



An
Bord
Pleanála

Record of Meeting ABP-311032-21 1st meeting

Case Reference / Description	ABP-311032-21 Proposed new tail-fed 110kV substation to connect to Finglas substation via underground cables in townland of Fieldstown, Co. Dublin.		
Case Type	Pre-application consultation		
1st / 2nd / 3rd Meeting	1 st		
Date	22/11/21	Start Time	11 a.m.
Location	N/A	End Time	11.45 a.m.

Representing An Bord Pleanála
Staff Members
Ciara Kellett, Assistant Director of Planning (Chair)
Niall Haverty, Senior Planning Inspector
Kieran Somers, Executive Officer
Representing the Prospective Applicant
Caroline Martins, Energia
Fiona Somers, Energia
Richard Green, Energia
David Lyons, Energia
Paul Cash, Energia
Shauna Woods, Aecom

Dean Atwell, Energia
Darren Fagan, Energia
Shaban Awili, Aecom
Oisin Burke, Aecom
Niamh O'Connell, Aecom

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 provided an overview of the proposed development which is for a 110kV AIS tail-fed substation with 110kV underground cable and associated works. The 110kV underground cable component of the proposed development will connect the new substation to an existing substation in Finglas. The total compound area will be circa 12,800 square metres. The prospective applicant provided a layout of the proposed substation (standard single storey substation) and also a site context for the subject site (mostly rural in nature and zoned as such in the current county development plan).

With regard to the subject site and proposed development, the prospective applicant referred to relevant solar farm planning applications in the vicinity which include planning register reference number F21A/0042 (granted permission by Fingal County Council in September 2021) and planning register reference number 211436 (a current live planning application which is due for a decision by Meath County Council before the end of 2021).

With regard to the pertinent class of development under section 182A of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, the prospective applicant stated its opinion that the proposed development would not constitute strategic infrastructure development. The prospective applicant added that the proposed substation would not form a node on the transmission network and referred to previous determinations by the Board with respect to this type of proposed development.

With regard to next steps for the project, the prospective applicant outlined its intended approach which includes the production of an Environmental Considerations Report and Screening for Appropriate Assessment.

Board's comments/queries:

The Board's representatives stated the preliminary opinion that the proposed development would comprise strategic infrastructure given the nature of the proposed development and with particular regard to section 182A(9) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, the definition of 'transmission' contained in the Electricity Regulation Act 1999, as amended, the proposal to transfer the 110kV substation and cable to EirGrid, and also in relation to the potential future use of the proposed substation. The prospective applicant noted this preliminary opinion and pointed out that the proposed development would be wholly situated within the functional area of Fingal County Council. The prospective applicant also stated its opinion that the proposed development would not be for the purposes of transmission, that it would not be a new node on the network, would be dedicated for the associated proposed solar farms and that any issues on the spur/tail line would not affect the transmission network. The Board's representatives replied to this stating that the proposed development would likely comprise SID with regard to a first principles approach to the definitions and wording of the Act, but noted that this was ultimately a matter for the Board to determine. The Board's representatives acknowledged the fact that its own interpretation of the relevant sections of the Act has changed recently and that it had determined similar proposed developments to be not SID in the past. The prospective applicant noted this and also noted its own time constraints as regards delivering the entire project.

The Board noted that the subject site for the proposed development is located in an area designated as a Nature Development Area in the current county development plan, which includes objectives relating to biodiversity protection and enhancement, and advised that assessments should be cognisant of this.

The Board's representatives noted the proximity of the site to the Broadmeadow River with drainage channels appearing to provide linkages. The connection of the River to the Broadmeadow/Malahide Estuary SAC was noted. In response, the prospective applicant said that Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment has been screened out with regard to any possible connectivity to the Broadmeadow River. It also stated that water quality and biodiversity issues and mitigation measures would be addressed within its environmental assessment. The Board's representatives noted that mitigation should not be included for the purposes of AA screening and the prospective applicant's representatives agreed with this.

In response to the Board's query on the matter, the prospective applicant said that Fieldstown Bridge, a protected structure, would not be adversely affected by the laying of the proposed cable and it also confirmed that it has had consultations with the roads section of the relevant planning authority in relation to cable routes and roadworks. The Board noted this and also noted the need for noise impacts and impacts on residential amenity to be considered with respect to the laying of the proposed cable.

The prospective applicant was advised to address services such as foul drainage and surface water management in its planning application.

With respect to the matter of phasing, the prospective applicant also confirmed that the construction of the proposed substation would precede the proposed solar farm. The Board's representatives advised that the issues of in-combination effects and potential cumulative impacts with other projects, such as the associated solar farms, should be addressed in the planning application.

With respect to the potential removal of hedgerows, the prospective applicant stated that assessments are on-going and that proposals to reinstate hedgerows would form part of the planning application.

The Board's representatives noted that sightlines, especially to the north, appeared to be substandard and advised that this, and any associated works, be addressed in the planning application.

With regard to consultations, the prospective applicant said that consultations have taken place with the local authority and ESB. The Board noted this and recommended that consultations should take place with Inland Fisheries Ireland given the proximity to the Broadmeadow River

Conclusion:

The record of the instant meeting will issue shortly and it will then be open to the prospective applicant to request a further meeting or formal closure of the pre-application consultation process. The prospective applicant indicated that it would do so and then await the Board's determination.

The meeting concluded at 11. 45 a.m.

Ciara Kellett
Assistant Director of Planning