

Planning Report for a Strategic Infrastructure Development

In respect of

The Provision of a Proposed Substation and Associated Electricity Transmission Line Connections

Prepared by

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On behalf of

EngineNode Ltd.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 On behalf the applicant, Enginenode Ltd, and further to a determination received from An Bord Pleanála confirming the proposed development constitutes Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) pursuant to Section 182A of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (hereinafter referred to as 'the Act'), we hereby submit this planning application in respect of a proposed development of an electricity substation compound, a medium voltage switchgear and control equipment building, a building housing indoor high voltage (HV) gas insulated switchgear (GIS) equipment, high voltage busbar connections, and step down power transformers, and an underground cable connecting the proposal to the Corduff – Woodland 220KV overhead line to the north of the proposed development site.
- 1.2 The proposed development is located within the townlands of Bracetown, Gunnocks, Paddingstown, Normansgrove, Rowan, Portmanna, and Pace, Co. Meath. The application site has a total area of c. 14.35 hectares.
- 1.3 The development is described as follows within the public notices:

“The proposed 220 kV GIS substation is to be located on lands at Bracetown and Gunnocks, to the north of Clonee, to the west of the R147 Regional Road, and to the southeast of Bracetown Business Park. The proposed substation is located to the south of a proposed data storage development subject to a separate concurrent application under Meath County Council Reg. Ref.: RA191593 and An Bord Pleanála Reg. Ref.: ABP-307546-20.

The proposed substation includes the provision of four transformers, a client control building (with a gross floor area of c. 637 sq.m) and a two storey GIS substation building (with a gross floor area of c. 2,430 sq.m) within a 2.6 m high fenced compound.

The proposed 220 kV transmission cables will run from the proposed 220 kV GIS substation, connecting to existing 220 kV overhead transmission lines to the north of the substation site (within the townlands referenced above).

One underground transmission cable circuit (the Gunnocks - Woodland circuit) will proceed from the proposed substation to the east, before following the R147 roadway northwards to an existing roundabout linking the R145 with the M3 motorway. From this roundabout, the circuit proceeds northeast through private agricultural lands, before reaching the Corduff – Woodland overhead line. This circuit will cover a distance of c. 2 kilometres.

The other underground transmission cable circuit (Gunnocks – Corduff circuit) will proceed from the proposed substation to the east, following the perimeter of the data storage facility site northwards, then northeast and exiting onto an existing rural roadway. The route then follows this rural road north-eastward, before reaching the Corduff – Woodland overhead line in private agricultural lands to the west of the roadway. This circuit will cover a distance of c. 1.7 kilometres.

Each of the two circuits will terminate in a cable – overhead interface compound containing air-insulated electrical equipment mounted on concrete plinths. Adjacent to each interface compound, an overhead line tower will be erected to facilitate connection of the new underground cables to the existing 220 kV overhead line. Each new overhead line tower will be approximately 21 metres in height, set on top of concrete foundations.

The development includes enabling works, services diversions, adjacent access paths to serve the proposed transmission cables, connections to the proposed substation, landscaping, security fencing and berms, lighting masts, provision of internal access arrangements and car parking within the substation compound, services, all associated construction works, and all ancillary works.”

- 1.4 An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) has been prepared by AWN Consulting Limited and other EIA contributors and accompanies this SID planning application submitted to An Bord Pleanála.
- 1.5 The main stakeholders for the development are as follows;
- EirGrid, is responsible for operating and developing the national high voltage electricity grid in Ireland;
 - ESB Networks (Asset Owner), is responsible for carrying out maintenance, repairs and where works are not contestable, the construction of the national high voltage electricity grid in Ireland;
 - EngineNode Limited’s role for this project is to act as the Developer/Applicant.

Development Method

- 1.6 The development of the proposed 220kV substation and transmission lines connecting to the existing overhead 220kV transmission line to the north will be a contestable development. The meaning of this, is that the Developer will be responsible for the design, construction, fit-out and pre-commissioning of both the proposed 220kV substation and the underground 220kV transmission line circuits and connections to the existing overhead 220kV transmission lines.
- 1.7 Upon completion of the works by the Developer, the proposed 220kV GIS Substation and transmission line circuits will be handed over to EirGrid, whom in conjunction with ESB Networks (ESBN) will carry out the final commissioning and energisation of the proposed substation and transmission line connections.
- 1.8 Once energised, the proposed development will form part of the ESBN infrastructure, which EirGrid will be responsible for operating.

Applicant

- 1.9 The Applicant (Developer) for the proposed contestable development is EngineNode Limited, with a registered address at 6/9 Trinity Street, Dublin 2.
- 1.10 The main agent acting on behalf of the Applicant is John Spain Associates, with an address at 39 Fitzwilliam Place, Dublin 2.

2.0 SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT

- 2.1 The proposed development comprises the provision of a 220 kV GIS substation to be located on lands at Bracetown and Gunnocks, to the north of Clonee, to the west of the R147 Regional Road, and to the southeast of Bracetown Business Park. The development also includes the provision of two 220 kV underground transmission cables (connecting to existing 220 kV overhead lines to the north of the proposed substation).
- 2.2 The proposed development is located within the townlands of Bracetown, Gunnocks, Paddingstown, Normansgrove, Rowan, Portmanna, and Pace, Co. Meath. The application site has a total area of c. 14.35 hectares.

Proposed 220kV GIS Substation

- 2.3 The proposed 220kV GIS substation is to be located on on lands at Bracetown and Gunnocks, to the north of Clonee, to the west of the R147 Regional Road, and to the southeast of Bracetown Business Park. The proposed substation is located to the south of a proposed data storage development subject to a separate concurrent application under Meath County Council Reg. Ref.: RA191593 and An Bord Pleanála Reg. Ref.: ABP-307546-20 (currently subject to appeal).
- 2.4 The site for the proposed 220kV GIS substation is greenfield in nature, and is relatively level in its topography. The site is highly accessible having regard to its location off the R147 Regional Road.
- 2.5 The lands surrounding the application site are currently undeveloped, but are subject to a current planning application as noted above.

Transmission Cable Routes and Dropdown Connection Points

- 2.6 The proposed 220 kV transmission cables will run from the proposed 220 kV GIS substation, connecting to existing 220 kV overhead transmission lines to the north of the substation site (within the townlands referenced below).
- 2.7 One underground transmission cable circuit (the Gunnocks - Woodland circuit) will proceed from the proposed substation to the east, before following the R147 roadway northwards to an existing roundabout linking the R145 with the M3 motorway. From this roundabout, the circuit proceeds northeast through private agricultural lands, before reaching the Corduff – Woodland overhead line. This circuit will cover a distance of c. 2 kilometres.
- 2.8 The other underground transmission cable circuit (Gunnocks – Corduff circuit) will proceed from the proposed substation to the east, following the perimeter of the data storage facility site northwards, then northeast and exiting onto an existing rural roadway. The route then follows this rural road north-eastward, before reaching the Corduff – Woodland overhead line in private agricultural lands to the west of the roadway. This circuit will cover a distance of c. 1.7 kilometres.



