



An
Bord
Pleanála

Record of Meeting ABP-302725-18 7th meeting

Case Reference / Description	ABP-302725-18 Proposed Celtic Interconnector to facilitate an electrical link between Ireland and France.		
Case Type	Pre-application consultation		
1st / 2nd / 3rd Meeting	7 th		
Date	15/04/21	Start Time	11.10 a.m.
Location	Via MS Teams	End Time	12.25 p.m.

Representing An Bord Pleanála
Staff Members
Brendan Wyse, Assistant Director of Planning (Chair)
Una Crosse, Senior Planning Inspector
Kieran Somers, Executive Officer
Representing the Prospective Applicant
Tomas Bradley, EirGrid
Valerie Brennan, EirGrid
Des Cox, Eirgrid
Donna Hassett, Mott MacDonald

The Board enquired as to whether the prospective applicant had any comments to make on the record of the previous pre-application consultation meeting (held on the 23rd February 2021). The prospective applicant replied that it had no comments to make on the record of this meeting.

Presentation by the prospective applicant/discussion:

The prospective applicant's presentation provided the Board's representatives with a recap and an overview of the proposed development which is for a direct electrical link between Ireland and France; the proposed Celtic Interconnector will have a capacity of 700 megawatts. The proposed development will be approximately 575 kilometres in length with approximately 500 kilometres of it submarine.

The prospective applicant provided an update on the project with respect to the constituent elements of the proposed development such as the proposed HVDC and HVAC cable routes and proposed converter station on the land-side (Irish onshore element) in County Cork. The prospective applicant also noted that further consultations and engagement have taken place with local communities and stakeholders since the time of its previous meeting with the Board.

The prospective applicant set out the proposed contents of the SID planning application; the plans and particulars for the planning application include an EIAR for the Irish onshore element of the proposed development, an NIS for the Irish onshore element, a Planning Report and a Joint Environmental Report (JER).

The prospective applicant set out its intended timeline apropos the various consents which are required for the project; its current intention is to lodge the SID planning application and the Foreshore Licence application in June 2021.

With respect to the consideration of any transboundary effects arising from the proposed development, the prospective applicant stated its opinion that the proposed development would be likely to have positive effects on the environment of a transboundary state, namely in France. The prospective applicant said that such positive effects would arise from the fact that the proposed development would export renewable energy to France and thereby have positive environmental effects in that jurisdiction with regard to benefits in respect of climate. The Board's representatives stated their preliminary opinion that the proposed development

would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment of a transboundary state with regard to the fact that no quantifiable information has been provided to substantiate this conclusion and questioned if the positive effects identified could be considered to be significant. In response to the Board's query on the matter, the prospective applicant said that it is its understanding that the transboundary procedure had not been initiated in France with respect to Ireland noting that the French legislative regime is quite different to the Irish one. The Board's representatives noted that the Board itself might take a different position on this matter and also noted the fact that the prospective applicant itself can initiate the transboundary procedure. In response to the Board's question, the prospective applicant also stated that it would most likely initiate the transboundary procedure with the relevant authority in the UK as well having regard to obligations set out under the Espoo Convention. The Board's representatives requested the prospective applicant to furnish it with such further detail as would support its conclusions in respect of the anticipated positive transboundary effects referenced.

The Board's representatives requested the prospective applicant to furnish it with a set of appropriately scaled route maps for the purposes of adequate information so that the route of the proposed development can be clearly identified. The prospective applicant undertook to do so.

With regard to the matter of public notices in relation to the proposed development, the prospective applicant stated its intention to place site notices at a number of above-ground locations. The prospective applicant indicated three such locations. The prospective applicant added that it is not its intention to erect site notices along the entire route of the proposed cable. The Board's representatives noted this and agreed that the intended approach was appropriate.

In relation to the forthcoming planning application, the prospective applicant stated its opinion that the proposed development would comprise strategic infrastructure and it also noted that an EIAR and an NIS are intended to accompany the planning application.

With respect to prescribed bodies, the prospective applicant asked if a preliminary list might be provided so that it could begin to liaise with the relevant prescribed bodies in advance. The Board's representatives referred to some of the bodies

considered relevant and asked that the prospective applicant furnish it with the list of bodies it has consulted with to date or considers relevant to the planning application.

With regard to other procedural matters, the prospective applicant sought advice on the number of copies to be furnished with the planning application and the preferred format of electronic data to be provided. The Board's representatives advised that a total of 10 copies of the application should be submitted comprising of seven electronic copies and three hard copies; the preferred electronic format would be either CD or USB. The Board's representatives also reminded the prospective applicant of the requirement for registration with the Department's EIA Portal in advance of the submission of the planning application.

In relation to the planning application the Board's representatives advised that all relevant plans, particulars and documents supporting same should be included in hard copy format as part of the planning application. The prospective applicant noted this requirement and advised that a large volume of documentation is likely to accompany the planning application.

Lastly, the prospective applicant indicated that this would most likely be the final meeting in the instant pre-application consultation process. It noted that in order to formally close the process and receive a subsequent SID determination, it would need to write to the Board requesting closure.

Conclusion:

It was agreed that the prospective applicant will revert to the Board in relation to the route maps, preliminary list of prescribed bodies and transboundary matter prior to seeking closure of the pre-application consultation process.

The record of the instant meeting will issue in due course and the prospective applicant signalled its intention to seek closure and a SID determination shortly after receiving the record of the meeting.

Brendan Wyse

Assistant Director of Planning