

An
Bord
Pleanála

Record of Meeting ABP- 318491-23 1st meeting

Case Reference / Description	Proposed development of a 33kV/110kV connection and transformer compound adjacent to the 220kV substation in the townlands of Trien, Co. Kerry		
Case Type	Pre-Application Consultation		
1st / 2nd / 3rd Meeting	1 st 18 th January 2024		
Date	2024	Start Time	11:00PAM
Location	Virtually by Microsoft Teams	End Time	11:30AM

Representing An Bord Pleanála

Stephen Kay, Assistant Director of Planning

Sarah Lynch, Senior Planning Inspector

Ashling Doherty, Executive Officer

Representing the Prospective Applicant

Fred Tottenham, Harmony Solar

Damien Browne – TLI

Gareth Cosgrove – TLI

Jim Hughes, FTCO

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 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.
- The Board will serve notice at the conclusion of the process. The Board may at any time conclude the consultation where it considers appropriate to do so.
- 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 any legal proceedings.

Presentation by the prospective applicant:

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

The prospective applicant intends to develop a solar farm (Kilmorna Solar Farm) which will include a 33kV/110kV transformer and associated development including a control module cable (38m²) and 'under the fence' connection to the adjacent Knockanure 220 kV substation in the townland of Trien, Co. Kerry.

The proposed transformer compound is located at Trien townland, approximately 8km southeast of Listowel. Site access to the transformer compound will be via the proposed solar farm from an unnamed local road to the south approximately 0.9 km from the proposed transformer compound.

The location of the Knockanure 220kV substation was a key consideration in the selection of the site. The site avoids flood risk zones, recorded monuments and Natura 2000 sites.

The prospective applicant referred to a number of precedent cases which were deemed not to be SID and provided an overview of the relevant legislation which included reference to the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the Electricity Regulation Act 1999.

The prospective applicant also raised a number of reasons as to why they consider the proposed development to not fall within the definition of Strategic Infrastructure Development.

Discussion:

A discussion was held, the prospective applicant confirmed the proposed solar farm will be in 3 clusters which will be connected by underground cabling of 33kV which will feed into the proposed transformer compound.

The prospective applicant confirmed that the Knockanure 220kV substation currently accommodates a 220kV Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) on the eastern side of the site and a 110kV GIS building at the western side of the site. It is proposed that the solar farm development will connect to the 110KV part of the sub station.

The Boards representative sought clarification in relation to the voltage of the electrical connection within both the proposed solar development and the connection

to the proposed transformer compound. The applicant confirmed that the solar development would be connected via a 33kV cable which would connect into the proposed transformer compound within which the connection would be stepped up to a 110kV via a transformer and would then connect to the 110kV section of the existing Knockanure substation.

Clarification was also sought by the Board's representative in relation access, biodiversity, ex-situ impacts from the nearby Natura 200 site and consultation.

The applicant confirmed that public consultations are ongoing as are surveys in advance of the preparation of an application for the solar farm.

The Boards representatives sought clarification with regard to the connection between the transformer compound / site and the sub station site and specifically whether this was proposed to be an above ground or underground connection. The prospective applicant confirmed that this connection would be via underground 110kv cable in the form of an 'under the fence' type connection.

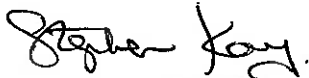
In response to a question, the prospective applicants stated that on completion of the overall solar farm development the proposed transformer compound would become an ESB asset.

The Board's representatives stated that their preliminary view based on the information presented is that the proposed application is not a Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID), however they advised the prospective applicant that the final decision on the matter rests with the Board.

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 either request a further meeting or close the consultation process.

The meeting concluded at 11:30am

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Stephen Kay", positioned above a horizontal line.

Stephen Kay

Assistant Director of Planning