



An Coimisiún
um Rialáil Fóntas
**Commission for
Regulation of Utilities**

INFORMATION NOTE (CRU2025182)

ELECTRICITY CONNECTION POLICY – GENERATION AND SYSTEM SERVICES (ECP-GSS) – UPDATE ON THE REQUIREMENTS FOR GRID APPLICATIONS FOR THE 31 MARCH 2026 BATCH

The Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) has today, 19 November 2025, published this Information Note to provide an update in relation to the requirements for entering the 31 March 2026 batch arising from the *Electricity Connection Policy – Generation and System Services (ECP-GSS)* Decision Paper (CRU/2024101).

Decisions

For the March 2026 ECP-GSS batch, the CRU has decided that

- The requirement detailed within the ECP-GSS Decision (CRU/2024101) that Grid Applications for RED III projects must contain a valid HLTA is removed.
- Both RED III and non-RED III projects are required to submit a “Pre-application Notification” (PAN) to the relevant SO by Tuesday 16 December 2025.

The process is detailed further below.

Pre-Application Notification (PAN) Process

The process for the PAN will be similar to as set out in the *ECP-GSS Pre-engagement and High-Level Technical Assessment* Decision Paper (CRU/202584) and which was applied to the September 2025 batch.

To be specific, the PAN process for the March 2026 ECP-GSS batch will be as follows:

- The requirement detailed within the ECP-GSS Decision (CRU/2024101) that Grid Applications for RED III projects must contain a valid HLTA is removed.
- Both RED III and non-RED III projects are required to submit a “Pre-application Notification” to the relevant SO by Tuesday 16 December 2025.
- The Pre-application Notification will consist of an application form available on the relevant SO’s website¹.
- A non-refundable “Pre-application Notification deposit” of €7,000 or 50% of the Connection Offer Application Fee² whichever is lower, is payable to the relevant SO on submission of the Pre-application Notification. This deposit will be paid in the same manner as the Application Fee deposit under ECP-2 and applies to both RED III and non-RED III projects.
 - For community-led projects³, the non-refundable deposit will be €2,000.
- If a RED III or non-RED III project’s Grid Application has either not been submitted by the 31 March 2026 Batch Closing Deadline, or if it is submitted but the SO deems it not to be a valid application during the subsequent 45-calendar day Batch Formation Process, then the project’s Pre-application Notification will lapse and the project will forfeit its Pre-application Notification deposit. In such instances, the Grid Application will not be processed.
- The Pre-application Notification form will consist of the following inputs:
 - Applicant Details
 - Applicant Name
 - Company Registration Number
 - Contact Name and Details
 - Community-Led Project Declaration (if applicable)

¹ Currently: [ECP-GSS-Pre-Application-Notification-Form.pdf](#) and [E S B Networks Pre-Application Notification](#)

² See ESB Networks’ website for Applications Fees: [https://www.esbnetworks.ie/services/get-connected/renewable-connection/enduring-connection-policy-\(ecp\)](https://www.esbnetworks.ie/services/get-connected/renewable-connection/enduring-connection-policy-(ecp))

³ Projects must be 100% Renewable Energy Community (REC) owned to be considered a community-led renewable project. See Annex 3 of CRU/2024101 for the definition of an REC.

- Project Details
- Project Name
- Site Address
- Location Coordinates
- Generator Size (MEC and Installed Capacity)
- Technology Type
- Project Layout/planning footprint
- Number of turbines/solar panels (if applicable)
- Preferred Connecting Station (optional)
- Conductor Type
- Extension or New Project
- Preference for contestable or non-contestable (optional)
- Planning status⁴ e.g. the following as applicable:
 - date of application (if submitted)
 - evidence of planning acknowledgement of completeness
 - planning reference
 - expected date of planning permission grant
 - planning permission consents
 - expected date of submission of planning application

Following the 31 March 2026 Batch Closing Deadline, the processes set out in Section 3.3.1 of the *Electricity Connection Policy – Generation and System Services* Decision Paper (CRU/2024101) will continue to apply (i.e. the Batch Validity Check, Batch Qualification, Batch Publication, Connection Offer and Connection Acceptance processes).

⁴ The CRU clarifies that planning permission in this context relates specifically to planning permission for the facility, as opposed to the grid connection.

The balance of the application fee (minus the deposit paid for the Pre-application Notification) is payable upon Grid Application.

As noted above, the requirement within CRU/2024101 that Grid Applications for RED III projects must contain a valid HLTA is removed for applications to the March 2026 batch.

For both RED III and non-RED III applicants into the March 2026 batch, the SOs will carry out Phase 1 and Phase 2 engagements in a similar manner as detailed within the *Enduring Connection Policy Stage 2 (ECP-2)* Decision (CRU/20/060). Applicants will be provided the option to withdraw from the process during these phases for a refund of 75% of their full application fee, as per the rules set out in Section 2.5 of CRU/20/060.

