



An
Bord
Pleanála

Record of Meeting ABP-310268-21 – 6th Meeting

Case Reference / Description	ABP-310268-21 Development of port lands on Poolbeg Peninsula, construction of a Southern Port Access Route comprising of a new bridge across the river Liffey. Poolbeg Peninsula and River Liffey, Dublin City		
Case Type	Pre-application consultation		
1st / 2nd / 3rd Meeting	6 th Meeting. First Meeting with Irish Rail		
Date	15/09/22	Start Time	11:00 a.m.
Location	MS Teams	End Time	11:50 a.m.

Representing An Bord Pleanála

Ciara Kellett, Assistant Director of Planning

Una Crosse, Senior Planning Inspector

Niamh Thornton, Executive Officer

Representing Irish Rail

Jim Meade, Chief Executive Officer, Irish Rail

Michael Power, Head of Transformation

Glen Carr, Director of Commercial Business Units

Barry Kenny, Corporate Communications Manager

Colm Costello, CIE Group Solicitor

The Board's representatives introduced themselves and welcomed Irish Rail to the meeting. The Board's representatives advised Irish Rail that the instant meeting is a consultation as part of the pre-application consultation process which the Board may hold with bodies other than the prospective applicant. The holding of consultations does not prejudice the Board in any way and cannot be relied upon in the formal planning process or any legal proceedings.

The Board will keep a record of this meeting and any other meetings, if held. Such records will form part of the file which will be made available publicly at the conclusion of the process. The record of the meeting will not be amended by the Board once finalised, but Irish Rail may submit comments on the record which will form part of the case file.

Presentation:

Irish Rail thanked the Board's representatives for facilitating the meeting.

Irish Rail gave a presentation on its future objectives and on its Rail Freight 2040 Strategy and its relevance to the pre-application consultation process currently underway between An Bord Pleanála and Dublin Port Company (DPC).

The Rail Freight 2040 Strategy was developed in the second half of 2020 and launched in December 2021. There are five strategic pillars to the Strategy, 1. Enhance connections with sea ports, 2. Develop a network of inland ports, 3. Address rolling stock requirements, 4. Progress network developments, 5. Policy decisions.

The Strategy was developed in response to European and National Policy noting that the European Green Deal calls for a 90% reduction in greenhouse emissions from transport by 2050. The EU Sustainable & Smart Mobility Strategy, which launched in 2019, targets a 100% increase in rail freight by 2050. A greater increase is required in Ireland. The National Planning Framework, National Development Plan 2018-2027 and Climate Action Plan 2019/2021 support the ideas of compact growth, sustainable mobility and transition to a low carbon and climate resilient society. Irish Rail stated that with 29 actions in the Climate Action Plan 2019 related to transport, rail freight should be considered to assist in achieving the Plan's targets. Irish Rail

listed other benefits of the Strategy, such as supporting economic growth and alleviation of current road sector pressures.

Irish Rail stated that DPC contacted them seeking to remove trains from Ocean Pier due to congestion and a lack of capacity within the area. Train operations stopped at the time for a period of six weeks, after which operations returned to night work only. Irish Rail stated that it is their understanding that DPC plan to permanently remove rail access to Ocean Pier.

Irish Rail stated that it is their opinion that rail access should be retained to Ocean Pier and the area reconfigured to facilitate growth in rail freight to/from port.

Regarding the 3FM Project, Irish Rail stated that, as per Pillar 1 of the strategy, it is Irish Rail's ambition to connect all Tier 1 Ports to the rail network. Irish Rail stated that this cannot be achieved if DPC were to advance the 3FM project in its current form with the 3FM project potentially comprising the largest inland container terminal in the country.

Irish Rail gave an overview of its next steps in terms of implementing the Rail Freight 2040 Strategy.

Discussion:

The Board's representatives gave a very brief overview of the pre-application consultation to date. The request for consultations was lodged with An Bord Pleanála in May, 2021 and four consultation meetings have been held with the prospective applicant to date. It was clarified that the works proposed, the subject of this pre-application consultation, are on the south side of the Port with little development other than the northern extent of the SPAR on the north side of the River.

The Board's representatives asked if Irish Rail had been in consultation with DPC. Irish Rail confirmed that they have been involved in a broader working group with DPC which had concerned in the main Ocean Pier. Regarding the 3FM project, Irish Rail stated that DPC provided them with the proposed plan, stating that a rail connection was not being proposed.

Irish Rail outlined their concern that the 3FM project would potentially comprise the biggest inland terminal facility in Ireland and it would not have any rail freight access. They stated that countries across Europe are moving more towards rail freight transport from ports. Irish Rail stated that it believes there is sufficient space to develop the container terminal proposed within the 3FM project on the north side of the Port which would allow for rail freight connectivity.

Regarding the existing rail infrastructure to the north side of the Port, Irish Rail clarified that some re-engineering and upgrading would be required to facilitate the growth expected in the Port and stated that there is sufficient space to allow for these upgrades.

The Board's representatives queried if Irish Rail considered whether it would be possible for a rail element to be incorporated to facilitate rail access to the south of the port as part of the 3FM project. Irish Rail stated that it would be possible to connect the proposed terminal by rail but that they had been informed by DPC that this option was not being considered. Irish Rail stated that they had not been consulted with regarding possible connection options for the 3FM Project.

Irish Rail stated that moving freight by rail will help decongest Dublin Port and Dublin City and stated that 20 train movements is the equivalent of 1400 truck movements. Moving a container by rail rather than road would provide a 75% decrease in emissions.

The Board's representatives reiterated that the purpose of the pre-application consultation is for the Board to determine whether the proposed development constitutes Strategic Infrastructure Development. The advice given to the prospective applicant during this process is limited and relates predominately to environmental matters such as areas to be included in the EIAR and NIS and application procedures. The Board's representatives stated that the assessment of the proposed project, in relation to proper planning and sustainable development takes place after an application is made to the Board. However, the Board's representatives thanked Irish Rail for bringing the matter of rail connectivity, and the benefits thereof, to their specific attention. In this regard, the Board's representatives suggested that Irish Rail should consult directly with DPC in respect of the Dublin

Port Masterplan and the 3FM Project. Irish Rail confirmed that a meeting is being scheduled.

Conclusion:

The record of this meeting will issue in due course and Irish Rail can submit any comments it may have in writing.

 19/9/22

Ciara Kellett

Assistant Director of Planning

