

An
Bord
Pleanála

Record of 1st Meeting ABP-319602-24

Case Reference / Description	ABP-319602-24		
Case Type	Pre-application consultation		
1st / 2nd / 3rd / 4th Meeting	1 st		
Date	22/05/2024	Start Time	14:40
Location	Virtually	End Time	15:30

Representing An Bord Pleanála
Staff Members
Stephen Kay, Assistant Director of Planning (Chair)
Pauline Fitzpatrick, Senior Planning Inspector
Raymond Muwaniri, Executive Officer

Representing the Prospective Applicant
Louise Byne, Senior Planner, Tobin Consulting Engineers
John Staunton, Senior Project Manager, Tobin Consulting Engineers
Yolande McMahon, Planner, Tobin Consulting Engineers
Emer Campbell, Project Manager, FuturEnergy Ireland
Sinead O'Malley, Planning Manager, FuturEnergy Ireland

Introduction

The Board referred to the letter received from the prospective applicant on the 22nd May 2024, requesting pre-application consultations under section 37CC of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and advised the prospective applicant that the purpose of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for the prospective applicant to present their request for design flexibility and to aid the Board's representatives in their understanding of the request and their recommendation as to whether it is appropriate that the proposed application be made and decided before the prospective applicant has confirmed certain details of the application. It was noted that the request for design flexibility related to the concurrent pre-application for a windfarm on the site under s.37B of the Act (ABP ref. 319601-24).

The Board's representatives mentioned the following general procedures:

- The Board will keep a record of this meeting. The record of the meeting will not be available for public inspection until an application for permission is made to the Board. The record of the meeting will not be amended by the Board once finalised, but the prospective application may submit comments on the record which will form part of the case file.
- The Board may at any time conclude the consultation where it considers it appropriate to do so. Following the conclusion of the consultation the Board will issue an opinion regarding the design options as set out under section 37CD of the Act. Any opinion issued will not be available for public inspection until an application for permission is made to the Board.
- 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 listed their unconfirmed details of the proposed development in which they are requesting design flexibility on. These details are the turbine tip height (between 179.5m – 185m), rotor diameter (between 149m – 163m), hub height (between 102.5m – 110.5m) and power output (between 85.5 – 108MW).

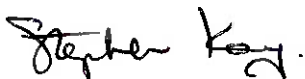
The prospective applicant noted that the circumstances which justify the flexibility sought is set out in the cover letter submitted with the request.

Discussion:

- The Board's representatives clarified that everything in relation to design flexibility must be presented and discussed at this meeting as there will be no further meetings under section 37CC.
- The Board's representatives stated that their preliminary view was that the maximum export capacity may not be considered a flexible design detail as it is an output of the other details in respect of which design flexibility would be agreed. The representatives stated that the final decision on this, the inclusion or otherwise of this detail in the opinion issued was one for the Board and stated that it would therefore be included as part of the request and addressed in the report that would go to the Board.
- The prospective applicant enquired if there had been any decisions made on similar pre-application cases. The Board's representatives replied that only 1 case had been decided, but the details of the Board's opinion cannot be discussed as it is not public until an application is made. The prospective applicant stated that this was their third meeting in respect of a request for a design flexibility opinion under s.37CC of the Act. These requests all relate to onshore wind energy projects and requests for opinions on similar details to those presented in this request.
- The Board's representatives said that the provision of the dimension at this design flexibility stage is useful to the Board and may help to get an understanding of the design flexibility request. Although the prospective applicant may have indicated potential dimensions in the design flexibility request, those dimensions will not form part of the opinion which will be issued by the Board and the prospective applicant is not bound to the range provided herein in its application for permission.
- The prospective applicant confirmed that they are happy with the turbine range as presented in the design flexibility request.

Conclusion:

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 they may have in writing or alternatively bring any comments for discussion at the time of any further meeting. Following circulation of the meeting record, it was requested that the prospective applicant respond to the Board even if they had no comments to make. On receipt of a response from the prospective applicant the Board will close the consultation process and proceed to determine the request.



Stephen Kay**Assistant Director of Planning**