

Meath County Council



Planning Report

To:	Wendy Bagnall, Senior Executive Planner
From:	David Caffrey, Executive Planner
Date:	29 th October 2014
File Number:	LB/140803
Applicant:	Dunbia (Slane)
Development Address:	Painstown, Beauparc, Co. Meath
Application Type:	Permission
Development Description:	development will comprise the following: (i) Intensification of livestock slaughtering activities at the existing meat plant; (ii) Demolition and removal of existing offices as required under Condition no 3 of planning permission SA/140210; (iii) Construction of 210m ² of new offices, staff welfare and storage facilities at the location of the demountable structure referred to in (ii) above; (iv) Change of use of an existing farmhouse from residential use to office use (153m ²); (v) Construction of 112m ² of additional lairage facilities; (vi) Construction of a 18m ² green offal processing room abutting the main factory building; (vii) Construction of an external gantry to support a stomach press (20m ²); (viii) Construction of a 4m ² pumphouse; (ix) Additional of 5 no. new ancillary car parking spaces. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be submitted with the planning application to the Planning Authority. The application is in respect of an activity which requires an Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Licence (IPPC).
Date Decision Due:	4 th November 2014

1.0 Site Location & Description:

The site consists of an existing abbatoir at the end of a cul-de-sac approximately 250m to the south west of the CR 381. There are a number of large industrial type buildings on site along with ancillary office accommodation. There is also a large concrete hardstanding for the parking and turning of employees vehicles and HGVs. The site is surrounded by agricultural buildings/land. Ther abbatoir has been in existence on site since the 1980s and was acquired by Dunbia in 2001.

The existing facility is regulated by an Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control licence issued by the EPA under P0811-01 and the said licence was amended by the EPA in 2013 to bring it into compliance with the provisions of EU Environmental Objectives Regulations 2010 and activity since 2013 is an Industrial emissions directive (IED) activity.

Services:

Water Supply- Public Mains

Effluent Disposal- Wastewater Treatment System

Surface Water- Soakpit

2.0 Planning History:

Under SA140210 the current applicant was granted permission for (i) retention of extensions to the side chill in three units of c. 155m² and c. 143m² and c. 46m² and extension to the existing lairage of c. 237m²; (ii) retention of change of use of separate lairage extension of c. 153m² from agricultural use to commercial use; (iii) retention of ancillary development comprising a trailer port, c. 93m² of existing green offal chills, c. 301m² of existing office and staff welfare facilities, 3 no. separate surface parking areas to accommodate 51 no. surface car parking spaces and 6 no. delivery/dispatch vehicles, together with lairage yard extension of c. 1025m² and associated site infrastructure works. Planning permission is also sought for works required to facilitate rain water harvesting, enhancement of water supply and upgrading of on-site drainage and surface water management infrastructure. The application relates to development for the purpose of an activity requiring an Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Licence

Under SA100576 the current applicant sought retention permission for an extension to side chill & extension to lairage to existing meat processing plant. The application was deemed to be withdrawn after failure to respond to an FI request.

Under SA/801209 permission was granted to the applicant for the construction of 2 No. effluent Aeration tanks, control building and additional smaller storage tanks for effluent treatment purposes. An Integrated Pollution Control licence has been applied for.

SA/30332 – p/p granted to construct an integrated constructed wetland system to treat wash-waters and yard-waters from the existing Newgrange Meats process facility

SA/20110 – p/p granted for a two storey extension to the front and rear of existing abattoir and all auxiliary site works and services. Further Information/revised plans submitted with revisions including revised site boundaries, new car parking spaces, to fill in existing septic tank and to install a new BAF sewerage treatment system and also to install 2 no. underground storage tanks under current planning ref no.SA20110

P00/818 – p/p granted for a single storey extension to the side of existing abattoir to be used for hanging & clipping, plus a new blood holding tank

3.0 National and Local Planning Policy:

Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 is applicable in the assessment of this application.

- Chapter 4 relates to economic development.
- Chapter 6 relates to transport.
- Chapter 10 relates to rural development.
- Chapter 11 relates to development management guidelines for non-residential development.

Chapter 4 of the County Development Plan sets out a range of economic policies and objectives which relate to the facilitation and development of employment in the county. Specifically, ED POL 19 relates to business enterprise in the countryside and states:

'To normally permit development proposals for the expansion of existing authorised industrial or business enterprises in the countryside where the resultant development does not negatively impact on the character and amenity of the surrounding area. In all instances, it should be demonstrated that the proposal would not generate traffic of a type and amount inappropriate for the character of the access roads. This policy shall not apply to the National Road Network'.

4.0 Submissions:

4 No submissions have been received under article 29 (1)(a) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended. The following outlines the main content of same:

- Concern on wash water being spread on adjoining farm lands
- The road network in the vicinity is not suitable to cater for the volumes of traffic generated
- Concern expressed on hours of operation and noise emanating from the site
- Concern expressed on wastewater treatment and the disposal of same
- The impacts of landspreading of organic waste would be significant
- Potential for pollution and odour emanating from the site

The applicant submitted a response to the content of the third party submissions and the HSE by way of unsolicited further information.