Figure 2.1: Context Map (image from Google Maps) with the subject site in red

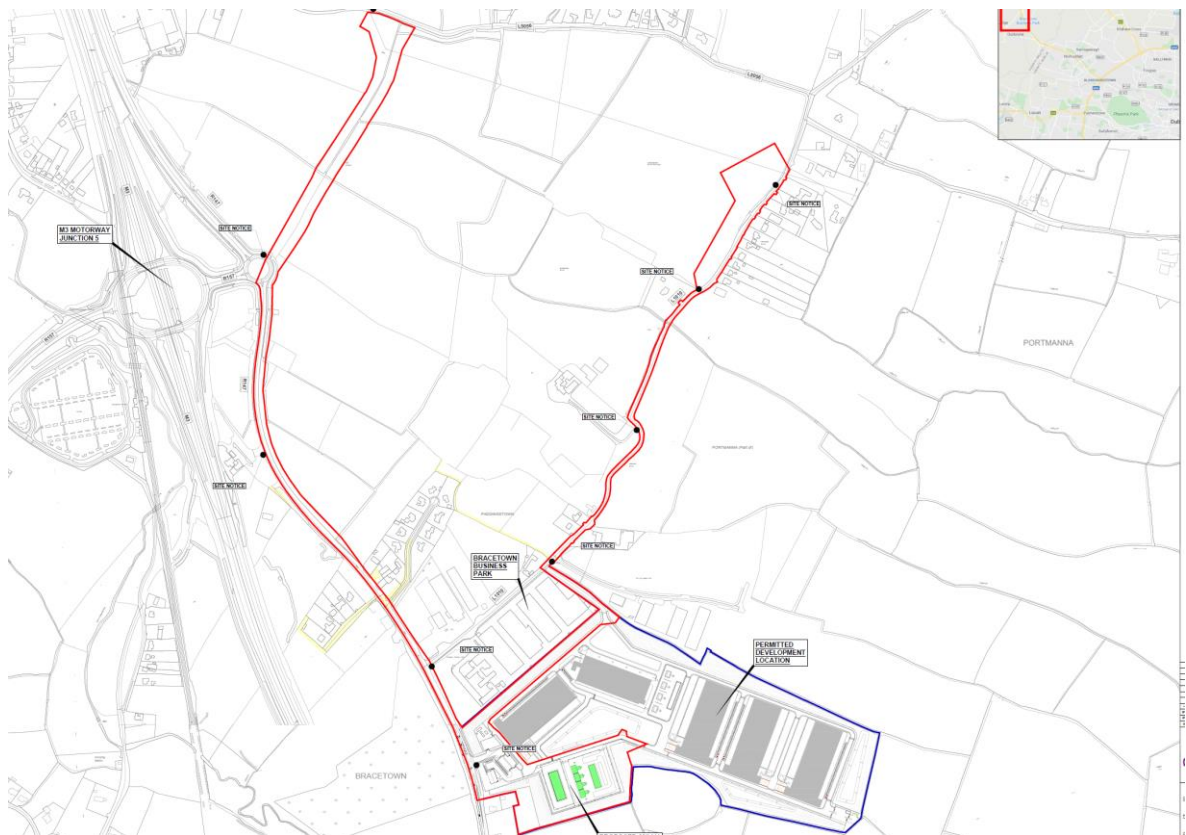


Figure 2.2: Extract from CSEA Consulting Engineers Site Location Map

3.0 PRE – APPLICATION CONSULTATIONS

- 3.1 The applicant has had 1 no. pre-application consultation meeting with An Bord Pleanála on the 4th of December 2019, in response to a pre-application consultation request received by An Bord Pleanála on the 9th of October 2019.
- 3.2 The purpose of the consultation meeting was to provide further information to An Bord Pleanála to inform their determination as to whether or not the proposed development might constitute strategic infrastructure.
- 3.3 A request to conclude the pre-application process was submitted to An Bord Pleanála on the 17th of April 2020. The request included details of minor alterations to the route alignment of the proposed transmission line circuits and other minor alterations to the project as originally set out for pre-application consultation. The Board’s Inspector confirmed that these alterations did not materially alter the pre-application request.
- 3.4 The Board Inspector’s report on the pre-application request, which informed the determination by the Board that the development constitutes Strategic Infrastructure Development, stated the following:

“The proposed development will comprise a new 220kV substation to serve a proposed data centre (currently the subject of a planning application with Meath County Council). It will be connected to the grid by 220kV underground cables. In effect, the substation will comprise part of EirGrid’s 220kV transmission network. Accordingly, the development falls within the definition of transmission set out in section 2(1) of the Electricity Regulation Act, 1999 and, therefore in my opinion comprises strategic infrastructure development under Section 182A(1) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).”

An Bord Pleanála Determination

- 3.5 An Bord Pleanála have confirmed in a letter dated the 18th of June 2020 that the proposed development constitutes Strategic Infrastructure within the meaning of section 182A of the Act. The determination was made following the conclusion of the above-referenced pre-application process under ABP Reg. Ref.: ABP-305657-19.
- 3.6 Therefore, the current application is required to be submitted directly to An Bord Pleanála under section 182A(1) of the Act.
- 3.7 The determination from the Board that the development constitutes a SID was accompanied by an Inspector’s Report, which recommended that the applicant be informed that the proposed development constitutes Strategic Infrastructure.
- 3.8 The determination by the Board that the proposal constitutes Strategic Infrastructure Development was accompanied by a list of Prescribed Bodies, to whom a copy of the application has been issued. The following bodies were listed:
- Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government
 - Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DAU)
 - Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine
 - Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment
 - Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport
 - Meath County Council (The Planning Authority for the area of the proposed development)

- Fingal County Council
- Irish Water
- Inland Fisheries Ireland
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland
- Environmental Protection Agency
- The Heritage Council
- An Taisce
- An Chomhairle Ealaíon
- Fáilte Ireland
- Health & Safety Executive
- Health & Safety Authority
- Commission for Regulation of Utilities, Water and Energy

Consultation with Meath County Council

- 3.9 Pre-application consultation has also been undertaken with Meath County Council. A pre-application meeting was held remotely on the 3rd of June 2020. Matters discussed included the route of the proposed underground cable circuits, roads and drainage matters, and the applicant's intended submission of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report as part of the application.
- 3.10 The applicant and design team have taken cognisance of the matters discussed during the course of this meeting and the feedback of the Planning Authority is reflected in the application documentation now submitted.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 This section provides details of the planning history of both the site of the proposed 220kV GIS substation at Bracetown and Gunnocks and other relevant planning history in the vicinity, of relevance to the overall development.

Proposed Substation Site

- 4.2 ***Meath County Council Reg. Ref.: RA191593 & ABP Reg. Ref.: ABP-307546-20 Current Data Storage Facility Application***

On the 27th of November 2019), a planning application was submitted to Meath County Council for a data storage facility development which the proposed substation and transmission line will ultimately serve. The site of the proposed substation and a portion of the proposed underground cable circuits are located within the site of this current data storage facility application, which is presently being considered by An Bord Pleanála following the submission of several third party appeals and a first party appeal (relating to development contributions only).

A decision to grant permission was issued in respect of this development by the Planning Authority on the 17th of June 2020.

The development the subject of this current / concurrent application is described within the public notices as follows:

“The construction of 4 number 2 storey data storage buildings with a combined gross floor area of c. 92, 172 sq.m, associated single storey energy centre with a gross floor area of c. 8,906 sq.m with an ancillary 1 storey MV operations building with part basement with a gross floor area of c. 1,016 sq.m, EngineNode 2 storey offices with a gross floor area of 736 sq.m. The data storage campus shall comprise of the

following uses: offices, canteen, computer and associated support areas, electrical component rooms, plant and associated equipment. Each Data Storage building includes for a total of 18 number 21.5 m high back-up generator exhaust flues which are incorporated on to the building facade. The energy centre shall comprise of: gas engines, ancillary plant and associate equipment. Each Data Storage building includes for a total of 18 number 21.5m high back-up generator exhaust flues which are incorporated on to the building facade. The energy centre shall comprise of: gas engines, ancillary plant and associate equipment. The energy centre includes for 4 number 40m high x 5m diameter exhaust flues and a standby diesel generator with a 22m high exhaust flue. An IE Licence is required for under the First Schedule of the EPA Act 1992 as amended under "Activity 2.1 Combustion of fuels in installations with a total rated thermal input of 50MW or more". Ancillary facilities on site include for an Above Ground Installation for gas connection, and a temporary ESB MV Substation with gross floor area of 40 sq.m in support of this development. Included in this application are all associated storage tanks, flues, access roads, services, entrance gates, railings, perimeter fencing at 3m high, landscaping and infrastructure inclusive of 245 No. car parking spaces and 3 number attenuation retention ponds."

The development is to be constructed in four phases and an Environmental Impact Assessment Report was submitted along with the application to the Planning Authority.

The current data storage facility application under Reg. Ref.: RA191593 makes passive provision for the development of a substation and the provision of associated underground cable circuits to serve the development, subject to a separate planning application (i.e. this application which is now being submitted to the Board following a determination that the substation and associated transmission cables constitute Strategic Infrastructure Development under section 182 of the 2000 Act). The layout of the current data centre development application is illustrated in the figure below.

The conditions applied by the Planning Authority in their decision to grant permission for the data storage facility development included *inter alia* a requirement for the provision of an element of public road infrastructure through the data storage facility site, to provide for future connectivity to adjoining lands, upon the delivery of a future link road (the Bracetown Link Road) on adjoining lands.

