



An
Bord
Pleanála

ABP-306323-20

Development	110kv substation at Ballykileen which will connect to the existing Eirgrid substation		
Location	Ballykileen, Edenderry Power Plant		
Case Type	Pre-application consultation		
1st / 2nd / 3rd Meeting	1 st		
Date	25/02/20	Time 11.30	12.30

Attendees		
Representing An Bord Pleanála		
Anne Marie O'Connor, Assistant Director of Planning (Chair)		
Una Crosse, Senior Planning Inspector		
Josephine Hayes, Senior Executive Officer		
Rob Mac Giollarnáth, Executive Officer	r.macgiollarnáth@pleanala.ie	01-8737247
Representing the Prospective Applicant		
Ken Fitzgerald MWP		
Dónal Murphy 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 relates to the construction of a 110kV substation at Ballykileen which it is proposed to connect into the existing Eirgrid Substation located within the Edenderry Power Plant which is located on the opposite side of the public road from the proposed development.

The presentation addressed the following matters:

- **Background to the application** – the current sub-station within the power station complex is at maximum capacity and accordingly the prospective applicant has agreed with Eirgrid that they will seek permission for and construct a new sub-station (to service a proposed windfarm) and connect same to the existing sub-station with the substation would then become an Eirgrid asset. It was stated that in addition to serving the proposed windfarm subject of separate applications to the local authorities, the proposed sub-station will also have the potential to connect other extant developments within the wider area into the Grid.
- **Related developments** – Permission sought for a windfarm of 9 turbines (8 located within Offaly County Council and 1 within Kildare County Council), both of which were refused by the local authority in recent days. It is intended to appeal these refusals to the Board.
- **Surrounding landscape** – The prospective applicant outlined the character of the surrounding area within the vicinity of the site which comprises farmland, rivers, bogland, existing railways on Bord na Móna land, solar developments. It is also noted that further windfarm development is planned in the area with a number of extant permissions.
- **Location of development** – the proposed substation is located west of the existing Edenderry Power Station opposite to same on a public road.

Discussion

The following matters were discussed:

- **Environmental Impact Assessment:** The prospective applicant has prepared an EIAR in respect of the proposed sub-station and the windfarm proposal. It was advised on behalf of the Board that although the cumulative effects of the sub-station and the turbines should be addressed in any EIAR for the proposed development, the prospective application should ensure that a development specific EIAR is provided in respect of the proposed sub-station development and application, but which also addressed the cumulative impacts of the proposal with the associated wind farm development to allow a holistic assessment of the environmental impacts to be carried out.

- **Appropriate Assessment:** It is proposed to submit a Stage 2 NIS.
- **Public Consultation:** No information was provided in respect of public consultation however details of discussions with EirGrid was provided.
- It would be important in any application to draw attention to the regional importance of the proposed development in respect of its role in connecting extant wind farm developments to the National Grid. The potential for the proposed sub-station to operate independent of the proposed wind farm development proposed should be outlined.
- **Preliminary View:** Both the Board and the prospective applicant were of the preliminary view that the project would constitute strategic development as it would constitute a node on the electricity transmission network. At this juncture, it would appear that a further meeting would not be required.

Conclusion

The record of the meeting will issue to the prospective applicant and it will then be a matter for the prospective applicant to submit any comments on this if it wishes to do so. Following this, the prospective applicant should seek a second meeting with the Board or request closure to the pre-application process.

If closure to the pre-application process is requested, the reporting inspector will complete the report and recommendation which will be forwarded to the Board for determination. A decision will then issue to the prospective applicant.

A copy of the procedures for the making of an application to the Board are attached.

pp Rob Mac Giollarnáth

Anne Marie O'Connor

Assistant Director of Planning