Record Of Meeting

Case Reference/	29S.PC0203		
Description	Expansion and upgrading of the existing Ringsend Waste Water Treatment Plant, Dublin.		
Case Type:	Pre-app consultation		
Meeting:	1st		
Date:	22nd September, 2015	11a.m.	
Location:	Conference Room		
Chairperson:	Anne Marie O'Connor		

Attendees:
Representing An Bord Pleanála
Anne Marie O'Connor – Assistant Director of Planning
Paul Caprani – Senior Planning Inspector
Marcella Doyle – Senior Executive Officer
Kieran Somers – Executive Officer
Representing Prospective Applicant
Donal O'Connor, Project Manager, Irish Water
Dominic Moloney, Project Engineer, Irish Water
Niall Riordan, Project Engineer, Irish Water
Ken McIntyre, Project Director, JB Barry and Partners
Gordon Barry, Project Manager, JB Barry and Partners
Diarmuid Cahalane, Technical Advisor, T.J. O'Connor and Associates
Stephen Little, Planning Co-ordinator, Stephen Little and Associates

Record Of Meeting

An Bord Pleanála

Michelle Maloney, Assistant Planner, Stephen Little and Associates

The meeting commenced at 11a.m.

Introduction:

The Board referred to the letter received by it from the prospective applicant dated the 31st July, 2015 formally requesting pre-application consultations with the Board. It 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 it wished to receive advice on from the Board. The Board also referred to the further information received from the prospective applicant on the 16th September, 2015 outlining current proposals for the Ringsend site. The Board noted the prospective applicant's preliminary view that the proposed development would constitute strategic infrastructure development.

The Board mentioned general procedures in relation to the pre-application consultation process as follows:

- The Board will keep a record of this meeting and any other meetings, if held. Such record will form part of the file which will be made available publicly at the conclusion of the process.
- The Board will serve formal notice at the conclusion of the process as to whether or not the proposed development is SID. It may form a preliminary view at an early stage in the process as to whether the proposed development would likely constitute strategic infrastructure.
- 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 any legal proceedings.

Presentation by the prospective applicant:

The prospective applicant outlined the site location of the proposed development and referred to the approval given by the Board under case reference number 29N.YA0010 in November, 2012. The prospective applicant said that this approved project comprised of three main elements as follows:

- Surgical insertions
- 400,000 PE expansion on an 0.8 hectare site
- A Long Sea Outfall Tunnel approximately 9 kilometres in length

The prospective applicant also referred to the areas which were planned for expansion as part of this approved development. The prospective applicant noted that shortly following this approval the Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC (site code 003000) was formally designated.

The prospective applicant then outlined the constituent elements of the proposed revised project. This is mainly premised on the advanced nutrient removal technology – Aerobic Granular Sludge (AGS) which was not available at the time of the previous application (case reference number 29N.YA0010) and is now available for municipal use. The prospective applicant said that the proposed revised project would result in no change in the approved capacity and no change in the odour standard associated with the existing approval. The prospective applicant said that there would be a retrofit of existing sequencing batch reactors (SBRs) with AGS technology and omission of the long sea outfall tunnel and the continuation of treated effluent discharge to the Lower Liffey Estuary. There will also be some other minor modifications involved in the project.

With respect to environmental impacts, the prospective applicant said the principal changes would be the omission of the long sea outfall tunnel and a higher standard of treatment and resource recovery. The existing discharge location would be used for the extended WWTP.

Board comments/queries:

The Board enquired as to whether any consideration has been given to using section 146B as a possible application route. The Board noted in this regard that the previous application (case reference number 29N.YA0010) was dealt with under strategic infrastructure. The prospective applicant replied that it has considered this option. Noting that the previous application entailed the preparation of both an EIS and NIS, it said that it wished to establish what might best be the most robust approach.

The Board asked the prospective application to expand further on what is involved in the AGS technology. The prospective applicant provided further clarification saying that it is a more efficient process. With respect to the proposed revised project generally, the prospective applicant said that discussions are on-going with the EPA. It confirmed to the Board that a licence renewal will be required from the Agency. It also advised that several studies have been commissioned in respect of the instant project.

The prospective applicant informed the Board that a small plant operating on AGS has been installed on the site and also that it is seeking to develop its own AGS on site. The prospective applicant said it is confident that AGS will work effectively on the effluent at Ringsend. The Board was also informed of the prospective applicant's intention to convert one of the 24 SBRs on site to an AGS reactor.

The prospective applicant confirmed that Appropriate Assessment screening is on-going and it is certain that a Natura Impact Statement will be required.

With respect to a 146B application, the Board pointed out that it would first of all have to make a determination as to whether any proposed alterations would constitute a material alteration. If such a determination is made, then the proposed alterations are open to public consultation. If a 146C determination is made by the Board, then a revised EIS is required which would also be the subject of public consultation.

Noting the different approaches involved under a section 37E application, as opposed to a section 146B application, the prospective applicant said it would wish to ascertain which would be the most appropriate application mechanism. In respect of pre-application consultations, the Board pointed out that it cannot conduct formal EIS scoping until such time as consultations have been formally concluded.

The Board also drew the prospective applicant's attention to the fact that the holding of an oral hearing is entirely at its discretion; the prospective applicant should not rely on the holding of an oral hearing in order to submit additional information on a proposed development.

The Board enquired as to what sort of timescale the prospective applicant might have in mind with regard to an application to it. The prospective applicant replied that if a section 37E application is to be made to the Board, then the lodgement of this would be likely circa summer/autumn of 2016. In the case of a 146B application, this may be made circa October/November 2015.

In response to the Board's query, the prospective applicant said that there would be no compulsory acquisition of land involved in any application.

Finally, the prospective applicant had a query regarding a proposed temporary construction access from Pigeon House Road to the Ringsend wastewater treatment main facility. The Board undertook to revert with advice on this at any further meeting held.

Conclusion:

The Board said a record of the instant meeting will issue to the prospective applicant shortly. Thereafter, a further meeting may be arranged. The Board told the prospective applicant that it is open to it in the meantime to make a written submission as to which application type it may be inclining towards (section 37E or 146B) and set out the reasons for this. The Board would consider any such submission and revert to the prospective applicant with its own advice on the matter.

The meeting concluded at 12p.m.

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Anne Marie O'Connor

Assistant Director of Planning