteria relating to Access/Movement/Car Parking

DFI Roads service have not offered any objections through the consultation process to the proposed access arrangements or the internal manoeuvring space within the site. A Transport Assessment Form had been completed which indicated low levels of vehicle movements associated with the proposed development. A new vehicular access is proposed from the Ballylumford Road with visibility splays of 2.4m x 70m to be provided. The nature of a BESS is such that, once constructed, it would not normally attract any significant volumes of traffic. The Planning Department are satisfied that criteria (c) has been complied with, subject to the addition of conditions relating to the provision of the new access.

(d) Criteria relating to Safety and the Safeguarding of Human Health/Wellbeing

The main issues regarding safety and safeguarding of human health and wellbeing raised by objectors related to factors arising should a fire occur at the proposed development. There are potential fire and safety risks associated with BESS facilities due to the nature of the Lithium Iron Phosphate (LFP) in the battery cells to store electrical energy.

The Fire & Safety report submitted by the applicants highlights the mitigation measures incorporated into the design and management of the proposed facility which allows isolation between racks, modules and cells in the event of a thermal runaway event. Testing has demonstrated that in this event flames would not be present, there would be no propagation between adjacent cells and no risk of flying debris or explosions. Built in fire suppression systems would also help to prevent any fire issues arising.

The Council have carried out extensive consultation with the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service and with the Health and Safety Executive.

The design of the proposal includes mitigation measures to isolate any units, so that in the event of a fire occurring it would be contained.

A new vehicular access is proposed from the Ballylumford Road frontage to allow access for NIFRS vehicles. There are agricultural fields to either side of the site which provide a buffer to any third party properties and would allow access by fire fighters if necessary. The battery units are sited back from the

road frontage with significant separation distances to neighbouring residential properties.

The Planning Department have carefully considered the consultation responses from the Health and Safety Executive, Mutual Energy and the NIFRS. None of the consultees have objected to the principle of development and whilst there may be some fire risk associated with the operation of a BESS facility, this would be contained on site. As an emerging technology, design, maintenance and management practices are also evolving and the developer would need to comply with NIFRS requirements.

Should planning permission be granted the applicant would be required to liaise with NIFRS to agree details on facilities, access, water supplies etc in order to develop emergency planning procedures. The BESS would become 'relevant premises' as defined by the Fire and Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 and the Fire Safety Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010. NIFRS as the enforcing authority would audit the relevant premises to ensure compliance. This is secured by condition number 4.

CCTV is included as part of the proposal which may also be providing an improvement in the general security of the surrounding area.

The proposed development will have a dedicated storm sewer system for the site, with separate storm drainage provided. The proposal also involves the addition of a septic tank to facilitate one toilet on site. A separate Consent to Discharge application will be necessary.

The site is not affected by flooding. A Drainage Assessment was submitted and Rivers Agency have been consulted as the relevant statutory consultee – they accept the findings of the Drainage Assessment and have offered no objections.

The site consists of previously undeveloped lands and there are no significant issues with ground contamination to address. Criteria (d) has been complied with.

(e) Criteria relating to Sustainable Development

The proposal aligns with the Council's LDP Spatial Growth Strategy which seeks to facilitate sustainable development in the open countryside, balancing the need to protect the environment and rural character while sustaining a strong and vibrant rural economy.

All essential infrastructure to facilitate the development is either already available or is to be included as a part of the proposed development.

The Drainage Assessment submitted indicates that Sustainable Drainage Solutions (SuDS) are to be utilised on the site with the use of oversized pipes and manholes with vortex flow control hydro brakes, granular storage and then discharged via a level spreader which will reduce the concentrated flows

of surface water runoff and help to manage surface water run-off within the site in a sustainable way.

The site is currently in agricultural use as grass pasture. There would be no unacceptable adverse impact on the quality and integrity of the environment or on local biodiversity. The introduction of the proposed native species trees and hedges to all site boundaries would improve the habitat quality in this area as well as screening the development from local viewpoints.

Solar panels are included as part of the proposal and are to be sited on the roof of the proposed switch rooms.

The levels of waste associated with the proposal are not likely to be significant, however the removal of waste materials associated with the build and maintenance can be facilitated within the site where adequate space is to be provided for vehicular manoeuvring.

The Shared Environmental Services have been consulted with no objections offered. This planning application was considered in light of the assessment requirements of Regulation 43 (1) of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended) by Shared Environmental Service on behalf of Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, which is the competent authority responsible for authorising the project.

Criteria (e) has been complied with.

(f) Criteria relating to Development in the Countryside

There will be some visual impact associated with the development of the BESS facility on an agricultural field in the countryside, however consideration should be given to the wider context of the site.

Public views would be available from the immediate surroundings of the site from the Ballylumford Road frontage and from existing residential properties in the locality. Due to the topography of the landscape and the presence of mature tree and hedge coverage along the Ballylumford Road and on field boundaries, views from within the Islandmagee peninsula would be very limited and localised. In time, with the maturity of the proposed tree and hedge planting, public views of the site would be further reduced.

Longer range public views in the region of a minimum of 1.5KM to 2.5KM exist from the opposite side of Larne Lough. From this point the landscape of the northern edge of Islandmagee is dominated by built form of the established Ballylumford Power Station. The proposed BESS facility would have a generally low visual impact on longer range views and it would be visually integrated into the landscape due to the topography of the land and the presence of mature trees and hedges. The proposed additional planting would further aid integration.

The proposal is appropriate for this particular rural location in terms of the design, scale, height and massing of built structures. The surrounding area contains numerous examples of energy infrastructure including Ballylumford

Power station, the Moyle Inter-connector, the gas pipeline, electricity pylons and overhead lines and the addition of the proposed BESS to supplement the existing infrastructure would be appropriate.

Criteria (f) has been complied with.

Policy TR1 – Access to Roads

The proposal seeks to develop a new access to the public road at the Ballylumford Road (eastern) side of the site. A new vehicular access is proposed with visibility splays of 2.4m x 170m. DFI Roads Service have not offered any objections in their consultation response and the Planning Department are satisfied that the proposal complies with Policy TR1, subject to conditions number 2 and 3.

Policy TR6 – Parking and Servicing

Proposed parking is to be within the site. DFI Roads Service who have offered no objections to the proposal in terms of parking, and post construction the proposed solar farm would not attract significant volumes of traffic.

