

An  
Bord  
Pleanála

## Record of Meeting ABP-310980-21 1<sup>st</sup> meeting

<b>Description</b>	ABP-310980-21 – Upgrade of an existing Waste Water Treatment Plant at Mortarstown Co Carlow and the upgrade of an existing waste water pumping station, Kilkenny Road Carlow.		
<b>Case Type</b>	Pre-application Consultation.		
<b>1st / 2nd / 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Meeting		
<b>Venue</b>	Virtually by Microsoft Teams		
<b>Date</b>	30/09/2021	<b>Time</b>	11:00am – 12:10pm

<b>Representing An Bord Pleanála</b>		
Brendan Wyse, Assistant Director of Planning (Chair)		
Mairead Kenny, Senior Planning Inspector		
Sarah Caulfield, Executive Officer	s.caulfield@pleanala.ie	01-8737287
<b>Representing the Prospective Applicant</b>		
Majella Keating - Planning Specialist, Irish Water		
Dawid Wozniak - Regional Delivery Lead, Irish Water		
Pat Egan- Design Engineer, Atkins		
Michael Brazil - Project Manager, Carlow County Council		
Aiden O'Neill - Planner, Coakely O'Neill		

## **Introduction:**

The Board referred to the letter received from the prospective applicant on the 30<sup>th</sup> July 2021, requesting pre-application consultations and advised the prospective applicant that the instant meeting essentially constituted an information-gathering exercise for the Board; 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 Board. The Board mentioned the following general procedures in relation to the pre-application consultation process:

- The Board 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 Board once finalised, but the prospective applicant may submit comments on the record which will form part of the case file.
- The Board 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 Board and public consultations may also be directed by the Board.
- The Board may hold consultations in respect of the proposed development with other bodies.
- The holding of consultations does not prejudice the Board in any way and cannot be relied upon in the formal planning process or in any legal proceedings.

## **Presentation by the prospective applicant:**

The proposed development is for upgrades to Mortarstown Wastewater Treatment Plant (WwTP) at Mortarstown Upper, Co Carlow and to the Wastewater Pumping Station (WwPS) at Kilkenny Road, Co. Carlow. It is intended to increase the capacity of the WwTP from 36,000 PE to 58,000 PE. The prospective applicant said the key drivers for the expansion are to alleviate current overloading, to improve compliance with the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive, and to enable growth in the agglomeration.

The prospective applicant said the wastewater treatment upgrade would result in an expansion of the existing wastewater treatment plant site into lands owned by Irish Water. The upgrade to the existing pumping station would expand in size to extend into lands owned by Carlow County Council (currently being transferred to Irish Water).

The prospective applicant said there is a current EPA wastewater discharge licence for the agglomeration, which issued in 2008. A review of the EPA licensing will also be undertaken for this development.

The Mortarstown WwTP is located approximately 2.2 kilometres to the south of Carlow Town Centre. The existing WwTP site largely comprises wastewater treatment infrastructure and amenity grassland. The amalgamated lands would have an overall site area of approximately 4.9 hectares. The existing treated effluent outfall pipe is laid from the WwTP, under the Kilkenny Road and through a field adjacent to the River Barrow (approximately 250 metres to the west). The agglomeration for the WwTP comprises Carlow Town and environs, including parts of Graiguecullen and Killeslin in Co. Laois.

The prospective applicant said the Kilkenny Road WwPS site is located on the western side of the Kilkenny Road, to the north of the WwTP site and approximately 1.4 kilometres to the south of Carlow Town Centre. Approximately 90% of wastewater produced in the agglomeration of Carlow Town and environs flows to the existing WwPS site. In order to take the additional flows from the agglomeration, it is proposed to upgrade the existing WwPS. Additional lands to the south are required



to facilitate the upgrade and are mainly undeveloped and comprise trees and scrub. These lands are currently owned by Carlow County Council and are in the process of being transferred to Irish Water.

The prospective applicant said it had consulted with Carlow County Council and Laois County Council in June/July 2021.

In relation to environmental considerations, the prospective applicant said EIA is mandatory by reference to Schedule 5, Part 2, Class 13(a). Preparation of the EIAR is ongoing and completion is anticipated in Quarter 1, 2022. Due to the proximity of the River Barrow SAC, the prospective applicant said it is likely that the proposal would be screened in for appropriate assessment. The prospective applicant said a flood risk assessment would also be prepared.

The prospective applicant advised of its preliminary opinion that the proposed upgrade of the WwTP may be considered as strategic infrastructure in accordance with Section 37A(2)(a), (b), and (c).

## **Discussion**


The following matters were discussed:

- In response to a query on the matter, the prospective applicant said it is proposed to install a new larger outfall pipe adjacent to the existing outfall pipe. The existing pipe would be retained but would be decommissioned.
- In relation to in-stream works, the prospective applicant said there would be a requirement for a small headwall (with concrete detail) to dissipate the energy of the pipe entering the river.
- The prospective applicant said as part of the EIAR, baseline odour monitoring has been completed and an odour model and noise model have been created for the site. It said the inlet works and primary tanks would be covered and have their own odour extraction and treatment unit. In relation to the dewatering building, it said that this building is fully enclosed and would have an upgraded odour control unit installed.
- The prospective applicant said further noise assessments are currently ongoing.

- The Board's representatives recommended providing a justification for the location of the inlet and primary tanks in any future planning application and in the assessment of alternatives in the EIAR.
- The Board's representatives provided a preliminary opinion that the proposed development would constitute SID. The final decision on this would be a matter for the Board.
- The prospective applicant said there is no wayleave currently in place for the outfall pipe and noted that discussions have commenced with the landowner.
- The Board's representatives sought clarity regarding the capacity and overall need for the upgrade. It was submitted by the prospective applicant that the current WwTP is currently in compliance with the requirements of the EPA licence but is at capacity and the upgrades would be timely in order to accommodate growth in the agglomeration.
- The prospective applicant said the Draft Carlow County Council Development Plan 2022-2028 specifically identifies the Mortarstown WwTP upgrade.

## **Conclusion**

The record of the meeting will issue to the prospective applicant and it will then be a matter for the prospective applicant to submit any comments on this if it wishes to do so. It will be a matter for the prospective applicant to revert to the Board if it requires a further meeting or if it wishes to close the pre-application consultation process.



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**Brendan Wyse**

**Assistant Director of Planning**

1 Oct. 21