

Sub No. 353

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Environmental
Protection Agency
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Office of Licensing and Guidance
Environmental Protection Agency
PO Box 3000
Johnstown Castle Estate
Co Wexford

Loughtown
Newcastle
Co Dublin

2nd January 2007

Re Corrib Gas/ Bellinaboy Terminal IPPC Licence P0738-01

Dear Sir/Madam

Due to my lack of technical knowledge regarding the above licence application, I have up to now, been reluctant to write to you. However over the Christmas break I had the time and opportunity to review the correspondence on your web site and to say the least was impressed by the depth of knowledge of the contributors.

While I have always considered it was a foregone conclusion that the licence would be granted in what ever manner the Shell consortium requested, the above mentioned correspondence has given me some hope that the EPA will have the courage to judge the application without political and corporate interference. I have no intention of restating the vast body of technical information available to your agency, but it has always been my contention that the Bellinaboy site was perhaps the worst location in the region. Yes I am aware that it was politically expedient to locate the facility at Bellinaboy, but political expediency is a short term solution to a problem that will have long term implications for the residents and visitors to this beautiful area.

Many references have been made to the Seveso 11 Directive (96/82/EC) and whether or not our guidelines comply. Hopefully this application will give your agency the opportunity to look beyond the minimum guidelines of this directive in such a manner that will produce a benchmark for future developments both in Ireland and elsewhere. The converse of course is the lowering of standards through Europe, if the minimum guidelines of the directive are not adhered to. It is the stated view of the Shell consortium that the question is money, how much will it cost and how much can be made on this project. The optimum location has always been offshore, the Shell consortium stated that this would cost too much.

Natural justice should dictate, that the future health and safety implications of the local community must outweigh any short term benefit the Shell consortium may gain by locating such a facility onshore. After all what we are talking about is not a Gas Terminal, it is in fact by definition a Gas Refinery and it must by judged under this classification.

EPA

Main File ☒
Public File ☒
Evaluation File ☒
4/1/07

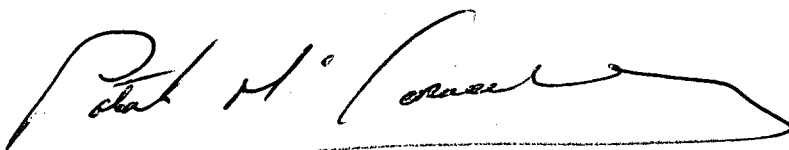
I have no intention of outlining the anguish and general fear this development is causing within the local community as I am sure that you are well versed on recent developments. Suffice it to say that most local people know that history can not be reversed and that the sell off of our natural resources is done and dusted. Having said that, they are also aware that there was major collusion between the original owners Enterprise Ireland and the then Fianna Fail government regarding the least expensive methodology of bringing this resource to the consumer. Unfortunately this collusion with the present owners has continued within the present Fianna Fail government who seem unwilling or unable to learn from the mistakes of the past. Perhaps if the then directors of An Bord Pleanala had listened to the voice of reason as expressed by all their own planning officials and not the government, they would not have overruled their own inspector's recommendation to refuse permission. A glaring example of the inertia and fear of the past was displayed by the present government when it set out the terms of reference for the Advantica Report. If as was proper, Advantica had been commissioned to examine the optimum location for the terminal, perhaps the events of the last few months would not have taken place

As you are aware the recent opinion poll showed that the majority of Mayo people were in favour of work progressing on the project. This is hardly surprising given that most of the respondents lived many, many miles away from the pipeline or terminal and consequently any potential danger. What did not receive headlines is that the majority of respondents said that they would protest in the same manner if the problem was on their own doorsteps!!!

My interest in the above stems from visiting the area on a very regular basis over the last 28 years. Two years ago my wife and I started building our retirement home at Gortmellia about 1 mile as the crow flies from the terminal. As my mother in law was born in the area it appears that half the local population are directly or indirectly related to my wife. As a consequence I have known many of the people involved in the protest for many years and can assure you they are neither REDS or PINKS but just normal people trying as best they can to protect their families, their lifestyle and the most pristine environment in Ireland. They have no problem with the gas coming ashore but fear the consequences of an "untreated gas" pipeline and the effects the onshore cleaning process will have on their environment and particularly on Carrowmore Lake which supplies all their drinking water.

Hopefully in the clinical world of reports, directives, political interference and money space can be found to look at the human cost of this project.

Yours faithfully



Pat McCormack