Policy TR6 has been complied with.

Policy FRD3 - Surface Water Flood Risk

A Drainage Assessment was submitted with the application and DFI Rivers Agency have been consulted. No objections were offered by DFI Rivers.

Policy FRD3 has been complied with.

Policy FRD4 – Sustainable Drainage (SuDS)

The proposal includes the use of sustainable drainage solutions in the form of permeable gravel surfaces, oversized pipes and manholes with a vertex flow control hydro brake, and then discharged via a level spreader which will reduce the concentrated flows of surface water runoff and help to manage surface water run-off within the site in a sustainable way.

Policy FRD4 has therefore been complied with.

Policy WW11 – Development relying on Non-Mains Wastewater Infrastructure

The proposed development is not likely to attract significant volumes of people to the site once constructed however provision has been made within the buildings for a WC – presumably to be used by staff maintaining the site. Connection to a septic tank is proposed and this would require a separate consent to discharge from NIEA. This is not likely to contribute to any significant pollution problem and Policy WW11 has been complied with.

NAT1 – European and Ramsar Sites – International

The site is not within or adjacent to any designated sites. There is a separation distance of approximately 210m from the site boundary to Larne Lough which is designated as an SPA and Ramsar Site. The main areas of concern relate to the potential hydrological links to Larne Lough from the site both during construction and once operational. The Drainage Assessment indicates that SuDS would be utilised to slow down the rate of surface water run-off and that in the event of emergency the discharge point could be isolated so that all water is retained within the site. Due to the separation distances involved and the percolation effects of water through the sub-strata there would be no effect from surface water or sewage leaving the site and entering Larne Lough on the designated sites.

Shared Environmental Services have been consulted and they conclude from the information submitted that there would be no impact on the European Designated Sites subject to conditions 4 and 5.

Policy NAT5 – Habitats, Species or Features of Natural Heritage Importance

In order to provide the main site access and visibility splays as well as facilitating internal access roads some removal of a native species trees and hedges would be required. The proposal includes the replacement of the native species hedge and trees along all of the site boundaries and along the rear of the visibility splays, and whilst this will take some time to mature, over the medium term would mitigate the loss of hedges and would actually improve habitat locally.

The Planning Department are satisfied that the proposal, having been amended from the initial submission, now complies with the requirements of the Council's Local Development Plan, Plan Strategy.

8. Consideration of Representations

A total of 26 objections have been received, with several members of the public writing to the Council on numerous occasions. The points raised in representations have been carefully considered in the above assessment however a summary is provided below.

- **Safety issues should there be a fire at the Battery Energy Storage System including the safety of residential properties and the potential impact on the gas pipeline.**

Consultation has taken place with the Health and Safety Executive (NI), the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service and with Mutual Energy (operators of the gas pipeline). None of these bodies have raised objections to the granting of planning permission on this site for a BESS. Should planning permission be granted, further co-operation will be required between the developers of the BESS and the various bodies to ensure a safe form of development and this is secured by Condition number 4.

The application site is to include a new vehicular access from the Ballylumford Road and there is a significant separation distance to the closest residential

dwelling at 44 Ballylumford Road to the south east of the site. The proposed Battery Energy Storage units are spaced out within the site and there are open fields to either side of the site to allow access for fire fighters should the need arise. Given the scale of the proposal and the separation distances involved to neighbouring properties along with the consultation responses from the relevant bodies, there are no concerns with fire safety and the impact on neighbouring residents.

- **Water run-off including water used in fire fighting and the resultant impact on Larne Lough.**

A Drainage Assessment has been submitted with extensive consultation taking place with Rivers Agency, NIEA and Shared Environmental Services. Due to the use of SuDS and the separation distances involved to the Protected Sites at Larne Lough it has been concluded that there would be no adverse impact on the integrity of any European site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. This conclusion is subject to the addition of Condition numbers 5 and 6.

- **Visual impact, including the cumulative impact of the proposal when read in conjunction with existing and approved energy infrastructure in the Islandmagee area.**

Although a roadside location, the site already benefits from quite significant levels of fairly mature trees and hedges. Views of the site from Islandmagee are very localised and limited to the Ballylumford Road frontage and existing nearby residential properties. Longer range views from Larne Harbour and the opposite side of Larne Lough are available however there is a separation distance of 1.5KM to at least 2.5KM involved and this landscape is completely dominated by the built form of the Ballylumford Power Station.

The proposed BESS consists of low level structures not exceeding 8m in height and includes significant levels of new native species planting which will in time mature to screen the site and aid habitat creation,

There are well established geographic and historic reasons for the siting of energy infrastructure in the Islandmagee area given its proximity to mainland GB, access to the sea as well as the main population centres of NI. Battery Energy Storage Systems are a relatively recent addition to the electricity network and are designed to complement existing infrastructure. Parts of the northern and eastern coasts of Islandmagee are designated as a Special Countryside Area due to the high quality of their landscapes, however there is no such designation applicable to the application site on the western side of Islandmagee.

- **Road safety concerns.**

The proposal includes a new vehicular access point to the Ballylumford Road with visibility splays of 2.4m x 70m along with internal parking and manoeuvring space within the site.

There would likely be a short term increase in traffic associated with the construction phase of the development however this would be a temporary arrangement. Once operational the proposal would not be likely to attract significant vehicle or pedestrian numbers with only maintenance staff visiting the site.

DFI Roads Service have been consulted and they offer no objections to the proposal on the grounds of road safety or traffic flow.

- **Light pollution.**

An External Lighting Analysis was submitted with the planning application. The development would only be illuminated during times of site maintenance outside day light hours and given the separation distances involved to existing neighbouring properties, light spill would not be a significant issue.

- **Impact on archaeological remains.**

Historic Environment Division have been consulted with an Archaeological Evaluation and an Archaeological Impact Assessment. This established that there were no significant archaeological remains within the site and that the setting of a nearby monument in state care would not be affected by the proposed development.

- **Lack of consultation with local residents.**

With a site area of 0.9ha the application falls within the category of Local Development as defined by Section 25 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. There is therefore no requirement for the applicant to carry out any pre-application community consultation.

The planning application was submitted to the Council and the standard neighbour notification processes were followed, including by notifying a dwelling at 44 Ballylumford Road that was constructed and subsequently occupied during the period that the application was under consideration. In addition, the application was advertised in the local press and on the Council's website.

