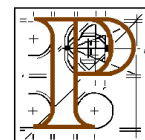


# Record Of Meeting

An Bord Pleanála



<b>Case Reference/Description</b>	04.HC0001 M28 Cork to Ringaskiddy Motorway Scheme.		
<b>Case Type:</b>	Pre-app consultation		
<b>Meeting:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup>		
<b>Date:</b>	24 <sup>th</sup> July, 2015	11a.m.	
<b>Location:</b>	Conference Room		
<b>Chairperson:</b>	Philip Green		

## Attendees:

### Representing An Bord Pleanála

Philip Green – Assistant Director of Planning

Stephen Kay – Senior Planning Inspector

Diarmuid Collins – Senior Administrative Officer

Kieran Somers – Executive Officer

### Representing Prospective Applicant

Paul Moran, Regional Manager, National Roads Authority

Tony Mullane, Projects Manager, Cork National Roads Design Office

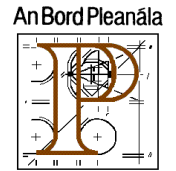
Ross Palmer, Senior Executive Planner, Cork County Council

Peter O' Donoghue, Senior Engineer, Cork County Council

Michael Noonan, Transportation Director (Roads), RPS

The meeting commenced at 11.00 a.m.

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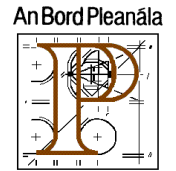
## Introduction:

The Board referred to the letter received from the prospective applicant dated the 5<sup>th</sup> June, 2015 formally requesting pre-application consultations with the Board. It 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 the pre-application consultations.
- Any comments on the record may be made in writing and will be put on file, or can be communicated at the time of the next meeting.
- A copy of the record will become public when consultations are completed. The record will be placed with the application documents once the application has been submitted for approval.
- The meeting is an information gathering exercise and may provide advice on the potential effects on the environment or an area, site or land and the implications for proper planning and sustainable development that may have a bearing on the Board's decision.
- The pre-application process does not discuss the merits or otherwise of the case.
- The number of meetings is dictated by the prospective applicant and it is for the prospective applicant to advise the Board when it wishes to close the consultation process.
- The Board may consult with other persons who may have relevant information in relation to the proposed development during the pre-application process.
- At the end of the consultation process the Senior Planning Inspector will make a report to the Board highlighting any key issues. The prospective applicant should formally request closure of the process and await the Board's formal notification on the matter prior to lodging the application with the Board.

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- The Board may require the prospective applicant to submit additional information during the pre-application process (if deemed necessary) to enable it to assess the proposed road development.
- The holding of consultations does not prejudice the Board in any way and cannot be relied upon in the formal planning process or in legal proceedings.

The Board also referred to the additional information it received from the prospective applicant following a request for same.

In response to questions from the Board, the prospective applicant confirmed that the application would be made in the name of Cork County Council. It also confirmed that a scheme submitted to the Board for a motorway under s.49 would be the application approval mechanism.

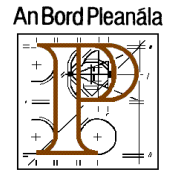
## **Presentation by the Prospective Applicant:**

The prospective applicant gave an outline of the proposed scheme. It said that the proposed scheme commences at Bloomfield Junction on the N40 and terminates to the east of Ringaskiddy Village where access to port facilities is proposed for the future. The initial c.2km south from the Bloomfield junction to Carr's Hill would be an on line upgrade. Existing merge/diverge to Maryborough and Mount Oval would be closed and revised access provided via a new junction at Carr's Hill. From Carr's Hill to Shanbally the scheme would be dual carriageway with a 100 km/hr design speed. East of Shanbally, the scheme would comprise a single carriageway road to Ringaskiddy, connecting with the proposed new eastern access to the Port of Cork lands.

The stated objectives of the proposed scheme are:

- To provide improved route access which will improve economic development.
- To reduce traffic congestion and delay on the N28 Corridor.
- To provide a safer national road.
- To form a key part of the TEN-T Core Network (Trans-European Transport Network).

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- To provide enhanced access to the Port of Cork.

Noting the above, the Board enquired as to whether there is funding currently available as part of the EC TEN-T network. The prospective applicant replied that there was a first call for funding in February of 2015 and that up to 15% of the overall project cost could be sourced from TEN-T, with the balance to be sourced from the exchequer.

With respect to the existing N28 and surrounding environs, the prospective applicant described this which consists of 12 kilometres approximately of single lane and short length of dual carriageway. It said that there are significant habitats in the area but that there would be no direct impacts on these.

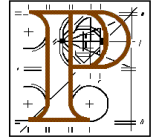
The prospective applicant outlined the principal changes in the context of the project since the original 2008 route selection study was conducted. These were identified as:

- The publication of TEN-T in May 2013.
- The publication of the National Ports Policy in 2013 and identification of Port of Cork as a Tier 1 Port.
- The appointment of RPS to the proposed scheme in early 2014 to review the route selection and to bring the scheme to EIS/Motorway Order publication.
- The publication of the NRA Service Area Policy in August 2014.
- The adoption of the current Cork County Development Plan in 2014.

