



**An
Bord
Pleanála**

**Record of Meeting
ABP-311187-21 1st
meeting**

Description	ABP-311187-21 – Proposed 110kV AIS single bay tail-fed substation and underground cable connection in Bendinstown, Gilbertstown, Kellistown West, Ballycurragh, Ardbearn, and Ballynuntery, Co. Carlow		
Case Type	Pre-application Consultation.		
1st / 2nd / 3rd Meeting	1 st Meeting		
Venue	Virtually by Microsoft Teams		
Date	06/10/2021	Time	11:00am – 11:42am

Representing An Bord Pleanála		
Brendan Wyse, Assistant Director of Planning (Chair)		
Mairead Kenny, Senior Planning Inspector		
Sarah Caulfield, Executive Officer	s.caulfield@pleanala.ie	01-8737287
Representing the Prospective Applicant		
Conor Frehill – HW Planning		
Donal Fewer – Garreenleen Solar Farm Limited		

Introduction:

The Board referred to the letter received from the prospective applicant on the 20th August 2021, 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 that it wished to receive advice on from the Board. The Board mentioned the following general procedures in relation to the pre-application consultation process:

- 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 in any legal proceedings.

Presentation by the prospective applicant:

The prospective applicant provided an overview of the proposed development which consists of a 110kV single bay tail-fed substation, with associated grid connection, comprising 110kV underground cabling to connect into the existing 220kV substation at Kellis in Co. Carlow.

The prospective applicant said the purpose of the proposed development is to serve as the grid connection for the recently approved Garreenleen Solar Farm (Carlow County Council Planning Reference: 20143/An Bord Pleanála Reference 307891-20).

The prospective applicant stated that all lease options were signed with landowners (4 in total) in late 2019/early 2020.

The prospective applicant said they attended an informal clinic with Eirgrid in April 2020 in relation to the connection of Garreenleen Solar Farm to the existing 220kV Kellis substation. At this clinic, Eirgrid indicated their preferred location would be the southern-most location out of 3 options submitted. The prospective applicant said this location was accepted and is now the preferred option.

It was submitted by the prospective applicant that the proposed substation site will be accessed via a new entrance and access track from the L7111 local road. To make way for this entrance, it was said that some hedgerow removal would be required however, no mature trees would be removed.

The prospective applicant said the proposed development would include the construction of a new 110kV substation comprising a separate 110kV Eirgrid compound and a 33kV customer compound. As part of these works, the prospective applicant said typical site restoration and landscaping works would be required and details of same would be included in any forthcoming application.

The prospective applicant said there would be an element of cut and fill required in terms of some level changes on the subject site. It anticipates a small level of cut required to the north and north-west of the site and corresponding fill required to the

east and south of the substation site. It was noted that full details would be included in any forthcoming application.

The prospective applicant said it considers the proposed substation and cable connection constitute 'electrical plant' as defined by the Electricity Regulation Act, 1999, it being a plant for purposes connected with the generation of electricity. The prospective applicant said it is their view that this development may constitute strategic infrastructure and it referenced two similar cases which were previously determined as SID:

- 1) ABP-310024-21 – 110kV substation and associated infrastructure, Co. Wicklow.
- 2) ABP-208120-20 – 110kV substation and associated infrastructure, Co. Offaly.

Discussion

The following matters were discussed:

- In response to a query on the matter, the prospective applicant said the smaller construction compound (33kV) will be owned by the prospective applicant. In relation to the larger compound proposed (110kV) on the eastern side, this will be in the ownership of Eirgrid and managed/maintained by ESB Networks. The prospective applicant said this would be a typical substation arrangement.
- The prospective applicant confirmed the transfer to Eirgrid would be finalised when all works are completed.
- In response to a query on the matter, the prospective applicant said it is possible that the proposed substation could be extended in the future by Eirgrid, and therefore have the potential to become a meshed node. They emphasised that Eirgrid have not indicated any future plans and said the proposed development is being designed only to the size required to serve Garreenleen Solar Farm.
- The prospective applicant said that Eirgrid's position is that the proposed development constitutes transmission. It said Eirgrid has not expressed its view in relation to whether it would or would not be a node.
- The prospective applicant believes the proposed development does constitute a strategic infrastructure development.

- The prospective applicant said the grid connection would be approximately 3-4 kilometres in length.
- The Board's representatives referred to the cover letter submitted as part of this pre-application consultation process where it states, "*associated loop-in infrastructure*". The prospective applicant confirmed that this was a typographical error.
- It was agreed that the prospective applicant would contact the Board in late October in relation to obtaining the Board's preliminary view on the proposed development.
- The Board's representatives noted that the prospective applicant may request a second meeting, if required.
- The Board's representatives advised against screening out any qualifying interests relevant to any particular European Site in stage 1 screening for appropriate assessment. The approach should be to either screen in or screen out the entire European Site.

Conclusion

The record of the meeting will issue to the prospective applicant and it will then be a matter for the prospective applicant to submit any comments on this if it wishes to do so. It will be a matter for the prospective applicant to revert to the Board if it requires a further meeting or if it wishes to close the pre-application consultation process.



Brendan Wyse

Assistant Director of Planning

18 Oct 2021