The decision to grant permission by Meath County Council is currently subject to both first and third party appeals under ABP Reg. Ref.: ABP-307546-20. As part of the response submitted to third party appeals, the applicant set out that a condition would be acceptable to omit the energy centre element of the application. However, as the application as submitted included the energy centre (and the Board may grant permission for the development proposal including energy centre), the drawings accompanying the current SID application illustrate the concurrent application including energy centre. Likewise, the EIAR accompanying this application takes into consideration the cumulative impact of the concurrent data storage facility development including the energy centre.

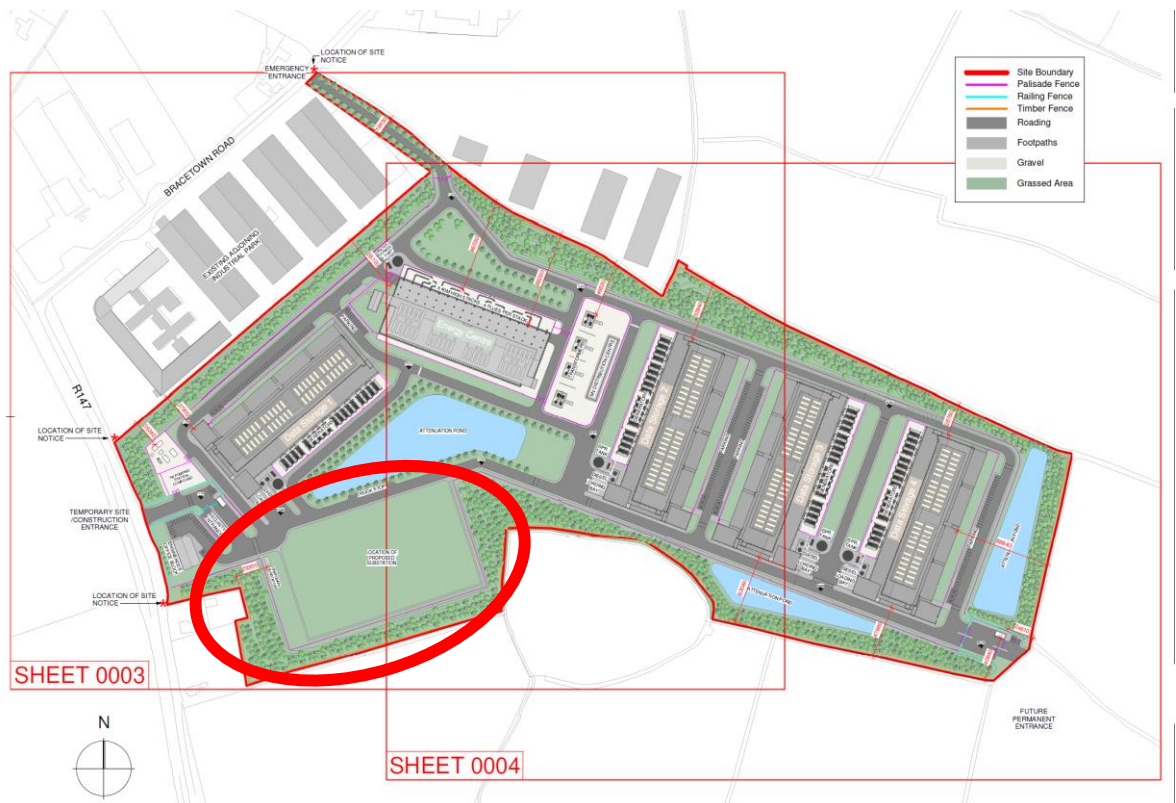


Figure 4.1: Extract of site masterplan for Reg. Ref.: RA191593, with substation location annotated in red

Other Relevant Planning History

4.3 ABP Reg. Ref.: VA0018 – Electricity Transmission Development Application by Runways Information Services Limited

Permission was granted by An Bord Pleanála on the 22nd of October 2015 for an electricity transmission development on lands to the east of the subject site. This application was also an electricity transmission strategic infrastructure development under section 182 of the 2000 Act. The development was described as follows:

“Strategic Infrastructure Development application to ABP for a 220kV substation compound and associated loop-in connection to the existing Corduff-Woodland No. 1 overhead 200kV line.”

The detailed description of the development (as per the ABP Order) was as follows:

- (i) *“The 220-kilovolt substation compound (approximately 30,100 square metres) will include:*
 - *Outdoor Air Insulated Switchgear (AIS) equipment rated for the system voltage of 220 kilovolts equipped with 12 number 220-kilovolt bays;*
 - *27 number lightning protection masts (height 30 metres);*
 - *3 number oil-filled step-down power transformers positioned within bunded enclosures;*
 - *3 number single storey buildings including a control building with ancillary services, diesel generator building and a customer Medium Voltage (MV) building incorporating ancillary services and customer backup diesel generator;*
 - *Internal access roads;*
 - *Enclosed by a 2.6-metre tall palisade fence;*

- (ii) *Construction of 2 number 220-kilovolt towers (26.5 metres in height) in line with the existing 220-kilovolt overhead line and installation of lead-in connections between towers and terminal structures within the substation.*

In addition to the above the proposed development will include the following:

- *New site access off the Kilbride Road (L5028) and internal site access road;*
- *Dedicated internal access road and associated parking within compound;*
- *Drainage infrastructure;*
- *All associated and ancillary site development works.”*

The conclusion of An Bord Pleanála in respect to the proposed development on the proper planning and sustainable development of the area is considered of relevance by way of a precedent, and is therefore set out *in extenso* below:

“Having regard to the foregoing, it is considered that, subject to compliance with the mitigation measures set out in the Environmental Impact Statement and subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, the proposed development:

- *would be in accordance with national policies and guidance, and with regional and local development policies,*
- *would not seriously injure the amenities of the area or of property in the vicinity,*
- *would not seriously injure the visual or recreational amenities of the area,*
- *would not give rise to risk of, or exacerbation of, flooding,*
- *would not be prejudicial to public health or safety,*
- *would not detract from the character or setting of features of architectural or archaeological heritage, and would not seriously detract from the cultural heritage of the area, and*
- *would be acceptable in terms of traffic safety and convenience.*

The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.”

4.4 ABP Reg. Ref.: PL17.301172 – Alteration to Permitted Electricity Transmission Development Permitted under ABP Reg. Ref.: VA0018

On the 9th of March 2018, a request was made to An Bord Pleanála by the applicant (Runways Information Services Limited) to alter the terms of the previously granted electricity transmission development permission under ABP Reg. Ref.: VA0018 (as described above).

The alterations sought related to the following elements:

- *“Outdoor Air Insulated Switchgear (AIS) equipment rated for the system voltage of 220 kilovolts which will connect to previously consented transformer to provide neutral earth switching facility.*
- *Outdoor AIS equipment rated for a system voltage of 200 kilovolts equipped in 3 no. 220 kilovolt bays: the equipment will connect to the already consented 220 kV busbar and also includes provision for associated neutral earth switching requirement: and*
- *Associated site works”*

The Board considered the proposed alterations and on the 2nd of May 2018, in accordance with the recommendation of the Board’s Inspector, determined that the

proposed alterations did not constitute a material alteration to the terms of the permitted development. Therefore, the Board proceeded to alter the terms of the permission accordingly.

4.5 Reg. Ref.: RA/150605 and ABP Reg. Ref.: PL.17.245347 – Data Storage Facility Development Application by Runways Information Services Limited

On the 22nd of October 2015, permission was granted for the following development on lands to the east of the currently proposed electricity transmission development site subject to this application:

“Construction of a data centre campus in two phases within 10 years which consists of: Three data centre buildings containing 8 no. data halls with a gross floor area of 50,800 m² and with a data capacity of 36MW per building (each building is 25,400 m² and contains 4 no. data halls) together with associated mechanical and electrical spaces and parking. 1 No. single storey ancillary administration/office building with gross floor area of 6,424 m² linking and accessing the data centre buildings. Ground-level emergency back-up generators (with internal fuel tanks). New site access and temporary construction access and car parking arrangements off the Kilbride Road (L5028). Closure of existing accesses (following the demolition of 2no. residential units). Upgrade to L5028 Kilbride Road to provide cycle path and pedestrian footpath between the R147 and the proposed new site access. Installation of temporary electrical infrastructure to service the data centre campus before final connection. Ancillary site works including underground electricity 20kV cables between substation and data centres. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has been prepared for the Proposed development and has been submitted with this planning application.”