The prospective applicant said that all routes considered were examined in terms of the five common appraisal assessment criteria, these being environment, safety, economy, accessibility and social inclusion and integration.

With respect to ecology, the prospective applicant identified the key issues in the study area. There are a number of Special Protection Areas and proposed Natural Heritage Areas however there would be no direct impacts on these. It identified a possible indirect impact on the feeding area for breeding bird curlew and oystercatcher, Annex1, a qualifying feature of the Cork Harbour SPA, however the alignment of the route at the eastern end of the scheme has increased the separation to these areas.

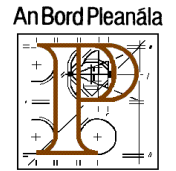
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In relation to archaeology, the prospective applicant noted that there are some archaeological remains at Castlewarren. These are currently being investigated. The prospective applicant informed the Board that the preferred route corridor for the proposed scheme went on public display in December 2014. Comparing this route to the original route of 2008, the prospective applicant identified two main areas of difference, at Raffeen and to the east of Barnahely. The prospective applicant stated that these changes had a number of advantages and outlined these to the Board as follows:

- The proposed scheme will avoid the need to acquire Fernhill Golf and Country Club lands.
- The proposed scheme will allow road building materials to be sourced and processed on site from an existing quarry (Raffeen Quarry).
- The proposed scheme will reduce the volume of road building materials to be brought to site resulting in a reduction in noise and vibrations associated with the movement of trucks.
- The proposed scheme will provide traffic relief to Ringaskiddy Village and a consequent reduction in traffic nuisance.
- The proposed scheme will be further away from Cork Harbour SPA and will avoid a recently identified feeding area for Curlew, a qualifying feature of the SPA.
- The proposed scheme will be further away from the Lough Beg proposed NHA.
- The proposed scheme will not require the acquisition of any dwellings.
- The single-carriageway has sufficient capacity to cater for likely development and estimated traffic volumes in the design year of 2033.
- There will be fewer conflicts with existing utilities when compared with the original and it is preferred by both ESBI and Bord Gáis Networks.
- The proposed scheme will require less land acquisition than the original due to its reduced footprint and shorter length.
- The proposed scheme will requires less earthworks than the original due to its reduced footprint, improved vertical alignment and shorter length.

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- The proposed scheme will offer a direct route from the proposed port entrance east of Ringaskiddy village (and the IMERC development area) to the start of the proposed motorway at Barnahely. This shorter route will lead to lower costs for both construction and maintenance, and higher time savings for port traffic.
- The proposed scheme will represent better value for money.

With respect to the proposed Carr's Hill Interchange element of the scheme, the prospective applicant outlined some of the advantages the proposed scheme would represent here. These include greater road network efficiency, improved safety standards, improved accessibility and improved network capacity.

The prospective applicant outlined the nature of analysis undertaken and completed to date in respect of the proposed scheme. Environmental surveys for four seasons have been conducted and a route selection report prepared. With respect to work on-going, the preliminary design report is approximately 75% complete and consultations with stakeholders in progress. The EIS is also being currently prepared.

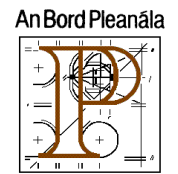
Public consultations on the emerging preferred route are on-going with further consultations scheduled to take place in Q3 of 2015. With respect to prescribed bodies, the prospective applicant said that there have been extensive consultations undertaken to date.

The prospective applicant referred to the proposed motorway service area and said that the currently preferred location for this is at the eastern end of the scheme, immediately east of the port lands.

The prospective applicant also outlined the road designation for the route post-construction. Mostly the route will have a motorway designation with the exception of the final stretch in the Ringaskiddy vicinity which will have a protected road status.

In relation to its projected timetable for the proposed scheme, the prospective applicant said that it hopes to make an application to the Board for the various consents circa quarter 4 of 2015.

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## Board comments/queries:

The Board noted that the current proposal will avoid the lands of Fernhill Golf and Country Club and instead traverse the lands of Raffeen Quarry. The prospective applicant said that the justification for this is mainly an economic one and also that this would have less impact than traversing an existing golf club (previous proposal would have entailed the removal of three holes on the golf course). The Board noted that although Raffeen Quarry is not in current use, it is in private ownership and might, therefore, require acquisition. The prospective applicant said there are on-going discussions with the owner in this regard. It also confirmed to the Board that the quarry does have planning permission for extractive use and undertook to provide the Board with the relevant planning application details. It is understood that planning permission was granted on appeal. Responding to the Board's query, the prospective applicant said that it has not yet fully established how much material might be required from the quarry for the proposed works, however it is likely that two thirds to three quarters of the permitted quarry reserves would be required. The Board noted that the proposal to traverse the quarry would involve extensive work in terms of levels and also advised that the EIS and accompanying documentation would need to address all issues arising, including levels, extraction volumes, hydrology and ecology as well as impacts in terms of noise and dust.

