

**Written record of third pre-application consultation between An Bord Pleanála and the prospective applicant (Galway Harbour Company) in relation to a proposed Harbour Extension at Galway Harbour, Galway.**

**An Bord Pleanála reference number: PC.61.PC0012**

- **Venue:** An Bord Pleanála, Conference Room
- **Date:** 7<sup>th</sup> May 2010

**In Attendance:**

**Representing An Bord Pleanála**

Mr. Philip Jones, Assistant Director of Planning  
Mr. Philip Green, Assistant Director of Planning  
Ms. Marcella Doyle, Senior Executive Officer  
Mr. Kieran Doherty, Executive Officer

**Prospective Applicant**

**The Galway Harbour Company**

Mr. Eamon Bradshaw, Chief Executive Officer, Galway Harbour Company  
Mr. Tom Broderick, Project Co-ordinator, Galway Harbour Company  
Captain Brian Sheridan, Harbour Master, Galway Harbour Company  
Mr. John Kelly, Director, Tobin Consulting Engineers  
Mr. Gus McCarthy, Director, McCarthy Keville O'Sullivan Ltd  
Mr. Raymond Burke, Director, Raymond Burke Consulting  
Ms. Corina Collieran, Director, McCarthy Keville O'Sullivan Ltd  
Dr. Brendan O'Connor, Director, Aquafact International Services Ltd  
Mr. Roddy Mannion, Director, Roddy Mannion and Associates  
Mr. Mark Whittaker, Senior Project Planner, McCarthy Keville O'Sullivan Ltd  
Mr. Brendan Rudden, Project Engineer, Tobin Consulting Engineers

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Philip Jones and commenced at 11.00 a.m. A list of attendees was exchanged (see Appendix 1).

**Introduction**

The Board's team was introduced.

The prospective applicant introduced its team. The purpose of the meeting was to update the Board on the current status of the project and to outline key areas of progress since previous meetings. The prospective applicant would like clarification from the Board on the Board's strategic infrastructure assessment as it hoped to submit a planning application in 6 months time.

## **Presentation**

The prospective applicant made a detailed presentation to the Board which covered the following topics:

1. Introduction
2. Need for Harbour
  - Planning Policy
  - Business Case
3. Urban Design Framework
4. Proposal & Phasing
5. Ecology Update
6. Marine Ecology & Modelling Studies
7. Road Traffic Update
8. Planning Programme
9. An Bord Pleanála Interaction

Hard copies of the presentation were submitted.

In its introduction the prospective applicant stated that the proposal is based on commercial marine and leisure facilities. It was stated that the Draft Galway Development Plan supports the development of a new port. Consultations have taken place with Galway City Council, the Department of Transport, the National Parks and Wildlife Service, the Western Regional Fisheries Board and various statutory bodies.

### *Need for Harbour*

In relation to the need for a new harbour the prospective applicant pointed out the significant role of ports in development of urban centres and their role at regional and local level. It was also stated that this is supported in the Regional Planning Guidelines and the Draft Galway City Council Development Plan identified the importance of maintaining and expanding the port. The prospective applicant also referred to Seveso issues in relation to petroleum terminals. Alternative locations within the harbour were also considered.

The prospective applicant explained that the port would have to close if a new harbour was not constructed. Tides restrict usage to 4 hours per day and deep water facilities are required to allow for larger ships that are restricted by the width of the harbour gate. Economies of scale require larger vessels which need 10 metre depth of water as opposed to the existing 8 metres.

### *Urban Design Framework*

The Integrated Urban Design Framework document was referred to; the purpose of which is to address the requirements and aspirations of the Galway City Council Draft Development Plan.

### *Proposal & Phasing*

The phasing of the development of the proposed port was outlined. By stage 3 of the proposed development berthing will be in the new port to allow development to take place in the old harbour. This Harbour Village development would be the subject of a separate planning application to the City Council. The new port would be the catalyst for the whole development. The old harbour will continue to function while construction takes place.

All class 1 oil tanks will be moved to the pier head.

### *Ecology*

More detailed information is contained in the pack in relation to impacts of the proposed development. An update on the work completed to date, details of ongoing impact assessment and consultations completed was provided.

### *Road Traffic*

It was indicated that considerable work had been undertaken in this regard. A mobility management plan has been proposed for the harbour.

The prospective applicant has entered into agreements with CIE and Galway City Council. It is proposed to lower the Lough Atalia Road under the railway bridge and also provide a pedestrian link between the abutments. The lowering of the road is an aim of the City Council as part of its traffic model.

A rail link, developed jointly with CIE, to the proposed development will be part of the planning application. Rail embankments will be put in place as the development progresses. This land is within the control of the prospective applicant.

### *An Bord Pleanála Interaction*

The prospective applicant indicated that it will be seeking a 10 year permission as the application is for all of the 6 stages of the development.

This presentation updates previous submissions and any Phase 2 development would be a separate application if further development is required.

## **Board's Comments**

The Board's representatives indicated that timing of each of the construction stages will need to be made clear. Clarification would also be required and assessments carried out in terms of potential overlaps of construction phases of the other potential developments in the vicinity.

The marine modelling domain will need to be extensive, including Spiddal and Lough Atalia. The issue of "appropriate assessment" must be fully addressed.

The railway bridge is a protected structure and the work around it will change its visual impression. The prospective applicant was advised to demonstrate to the Board's satisfaction that there will not be any detrimental impact on the railway bridge.

The rail link during each stage of construction must have a clear timescale in the application. The Board needs to be satisfied that a practicable and workable rail link is provided. This would future proof the port. Services on the rail link would need to be determined by CIE and the prospective applicant. The Board emphasised the fact that it considers rail access as a core element of the port development.

The issue of traffic and access was a very significant issue in this case and the Board would need to be satisfied that adequate and timely arrangements and infrastructure were in place to cater for all aspects of the development's traffic and access requirements.

The Board will need to be advised of when the lowering of the Lough Atalia Road would be carried out. It also stated that any road works to be carried out will need to be included in the application.

The Board enquired whether the Fisher Associates Report would be referred to in the planning application.

The Board advised that a formal scoping request submitted to the Board is a separate process to the pre-application consultation. This can be done after the pre-application process is closed. The scoping process takes approximately 12 weeks including consultations with prescribed bodies. Ecology and marine flow will be part of the EIS.

The Board may seek a further meeting with the relevant bodies, including Galway City Council prior to issuing its decision on whether the proposed development constitutes a strategic infrastructure development.

### **Conclusion**

The Board's representatives stated that it was probable, based on the information submitted, that the project might be considered to be strategic infrastructure.

The next pre-application meeting would include the following:

- Strategic infrastructure assessment
- Application procedures
- Likely significant issues to be taken into account by the Board in the application.

The next meeting will be scheduled by the Board as soon as practicable, and hopefully in 4-6 weeks time.

The meeting ended at 1.05 pm.

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Philip Jones,  
Assistant Director of Planning