An Bord Pleanála

Record of 2nd Meeting

ABP-313767-22

Case Reference / Description	ABP-313767-22		
Case Type	Pre-application consultation		
1st / 2nd / 3rd / 4th Meeting	2nd Meeting		
Date	02/05/2024	**Start Time**	11:00 a.m.
Location	MS Teams	**End Time**	11:30 a.m.

Representing An Bord Pleanála
Stephen Kay, Assistant Director of Planning (Chair)
Conor McGrath, Assistant Director of Planning
Lauren Murphy, Executive Officer
Ellen Moss, Executive Officer

Representing the Prospective Applicant
Conor Frehill, HW Planning
Richard Coughlan, HW Planning
Niall Galvin, Reeve Wave Ltd
William O'Connor, Reeve Wave Ltd

Introduction

The Meeting commenced at 11:00 am.

The Board representatives noted that a first meeting on this consultation had been held in August, 2022 and that this second meeting was in response to a request received from the prospective applicant dated 2nd April, 2024.

The Boards representatives noted that the general procedures around the pre application process had been presented at the meeting in August, 2022, were recorded in the record of that meeting that had gone to the prospective applicants and stated that it was not proposed to restate these general procedures at this meeting.

The Boards representatives asked the prospective applicant if they had any comments on the record of the first meeting held in August, 2022. The prospective applicant stated that they did not.

Presentation made by the prospective applicant:

The prospective applicant provided a recap of the proposed development which included the provision of entrance and access track from the L3046 to the proposed development, the construction of a new 110-kilovolt substation, and an underground 110-kilovolt grid connection cabling to the Ardnacrusha 110-kilovolt substation.

The prospective applicant presented a drawing of the proposed location of the 110kV substation.

The prospective applicant presented two drawings one of the initial underground cable route options (Aug 2022) and the second drawing showing the underground cable route now proposed. This route essentially comprises the eastern of the two route options presented in August 2022.

The prospective applicant advised that the grid connection proposed is part of a dual consent process. The Ballyglass Solar Array application has been permitted by Clare

County Council under Clare County Council reference number P22-591 and granted by the Board on appeal, Ref. ABP-316043-23.

The prospective applicant discussed a potential alternative location for the substation from that discussed at the first meeting on the 25th of August 2022. This alternative substation location is to the east of the permitted solar farm site and is located on lands that the prospective applicant stated are being examined as a potential Phase 2 of the solar farm development.

The prospective applicant stated that the alternative substation location would provide for a shorter cable route and would avoid a cable crossing of the Oakfield Stream. This proposal is however still under consideration pending landowner consent and no application for a phase 2 of the solar farm has been submitted to the planning authority.

Discussion:

- The Board's representatives noted the need for clarity with regard to the scope of development the subject of this pre-application consultation request. The prospective applicants noted while that the alternative substation location is the preferred location, there is no landowner agreement to date. It was confirmed, however that there was landowner consent to enter into pre-application consultations.
- The prospective applicant confirmed that they intend on submitting the application for the substation, regardless of any phase two development; however, they are still negotiating with the landowners and are awaiting a full legal agreement.
- The Board's representatives asked the prospective applicant to clarify details of the location of the proposed development in their close out request of the pre application consultation. A further meeting could be requested if required. The prospective applicant advised they will accompany any close out request with a final site location and layout map.
- The Board's representatives asked the prospective applicant if they had considered a Natura Impact Statement or Appropriate Assessment of the

alternative cable route. The prospective applicant advised they are currently in talks with Clare County Council, and they intend to assess the alternative location in full.

- The Board's representatives asked the prospective applicant to clarify how the site will be accessed for construction. The prospective applicant advised that they would access the site from the L7032 and the R436. The preference of Eirgrid is to route cables along the R436. The L7032 will be resurfaced and upgraded. They advised that this may cause some disruption to residents and landowners, however, access will be fully supervised, and access will be facilitated. The prospective applicant currently has a pre-application with Clare County Council in terms of traffic management and further discussions are required.
- The Board's representatives advised the prospective applicant that the development would need to be screened for Appropriate Assessment, particularly having regard to watercourse crossings.
- The Board's representatives asked the prospective applicant to confirm whether the footprint / layout of the alterative substation would remain the same as that previously described. The prospective applicant advised it would stay the same, as the capacity would remain the same.
- The prospective applicant confirmed their intent to seek closure of the consultation process and that they intend to submit an application for phase two of the solar energy development with Clare County Council prior to lodgement of an application with the Board.

Conclusion:

The Board's representatives advised that the record of the instant meeting will be issued to the prospective applicant following the closure of the meeting and that on receipt of the record the prospective applicant can submit any comments it may have in writing. The Board's representatives also stated that the timeline around the determination of the request was with the Board, that there was no requirement for the prospective applicant to formally request closure of the consultation process and

that it would give the Board clarity if the prospective applicant could inform the Board if it had any comments on the draft record.

The Meeting concluded at 11:30 am.

Stephen Kay.

Stephen Kay

Assistant Director of Planning