



An
Bord
Pleanála

Record of Meeting ABP-304858-19 1st meeting

Case Reference / Description	ABP-304858-19/110kV electricity substation as part of a proposed wind farm at Derrykilleg, County Donegal		
Case Type	Pre-application consultation		
1st / 2nd / 3rd Meeting	1 st		
Date	24/10/19	Time	11.00 – 11.50

Representing An Bord Pleanála
Staff Members
Anne Marie O'Connor, Assistant Director of Planning (Chair)
Deirdre MacGabhann, Planning Inspector
Josephine Hayes, Senior Executive Officer
Rob Mac Giollarnáth, Executive Officer
Representing the prospective Applicant
Jimmy Green, MKO
Claire Walsh, Statkraft

Introduction:

The Board referred to the letter received from the prospective applicant requesting pre-application consultations and advised the prospective applicant that the instant meeting essentially constituted an information-gathering exercise for the Board; it also invited the prospective applicant to outline the nature of the proposed development and to highlight any matters it wished to receive advice on from the Board. The Board mentioned general procedures in relation to the pre-application consultation process as follows:

- The Board will keep a record of this meeting and any other meetings, if held. Such records will form part of the file which will be made available publicly at the conclusion of the process. The record of the meeting will not be amended by the Board once finalised, but the prospective applicant may submit comments on the record which will form part of the case file.
- The Board will serve notice at the conclusion of the process as to the strategic infrastructure status of the proposed development. It may form a preliminary view at an early stage in the process on the matter.
- A further meeting or meetings may be held in respect of the proposed development.
- Further information may be requested by the Board and public consultations may also be directed by the Board.
- The Board may hold consultations in respect of the proposed development with other bodies.
- The holding of consultations does not prejudice the Board in any way and cannot be relied upon in the formal planning process or any legal proceedings.

Presentation by the prospective applicant:

The proposed development is for the construction of a 110 kV substation and underground cable to connect to the national grid at the existing Cliff substation (3km distance). The proposed substation will serve a permitted windfarm (7 turbines) at Derrykillew (PL05.245108). The substation and grid connection may also potentially serve a proposed windfarm (7 turbines) to the north of the Derrykillew site which is currently the subject of an appeal (ABP-305163-19). (It is one of two options.)

The prospective applicant stated that a new application to increase the height of the permitted turbines at Derrykillew may be made to Donegal County Council. The output of the permitted windfarm is c.20 MW and the revised application would generate c.25 MW

The prospective applicant has met Eirgrid but does not have a grid connection offer. It is expected to make an application for a connection offer in 2020. The prospective applicant was of the view that the proposed substation would not constitute SID and referred to previous decisions by the Board (VC0097 and VC0104).

Discussion:

The following matters were discussed:

- **Technical status of the substation:** The existing sub-station at Cliff is part of the infrastructure for the Cathleen's Fall/ Ballyshannon hydro-electric generating station on the River Erne. Electricity currently flows from the hydro plant at Cliff to the Cathleen's Falls substation (110Kv) via OH lines which are part of the transmission system (Eirgrid assests). Due the the age and specifications of the Cliff substation, it is not capable of facilitating a direct 'plug-in' of power from the proposed windfarm substation without major up-grading works. It is therefore proposed to direct power from the Cliff substation up to the new sub via the new underground cable, collect the wind farm generated electricity at the new substation, and then transport power back down to the Cliff substation via the new underground cable, and on to the existing substation at Cathleen's Falls. This is considered by the prospective applicant to constitute a private plug-in to the network, and not part of the transmission system.
- The Board stated that this is a complex arrangement and it is difficult to determine if the proposed substation would constitute part of the distribution or transmission system, for the purposes of determining if it is SID. The Board enquired as to the implications for the network if the proposed substation went down. It was stated that it such circumstances the hydro-station at Cliff would not be able to supply power to the national grid but that it would not cause an 'out' on the system. The prospective applicant stated that

it would try to clarify whether the existing Cliff substation is part of the transmission or distribution network and revert to the Board.

- The Board stated that further consideration of the issues raised, including the status of Cliff substation was required to form a preliminary view on whether the proposed application would constitute SID.

Conclusion:

The record of the instant meeting will issue.

The prospective applicant will revert to the Board on the matter of the status of the existing Cliff substation and any further information relevant to the consideration of whether the proposed substation would form part of the transmission or distribution network.

The Board will revert to the prospective applicant with a preliminary view once this information is received. A second meeting may be required in order to clarify matters.

When the prospective applicant wishes to request formal closure to the pre-application consultation, a request must be made in writing and, upon receipt, the reporting inspector will complete his/her report and recommendation and the file will be forwarded to the Board for SID determination. The Board advised the prospective applicant that this final stage of the process might take approximately four weeks.

Anne Marie O'Connor
Assistant Director of Planning