



Senator John Whelan

March 20th, 2013



Dear Inspector,

I wish to make a submission on my own behalf and as a Senator on behalf of the community and public interest which I try to the best of my abilities to represent.

I believe that the Eirgrid application before you for a so called Sub-Station at Coolnabaca is totally inappropriate and unsafe. The proposed siting of this massive installation on an important and exposed aquifer poses a serious risk and danger to a crucial water supply and the public health.

The application before you from Eirgrid is also further seriously flawed, undermined and contamination due to the grievous shortcomings in the so called consultation process. It was anything but forthright and up-front. The community, the public at large and myself as an elected and mandated public represented were all misled and indeed duped by Eirgrid.

I myself endeavoured over a two year period to engage in the consultation process with Eirgrid but instead of getting sight and any insight into Eirgrid's real plans and intentions I was wilfully deceived by Eirgrid. This strategy by Eirgrid has let to untold damage and divisiveness within the community and in confidence in the company. The public trust in Eirgrid is seriously undermined as a direct result of the company failing to fully disclose its plans and objectives which are far more wide reaching and ranging, and far more extensive in scale than anything ever revealed or disclosed by Eirgrid at any of the consultation meetings.

It is clear that the Laois hub being proposed by Eirgrid has little or nothing to do with the Laois - Kilkenny Reinforcement project but rather to prepare for wholesale and large scale connectivity to the grid from a massive range of wind farms being proposed by private commercial interests all across Laois and the Midlands. (Please see correspondence and information leaflet attached).

I therefore respectfully suggest that the Eirgrid proposal is based on a false premise in an attempt to conceal its actual purpose. Due to the misleading nature of the flawed consultation process and the application I contend that it should not only be refused but actually withdrawn. Failing this, the least the community can expect is a full and open public oral hearing to permit all aspects of this planning application to be inspected and assessed in a wholly transparent way in the interest of proper planning and in the best public interest.

Yours sincerely,



Senator John Whelan

Seanad Éireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

Tel: 01 618 3244  
Email: john.whelan@oir.ie

Constituency Office  
Bull Lane  
Portlaoise  
Co. Laois

Tel: 057 86 34047  
Mobile: 087 250 9663

Follow John on  and 

21. AUGUST. 2009

SINEAD / DAVID,

PLEASE SEE OUR COMMENTS IN RED. I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU DO NOT IN FACT REISSUE AN AMENDED VERSION OF THESE RECORDS, BUT COMMENTS CAN BE INCORPORATED INTO OUR SECOND MEETING.

AS DISCUSSED FOR CLARITY, I FEEL I SHOULD SEND YOU ON OUR COMMENTS NOW. ANYWAY.

KIND REGARDS  
RAY NOLAN

with compliments



AN BORD PLEANÁLA

TIME \_\_\_\_\_ BY \_\_\_\_\_

25 AUG 2009

LTR-DATED \_\_\_\_\_ FROM \_\_\_\_\_

PL \_\_\_\_\_

The Oval 160 Shelbourne Road  
Ballsbridge Dublin 4  
160 Bóthar Shíol Bhroin  
Dothra Baile Átha Cliath 4  
TELEPHONE +353 (0)1 677 1700  
FAX +353 (0)1 661 5375  
E-MAIL info@eirgrid.com  
www.eirgrid.com

AN BORD PLEANÁLA

TIME \_\_\_\_\_ BY \_\_\_\_\_

21 MAR 2013

LTR-DATED \_\_\_\_\_ FROM \_\_\_\_\_

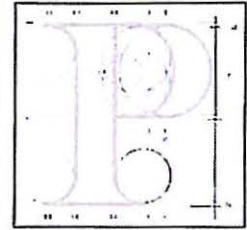
PL \_\_\_\_\_

Our Ref: 11.VC0035

Your Ref:

Received 20/8/09  
RN.

An Bord Pleanála



Ray Niland  
Eirgrid **EirGrid (CAPITAL 'G')**  
The Oval,  
160 Shelbourne Road,  
Ballsbridge,  
Dublin 4.

13th August 2009

Re: Proposed 400/110 KV Substation **near (exact location of proposed substation (400/110) yet to be agreed).** At Loughteog, Co. Laois And Associated Line And Station Works.

Dear Sir,

I have been asked by An Bord Pleanála to refer further to the above mentioned pre-application consultation request.

Please find enclosed a copy of the written record of the first meeting of the 5th of August, 2009 which is marked 'Private and Confidential' for your information.

If you have any queries in relation to the matter please contact the undersigned officer of the Board.

Please quote the above mentioned An Bord Pleanála reference number in any correspondence or telephone contact with the Board.