The submissions/observations have been reviewed and taken into consideration in the assessment of this planning application.

5.0 Prescribed Bodies:

The file was referred to the following prescribed bodies under Article 28(1) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended):

An Taisce: An assessment is required with regard to ED POL 17 and ED POL 18 of the CDP

EHO: No objection subject to conditions

EPA: Report Received. General comments in respect of obligations of the EPA in respect of licencing

Development Applications Unit: No objection subject to conditions

6.0 Referrals:

Area Engineer: No report received

Road Design: No further development should be permitted until the entrance is upgraded to an acceptable standard

Chief Fire Officer: No objection

Heritage Officer: No report received

7.0 Pre-Planning Consultation:

The applicant did engage in pre-planning discussions.

8.0 Summary of Key Planning Issues:

It is considered that the key planning considerations are:

- Principle of Development
- Requirement for EIS
- Access to the site
- Visual Impacts
- Site Servicing
- Archaeology & Built Heritage
- Appropriate Assessment

9.0 Planning Assessment:

9.1 Principle of Development

Whilst the subject site is located on unzoned and unserviced lands it is recognised that there is an existing and established commercial enterprise on site, which the applicant is now seeking to extend as follows: (i) Intensification of livestock slaughtering activities at the existing meat plant; (ii) Demolition and removal of existing offices as required under Condition no 3 of planning permission SA/140210; (iii) Construction of 210m² of new offices, staff welfare and storage facilities at the location of the demountable structure referred to in (ii) above; (iv) Change of use of an existing farmhouse from residential use to office use (153m²); (v) Construction of 112m² of additional lairage facilities; (vi) Construction of a 18m² green offal processing room abutting the main factory building; (vii) Construction of an external gantry to support a stomach press (20m²); (viii) Construction of a 4m² pumphouse; (ix) Additional of 5 no. new ancillary car parking spaces. Chapter 4 of the County Development Plan sets out a range of economic policies and objectives which relate to the facilitation and development of employment in the county. Specifically, ED POL 17 relates to business enterprise in the countryside and states:

'To normally permit development proposals for the expansion of existing authorised industrial or business enterprises in the countryside where the resultant development does not negatively impact on the character and amenity of the surrounding area. In all instances, it should be demonstrated that the proposal would not generate traffic of a type and amount inappropriate for the character of the access roads. This policy shall not apply to the National Road Network'.

The Planning Authority would acknowledge that the precedent for this type of use has been set on site already.

In relation to the extensions the capacity of the site to absorb the development on the scale proposed will be assessed below in the context of environmental impacts, on site car-parking, loading areas and anticipated traffic movements to and from the site above existing.

9.2 Requirement for EIS

The Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended sets out in Schedule 5 the development thresholds which necessitate a mandatory EIA and in particular references the requirement for same where the slaughter of animals would exceed a daily capacity of 1,500 units (5 units per head of cattle). Given that the proposal involves an intensification of the kill rate to 350 cattle per day it is accepted that a mandatory EIS is required in accordance with the regulations. The application is accompanied by an environmental impact statement and there is a non-technical summary document. In relation to the adequacy of the E.I.S, I submit that it contains the information specified in Schedule 6 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. In general the information provided is considered to be relatively clear and precise.

In accordance with the requirements of Article 3 of the European Directive 85/337/EEC, as amended by Council Directives 97/11/EC and 2003/35/EC and Section 171A of the Planning and Development Act 2000 – 2013, the environmental impact statement submitted by the applicant is required to be assessed by the competent authority and which is done within the remaining sections of this report.

9.3 Access & Traffic

The applicant is proposing to utilise the existing access point onto the narrow local road, which at the time of site inspection was deemed to be lightly trafficked but is in poor condition in terms of surface width and condition. The applicant submits that there will be a minor increase in traffic volumes associated with the increased throughput by reason of increased staffing, cattle deliveries and waste collection. It is anticipated that the additional movements would be circa 86 per day inclusive of some 66 HGV movements. The EIS states that the additional movements will have a limited impact on the road network (on the basis of traffic modelling undertaken).

The Planning Authority would contend that 66 additional HGV movements would be relatively significant and the content of the Road Design Section report is noted, which states as follows: *"This site is located on a county road in 80kph speed limit zone. The entrance is located on the inside of a bend where there is very narrow verge and sightlines are extremely poor.*

The entrance is dangerous to say the least except for trucks which may be seen or enable truck driver to see over the adjoining hedge/fence/wall.

No further development should be permitted until this entrance is improved to an acceptable standard". It is reasonable to afford the applicant the opportunity to address the concerns as specified and as such it is recommended that Further Information be sought.

In terms of on site parking the Meath County Development Plan 2013 Table 11.9 outlines that manufacturing facilities requires a provision of 1 space per 50sq metres with greater requirements for office use. Having examined the site the Planning Authority is satisfied that adequate on site parking exists.

9.4 Visual Impacts

The subject site is located within Landscape Character Area 6 (Central Lowlands), which is of High value, medium sensitivity and is of regional importance. The Planning Authority would therefore state that whilst the Landscape Character Area mapping is largely indicative, the application site is not located within an identified highly sensitive landscape.