4.6 Amendments to the Data Storage Facility Development permitted under Reg. Ref. RA/150605 and ABP Reg. Ref.: PL.17.245347

Several permissions have been granted for alterations to the permission for data storage facility development outlined above. While these amendments generally do not have any direct bearing on the current application, they are listed below for ease of reference.

- **Reg. Ref.: RA160433** - Minor Amendment to previously approved Data Centre Campus application (ref: RA/150605) comprising two elements: 1. a 16sq metre illuminated entrance sign to the immediate north of the main Data Centre Kilbride Road entrance; and 2. a 3.5m high Weather Transmitter mounted on the roof of Datahall CLN-1.1, projecting 2m above the building's perimeter screen wall and associated works.
- **Reg. Ref.: RA160937** - The development will consist of the minor alteration to the previously approved road layout as part of Data Centre Campus Reference RA/150605 and ABP Reference PL 17.245347 involving the relocation of a landscaping berm and associated works to provide a new internal two lane access road to a secondary entrance for emergency and incidental service use only at the south east corner of the site. (The above mentioned application is concurrent with a separate planning application to Fingal County Council for a secondary access road for emergency incidental service use only to the previously approved Clonee Date Centre Campus Reference RA/150605 and ABP Reference PL 17.245347, comprising a new entrance and associated works on Damastown Road, 2.4m height perimeter security fencing with associated entrance gate, CCTV and intercom system).

- **Reg. Ref.: RA180048** - The development will consist of alterations to a previously approved Data Centre Campus application (Meath County Council ref: RA/150605/An Bord Pleanála ref: PL17.245347) comprising the following elements: 1) Alterations to the layout, design, external lighting and siting of the previously consented entrance guardhouse of the Data Centre Campus (granted under reg. ref: RA/150605 and ABP reg. ref: PL17.245347) involving the extension of the guardhouse canopy and addition of Corten steel to the facade and canopy of the building; 2) Proposed boundary treatment improvements including: 3.0m high weathered steel Corten Picket fencing on a concrete base wall (Type 1); 3.0m high mesh boundary fencing with 3.0m high fence and matching gates along the internal substation access road; 5) 600mm high oak bollards on the edge of road/pathways; and 6) All other associated works. The above application is concurrent with a separate planning application to Fingal County Council for alterations to the previously approved boundary treatments under register reference FW16A/0127

4.7 **Reg. Ref.: RA180671 – Expansion of the Previously Permitted Data Storage Facility Development by Runways Information Services Limited**

On the 24th of September 2018, following the withdrawal of a third party appeal, a final grant of permission was issued in respect of the following development, on lands in close proximity to and to the east of the substation now proposed. The development was described as follows:

“An expansion of the existing approved data centre Campus (Meath County Council ref: RA/150605 / An Bord Pleanála ref: PL 17.245347) comprising the following elements

- (a) Construction of two single-storey data centre buildings with a gross floor area (GFA) of circa 57,400m²;*
- (b) A single storey administration / office building with a GFA of circa 5,710m² which is physically linked to the proposed data centre buildings;*
- (c) Site infrastructure to include entrance gates and appropriate signage, a security guardhouse of circa 60m² and associated canopy;*
- (d) Road works including a new permanent site access, internal roadways, underpass & footpaths, circa 276 no. car parking spaces, bicycle parking facilities, upgrades to a section of the L5028 Kilbride Road together with an emergency access via the L10101 to include resurfacing only a section of the road and additional of circa 1 no. passing bay;*
- (e) General drainage networks and arrangements and a connection to the existing public sewer network;*
- (f) Surface level back-up generators with internal fuel tanks;*
- (g) Hard & soft landscaping incorporating perimeter fencing to include both external and internal circa 3.0 metre high architecturally designed metal fencing and matching gates;*
- (h) Temporary construction access and associated car parking arrangements off the Kilbride Road (L5028); and (i) Associated & ancillary site works.*

Planning permission is being sought for a 10 year period. There is a separate planning application and associated EIAR on lands enclosed by the data centre application. It is a Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) application to An Bord Pleanála under S182A of the P&D Act 2000, as amended. The application comprises the construction of a new 220KV substation compound & assoc. underground 220 KV cables connecting to the existing substation at Portan, Clonee (consented ABP ref PL17.VA0018). An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) has been

prepared for the proposed development and has been submitted with this application.”

- 4.8 The first phase of the campus being developed by Runways Information Services Limited is complete, with phase 2 of the campus currently under construction on proximate E2/E3 zoned lands to the north of the M3.

5.0 DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION

220kV Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) Substation

- 5.1 The proposed 220 kV GIS substation is to be located on lands at Bracetown and Gunnocks, to the north of Clonee, to the west of the R147 Regional Road, and to the southeast of Bracetown Business Park. The proposed substation is located to the south of a proposed data storage development subject to a separate concurrent application under Meath County Council Reg. Ref.: RA191593 and An Bord Pleanála Reg. Ref.: ABP-307546-20.
- 5.2 The proposed substation includes the provision of four transformers, a client control building (with a gross floor area of c. 637 sq.m) and a two storey GIS substation building (with a gross floor area of c. 2,430 sq.m) within a 2.6 m high fenced compound.
- 5.3 The two storey GIS substation building (with a gross floor area of 2,430 sq.m) will accommodate a cable room, control room, mess room, generator room, battery room and workshop at ground floor level, with a storeroom and substation room provided at first floor level. The building design is rectilinear, and the building will be finished in metal cladding to match the adjoining proposed data storage facilities on site.
- 5.4 The proposed transformers will be located centrally within the substation compound, set out in a row running northwest - southeast within the compound area. Lightning masts / rods will be provided within the substation compound to mitigate against the risk of lightning strikes.

220kV Underground Transmission Cables

- 5.5 The proposed 220 kV transmission cables will run from the proposed 220 kV GIS substation, connecting to existing 220 kV overhead transmission lines to the north of the substation site (within the townlands referenced above).
- 5.6 One underground transmission cable circuit (the Gunnocks - Woodland circuit) will proceed from the proposed substation to the east, before following the R147 roadway northwards to an existing roundabout linking the R145 with the M3 motorway. From this roundabout, the circuit proceeds northeast through private agricultural lands, before reaching the Corduff – Woodland overhead line. This circuit will cover a distance of c. 2 kilometres.
- 5.7 The other underground transmission cable circuit (Gunnocks – Corduff circuit) will proceed from the proposed substation to the east, following the perimeter of the data storage facility site northwards, then northeast and exiting onto an existing rural roadway. The route then follows this rural road north-eastward, before reaching the Corduff – Woodland overhead line in private agricultural lands to the west of the roadway. This circuit will cover a distance of c. 1.7 kilometres.
- 5.8 Each of the two circuits will terminate in a cable – overhead interface compound containing air-insulated electrical equipment mounted on concrete plinths. Adjacent

to each interface compound, an overhead line tower will be erected to facilitate connection of the new underground cables to the existing 220 kV overhead line. Each new overhead line tower will be approximately 21 metres in height, set on top of concrete foundations.

- 5.9 The proposed underground transmission cables will be punctuated by Joint Bays and Pull Pits at various points along their routes as illustrated in the accompanying drawings prepared by CSEA Consulting Engineers.

Associated / Ancillary Works

- 5.10 The development includes enabling works, services diversions, adjacent access paths to serve the proposed transmission cables, connections to the proposed substation, landscaping, security fencing and berms (including altered berm locations which will supersede those under Reg. Ref.: RA191593 and An Bord Pleanála Reg. Ref.: ABP-307546-20).
- 5.11 The development also includes the provision of internal access arrangements and car parking within the substation compound, services, all associated construction works, and all ancillary works.
- 5.12 The development includes all associated construction and ancillary works.

6.0 RELEVANT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL POLICY CONTEXT

Government Statement on The Role of Data Centres in Ireland's Enterprise Strategy

- 6.1 The Government Statement on the Role of Data Centres in Ireland's Enterprise Strategy was published by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation in June 2018. The Statement notes the role which data centres play in Ireland's ambition to be a digital economy hot-spot in Europe.
- 6.2 The Statement includes a section dealing with electricity infrastructure (page 8 onward refers). The Statement includes the following statement in relation to the electricity infrastructure requirements of planned and projected data centre development:

“Currently, a large portion of existing and planned data centres that are due to connect to the electricity system are expected to be in the Dublin area. Based on existing data centres, committed expansion and expected growth, total demand could treble within the next ten years. A consistent and supportive whole of government approach will be brought to the realisation of the transmission and distribution assets required to support the level of data centre ambition that we adopt.”

