



An  
Bord  
Pleanála

## Record of 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting ABP-318666-23 (PC)

<b>Case Reference / Description</b>	ABP-318666-23 - Proposed development of 11 Wind Turbines, Ballincor Wind Farm County Tipperary and County Offaly.		
<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>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Meeting		
<b>Date</b>	07/05/2025	<b>Start Time</b>	11:00am
<b>Location</b>	MS Teams	<b>End Time</b>	12:00pm

### Representing An Bord Pleanála

Una Crosse, Assistant Director of Planning (Chair)

Brendan Coyne, Senior Planning Inspector

Lauren Murphy, Executive Officer

### Representing the Prospective Applicant

John Dillon – TOBIN

Eirene Varghese – TOBIN

Yolonde McMahon – TOBIN

Cliona O'Sullivan - RWE

Sean Galvin – RWE

## **Introduction**

The Meeting commenced at 11:00 am.

The Board referred to the letter received from the prospective applicant on the 17<sup>th</sup> April 2025, requesting a second pre-application consultation meeting under section 37B 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 began the presentation by discussing the meeting agenda and providing a brief introduction to RWE.

The prospective applicant recapped on the points discussed in the 1<sup>st</sup> pre application consultation meeting and the relevant issues raised by the Board.

Further on the prospective applicant discussed key points raised by Offaly County Council and Tipperary County Council during pre-planning consultations held.

The prospective applicant discussed the proposed site location and key features including the proposed access route, site characteristics and distance to surrounding townlands.

The prospective applicant provided an outline of the proposed 11 wind turbines and the grid connection route layout and provided their justification for the proposed development falling within the scope of Strategic Infrastructure Development.

The prospective applicant presented a drawing and briefly discussed surrounding Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas located near the proposed development site.

The prospective applicant discussed European, national, and local policy context in relation to the proposed development.

The prospective applicant concluded the meeting presentation by discussing the EIAR scoping, Biodiversity surveys, landscape and visual assessments, the public consultation to date and their intended next steps in relation to the proposed development.

## **Discussion:**

- The Board's representatives began the discussion by seeking clarity on the type of ground cover located in the centre of the proposed development site. The prospective applicant advised that this area is degraded raised bog and also noted that they are intending on adding habitat enhancement plans for this area of the proposed site as part of their biodiversity assessment.
- Following on from a point raised by the Board's representatives, the prospective applicant advised that the proposed development is located approx. 3km from the Birr Airfield and is located outside of their zone of influence. They also advised that they have consulted with the Airfield and provided them with a layout of the proposed turbine locations.
- The Board's representatives noted that it would appear from the wind energy policy pertaining to the site that the proposed development may constitute a material contravention of both development plans (Offaly & Tipperary County Development Plans) and advised the prospective applicant to provide a detailed planning statement addressing this consideration.
- Following on, the Board's representatives noted the proximate Special Area of Conservation to the site and advised the prospective applicant to undertake comprehensive surveys and provide detailed examination of same to facilitate the consideration of the proposed development.
- The Board's representatives advised the prospective applicant to robustly address other environmental considerations as they relate to groundwater, surface water and soil, as a portion of the site is included within the Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) mapping database as susceptible to landslides.
- Following a query raised by the Board's representatives, the prospective applicant outlined that they are undertaking an assessment in respect of compliance with the Water Framework Directive as part of their planning application.
- Following a query raised by the Board's representatives, the prospective applicant advised that the proposed grid connection route follows the local road

around Birr Castle to minimise impact on same and has received positive feedback from Birr Castle in relation to this.

- The Board's representatives advised the prospective applicant that to address matters arising in respect of the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) component of the proposed development that the application should include a Fire Safety Management Plan, and an Emergency Response Plan are included as part of the planning application.
- The Board's representatives asked the prospective applicant to submit a paper copy of the proposed site layout at an appropriate scale following this meeting.

#### **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.

The meeting concluded at 12:00pm.



**Una Crosse**

**Assistant Director of Planning**