



**Roinn Cumarsáide, Gníomhaithe
ar son na hAeráide & Comhshaoil**
Department of Communications,
Climate Action & Environment

Office of the Minister
Fón/Tel +353 1 678 2000
Faics/Fax +353 1 678 2029
minister.naughten@dccae.ie

Ms. Nicola Radley,
Snr. Executive Officer,
Cork County Council,
County Hall,
Cork,
Ireland,
T12 R2NC

24th March 2017



Dear Ms. Radley,

I refer to your letter of 22nd February 2017 regarding a motion by Cork County Council calling on the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government (DHPCLG) to invoke a moratorium on solar energy power plants in Cork County until the necessary guidelines regarding large scale solar developments are in place. In copying the motion to me you have asked that I consider the motion.

As Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment my function is to encourage the deployment of renewable energy in Ireland. The Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government has planning policy responsibility.

As you are aware, there are no specific planning guidelines in place in respect of solar energy development. Proposals for individual solar farm developments are subject to the statutory requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, in the same manner as other proposed developments. Planning applications are made to the relevant local planning authority with a right of appeal to An Bord Pleanála.

I am satisfied that the planning code is sufficiently robust to facilitate the assessment of individual planning permission applications for solar development. However, the matter will be kept under review, in consultation with my colleague, the Minister for Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government and his Department - which leads on planning policy - in the context of the Government's White Paper on Energy Policy, the development of a Renewable Electricity Policy and Development Framework and the finalisation of a new support scheme for renewable electricity by this Department expected in late 2017.

I trust this information is of some assistance.

Kind Regards,

Denis Naughten T.D.,

Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment

Fáiltítear roimh comhfhreagras i nGaeilge