It is clear from the correspondence received from members of the public that residents were aware of the planning application and it should be noted that many of the representations received were submitted by people who live significant distances away from this particular location.

Representations also made the Council aware of several social media pages that had been set up in opposition to the proposed development. This included a Facebook page and a petition on the website Change.org. Little weight can be attributed to external social media platforms as part of the consideration of objections to planning applications. The correct method of making a representation is either online through the Planning Portal or directly in writing to the Council's Planning Department. All representations received by either method have been carefully considered when assessing this planning application.

9. Conclusions

Having regard to the Plan Strategy and all other material considerations the Planning Department is of the opinion that the application should be approved.

10. Conditions

The Planning Department recommends that planning permission be approved, subject to the following conditions.

- (1) The development hereby permitted must be begun within five years from the date of this permission.

Reason: As required by Section 61 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011

- (2) The vehicular access including visibility splays and any forward sight distance, shall be provided in accordance with Drawing No 17. date published 02 JAN 2024 prior to the commencement of any other development hereby permitted. The area within the visibility splays and any forward sight line shall be cleared to provide a level surface no higher than 250mm above the level of the adjoining carriageway and such splays shall be retained and kept clear thereafter.

Reason: To ensure there is a satisfactory means of access in the interests of road safety and the convenience of road users.

- (3) The gradient of the access road shall not exceed 4% (1 in 25) over the first 10m outside the road boundary. Where the vehicular access crosses a footway, the access gradient shall be between 4% (1 in 25) maximum and 2.5% (1 in 40) minimum and shall be formed so that there is no abrupt change of slope along the footway.

Reason: To ensure there is a satisfactory means of access in the interests of road safety and the convenience of road user.

- (4) Prior to the commencement of development, the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS) shall be provided with written details of the facilities, detection and monitoring systems, suppression systems, site access, water supplies and emergency plans and be provided with a site layout plan showing these for emergency planning purposes.

Reason: To protect the health and safety of neighbouring residents and to protect the residential amenity of neighbouring properties.

- (5) The operational site drainage shall be constructed to include the measures identified in the Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment (Doc 20) published 5th August 2024 and the accompanying email clarifying the strategy (Doc 22) published on 13th August 2024. The attenuation and storage area shall be sized and constructed to provide attenuation for at least 228m³ of fire fighting water and shall be lined with an impermeable membrane that is sufficient to ensure that contaminants cannot infiltrate into the ground, unless otherwise agreed by the Council.

Reason: In order to protect the integrity of designated European sites.

- (6) The operational site drainage shall be constructed to include a readily accessible shut off valve in the final manhole, prior to entry to the vortex flow device, for use in emergencies. The shut off valve shall be kept maintained to ensure its functionality and shall remain accessible throughout the operational lifetime of the development, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Council.

Reason: In order to protect the integrity of designated European sites.

- (7) Noise levels from the permitted development at the stated residential locations shall not exceed that as specified in Table 1:

<i>Noise Monitoring Location</i>	<i>Irish Grid Co-Ordinates</i>	<i>Rated Noise Level dB</i> <i>L_{Aeq, 15min}</i>
<i>91 Ballylumford Road</i>	<i>343053 401598</i>	<i>31.1</i>
<i>89 Ballylumford Road</i>	<i>343166 401499</i>	<i>35.3</i>
<i>85 Ballylumford Road</i>	<i>343180 401472</i>	<i>37.5</i>
<i>83 Ballylumford Road</i>	<i>343218 401423</i>	<i>34.7</i>
<i>81a Ballylumford Road</i>	<i>343239 401395</i>	<i>33.1</i>
<i>Ballylumford Road</i>	<i>343188 401342</i>	<i>34.8</i>

Table 1: Specified noise levels from the permitted development at residential locations

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity.

- (8) Inverters shall be hard capped to no more than 20% output. Verification documentation demonstrating compliance with the 20% output requirements shall be provided to an officer of Mid and East Antrim Borough Council on request

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity.

- (9) In the event that previously unknown contamination is discovered, development on the site shall cease pending submission and agreement of a written report, detailing the proposed investigation, risk assessment and remediation scheme, by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency. Development works shall not resume until the approved written report has been fully implemented to the satisfaction of Mid and East Antrim Borough Council and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

Reason: In the interests of public health.

- (10) The lighting positions, structures and strengths installed at the permitted development shall match those as presented within the submitted light impact assessment entitled, "External Lighting Assessment, Ballylumford" (Doc 02) dated 28th April 2023.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity.

- (11) All hard and soft landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the details on the approved Landscaping Plan (Drawing Number 04/1) and are to be retained in perpetuity. All landscaping works shall be carried out during the first planting season following the commencement of the development hereby approved. Any trees or shrubs which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development, die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next available planting season with others of similar size and species.

Reason: To ensure that there is a well laid out scheme of healthy trees and shrubs in the interests of visual amenity.

- (12) Prior to decommissioning works commencing, a final Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (DEMP) must be submitted for agreement with the Council. The final DEMP must be site specific and include all necessary mitigation measures for the decommissioning phase of the development to avoid any pollutant egress to the adjacent surface water environment. The approved final DEMP shall be adhered to and implemented in full throughout decommissioning in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Council.

Reason: To ensure the project will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European site.

- (13) Within 12 months of the cessation of electricity storage at the site all structures shall be removed and the land restored in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Council at least one year prior to the commencement of any decommissioning works.

Reason: To restore and maintain the landscape quality of the area.

- (14) The development hereby approved shall be developed and operated in accordance with the plans and documents referenced at the beginning of this decision notice.

Reason: To ensure that the development is developed/operated in accordance with the approved plans and documents.