Yours faithfully,

  
Sinéad McInerney  
Executive Officer

VC07.LTR

**AN BORD PLEANÁLA**  
TIME \_\_\_\_\_ BY \_\_\_\_\_  
25 AUG 2009  
LTR-DATED \_\_\_\_\_ FROM \_\_\_\_\_  
PL \_\_\_\_\_

**AN BORD PLEANÁLA**  
TIME \_\_\_\_\_ BY \_\_\_\_\_  
21 MAR 2013  
LTR-DATED \_\_\_\_\_ FROM \_\_\_\_\_  
PL \_\_\_\_\_

64 Strand Maonbhride,  
Baile Átha Cliath 1

Tel: (01) 858 8100  
LoCall: 1890 275 175  
Fax: (01) 872 2604  
Web: <http://www.pleanala.ie>  
email: [bord@pleanala.ie](mailto:bord@pleanala.ie)

64 Marlborough Street,  
Dublin 1.

11.VC0035

*EirGrid (As cover page) (applies throughout document)*

Written record of the first pre-application consultation meeting between An Bord Pleanála and the prospective applicant (*Eirgrid*) in relation to the proposed 400/110kV *kV* substation at *Loughteeog*, County Laois, and associated line and station works.

*Near*

- Venue: Conference Room, An Bord Pleanála
- Date: 5<sup>th</sup> August 2009 (11.05 am)
- Present

**Representing An Bord Pleanála**

David Dunne - Assistant Director of Planning  
Úna Crosse - Senior Planning Inspector  
Marcella Doyle - Senior Executive Officer  
Sinéad McInerney - Executive Officer

**Representing Prospective Applicant  
Eirgrid**

Deborah Meghen - Eirgrid Manager  
Ray Niland - Eirgrid Project Manager  
Louis Wildenboer - Eirgrid Principal Manager *Planner*  
Mario Duarte - Eirgrid Transmission Network Planner  
Tim Kavanagh - ESBI Consultant  
Jarlath Doyle - ESBI Consultant  
Ciara Kellet - AOS Planning Consultant

PRIVATE &  
CONFIDENTIAL

AN BORD PLEANÁLA	
TIME _____	BY _____
25 AUG 2009	
LTR-DATED _____	FROM _____
PL _____	

A list of attendees is attached as Appendix 1. *(not attached but we don't require)*

- The meeting was chaired by David Dunne.

**Introduction**

The Board's team was introduced and an agenda set out.

The Board advised the prospective applicant that the meeting is considered by it to be a preliminary meeting the purpose of which will be for the Board to obtain information from the prospective applicant in respect of the proposed development, and for the prospective applicant to seek advice from the Board. Further pre-application consultation meeting or meetings may be required, and it is intended that the Board would also meet with the relevant local authorities to seek their views on the proposed development. The Board will keep a record of the meeting which will then be made available to the public at the end of the pre-application consultation process. The decision will be made by the Board on whether or not the proposed development is strategic infrastructure under the Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Act 2006. The holding of consultations does not prejudice the Board in any way and cannot be relied upon in the formal planning process or in legal proceedings.

AN BORD PLEANÁLA	
TIME _____	BY _____
21 MAR 2013	
LTR-DATED _____	FROM _____
PL _____	

11.VC0035

AN BORD PLEANÁLA  
 TIME \_\_\_\_\_ BY \_\_\_\_\_  
 25 AUG 2013  
 LTR-DATED \_\_\_\_\_ FROM \_\_\_\_\_  
 PL \_\_\_\_\_

**Presentation of Prospective Applicant**

The prospective applicant responded by introducing its team.

An overview of the proposed development was given by way of a power point presentation, a hard copy of which is attached (Appendix 2). *(not attached, not required)*

The proposed development is required to improve the quality and security of supply within the area.

A number of options were considered and four different parameters were examined in choosing the most viable option. These included voltage level, voltage stability, outage performance and longevity. A 400kV injection point and associated 110kV integration (Loughtecog) was considered to be the best option.

*THE 'INJECTION POINT' WILL BE NEAR LOUGHTECOG WITH THE 110KV EMANATING FROM THAT.*

Constraints which have been identified within the study area include terrain, ribbon development, road network, special area of development control, forestry, candidate Special Area of Conservation, recorded sites and monuments, and areas of high amenity and scenic views. *(ALSO EXISTING HV ELECTRICITY INFRASTRUCTURE & VARIOUS TOWNS)*

A desktop study has been carried out on a number of route options. Six route options involving ~~over-ground cables~~ and three route options involving underground cables have been identified. *↑ OVERHEAD LINES*

A more detailed assessment of the identified route options will be carried out to identify environmental constraints for each, and a constraints report will be produced.

**Matters discussed**

The proposed 110kV line would be supported by wooden poles, with approximately 15m steel structures where the line changes direction.

