



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report

ABP-320187-24

Development	The construction of (1) new storage warehouse with canopy (2) filling in of an existing fire water lagoon and replacing with a fire water tank and (3) associated site works.
Location	Oranstown, Dunboyne, Co. Meath
Planning Authority	Meath County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	212142
Applicant(s)	Mid Cork Pallets.
Type of Application	Permission
Planning Authority Decision	Grant
Type of Appeal	Third Party
Appellant(s)	Kevin Cummins, Oliver Ryan, Pat and Finnuala Nevin.
Observer(s)	1. Paul and Helga Slevin 2. Barbara Goode 3. Pat and Kathleen Clark. 4. Tony Connolly and others.
Inspector	Lucy Roche

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1.0 Introduction:

- 1.1. This appeal relates to a proposal for works at an existing warehouse / factory facility in Oranstown, Dunboyne, County Meath, comprising the construction of a new warehouse structure, the filling in of an existing fire water lagoon and its replacement with a steel fire water tank and associated site works.
- 1.2. The Board previously made a decision on this appeal by order dated 7th February 2024 and under appeal reference number ABP-314130-22. The correspondence on file, dated 26th of July 2024, confirms that this decision was quashed by order of the High Court and the case was remitted by that Court back to the Board to the point in the process immediately following the decision of the Board to defer consideration of the case and to issue a notice to the Applicant pursuant to section 132 of the 2000 Act.. The appeal has now been reactivated under ABP Ref: 320187-24.
- 1.3. Having regard to the High Court Order, the quashing of the previous Board decision and the passage of time, the Board also considered it appropriate in the interests of justice to request relevant parties under section 131 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) to make any further general submissions/observations in relation to the appeal. The Section 131 and Section 132 notices were issued on the 26th of July 2024.
- 1.4. This report is an addendum to my previous Inspector's report (dated 31st July 2023) in respect of ABP-314130-22. The previous report recommended that planning permission be refused on the grounds that it could not be determined on the basis of the information on file, that
 - The existing wastewater treatment and disposal system serving the site is adequate to cater for the additional loading that would be generated by this development.
 - The water supply is adequate in terms of quality and yield to cater for the additional demand likely generated by the proposed development.
 - Proposals for the collection and disposal of surface waters on site are adequate to cater for the proposed development.
- 1.5. The Section 132 Notice issued to the applicant on the 26th of July 2024 requested the applicant to provide details in relation to the existing wastewater treatment

system on site including an assessment of its capacity and ability to cater for increased PE (population equivalent) on site. This report shall consider the further information submitted by the applicants in response to the Section 132 along with submissions received from relevant parties.

2.0 Responses to Section 131 Notice:

Two submissions were received in response to the Boards section 131 Notice issued on the 26th of July 2024. Submissions were received from the planning authority and from the third-party appellants, Kevin Cummins and Oliver Ryan, as follows:

2.1. Submission of the Planning Authority:

The Planning Authority's response to the section 131 request, received on the 31st of July 2023, raises no further issue. The planning authority request that the Board refer to the planner's report and previous submission made.

2.2. Submission of Kevin Cummins and Oliver Ryan (Appellants):

A response to the Boards Section 131 request was received from Kevin Cummins and Oliver Ryan (Appellants) on the 12th of August 2024. This submission can be summarised as follows:

- The Appellants in their submission reiterate the concerns raised in their original objection which they consider remain valid and have been exacerbated by recent development.
- The issue of increased traffic has become more pronounced with a notable increase in HGV traffic on the local road and a number of recent traffic incidents highlighting the danger posed by the current situation. The applicants have themselves acknowledged these safety concerns by proposing alterations / upgrades to the road without landowner consent.
- Unauthorised development has occurred on site in the form of the erection of a large structure without the necessary approval. This structure has placed further strain on already overburdened infrastructure.

3.0 Applicants Response to Section 132 Notice:

3.1. The Applicants agent submitted a response to the Board's section 132 notice on the 12th of August 2024. The information received includes proposals to replace the existing wastewater treatment system on-site with a new system, comprising a PE12 Tricel Novo (or similar approved), UV Filter and Sancel 1800 Filtering Module. The applicant's submission includes a Site Characterisation Report with supporting paperwork and drawings.

