

An  
Bord  
Pleanála

## Record of Meeting ABP-314400-22 1<sup>st</sup> meeting

<b>Case Reference / Description</b>	ABP-314400-22 Proposed 38kV-to-110kV step-up transformer, and extension to the substation, at the existing Srananagh 110/220kV substation, County Sligo		
<b>Case Type</b>	Pre-application consultation		
<b>1st / 2nd / 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting</b>	1 <sup>st</sup>		
<b>Date</b>	11/10/22	<b>Start Time</b>	11:00 a.m.
<b>Location</b>	MS Teams	<b>End Time</b>	11:30 a.m.

<b>Representing An Bord Pleanála</b>
Ciara Kellett, Assistant Director of Planning
Anthony Kelly, Planning Inspector
Niamh Thornton, Executive Officer
<b>Representing the Prospective Applicant</b>
Sinead O'Malley, MKO
Colm Ryan, MKO
David McGrane, MKO
Eoin McCarthy, FuturEnergy Ireland
Emmet McLaughlin, FuturEnergy Ireland
Ciaran McNamara, FuturEnergy Ireland

The meeting commenced at 11.00 a.m.

The Board's representatives 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's representatives 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 opened its presentation with some background information on the applicant. FuturEnergy Croagh Designated Activity Company is a subsidiary of FuturEnergy Ireland, a joint venture company owned by Coillte and the ESB.

The proposed electrical infrastructure will facilitate the proposed Croagh Wind Farm in counties Leitrim and Sligo. The prospective applicant provided some information on the status of this proposed windfarm. Croagh Wind Farm was granted planning permission by Leitrim County Council (PI. Ref. 20.120) and Sligo County Council (PI. Ref. 20/251) in June 2021. Both grants of planning permission have been appealed to An Bord Pleanála and are awaiting decision. (ABP-310789-21 and ABP-310788-21).

The windfarm development proposal includes an on-site 38kV electrical substation and a 38kV underground grid connection to the existing 110kV Garvagh Glebe substation, located in the townland of Seltan, County Leitrim.

The prospective applicant now wishes to pursue an alternative grid connection option for the proposed windfarm, between the proposed on-site substation and the existing Srananagh 110/220kV substation.

Permissiion for the 38kV grid connection will be sought from Leitrim and Sligo County Councils.

The subject of this consultation relates to a proposed step-up transformer and connections works at the substation, facilitating the connection of the 38kV cable into the Srananagh 110/220kV substation.

The prospective applicant presented an drawings and details of the proposed underground cabling route which will run a total length of approx. 15.8km and a site layout of the proposed works required to be carried out at the substation.

The prospective applicant shared its opinion that it does not consider the project to be SID, stating that the proposed development is of a minor nature comprising alterations and extension to an existing substation, facilitating a tail fed connection to a single windfarm. The proposed development will not act as a new node on the system and it was stated that the proposal is not a critical link for other strategic

developments in the area and is not of strategic economic or social importance to the State or Region.

The prospective applicant referred to a number of precedent cases where the Board considered similar requests for proposed improvement / refurbishment / upgrade works to existing electrical infrastructure not to fall within the scope of section 182A.

Giving an update on the project programme, the prospective applicant stated that it is on track to submit a planning application in Q4 of 2022.

### **Discussion:**

The prospective applicant clarified that the 38kV underground cable is not to be considered as part of this pre-application consultation and that the subject of this consultation is confined to the step-up transformer and works at Srananagh substation.

A brief discussion was had regarding the length of the grid connection route. The prospective applicant stated that various possible routes were analysed. The current route emerged as the preferred option due to a number of issues including technical constraints, buildability and landownership issues. It was stated that another site access option is still being assessed.

Regarding the application, the Board's representatives noted the presence of a number of watercourses in the area which flow into Lough Gill and Unshin River SACs. The prospective applicant will have to determine whether Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment would be required.

The prospective applicant clarified that connecting to Garvagh Glebe substation, as proposed in the applications currently under appeal to An Bord Pleanála, may not be an option due to a lack of capacity. The connection to Srananagh substation is being pursued as an alternative.

It was clarified that the total potential output of the proposed windfarm is 48MW. The prospective applicant confirmed that a 38kV connection should be sufficient and it is not envisaged that a 110kV will be required.


The Board's representatives gave their preliminary view that the subject proposal was not strategic infrastructure but noted that the decision ultimately rests with the Board.

**Conclusion:**

The onus is on the prospective applicant to either request a further meeting or formal closure of the instant pre-application consultation process.

The record of the instant meeting will issue in the meantime and the prospective applicant can submit any comments it may have in writing or alternatively bring any comments for discussion at the time of any further meeting.

The meeting concluded at 11:30 a.m.

 17/10/22

**Ciara Kellett**

**Assistant Director of Planning**

