

## Ryan intervenes directly in 'senseless' Shannon LNG plan

The Minister for the Environment says permitting the scheme, which could use fracked gas from the US, would go directly against government policy

DANIEL MURRAY and KILLIAN WOODS | JANUARY 23, 2022



Eamon Ryan: the Minister for the Environment told An Bord Pleanála that the proposed Shannon LNG terminal should not be permitted "under any circumstances". Picture: Gareth Chaney/Collins

Eamon Ryan has intervened directly in the planning application of Shannon LNG, telling An Bord Pleanála that it should not be permitted "under any circumstances".

The *Business Post* previously reported that New Fortress Energy, the US energy firm, was preparing to lodge a new planning application for a €650 million Shannon LNG liquified natural gas import terminal, along with a 600 megawatt (MW) gas power plant, on the Shannon estuary in Ballylongford, Co Kerry.

That application was lodged directly with An Bord Pleanála in September as a strategic infrastructure development, and a decision on the application is expected in March of this year.

Shannon LNG has been in the pre-development phase in Ireland for many years, with substantial opposition emerging to the project on environmental grounds, as some of the gas that New Fortress Energy would supply to the terminal may come from fracking in the US. Fracking is a form of fossil fuel extraction which involves injecting high-pressure water and chemicals deep into the earth to release hydrocarbons from shale rock.

New correspondence from the end of October 2021 shows the Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications wrote directly to An Bord Pleanála stating that as a "prescribed body considered relevant . . . to this planning application" he wished to "set out clearly my views".

Ryan went on to draw An Bord Pleanála's attention to the programme for government, which, he reminded them, has stated that "we do not believe that it makes sense to develop LNG gas import terminals importing fracked gas".

He then further referred planning officials to the Government Policy on the Importation of Fracked Gas, published in May 2021, which he said clearly showed government opposition to the building of LNG terminals, until a full energy security review could be completed.

"The government has approved that pending the outcome of the review of the security of energy supply of Ireland's electricity and natural gas systems, it would not be appropriate for the development of any LNG terminals to be permitted . . ." Ryan said, quoting from the May policy statement.

Ryan said that while he accepted the need for additional electricity generation capacity, the inclusion of a power plant in this project did not change the fact that it was contrary to government policy.

"In conclusion, I wish to make it very clear that I believe that [the] permitting of this project would be in direct contravention to government policy and therefore it should not, under any circumstances be permitted," he said.



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