3.2. The applicant response can be summarised as follows:

- The applicants, Mid Cork Pallets and Packaging Ltd, operate an existing facility at the site at Oranstown, and have done so for some time.
- At present the property is served by an existing treatment system which has been in place since 2001. Following site inspection, the applicant's agent was unable to find any evidence that the existing system, is not operating effectively. Notwithstanding, it is now proposed to replace this system with a new one to serve the proposed extended facility.
- The proposed system has been designed to comply with E.P.A advice regarding existing systems being improved and upgraded.
- The proposal is an improvement on the current one and will benefit both the applicants and their neighbour's and the local environment into the future.

Following consideration of the applicant's response to the section 132 notice issued on the 26th of July 2024 (outlined in Section 2.0 above), the Board considered it appropriate, in the interests of justice, to request relevant parties under Section 131 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) to make any submissions or observations in relation to applicant's response submission. All parties were invited to make a submission in relation to the matters raised above on or before the 2nd of October 2024.

4.0 Response to Section 131 Request (12th of September 2024)

Submissions to the section 131 Notice issued on the 12th of September 2024 were received from the planning authority and from 1 no. Observer, Pat Clarke and Family, as follows:

4.1. Submission of the Planning Authority

The submission of the planning authority was received on the 26th of September 2024. The planning authority stated that they had no comment to make at this time.

4.2. Submission of Pat Clarke and Family (Observers)

The submission from Pat Clark and Family as Observers to this appeal, was received on the 26th of September 2024 and is summarised as follows:

- The proposed wastewater treatment system is located across the road from the family home of Mr. Clarke's son (and proposed / permitted houses of his other two sons and their partners). Mr. Clarke is concerned that the proposed wastewater treatment system is positioned too close to the existing /permitted water supplies (wells) serving these properties.
- The above concern is raised in addition to the previous concerns raised in relation to traffic safety.
- The proposed development should be located within a designated industrial area.

5.0 Significant Further Information:

The applicant's response to the section 132 request, received on the 12th of August 2024, includes additional works that did not form part of the original development proposal i.e. proposals to replace the existing wastewater treatment system on-site with a new system to current EPA standards. The Board deemed this submission to be '*significant further information*', and revised public notices were requested on the 22nd of October 2024. Revised notices, received on the 7th of November 2024, were

deemed to be in order. These notices detailed the nature of the new proposals, to inform the general public of their contents. No further submissions were received on foot of these notices.

6.0 Policy Context

6.1. Additional Development Plan Policy:

The Consolidated Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 (incl. v.1 & v.2) is the statutory plan for the area. The Plan in Chapter 6 - Infrastructure Strategy, sets out the policy position of the Council in respect of wastewater infrastructure, the following of which is of note:

It is an Objective of the Council:

INF OBJ 13 To ensure that septic tanks, proprietary effluent treatment systems and percolation areas are located and constructed in accordance with the recommendations and guidelines of the EPA and the Council in order to minimise the impact on surface water of discharges.

6.2. Referenced Guidance Documents:

The following documents are considered relevant:

- Code of Practice: Domestic Wastewater Treatment system (Population Equivalent ≤ 10) - Environmental Protection Agency-2021
- Waste Water Treatment Manual - Treatment Systems for Small Communities, Business, Leisure Centres and Hotels- Environmental Protection Agency-2009

6.3. Natural Heritage Designations

The site is not located within or directly adjacent to any designated site. The Rye Water Valley/Carlton SAC (site code:001398) is located c3.6km to the south. There are no other designated Natura 2000 sites within 15km.

6.4. EIA Screening

- 6.4.1. See completed Form 2 on file. Having regard to the nature, size and location of the

proposed development and to the criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the Regulations, I have concluded at preliminary examination that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development. EIA, therefore, is not required.

