

An Rannóg Talamhúsáide, Pleanála agus Iompair
Land Use, Planning & Transportation Department
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PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACT, 2000 (as amended) AND PLANNING REGULATIONS THEREUNDER

Decision Order Number: 1225	Date of Decision: 13-Sep-2021
Register Reference: SD21A/0203	Registration Date: 20-Jul-2021

Applicant: Microsoft Operations Ireland Ltd.

Development: Modifications and minor additions to previously approved scheme (Planning Register Reference SD20A/0283) at this site of c.16.23ha (in total) comprising of the following changes to previously approved scheme SD20A/0283; Approved Central Administration Building (CAB), relocation of building to the east by approx. 7m; reconfiguration and setting out of building plans at all levels (including roof level) resulting in increase in building footprint of approximately 170sq.m (from 1,424sq.m to 1,594sq.m) associated changes to building elevations (design and finishes); approved single storey Cafeteria Element, additional basement level below cafeteria to accommodate plant; 9 rooflights (2.8 m diameter) and 9 rooflight (1.8m diameter), inclusion of MEP Plant on roof level including new flue extending approx. 1m above parapet; approved four-storey Office element, parapet at roof level to be raised by approx. 1.1m (increased from approved 19.5m in height to proposed 20.6m); overall increase in GIFA of 395sq.m; reconfiguration of area available for PV panels and sedum roof finish in order to accommodate required MEP equipment at roof levels. approved Data Centres - DUB14 and DUB15, reconfiguration and setting out affecting building locations and plans at all levels (including roof level) resulting in reduction in overall building footprint (for each building) by 48sq.m (from 13,442sq.m to 13,394sq.m), associated changes to staircases design, building elevations design and finishes, increase in parapet height of Vent Houses (at roof level) by approx. 350mm and omission of previously proposed zone of sedum roof finish; overall decrease in GIFA of 1,352sq.m in respect of DUB 14 and

decrease of 1,453sq.m in respect of DUB 15; all plant equipment at ground level - reduced in height compared to approved layout so that the screening is deemed not required; DUB 14, reduction in height of approved flues by approx. 650mm, reduction in number of flues from 11 approved to 8 proposed; DUB 15, change to level of ground floor and associated increase in overall building height of approx. 700mm (parapet height increased from approved +83.0m O.D. to proposed +83.7m O.D.); reconfiguration of associated external plant at ground level (including generators / E-Houses & transformers) flues, omission of approved Modular Electrical Rooms (MERs) and associated screening serving approved Data Centres DUB14 &15; relocation, modifications to design and expansion of approved Water Treatment Building and associated plant to include, Water Treatment Tanks, 2 sprinkler tanks and relocated approved pump house (contained in the main Water Treatment Plant building) and 1 generator with additional proposed flue stack (height 30.75m) and 1 transformer; Gas Generator Compound - Relocation & reconfiguration of previously approved gas generator compound including, additional 4 generators (from 20 approved to 24 proposed), omission of approved E-houses; additional 7 electrical rooms, additional 7 flues (from 5 approved to 12 proposed); modifications to approved layout of internal site roads, yards and footpaths; relocation and modifications to design of approved Sprinkler Tanks and Pump Houses, Pump House serving DUB 14, relocated into proposed Water Treatment Building and compound, redesign of approved larger tank into proposed two smaller tanks; Pump House serving DUB 15, relocated to south of DUB15 the north facilitate space for electrical equipment redesign of approved larger tank into proposed two smaller tanks; relocation of Approved Gas Networks Ireland (GNI) gas skid & compound including approved 3 kiosk buildings; modifications to approved car park layouts and landscaping design; modifications to location and design of approved bicycle shelters; modifications to site development works, including underground water and building services provision, landscaping, internal security and compound enclosure fencing, and associated works; the remainder of the development (including permitted temporary construction car parking) to be carried out in accordance with parent permission SD20A/0283. An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) has been submitted with this application; The application relates to a development which comprises an activity requiring an integrated pollution prevention and control (IE) licence relating to lands located west of the existing MS Data Centre Campus and also a site located north of the main entrance to the business park from Grange Castle Road.

Location: Grange Castle Business Park, Nangor Road, Clondalkin, Dublin 22
Application Type: Permission

Dear Sir /Madam,

With reference to your planning application, received on 20-Jul-2021 in connection with the above, I wish to inform you that before the application can be considered under Section 33 of the Planning & Development Act 2000, six copies of the following ADDITIONAL INFORMATION must be submitted.

1. The applicant has proposed to make significant changes to the approved surface water drainage layout for the development. The Planning Authority is concerned that the changes have not been fully accounted for in the EIAR and do not comply with policies and objectives laid out in Chapters 7 and 8 of the County Development Plan. The applicant is requested to address the above concerns and submit further information for clarification purposes as follows:

The applicant shall contact SDCC Water Services Section prior to submitting a response to this request for further information.

