



An  
Bord  
Pleanála

## Record of 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting ABP-320137-24

<b>Case Reference / Description</b>	Proposed development of a 9 no. wind turbine renewable energy project and 110kV on site substation, in the townlands of Cushina, Clonsast Lower and Chevychase or Derrynadarragh near Bracknagh, in County Offaly and the townlands of Aughrim and Derrylea near Monastervin in County Kildare		
<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> Meeting		
<b>Date</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	<b>Start Time</b>	11:00am
<b>Location</b>	MS Teams	<b>End Time</b>	11:45am

### Representing An Bord Pleanála

Una Crosse (Assistant Planning Director) Chair

Laura Finn (Senior Planning Inspector)

Lauren Murphy (Executive Officer)

### Representing the Prospective Applicant

Nicholas Lyons, Dara Energy Limited

Damien Courtney, Dara Energy Limited

John Crean, Dara Energy Limited

Austin Coughlan, Dara Energy Limited

Jim Hughes, Fehily Timoney

Robyn Nicholl, Fehily Timoney
Patrick Crushell, Ecologist

## Introduction

The Board referred to the letter received from the prospective applicant on the 9<sup>th</sup> July 2024, requesting pre-application consultations under section 37E 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 provided a presentation to the Board's representatives in respect of the proposed development. This presentation has been placed on the file.

The prospective applicant concluded the meeting presentation by discussing next steps they intend to take, and if no further pre application meeting is required they intend to seek closure of this pre application consultation.

### **Discussion:**

- The Boards representatives began the discussion by raising a question in relation to the purpose of the proposed bridge development crossing the Cushina River. The prospective applicant clarified that the purpose of this bridge crossing will be used as a Turbine Delivery Route during the construction phase and thereafter as access to the proposed site during the operational stage.
- The Boards representatives sought clarity on any consultations that had been undertaken with prescribed bodies in relation to the proposed bridge crossing with the prospective applicant clarifying that they propose to consult with the Office of Public Works (OPW) and Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI). The prospective applicant stated that they have carried out flood risk assessments which will make up part of their Natura Impact Statement as part of their planning application.
- The prospective applicant stated that their design team will assess the proposed bridge and propose a method of construction to comply with the guidelines set out by the OPW and IFI and will obtain the necessary licences. They will also include a comprehensive construction methodology report as part of their Environmental Impact Assessment.

- The Boards representatives note that there are two proposed substations associated with the proposed development and questioned the rationale for same. The prospective applicant clarified that the Brathlone 110kV substation is already permitted, however it has not yet been constructed and the proposed 110kV substation located on site would be constructed and handed over to EirGrid to become part of the network. Cumulative impacts of the Brathlone substation development will be identified with the EIAR.
- The prospective applicant clarified that at this stage it was proposed to submit one EIAR in respect of both the proposed wind energy and grid connection infrastructure.
- The prospective applicant queries if the proposed 110kV substation could be submitted as part of the Wind Farm development application under Section 37B of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. The Board representatives noted that the Board had previously accepted applications that incorporated both wind energy and grid connection infrastructure under s.37, however the final decision on the most appropriate way in which to present such applications lies with the prospective applicant informed by their own advice.
- The prospective applicant outlined that they have consulted with EirGrid and presented them with assessments and studies carried out to date. EirGrid will not provide a formal grid connection offer until planning permission for the proposed development has been approved. However, the prospective applicant stated that as a preliminary view based on consultations undertaken with EirGrid, there is currently capacity to connect the proposed development to the Brathlone 110kV substation.
- The prospective applicant clarified that there are multiple landowners but are unsure of the exact figure but c. 6-10 landowners.

- The Boards representatives gave their preliminary opinion that the proposed development falls within the scope of Strategic Infrastructure Development but stated that the final determination is a matter for the Board.

**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 pre-application consultation process. The Board's representatives advised that the record of the 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.

The Meeting concluded at 11:45am.



**Una Crosse**

**Assistant Director of Planning**