



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Record of Meeting

ABP-307462-20

Case Reference / Description	Ten-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal which improves vital improvements to three sections of the National Road Network - Section 1: N13/N15 Ballybofey Stranorlar Bypass, Section 2: N13/N14/N56 Letterkenny Bypass and Dual Carriageway to Manorcunningham, Section 3: N14 Manorcunningham to Lifford.		
Case Type	Pre-application consultation		
1st / 2nd / 3rd / 4th Meeting	6 th Meeting		
Date	24/07/2025	Start Time	15:00pm
Location	Virtually by Microsoft Teams	End Time	16:30pm

Representing An Coimisiún Pleanála		
Staff Members		
Ciara Kellett, Director of Planning (Chair)		
Sarah Lynch, Assistant Director of Planning		
Finbarr Quigley, Inspectorate		
Maeve Flynn, Inspectorate		
Aisling Reilly, Executive Officer	a.reilly@pleanala.ie	01-8737131
Representing the Prospective Applicant		
Damian McDermott – Senior Engineer – Donegal County Council		
Áine McHugh – Senior Executive Engineer – Donegal County Council		
Brien Reid – Land Liaison Manager – Senior Executive Engineer – Donegal County Council		
Graham Diamond – A/Senior Executive Planner – Donegal County Council		

Eamon Daly – Project Director – RPS Barry Transportation
Gareth McElhinney – Environmental Project Manager – RPS Barry Transportation
Tatiana Kelley – Environmental Co-Ordinator – RPS Barry Transportation
Michael Conway – Senior Project Engineer – RPS Barry Transportation

Introduction

This was the sixth pre-application consultation meeting for the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal. The meeting provided project updates, technical clarifications, and briefed the Commission's representatives on changes since the last meeting on 22nd October, 2021.

Presentation made by the prospective applicant

- The prospective applicant reintroduced the Donegal TEN-T project, emphasising improvements to three principal segments of the road network (across the N15, N13, N56, and N14) and associated infrastructure within County Donegal.
- Donegal remains classified as a “lagging region,” facing significant economic and accessibility challenges due to its border location and insufficient road and rail connections.
- The project was designed to address both European (TEN-T) and national policy objectives, by enhancing regional accessibility, cross-border linkages, and compliance with climate, safety, and sustainable travel requirements.
- Key deliverables include: 23km of bypasses, 4.4 km of upgraded routes, 63km of active travel corridors, and eight modal hubs to support multimodal transport and electric vehicle infrastructure.
- The prospective applicant stated they were completing the Environmental Impact Assessment Report, Natura Impact Assessment and Compulsory Purchase Order processes, with publication targeted for September 2025.
- The project was broken down into three sections, Section 1 (Belfast to Norwood bypass), Section 2 (Letterkenny relief), Section 3 (N14 to Lifford/Strabane cross-border connection).

Discussion

The following matters were discussed:

- The prospective applicant stated that it had implemented a robust engagement strategy with land and property owners: 475 properties are directly affected, and protocols for ongoing communication have been established; of these properties, 34 are residential, 4 are commercial, and 5 are uninhabited.
- The prospective applicant addressed potential impacts to habitats and species, with detailed discussions on ecological surveys (bats, otters), and alignment with current regulations for derogation licences.
- Major legislative and policy developments were discussed including the need to demonstrate compliance with climate legislation (Climate Act, Climate Action Plan 2024/2025), consideration of implications of relevant Supreme Court decisions (Coolglass Wind Farm), and the correct application of the 2024 Planning and Development Act (especially around material contraventions of development plans and legal compliance).
- The prospective applicant stated it will meet transboundary environmental impact assessment requirements and ensure conformity with cross-border regulations.
- The prospective applicant confirmed securing Maritime Area Consent (MAC) for specific works (particularly at water crossings) is required and will be in line with legal requirements.
- The Commission's representatives emphasised the importance of well-organised, comprehensive, and accessible submission documents, including clearly tabulated mitigation measures, Environmental Impact Assessment Report chapters organised by project section and geography, logically organised A3-booklet format for project drawings, and linear referencing.
- The Commission's representative advised the prospective applicant to ensure all prescribed bodies (National Parks and Wildlife Service, Inland fisheries Ireland) were engaged with prior to submission, and to provide confirmation that all derogation licenses and up-to-date ecological surveys were available or in progress.
- The prospective applicant stated it will complete a comprehensive Water Framework Directive compliance assessment as a standalone document and maintain thorough record-keeping of engagement with all relevant agencies.

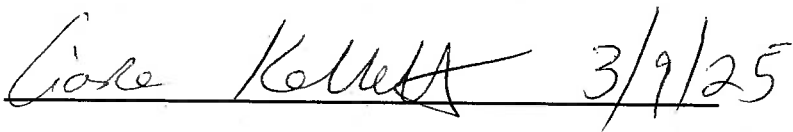
- The prospective applicant intends to schedule a final procedural meeting in late August or early September to resolve all outstanding matters prior to submission.

Conclusion

The meeting outlined the responsibilities, procedural steps, and outstanding items to be addressed by the prospective applicant, as well as the expectations of An Coimisiún Pleanála.

The Commission's representatives advised that the record of the meeting will issue shortly, and the prospective applicant can submit any comments it may have in writing or alternatively bring any comments for discussion at the time of next meeting.

The next meeting will be scheduled to ensure all requirements are met prior to the planned submission in September 2025.

 3/9/25

Ciara Kellett

Director of Planning