



An
Bord
Pleanála

Record of Meeting ABP-315800-23 2nd meeting

Case Reference / Description	Proposed Dublin Array offshore wind farm. Located approximately 10km off the coast of counties Dublin and Wicklow, at the Kish and Bray banks.		
Case Type	Marine pre-application consultation under Section 287		
1st / 2nd / 3rd Meeting	2 nd		
Date	30/08/2023	Start Time	14:00 p.m.
Venue	Hybrid	End Time	16:00 p.m.

Representing An Bord Pleanála

Ciara Kellett, Director of Planning (Chair)

Stephen Kay, Assistant Director of Planning

Conor McGrath, Senior Planning Inspector

Maeve Flynn, Ecologist

Eugene Nixon, Consultant

Marcella Doyle, Senior Administrative Officer

Cora Cunningham, Senior Executive Officer

Niamh Hickey, Executive Officer

Representing the Prospective Applicant

Peter Lefroy, RWE

Paul Kelly, RWE

John Lowry, RWE
Siobhan McCabe, RWE
Jamie May, RWE (on-line attendance)
Gillian Moore, RWE (on-line attendance)

Presentation by the prospective applicant:

The prospective applicant began their presentation by providing comments on the first meeting which it will forward separately to the Board.

The prospective applicant also gave a summary of the updates on the project since the first meeting. It was stated there are 2 core foundation types under consideration. The proposed development will have a single offshore substation platform. The export cable corridors (2 no.) are proposed to be 1km in width. The number of turbines being assessed remains the same which is between 39 and 50. The rotor diameter range is still between 236m (50 turbines) and 278m (39 turbines) depending on the final number proposed. The prospective applicant explained that the cable routing and design are influenced by sand waves.

The prospective applicant presented draft layout plans of the proposed development. The prospective applicant also provided images and a brief summary of the two different foundation types: monopile and multileg.

It was stated that the Operation and Maintenance (O&M) facility is located on St. Michael's Pier and is adjacent to the nearshore area. Discussions are ongoing with Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council and MARA in relation to title. The pontoon is attached to the quay wall and is within the maritime area which may require a MAC. The prospective applicant will ensure that all the necessary consents are in place when making the application.

Pending the enactment of the forthcoming Historic and Archaeological Heritage Bill, the prospective applicant stated its intention is to keep the section 182B pre-application consultation open in respect of the grid connection. It was noted that the O&M base may be subject to similar restrictions to the grid connection in terms of inclusion in the section 291 application.

The Board's representatives noted that a new candidate Special Protection Area (cSPA) was identified and advised that the environmental assessment should take account of this. The prospective applicant stated that it has engaged with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) regarding this, and it was noted that the NPWS undertook to provide the datasets underpinning the cSPA designation to the Phase 1 applicants to inform their assessments. The prospective applicant advised there were no new implications in respect of the recently published MPA sensitivity mapping for the proposed development.

The discussion moved on to the National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF). The Board's representatives stated that there are 92 policies contained within this framework and it would be optimal for the prospective applicant to systematically assess the application on the basis of each of these policies. The prospective applicant stated it will carry out a diagnostic analysis to review the policy objectives. The prospective applicant noted that all of the policies will be considered.

The Board's representatives requested an update in relation to survey work. The prospective applicant stated that the updating of the radar surveys of leisure craft activity in the area is underway. Ecological monitoring for birds and marine mammals has been reinstated for a further 2 years since April 2023. It was also noted that intertidal bird surveys are being undertaken in the coming weeks. The Board's representatives referred to studies undertaken in respect of the EIRwind project in the Irish Sea, including findings regarding the vulnerability of seabirds to collision and displacement effects. Regard should be had to these studies in the prospective applicant's assessments.

Regarding consultations with other Phase 1 projects, the prospective applicant confirmed there has been regular communication and advised that effective consultations on cumulative effects are being undertaken. A methodology for all Phase 1 projects has been developed and submitted for comment to NPWS. The methodology addresses all relevant topics, including visual impacts, navigation, marine mammals and birds. Consultation has also extended beyond methodology to the sharing of information and quantitative data on effects. The Board's

representatives highlighted the importance of engaging with the other Phase 1 projects.

The Board's representatives queried if the prospective applicant would be using data from other completed projects to assist with the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) in respect of the proposed development. The prospective applicant noted this and indicated that caution is required when comparing data from other projects as the receiving environment is not always the same.

A discussion was held regarding transboundary procedures and issues. The prospective applicant identified Northern Ireland, Wales, Isle of Man, England and France as potential consultees but queried who the relevant parties to engage with would be.

The prospective applicant had a query in relation to the coastal planning authorities and if the inclusion of planning authorities that are subject to visual but have no other effects would be considered a coastal planning authority. The Board's representatives advised the prospective applicant that at this stage it is likely that only Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council would be the coastal planning authority for the proposed development and that any other planning authority may be considered a prescribed body to the application. The prospective applicant enquired if the Board intends to engage with the coastal planning authority at pre-application stage. The Board's representatives advised that it currently has no plans to do so. The prospective applicant noted that it has had significant engagement with Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, and consultations to date have been positive.

The prospective applicant stated that a number of prescribed bodies have yet to respond to consultation requests, and a reminder letter will issue to them in September.

The prospective applicant has also scheduled a meeting with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regarding the requirement for a Dumping at Sea licence. Such requirement will be dependent on the construction techniques adopted. The Board's representatives advised that if a licence is required, it would be appropriate to reference this in the public notices to ensure that the public are aware of this fact.

The prospective applicant noted that Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) was identified as not relevant to this project.

The Board's representatives provided advice to the prospective applicant on the application requirements including the application form, templates for public notices and letters to prescribed bodies. They also advised procedures would be discussed at the final pre-application meeting.

The prospective applicant queried the status of dredging or trenching excavations for cable installation as structures for the purpose of the regulations, and any necessary drawing requirements in this regard. The Board's representatives advised that they would consider this and revert at a later meeting.

The prospective applicant stated its intention to close off the pre-application process by the end of 2023 and lodge an application in Q1 of 2024.

The prospective applicant raised some queries in relation to design option flexibility and stated flexibility would be required for the construction element of the project. The Board's representatives referred to the contents of the letter issued on the 31st July and advised the prospective to submit a formal request to the Board under section 287A of the Act and stated that a further meeting will be scheduled to discuss this matter.

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 meeting concluded at 16:00 p.m.



Ciara Kellett

Director of Planning

