



An
Bord
Pleanála

Record of Meeting
ABP-315809-23
1st meeting

Case Reference / Description	ABP-315809-23 - Proposed development of Codling Wind Park, an offshore wind farm in the Irish Sea, located in the Codling Bank, approximately 13-22 kilometres off the coast of County Wicklow, between Greystones and Wicklow Town.		
Case Type	Marine pre-application consultation under Section 287		
1st / 2nd / 3rd Meeting	1 st		
Date	06/06/2023	Start Time	11:00am
Location	Conference Room, An Bord Pleanála	End Time	13:00pm

Representing An Bord Pleanála
Ciara Kellett, Director of Planning (Chair)
Stephen Kay – Assistant Director of Planning
Deirdre MacGabhann, Planning Inspector
Eugene Nixon, Consultant
Nichola Meehan, Senior Executive Officer
Niamh Hickey, Executive Officer
Barbara White, Administrative Assistant (Recording)

Evan McGuigan, Administrative Assistant (online)
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Ellen Moss, Administrative Assistant (online)

Representing the Prospective Applicant

Lis Royle – CWP – Consents Manager

Sean Leake – CWP – Consents and EIA Manager

Fiona Campbell – CWP Onshore Consents Manager

Jerry Barnes – Planning Advisor (MacCabe, Durney, Barnes on behalf of CWP)
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The meeting commenced at 11:00am.

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 purpose of the meeting is also to give the Board an opportunity to provide its opinion on issues relating to the making of an application and other matters including the NMPF, objectives of maritime spatial planning, the principles of proper planning and sustainable development and the environment and any European site in making a decision on an application,

The Board will not discuss or provide advice on the merits or otherwise of specific aspects of the proposed development. The Board wishes to ensure that the application presented to the Board will be as comprehensive as possible.

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.

- A further meeting or meetings may be held in respect of the proposed development.
- The Board envisages that the pre application consultation process under section 287 of the Act will not involve a significant number of further meetings. Following the conclusion of this meeting, the Board will be in contact regarding a suggested schedule and agenda for future meetings.
- If the prospective applicant has submitted an application for an opinion under section 287A of the Act (Design Options) this discussion will be held later, either in conjunction with discussion under s.287 or as part of a separate meeting. This will be advised to you after this meeting. The prospective applicant should note that a separate Board opinion will issue in respect of section 287A of the Act and that records relating to this application (287A) will not be available for public inspection until an application for permission is made to the Board.
- 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.
- In accordance with section 287(3) of the Act, the decision to close a consultation rests with the Board. At the conclusion of the pre application process the case file including the record of meetings held and the report of the reporting inspector detailing the issues arising in the consultation, will be forwarded to the Board. The Board will issue a Direction / Order clarifying that the consultation has closed and that the prospective applicant may make an application for permission under section 291.
- 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 Codling Wind Park (CWP) provided details in relation to the companies involved, as per presentation. This is the largest Phase 1 project and will contribute 26% towards the 5GW offshore wind CAP target.

Some of the issues raised in the presentation are summarised as follows:

Target timeline: the grid application and MAC were secured at the end of 2022. The prospective applicant aims to submit their planning application by the end of 2023. Construction is expected to commence in 2026 and will take between two-three years meaning Codling Wind Park (CWP) could be operational by 2030.

Project commitments: The prospective applicant is committing a significant amount of funds to a community benefit fund and has established a commercial fisheries fund. The prospective applicant has also released a commercial fisheries and biodiversity charter and is considering options for biodiversity enhancement at Poolbeg.

Project areas: Eirgrid has confirmed to the prospective applicant that the grid connection will take place at Poolbeg. The key infrastructure required are the substation, landfall site, underground cables connecting the landfall location to the substation and to the ESB substation, and temporary construction compounds. It was noted that the elements of the project visible when constructed are the wind turbines and the offshore and onshore substations.

Wind farm: Advances in technology, public consultation feedback, ornithological factors, marine mammal impacts, fisheries, navigation, and shipping route considerations have refined the project design over time. There are currently two proposed design options. Option A is 75 WTGs x 250m RD with 288m tip height. Option B is 60 WTGs x 276m RD with 314m tip height. There will be three offshore substations. The EIAR will be completed based on these options.

