

An  
Bord  
Pleanála

## Record of Meeting ABP-315796-23 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting

<b>Case Reference / Description</b>	ABP-315796-23 - Proposed development of an offshore wind farm and associated infrastructure for Arklow Bank Wind Park (ABWP) located on and around the Arklow Bank, approximately 6 to 15 km from the shore at Arklow, Co. Wicklow.		
<b>Case Type</b>	Marine pre-application consultation under Section 287		
<b>1st / 2nd / 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup>		
<b>Date</b>	06/11/2023	<b>Start Time</b>	11:00am
<b>Location</b>	An Bord Pleanála	<b>End Time</b>	11:30am

### Representing An Bord Pleanála

Ciara Kellett, Director of Planning (Chair)

Stephen Kay, Assistant Director of Planning

Auriol Considine, Senior Planning Inspector

Eugene Nixon, Consultant

Cora Cunningham, Senior Executive Officer

Evan McGuigan, Executive Officer (online)

### Representing the Prospective Applicant

Kaj Christiansen, ABWP 2

James O'Hara, ABWP 2

Marc Walshe, ABWP 2

Eimear Lenehan, SSE Renewables

Ellen McMahon, GoBe
Rosemary Daly, Turleys
Michael Gordon, Turleys

## **Introduction**

The meeting commenced at 11:00am.

The Board's representatives referred to its previous meeting with the prospective applicant on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2023 and the record of this meeting. The Board's representatives asked if the prospective applicant had any comments it wished to make on the record of this meeting or questions; the prospective applicant replied that it had already submitted its comments regarding this record to the Board and had no further questions.

## **Presentation by the prospective applicant:**

The prospective applicant began its presentation with a series of updates on the proposed development that had taken place since the previous meeting.

It stated that work in relation to the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) is underway and was described as well advanced. It also stated that it has revised and updated its assessment approach following previous consultation meetings and that offshore geotechnical survey campaigns had been completed.

The prospective applicant submitted that periods of public consultation (commenced in March 2023), scoping consultation and transboundary consultation (both commenced in July 2023) had now concluded and that it intends to continue engagements with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and other Phase 1 projects regarding the proposed development.

The prospective applicant stated that it has secured an alternative route to the market for the proposed development.

The prospective applicant stated that, following previous consultation meetings, it has revised the project design by reducing it from four turbine design options to two options. Both of these options would be described and assessed in the EIAR. The prospective applicant noted that it submitted material relating to both these options and its design flexibility request (under ABP-316331-23) to the Board on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2023.

The prospective applicant stated its intention to submit a planning application for the proposed development to the Board by March 2024.

### **Discussion:**

The following matters were discussed:

- A discussion took place between the prospective applicant and Board's representatives in relation to the upcoming Offshore Wind Planning guidelines. Following a query from the prospective applicant, the Board's representatives stated that, according to the latest information available, these guidelines would possibly be made available by the Department in the final quarter of this year or the first quarter of 2024. The prospective applicant also asked the Board's representatives if – should any issues arise from the guidelines that may impact methodologies or reports in relation to the proposed development – they envisaged that a request for further information from the Board may be triggered as a result of the guidelines during the application. The Board's representatives stated that they cannot say at this point if the guidelines would trigger a further information request given that they have yet to be published, and that a decision on when to submit the application would be up to the prospective applicant.
- The prospective applicant and Board's representatives also discussed the drawings in relation to the proposed development. The Board's representatives advised that drawings should be produced within the appropriate regulations and stated that sample drawings could be sent to the Board's administration team prior to the lodgement of an application to ensure that they are acceptable

to the Board. It also stated that a drawing schedule would need to be provided in the application documentation by the prospective applicant.


- The prospective applicant asked the Board's representatives if they were aware of any potential updates due to be made to the Planning and Development Bill, that it should bear in mind regarding the proposed development. The Board's representatives stated that they, at this point, have no information regarding any potential updates.
- The prospective applicant stated that it is aware of potential new and potential extensions to existing NPWS designated areas and will take these into consideration regarding the proposed development.
- In response to a query from the prospective applicant, the Board's representatives stated that the Board is prepared to receive an application for the proposed development.
- The prospective applicant queried the Board's representatives about how the Board intended to assess the cumulative effects across all of the Phase 1 projects. The Board's representatives stated that they would not answer this at the present time as this is part of the assessment.
- In response to a query from the prospective applicant, the Board's representatives confirmed that a Marine Area Consent enables an applicant to apply for permission to the Board for the proposed development.
- The Board's representatives recommended that the prospective applicant clearly reference existing offshore infrastructure in any reports and assessments.
- The Board's representatives advised the prospective applicant to engage with the National Monuments Service in relation to any monuments or shipwrecks that may be present in the vicinity of the proposed development.
- In response to a query from the Board's representatives, the prospective applicant stated that it had not yet received substantial feedback from transboundary consultations. The Board's representatives requested a list of bodies that the prospective applicant has contacted regarding the proposed development, and it was agreed that this topic would be discussed further at the next meeting.

- The Board's representatives stated that the Board would advise the prospective applicant in relation to who the relevant coastal planning authority or authorities may be for any application regarding the proposed development.
- Following a query from the prospective applicant, the Board's representatives confirmed that the Board received a legal opinion regarding s.287A design flexibility.
- It was agreed between the prospective applicant and the Board's representatives that administrative queries regarding the lodgement of an application for the proposed development would be discussed further at the next meeting.

**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 Board will revert to the prospective applicant in relation to scheduling a further meeting.

The meeting concluded at 11:30am.

 4/12/23

**Ciara Kellett**

**Director of Planning**