



An  
Bord  
Pleanála

## Record of Meeting 07.PC0232 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting

<b>Case Reference / Description</b>	07.PC0232 Construction of a new deep water quay facility and all ancillary works at Rossaveel, Co. Galway.		
<b>Case Type</b>	Pre-application consultation		
<b>1<sup>st</sup> / 2<sup>nd</sup> / 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup>		
<b>Date</b>	06/04/17	<b>Start Time</b>	1 p.m.
<b>Location</b>	Meeting Room 3	<b>End Time</b>	1.30 p.m.
<b>Chairperson</b>	Anne Marie O'Connor	<b>Executive Officer</b>	Kieran Somers

<b>Attendees</b>		
<b>Representing An Bord Pleanála</b>		
<b>Staff Member</b>	<b>Email Address</b>	<b>Phone</b>
Anne Marie O'Connor, Assistant Director of Planning		
Stephen Kay, Senior Planning Inspector		
Marcella Doyle, Senior Executive Officer		
Kieran Somers, Executive Officer	k.somers@pleanala.ie	01-8737107

<b>Representing the Prospective Applicant</b>		
John McHale, Assistant Chief Engineer, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine		
John Donnelly, Harbour Master, Rossaveel		
Ciaran Reilly, Project Manager, Mott MacDonald		
Mark McCarthy, Environmental Planner, Mott MacDonald		
Noel O'Murchu, Engineer, Marine Engineering Division, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine		

The meeting commenced at 1 p.m.

### **Introduction:**

The Board referred to its previous meeting with the prospective applicant of the 7<sup>th</sup> November, 2016. The Board asked the prospective applicant if it had any comments to make on the record of this meeting. The prospective applicant replied that it had no comments to make.

The Board noted that, by way of the previous meeting and documentation submitted, it had a good understanding of what was entailed in the proposed development.

The prospective applicant provided a summary of Appropriate Assessment in relation to the proposed development. In respect of European Sites, the prospective applicant said that a number of such sites had been identified within a 15-kilometre radius; it expanded by saying that only two of these had an element of connectivity with the subject site. The prospective applicant advised that a draft Stage 1 report has been completed and concludes that there would be no likely significant effects on any European sites and that, therefore, Stage 2 Assessment would not be required.

The prospective applicant outlined the reasons as to why the proposed development is not to be considered strategic infrastructure development as follows:

- With respect to the criteria of section 37A(2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, the prospective applicant noted that the proposed development is not identified in the National Ports Policy 2013 and is not considered to be of strategic, social or economic importance.
- The prospective applicant also added that the proposed development is not identified in the National Spatial Strategy 2002 – 2020 nor in the regional planning guidelines for the west area. The prospective applicant said that the proposed development would only be significant in a local context.
- The prospective applicant also stated its opinion that the proposed development would have no effects on the jurisdiction of any other planning authority during both construction and operational phases.

The Board enquired as to the number of additional vessels per year which might use the port as a result of the proposed development. The prospective applicant replied that this would be in the order of approximately 300. It was noted by the Board that this was greater than the projected 143 vessels per annum that was stated in the initial submission to the Board dated 11<sup>th</sup> October, 2016 and reflected revised economic projections undertaken in the interim. It was contended by the prospective applicant that the revised levels of vessels and tonnage of catch per annum were such that the economic and social impacts arising were still of a local rather than regional level.

Responding to questioning by the Boards representatives regarding the likely level of commercial port traffic, the prospective applicant said that there was a possibility that some other commercial type vessels, such as cruise ships, might use the facility in the future, but emphasised that this does not form the rationale for the proposed development. It was stated that any such use of the port would have to be clearly secondary to the primary role as a commercial fishing port as this was the main role of the port as a fisheries harbour centre. It was also stated that the potential for cruise liner traffic is limited as such traffic in the area would go to Galway and that there is no current market for commercial vessels. The point was also made that any ancillary commercial or cruise liner traffic would be small in the context of the existing approximately 400,000 Aran Islands ferry passenger movements per annum.

It clarified to the Board that the length of vessels using the port post-development would range between 18 metres and 118 metres and that modelling had been undertaken that showed that vessels of up to 118 metres in length and 20 – 25,000 tonnes could be accommodated with the proposed development in place.

The prospective applicant noted for the record that one of the key drivers underpinning the project is the existing fish processing plant which is currently under-capacity. The prospective applicant said that a key objective would be to bring this plant back to previous levels of production and employment so as to benefit the region as a whole. The Board representatives noted that the original projections were that the current 30-35 full time equivalents (FTEs) employed in fish processing during peak season could be increased to 50-60 FTEs have now changed on foot of the revised economic projections and that there may be potential for additional fish processing facilities in the area. The prospective applicant agreed that there would be additional employment potential as a result of the revised economic projections, but it was envisaged that some spare capacity would likely remain in the existing fish processing facility at the port. Representatives of the prospective applicant stressed that the main reason for the proposed development is keeping the port fishing activity alive, both in terms of attracting back larger fishing vessels to the port, as was previously the case, and also the protection of local employment and protection of the viability of the existing fish processing facility and other ancillary port businesses.

### **Conclusion:**

The Board's representatives said they had no other comments to make on the case except to say that the preliminary opinion is that the proposed development would not constitute SID having regard to section 37A(2).

The Board's representatives said that they would arrange to have an informal meeting with the SID division of the Board in relation to this case and the other related port harbour developments (PC0234, PC0235 and PC0237), and would revert to the prospective applicant if any further issues arose necessitating a further meeting.

The meeting concluded at 1.30 p.m.

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**Anne Marie O'Connor**

**Assistant Director of Planning**