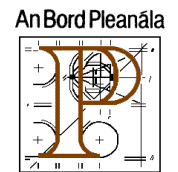
With respect to the proposed motorway service area, the prospective applicant informed the Board that a destination location had emerged as the preference. It said that this would be geared mainly for freight and passenger traffic and is based on UK and European models (as per TEN-T). The prospective applicant confirmed to the Board that this element would form part of the scheme for approval and would require acquisition as it is within Port of Cork lands. Noting this the Board said that the need for this facility would need to be clearly set out in the planning application and CPO documents.

The Board enquired as regards the nature of works in the vicinity of Donnybrook Stream. The prospective applicant confirmed that culverting would be required and said it would revert to the Board on details in relation to this. It said that there would be an impact on the stream and that it has had discussions to date with Inland Fisheries Ireland and the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

With respect to indirect impacts on habitats and species the prospective applicant informed the Board that a year's survey work has been conducted to date. The Board said it might be useful also if the prospective applicant were to draw on baseline data gathered from previous survey work given the previous iterations of the proposed scheme. The Board emphasised that the number and duration of surveys is important and advised that one year of surveys might not be sufficient. It advised the prospective applicant that it should have regard to best practice and be as thorough as possible in this regard and to, as far as is practicable, ascertain the



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requirements of the prescribed bodies in relation to survey material prior to the submission of an application.

The Board enquired as to how the proposed scheme ties in with the existing road network in the area and different traffic modes. The prospective applicant referred to development in the vicinity generally and said it is aware of development potential in the area. It also said that access to the area is important and that the existing road network is not coping with existing traffic in this regard. The prospective applicant noted the recent planning decision made by the Board in relation to the Port of Cork. It said the intention is that the proposed scheme would support sustainable transport. The prospective applicant said that it views cycling as a viable mode of transport and that the old N28 could serve as a corridor in this regard. There are plans also for a greenway around the port. The prospective applicant said the overall priority is to make the proposed scheme compatible with the various modes of transport. Noting this, the Board said it would be important to demonstrate and expand on this point in the application documentation and to ensure that any hindrances and/or severances in terms of land and different traffic modes are kept to a minimum.

The Board enquired as to the key issues emerging as part of public consultations to date. The prospective applicant replied that there is general support for the proposed scheme, though it acknowledged that some local issues are also likely to emerge. The prospective applicant noted that the more detailed elements of the proposed scheme have yet to go to public consultation stage. It expects more detailed submissions from members of the public once this occurs. The prospective applicant noted that there is a strong desire for HGV's to be taken out of the villages. Also there is a general desire for traffic congestion to be relieved.

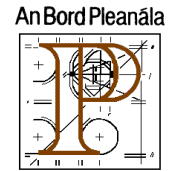
The Board asked how many landowners would be likely involved in terms of land acquisition. The prospective applicant said the number would not be extensive and estimated this at 25 approximately. It said that the IDA would be the most significant landowner involved.

The Board enquired as to whether there are any demolition works proposed as part of the scheme. The prospective applicant replied that there are none.

The Board asked if the proposed route has been fully assessed in terms of ecological impact. The prospective applicant replied that surveys in this regard are on-going. It does not expect that an NIS will be required, nor is it aware of any species which will be directly impacted by the proposed scheme. The Board advised the prospective applicant that its approach should be as robust as possible in this regard and that there is merit in undertaking a full ecological survey of the route and adjoining lands at this stage in order that any priority habitats or species present are identified.



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Prior to the conclusion of the meeting the prospective applicant identified certain aspects of the proposed scheme which it wished to highlight to the Board. These were as follows:

- The proposed interchange at Carr's Hill whereby two slip roads are being taken away. The prospective applicant said that it anticipates some concerns in respect of this element in that it will have an effect on residents' travelling distances, particularly their homeward journey and that this will be an issue that arises in the forthcoming public consultation. The Board said that this aspect will require thorough assessment and a full examination of alternatives.
- TEN-T and its requirement for cross-sections. The prospective applicant said that the final two kilometres of the proposed development would likely be expressway. It said that the National Roads Authority is finalising standards for expressways and these are expected circa September 2015.
- That the proposed development would have a potential impact on other roads. In this context the NRA is undertaking a N40 demand management study which is expected to be published circa September/October 2015. This study is predicated on the Dunkettle Interchange being upgraded as per the approval given for it by the Board.

## Conclusion

It was agreed generally that a further meeting will take place following the next stage of the public consultation process. The Board asked the prospective applicant to forward to it any findings/documents in relation to this next phase of public consultations. It is a matter for the prospective applicant to request a further meeting with the Board.

The meeting concluded at 12.55p.m.

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**Philip Green**  
**Assistant Director of Planning**