7.0 Assessment

7.1. Having examined all additional documents on file, including the submissions made in response to the two Section 131 Notices and the Section 132 notice, I consider the main issue to be considered in this addendum report relates to the applicants' proposals for wastewater treatment. Issues raised by third parties in response to the section 131 Notices and Appropriate Assessment also need to be considered. I purpose to address these issues under the following headings:

- Proposals for Wastewater Treatment
- Other Issues
- Appropriate Assessment

7.2. Proposals for Wastewater Treatment

7.2.1. The Applicants existing warehouse/factory facility at Oranstown is served by an on-site wastewater treatment system. This system was permitted in 2001 under the previous grant of planning permission, ABP Ref. PL17.121313 / (MCC PL Ref:99/2594). The capacity of this system and its ability to cater for the proposed extended development is unclear. This uncertainty formed the basis of the Boards section 132 Notice, issued on the 26th of July 2024. The Applicants in their response to the Section 132 Notice submitted a proposal to replace the existing on-site wastewater treatment system with a new system designed to current EPA standards. The response documentation includes: a completed Site Characterisation Form, revised layout plans, a system loading sheet detailing how the loading for the new system was calculated, and design specifications of the system proposed.

7.2.2. As detailed on the revised site layout plans, both the existing and proposed systems are located to the southwest of the existing warehouse/factory facility, on lands

shown to be within the Applicants landholding (within the Blue Line Boundary). on this basis I am satisfied that the applicants have sufficient control over the necessary lands to carry out the proposed works. In addition, I note S.34(4)(a) of the Planning Act gives power to impose a condition on land which is under the control of the applicant as long as the condition is expedient for the purposes of or in connection with the development authorised by the permission. Parties to the appeal and the general Public have been informed of the changes to the application and given an opportunity to comment.

7.2.3. The submitted Site Characterisation Form provides the following information:

Details from Site Characterisation Report		
Soil type	Till derived chiefly from Limestones	
Subsoil	Till derived from Limestone	
Aquifer Vulnerability	Low	
Groundwater Body / status	Dublin; OK	
Groundwater Protection Response	R2 Acceptable subject to normal good practice. Where domestic water supplies are located Nearby, particular attention should be given to the depth of subsoil over bedrock such that the minimum depths required in Chapter 6 are met and the likelihood of microbial pollution is minimised	
Slope	Relatively flat (0.67m over 35m approx.)	
Groundwater flow Direction	Northeast to Southwest (estimated)	
Ground Condition	Industrial Site – Concrete yard	
Trial Hole Depth	2.2	
Percolation Test	Surface (p-Test)	Fail
	Subsurface (T-Test)	23.28

7.2.4. The Site Characterisation Form outlines the results of a trial hole assessment carried out in August 2024. The trial hole was dug to a depth of 2.2m. The water table was

encountered at a depth of 1.85m below ground level, no mottling was observed. The T-Value encountered in the subsoil (23.28) is stated as reasonable; however, the surface percolation test failed, indicating that the ground is unsuitable for the on-site disposal of wastewater. Notwithstanding, regard is had to the fact that this appeal relates to an established warehouse / factory facility which is served by an authorised on-site wastewater treatment system. As such, I am satisfied that the principle of on-site effluent treatment and disposal to serve the warehouse / factory facility has been established.

7.2.5. The proposed wastewater treatment system is intended to replace the existing system, which is to be decommissioned. The EPA's *Code of Practice: Domestic Wastewater Treatment system (Population Equivalent ≤ 10), 2021*, includes in sections 1.3 and 2.2, advice on the retrofitting / upgrading of existing on-site wastewater treatment systems where the site is found to be unsuitable. Essentially, any proposed upgrade must provide improved treatment and reduced environmental impact. While I note that the EPA Code of Practice 2021, refers to wastewater treatment systems serving domestic rather than commercial / industrial premises, I am satisfied that the same principle would apply. This Code of Practice is the most up-to-date guidance document on on-site wastewater treatment in Ireland. Reference to this document in applications of this nature is accepted practice and is appropriate in terms of ensuring a high standard of treatment. On this basis, I am satisfied that the proposal to replace the existing wastewater treatment system with a new upgraded system that is designed and sized to cater for the proposed extended warehouse / factory facility and in accordance with current EPA standards, would be acceptable in principle.