Planning Committee 09th January 2025

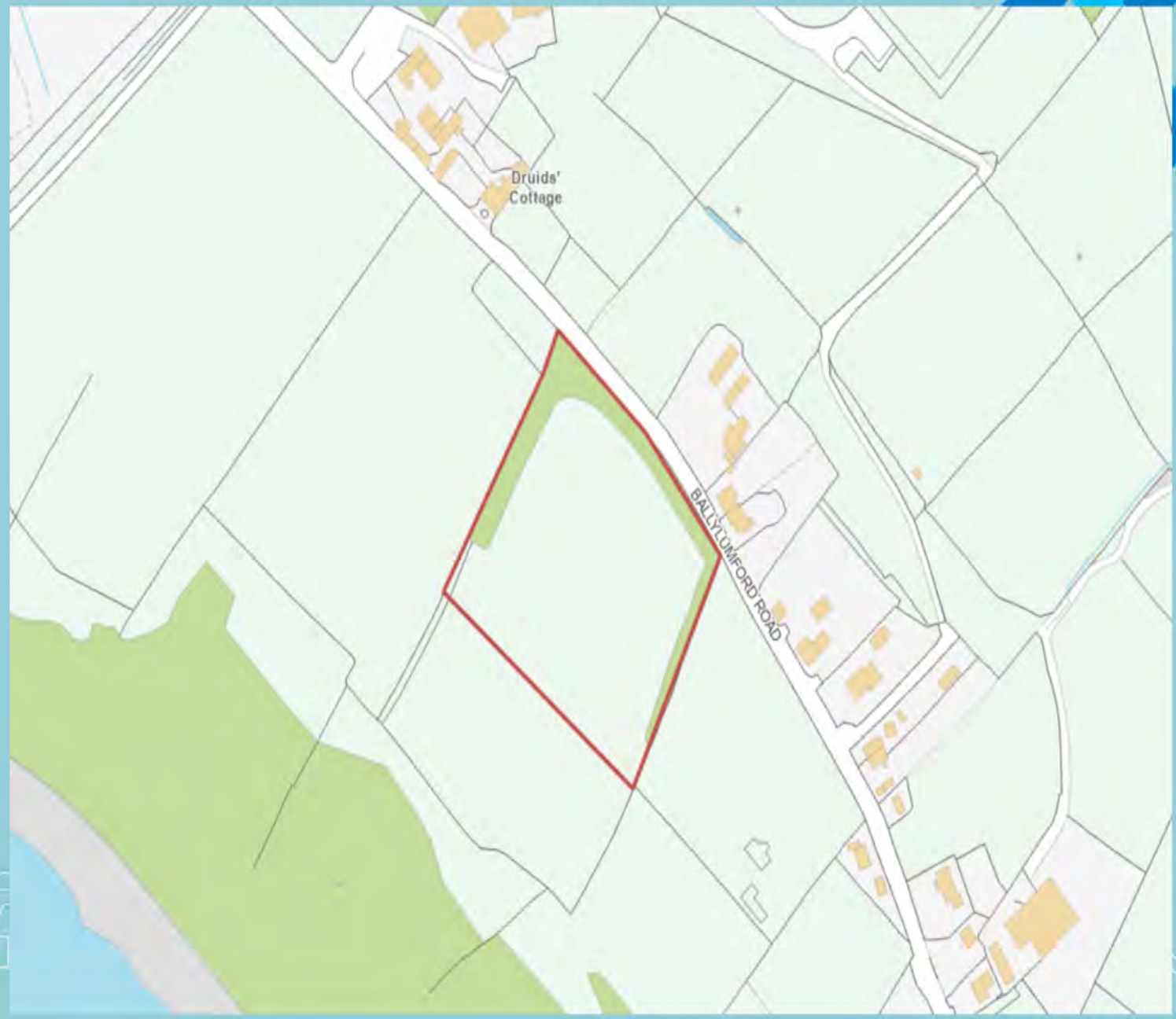
Application: LA02/2023/1577/F

**Battery Energy Storage System
(BESS) at lands 40m south of 87
& 89 Ballylumford Rd,
Islandmagee.**





Site Location Plan



Surrounding Context





Adjacent Land Uses – Ballylumford PS

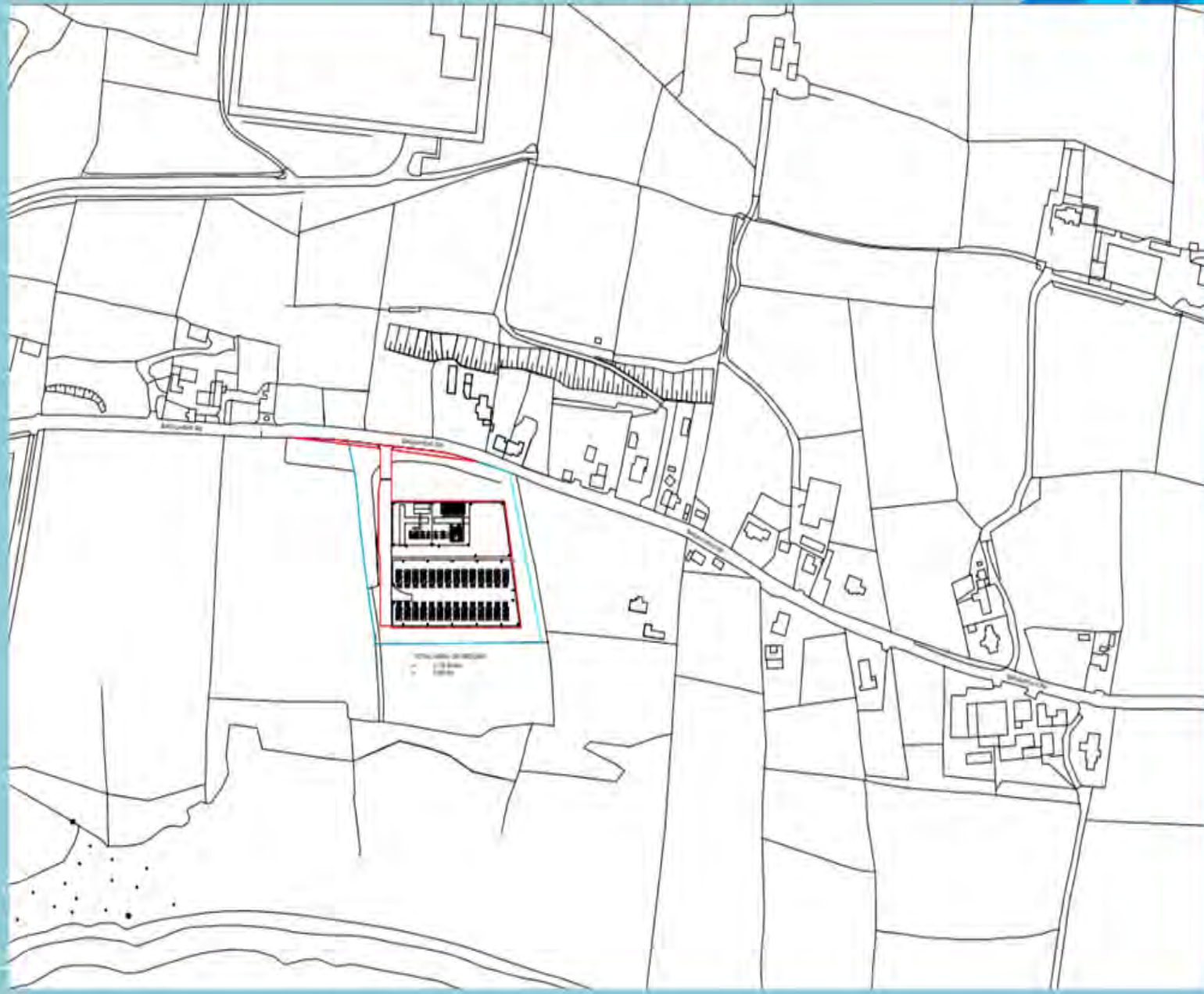




Adjacent Land Uses – North / South Interconnector



Block Plan



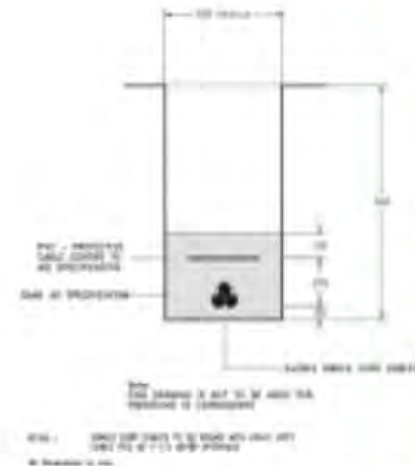
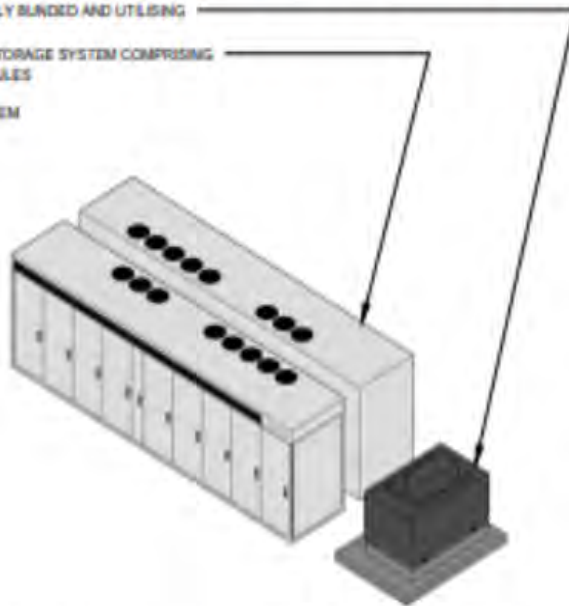
Battery Modules

TYPICAL BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM GA VIEW @ 1:50

TRANSFORMER, FULLY BLINDED AND UTILISING
MIDDEL OIL

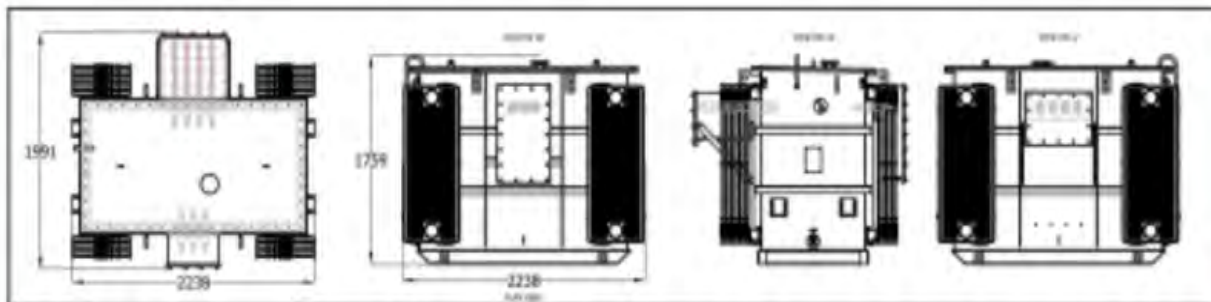
BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM COMPRISING

- BATTERY MODULES
- INVERTER
- COOLING SYSTEM



TYPICAL BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM 3D VIEW

NIE 33kV TRENCH DETAIL



TYPICAL TRANSFORMER DETAIL



Existing Views onto the Site



Proposed Landscaping





Summary

- Proposal: Battery Energy Storage systems (BESS).
- Consultees satisfied subject to conditions
- 26 Objections
- Complies with Planning Policy
- Recommendation: Approval



Mid and East Antrim Borough Council – Planning Committee

Application Ref:	LA02/2024/0768/F
Application type:	Full Application
Publication Status:	Open meeting
Date of Committee:	9 th January 2025
Case Officer:	Henry McAlister
Email:	henry.mcalister@midandeastantrim.gov.uk
Telephone:	02825633225
Proposal:	Replacement of main stand and upgrade of existing facilities and consolidation of previous planning permissions to provide; new covered terrace stand, supporters/visitors areas (to include bar and restaurant) toilets, ancillary rooms and associated works (amendment to previous approval LA02/2021/0088/F).
Location:	Larne Football Club, Inver Park, Inver Road, Larne.
Applicant:	Larne Football Club
Agent:	JPE Planning
Objections:	0
Support:	1
Recommendation:	Approve

1. Description of site and surroundings

The site is located at Inver Park in Larne and consists of an established football ground, home to Larne FC. The site at present consists of the main playing pitch with stands and terracing on three sides and is accessed from Inver road to the south of the site. This proposal relates to the replacement of the main stand which is located on the southern side of the playing pitch along with associated buildings housing a social club and ancillary facilities and a hard standing car park to the rear.

The site within a mixed use area, close to Larne Town Centre with a mix of residential, commercial, church and school buildings in the immediate locality.

Site Location



2. Proposed Development

Replacement of main stand and upgrade of existing facilities and consolidation of previous planning permissions to provide; new covered terrace stand, supporters/visitors areas (to include bar and restaurant) toilets, ancillary rooms and associated works (amendment to previous approval LA02/2021/0088/F).