- 6.3 The current Strategic Infrastructure Development proposal constitutes the provision of transmission infrastructure required to provide electricity for the development of the area, including the adjoining data storage facilities which are subject to a current planning application as outlined above.

National Planning Framework – Ireland 2040

- 6.4 The National Planning Framework was published in February 2018 and contains policies which are supportive of the development of ICT infrastructure, with particular reference made to “*datacentres*”.

6.5 National Strategic Outcome 6 of the NPF relates to the creation of “A Strong Economy Supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills”. This strategic outcome is underpinned by a range of objectives relating to job creation and the fostering of enterprise and innovation.

6.6 The following objective, relating to ICT infrastructure (including datacentres) is included under National Strategic Outcome 6:

“Promotion of Ireland as a sustainable international destination for ICT infrastructures such as data centres and associated economic activities.”

6.7 The current application proposes the provision of electricity infrastructure which will serve a proposed data storage facility development, and is therefore considered to be in accordance with the foregoing policies.

6.8 The NPF further states under National Strategic Outcome 6:

“Ireland is very attractive in terms of international digital connectivity, climatic factors and current and future renewable energy sources for the development of international digital infrastructures, such as data centres. This sector underpins Ireland’s international position as a location for ICT and creates added benefits in relation to establishing a threshold of demand for sustained development of renewable energy sources.”

6.9 As noted above, the proposed development constitutes the development of the grid to serve a proposed data storage facility development and is therefore considered to fully accord with the foregoing strategic outcome.

Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly

6.10 The Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly (EMRA) have adopted the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Eastern and Midlands Region.

6.11 The RSES recognises the need to facilitate the provision of sufficient electricity to meet increasing demand in the region. Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 10.20 states the following:

“Support and facilitate the development of enhanced electricity and gas supplies, and associated networks, to serve the existing and future needs of the Region and facilitate new transmission infrastructure projects that might be brought forward in the lifetime of this Strategy. Including the delivery of the necessary integration of transmission network requirements to facilitate linkages of renewable energy proposals to the electricity and gas transmission grid in a sustainable and timely manner subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process.”

6.12 The proposed development constitutes a transmission project which is required to serve the electricity needs currently proposed and future development in the area in accordance with the foregoing objective.

6.13 The strategy goes on to state the following:

“The Dublin Region is the major load centre on the Irish electricity transmission system. Approximately one third of total demand is located here, similarly the Eastern Region is a major load centre on the Irish transmission system. The main

urban demand centres are composed of a mix of residential, commercial and industrial demand, which is expected to grow up to 2025 and beyond. Developing the grid in the Region will enable the transmission system to safely accommodate more diverse power flows from renewable generation and also to facilitate future growth in electricity demand. These developments will strengthen the grid for all electricity users, and in doing so will improve the security and quality of supply. This is particularly important if the Region is to attract high technology industries that depend on a reliable, high quality, electricity supply.”

- 6.14 The current proposal seeks to provide for the development of the grid via a new substation and connections to an existing 220kV transmission line which will supply *inter alia* high technology industry in the area, which is dependent on a reliable, high quality electricity supply.
- 6.15 The RSES provides for a series of principles, pursuant to which Local Authority Development Plans will “*facilitate the provision of energy networks in principle*”:
- *“The development is required in order to facilitate the provision or retention of significant economic or social infrastructure.*
 - *The route proposed has been identified with due consideration for social, environmental and cultural impacts and address issues of climate resilience, biodiversity, impact on soils and water quality.*
 - *The design is such that it will achieve least environmental impact.*
 - *Where impacts are inevitable mitigation features have been included.*
 - *Where it can be shown that the proposed development is consistent with international best practice with regard to materials and technologies and that it will ensure a safe, secure, reliable, economic and efficient high-quality network.*
 - *In considering facilities of this nature that traverse a number of counties or that traverse one county in order to serve another, planning authorities should consider the proposal in light of the criteria outlined above. It is important that planning authorities are engaged in early consultation and discussion with the relevant Transmission System Operator.*
 - *Corridors for energy transmission or pipelines should avoid creating sterile lands proximate to key public transport corridors, particularly rail routes, and in built up urban areas.*
 - *Regard for any National or Regional Landscape/ Seascape Character Assessment.”*
- 6.16 In response to the above it is considered that the proposed, comparatively short, electricity transmission infrastructure is required to facilitate significant economic infrastructure in the area. It is also considered that the route for the proposed transmission line has been identified with due consideration for social, environmental and cultural impacts (as set out in detail within the EIAR). The design selected has been predicated on the need to minimise environmental impact and includes mitigation measures as set out within the EIAR submitted herewith. The design of the project has been undertaken in accordance with best practice by the project engineers, and the corridor selected will avoid the sterilisation of lands proximate to key public transport corridors, particularly rail routes, or built up urban areas.

7.0 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

7.1 This proposed development comprises of development within the functional area of Meath County Council.

Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019

- 7.2 The site of the proposed substation at Bracetown and Gunnocks is zoned E2/E3 under the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019. The E2/E3 zoning has a stated objective to *“provide for the creation of enterprise and facilitate opportunities for employment through industrial, manufacturing, distribution, warehousing and other general employment / enterprise uses in a good quality physical environment. To facilitate logistics, warehousing, distribution and supply chain management inclusive of related industry facilities which require good access to the major road network.”*
- 7.3 Public services are permitted in principle under the E2 and E3 zoning objectives as set out within section 2.9. of the County Development Plan.

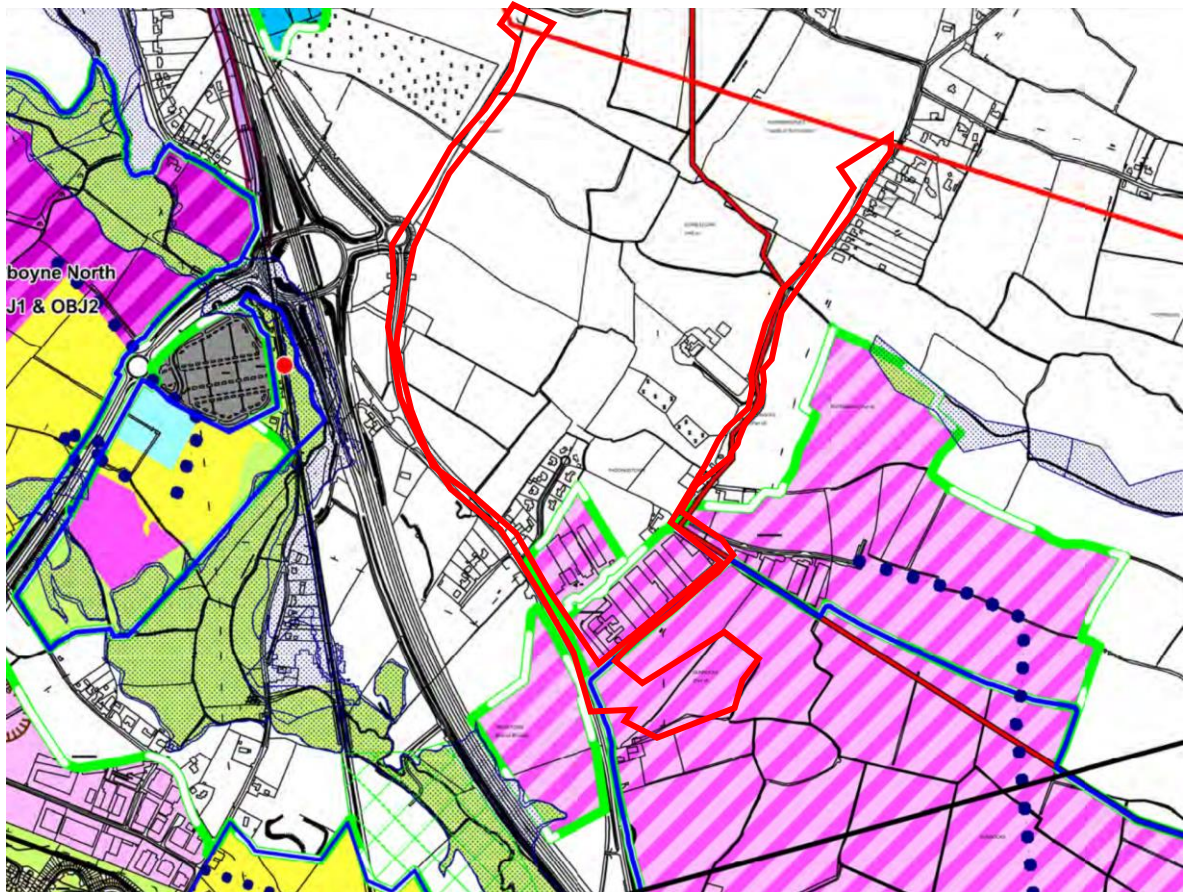


Figure 7.1: Extract from the Dunboyne North – Dunboyne – Clonee Zoning Map of the Meath County Development Plan, with the approximate application site extent indicated in red

