

**An
Bord
Pleanála**

Record of Meeting ABP-314965-22 1st meeting

Case Reference / Description	ABP-314965-22 Wind farm development. Derryadd, Derryaroge and Lough Bannow Bogs, County Longford.		
Case Type	Pre-application consultation		
1st / 2nd / 3rd Meeting	1 st		
Date	09/01/23	Start Time	10.05 a.m.
Location	N/A	End Time	10.55 a.m.

Representing An Bord Pleanála
Ciara Kellett, Assistant Director of Planning (Chair)
Kevin Moore, Senior Planning Inspector
Niamh Thornton, Executive Officer
Representing the Prospective Applicant
David Naughton, Bord na Mona
Sean Creedon, Bord na Mona
Caitríona Carter, Bord na Mona
Gael Gibson, Tobin

The meeting commenced at 10.05 a.m.

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 opened its presentation with an overview of the project team and stated that many of the specialists on this application were also involved in the previous application (ABP-303592-19) and as such were very familiar with the site and proposed project.

The prospective applicant presented a map of the proposed development site which lies approximately 9km to the southwest of Longford town and spans across 3 bogs, Derryaroge Bog, Derryadd Bog and Lough Bannow Bog. Derryarogue Bog lies approximately 300m south of the River Shannon.

A brief background to the project was presented. Permission was previously granted by An Bord Pleanála under planning reference ABP-303592-19 in June 2020 for 24 wind turbines and a 110kV substation. Current activities on site include decommissioning of peat extraction activities in compliance with IPC licence requirements, re-vegetation of bare peat and an existing wind monitoring mast at Lough Bannow Bog. This site is not located in a SAC, SPA or NHA. Lough Bawn pNHA overlaps with a small section of Lough Bannow Bog. There are a number of archaeological records on site. The prospective applicant presented maps of designated sites and existing wind farms in the area.

Regarding planning policy, the prospective applicant referred to Longford County Development Plan 2017-2027 and its support of wind energy developments. The project site is located in an area designated as 'preferred location' for wind energy on a map of areas suitable for wind energy in the County Development Plan. The landscape character type is designated as peatlands and is of low visual sensitivity.

Regarding the design process of the proposed wind farm the prospective applicant presented a constraints map which informed the suitability of the site and placement of turbines. It was stated that the turbine layout was finalised in December 2022 to include 22 turbines. The prospective applicant envisages the application will include fixed turbine dimensions as opposed to applying for a range of dimensions. The turbine will have a maximum tip height of 190m. The application will also include 16MW of Battery Storage Energy System (BESS) and a 110kV substation and grid connection. The project will include development of recreational and amenity facilities.

A map was presented showing the proposed haul route for the turbines. It was stated that the same haul route is being proposed as the previous application with new analysis being done to allow for the larger dimensions of the proposed turbines.

Public consultation events were held on June 2022, a pre-planning meeting was held with Longford County Council in November 2022 and consultations with prescribed bodies and 3rd parties is ongoing.

The prospective applicant stated that the proposed application is being designed to be compatible with the delivery of the Mid Shannon Wilderness Park and stated that the footprint of the wind farm will be less than 1% of the wilderness park.

The prospective applicant presented the proposed structure of the EIAR, with 20 chapters in total and 2 chapters dedicated to Biodiversity. Work on the EIAR is ongoing and it was stated that the same specialists worked on the previous application.

The prospective applicant gave an overview of the works completed to date and stated that it aims to submit the application in Q2 of 2023.

It was noted that there is currently an application for leave to apply for substitute consent at this location (ABP-313897-22) before the Board.

Board's comments/queries:

The prospective applicant confirmed that the site of the proposed development is the same site as in the previous application to the Board, reference number ABP-303592-19.

The Board's representatives queried whether the prospective applicant would be developing borrow pits onsite. It was clarified that the civil design is ongoing and that there is potential for development of borrow pits. It was stated that the Peat Management Plan would address this. It was noted that the site is very flat throughout.

Regarding the proposed development's proximity to Lough Ree SPA it was stated that bird surveys are ongoing and that the turbines are located further away from the SPA than the bog boundary.

It was noted that a noise consultant has been appointed to the project and noise assessment will be robustly addressed, including impact on residential properties in the area.

Regarding Visual Impact Assessment, the prospective applicant confirmed that a radius of 20km is being considered. The Board advised the prospective applicant to take into account the visual impact on and from sensitive areas.

The prospective applicant confirmed that the BESS will be included as part of the application.

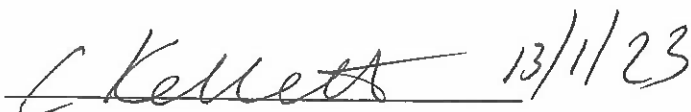
Regarding the current application for leave to apply for substitute consent the prospective applicant stated that it intends to make the application for substitute consent prior to making the wind farm application, however this timing will depend on when a decision is made on the application for leave to apply for substitute consent.

The Board's representatives gave their preliminary opinion that the proposed development is SID, however the final decision will be for the Board to make.

Conclusion:

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

The meeting concluded at 10.55 a.m.

 13/11/23

Ciara Kellett

Assistant Director of Planning