The proposal falls within the Major category of development.

3. Relevant Planning History

LA02/2024/0545/PAN. Replacement stand – completed 25th July 2024

LA02/2021/0088/F – replacement stand, social club, fan zone and changing rooms – approved 5th August 2021

LA02/2024/1049/F – external covered stairs to existing east stand – approved 3rd April 2023

LA02/2020/0462/F – replacement terracing to east end – approved 8th July 2021

4. Planning Policy Context

Larne Area Plan

The Departmental Development Plan that provides land use planning designations and policies for the development of the former Larne Borough Council area.

Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS)

The SPPS sets out strategic planning policy for a wide range of planning matters. It provides the core planning principles to underpin delivery of the two-tier planning system with the aim of furthering sustainable development.

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council Local Development Plan 2030 – Plan Strategy.

A plan-led framework for making decisions to help the Council deliver sustainable growth and development including future housing provision.

5. Consultations

NI Water	There are network capacity issues with WWTW that will be dealt with by way of planning condition.
NIEA Water Management Unit	Objected to the proposal on the grounds of network capacity issues for WWTW.
NIEA Natural Heritage	No objections.
DFI Roads Service	No objections
Rivers Agency	No objections following submission of Drainage Assessment and amended plan to show working strip to watercourse.
Shared Environmental Services	No objections
Historic Environment Division	The proposal is in close proximity to listed buildings but given previous approvals on site and the established built form and use of the site, no objections are offered. HED also note that the proposal is smaller in scale than the previous approval.
Environmental Health	No objections

6. Representations

Following neighbour notification and press advertisement, no objections were received. One letter of support was submitted from a resident who also wanted the football club to provide additional car parking on site.

Car parking is provided within the grounds of the site with 75no spaces proposed, however there is limited space. The main report considers parking further with consideration given to the location close to the town centre and within walking distance of public transport routes and facilities including the Larne Bus and Train Stations.

7. Consideration and Assessment

Section 45(1) of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 (the Act) requires regard must be had to the Local Development Plan (LDP), so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. Section 6(4) of the Act states that where regard is to be had to the LDP, the determination must be made in accordance with the Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Planning Act (NI) 2011 establishes a plan-led planning system which gives primacy to the plan in the determination of planning applications unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council adopted the Local Development Plan 2030 Plan Strategy on 16th October 2023. The Plan Strategy became effective from the date of adoption and is relevant to the consideration of the above planning application. The Council has yet to adopt its LPP, so in the interim, decisions fall to be made in light of current circumstances.

The Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 (as amended) (Regulations) makes provision for the preparation of a LDP by a Council. Part 9 and the Schedule contain the arrangements for the transition from departmental development plans made under the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1972 or the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991 to the new council local development plans.

It also defines what constitutes an LDP during the transition period until the council has fully adopted its own LDP. In line with the transitional arrangements set out in the Schedule to the Regulations, the LDP is currently a combination of the departmental development plan (DDP) and the Plan Strategy read together. Any conflict between a policy contained in the DDP and those of the Plan Strategy must be resolved in favour of the Plan Strategy.

The Larne Area Plan comprises the DDP for this proposal. The site contains no particular zoning on the DDP and is located outside of any designated settlement in the Plan.

The proposal falls within the Major category of development as set out in Section 25(a) of the Planning Act (NI) 2011.

The applicant served notice to the Council of their intent to submit a major planning application through LA02/2022/0545/PAN in compliance with Section 27 of the Act.

The applicant has carried out a pre-application community consultation and submitted the relevant report to outline the details of the consultation in accordance with Section 28 of the Act.

The Spatial Growth Strategy Policy SGS2 Settlement Hierarchy designates Larne as one of three Main Towns in the Borough. They are predominant in regard to the range of services that they offer, their transportation links and the strength of the economic base.

Policy **SGS9** – Open Space Strategy supports the protection and enhancement of existing open spaces within mid and East Antrim.

Policy **OSL1** – Protection of Open Space. The playing pitch at Inver Park would be considered to be open space and thus would be protected under Policy OSL1. This proposal does not affect the playing surface and so the policy has not been offended.

Policy **OS5** – Sport and Outdoor Recreation Facilities. The development of sport and recreation facilities within settlements will be permitted where they meet the General Policy and comply with policy tests relating to noise and floodlighting. In this case the proposal is for a replacement spectator stand and associated facilities at an established football stadium within the settlement limits for Larne. This proposal does not include floodlighting which already exists on site. The nature of football stadia is such that there is the potential for noise from players, spectators and public address systems or other entertainment facilities. The application site is in close proximity to residential properties and there would be potential for noise nuisance at particular times. Having consulted with the Council's Environmental Health Department, it has been necessary to add conditions 5-11 inclusive in order to mitigate the potential impact on residential amenity from noise emitting sources such as amplified music from within the building, however it is accepted that crowd noise and other disturbance is an established part of living close to a football stadium. Similarly worded conditions were attached to the previous approval on this site.

Policy **GP1** states that planning permission will be granted for sustainable development where the proposal accords with the LDP and there is no demonstrable harm to interests of acknowledged importance. All development proposals within settlements will be assessed against general policy criteria (a)-(e).

(a) Criteria relating to Design Quality and Respecting Local Character and Distinctiveness

The proposal involves the replacement of existing buildings to create a new stand at Inver Park with associated bar, corporate boxes, catering and toilet facilities.

Inver Park has been in use as a football stadium for a significant period of time and the proposal is appropriate for this particular location. Permission has previously been granted under application reference LA02/2021/0088/F for a replacement stand. This proposal is an amendment to the previous approval and actually has a lower visual impact than the previous approval.

In terms of design and appearance the proposed stand is reflective of modern stadium appearance and consists of a main building finished in a mix of brick/render and cladding with a steel structure providing a cantilevered roof to cover spectators. This design would complement the existing spectator facilities in the form of stands and terracing at either end of the existing football pitch and would not have an adverse impact on the character or appearance of the surrounding area.

The St Cedma's Church and War Memorial are located to the east of the site and are listed. The Historic Environment Division expressed some unease about the proposal and the potential impact on the listed structures, however the Planning Department have taken into account the established use of the site and previous approvals for stands, including at the east end of the ground. This proposal is lower in height to the previously approved stand under application reference LA02/2021/0088/F and which provides a 'fall back' position which could still be developed. Taking all of this into account, the Planning Department are satisfied that the proposal would not adversely affect the established built form of the surrounding area.