7.4 The County Development Plan states the following in relation to lands zoned E2:

“E2 lands constitute an important land bank for employment use which must be protected. The development of E2 lands seek to provide for the creation and production of enterprise and facilitate opportunities for industrial, manufacturing,

distribution, warehousing and other general employment / enterprise uses in a good quality physical environment.”

- 7.5 As illustrated in the zoning map extract above, the majority of the two proposed underground cable circuits and the proposed connections to the existing 220kV overhead transmission lines are located on lands which are unzoned at present. Development on such lands must be appraised on a case by case basis and on its merits. As the element of the proposed development on these lands comprises solely of underground and over-ground electricity services it is considered that the proposal is appropriate and in accordance with the proper planning of the area. The proposed underground cable circuits and connections to existing overhead transmission lines are necessary in order to connect the proposed new substation to existing public services in order to serve currently proposed and future development in the vicinity.
- 7.6 Section 4.2 of the County Development Plan states the following in relation to the E2 / E3 zoned lands at this location:
- “A substantial data centre development is permitted on the existing E2/E3 zoned lands at Portan Clonee. There is a need to provide additional E2/E3 employment zoned lands between the existing zoned lands at Portan and Bracetown Business Park in order to avail of the opportunities brought forward by the proposed data centre investment on the Portan lands. Consequently in order to promote clustering and agglomeration effects of similar format developments at this location, additional lands have been zoned for E2/E3 purposes.”*
- 7.7 The foregoing text was introduced under Variation 3 of the County Development Plan, specifically identifying the site of the proposed substation and surrounding lands as an appropriate location for an extension of the permitted / existing data storage facility development on adjoining lands.

Economic Development

- 7.8 Chapter 4 of the Development Plan relates to the economic development of the County. This chapter recognises the importance of encouraging business to locate in the County, at locations identified for employment growth. It is the policy of the Council to facilitate economic development and the growth of employment in the county.
- 7.9 The proposed development is located in a Secondary Economic Growth Centre adjacent to Dunboyne North which is one of the five key strategic sites within County Meath identified for economic development and employment, including large scale developments and foreign direct investment. The current development proposal will constitute important infrastructure to service and further the realisation of employment and investment at this location.
- 7.10 The following policies and objectives are considered relevant in the context of the proposed development. The proposed substation and associated transmission cable connections will serve the ongoing development of an area of the county which has been specifically targeted for enterprise and employment creation. The area surrounding the proposed substation has been identified as a suitable location for the agglomeration of high technology employment generating uses, and in particular the development of data storage facilities. There are clear benefits to be realised from the clustering / agglomeration of such uses in terms of economies of scale and efficient use of services and appropriately located lands with a suitable accessibility profile.

- Policy ED POL 3 is *“To encourage and facilitate the successful development of the 5 no. key strategic employment sites in the County as identified in the Economic Development Strategy for County Meath 2014-2022. These are to develop as regional anchors of enterprise and employment creation, promoting a mix of employment types and thereby reducing the need for residents of County Meath to commute outside the County for employment.”*
- Policy ED POL 9 is *“To promote innovative economic sectors and encourage clustering which positively exploits synergies between interconnected companies and / or which forge synergies with adjoining third level education institutions including lifelong learning synergies and start up technology enterprises given Meath’s locational advantages being close to a number of high quality third level campuses where research and development activity is fostered.”*
- Objective ED OBJ 1 is *“To identify and promote a wide range of locations throughout the county for different types of enterprise.”*
- Objective ED OBJ 4 is *“To ensure that sufficient and suitable land is zoned for logistics, distribution and supply chain management industries at Ashbourne, Dunboyne / Clonee, Kells, Enfield and Stamullen and in addition to land zoned for large scale and general industry.”*
- Objective ED OBJ 7 is *“To co-operate with local and national development agencies to maximise job creation opportunities and to engage with existing and future large scale employers in order to maximise job opportunities in the county.”*

Energy & Communications

- 7.11 Chapter 8 of the County Development Plan relates to energy and communications in the county. The Development Plan recognises the need to develop the grid to serve the ongoing development of the county, and states the following at section 8.1.1:

“Meath County Council recognises the essential requirement for energy production and distribution. The two main energy networks serving County Meath are electricity and gas. With increased residential development in the county and a drive for more industrial, commercial and employment generating uses, it will be important to ensure that the capacity of the energy networks is sufficient to meet these demands.”

- 7.12 The Plan notes the suitability of the County for the development of the grid and the potential for new generation facilities, should the requirement arise. Section 8.1.2 notes that the main electricity corridors are identified on Map 8.1 of the Development Plan, an extract of which is provided below.

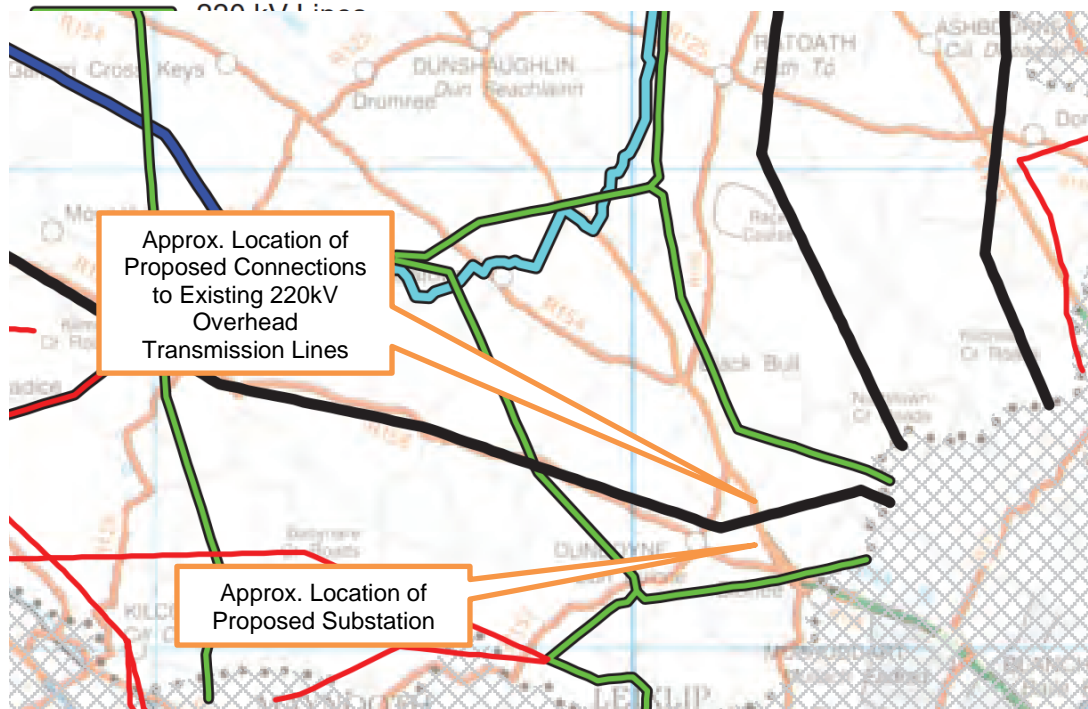


Figure 7.2: Extract from Map 8.1 of the Meath County Development Plan (Electricity Transmission Infrastructure)

7.13 The extract from Map 8.1 above has been annotated to indicate the approximate location of the proposed substation and the proposed connection points to the existing 220kV (Woodland – Corduff) overhead transmission lines.