There are currently thirty-three viewpoints, including daytime and night-time views, which extensively cover the coastline and some of those viewpoints are offshore. The prospective applicant is seeking consent for Option A and B. Some flexibility is also being sought in terms of the physical location of WTGs (up to 100m), which would take into consideration prevailing seabed conditions at the time of

construction. There have been 12 months of vessel-based data gathered and 24 months research data compiled on this site.

Offshore export cable: The project is envisaged to have three export cables with the average cable length of 48.4km. The cables will traverse an area which has a high volume of marine traffic. There are two options being considered for the offshore cable corridor. The cables will be underground and installed using either open-cut trenching or trenchless technique e.g., Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD). The open trench option is more intrusive and would require a coffer dam. Ecological constraints which need to be considered include mussel beds and over-wintering bird sites. Extensive intertidal data has been collated. Environmental mitigations have been initiated and will be subject to the final design plan.

Onshore Redline Boundary: It is likely that the redline boundary presented will be refined as the design progresses. The site is a built-up area and is constrained. The Hammond Lane compound would need to be demolished to create space.

Onshore: Landfall and Cable Corridor: The project proposes bringing three offshore export cables onshore into three Transition Joint Bays (TJBs). The TJBs will be 130m long underground concrete chambers. The cable will go under Irish Water infrastructure. Archaeological consultants are analysing the onshore site to determine if there are areas of archaeological importance. Construction works will require the temporary removal of two shore side bunds, with one of these permanently removed to enable access to the TJBs. The construction compound will be housed at landfall near Pigeon House. The onshore export cable corridor will be installed using tunnelling or cable trenching and HDD. It was noted there are 150 utility crossings in Poolbeg, but the distance between the cable and landfall is short at 1km.

Onshore Substation: The substation overlaps and abuts Dublin Port Company (DPC) 3FM plans. An area of land reclamation will be required for the new substation. The new substation will be approximately thirty metres high and will be a unique design. There are some environmental issues as this is an area of sensitivity. A Tern mitigation strategy and other biodiversity enhancements are being considered. The project team are trying to secure a consultation with NPWS and are awaiting an update on this. There may be an area of archaeological sensitivity near the Great

South Wall. DPC owns the seabed in this area so the prospective applicant would need to lease the seabed from DPC. This may mean the MAC needs to be altered to incorporate all the area required.

Discussion:

- It was noted that the prospective applicant will seek advice from the Board regarding submitting the Design Option under section 287(B) of the Act. This will focus on two options for the WTGs, two options for installing cables and two options for the cables coming from offshore onto onshore into the substation. It was pointed out by the Board's representatives that flexibility would have to be consistent with legislation and any emerging guidelines (e.g., Design Options circular) and would be discussed at a subsequent meeting.
- The prospective applicant advised that they intend to submit two planning applications. The first application is under S291 for the project as a whole (onshore and offshore elements), and the second application will be under S182A for the electrical installation aspect of the project. They also advised that the operations and maintenance base will not form part of this application.
- The Board's representatives advised the prospective applicant that the above approach must be robust. The Board's representatives advised that it would be likely, in the event that two applications are submitted, that the same Inspector would be reviewing both files and they would be decided concurrently.
- The Board's representatives advised that the applicant should address the aspects set out in section 287(1)(f) of the Act in respect of the matters which can be considered in the pre-application process (e.g., National Marine Planning Framework) and to include details of fit with policy context alongside environmental impact assessment and appropriate assessment.
- The Board's representatives advised that the tiered approach to cumulative impact assessment was in principle acceptable and should include a collaborative approach, including where possible shared modelling, with other

applicants for offshore wind in the Irish Sea. The importance of cumulative impacts were stressed by the Boards representatives.

