An Coimisiún Pleanála

Record of Meeting
ABP- 310143-21 (PCX)

Case Reference / Description	Construction of a wind energy development comprising approximately 50-55 no. wind turbines In Ballydermot (and other townlands), Co. Offaly and Lullybeg (and other townlands), Co. Kildare.		
Case Type	Pre-application consultation		
1st / 2nd / 3rd / 4th Meeting	2nd Meeting		
Date	10/03/2026	**Start Time**	11:00am
Location	MS Teams	**End Time**	12:20pm

Representing An Coimisiún Pleanála
Una Crosse, Assistant Planning Director, Chair
Donal Donnelly, Senior Planning Inspector
Paula Kearney, Senior Ecologist
Emmett Smyth, Senior Environmental Scientist
Lauren Murphy, Executive Officer

Representing the Prospective Applicant
Ronan Dunne, MKO
Shika Gajula, MKO
Ellen Costello, MKO
Catherine Johnson, MKO

Patrick Manley, MKO
Kate O'Donnell, MKO
Julie Larkin, Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd
Muriel Ennis, Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd
Ellen Hillard, Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd
Anna Perdue, Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd

Introduction

The Commission's representatives referred to the letter received from the prospective applicant requesting a second pre-application meeting and referred to the first meeting held on 26th July 2021. The Commission's representatives advised the prospective applicant that this meeting would entail an overview of the proposed development and project updates, and further in-depth discussions would be held at the next meeting.

Presentation

The prospective applicant set out their presentation, which is attached to the file.

Discussion

Update on Development Proposal/Development Description

- The prospective applicant was asked to send a copy of the drawings presented in the presentation at an appropriate scale after this meeting.
- The ACP representatives advised that considerations in respect of the EIAR will be discussed in more detail at a further meeting.
- The baseline for the EIAR has been informed by studies and surveys which have been undertaken.
- IPC licence still active on site even if this proposed development does not go ahead.

- Decommissioning works for the existing wind farm on site will be assessed in chapter two of the EIAR.
- Advised the evolution of the project should be assessed along with proposed turbine and substation locations and alternative considerations.

Biodiversity & Ornithology

- EIA and AA reporting should employ most up to date guidance for survey and assessment, with clear and concise reporting. Note recent revisions in NatureScot guidelines with respect to Collision Risk Modelling (NatureScot, 2025) and Bat Conservation Ireland Bat Survey, Assessment & Mitigation Guidelines for Onshore Wind Turbines in Ireland (BCI, 2026).
- Set out the survey methodology guidelines followed including assumptions, limitations, timings, duration, detailing any deviations from guidance. List of wintering and breeding bird surveys including vantage points and transects representative of habitat types.
- Where applicable, reference lessons learned from other windfarm developments in portfolio
- Note engagement with statutory bodies is recommenced. Outline how 3rd party submissions are addressed in the reporting.
- Clearly identify ecological receptors and provide detailed rationale as to the selection of KERs brought forward to assessment.
- Rationale for buffer zones from sensitive ecological receptors used.
- If required, Regulation 54 derogation licences for Annex IV species to be obtained in advance of submitting the application.
- Where possible, minimise the removal of linear vegetation on the turbine delivery route and grid connection route. Vegetation management to be conducted outside the Bird Nesting Season.
- Invasive species survey and management plan to include the wind farm site, turbine delivery route and grid connection route.

- Baseline aquatic ecology surveys will be completed upstream and downstream of the proposed river crossings and the turbine delivery and grid connection routes where required.
- Otter, bat and breeding bird surveys are to be conducted, in accordance with best practice guidelines, at water crossings within the wind farm site, and on the turbine delivery and grid connection routes where required.
- Ensure IPC licence conditions and biodiversity enhancement measures align.
- The impact assessment will address how habitats altered by wind farm construction and biodiversity enhancement measures may affect future wildlife use of the site and will identify measures to enhance biodiversity under postconstruction conditions.

Hydrology and Land & Soils

- Peat abstraction has not been active on site since 2019.
- Assessment of consequences in peat areas should be carried out.
- Substitute consent application to be submitted in terms of peat abstraction, with due consideration for the proposed wind farm development.
- There is an active IPC licence on site at the moment.
- Peat disposal will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting.

General Matters

- Baseline environment should be clearly identified and given particular consideration for all matters individually forming part of the EIAR having regard to the requirements of the condition on the IPC licence and the substitute consent proposal.
- Prospective applicant does not intend to submit a design flexibility request.
- Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) not envisaged as part of proposal.
- Ensure planning application documentation is consistent.
- Contents page at the front of each chapter of the EIAR would be useful.

Hydrology and Hydrogeology

- Number of water crossings on site noted. Advised that these crossings should be agreed with IFI prior to submission of the planning application.
- Standalone water framework directive assessment should be included as part of planning application.
- Impacts on ground water flows should be assessed.
- Water management will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting.
- Detailed site drainage design will be included in the planning application.
- Assessment of internal road work should be included.

Consultations

- Detailed consultations have been held with EirGrid in terms of the proposed grid connection.
- Consultations should be held with the NPWS in terms of identifying if any derogation licences for Annex Species is required.

Landscape

- Visual impact assessment to be undertaken.
- Haul roads and turbine delivery route should be assessed for vegetation removal.

Cumulative Impacts

- Importance of cumulative impact assessments of existing and proposed developments highlighted.
- Haulage route should be assessed in terms of cumulative impacts.
- Importance of cumulative visual assessment emphasised.

Noise

- Distance from each proposed wind turbine to residential dwellings should be clearly mapped out.
- Useful to tabulate each proposed wind turbine and its nearest residential receptor.
- Buffer zones for each noise receptor should be clearly identified and why these were chosen.
- Noise will be discussed in further detail at the next meeting.

Other

- Following a query, the ACP representatives advised that they are currently preparing an EIA scoping guide and have no further update on the process.
- The ACP representatives clarified that legally binding agreements may be required in some instances relating to biodiversity enhancement lands if they are not within the red line boundary.

Conclusion:

The Commission's representatives advised that the onus is on the prospective applicant either to request a further meeting or formal closure of the instant pre-application consultation process. The Commission'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 12:20pm.

Una Crosse

Assistant Director of Planning