7.2.6. The submitted Site Characterisation Form recommends a Tertiary Treatment system and Infiltration / treatment area. The system proposed comprises a Tricel Novo Packaged Plant, UV Filter and Sancel 1800 Filtering Module. Design specifications for this system have been submitted. The proposed system has been designed to cater for a P.E of 12. The size of the system is based on a predicted loading from 15 no. staff members and 30 no. deliver / collection drivers and includes an allowance for additional future loading. Loading was calculated having regard to Table 3: Recommended Wastewater Loading Rates from Commercial Premises, of the *Wastewater Treatment Manual, Treatment Systems for Small Communities*,

Business, Leisure Centre and Hotels (EPA1998). Following consideration of the above, I am satisfied that the proposed system has been designed / sized to cater for the proposed extended warehouse / factory facility.

- 7.2.7. As detailed on the revised layout plans submitted to the Board on the 12th of August 2024, the proposed WWTS is to be located to the southwest of the existing warehouse / factory premises, in the vicinity of the existing system. The lands in question are currently under concrete which, in my opinion, is not conducive to ensure the effective operation and long-term maintenance of the system. Therefore, should the Board be minded to grant permission for the proposed development (as amended), I would recommend the inclusion of a condition that requires the lands occupied by the proposed wastewater treatment system to be retained free of development and finished in grass.
- 7.2.8. Concerns have been raised by Pat Clarke and Family as observers to this appeal regarding the proximity of the proposed system to existing and permitted private wells on the opposite side of the public road. In this regard I note that the layout plans submitted in support of the proposal demonstrate separation distances in excess of 34 meters between the proposed wastewater treatment system and existing / permitted wells. This would exceed the minimum separation distance of 25 meters for alongside wells specified in the Code of Practice (Table 6.2. Minimum separation distances from the entire DWWTS). Further to this point, I note that the proposed wastewater treatment system is proposed at the location of the existing system. In my opinion, the upgrading of the existing system to current EPA standards, as proposed, would reduce the risk of pollution / contamination of groundwater.
- 7.2.9. Overall, I am satisfied that the proposal to replace the existing on-site wastewater treatment system with a new system to current EPA standards is acceptable and would result in a planning gain. The proposed system incorporating tertiary treatment, would provide for a high level of treatment and a reduced risk of pollution / environmental impact. The proposal is acceptable in this regard.

7.3. Other Issues:

- 7.3.1. The Appellants, Kevin Cummins and Oliver Ryan in their response to the Section 131 notice issued by the Board on the 26th of July 2024, reiterate previous concerns relating to the nature and volume of traffic generated by the development and its impact on traffic safety. They state that since their original appeal submission, HGV traffic from the proposed development site has increased compounding traffic safety concerns. They attribute the increase in HGV traffic to the erection of a large structure on site which they state was erected without the necessary approvals.
- 7.3.2. On the issue of traffic, the Board will note that the type and volume of traffic likely generated by the proposed development and its impact on the local road network was considered in detail in my original Inspectors Report on file, dated 31st of July 2023. While it was accepted that the proposed development would result in additional HGV traffic movements on the local road network, the anticipated volume of additional HGV's movements (20 HGV/day) was not deemed to be significant. Regard was had in the assessment to the proximity of the site to the regional road network (c700m / c1 minute drive) and to the applicant's proposals for the management of HGV traffic movements to and from the site which include the implementation of a Communication Travel Management Plan / Delivery Management System (DMS). While I acknowledge that this issue remains a concern for third parties, no significant new information has been presented that would in my opinion necessitate further consideration of this matter.
- 7.3.3. Regarding the allegations of unauthorised development on site, I note that matters of enforcement fall under the jurisdiction of the planning authority. Notwithstanding, I note that the revised layout plans received by the Board on the 12th of August 2024, delineate a temporary storage marque on lands to the south of the existing warehouse / factory facility, in the vicinity of the proposed wastewater treatment system. I believe this to be the structure referenced in the Appellants submission. It may be of interest to the Board to note that in accordance with Meath County Council's online planning system, retention permission was granted for this structure in September 2024, for a temporary period of three years.