(1) The applicant is requested to submit a surface water drainage catchment drawing showing what areas are served by all proposed and existing attenuation and rainwater harvesting facilities. The drawing shall show attenuation and rainwater harvesting volumes for each system as well as the flow control device locations and corresponding maximum discharge rates. No attenuation system shall be located under a proposed building and must be adequately distanced away from same so that building foundations are not adversely affected. Proposals should seek natural solutions and not the heavily engineered solutions proposed.

(2) The applicant is requested to submit a report showing a breakdown of all surface area types, surface areas (in m²) including corresponding surface run off coefficients for all drainage catchments. The report shall also include greenfield discharge rate (Q_{bar}) calculations. The applicant shall ensure that the maximum discharge rate from each catchment does not exceed Q_{bar} rural for all storm events. Green infrastructural elements should be demonstrated throughout the site.

(3) The proposed location of the attenuation system to the north underneath process water storage tanks is not acceptable. This system shall be relocated so that it is a minimum distance of 3m away from the proposed water treatment facility and 5m from any building. Again, Green Infrastructural elements should be demonstrated throughout the site.

(4) The applicant is requested to investigate if the proposed concrete attenuation tank to the west can be changed to a modular underground storage system such as an arch type system or similar. These systems offer more in terms of interception storage volumes and also are easier to maintain. Concrete attenuation structures are only acceptable as a last resort. Again, Green Infrastructural elements should be demonstrated throughout the site and underground attenuation should only be sought where other natural solutions can be provided. The Planning Authority notes that there are substantial lands that could be used for natural attenuation areas above ground; these should be investigated and revised proposals submitted.

(5) The applicant has proposed to relocate attenuation systems and rainwater harvesting systems so that they are underneath the proposed gas compound to the east. The applicant is requested to demonstrate how these attenuation and rainwater harvesting systems will be accessed for maintenance

purposes and demonstrate how these systems will not be adversely affected by loading from compound structures above. Again points 3 and 4 above are relevant.

(6) The applicant is requested to submit an updated SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems) layout plan for the development. SuDS shall be maximised across the site and shall include features such as but not limited to: Swales, detention basins, tree pits, filter drains, channel rills, permeable pavement, living walls and green roofs. The applicant shall submit details of all such SuDS features.

(7) All proposed parking bays shall be constructed using a porous surface material. A revised layout drawing shall include this information.

(8) No industrial water or potable water supplied from the public watermains network shall enter the storm water network. Only clean untreated and uncontaminated rainwater shall enter the stormwater network. All treated water and process cooling water shall be discharge to the public wastewater drainage network.

(9) All design of overground fuel storage tanks shall comply with the requirements of the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works Section 17-GUIDELINES FOR THE BUNDING OF OVERGROUND OIL STORAGE TANKS.

(10) Conditions 12 and 13 of previously granted planning permission ref: SD20A/0283 shall continue to apply.

2. The applicant is requested to engage with Irish Water by submitting a pre Connection Enquiry (PCE) to assess feasibility of connection to the public water/waste water infrastructure. The outcome of the PCE is to be submitted to the Planning Authority as a response to the request for further information.
3. The applicant is requested to reconsider the current plan, to investigate the inclusion of other biodiversity compensatory measures such as living walls/green walls, additional green roof features on administration buildings (or other roofs free of plant structures) etc in line with green infrastructure requirements and policies under Chapter 8 of the CDP. Sufficient and appropriate biodiversity compensatory measures on other areas of the applicant's overall property holding at Grange Castle could also be considered. The applicant is requested to submit a revised site layout which adequately address the loss of landscape and biodiversity features.
4.
 - (1) The removal of the planting within the parking area is not acceptable and must be addressed through a revised site layout plan.
 - (2) A significant amount of planting is removed from around the perimeter of the DUB 15 building. Although the building has widened by 60m, the removal of trees and landscaping is significant and is not acceptable to the Planning Authority. The Planning Authority understands the rationale regarding the wider building and associated constraints. However, the applicant is requested to, way of additional information. advise on how the removal of trees will be replaced elsewhere on site. The applicant is requested to submit revised proposals demonstrating the inclusion of significant Green Infrastructure throughout the development, to be incorporated along with the requirements set out under the biodiversity item included in this overall request for additional information.
5. In the interests of clarification of what is being proposed the applicant is requested to submit a full schedule clearly detailing all development approved and all proposed amendments and the difference, to include clarity on:
 - (i) The statutory notices state that the proposed development will comprise of:
 - o A 'reduction in overall building footprint (for each approved Data Centre - DUB14 and DUB15) by

48sq.m (from 13,442sq.m to 13,394sq.m)’ and

o An ‘overall decrease in Gross Internal Floor Area (GIFA) of 1,352sq.m in respect of DUB 14 and decrease of 1,453sq.m in respect of DUB 15’

Both of the above statements appear to be contradictory. It is unclear what is being proposed. This requires clarification and exact floor areas for each structure should be submitted for assessment.

(ii) The statutory notices state that the proposed development will comprise of

o Omission of approved E-houses.

The Planning Authority a number of E-houses throughout the site. It is unclear how many E-houses are proposed to be omitted in this application. Do the E-houses to be omitted relate only to DUB15 or to the entire development? (it is noted that other E-houses have been granted throughout the site).

