



Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2019

Planning Authority: Meath County Council

Planning Register Reference Number: LB/190031

APPEAL by Bob and Anthea Cameron of Mount Granville, Platin Road, Drogheda, County Meath and by Others against the decision made on the 5th day of July, 2019 by Meath County Council to grant subject to conditions a permission to SSE Generation Ireland Limited care of AOS Planning of 1st Floor, 24-26 Ormond Quay Upper, Dublin.

Proposed Development: A 208 megawatt (electrical output) open cycle gas turbine (OCGT) power plant comprising the following elements: (a) Four number containerised peaker plant units (each 248 square metres and circa eight metres wide by 31 metres long by 3.5 metres high), each housing a fully enclosed and roofed turbo generator comprising of two number turbines with a common generator, all on a concrete plinth of 615 square metres; (b) Each unit has two exhaust stacks (15 metres in height) one for each turbine; (c) Water treatment plant comprising 275 square metres water treatment (demineralisation) building (six metres high by 11 metres wide by 25 metres long) - a 120 metres square raw water treatment tank of 1,000 cubic metres (circa 10 metres high) - a 315 square metres deionized (treated water) water storage tank (maximum volume of 4,900 cubic metres) circa 16 metres high - hydrochloric acid tank (five cubic metres) circa three metres high - sodium hydroxide tank (2.5 cubic metres) circa two metres high - waste water storage tank (40 cubic metres) (circa 2.5 metres high) - 25 square metres firewater

module measuring five metres wide by five metres length by five metres high - foul water pump station (slab area of 121 square metres); (d) Two number fuel storage tanks to each hold a maximum volume of 4,900 cubic metres per tank (each circa 16 metres high), and associated fuel pumping and filtering equipment and pipework, all within a 2,350 square metres concrete bund; (e) Three number waste storage containers, each 80 square metres (circa three metres wide by 26 metres length by four metres high); (f) Diesel generator with floor area of 32 square metres (circa four metres wide by eight metres length by four metres high); (g) Two number transformers each 160 square metres, and each measuring circa eight metres wide by 10 metres length by nine metres high; (h) A 830 square metres office and ancillary services building (circa 20 metres wide by 47metres length by six metres high); (i) A 570 metres square switchgear (MV) building (circa 13 metres wide by 54 metres length by five metres high); (j) All other miscellaneous and ancillary site works, including:12 number car parking spaces and three number unloading bays, widened and upgraded entrance from the R152, two lowered site platform areas, and internal circulation road and hard and soft landscaping, a temporary construction compound, and palisade fencing; (k) New road markings, including deceleration lane approaching the site, on the R152. The proposed development will include connection to public water and wastewater provision, supplied by Irish Water, all at Carranstown and Caulstown, Platin, Duleek, County Meath. The proposed development was revised by further public notices received by the planning authority on the 12th day of June, 2019.

The application relates to a development which comprises or is for the purposes of an activity requiring an Industrial Emissions Directive (IED) licence, and full details of the proposed development and its anticipated environmental impacts will be notified to the Environmental Protection Agency. The proposed development is planned to connect to a new 110 kV substation to be located adjacent and to the south-west of the proposed open cycle gas turbine (OCGT) power plant. The new 110 kV substation substation and alterations to an existing 110 kV line is the subject of a separate Strategic

Infrastructure Development (SID) application to An Bord Pleanála. A Natura Impact Statement accompanies the application.

Decision

REFUSE permission for the above proposed development in accordance with the reasons and considerations set out below.

Matters Considered

In making its decision, the Board had regard to those matters to which, by virtue of the Planning and Development Acts and Regulations made thereunder, it was required to have regard. Such matters included any submissions and observations received by it in accordance with statutory provisions.

Reasons and Considerations

Notwithstanding the importance of the provision of a regionally significant power generating ‘peaking plant’ facility at this location, arising from the increase of wind power on the national grid and the requirement to provide additional stability to the electricity supply, it is considered that the proposed development needs to be associated with and better aligned with strategic planning and renewable energy policies and plans in order to achieve balanced, orderly development of energy infrastructure. Furthermore, it is considered that the development of such energy infrastructure, to address intermittency of supply, must itself pursue the optimum potential sustainable fuel source in order that such development would not maintain or add to the current unsustainable levels of greenhouse gas emissions arising from electricity generation within the State.

Having regard to:

- The national requirements under the EU Renewables Directive 2009/28/EC relating to the share of energy from renewable sources and to the increased obligations under the recast Renewable Energy Directive (2018/2001);
- The 'Climate Action Plan 2019', published by Government, which states with regard to the electricity sector, that a significant step-up in ambition over existing policy is required to achieve the level of decarbonisation required to meet Ireland's 2030 emissions reduction target and which notes the use of natural gas plants that can generate electricity at times when there is no wind, as an example of technology solutions for addressing intermittency of supply;
- The 'Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework', published by Government, which recognises the necessity for a more distributed, renewables-focused energy generation system and places emphasis on the need to accelerate action on climate change, including National Policy Objective 54 (reduce our carbon footprint by integrating climate action into the planning system in support of national targets for climate policy mitigation and adaptation objectives) and National Policy Objective 55 (promote renewable energy use and generation at appropriate locations);
- The 'Project Ireland 2040 National Development Plan 2018-2027', published by Government, which includes decarbonising electricity generation as a measure related to the radical transformation of Ireland's energy system in order to achieve its 2030 and 2050 energy and climate objectives;

- The 'National Mitigation Plan 2017', published by Government, expressly promoting gas as the generation back-up technology;
- The relevant provisions of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 including Section 8.1 which states that Meath is well placed to encourage and facilitate the development of power generation facilities for reasons including the passage of a number of gas mains through the county, the commentary at Section 8.1.2 that natural gas is the cleanest of all fossil fuels, and policy EC POL 2, (to support international, national and county initiatives for limiting emissions of greenhouse gases through energy efficiency and the development of renewable energy sources);
- The planning history of the site, including consents for electricity generating plants, powered by gas, with distillate oil provided as a contingency fuel source rather than the primary fuel source, as is proposed in the current application;
- The adjacency of the proposed development to the natural gas network;
- The documentation submitted with the application, including the Further Information response submitted to the planning authority on the 24th day of May, 2019, which states that natural gas is a non-renewable fossil fuel that is cleaner burning, and produces lower CO2 equivalent emissions, than distillate oil;
- The necessity to import and transport by road the distillate fuel oil to the site;

it is considered that the proposed development in its current form with full reliance on the use of distillate oil, would conflict with national obligations relating to greenhouse gas emissions set out under the EU Renewable Energy Directive, would be contrary to national policy relating to the need for decarbonisation of the electricity sector, would not be supportive of the relevant provisions of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019, and through the specific use of distillate oil, would constitute an unsustainable approach in relation to the provision of energy infrastructure to address intermittency in renewable power generation. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Chris McGarry
Member of An Bord Pleanála
duly authorised to authenticate
the seal of the Board.

Dated this day of 2019.