



An
Bord
Pleanála

Record of 1st Meeting ABP-314463-22

Case Reference / Description	ABP-314463-22 - Proposed development to consist of up to 12 wind turbines in the townland of Drehid, Co. Kildare		
Case Type	Pre-application consultation		
1st / 2nd / 3rd / 4th Meeting	1 st		
Date	26/10/22	Start Time	11:00 a.m.
Location	Virtually	End Time	11:25 p.m.

Representing An Bord Pleanála		
Staff Members		
Ciara Kellett, Assistant Director of Planning (Chair)		
Anthony Kelly, Planning Inspector		
Eimear Reilly, Executive Officer	e.reilly@pleanala.ie	01-8737184
Representing the Prospective Applicant		
Kevin MacMahon, Senior Project Manager, Statkraft Group		
Jim Hughes, Project Director, Fehily Timoney & Company		
Brian Cronin, Senior Project Environmental Scientist, Fehily Timoney & Company		

Introduction

The Board's representative referred to the letter received from the prospective applicant on the 29th August 2022, requesting pre-application consultation under section 37B of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended 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's representative 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 made by the prospective applicant:

The prospective applicant, North Kildare Wind Farm Limited, is a subsidiary of Statkraft Ireland and is a part of the wider Statkraft Group, and the agent is Fehily Timoney & Company. The prospective applicant gave an overview of the nature and extent of the proposed development which was stated to be a windfarm comprising of 12 no. turbines with a tip height of 169m. Located approximately 2.05km south of Johnstown Bridge and approximately 4.89km east of Carbury, the proposed development is within the townlands of Ballynamullagh, Kilmurry, Coolree, Mulgeeth and Drehid, County Kildare.

In relation to planning history, the prospective applicant noted that permission was previously granted by the Board following an appeal for a wind farm comprising of 12 turbines with a tip height of 169m, turbine foundations and hardstanding areas, new access tracks and upgrading of existing access tracks with an underground grid connection to Dunfiirth substation via the L1004 public road (ABP-306500-20), and that this decision is currently subject of a judicial review.

The prospective applicant explained the rationale for the proposed development, stating that having regard to changes in turbine technology and the increased MW output from turbines, it now seeks permission for a 12 turbine development with a maximum export capacity (MEC) of 60MW as opposed to the 49 MW which it could facilitate at the time of submitting the initial application to Kildare County Council.

It was noted that a related pre-application consultation (ABP-311394-21) under Section 182E of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, has been submitted for a 110kV substation and an on-site 110kV loop-in/loop-out connection to the Kinnegad-Rinawade 110kV overhead line which would supersede the permitted connection to Dunfiirth.

The prospective applicant noted that the proposed development would be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment and Appropriate Assessment and that a Natura

Impact Statement and Environmental Impact Assessment Report will be prepared with the application. The existing NIS and EIAR will be updated to reflect changes and basis for the project and will include all pertinent information including up-to-date surveys to cover the overall project area.

The surveys that have been completed are as follows: Breeding Birds and Winter Birds, Lizards, Aquatic Ecology, Terrestrial Habitats, and Bats.

The prospective applicant outlined its opinion that the proposed development is a strategic infrastructure development as its output is in excess of 50MW, contributes to the Climate Action Plan, and, as it would provide clean renewable energy to the region, will displace carbon dioxide and is, therefore, of strategic and national importance.

Discussion:

Following a query from the Board's representatives, the prospective applicant clarified that the instant meeting and pre-application consultation request relates only to the development of the 12 turbines and not to the 110kV substation.

The Board's representatives advised that the prospective applicant address in the application any issues that arose during the previous application and advised that the Department of Defence are consulted prior to application. The prospective applicant replied that it has addressed these issues and concerns.

Following a query from the Board's representatives the applicant confirmed that they intend to submit an application for a specific overall turbine tip height.

The Board's representatives advised that photomontages include views of the proposed development from the nearby villages.

Following a query from the Board's representatives, the prospective applicant stated that the grounds for the judicial review associated with the permitted wind farm were numerous and that a judgement may be made in the next couple of months.

The Board's representatives expressed the opinion that the proposed development would likely constitute strategic infrastructure development due to the reasons noted by the prospective applicant but stated that the determination is ultimately a matter for the Board.

Following a query from the prospective applicant, the Board's representatives advised that other applicants are submitting the entire project under s.37B or submitting both elements separately under s.37B and s.182, and that this is up to the prospective applicant to decide.

Conclusion:

The Board's representatives advised that the record of the instant meeting will issue shortly and that the onus is on the prospective applicant to request closure of the pre-application process or to request a further meeting.

Ciara Kellett

Assistant Director of Planning