The number of E-houses to be omitted should be submitted for assessment.

(iii) The statutory notice states that a total gross floor area is 56,566sq.m (Previously stated to be 59,766sqm under SD20A/0283), which represents an overall decrease in 3,200sqm. The applicant is requested to submit clarification of the breakdown of approved floor area and proposed floor and demonstrate clearly where the decrease takes place.

6. (i) This office building presents a high-quality architectural response that in visual terms, positively defines and frames the entrance to the Business Park. This is generally acceptable and the relocation of the structure in an eastwards direction is welcomed, this should allow for greater planting to take place around the Griffeen River. Revised Landscape Proposals should be submitted addressing this requirement.
(ii) The Planning Authority understands from the documentation submitted that the CAB building is being realigned/relocated to accommodate a 10.5m wide wayleave over the existing 450mm below ground foul sewer and 5m wide wayleave for future utilities running along the inside of the site boundary wall and this is generally acceptable. However, the Planning Authority remains of the opinion that the boundaries of this site and all lands in close proximity to the remnants of the River Griffeen should significantly planted, screened and greened. The applicant is requested to clearly demonstrate mitigation measures for the ‘future utilities’ at this location.
7. With regards to the proposed relocation, modifications to design and expansion of approved Water Treatment Building and associated plant to include, Water Treatment Tanks, 2 sprinkler tanks and relocated approved pump house (contained in the main Water Treatment Plant building) and 1 generator with additional proposed flue stack (height 30.75m) and 1 transformer, the Planning Authority has serious concerns. These concerns were raised at the Pre-Planning meeting. They encroach upon an area that has significant landscaping possibilities to mitigate the impact of the development on the receiving environment and has natural SUDS solutions capabilities. Their arbitrary location would ensure that landscaping and increasing biodiversity in the area will be challenging and possibly ineffective. The Planning Authority are not supportive of this change and would request the applicant to seek an alternative location and/or design solutions. The applicant should seek ‘natural solutions’ to these proposals in line with County Development Plan policy and objectives. Revised proposals to be submitted.
8. (i) The Planning Authority notes the contents of the EIAR. The Planning Authority had assessed the approved development on the basis of the original EIAR. The proposed amendments are not considered to be minor and it is considered that they will have a major impact on the receiving

environment. The applicant is requested to submit revised proposals to demonstrate that increased mitigation measures are proposed for the subject development and the cumulative impact of all datacentre development within the ownership of the applicant, this subject site being the last to be developed, should be considered and appropriate mitigation is requested to be proposed.

(ii) The Planning Authority considers that further information arising from the information contained within the EIAR is required. The mitigating measures for the approved development should be compared and contrasted in a separate report and the applicant is requested to demonstrate that additional and significant mitigating measures are provided for. The Planning Authority remains concerned that the proposed modifications represent an overdevelopment of the entire lands, and the cumulative effect is significant.

Please note that the Planning Authority welcomed the approved permission due to its substantial landscaping, screening and berm proposals. These items have been seriously eroded in the current application which is not generally acceptable to the Planning Authority and the Authority remains concerned with the cumulative impact of the datacentre development across the landholding.

9. The location of the Central Administration/Gateway Building helps in integrating the Data-halls within the overall Microsoft development and in screening the halls from the R134 junction with the Business Park (refer to Photomontage Views 1 -4 (Figures 10.5.1A - 10.5.1D and Figures 10.5.2A - 10.5.2D)). Although this 'screening' is generally welcomed, the Planning Authority seek increased natural screening in the form of living green walls, berms and significantly increased planting. Retention of existing vegetation along the Site boundary with the Griffeen River and the Business Park Road has a significant effect in reducing impact of the Proposed Project on views from within the Park and in ensuring that the development is in keeping with the nature of development in the Business Park as a whole. The Planning Authority welcomes the retention of existing vegetation but seek:
 - (i) significant augmentation of this vegetation
 - (ii) the relocation of buildings away from roadside boundaries (the proposed development is considered to be located too close to the existing road network).
 - (iii) Significant green infrastructure that traverses the entire site/landholding and connecting back to the increased planting at the Griffeen River should be demonstrated.
 - (iv) Reduction in overall footprint of all structures on the subject site.

NOTE: The applicant should note that any submission made in response to the above will be examined and MAY be deemed to be SIGNIFICANT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION by the Planning Authority. In this event the applicant(s) will be subsequently notified and requested to publish a notice in an approved newspaper and erect or fix a site notice on the land or structure to which the further information relates and to submit copies of the both the newspaper and site notices to the Planning Authority in accordance with Article 35 (1) (a) and (b) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

Note: The applicant must submit the Further Information within **6 months** of the **date of decision**. If the information is not received within this period the planning authority shall declare the application to be withdrawn.

Please ensure that your reply to this Request for Additional Information is accompanied by a covering letter marked “ADDITIONAL INFORMATION” and that the Planning Register Reference Number given above is quoted on the covering letter.

Signed on behalf of South Dublin County Council

Register Reference: SD21A/0203

Date: 15-Sep-2021

Yours faithfully,


for **Senior Planner**