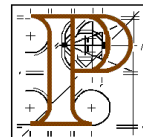


Record Of Meeting

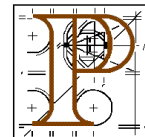
An Bord Pleanála



Case Reference/	29S.PC0203		
Description	Expansion and upgrading of the existing Ringsend Waste Water Treatment Plant, Dublin.		
Case Type:	Pre-app consultation		
Meeting:	Dublin City Council meeting		
Date:	11 th January, 2016	2p.m.	
Location:	Offices of Dublin City Council		
Chairperson:	Anne Marie O'Connor		

Attendees:
Representing An Bord Pleanála
Anne Marie O'Connor – Assistant Director of Planning
Paul Caprani – Senior Planning Inspector
Kieran Somers – Executive Officer
Representing Dublin City Council
Mary Conway, Deputy City Planner, Head of Development Management
Ken Hand, Senior Engineer, Drainage Services
Sally Reddington, Temporary Senior Engineer, Engineering Water Services
Michael Kenny, Senior Engineer, Ringsend Waste Water Treatment Works
Mary Ann Harris, Biodiversity Officer
Imelda Averill, Senior Scientific Officer, Central Laboratory

Record Of Meeting



The meeting commenced at 2.10p.m.

The Board said that the instant meeting was being convened mainly as an information-gathering exercise from its point of view and also to seek comments from the local authority on issues it sees pertaining to the proposed development. In relation to the pre-application request the Board advised the local authority that there have been two meetings with the prospective applicant to date. It said that much of the focus thus far had been on the appropriate application mechanism which might be pursued by the prospective applicant (a section 37 planning application or a 146B request for an alteration to the existing planning permission). The Board said it had concluded, and advised the prospective applicant, that a section 37 planning application would appear to be the more appropriate application mechanism given the nature of the proposed change to the discharge location and the treatment technology/process.

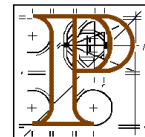
With regard to a formal section 37 planning application, the Board reminded the local authority of the criteria it has to consider under the provisions of Section 37A(2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. The Board's remit ultimately is to determine whether or not the proposed development would constitute strategic infrastructure. The Board also advises on matters relating to proper planning and sustainable development or the likely effects on the environment, which may have a bearing on the Board's consideration of a future application.

The Board referred to the previous permission granted (for an extension to the Ringsend wastewater treatment works (reference number 29N.YA0012). The principal changes to that permission were identified as:

- Introduction of Aerobic Granular Sludge technology
- Omission of the Long Sea Outfall Tunnel
- Use of existing outfall
- Ancillary and Sundry Works

With regard to the instant project, the Board noted that the proposed omission of the Long Sea Outfall Tunnel will have a number of implications as the discharge would now take place at the Poolbeg Peninsula and will be subject to the requirements of the Surface Water Regulations. Also, with respect to the proposed new technology, the Board noted that there will be a greater degree of nutrient removal on site. It said it would welcome the local authority's comments, if any, on a number of matters including:

Record Of Meeting



- General matters
- Comments on the proposed new technology
- Comments on the assimilative capacity of receiving waters
- Comments in relation to impacts on benthic ecology in the vicinity of the outfall
- Comments in relation to appropriate assessment

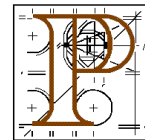
The local authority asked if the proposed works will take place in the existing SPA. The Board said its understanding is that works will not take place within any European Site, but are located close to a number of SAC's and SPAs.

The local authority queried as to whether there would be an increase in sludge volume. The Board said this would be a matter to investigate further with the applicant. It also noted that phosphorous will be extracted on site. The local authority noted these points and commented that there may be a question as to whether the treated material would be designated as a waste. It referred to struvite which can be used as a fertiliser. The local authority added that members of the public would most likely want to know if the treated material is a safe product and if any contamination might arise.

The local authority asked the Board if any discussions have taken place between it and the EPA so far. The Board replied no, but indicated its intention to meet with the Agency regarding the proposed development. The Board noted that the prospective applicant has initiated consultations with the EPA. The local authority commented that the current EPA licence for the facility was issued in 2010. It informed the Board that it conducts annual environmental reports (AER's) in respect of the facility and advised the Board generally of some of its findings in this regard. The local authority noted that there is considerable baseline data available for the vicinity of the facility in terms of matters such as benthic ecology. It advised the Board that the 2015 AER in relation to the facility is due to be submitted in February 2016.

The local authority also noted that the original Long Sea Outfall Tunnel would have removed nutrients out to Dublin Bay. It referred generally to the Bathing Water Regulations and advised the Board that the standard in respect of these has been raised significantly in recent times. The local authority remarked that there is a need for a sophisticated model in respect of Dublin Bay. It also said that better analysis and data would be useful in relation to cumulative effects in the bay. The local authority noted that there are no proposed changes under the current proposal in relation to storm overflow. This may also have certain implications for bathing waters in the vicinity.

Record Of Meeting



The local authority noted that Dublin Bay generally is quite a designated area in terms of appropriate assessment. It referred again to cumulative effects and raised concerns regarding long-term impacts of development. On-going climate changes were also mentioned by it in this regard.

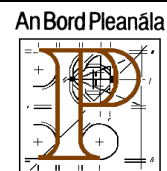
The local authority commented that the proposed new technology (i.e. Aerobic Granular Sludge Technology) does appear to be a very good fit for the facility at Ringsend. At the Board's request, the local authority expanded somewhat on its understanding of this new technology. In response to the Board's query, it said that any impacts arising from odour would be quite minimal. The Board noted that the prospective applicant has referred to the use of the new technology at an existing plant in Clonakilty. The local authority said this is its understanding also, but pointed out that the plant in Clonakilty is on a much smaller scale than Ringsend. Nonetheless, it said that it should be possible to draw comparisons between this smaller facility and the larger one at Ringsend. The local authority also stated its opinion that a revised licence in respect of the proposed alterations will be required from the EPA. The local authority referred to the pilot project using AGS technology currently ongoing at the Ringsend plant. It understood that initial results were promising but indicated that would like to see data for an entire calendar year.

The local authority said that a risk analysis would have to be conducted by the operator of the facility. It referred to some of the scenarios which can arise for a facility of this type such as toxic shock, or the event of a very cold spell as occurred in recent years. Although many scenarios are quite unlikely, the local authority said that any risk analysis carried out should be as robust as possible.

The local authority raised its concern that the existing facility at Ringsend is overloaded and that this is having implications for the quality of effluent. It also expressed its concern in relation to how effectively various planning consents can keep pace with the ever increasing requirements of the system. The local authority noted that economic recovery is now well under way and that it is receiving an increased volume of planning applications. It said that these permissions will also be discharging as well as all existing development.

The local authority also noted the presence of some protected structures in the vicinity of the facility. It said that any effects on these arising from the proposed development would have to be properly assessed. A traffic impact assessment should also be required, including the transport of sludge.

Record Of Meeting



The Board confirmed to the local authority that an EIS and NIS would be required as part of the formal planning application. EIA and Appropriate Assessment will be carried out by the Board in respect of the planning application.

Conclusion:

The Board said that it may hold a further meeting with the local authority in relation to this pre-application consultation. In the meantime, the Board intends to hold a meeting with the EPA. At least one further meeting will also be required with the prospective applicant.

The meeting concluded at 3.20p.m.

Anne Marie O'Connor

Assistant Director of Planning