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	3rd Meeting		
Date	12th June 2026	**Start Time**	11:00am
Location	MS Teams	**End Time**	12:30pm

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

Aoife Joyce, MKO
Molly O'Hare, MKO
Julie Larkin, Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd
Caitriona Carter, Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd
Anna Perdue, Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd
Chris Cullen, Bord na Móna Powergen Ltd
Ian Higgins, Fehily Timoney
Michael Gill, Hydro- Environmental Services
Conor McGettigan, Hydro- Environmental Services

Introduction

The Commission's representatives referred to the letter received from the prospective applicant requesting a third pre-application meeting and referred to the second meeting held on 10th March 2026. An Agenda had been forwarded to the prospective applicant in advance of the meeting outlining that the consultation meeting would focus for the most part on the following considerations:

1. Update on Development Proposal/Development Description and Baseline Environment
2. Hydrology & Hydrogeology
3. Land & Soils - Peat
4. Biodiversity including Habitats and Water
5. Ornithology

Presentation

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

Discussion

Update on Development Proposal/Development Description

- The prospective applicant provided an update on the decommissioning taking place on the site and the rehabilitation plans that have been drafted with consideration given to the proposed development.
- It was also outlined that ornithology has been a consideration in undertaking the draft rehabilitation plan with no active rewetting undertaken or proposed.
- It was clarified that the decommissioning of railway lines is the only activity ongoing on the lands.
- ACP representatives outlined that clarity would be necessary in respect of the baseline being considered in the EIAR in respect of existing baseline or future receiving environment and the information presented on same should be clear to the Commission and members of the public.

Hydrology and Hydrogeology

- Standalone report to address the requirements of the water framework directive should be submitted as part of the planning application.
- Noted that the proposed grid connection route should be assessed in terms of group water schemes and any potential impacts should be addressed.
- Noted that the River Boyne enters the site to the very north and that this should be included in any consideration of this matter.
- Any Karst or exposed bedrock should be identified and comprehensively addressed.

Lands and Soils

- Susceptibility to peat slippage across the site is low.
- Relevant Guidance to be followed.

Biodiversity and Ornithology

- The Commission's representatives advised that the assessment must evaluate the cumulative effects of future habitat alteration resulting from the Proposed Project and the proposed BnM rehabilitation plan on wildlife, such as habitat creation, functional habitat loss and displacement. For example, where rewetting or planting could reduce habitat availability for marsh fritillary, waders/ground nesting species or displacement due to greater habitat availability for predators etc.
- The Commission's representatives requested that calculations of habitat loss from the wind farm, TDR and substation and mitigation proposals including deterrent measures, will be required. Proposed mitigation, restoration and enhancement measures shall be incorporated into Habitat Management Plan(s) to include monitoring and adaptive measures covering short, medium and long term.
- The Commission's representatives requested that proposals should be designed and constructed in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy, and mitigation proposed for key ecological and ornithological receptors, needs to be proportionate to the nature, scale and significance of the potential impacts. EIA reporting should include desktop and site-specific survey derived information presented on appropriately scaled maps and demonstrate how the information has been used to inform constraints and application of the mitigation hierarchy.
- The Commission's representatives requested the applicant to provide a rationale for establishing habitat compensation and restoration ratios relative to habitat loss. The ratios must directly correlate with the ecological significance of the receptor and scale of effects including direct, indirect and cumulative effects, and account for potential difficulties in recreating the habitat, temporal

losses due to establishment and scientific uncertainty, where higher ratios may be required.

- The Commission's representatives advised that the survey and assessment of impacts to badgers include the type of sett and sett status to inform mitigation in accordance with best practice.
- The Applicant's representatives propose deterrent buffers to mitigate potentially significant collision risk impacts to golden plover.
- The Commission's representatives have reqesuted that the geographical scale of the significance of effect on ornithological receptors including golden plover is provided at the fourth pre-application. This Applicant's representatives had stated that they had not completed final analysis and assessment at the time of the third pre-application meeting.
- The Commission's representatives requested clarification on how deterrent buffers are calculated and noted the NatureScot Guidance Disturbance Distances Review: An updated literature review of disturbance distances of selected bird species (Goodship, N.M. and Furness, R.W. 2022). It is also advised that all mitigation measures are informed by site specific ornithological surveys, data analysis including cumulative effects, and an evidence base, where applicable, to demonstrate effectiveness.
- The Applicant's representatives discussed potentially significant habitat loss impacts to golden plover, whooper swan, hen harrier and breeding waders, for example lapwing.
- The Applicant's representatives provided information on the current use of Lodge Bog by breeding wader populations, which forms part of the proposed enhancement areas.
- The Commission's representatives advised that the application should consider the carrying capacity of available habitats at Lodge Bog and the current and future breeding wader density that may use this area as a result of the Proposed Project.
- The Applicant's representatives confirmed opportunistic hen harrier roosting was recorded on site.

- The Commission's representatives queried whether whooper swan and hen harrier were also considered in the Collision Risk Model, which was confirmed by the applicant, however the findings of the data analysis were not available at the time of the third pre-application meeting. Locations of roosting habitat for whooper swan and hen harrier are to be represented on a figure for discussion at the fourth pre-application meeting.
- The Commission's representatives queried whether timely and seasonal curtailment has been considered for bats and birds. The Applicant's representatives stated that it was not considered necessary at this time.
- The Applicant's representatives confirmed they have engaged with NPWS and had an online consultation meeting to discuss the proposal.

Post Meeting Note

The Commission's representatives have sought a meeting with the NPWS under the provisions of Section 37C(4) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended, prior to the planned fourth pre-application consultation meeting.

Conclusion:

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 12:30pm.

Una Crosse

Assistant Director of Planning