



<b>Case Reference / Description</b>	04.PC0235 Development of a New Quay at Dinish Island, Castletownbere, Co. Cork.		
<b>Case Type</b>	Section 37B		
<b>1<sup>st</sup> / 2<sup>nd</sup> / 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting</b>	1st Meeting		
<b>Date</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> April 2017	<b>Start Time</b>	10.10 am
<b>Location</b>	Offices of An Bord Pleanála	<b>End Time</b>	11.00 am
<b>Chairperson</b>	Anne Marie O'Connor, Assistant Director of Planning		

**Representing An Bord Pleanála:**

Anne Marie O'Connor, Assistant Director of Planning
Stephen Kay, Senior Planning Inspector
Marcella Doyle, Senior Executive Officer
Kieran Doherty, Senior Executive Officer

**Representing Prospective Applicant**

Tony O'Sullivan, Grade 1 Engineer (DAFM)
Noel Ó Murchú, Grade 1 Engineer (DAFM)
Noel Clancy, Chief Engineer, Marine Engineering Division, (DAFM)
Maria Lombard, RPS Consulting Engineers
Alan Barr, RPS Consulting Engineers

## **Introduction**

The representatives of An Bord Pleanála welcomed the prospective applicant and introductions were made. The ABP representatives acknowledged the letter dated 24<sup>th</sup> October 2016 formally requesting pre-application consultations with ABP, and the subsequent documentation received on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2016 and 6<sup>th</sup> March 2017.

The representatives of ABP advised the prospective applicant that the meeting essentially constituted an information-gathering exercise for An Bord Pleanála and that a further meeting or meetings could take place.

The representatives of ABP mentioned general procedures in relation to the pre-application consultation process as follows:

- ABP 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 to the public at the conclusion of the process. The prospective applicant can comment on the record in writing or at the next meeting.
- Further information may be requested by ABP and public consultations may also be directed by the ABP.
- ABP may hold consultations in respect of the proposed development with other bodies.
- The holding of consultations does not prejudice ABP in any way and cannot be relied upon in the formal planning process or any legal proceedings.
- If the proposed development is considered to be strategic infrastructure, ABP will also advise the prospective applicant on considerations related to proper planning and sustainable development that may have a bearing on the decision and also the planning application procedures.
- In addition to definitions and thresholds set out in the Seventh Schedule, ABP also needs to consider the criteria set out in section 37A(2) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended.
- To conclude the process, the prospective applicant must put this in writing unless the Board of ABP considers that the proposed development is not strategic infrastructure.
- At closure, the planning inspector will submit a report to the Board of ABP.
- ABP will serve formal notice at the conclusion of the process as to whether or not the proposed development is strategic infrastructure along with identifying the prescribed bodies to be notified of the application. To facilitate the pre-application consultation process it may form a preliminary view at an earlier stage in the consultations as to whether the proposed development would likely constitute strategic infrastructure.

## **Proposed Development**

The proposed development comprises the following:

- Construction of a new quay wall extension to the existing Dinish Wharf on Dinish Island. This would increase the berthage length in the harbour by 216 metres and be located at the north west corner of Dinish Island.
- The reclamation of an area of c. 4,100 sq. metres (22,500 cubic metres of material).
- Dredging to a depth of -8 metres CD adjacent to the proposed quay and connection to the existing navigation channel. The total area of dredging is approximately 4.1 ha.
- Construction of 2 no. new breakwaters plus a new rock armour revetment.

## **Prospective Applicant's Presentation**

The prospective applicant referred to the submission, dated 6th March, 2017, in response to a request for further information issued by the Board on 9th February, 2017. This request clarified that the Board had concluded that the appropriate legislative provisions for consideration of the request was s.37B of the Planning and Development Act and not s.181 which relates to State development.

The following is a summary of the main points made by the prospective applicant under the headings referred to in s.37(2)(b) of the Act and the ensuing discussion.

### Economic / Social Impact

The prospective applicant stated that the proposed development could be considered to have significant local economic and social importance; however, it is not considered to be of strategic economic or social importance at a national or regional level having regard to the following:

- It is to provide for existing traffic using Castletownbere Harbour. The existing facilities create congestion on both the seaside and landside. The increased berthage will provide for safer and more efficient operational practices within the harbour to serve existing traffic and would reduce congestion of berthing on the town side of the port.
- The development would facilitate the relocation of vessels out of the town side of the port and the economic development of the town. It is stated that the relocation and redevelopment / reuse of the town side for other commercial activities would prevent the intensification of the use of the port overall.
- Larger, modern vessels can be accommodated.
- The increase in domestic landings is modest having regard to low base level.
- Commercial freight traffic is an incidental service and at a very low level and is one of the lowest of any port in the country. There may be a significant

percentage increase in this traffic but the levels are small. (see Table 2 on page 5 of submission received on 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2017).

- Traditionally freight traffic connected with the importation of coral for animal feedstuffs but that this is now in decline.
- The scope for increased commercial traffic very limited by the road network. There are also restrictions in terms of water supply.
- Domestic landings are restricted by fish quotas, which are unlikely to change.
- Dinish Island is used for fish processing but is limited in size.
- The port is not in competition with other ports.
- 80% of existing fish landings are for direct foreign export which are transported on by road via refrigerated units, usually via Rosslare.
- Some additional local employment will be provided. The number of harbour employees is projected to rise from 7 to 11 (see Table 2 of submission received 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2017).
- Local spending on supplies and services is expected to increase by 9%

#### National and Regional Policy

With regard to the National Spatial Strategy, the prospective applicant stated that Castletownbere is identified as having a local or county level importance in terms of its economic and service function. The NSS does not have any specific policies or objectives in relation to the development of Castletownbere.

The prospective applicant stated the proposed development is supported by the objectives of Southwest Regional Planning Guidelines as it seeks to enhance the potential of commercial fishing; however, the potential impacts which may arise are considered to be of local influence.

Castletownbere is designated as a Port of Regional Significance in the National Ports Policy; however, the prospective applicant states that this classification is due to the incidental commercial traffic using the port rather than having an actual regional importance for commercial freight traffic. Castletownbere had the second lowest number of vessel arrivals in 2011 of any port receiving commercial traffic (table 1.1 National Ports Policy, 2013) which reinforces its role as a fisheries centre.

#### Planning Authority Effects

- The prospective applicant is of the opinion that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on more than one planning authority.
- No fisheries traffic is being redirected from other Irish harbours.
- The increased port traffic is estimated to be largely foreign derived demand.
- There will be some increase in road traffic going to Rosslare Harbour.

Finally, the prospective applicant highlighted the similarities between this case and the refurbishment of Berth 2 of Greenore Port, which was considered not to be strategic infrastructure (case reference PC0226).

## **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 (PC0232, PC0234 and PC0237), and would revert to the prospective applicant if any further issues arose necessitating a further meeting.

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**Anne Marie O'Connor**  
**Assistant Director of Planning**

**April 2017**