7.4. Appropriate Assessment

- 7.4.1. I have considered the proposed development in light of the requirements S177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.
- 7.4.2. The subject site is in the rural area of Oranstown, Co. Meath. The appeal site is not located within or directly adjacent to any European site. The closest site, the Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC (site code:001398) is located c3.6km to the south. I am not aware of any direct hydrological link between the appeal site and the Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC or any other designated site.
- 7.4.3. The proposed development comprises the construction of a detached storage warehouse, the filling in of an existing fire water lagoon and its replacement with a steel fire water tank and associated site works. The proposed works are associated with an established warehouse facility on site. This facility is served by on-site wastewater treatment system and water supply. The application has been extended to include proposals to upgrade the existing wastewater treatment system to current EPA standards. The proposed system would provide for a high level of treatment and a reduced risk of pollution.
- 7.5. Having considered the nature, scale and location of the project, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because it could not have any appreciable effect on a European Site. The reason for this conclusion is as follows:
- The nature of the works proposed, including proposals to upgrade the existing wastewater treatment system on site to current EPA standards.
 - The location of the development, its distance from European Sites and the absence of direct ecological pathways to European Sites.
 - The screening determination by Local Planning Authority

I consider that the proposed development would not be likely to have a significant effect individually, or in-combination with other plans and projects, on a European Site and appropriate assessment is therefore not required.

8.0 Conclusion

8.1. In my previous Inspectors report on file, dated 31st July 2023, I recommended that permission for the proposed development comprising a new storage warehouse building, the filling in of an existing fire water lagoon and its replacement with a steel fire water tank and associated site works, be refused because it could not be determined on the basis of the information on file, that:

- The existing wastewater treatment and disposal system serving the site is adequate to cater for the additional loading that would be generated by this development.
- The water supply is adequate in terms of quality and yield to cater for the additional demand likely generated by the proposed development.
- Proposals for the collection and disposal of surface waters on site are adequate to cater for the proposed development.

8.2. The Board issued a Section 132 notice to the applicant on the 26th of July 2024 requesting details in relation to the wastewater treatment system on site including an assessment of capacity and ability to cater for increased PE (population equivalent) on site. The applicant's response to the Section 132 Notice included proposals to replace the existing system with a new system to current EPA standards. Following consideration of the further information submitted and having regard to the issues raised by third parties, I am satisfied that the applicant's proposals for the installation of a new wastewater treatment to serve the proposed extended warehouse / factory facility are acceptable. Therefore, I do not recommend that permission be refused on this basis. However, as no additional information was requested / received in relation to water supply or surface water drainage for the proposed scheme, my recommendation in respect of these issues, still stand.

9.0 Recommendation

I recommend that permission be refused for the proposed development, as amended by way of significant further information received by the Board on the 12th of August 2024, and as detailed in revised notices submitted on the 7th of November 2024, for the following reason:

10.0 Reasons and Considerations

1 On the basis of the information on file in relation to proposals for water supply, and surface water drainage, the Board is not satisfied that:

- The water supply is adequate in terms of quality and yield to cater for the additional demand likely generated by the proposed development.
- Proposals for the collection and disposal of surface waters on site are adequate to cater for the proposed development.

The Board is therefore unable to determine that proposed development would not be prejudicial to public health or result in the contamination of ground / surface waters. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to proper planning and sustainable development.

I confirm that this report represents my professional planning assessment, judgement and opinion on the matter assigned to me and that no person has influenced or sought to influence, directly or indirectly, the exercise of my professional judgement in an improper or inappropriate way.