7.14 Policy EC POL 11 is as follows:

“To support and facilitate the development of enhanced electricity and gas supplies, and associated networks, to serve the existing and future needs of the County.”

7.15 The proposed development constitutes the delivery of enhanced electricity infrastructure to serve a location within the county that has been identified for commercial development and the proposed development is therefore directly supported by this Development Plan policy.

7.16 Policy EC POL 13 is as follows:

“To ensure that energy transmission infrastructure follows best practice with regard to siting and design particularly to ensure the protection of all-important recognised landscapes.”

7.17 The proposed electricity transmission development has been designed in accordance with best practice. The siting of the proposed substation and connections to the existing overhead transmission lines have been carefully selected to ameliorate landscape and visual impact. The proposed substation will be effectively screened by landscaping and is set back from adjoining properties to mitigate against visual impact. The proposed cable circuits between the proposed substation and the connection points with the existing overhead transmission lines are underground, and therefore will not result in any material visual impact.

- 7.18 Policy EC POL 16 is “*To require that the location of local energy services such as electricity, be underground, where appropriate.*” The proposed cable circuits to serve the new substation are undergrounded to ensure the proposed energy services will have minimal visibility in compliance with this policy.
- 7.19 Policy EC POL 17 is “*To seek to avoid the sterilisation of lands proximate to key public transport corridors such as rail, where future energy transmission routes/pipelines are being designed and provided.*” The proposed underground cable circuits and other elements of the proposed development are appropriately sited and will not sterilise any such lands.
- 7.20 Policy EC POL 18 is “*To generally avoid the location of overhead lines in Natura 2000 sites unless it can be proven that they will not affect the integrity of the site in view of its conservation objectives i.e. by carrying out an appropriate assessment in accordance with Article 6(3) of the E.C. Habitats Directive*”. As noted above, the proposed cable circuits to serve the new substation are to be located underground and in any case the development is not located within or proximate to any European / Natura 2000 Site.
- 7.21 Policy EC POL 25 is “*To facilitate the delivery of a high capacity Information and Communications Technology (ICT) infrastructure and broadband network and digital broadcasting throughout the county*”. The proposed development will serve *inter alia* a currently proposed data storage facility development on lands adjoining the substation, which is subject to a separate concurrent planning application (currently at appeal before An Bord Pleanála).
- 7.22 Objective EC OBJ 1 is as follows:
- “To ensure that all plans and projects associated with the generation or supply of energy or telecommunication networks will be subject to an Appropriate Assessment Screening and those plans or projects which could, either individually or in-combination with other plans and projects, have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site (or sites) undergo a full Appropriate Assessment.”*
- 7.23 The current application to An Bord Pleanála is accompanied by an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report prepared by Moore Group. The AA Screening Report provides the information necessary for the Board as competent authority to carry out screening for Appropriate Assessment. The AA Screening Report concludes that the development will not have any likely significant impact on any European Site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

Development Management Standards

- 7.24 Chapter 11 of the Development Plan relates to Development Management Standards. Section 11.8.1 relates to “*Industrial, office, warehousing and business park development*”. The proposed substation forming part of the development will be located within the context of a data storage facility campus which is currently subject of a concurrent planning application (Reg. Ref.: RA191593 & ABP Reg. Ref.: ABP-307546-20).
- 7.25 The Development Plan notes that a high standard of design and finish is required for developments of this nature and that landscape plans will be required as part of applications. The current proposal demonstrates a good-quality architectural design executed by Kavanagh Tuite Architects, which also tie-in to the data storage facility development on the adjoining lands and the landscape layout developed by Brady Shipman Martin landscape architects.

7.26 This section of the Development Plan goes on to set out a series of criteria, against which development proposals will be assessed. The proposed development accords with these criteria on the basis of the following:

- The subject site is appropriately zoned for the proposed development, with the substation to be delivered on lands zoned E2/E3 under the Meath County Development Plan.
- The proposal allows for a campus style design, which will tie-in with the data storage facility development that is subject to a concurrent planning application.
- The proposed height of the development is no more than is necessary for the operation of the development, and will not have any significant impact on adjoining land uses, or the amenity of the area, particularly having regard to the landscape screening and berming to be provided to site boundaries. The proposed substation compound and buildings are also significantly set back from any adjoining properties, allowing for a significant landscaped buffer.
- The subject site is serviced to allow for the proposal, whilst the development in its own right will provide for the enhanced servicing of the area by providing for a new substation and associated electrical connections.
- The proposal provides for an adequate standard of accessibility.
- The current application is accompanied by a full Environmental Impact Assessment Report, which includes detailed assessments pertaining to noise and air quality.

Other Relevant Objectives

7.27 Policy WS POL 14 is to *“implement the policies developed for the Greater Dublin Area by the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study and to ensure that all developments will have regard to the policies as expressed in the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study.”* The water services proposals forming part of the proposed development, including the use of SUDs, accord with the provisions of the GDSDS. Please refer to the accompanying Engineering Services Report prepared by CSEA Consulting Engineers for further details.

7.28 Objective WS OBJ 8 of the Development Plan is to *“generally require new developments to provide for the separation of foul and surface water drainage networks within the application site.”* The proposed development provides for the separation of foul and surface water drainage networks in accordance with this objective.

Dunboyne / Clonee / Pace Local Area Plan 2009-2015 (as incorporated into the County Development Plan)

7.29 The Local Area Plan (LAP) provides objectives and policies pertaining to the Dunboyne/Clonee/Pace Corridor. The subject lands are zoned under the County Development Plan, as the zoning maps associated with the LAP were incorporated into the County Development Plan as part of Variation No. 2.

7.30 Objective CER OBJ 3 is as follows:

“To facilitate the development of lands between Portan, Clonee and Bracetown for E2 ‘General Industry & Employment’ and E3 ‘Warehousing & Distribution’ as provided for in Volume I of the County Development Plan. A Master Plan and a

detailed Roads Needs Assessment of said lands shall accompany any planning application for the development of these lands. This Master Plan shall obtain the prior written agreement of the Executive of the Planning Authority. The Master Plan shall accompany any application for planning permission on these lands and shall address land use, transportation, connectivity, urban design, recreation, environmental impacts including flood risk, phasing and implementation issues to the satisfaction of the Executive of the Planning Authority. Development shall be contingent on the phased delivery of the distributor road. The Master Plan shall address the following:

A Design Concept for the lands;

- *Guidance for high quality design throughout the development;*
- *Building heights and densities;*
- *A landscape plan for the development and landscape management plan (post-completion of the development);*
- *Flood Risk Assessment which takes account of the most up to date available CFRAM data Draft Variation No. 3 of the Meath County Development Plan, 2013-2019*

A Transport Assessment which addresses the following issues:

- *Access arrangements to the Development Site;*
- *Provision of safe cycle ways and pedestrian routes throughout the Development Site;*
- *Provision and access for Service Vehicles to the Site.*

The Master Plan shall be agreed in writing with the Executive of the Planning Authority in advance of the lodging of any planning application.”

- 7.31 This objective has been satisfied previously via the updating and submission to MCC of the non-statutory Masterplan (Revision One) that was previously provided with planning permission (MCC ref RA/191593). That masterplan was agreed in writing by the Executive of the Planning Authority prior to the submission of the concurrent application under Reg. Ref.: RA191593 & ABP Reg. Ref.: ABP-307546-20.
- 7.32 Objective CERO BJ 7 is *“To facilitate the development of lands between Portan Clonee and Bracetown for E2 “General Industry & Employment” and E3 “Warehousing and Distribution” purposes solely for the development of major employment proposals, primarily FDI, requiring a significant site area, having regard to this strategic location within the county, as provided for in Volume I of the County Development Plan.”* The current electricity transmission development proposal will support the achievement of this objective via the provision of electricity services to a location which has been identified for large scale employment proposals, including foreign direct investment.

Draft Meath County Development Plan 2020-2026

- 7.33 The Draft Meath County Development Plan for 2020-2026 was published on the 18th of December 2019. Public consultation on the Draft Plan was until March 6th, 2020 and the plan is likely to be adopted by the end of 2020. Whilst the current application will be considered under the current Development Plan, it is considered appropriate to note the key aspects of the Draft County Development Plan as it relates to the subject site.