Criteria (a) has been complied with.

(b) Criteria relating to Safeguarding Residential Amenity:

The site is located in close proximity to residential properties at Inver Road. There would be no adverse impacts in terms of overlooking or overshadowing as a result of the proposal. Residents in this area would be accustomed to noise and disturbance associated with football matches being held and the resultant traffic movements, flood lighting, noise from spectators etc. This would not change as a result of the proposal with the new stand representing a modernisation of the existing football ground rather than a new build development.

Criteria (b) has been complied with.

(c) Criteria relating to Access/Movement/Car Parking

DFI Roads service have not offered any objections through the consultation process to the proposed access arrangements or the internal manoeuvring space within the site. The Planning Department are satisfied that criteria (c) has been complied with, subject to the addition of conditions relating to the provision of the new access.

(d) Criteria relating to Safety and the Safeguarding of Human Health/Wellbeing

The proposal will not prejudice safety or cause any demonstrable harm to human health and wellbeing and will actually improve the range of recreational facilities for the borough.

Inver Park is located close to Larne town centre and within walking distance of the main bus and train stations

The proposal involves the connection to the mains sewerage. NI Water have indicated that there is insufficient capacity at present and that a sewage connection would need to be secured by way of planning condition.

The site is not affected by flooding and the proposal would not lead to any increase in flood risk.

A Drainage Assessment has been submitted with Rivers Agency consulted as a statutory consultee. They accept the findings of the Drainage Assessment and offer no objections to the proposal.

Criteria (d) has been complied with.

(e) Criteria relating to Sustainable Development

The proposal aligns with the Council's LDP Spatial Growth Strategy which seeks to protect and improve open space and recreation facilities.

All essential infrastructure to facilitate the development is either already available or is to be included as a part of the proposed development.

The Drainage Assessment submitted indicates the use of Sustainable Drainage solutions to ensure that surface water run-off is managed in a sustainable way.

There are no anticipated adverse impacts on the quality and integrity of the environment including any protected sites.

The Shared Environmental Services have also been consulted with no objections offered. This planning application was considered in light of the assessment requirements of Regulation 43 (1) of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended) by Shared Environmental Service on behalf of Mid and East Antrim Borough Council which is the competent authority responsible for authorising the project.

Criteria (e) has been complied with.

Policy TR1 – Access to Roads

The proposal seeks to utilise the existing access point to Inver Road at the south eastern corner of the site. DFI Roads Service have offered no objections to the proposal. The Planning Department are satisfied that the proposal is in general accordance with Policy TR1, subject to the conditions provided by DFI Roads Service.

Policy TR5 – Active Travel

The proposed development represents a replacement of existing facilities in a location that benefits from close proximity to residential areas, Larne town centre and public transport routes. The access point would link to existing footways within Larne and would encourage people to travel to the site by means other than a private car.

Policy TR5 has been met.

Policy TR6 – Parking and Servicing

Proposed parking is to be within the site with 75no parking spaces proposed. DFI Roads Service have offered no objections to the proposal in terms of parking.

Policy TR6 has been complied with.

Policy FRD3 - Surface Water Flood Risk

A Drainage Assessment was submitted with the application and DFI Rivers Agency have been consulted. No objections were offered by DFI Rivers.

Policy FRD3 has been complied with.

Policy FRD4 – Sustainable Drainage (SuDS)

The proposal includes the use of sustainable drainage systems to deal with surface water run-off.

Policy FRD4 has therefore been generally complied with.

The Planning Department are satisfied that the proposal, having been amended from the initial submission, now complies with the requirements of the Council's Local Development Plan, Plan Strategy.

8. Consideration of Representations

The representation received was supportive of the proposal and ongoing improvements at Inver Park but requested that further car parking be provided. It is understandable that there may be times of parking pressure and traffic congestions around particular match times, however this is typical of almost all sports stadiums.

The proposed stand is a replacement for an existing stand. There is a previous approval for a replacement stand on the site, also with similar car parking provision to the existing proposal.

9. Conclusions

Having regard to the Plan Strategy and all other material considerations, including the previous planning history on this site, the Planning Department is of the opinion that the application should be approved.

10. Conditions

The Planning Department recommends that planning permission be approved, subject to the following conditions.

- (1) The development hereby permitted must be begun within five years from the date of this permission.

Reason: As required by Section 61 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

- (2) No development shall take place on-site until the method of sewage disposal has been agreed in writing with Ní Water or a consent to discharge has been granted.

Reason: To ensure a practical solution to sewage disposal is possible at this site.

- (3) A detailed Construction Method Statement, for works in, near or liable to affect any waterway as defined by the Water (Northern Ireland) Order 1999, must be submitted to the Council in consultation with NIEAs Water Management Unit, at least 8 weeks prior to the commencement of works or phase of works.

Reason: To ensure effective avoidance and mitigation measures have been planned for the protection of the water environment

- (4) No retailing or other operation in or from any building hereby permitted shall commence until hard surfaced areas have been constructed and permanently marked in accordance with the approved drawing No. 05/1 dated 5th December 2024 to provide adequate facilities for parking, servicing, and circulating within the site. No part of these hard surfaced areas shall be used for any purpose at any time other than for the parking and movement of vehicles.

Reason: To ensure that adequate provision has been made for parking, servicing and traffic circulation within the site

- (5) External plant and equipment sound power levels shall not exceed the noise levels as stipulated within the submitted Noise Impact Assessment entitled 'Amended Noise Assessment', KRM Acoustics. dated 11th May 2021.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity.

- (6) All amplified entertainment within the bar and entertainment areas of the permitted development shall be played through an in-house amplification system and compression type noise limiter, which shall be set to and maintained at a noise level of no greater than that as specified in Table 1.

Table 1: Entertainment noise level (dB(A))

<i>Frequency (Hz)</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>125</i>	<i>250</i>	<i>500</i>	<i>1000</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>4000</i>	<i>8000</i>
<i>Entertainment noise level (dB)</i>	<i>62</i>	<i>82</i>	<i>79</i>	<i>84</i>	<i>84</i>	<i>82</i>	<i>79</i>	<i>76</i>

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity.

