

An
Bord
Pleanála

Record of 2nd Meeting ABP-317599-23

Case Reference / Description	Proposed development of a 400 kV underground cable between Woodland 400 kV Substation located in the townland of Woodland, Co. Meath and Belcamp Substation in the townlands of Clonshaugh and Belcamp, Co Dublin, known as the 'East Meath – North Dublin Grid Upgrade.		
Case Type	Pre-application consultation		
1st / 2nd / 3rd / 4th Meeting	2 nd		
Date	28/11/2023	Start Time	2:30 p.m.
Location	Virtually	End Time	3:40 p.m.

Representing An Bord Pleanála
Staff Members
Stephen Kay, Assistant Director of Planning (Chair)
Niall Haverty, Senior Planning Inspector
Niamh Hickey, Executive Officer

Representing the Prospective Applicant
Dara McGowan, Eirgrid
Leah Kenny, Eirgrid
Andy Scott, Jacobs
Voirrey Costain-Williams, Jacobs
John Kehoe, Jacobs

Introduction

In relation to the 1st pre-application meeting held on 8th September 2023, the prospective applicant had no comments to make on the record of the last meeting.

Presentation made by the prospective applicant:

The prospective applicant provided an update on the proposed development since the last meeting. The best performing option was published in September 2023. The prospective applicant discussed some of the consultations it has had with key stakeholders. It also stated that there is ongoing design work for the Belcamp substation. The prospective applicant noted that their Environmental Impact Screening confirmed the need for an Environmental Impact Assessment Report.

The prospective applicant discussed the design refinement of the M3 crossing and demonstrated this on the plan provided. It also showed plans of an off-road section and the design refinement at the Belcamp corridor. The prospective applicant has had extensive consultations with the landowners in this area.

The prospective applicant discussed three other developments at the Belcamp substation.

The proposed development is a 400kV GIS building proposed to be built within the substation compound. Some modification to the northern boundary will be required to create a sufficient buffer between the equipment and the GIS building. The layout for this was demonstrated on the plan provided.

Regarding traffic management the prospective applicant spoke about the three phases of construction. Phase 1 and 3 will be in discrete locations while phase 2 will

be in a rolling working area. Local diversion routes will be in place subject to discussions with Meath County Council. There are five construction compounds and three horizontal directional drilling compounds at the proposed M3, M2 and M1 Motorway crossing points.

The prospective applicant provided a summary of the key environmental considerations including biodiversity, water crossings, hydrology, flood risk, landscape and visual, historic environment and construction traffic. Regarding cumulative assessment the prospective applicant stated that a large number of proposed projects will also be assessed in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report. The Natura Impact Statement concluded that there would be no adverse effects on site integrity. The prospective applicant stated that the proposed development is fully compliant with the Water Framework Directive and does not require assessment under Article 4.7.

The prospective applicant stated it plans to submit an application in Q1 of 2024.

Discussion:

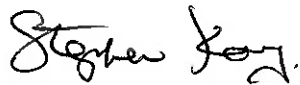
- The prospective applicant confirmed that there are 20 water crossings that are considered Water Framework Directive.
- The Board's representative advised the prospective applicant to consult with Inland Fisheries Ireland in relation to the methodology for watercourse crossings before submitting an application.
- The prospective applicant stated that there are still ongoing consultations with the planning authority and Transport Infrastructure Ireland with regard to roadworks and Motorway crossing methodologies.
- The prospective applicant confirmed that Horizontal Directional Drilling can be conducted while the road is in operation. The Board's representatives advised that it would be useful if there was an agreed methodology with TII and Irish Rail for motorway/rail crossing works.

- The Board's representatives noted the number of data centres in the Meath/West Dublin area and advised the prospective applicant to consult with Telecom providers in regard to data cable routing in the area.
- The Board's representatives noted that other proposed developments, including offshore wind farms, are intending to connect to Belcamp. The prospective applicant is engaging with landowners regarding a future off road cable corridor from the north that will allow other circuits to connect to Belcamp also. The Board's representatives queried if a new road access will be required for this, but the prospective applicant stated that access point will remain the same.
- The Board's representatives noted the busy and high speed nature of the R 139 at Belcamp and the challenges it may present for HGV traffic seeking to turn into the site. The prospective applicant stated that there will be a temporary construction access point from the west on Stockhole Lane.
- The Board's representative highlighted a number of topics for the prospective applicant to assess such as construction traffic safety, potential conflict points such as schools and industrial facilities, the Dart West project in the vicinity of M3 Parkway, a current LRD application in Bennetstown, requirement for substantial soil and vegetation removal, noise for sensitive receptors, biodiversity, species management, landscape and visual assessment, cumulative impacts, and operational phase issues such as methodology for finding and repairing faults.
- The Board's representatives noted a recent section 5 referral (313625) relating to marker posts for the East-West Interconnector, which the Board had determined not to be exempted development. The prospective applicant was advised to consider this with regard to ancillary aspects of the proposed development.
- With regard to the EIAR that the prospective applicant is preparing, the Board's representatives advised that it should clearly state which effects are considered 'Significant' for the purposes of the EIA Directive for each environmental topic and further advised that a table of all Significant effects, associated mitigation

and residual effects would be useful, and could be included as an Appendix to or separate chapter of the EIAR.

Conclusion:

The Board's representatives advised that the onus is on the prospective applicant to either request a further meeting or formal closure of the instant pre-application consultation process. The Board's representatives advised that the record of the instant meeting will be issued in the meantime and that 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.



Stephen Kay

Assistant Director of Planning