Dunboyne, Clonee and Pace

- 7.34 Section 5.1 of the Draft Development Plan states the following in relation to employment development in the vicinity of the subject site:

“As part of the agreed Master Plan for the employment lands between Portan and Bracetown a route for the link road between Bracetown Business Park and the Kilbride Road has been identified. A section of this road is to be delivered as part of the construction of the expansion to the Facebook Data Centre complex. The completion of this road will provide an access to the remainder of the employment lands in this Master Plan area, which will enhance the attractiveness of these lands for economic investment due to the improved connectivity.

The expansion of the Facebook campus will encompass approximately 45% of this Master Plan area. In order to ensure there are sufficient employment lands available to accommodate large scale indigenous or Foreign Direct Investment additional employment lands between this Master Plan Area and the Bracetown Business Park have been zoned. A detailed Master Plan (MP 3) will be required to be prepared for these lands, which shall set out a design concept for the lands including general layout and access and service arrangements.”

- 7.35 Objective DCE OBJ 7 of the Draft Plan is *“To continue to support and facilitate the development of the Dunboyne-Clonee area as a hub for employment and economic investment in County Meath and the Dublin Metropolitan Area.”*

- 7.36 Objective DCE OBJ 9 is as follows:

“To facilitate the preparation of a Master Plan at:

- *MP 1 Lands at Dunboyne North*
- *MP2 Lands at Bracetown/Gunnocks*
- *MP3 Lands at Pace townland between Piercetown and Bracetown, east of the M3 Motorway.*

As set out in Section 7 of this written statement.”

- 7.37 Section 7 of the Draft Plan relates to masterplans for the areas of Dunboyne, including the area in which the proposed substation will be located (Masterplan 2). The Draft Plan notes that a masterplan is now in place for those lands, and that it can be updated as necessary subject to an iterative process.

Land Use Zoning

- 7.38 Under the Draft Development Plan, the lands on which the proposed new 220kV substation will be located remain zoned E2/E3. The lands to the northwest of the proposed substation site are also proposed to be zoned E2/E3 under the Draft Development Plan (currently unzoned under the 2013-2019 Development Plan). These lands are traversed by the proposed underground cable circuits.
- 7.39 Section 11.16.2 of the Draft Plan states that *“Utilities comprise of water, wastewater, electricity, telecommunications, transport infrastructure”*. The proposed development therefore falls into this use class.

- 7.40 Utilities are considered a permitted use under both the E2 and E3 zoning objectives within the Draft Development Plan, and therefore the proposal is also consistent with the Draft Plan.

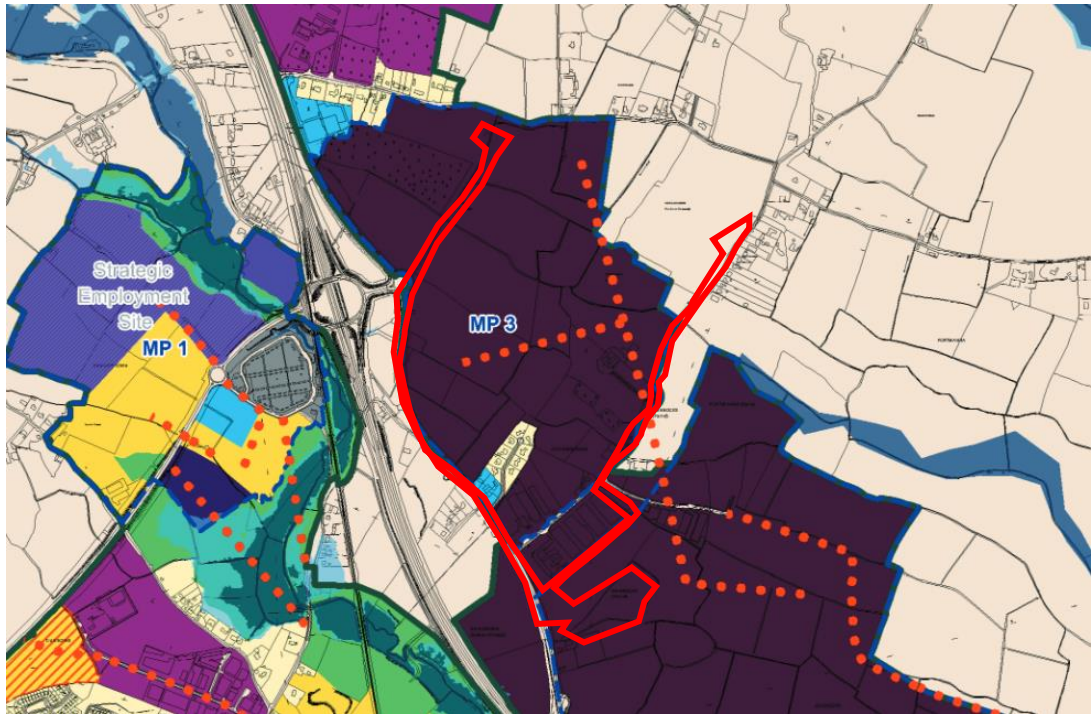


Figure 7.3: Extract from the zoning map for Dunboyne, Clonee and Pace under the Draft County Development Plan

8.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) including a Non-Technical Summary has been prepared / coordinated by AWN Environmental Consultants and is submitted along with this application.
- 8.2 An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been prepared by Moore Group, Consultant Ecologists, and is included as an Appendix of the EIAR.

9.0 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 This planning application relates to the provision of a 220kV GIS substation and an underground transmission cable connection (comprising two circuits and dropdown connections) between the proposed 220kV substation and the existing 220kV overhead Woodland - Corduff transmission lines, to the north of the proposed substations site.
- 9.2 This project is designed to support current power demand and future growth within the area inclusive but not limited to the power requirements for the proposed data storage facility development under Reg. Ref.: RA191593 & ABP Reg. Ref.: ABP-307546-20.
- 9.3 The proposal is in accordance with the policies and objectives of national and regional planning policy, and the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019. This report has also set out the compliance of the proposed development with the emerging planning policy context, consisting of the Draft Meath County Development Plan 2020-2026.

- 9.4 It has been demonstrated within this report, as well as within the accompanying drawings, documents, and Environmental Impact Assessment Report that the proposal provides a suitable use of the subject lands. The applicant and design team in preparing the application documentation have considered the issues raised within the pre-application consultations undertaken with An Bord Pleanála and their determination issued prior to the lodgement of this application.
- 9.5 If you require any further information, or clarification on the above, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully,

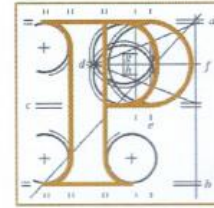


John Spain Associates

APPENDIX 1: EXTRACT OF BOARD CONFIRMATION THAT THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT CONSTITUTES STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMEN

Our Case Number: ABP-305657-19

Your Reference: EngineNode Ltd - EngineNode



**An
Bord
Pleanála**

Enginenode Limited
6/9 Trinity Street,
Dublin 2

Date: 18 June 2020

**Re: Proposed substation and associations grid connection at Bracetown, Gunnocks, to the north of Clonee.
Co. Meath**

Dear Sir / Madam,

Please be advised that following consultations under section 182E of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, the Board hereby serves notice that it is of the opinion that the proposed development falls within the scope of section 182A of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended. Accordingly, the Board has decided that the proposed development would be strategic infrastructure within the meaning of section 182A of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended. Any application for approval for the proposed development must therefore be made directly to An Bord Pleanála under section 182A(1) of the Act.

Please also be informed that the Board considers that the pre-application consultation process in respect of this proposed development is now closed.

In accordance with section 146(5) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, the Board will make available for inspection and purchase at its offices the documents relating to the decision within 3 working days following its decision. This information is normally made available on the list of decided cases on the website on the Wednesday following the week in which the decision is made.

The attachment contains information in relation to challenges to the validity of a decision of An Bord Pleanála under the provisions of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended.

If you have any queries in relation to the matter please contact the undersigned officer of the Board.

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Glaó Áitiúil	LoCall	1890 275 175
Facs	Fax	(01) 872 2684
Láithreán Gréasáin	Website	www.pleanala.ie
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