



An  
Bord  
Pleanála

## Record of 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting

**ABP-310202-21**

<b>Development</b>	Proposed upgrade to Limerick (Bunlicky) Wastewater Treatment Plant at Ballykeeffe, Limerick		
<b>Location</b>	Virtually by Microsoft Teams		
<b>Case Type</b>	Pre-application consultation		
<b>1<sup>st</sup> / 2<sup>nd</sup> / 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting</b>	1 <sup>st</sup>		
<b>Date</b>	28/06/2021	<b>Time</b>	11:45a.m. – 12:30p.m.
<b>Attendees</b>			
<b>Representing An Bord Pleanála</b>			
Ciara Kellett, Assistant Director of Planning (Chair)			
Patricia Calleary, Senior Planning Inspector			
Jennifer Sherry, Executive Officer	j.sherry@pleanala.ie	01-8737266	
<b>Representing the Prospective Applicant</b>			
Majella Keating, Project Planning Specialist, Irish Water			
Seamus Glynn, Wastewater Programme Regional Lead, Irish Water			
Conor Delaney, Project Manager, Irish Water			
Paul Judge, Senior Engineer JB Barry's & Associates			
Julie O'Sullivan, Ecologist, MKO & Associates			

## **Introduction**

The Board referred to the letter received from the prospective applicant 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 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 any legal proceedings.

## **Presentation**

The prospective applicant outlined the purpose of this pre-application consultation meeting is to determine if the proposed upgrades constitute strategic infrastructure development as set out in the Seventh Schedule. The prospective applicant gave a presentation on the following topics:

**Background and need** – the existing WwTP has 130,000 P.E. capacity and it is proposed to increase this capacity to 285,000 P.E., to provide for domestic and commercial growth, and provide capacity for significant industrial customers. There may be a need to acquire lands at Corcanree Pumping Station from Shannon Foynes Port Company, likely by agreement or if not by agreement, there may be a need for a compulsory purchase order. A foreshore license is not required. A review of the WwDL will be necessary and such an application will be submitted to the EPA.

**Site location** - the proposed development site is located at two separate parcels of land one for Bunlicky WwTP and the other for Corcanree Pump Station both located north of Dock Road and accessed via an industrial road. A site location map and agglomeration drawing were included in the presentation.

**Existing infrastructure** – a desktop study was undertaken to look at the flows and loads into Bunlicky WwTP. The future P.E. trade effluent licenses are a big driver for the increase in capacity and a conventional sludge plant. The infrastructure on site includes a sludge treatment area, admin building, inlet works, primary settling tanks, Mungret PS, aeration tanks, secondary settling tanks, storm tanks and final effluent PS.

**Proposed development** – the prospective applicant included a list of proposed development works in the presentation provided which included new inlet works; upgrade works to the final effluent pumping station and the sludge treatment facility including additional anaerobic digester and CHP; new process stream including influent balancing tank and sludge buffer tank; upgrades to existing Classical Activated Sludge (CAS) process stream; repairs/upgrades to existing outfall pipeline and new storm holding tank at Corcanree Pumping Station.

**EIAR and AA** - the prospective applicant set out that the preparation of an EIAR is in progress and the EIAR is expected to be completed in Q1 2022. The EIAR will be prepared in line with current legislation and guidance. Also, appropriate assessment screening / Stage 2 NIS is to be undertaken taking into account the pathway with Lower Shannon SAC. A flood risk assessment report will also be prepared.

**Engagement with Local Authorities** – the prospective applicant stated it has consulted with Limerick City and County Council and Clare County Council in March/April 2021 in which they have provided an overview and outline of the proposed development.

**Section 37A (2): SID Criteria** – the prospective applicant advised of its preliminary opinion that the proposed upgrade works of the WwTP is a strategic infrastructure development in accordance with Section 37A(2)(a), (b) and (c).

## **Discussion**

The following matters were discussed as part of the meeting:

- The Board’s representatives commented on the anaerobic sludge digester as new technology and suggested the prospective applicant could include examples of where it has worked previously in any future planning application. In response to the Board’s representatives query the prospective applicant explained there is an existing sludge hub at Bunlicky WwTP with anaerobic digestors installed in 2016. It is proposed to build another digester and sludge tank for the intake of imported sludge. There is currently capacity for sludge at 100,000 P.E. whereas, for an increased capacity to proposed P.E. of 285,000, the proposed upgrades would need to take place. The prospective applicant advised the project design will be progressed further and more detail can be given at the next meeting. The Board’s representatives stated the chain of events of the sludge, for example transporting sludge from Castletroy to Bunlicky sludge hub, needs to be captured in the planning application.
- The prospective applicant in response to the Board’s representatives query stated they are in the middle of scoping the EIA.
- The prospective applicant advised they have been in contact with Shannon Foynes Port Company over the acquisition of land and the initial contact has been positive.
- The Board’s representatives enquired if there are any electrical upgrade works to take place as part of the proposed works. The prospective applicant said the existing infrastructure on site is sufficient to deal with the increased demand.

- The Board’s representatives advised a second meeting would be beneficial when the design of the proposed development has progressed and when the EIAR is further advanced.

## **Conclusion**

The record of the meeting will issue to the prospective applicant, and it will be a matter for the prospective applicant to submit any comments on this if it wishes to do so.

Following this, the prospective applicant should seek a second meeting with the Board or request closure to the pre-application process in writing.

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Ciara Kellett

Assistant Director of Planning