

An  
Bord  
Pleanála

## Record of Meeting

<b>Case Reference / Description</b>	Celtic Interconnector PCI10003		
<b>Case Type</b>	Project of Common Interest (PCI)		
<b>1<sup>st</sup> / 2<sup>nd</sup> / 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting</b>	Second meeting following entry into Permit Granting Process		
<b>Date</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> January, 2020	<b>Start Time</b>	11.00 a.m.
<b>Location</b>	An Bord Pleanála offices.	<b>End Time</b>	
<b>Chairperson</b>	Diarmuid Collins	<b>Executive Officer</b>	Sorcha Skelly

### Present:

#### Representing Competent Authority, An Bord Pleanála, PCI Unit

Diarmuid Collins, Senior Administrative Officer

Sorcha Skelly, Executive Officer

#### Representing Project Promoter (Eirgrid)

Eoghan Tuite, Eirgrid

Tomás Bradley, Eirgrid

Donna Hassett, Mott MacDonald

Valerie Brennan, Eirgrid

## **Introduction**

Introductions were made and the Competent Authority (CA) stated that it would take a record of the meeting and the record would enter the public domain at the conclusion of the process. As such, no information that might be considered commercially sensitive should be presented.

The CA stated that these meetings were entirely separate from the SID meetings and process and that there would be no crossover in ABP staff between these processes. Under the PCI process, the CA said the merits or otherwise of the project would not be discussed.

## **Public Participation Concept**

Eirgrid stated that since the last contact, the modifications required by the CA had been completed except for the publishing of the PCI project in the national newspapers. Eirgrid has held off on publishing in newspapers as an issue has arisen concerning a UK consent which it wished to discuss.

## **Project Update**

Eirgrid is working to a six-step framework and is currently at Step 4, which concerns where exactly it should build. Step 4 of the public consultation was launched in November 2019. Converter station site and landfall site location options were presented to the public. The options presented were influenced by feedback from the Step 3 consultation and addressed the main issues such as noise, visual, health and traffic. It is currently at the end of Step 4A, and it has identified three potential landfall locations. Site visits are being carried out to identify the best performing option.

Step 4 documents were published on Eirgrid's website and information letters had issued to landowners/community organisations and advertised in local and national media. During Step 3, Eirgrid received over 1,000 submissions which it had summarised in the Step 3 Consultation Report available on the website. A similar

report will also be available in relation to Step 4. The CA queried if there has been much activity on the project website. Eirgrid will provide figures at the next meeting.

During the consultation period, there were seven open days held in local communities. A 3D visualisation software showing the varied visual impacts on each site was available for viewing. Feedback is accepted by the public through an online feedback form, or post/email/phone. Consultation is open until 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2020. Throughout the consultation period, there is ongoing engagement with local groups and stakeholders. Key concerns were the issue of overhead versus underground lines and possible noise pollution at the chosen converter location.

Eirgrid queried if the ground routing were to change in the future, would that affect the PCI process. The CA noted that this particular project was at a very early stage and that no consent applications had been lodged yet. However, in response to the query, it said it had raised the issue of alterations to consents with the EU Commission and indeed had cited the issue in earlier publications of its Manual. The issue was not yet clarified. The CA suggested that Eirgrid might wish to pursue this matter itself.

### **UK Consent**

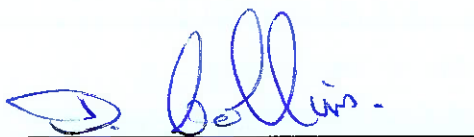
Initially when Eirgrid enquired about the consents which were required for the project, it was informed that no licence was required from the UK authorities in relation to the cable which would cross the UK Exclusive Economic Zone. However, after further investigation, Eirgrid has been made aware that it may require a licence from the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) as it is laying external protection on top of the cable. Eirgrid is currently awaiting a meeting with the MMO in regard to this licence.

Eirgrid has obtained legal advice in relation to PCI matters arising. Article 10 of the Regulation requires that, for the purpose of establishing the start of the permit granting process, the project promoter shall notify the project to the competent authority of the Member States concerned. Ireland and France had been notified. Both Member State competent authorities had admitted the project into the permit granting process and as the letter dated 21/3/19 from ABP (CA) had correctly stated,

the date of acceptance of the last notification by the competent authority concerned (where more than one Member State is concerned) shall serve as the date of the start of the permit granting process. Where a permit granting process has commenced, a concept for public participation was to be submitted to each competent authority within three months of the start of the permit granting process. Should a situation arise where Eirgrid should have notified the UK, the question of the modification or approval of those concepts would arise as the permit granting process would not have commenced. Eirgrid's advice is, in that situation, those purported notifications would be ultra vires and void.

Should Eirgrid require a consent from the UK, then it foresaw itself as needing to re-submit or update the concept for public participation submitted to ABP(CA). The CA said it understood the issue as presented by Eirgrid and would consider the matter. In relation to the concept, its initial view was that the concept process would have to commence again and as such a concept would be submitted as opposed to being re-submitted or updated. The CA would also be interested in any view that might be taken by the French CA.

Eirgrid is to keep the CA updated on this issue.



Diarmuid Collins,  
Senior Administrative Officer,  
16<sup>th</sup> January, 2020.