An Coimisiún Pleanála

Record of Meeting

ACP-324085-26 (VC)

Case Reference / Description	Proposed development of a new 440kV/220kV/110kV substation and associated ancillary development at Wards Cross, in the townland of Newpark, Fingal		
Case Type	Pre-application consultation		
1st / 2nd / 3rd / 4th Meeting	1st Meeting		
Date	17 June 2026	**Start Time**	10:00am
Location	MS Teams	**End Time**	11:10am

Representing An Coimisiún Pleanála
Stephen Rhys Thomas (Assistant Director of Planning)
Liam Bowe (Senior Planning Inspector)
Ellen Moss (Executive Officer)

Representing the Prospective Applicant
Dara McGowan – EirGrid
Katelyn Larkin – EirGrid
Leah Kenny – EirGrid
Robert Fennelly – EirGrid
Carolyn Howle Outlaw – EirGrid
Ursula O'Higgins – AtkinsRéalis
Duncan McKune – AtkinsRéalis
Colin Prendeville – AtkinsRéalis
Eimear Egan – AtkinsRéalis
Aiden O'Neill – Coakley O'Neill

Introduction

The Commission referred to the letter received from the prospective applicant on the 13th February 2026, requesting pre-application consultations under section 182A of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and advised the prospective applicant that the instant meeting essentially constituted an information-gathering exercise for the Commission; it also invited the prospective applicant to outline the nature of the proposed development and to highlight any matters that it wished to receive advice on from the Commission. The Commission's representatives mentioned the following general procedures in relation to the pre-application consultation process.

- The Commission will keep a record of this meeting and any other meetings, if held. Such records will form part of the file which will be made available publicly at the conclusion of the process. The record of the meeting will not be amended by the Commission once finalised, but the prospective applicant may submit comments on the record which will form part of the case file.
- The Commission will serve notice at the conclusion of the process as to the strategic infrastructure status of the proposed development. It may form a preliminary view at an early stage in the process on the matter.
- A further meeting or meetings may be held in respect of the proposed development.
- Further information may be requested by the Commission and public consultations may also be directed by the Commission.
- The Commission may hold consultations in respect of the proposed development with other bodies.
- The holding of consultations does not prejudice the Commission in any way and cannot be relied upon in the formal planning process or in any legal proceedings.

Presentation made by the prospective applicant:

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

Discussion:

- The Commission's representatives advised that a robust planning assessment statement should form part of any future application and should cover land use zoning and supporting planning policies. Agricultural land/ green belt lands should be retained or replaced.

- The Commission's representatives advised that any impacts on roads should be assessed and considered in a Construction Traffic Management Plan.

- The Commission's representatives noted that an EIAR does not generally trigger an EIAR and queried whether it was triggered while screening for other elements. The prospective applicant advised that it was unable to comfortably screen out, and it will be included as a precautionary measure.

- The Commission's representatives advised that consultations with Dublin City Council are instrumental. The prospective applicant noted that consultations are ongoing in relation to the delivery route and advised that the prospective applicant should consult each road's authority as well as TII.

- The Commission's representatives queried whether welfare facilities are proposed as part of any future application. It is envisaged that a connection for a holding tank will include a water supply to the proposed development to allow for toilets.

- The Commission's representatives queried whether the older buildings due to be demolished are considered protected structures. The prospective applicant confirmed they are not, but these will be assessed.

- The Commission's representatives queried any findings in relation to the Appropriate Assessment screening. The prospective applicant advised that there is very little evidence of golden plover from the Malahide SPA. Screening is ongoing, with a focus on mitigation measures.

- The Commission's representatives queried any findings in relation to the bat surveys and reminded the prospective applicant that if bat roosts are identified, a derogation licence is required. The prospective applicant advised that these surveys are ongoing; however, they noted that no bat roosts have been identified on site to date, and the old buildings hold low potential.

- The Commission's representatives reminded the prospective applicant of the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.

- The Commission's representatives queried whether comms would be required. The prospective applicant advised that each asset would include a fibre-optic connection, which is proposed to run alongside the local road. It was noted that consultations are ongoing with Eir in relation to the existing assets.

- The Commission's representatives gave their preliminary opinion that the proposed development falls within the scope of strategic infrastructure but reminded the prospective applicant that the final decision lies with the Commission.

Conclusion:

The Commission's representatives advised that the onus is on the prospective applicant 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 11:10am.

16/07/26

Stephen Rhys Thomas

Assistant Director of Planning