



An  
Bord  
Pleanála

## Record of 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting ABP-321855-25

<b>Case Reference / Description</b>	Proposed AIS tail fed substation with associated grid connection to connect to existing 220/110kV Kellis Substation located in the townlands of Ballyloo, Linkardstown, Kilballyhue, Graiguenspiddoge, Castletown, Moyle Big, Kellistown West & Kellistown East, County Carlow.		
<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>	31/03/2025	<b>Start Time</b>	11:00am
<b>Location</b>	Virtually	<b>End Time</b>	11:25am

### Representing An Bord Pleanála

Una Crosse, Assistant Planning Director, Chair

Bríd Maxwell, Planning Inspector

Lauren Murphy, Executive Officer

Sinead White, Executive Officer

### Representing the Prospective Applicant

Mark McCarthy, Ballyloo Solar Farm Limited

## **Introduction**

The Board referred to the letter received from the prospective applicant on the 10<sup>th</sup> February 2025, 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 presentation, which is on the file, outlined the nature of the subject application and the status of the proposed solar farms which it is intended to serve. The prospective applicant outlined the context of the site and wider area and the 220/110kV Kellis substation and the road and rail network. The nearest European designated site is the River Barrow and River Nore SAC which is approximately 4km to the west of the proposed substation.

The proposed substation will be either an Air Insulated Switchgear (AIS) or Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) tail fed substation with the associated grid connection comprising underground cabling which will connect into the existing 220/110kV Kellis substation.

The prospective applicant discussed relevant planning policies including national, regional and local, before also discussing legislative considerations in relation to strategic infrastructure developments.

The presentation was concluded by the prospective applicant discussing what documentation would be submitted to the Board if it's confirmed that the development is strategic infrastructure and stated that they believe the development does fall within the scope of strategic infrastructure development.

**Discussion:**

- The Board's representatives began the discussion by querying the policy relevant to the proposal before asking if alternative routes had been considered for the grid connection. The prospective applicant informed the Board's representatives that three other options were considered before they settled on the current proposed grid connection.

- The Board's representatives advised the prospective applicant that any Natura Impact Statement submitted to Board should be robust.
- The prospective applicant informed the Board's representatives that a lot of site analysis and assessment has been carried out as part of associated planning applications including substantial archaeological site investigation which resulted in the current alternative site location for the proposed substation from that originally envisaged. The policy pertaining to the development of solar within the area was noted with the renewable energy strategy supporting structures like substations.
- The Board's representatives concluded the meeting by advising the prospective applicant that it was their preliminary view that the proposed development does fall within the scope of strategic infrastructure development, but that the final and 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 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 11:25am.



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**Una Crosse**

**Assistant Director of Planning**