Planning Acknowledgement of Completeness

In August 2025, the CRU published an Information Note *ECP-GSS – Update on the Requirement for Grid Applications for the 30 September 2025 Batch* (CRU/2025123) which detailed requirements with respect to planning application acknowledgements of completeness from the relevant planning authorities. As detailed in CRU/2025123, S.I. 274 of 2025 was published in August 2025 which specifies the process for the planning authorities to issue acknowledgements of completeness of the planning application. The CRU understands that planning authorities are now issuing acknowledgements of completeness within 45 days of receipt of an application, as per this Statutory Instrument.

CRU/2025123 stated that, in order for for the “overall” RED III permit-granting timelines to apply, RED III projects must submit their Grid Application not greater than 15 calendar days following a project’s Planning Application being acknowledged as complete by the relevant planning authority. Therefore, if any RED III project wishing to enter the March 2026 batch has received, or does receive, a planning acknowledgement of completeness under S.I. 274 of 2025, their Grid Application must be submitted within this timescale for the “overall” RED III permit-granting timelines to apply.

The CRU emphasises that the SOs are still required to process the grid permit-granting element for all renewable energy projects within 12 months of the Batch Closing Deadline (or faster where required under CRU/2024101), irrespective of whether they have met the requirements set out for the “overall” RED III permit-granting timelines.

Projects which may not have received an acknowledgement of completeness

CRU/2025123 also recognised that there could potentially be instances whereby RED III projects have applied for planning prior to the S.I. entering into force but have subsequently not applied into the September 2025 ECP-GSS batch. The CRU understands that, in lieu of the acknowledgement of completeness, such projects should have received either:

- a) a letter issued by the Local Authority in respect of the proposed development pursuant to Article 26(2) of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001-2025, or
- b) correspondence issued by An Coimisiún Pleanála confirming the receipt of an application made for the proposed development under Section 37E or Section 182A of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).

CRU/2025123 details that such projects may provide such a valid letter or correspondence in lieu of planning application acknowledgement of completeness with their Grid Application to the relevant SO for entry into the March 2026 batch, subject to the letter or correspondence being dated prior to the 30 September 2025 Batch Closing Deadline. In such instances, the Grid Applications are not subject to the 15-day requirement.

Additionally, whilst the planning authorities are legislated under S.I. 274 of 2025, the CRU recognises that there is a risk that individual Local Authorities might not have introduced processes to do so and therefore might not issue the acknowledgements of completeness within the timeframes required. Therefore, in the event that a planning application is submitted and neither the acknowledgement of completeness nor the notice requesting the applicant to submit a complete application (as per S.I. 274 of 2025) is received by the

applicant within 45 days of the application, then the applicant may provide a letter issued by the Local Authority in respect of the proposed development pursuant to Article 26(2) of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001-2025 with their Grid Application to the relevant SO for entry into the March 2026 batch. This will be in lieu of the acknowledgement of completeness and, in such instances, is not subject to being dated prior to the 30 September 2025 Batch Closing Deadline. In such instances, RED III projects must submit their Grid Application not greater than 60 calendar days following the planning application being submitted (i.e. 15 calendar days after the 45-day period following the application) for the “overall” RED III permit-granting timelines to apply.

The CRU understands that, under certain circumstances, the planning authorities may subsequently invalidate the application which is the subject of the letter issued under Article 26(2) of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001-2025. In such instances, the CRU understands that the applicant will be informed by the planning authority. If the applicant has submitted their Grid Application to the SO and is subsequently informed that the planning application is invalidated, then the applicant must inform the relevant SO of this as a matter of urgency and before the end of the Batch Formation Process at the very latest (i.e. 45 calendar days following the 31 March 2026 Batch Closing Deadline). Such projects will not be included in the March 2026 batch and will need to reapply into a subsequent batch under the rules for that batch. In such instances, any grid application fees paid will be refunded by the SO to the applicant (except for the Pre-application Notification deposit (see CRU/202584) which will not be refunded).

Non-RED III Projects

As per CRU/2024101, “non-RED III projects” are required to have received planning permission before a Grid Application can be submitted to the SO. Therefore, the above requirements to submit the planning application acknowledgement of completeness or the letter / correspondence detailed above do not apply to such projects. As detailed in

CRU/2024101, Grid Applications may be submitted at any time prior to the March 2026 Batch Closing Deadline, subject to planning permission being granted. In addition, the full application fee is payable upon application.

Next Steps

A further update or Information Note may be issued in the future in relation to individual batches, if required. The CRU is also continuing to engage with stakeholders in relation to an enduring process.