



An
Bord
Pleanála

Record of Meeting ABP-304794-19 1st meeting

Case Reference / Description	ABP-304794-19/110kV electricity substation as part of Coole Wind Farm and grid connection.		
Case Type	Pre-application consultation		
1st / 2nd / 3rd Meeting	1 st		
Date	30/10/19	Start Time	11 a.m.
Location	Seomra Mhaoilbhríde	End Time	11.30 a.m.

Representing An Bord Pleanála
Staff Members
Brendan Wyse, Assistant Director of Planning (Chair)
Pauline Fitzpatrick, Senior Planning Inspector
Ellen Morrin, Senior Administrative Officer
Rob Mac Giollarnáth, Executive Officer
Representing the prospective Applicant
Jimmy Green, MKO
Claire Walsh, Statkraft

The meeting commenced at 11 a.m.

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 prospective applicant said that the proposed development is for the construction of a 110kV substation and underground electricity cable to facilitate connection of the consented Coole Wind Farm (Westmeath County Council 17/6292 & ABP-300686-18) to the national grid at the existing Mullingar 110kV Substation, Co. Westmeath.

- The permitted Coole Wind Farm development consists of
 - 13no wind turbines (175m tip height),
 - 1 No. on-site electrical substation
 - construction compound,
 - underground electrical and communication cabling,
 - site access roads,
 - 1 no. borrow pit, link road, junction improvements and all associated works.
- The route of the subject grid connection is c.25.9km along a number of national (N6) regional (R396 & 395) and local (L1826 and L1820) roads. The proposed underground Grid Connection will extend from the permitted Coole wind farm site to the Mullingar 110kV Substation located south of the wind farm.

Matters raised in discussion:

- It was not intended to change the substation that had already been granted but it is intended to update the specification and to allow for a slightly larger substation. It was also proposed to provide a degree of flexibility regarding voltage 38kv or 110kv.
- In any subsequent application it would be proposed as a precautionary measure to carry out both an EIA and NIS (even if strictly speaking not required) to ensure that the project was environmentally robust.
- The proposed route of the cabling had taken into account all watercourse and level crossings.
- The prospective applicant reiterated its view that, as the proposed grid connection would be a 'tail feed' for the wind farm only, and would not act as a node on the national transmission network, it does not constitute SID. In support of this opinion, the prospective applicant cited a number of precedent cases where the Board, in similar circumstances, reached the same view. The Board indicated its preliminary view that the proposed development is not SID.

Conclusion:

The Board advised the prospective applicant to await the written record of the instant meeting prior to requesting formal closure to the pre-application consultation process. Such a request must be made in writing and, upon receipt, the reporting inspector will complete 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.

The record of the instant meeting will issue in the meantime and the prospective applicant can submit any comments it may have in writing.

The meeting concluded at 11.30 a.m.

Brendan Wyse**Assistant Director of Planning**