- (7) All amplified entertainment within the restaurant and community areas of the permitted development shall be played through an in-house amplification system and compression type noise limiter, which shall be set to and maintained at a noise level of no greater than that as specified in Table 2.

Table 2: Entertainment noise level (dB(A))

<i>Frequency (Hz)</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>125</i>	<i>250</i>	<i>500</i>	<i>1000</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>4000</i>	<i>8000</i>
<i>Entertainment noise level (dB)</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>72</i>	<i>69</i>	<i>74</i>	<i>74</i>	<i>72</i>	<i>69</i>	<i>66</i>

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity.

- (8) Glazing capable of providing a sound reduction index of at least that as presented within Table 3 shall be installed within the restaurant and community areas of the permitted development.

Table 3: Sound reduction index of glazing (dB(A))

<i>Frequency (Hz)</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>125</i>	<i>250</i>	<i>500</i>	<i>1000</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>4000</i>	<i>8000</i>
<i>Sound reduction index dB</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>49</i>	<i>59</i>

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity.

- (9) All ventilation systems serving entertainment spaces of the permitted development shall be re-circulating and shall not have any external inlet or outlet ducting.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity.

- (10) There shall be no external amplified music or entertainment provision, except for the use of the public address system during football matches, unless the Council gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity

- (11) Un-lobbied external doors serving any areas of entertainment within permitted development shall remain closed at all times during entertainment provision, except in emergency situations.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity

- (12) The development hereby approved shall be developed and operated in accordance with the plans and documents referenced at the beginning of this decision notice.

Reason: To ensure that the development is developed/operated in accordance with the approved plans and documents.

Planning Committee

9th January 2025

Application: LA02/2024/0768/F
Replacement of main stand and upgrade of existing facilities and consolidation of previous planning permissions to provide; new covered terrace stand, supporters/visitors areas (to include bars and restaurant) toilets, ancillary rooms and associated works (amendment to previous approval LA02/2021/0088/F).



**Larne Football Club, Inver Park,
Larne**

Site Location Plan



Proposed Site Plan



Elevations



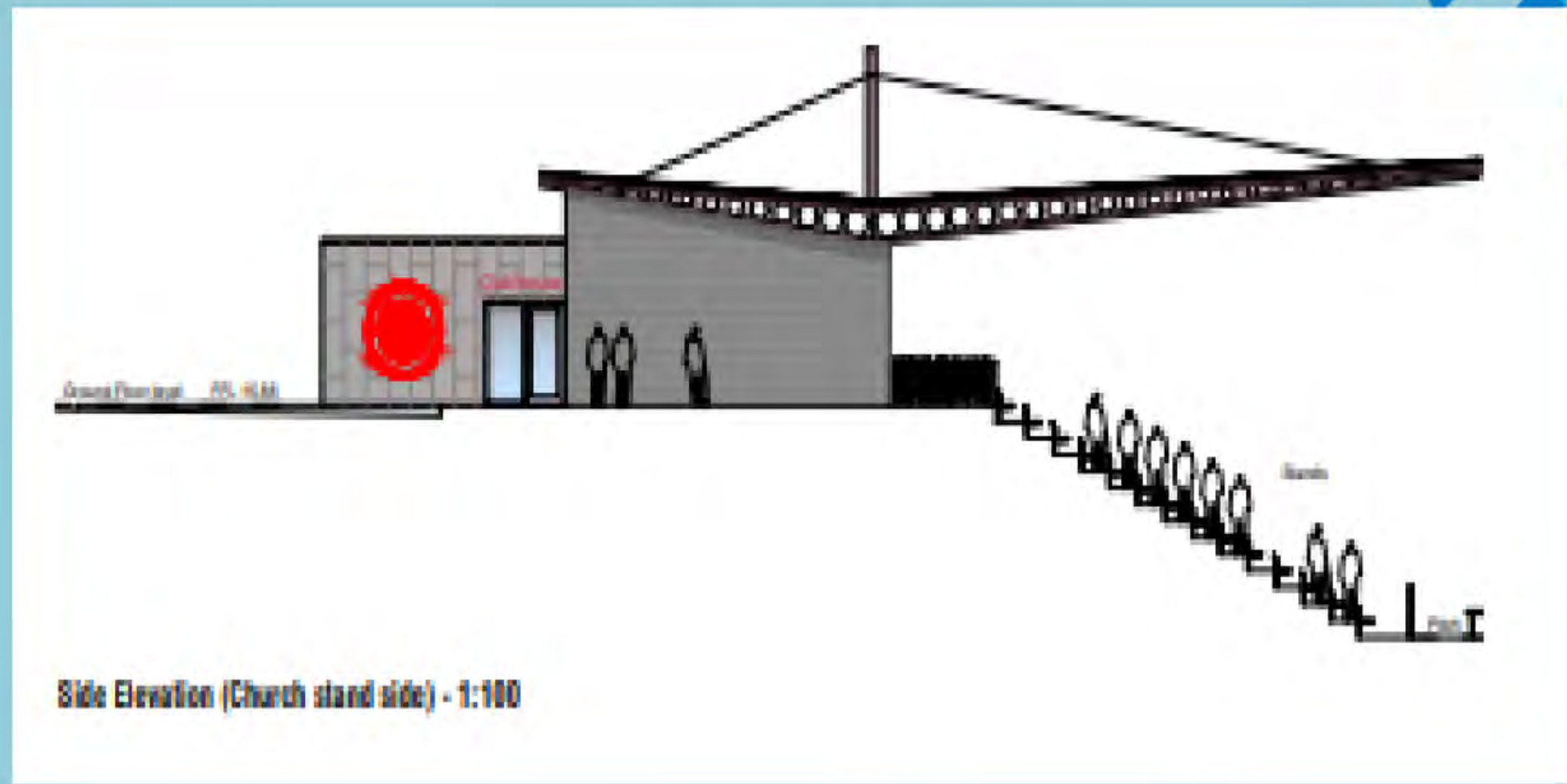
Front Elevation (Over Road Side) - 1:100



Rear Elevation (Pitch side) - 1:100



Sections





Summary

- Proposed replacement stand at existing football ground;
- Reduction in scale from previously approved stand under LA02/2021/0088/F;
- No Objection;
- Complies with relevant planning policy context;
- Recommendation: Approval.

