



An  
Bord  
Pleanála

## Record of Meeting 07.PC0227 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting

<b>Case Reference / Description</b>	07.PC0227  Proposed wind farm development and associated works at Ardderroo, near Rosscahill, Co. Galway.		
<b>Case Type</b>	Pre-application consultation		
<b>1<sup>st</sup> / 2<sup>nd</sup> / 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup>		
<b>Date</b>	06/03/17	<b>Start Time</b>	11 a.m.
<b>Location</b>	Meeting Room 3	<b>End Time</b>	12.10 p.m.
<b>Chairperson</b>	Anne Marie O'Connor	<b>Executive Officer</b>	Kieran Somers

<b>Attendees</b>		
<b>Representing An Bord Pleanála</b>		
<b>Staff Member</b>	<b>Email Address</b>	<b>Phone</b>
Anne Marie O'Connor, Assistant Director of Planning		
Sarah Moran, Senior Planning Inspector		
Diarmuid Collins, Senior Administrative Officer		
Kieran Somers, Executive Officer	k.somers@pleanala.ie	01-8737107

<b>Representing the Prospective Applicant</b>		
Jimmy Green, McCarthy Keville O'Sullivan		
Pat Roberts, McCarthy Keville O'Sullivan		
William O'Connor, Ardderroo Windfarm Ltd		

The meeting commenced at 11 a.m.

The Board referred to the fact that it had requested this second meeting with the prospective applicant in order to further discuss matters including Appropriate Assessment and consultation with the Prescribed Bodies and the public generally.

**Presentation by the prospective applicant:**

The prospective applicant referred to its previous meeting with the Board and noted the record of same. With regard to various surveying work and data gathering, it reported that a substantial amount of work has been done with respect to the subject site since the time of the previous planning application.

The prospective applicant reported that it had a meeting with representatives from the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) on the 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2017. A Briefing Document was prepared in respect of this meeting and this was presented to the Board. The prospective applicant gave a synopsis of survey work done in relation to the subject site since the time of the previous planning application and, in particular, with regard to the last twelve months. With regard to ecological surveying, the prospective applicant stated:

- Habitat mapping has been done and all Annex I Habitats are being avoided.
- No invasive species have been found on the site.
- Badger surveys have also been conducted with no setts in evidence on the subject site.
- No otters have been found on site.
- Bat surveys are being conducted on a monthly basis and a substantial amount of data has been compiled. The bat roost in the Letter Lodge is being left as is and connectivity will be maintained throughout the site.
- There have been no changes on the site in relation to species such as marsh fritillary and the Kerry Slug since the time of the previous planning application.
- A precautionary approach had been adopted in relation to other fisheries and aquatic fauna.

Noting this and other information, the Board advised the prospective applicant to take into account cumulative impacts of the proposed development with existing and planned development in the vicinity of the subject site.

With respect to ornithological surveying, the prospective applicant said that surveying work had been carried out in accordance with the Scottish Natural Heritage Guidance 2014 over the last 12 months. A peer review approach had been adopted with regard to the establishment and methodology of surveys done. No significant degree of bird activity has been identified on the site, as per previous surveys. Non-breeding survey work is on-going, and there is no evidence that the site is situated on a migratory path. The prospective applicant stated that it is satisfied that a robust body of information has been put together in relation to bird surveys.

The Board referred the prospective applicant to two recent wind farm cases in County Roscommon (planning appeal reference numbers PL 20.244346 and PL 20.244347) which were the subject of judicial review and were remitted back to the Board for its consideration. The Board suggested that the prospective applicant might make itself aware of these cases and also note the content of the ecologist's reports on both. These would be especially pertinent with regard to the Scottish Natural Heritage Guidance it added. The Board said that any future planning application should outline all survey work done with regard to the Scottish Natural Heritage Guidance, as well as all additional work generally done. It said that a clear description of the processes undertaken and how conclusions have been arrived should be provided, and that there should be no gaps in the data presented in support of a conclusion.

The prospective applicant confirmed that a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) will be lodged as part of the formal planning application. The Board noted this and commented that a screening report should also be submitted with the application. In response to a question from the prospective applicant, it stated that the screening report could be part of the NIS or a separate document.

In relation to Appropriate Assessment, the prospective applicant reported on the European Sites which were informing the preparation of an NIS for the proposed development. The prospective applicant referred to the pathways which exist between the European Sites in question and the subject site. It said that a precautionary approach is being undertaken with respect to matters such as core foraging ranges and general sensitivity to wind farm sites. Noting this, the Board said that European Sites outside the 15-kilometre radius should be also considered with respect to connectivity to the subject site.

The Board enquired as to what feedback the prospective applicant had received from the NPWS. The prospective applicant said that the NPWS's main concerns related to water quality in downstream aquatic sites and data produced in respect of bird surveys. In relation to this latter matter, the prospective applicant said that it had pointed out to the NPWS its adherence to the provisions of the Scottish Natural Heritage Guidance.

In general terms, the prospective applicant said that the proposed layout for the wind farm was been informed by on-going studies. In relation to public consultations it said that it was having on-going meetings and discussions with two residential groups in particular. A public information evening is to be held in due course.

With respect to the application, the prospective applicant said that it will be seeking permission for a wind farm in excess of 25 turbines and 50 megawatts output. It indicated that it will firm up on the number of turbines proposed following further public consultations. It referred the Board to some minor alterations which have been made to the proposed site layout including a relocation of the met mast and T1 turbine.

The prospective applicant referred to other projects and proposed developments in the vicinity of the subject site. The Board noted this and said that it would be useful for it to have a complete picture of permitted and proposed development near the subject site.

In relation to the pre-application consultation case for a proposed 100kV substation at Letter, County Galway (recently determined by the Board to not constitute SID), the prospective applicant indicated that, notwithstanding the progress of any planning application to the local authority, it might be minded to include this element in the SID application as well. The Board noted this and said that it would have to consider the logistics of such a situation if the proposed substation were on appeal to it, as well as being part of the SID application.

The prospective applicant recapped as to why it considers the proposed development would constitute strategic infrastructure. It reiterated that the proposal will be in excess of 25 turbines and have a total power output greater than 50 megawatts. At the present moment its intention is to lodge the formal planning application sometime during Quarter 2, 2017.

The Board enquired as to whether the previous proposal for a public walkway (as part of community gain) would still be a proposed initiative. The prospective applicant confirmed that it would be, adding that there would be some further enhancements on the previous proposal.

With respect to public consultations generally, the Board noted the prospective applicant's information regarding its on-going discussions with residential groups in the area. The Board advised the prospective applicant that it should also be cognisant of members of the public in a general sense and ensure that no interested parties are omitted from the process in so far as possible.

**Conclusion:**

The record of the instant meeting, which is to be the final one, will be issued to the prospective applicant in due course. Thereafter, it will be a matter for the prospective applicant to formally request closure to the pre-application consultation process.

The meeting concluded at 12.10 p.m.

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**Anne Marie O'Connor****Assistant Director of Planning**