It was stated that visual impact of the proposed development would be the main environmental constraint, with recorded sites and monuments also a major consideration. In relation to the candidate Special Area of Conservation - Barrow/Norc river system - the Board referred to the Oak woodland and the Tree Protection Orders in the area and advised that these should be avoided. *\*SEE FOOTNOTE AT END OF THIS SHEET*

AN BORD PLEANÁLA  
 TIME \_\_\_\_\_ BY \_\_\_\_\_  
 21 MAR 2013  
 LTR-DATED \_\_\_\_\_ FROM \_\_\_\_\_  
 PL \_\_\_\_\_

The prospective applicant is currently working on an environmental constraints report in relation to each of the identified route options.

It was stated that the proposed stations will be designed to facilitate ~~to both~~ networks, ~~from~~ renewable and non-renewable power sources. *\*SEE FOOTNOTE AT END OF NEXT SHEET.*

A discussion took place in relation to running parts of the proposed development underground. The prospective applicant said that the preferred option is to run ~~lines over-ground~~ *OVERHEAD LINES* due to issues of maintenance, safety and security, however both underground and over-ground options will be examined in the context of the surrounding environment.

*SECURITY OF SUPPLY, TECHNICAL & OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH UGC, ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT & INCREASED COST. ALSO WITH PART OHL - PART UGC 'SOLUTION' POTENTIAL INCREASED VISUAL IMPACT DUE TO CABLE-OHL INTERFACE COMPOUNDS.*

When identifying a preferred route, the Board advised that a summary of the methodology of reaching that decision should be provided, and details of the alternatives set out. At that

**11.VC0035**

*IT WAS EXPLAINED THAT PROJECT WAS STILL AT PRELIMINARY STAGES AND THAT ALL ROUTE OPTIONS PRESENTED WERE MOSTLY AS A RESULT OF DESKTOP STUDIES (WITH SOME DEGREE OF FIELD WORK) AND THAT A 'ROUTE CONSTRAINTS REPORT' WAS BEING PREPARED WHICH WOULD EXPLAIN MERITS OF ONE ROUTE OVER ANOTHER AND ADDRESS ALL THESE QUESTIONS.*

stage the Board will look at whether an environmental report can be submitted with an application or whether an environmental impact statement is required. (The prospective applicant was informed of the formal process for scoping an environmental impact statement) **IT WAS STATED THAT AT THE NEXT MEETING WE SHOULD PRESENT WHETHER OR NOT WE FEEL AN EIS IS REQUIRED. DIFFICULTIES & POSSIBLE DELAYS IN GETTING AN E.P. TO SCOPE AN EIS WAS EXPLAINED.**

The Board advised the prospective applicant that detailed discussions should take place with all the relevant sections of the local authorities in relation to the proposed development. The Board will not meet with the local authorities until such time as a preferred route option has been identified.


The procedures involved in making an application will be provided at a further pre-application consultation meeting.

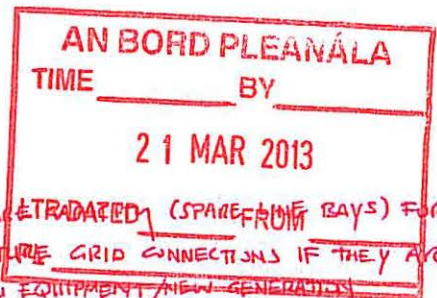
### Conclusion

When completed, the environmental constraints report should be submitted for information.

The prospective applicant will revert to the Board when a preferred route option has been identified and a further pre-application consultation meeting will be arranged at that stage.

The meeting concluded at 12.05 p.m.

  
David Dunne  
Assistant Director of Planning  
13<sup>th</sup> August, 2009



**## THE PROPOSED NEW STATIONS WILL BE DESIGNED WITH SOME DEGREE OF SPACETRADATED (SPAREFRONT BAYS) FOR NEW CONNECTIONS IN SO FAR AS IS PRACTICAL. THIS WILL FACILITATE FUTURE GRID CONNECTIONS IF THEY ARE REQUIRED (WHETHER THAT IS A NEW CIRCUIT FROM 400/110 STATION / NEW STATION EQUIPMENT / NEW GENERATORS CONNECTION (CONVENTIONAL OR RENEWABLE)).**  
**STRENGTHENING THE NETWORK IN THE REGION BY CONSTRUCTING NEW CIRCUIT (110KV) WILL INCREASE THE CAPACITY OF THE TRANSMISSION SYSTEM IN THE REGION WHICH CAN THEN CATER FOR INCREASED DEMAND FOR POWER. SIMILARLY IT CAN BE USED TO CATER FOR INCREASED SUPPLY IN THE REGION (CONVENTIONAL AND/OR RENEWABLE GENERATION), SO THE PROJECT WILL THEREFORE FACILITATE INTEGRATION OF RENEWABLES ONTO THE GRID.**

