

An
Bord
Pleanála

Record of 1st Meeting ABP-317089-23

Case Reference / Description	Proposed 110kV electrical infrastructure and connection to the national grid at the existing 110kV Ikerrin-Thurles overhead line. Co. Tipperary		
Case Type	Pre-application Consultation		
1st / 2nd / 3rd Meeting	1 st		
Date	06/07/2023	Start Time	11:00
Location	Virtually	End Time	11:45

Representing An Bord Pleanála
Paul Caprani, Assistant Director of Planning (Chair)
Liam Bowe, Senior Planning Inspector
Barbara White, Administrative Assistant (Recording)

Representing the Prospective Applicant
John Willoughby (MKO)
Ronan Dunne (MKO)
Niall Galvin (Turnkey Developments)
William O'Connor (Turnkey Developments)
Karen Mulryan (MKO)
Grainne Griffin (MKO)

The meeting commenced at 11:00am.

Introduction

The Board referred to the letter received from the prospective applicant on the 10th May 2023, requesting pre-application consultations under section 182A 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 representatives 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 by the prospective applicant:

The prospective applicant's agent (MKO Ireland) provided details on behalf of their client, Buirios Limited regarding the proposed Borrisbeg Renewable Energy Development, which includes 110kV substation, underground cable grid connection from substation to existing 110kV Ikerrin to Thurles overhead line and breaking into the existing overhead line.

Some items raised in the presentation are summarised as follows:

Introduction: Buirios Limited is an associated company of Enerco Energy Limited, who is involved in various wind energy developments throughout Ireland. The prospective applicant is also engaging with the Board regarding a proposed windfarm application under section 37B of the Act, Reference No. ABP-315851-23, which would run concurrently with the proposed development being discussed today.

Site Location: a map was presented noting the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) boundary. The site is c. 11km south of Roscrea Town and over 2km northeast of Templemore.

Energy Security and REPowerEU: focuses on accelerating the rollout of renewable energy and achieving established targets. The National Energy Security Framework April 2022 aligns national policy with REPowerEU targets.

National Planning Policy Context: The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, the Climate Action Plan 2023 and Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework were mentioned and reiterate strong support for renewable energy.

Local Planning Context: as per the presentation slides it was noted Tipperary County Council supports renewable energy development and set targets on this issue in its County Development Plan 2022-2028 and Wind Energy Strategy 2016.

Grid Connection: the proposed development includes the existing 110kV Ikerrin-Thurles overhead line being broken with two new steel towers. Also, underground cabling connection to a 110kV substation. An aerial view map was presented highlighting the proposed site, substation, temporary substation compound, underground grid connection route and the Ikerrin to Thurles 110kV line. Other items

presented were the proposed substation design; connection; an indicative layout and elevation; indicative elevations for the proposed 110kV end masts and grid route. It was noted there would be two watercourse crossings at the Clonmore and Strogue streams, but no instream works are proposed.

Scoping, Pre-application and Community Consultation: A scoping document was circulated to the prescribed bodies in October/November 2022. Dates of various community consultations held were presented. Community consultations included a project website, site introduction, biodiversity brochure, draft turbine layout and proposed grid infrastructure and public consultation event held in Templemore, Co. Tipperary. It was noted there has been a lot of engagement with the community and the feedback was positive.

EIAR: details on the various chapters and areas to be covered was presented. Two new chapters have been added to the EIAR in relation to Climate; and Vulnerability of the Project to Major Accidents and Natural Disasters.

Proposed Project Timeline: during Q3 2023 more public consultations will be held and the prospective applicant aims to lodge a planning application for the windfarm under section 37E of the Act. In 2024 there will be ongoing public consultations. If the pre-application consultations and windfarm application are successful, then this proposed development application will be lodged also.

Discussion:

The Board's representatives advised the cumulative impact assessment must be comprehensive and noted from the details presented, that the case may fall within the scope of section 182A of the Act, however it was pointed out it is for the Board to decide if the application meets the criteria set out in section 182A of the Act, not the planning inspector in this instance.

It was noted the proposed substation and two steel towers will need to be included in the cumulative visual impact assessment also.

The Board's representatives discussed the possibility of constructing the underground cable along the west road as an alternative route. The prospective applicant noted this possibility.

The Board's representatives noted that there appears to be six households and two working farms along the road where construction is being proposed and suggested the prospective applicant try to include these households, in the upcoming public consultations.

The Board's representatives noted the layout of the EIAR Table of Contents and suggested that the chapter in relation to 'Vulnerability to Major Accident and Natural Disasters' might be placed before the Chapter on the 'Interaction of the Foregoing' so as it can be assessed as part of the Chapter on the 'Interaction of the Foregoing'. The prospective applicant noted they would review and take this into consideration.

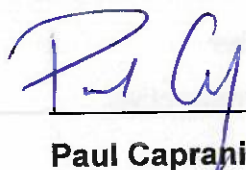
The Board's representatives sought confirmation from the prospective applicant there would be no instream works and, therefore, no potential for water pollution in either of the streams. The prospective applicant confirmed there are no instream works proposed.

Some discussion ensued regarding the Appropriate Assessment. The prospective applicant mentioned the nearest Special Area of Conservation (SAC) site is 17 kilometres west and the nearest Special Protection Area (SPA) would be the Slieve Bloom Mountains. The prospective applicant noted in terms of Appropriate Assessment and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) that the proposed development would be a relatively straightforward application.

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 request a further meeting.

The meeting concluded at 11.45.



Paul Caprani

Assistant Director of Planning