- The prospective applicant stated that all prospective applicants are sharing information i.e., collision modelling where a joint collision risk modelling paper has been submitted to the NPWS. This data has been communicated to NPWS and their feedback is awaited. The applicant advised that they are working as hard as possible to ensure that the models talk to each other. They also raised the issue of how account would be taken of where some projects were more advanced than others and stated that their cut off point for cumulative impact assessment was three months in advance of application submission. The Board's representatives advised that this seemed reasonable.
- The prospective applicant was advised by the Board's representatives to ensure all the assessments are robust in order to eliminate the need for a further information request which could delay timelines.
- The prospective applicant enquired as to the approach the Board is taking to marine applications. The Board's representatives advised they cannot comment on the merits of the application itself but can provide advice on areas which should be considered in the application.
- The Board's representatives pointed out the scoping report is from 2020 and that the prospective applicant should ensure that the most up-to-date data available is included in the application. The Board's representatives also stated that the prospective applicant should obtain broad agreement on the sufficiency of the data from the prescribed bodies and to close out any substantial issues.
- The Board's representatives asked what the timelines for ordering the WTGs were. The prospective applicant is requesting approval for two options, therefore, once the Board has made their decision the prospective applicant will be able to place the order for their preferred option assuming a successful application outcome.
- The Board's representatives asked the prospective applicant to consider the temporal impacts, if construction is undertaken in multiple phases as

indicated, with those occurring over time as a result of the development and other users of the marine environment.

- The Board's representatives requested clarification in relation to cable laying at landfall points and how the prospective applicant intends to lay the cable across the SAC. The prospective applicant advised that this would be by open trench or HDD methodology. The Board's representatives stated that the application should address likely effects on the SAC with scientific evidence to support why a certain approach has been taken.
- The Board representatives noted the importance that efficiency in mitigation measures proposed would be clearly demonstrated.
- The Board's representatives advised the prospective applicant to:
 - Consider efficiencies for cabling, given the presence of other cable routes serving different proposed offshore wind farm development.
 - Clarify the different role and location of the operations and maintenance base and the ports and to ensure a high level assessment of these in the cumulative effects assessment.
 - Refer to the emerging standards under the Marine Framework Strategy e.g., emerging limits for underwater noise.
 - Consider the effect of the development on the integrity of sand banks in the Irish Sea and consequential sand movements.
 - Assessment of the environmental effects of operational and maintenance activities e.g., additional scour protection.
 - Clear justification for screening out potential impacts e.g., effects of 400kV export cable.
 - Ensure high level of confidence in predicted effects with robust modelling, with identified areas of uncertainty and risk. The modelling exercise should include effects on and of climate change. Efficacy of the mitigation measures to be included. Worse case scenarios should be planned for and demonstration on how monitoring is to be transparent and how long-term monitoring will feed into the EIA process.
 - Address any gaps in archaeological assessment. The prospective applicant stated that further archaeological studies within the area have

not located many additional sites, but the prospective applicant will revisit this topic with a 100m limit of deviation on the placement of WTGs from a central point. Currently they are compliant with legislation.

- Consider the impact of the development on commercial fisheries, shipping, mariners e.g., displacement given proximity of shipping lanes, and to consider the issue of energy security.
- The prospective applicant noted they are working with DPC 3FM regarding the onshore element. DPC have shared their plans with the prospective applicant. The two projects need to work in conjunction on this site. The prospective applicant had a meeting with the Dublin City Council Parks Division regarding access to the site and are awaiting an update. The prospective applicant is trying to engage with NPWS.
- The prospective applicant raised the issue of transboundary environmental effects, with Northern Ireland and the United Kingdom being considered.
- The Board advised further information will be given in the final meeting in relation to design options, flexibility, plans and particulars. The prospective applicant asked if the Board would provide comment on the list of documents proposed to be submitted with the application if forwarded. The Board's representatives indicated that this would be acceptable.
- Regarding planning authorities, the prospective applicant mentioned one of the planning authorities requested they trigger a S247 process, but that all the other planning authorities are engaging openly with the prospective applicant. The Board's representatives noted the approach taken. The prospective applicant advised they were consulting with a Dublin City Council and Wicklow County Council but had not consulted with Fingal County Council. The Board advised the prospective applicant to consult with Fingal County Council to enable any potential future issues to be addressed.
- The prospective applicant mentioned it had discussions with the EPA regarding dumping at sea legislation. The EPA will revert to the prospective applicant and advise on what constitutes dumping.
- It was noted construction compounds to be addressed as it is subject to EIAR.

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 prospective applicant noted they wished to raise the community benefit fund topic at the next meeting. The Board will revert to the prospective applicant in relation to scheduling a further meeting.

The meeting concluded at 13:00pm.

 26/6/23

Ciara Kellett

Director of Planning