



An
Bord
Pleanála

Record of Meeting ABP-303322-18 1st meeting

Case Reference / Description	ABP-303322-18 Wind farm of up to 27 no. wind turbine generators and up to 2 no. substation compounds with battery storage units along with ancillary and electrical infrastructure, Bottlehill, Mullensaboree, Knockdoorty, Glannasack, Co. Cork.		
Case Type	Pre-application consultation		
1st / 2nd / 3rd Meeting	1 st		
Date	5/6/2019	Start Time	11 a.m.
Location	Cathal Brugha Room	End Time	1.05 p.m.
Chairperson	Brendan Wyse	Executive Officer	Fergal Kilmurray

Attendees		
Representing An Bord Pleanála		
Staff Member	Email Address	Phone
Brendan Wyse, Assistant Director of Planning		
Karla McBride, Senior Planning Inspector		
Ellen Morrin, Senior Administrative Officer		
Fergal Kilmurray, Executive Officer	f.kilmurray@pleanala.ie	01-8737247

Representing the Prospective Applicant		
Jim Hughes Fehily Timoney		
Trevor Byrne Fehily Timoney		
James Dineen Brookfield Renewables		
Claire Deasy Brookfield Renewables		
Kieran O'Malley Coillte		
Sinead O'Malley Coillte		

The meeting commenced at 11 a.m.

Introduction:

Following introductions, the representatives of the Board referred to the request received from the prospective applicants on 24th December 2018 to enter into pre-application consultations.

The Board advised the prospective applicants that the instant meeting essentially constituted an information-gathering exercise for the Board; it also invited the prospective applicants 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 applicants may submit comments on the record which will form part of the case file.
- The Board will serve formal notice at the conclusion of the process as to whether or not the proposed development is Strategic Infrastructure Development. It may form a preliminary view at an early stage in the process as to whether the proposed development would likely constitute strategic infrastructure.
- 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.
- The Board's representatives advised the prospective applicants that the pre-application consultation is not a scoping process for an Environmental Impact Assessment Report.

The Board's representatives said that having regard to the documentation already received by the Board, it had been noted that the view of the prospective applicants was that the proposed development would constitute Strategic Infrastructure Development.

Presentation by the prospective applicant's:

The prospective applicants gave an overview of the proposed development as follows.

- The prospective applicant, BRIL, is a subsidiary of Brookfield Renewable Partners, a global renewable energy company that develops, acquires, builds and operates utility-scale wind and solar power projects, and Coillte is a commercial forestry business in Ireland, owned by the state.
- The site is located in N Cork and to the S of the N72 Mallow to Fermoy road. The mainly upland area comprises the townlands of Bottlehill, Mullenaboree, Knockdoorty and Glannasack and it is part of a high-level proposal to develop a Renewable Energy Park in North Cork, to provide a variety of renewable energy technologies.
- A preliminary design and Environmental assessment was carried out for:
 - Up to c.35 Wind turbines (since revised)
 - Access tracks
 - Borrow Pits (3 no. Identified)
 - Turbine Delivery Routes
 - Substations (2no. On-site)
 - Battery Storage
 - 2 x underground electricity grid route options:
 - Barrymore 110kv substation, Rathcormac to E of M8
 - Loop in to 220kv overhead line near Knockroura which runs N-S
- Solar development will not feature as part of this application.
- Constraints based studies maps of the development boundaries were submitted with the presentation.
- Following desktop studies and community and statutory consultation, a 22 wind turbine layout is now proposed, with a tip height of 167 metres.
- A site layout map Figure 3.1 submitted with the presentation shows the proposed cable route, grid connection and proposed roads access.
- Bottlehill is occupied by the completed but not yet operational landfill site.
- The 3 borrow pits would be located to the SW of Bottlehill, N of Mullensaboree, and NW of Knockadoory.
- The main substation proposed for the eastern side of the site shown on site layout map Figure 3.1.2 submitted with the presentation.
- The most likely grid connection route for the 110kv line will be from Barrymore substation, as Eirgrid have indicated that the this would be the preferred option.
- The cable route will be drilled under motorways/bridge crossings.

- The site of the proposed development is situated in a low density residential area (c.178 houses within 2km), with a turbine setback of 750 metres from dwellings.
- Having regard to the Seventh Schedule threshold and Section 37A(2) criteria, the prospective applicant's contends that the proposed development is Strategic Infrastructure Development.

In relation to the relevant provisions of the Cork Development Plan the prospective applicants indicated that all site constraints in relation to landscape designations and scenic routes have been considered. Four turbines in the preliminary design located at the ridge height at the Blackwater Valley an SAC, have been removed, and turbines located in areas of Medium Landscape value have been stepped down.

The prospective applicants provided details of community consultations and indicated that further consultations will also be held.

Statutory consultees have also been engaged, including the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. EIAR Scoping report to issue to the statutory bodies shortly.

- **Planning History** - 16no. Turbine wind farm in vicinity of site (P01/6654 ABP Ref. 04.128917), refused by Cork County Council and ABP in 2002, and a single turbine (ABP. PL04.241037) north of Moneygorm (in vicinity of site) tip height 100m, granted by ABP. Regarding the (P01/6654 ABP Ref. 04.128917) refusal, the policy and scenic routes have changed. The zoning for the area in relation to wind energy has changed from No Wind Energy Strategy to an Area Open for Consideration for Wind Energy

The prospective applicants provided details of EIAR surveys and studies carried out to date. Extensive desk top studies and field surveys have been carried out over the past 3 years.

The prospective applicants indicated that it would be intending to lodge the application circa September 2019.

Discussion

The following matters were discussed:

- The Board representatives advised that the preliminary view is that proposed development would constitute strategic infrastructure development.
- The Board representatives advised that any application should address in particular, the potential impacts arising from the following:
 - Visual impacts from along the scenic routes and other sensitive locations,
 - Recorded Monuments, and Protected Structures along the delivery routes, and at Ballyhooly ACA,
 - Alternative grid connections,
 - Peat Stability drainage and water management,
 - Proximity to Freshwater Pearl Mussel Catchment,
 - The road network including bridges, scenic routes and narrow rural roads, and,

- The application should also address community gain and issues arising from consultations with TII, NPWS, IFI & the local authority.
- The prospective applicants said it has had one meeting with the local authority, and that they had concerns in relation to the impact of the proposed development on the Blackwater Valley Ridge. The prospective applicants said it would request a second meeting with the local authority.
- The prospective applicants raised the issue regarding landowner consent for the grid connection along the public road and whether two separate applications would be advisable. The Board's representatives indicated that further consideration should be given to this matter.

Conclusion

The Board's representatives concluded the meeting, indicating that a record of the meeting would be forthcoming, and that the Board will wait for the prospective applicants to revert for a second meeting.

The meeting concluded at 1.05 p.m.

Brendan Wyse

Assistant Director of Planning