Lucy Roche
Planning Inspector

15th January 2025

Form 1

EIA Pre-Screening

An Bord Pleanála Case Reference	320187-24		
Proposed Development Summary	The construction of a new storage warehouse with canopy, the filling in of an existing fire water lagoon and replacing with a fire water tank; the replacement of the existing on-site wastewater treatment system with a new system to EPA standards and associated site works		
Development Address	Oranstown, Dunboyne, Co. Meath		
1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA? (that is involving construction works, demolition, or interventions in the natural surroundings)		Yes	X
		No	
2. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 1 or Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)?			
Yes	X	10. Infrastructure projects (a) Industrial estate development projects, where the area would exceed 15 hectares. (iv) Urban development which would involve an area greater than 20 hectares (outside of built-up-area).	Proceed to Q3.
No			
3. Does the proposed development equal or exceed any relevant THRESHOLD set out in the relevant Class?			
Yes		.	EIA Mandatory EIAR required

No	X		Proceed to Q4
4. Is the proposed development below the relevant threshold for the Class of development [sub-threshold development]?			
Yes	X	10.Infrastructure projects (iv) Urban development which would involve an area greater than 20 hectares (outside of built-up-area).	Preliminary examination required (Form 2)

5. Has Schedule 7A information been submitted?		
No	X	Screening determination remains as above (Q1 to Q4)
Yes		Screening Determination required

Inspector: _____

Date: _____

Form 2

EIA Preliminary Examination

An Bord Pleanála Case Reference Number	ABP-320187-24
Proposed Development Summary	The construction of a new storage warehouse with canopy, the filling in of an existing fire water lagoon and replacing with a fire water tank; the replacement of the existing on-site wastewater treatment system with a new system to EPA standards and associated site works
Development Address	Oranstown, Dunboyne, Co. Meath
The Board carried out a preliminary examination [ref. Art. 109(2)(a), Planning and Development regulations 2001, as amended] of at least the nature, size or location of the proposed development, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the Regulations. This preliminary examination should be read with, and in the light of, the rest of the Inspector's Report attached herewith.	
Characteristics of proposed development (In particular, the size, design, cumulation with existing/proposed development, nature of demolition works, use of natural resources, production of waste, pollution and nuisance, risk of accidents/disasters and to human health).	The proposed development site is in the rural area of Oranstown in County Meath. It has a stated area of c. 1.16ha. The proposed scheme comprises works associated with an established pallet and packaging storage facility on site. Surrounding lands are predominantly in agricultural use with some single dwellings in the vicinity of the site. The nature of the development is not exceptional in the context of the existing environment. The proposed structure in terms of its design and material finish is reflective of large-scale agricultural buildings and as such would not appear incongruous or out of character in this environment. The development does not involve works of demolition. The proposed development would not give rise to waste, pollution or nuisances that differ from that currently produced on site.

			The site is served by an existing on-site wastewater treatment system which is to be upgraded as part of the proposed development. The development, by virtue of its type, would not pose a risk of major accident and / or disaster, or vulnerable to climate change.
Location of development (The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the development in particular existing and approved land use, abundance/capacity of natural resources, absorption capacity of natural environment e.g. wetland, coastal zones, nature reserves, European sites, densely populated areas, landscapes, sites of historic, cultural or archaeological significance).			The proposed development is in area identified as having a 'very high' landscape value, a 'medium' landscape sensitivity and 'Regional' landscape importance in the Meath County Development Plan. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) was submitted with the application the LVIA predicts a 'Slight' level of landscape impact for the application site and its immediate surroundings, which is likely to reduce quickly to an 'imperceptible' level of impact with increased distance. The potential impact of the proposed development was assessed in the previous Inspector's report dated 31st July 2023, with no significant adverse impacts on the landscape / visual amenity anticipated. The site does not have any historic, cultural or archaeological significance and is removed from designated natural heritage areas.
Types and characteristics of potential impacts (Likely significant effects on environmental parameters, magnitude and spatial extent, nature of impact, transboundary, intensity and complexity, duration, cumulative effects and opportunities for mitigation).			Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development, the established use of the site, the location of the site removed from sensitive habitats, likely limited magnitude and spatial extent of effects, and absence of in combination effects, there is no potential for significant effects on the environmental factors listed in section 171A of the Act.
Conclusion			
Likelihood of Significant Effects	Conclusion in respect of EIA		Yes or No

There is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.	EIA is not required.	X
There is significant and realistic doubt regarding the likelihood of significant effects on the environment.	Schedule 7A Information required to enable a Screening Determination to be carried out.	
There is a real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.	EIAR required.	

Inspector: _____ Date: _____

DP/ADP: _____ Date: _____

(only where Schedule 7A information or EIAR required)