Chapter 11 of the Development Plan sets out guidelines in relation to non-residential development, regarding layout, design, loading/unloading, car parking, storage etc... This section of the Plan also indicates that a high standard of design, finish, layout and landscaping will be required for industrial warehousing and business park development. Comprehensive landscaping plans must also be prepared by a fully qualified landscape architect and shall be submitted at application stage.

The proposal involves the Demolition and removal of existing offices as required under Condition no 3 of planning permission SA/140210; Construction of 210m² of new offices, staff welfare and storage facilities at the location of the demountable structure; Change of use of an existing farmhouse from residential use to office use (153m²); Construction of 112m² of additional lairage facilities; Construction of a 18m² green offal processing room abutting the main factory building; Construction of an external gantry to support a stomach press (20m²); Construction of a 4m² pumphouse; Additional of 5 no. new ancillary car parking spaces. The topography surrounding the site is gently undulating and the application site undulates by c10m. The applicant has referenced the landscaping scheme permitted under SA140210 to ensure that the proposal will not have a significant adverse effect on the surrounding environment. The buildings are on the footprint of a previously established farming complex and the general appearance of the structures are acceptable.

In terms of the office/staff welfare structures, same is acceptable in the context of the previous grant of permission whereby temporary facilities were to be replaced.

9.5 Environmental Considerations

The environmental considerations considered as part of this proposal relates to the following matters:

9.5.1 Soils & Geology

The principle impact on soils, subsoils and bedrock is associated with the construction and operational phases with risk of spillage. Mitigation measures relate to the provision of hydrocarbon based products and appropriate management of animal byproducts. The mitigation measures means that the impact on soils and subsoils are assessed as low.

9.5.2 Hydrology

The increased risk of uncontrolled discharge of fuels and effluent to local drainage ditches would be the principle impact on Hydrology. To mitigate these concerns the applicant proposes the treatment and attenuation of surface water run-off from roofs

and yard areas and the treatment of dirty waters from washdown before it is tinkered off site.

An increase in groundwater supply is required for the intensification of use and this will be provided from the 2 existing groundwater wells and a new production well. An investigation of the supply undertaken by the applicant demonstrates that groundwater drawdown in the well will not impact on groundwater flow or other groundwater supplies.

9.5.3 Air Quality/Odour:

Mitigation measures in relation to odour and air quality impacts are already in place as required under the existing IPPC licence. In any case the assessment undertaken as part of the EIS indicates, with the implementation of specific dust control measures, that potential dust impacts during the construction phase will be largely imperceptible.

9.5.2 Noise:

No additional externally mounted refrigeration, air conditioning or ventilation is required to facilitate the development and thus it is likely that the only increase in noise levels would be associated with the loading and unloading of stock on a more frequent basis. The Planning Authority would not envisage a significant increase in noise levels, however it is accepted that the hours of operation should be tightly regulated to ensure no loss of amenity. This matter can be conditioned in any grant of permission.

9.6 Archaeology and Built Heritage

There are no recorded monuments in close proximity to the site that could potentially be disturbed at construction or operational stage. Similarly there are no protected structures in the immediate vicinity of the site that could be adversely affected. A report has been received from the Development Applications Unit, which recommends that Archaeological Monitoring be undertaken by way of condition in the event of a grant of permission.

9.7 Appropriate Assessment

With regard to appropriate assessment and as detailed in the Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities, where from the nature, size and location of the development it is unclear if the proposal, will have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site an Appropriate Assessment will need to be undertaken. A watercourse is located 200m north of the site but there are drainage ditches that may connect to this watercourse however upon inspection it was noted that the drainage network is not wet throughout the year suggesting a degree of natural soakage. The subject site is located approximately 2.5km from the River Boyne and Blackwater SAC/SPA. The applicant has submitted a screening for appropriate assessment document which concludes that there is no significant effect on the qualifying interests of the Natura 2000 site having regard to the separation distances and the lack of an identifiable pathway to same. The Planning Authority is satisfied with the screening report provided.

10.0 Development Contributions:

DCS 2012 applicable

11.0 Recommendation:

I recommend that **Further Information** be sought as follows:

1. The subject site is located on a county road in 80kph speed limit zone. The entrance is located on the inside of a bend where there is very narrow verge and sightlines are extremely poor. Reservations exist that an intensification of the site would impact on traffic safety to an unacceptable degree. Therefore you are requested to submit proposals whereby suitable access/egress arrangements are put in place. You are advised to liaise with the Road Design Section of Meath County Council in respect of the foregoing.
2. If any submission resulting from the above requires the submission of additional data which alters your original proposal and the Planning Authority on receipt of the submission consider it to be significant, you may be required to publish a notice in an approved newspaper in accordance with S.34(8) of the Planning and Development Act 2000-2014. You should not publish any notices unless and until such time as the Planning Authority issues you with a notification to do so.

David Caffrey
Executive Planner



Wendy Bagnall
Senior Executive Planner

RECOMMENDATION ACCEPTED
31 OCT 2014
Signed: 

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approved
W Bagnall
31/10/14

FURTHER INFORMATION