

An  
Bord  
Pleanála

## Record of 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting ABP-318011-23

<b>Case Reference / Description</b>	ABP-318011-23 - Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), 110kV substation and 110kV Underground Grid Connection to existing Great Island Eirgrid Substation and all associated site works located at lands at Great Island, Kilmokea, Co. Wexford.		
<b>Case Type</b>	Pre-application consultation		
<b>1<sup>st</sup> / 2<sup>nd</sup> / 3<sup>rd</sup> / 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting</b>	1 <sup>st</sup>		
<b>Date</b>	06/11/2023	<b>Start Time</b>	11:00 a.m.
<b>Location</b>	Virtually	<b>End Time</b>	12:00 p.m.

### Representing An Bord Pleanála

#### Staff Members

Paul Caprani, Assistant Director of Planning (Chair)

Susan Clarke, Senior Planning Inspector

Niamh Hickey, Executive Officer

### Representing the Prospective Applicant

Kieran Tarpey, Entrust

Vincent Griffin, TLI Engineering

David Tarrant, TLI Engineering

Niall McCoy, PNG Energy

Rob Galway, Gore Street
Paul O Sullivan, Entrust
Gerard , TLI Engineering

## **Introduction**

The Board referred to the letter received from the prospective applicant on the 13<sup>th</sup> September 2023, requesting pre-application consultations under section 182E 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 made by the prospective applicant:**

The prospective applicant gave a brief overview of the applicant Kilmannock Battery Energy Storage Limited and the agent Entrust Limited and the previous and current cases that Entrust Limited have with the Board.

The prospective applicant gave a summary of the site location. It is located immediately north of the Greenlink Interconnector and south of the Waterford-Rosslare rail line. The site is sloping significantly, the highest level is 22 metres, and the lowest level is 5 metres. The proposed site is characterised by rough grasslands and a small portion of brambles and scrubs. It is located west of the SSE Great Island Power Station including two substations, the Eirgrid 110kV substation and ESB 38kV substation. The access to the site is from the L4033. The SSE Power Station in close proximity is a SEVESO site and as a result the Health and Safety Authority are a consultee. A previous permission on the site was granted for a similar facility in 2018. The prospective applicant provided an overview and plan of this as part of the presentation. The nearest dwellings are approximately 650 metres from the proposed site. The proposed site is within the environment of the River Barrow and the River Suir estuaries. The prospective applicant demonstrated images of the proposed site.

The prospective applicant provided a description of the Greenlink Interconnector and converter station that was approved by the Board in June 2021.

The prospective applicant provided a summary of the proposed development which is a 90MW energy infrastructure facility that incorporates a battery energy storage system (BESS), a 110kV substation and a 110kV underground grid connection. The prospective applicant stated that there is a separate application on the proposed site that was submitted to Wexford County Council on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2023. The application consists of a BESS, a 38kV substation, a 38kV underground grid connection and ancillary developments. The prospective applicant provided a summary of the

elements of the proposed developments battery energy storage system, 110kV substation and 110kV underground grid connection. The prospective applicant also provided plans of each of these layouts.

The prospective applicant provided an overview of the documents proposed to form part of the application so far and some updates on each topic. Archaeological surveys are still ongoing. The prospective applicant stated it believes an Environmental Impact Assessment Report is not required in this case, nevertheless the project will be screened for EIA. In terms of ecology, two sites have been identified within the zone of influence, the River Suir Special Area of Conservation and the River Barrow and Nore Special Area of Conservation. The prospective applicant stated that a Natura Impact Statement is not required as the proposed development is not likely to have any significant effects on a European Site. The proposed development is also considered appropriate from a noise and flood risk perspective. The prospective applicant provided details on the construction methodology and landscape and visual impact assessment.

The prospective applicant provided information on the Environmental Impact Assessment chapters and the Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) assessment. The prospective applicant stated that the proposed development would not increase the risk of a major accident.

The prospective applicant listed the prescribed bodies that will be statutory consultees to the application.

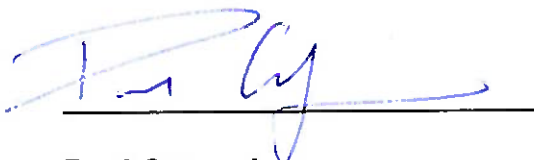
The prospective applicant discussed the Wexford County Development Plan and how the plan supports the implementation of the proposed development.

## **Discussion:**

- The Board's representatives gave their preliminary opinion that the proposed development's 110kV substation and 100kV underground grid connection would likely constitute strategic infrastructure development, but the battery energy storage system would not likely constitute strategic infrastructure development but also noted that this is a decision for the Board.
- The prospective applicant stated it has a pending grid connection offer from EirGrid. It is awaiting engagement from EirGrid on this and hoping to receive this in 2024.
- The Board's representatives advised the prospective applicant in carrying out screening for EIA regard should be had to SI 353 of 2023, which incorporates 'Rural Restructuring' as a class of development for the purposes of Schedule 5 of the 2001 Regulations (as amended), particular regard should be had to hedgerow removal under this class.
- The Board's representatives advised that should an application proceed that due consideration is given to potential cumulative impacts from the proposal with other existing and proposed developments in the area, particularly in relation to potential impacts on landscape, transportation, ecology, and tourism.
- The Board's representatives advised to make sure photomontages are included for the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and that tourism and scenic routes are also taken into consideration in this report.
- The Board's representatives advised the prospective applicant to ensure that the lighting is in compliance with the bats and lighting guidelines.
- The Board's representatives highlighted the importance of consulting with prescribed bodies particularly the Health and Safety Authority, National Parks and Wildlife Services, An Taisce, Inland Fisheries Ireland and Commission for Regulation of Utilities in relation to the proposed development.
- The Board's representatives advised to make sure the screening for the Natura Impact Assessment is robust.

**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.



**Paul Caprani**

**Assistant Director of Planning**