



Case Reference / Description	05.PC0237 Development of a Quay Extension at Killybegs Fishery Harbour Centre, Co. Donegal.		
Case Type	Section 37B		
1st / 2nd / 3rd Meeting	1st Meeting		
Date	6 th April 2017	Start Time	11.07 am
Location	Offices of An Bord Pleanála	End Time	11.40 am
Chairperson	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

John McHale, Assistant Chief Engineer (DAFM)
Philip Newell, Grade 2 Engineer (DAFM)
Noel Ó Murchú, Grade 1 Engineer (DAFM)
Noel Clancy, Chief Engineer, Marine Engineering Division, (DAFM)
Gavin Nichol, Doran Consulting
Diana Thompson, MBA Planning

Introduction

The representatives of An Bord Pleanála welcomed the prospective applicant and introductions were made. The ABP representatives acknowledged the letter dated 27th October 2016 formally requesting pre-application consultations with ABP, and the subsequent documentation received on 23th December 2016 and 6th 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 general procedures in relation to the pre-application consultation process are 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.

The representatives of ABP stated that it would be of benefit to ABP if the prospective applicant's representatives could briefly talk through the latest submission dated March 2017, particularly in relation to the paragraphs under section 37A of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

The submission dated 6th March, 2017 was 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.

Prospective Applicant's Presentation

The prospective applicant is of the opinion that the circumstances of this proposed development are very similar to the refurbishment of Berth 2 of Greenore Port, (case reference PC0226) which, in a Board Direction dated 22nd November, 2016, was considered not to be strategic infrastructure by ABP.

Proposed Development

The prospective applicant submitted a draft drawing, 'Existing Quay Lengths', to illustrate the proposed development. It was stated that the principal function of the development is to allow existing peak congestion to be relieved by the provision of additional berthage which would relieve the pressure on Blackrock Pier to the north and, therefore, provide operational and health and safety benefits. Photographs of existing use of Blackrock Pier was presented to illustrate overcrowding at this location. The proposed quay extension would provide for stern on berthage which would facilitate maintenance.

The following is a summary of the proposed works as illustrated on the submitted drawing 'Existing Quay Lengths'.

- A 54 metre quay extension, corresponding to a 4% increase in the total existing length of berthage is proposed, to be located at the northern end of the existing quay. While the new quay is below the 100 metre threshold specified in the Seventh Schedule, it is noted that in the case of PC0226 (Greenore Port), the Board considered that refurbishment of an existing quay that was longer than 100 metres would trigger the threshold. Using the same logic, the proposed extension at Killybegs would result in the northern quay being 270 metres and the overall quay length (north and south) being 570 metres and that the threshold set out in the Seventh Schedule would therefore be exceeded.
- The dredging of an additional area immediately to the south of the proposed quay extension which would increase the draught available at the existing quay at Smooth Point. The length of this addition area is c.66 metres.
- The construction of 4 no. new mooring dolphins to be located at the northern end of the proposed quay extension.

- All dredging and disposal of marine seabed sediments will be the subject of an application for a dumping at sea permit from the EPA (for approximately 94,000 cubic metres). Stated that a waste permit also be required for c. 20,000 cubic metres of material that is contaminated with TBT.

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.

Economic / Social

The prospective applicant stated the following:

- Killybegs is primarily a fishing harbour. Most of the catch is processed in 12 factories situated in the hinterland of the harbour.
- In 2011 the port handled 90 commercial freight vessels which represents 0.7% of the total number of vessels arriving in Ireland that year.
- In 2011 the harbour handled 0.08% of Irish commercial freight.
- The commercial freight is mostly in connection with wind energy and the off-shore oil industry.
- No additional traffic is expected to use the harbour as a result of the proposed development. The rationale is to provide a safe environment for the maintenance and storage of boats which currently use Blackrock Pier.
- It is not good practice to mix leisure and commercial traffic at a port; the proposed development will allow Blackrock Pier to be used primarily for leisure.
- The largest fishing vessels operating in the Atlantic already use Killybegs, these would be accommodated more safely. The size of vessels using the harbour will not increase.
- The 1,500-2,000 tonne boats can be moved to a position where the draft is not compromised.
- The southern section of the quay is not favoured for use by fishing boats as it is less sheltered and can have 1-metre-high waves which cause wear and tear to boats.
- Stern on maintenance of boats could be facilitated. An upgrade of the quay-side electricity supply to boats would remove the need for boats to run their engines in the harbour.
- There will be no increase in the number of staff employed. It should; however, safeguard the existing jobs.
- Domestic landings are restricted by fish quotas, which are unlikely to change.
- It was noted that the port currently hosts cruise liners and that there are 11 no. liners booked in for the 2017 season. It was stated that the primary purpose of the proposed development was not the attraction of cruise ship traffic.

National or Regional Policy

With regard to the National Spatial Strategy, the prospective applicant stated that Killybegs is classified as a small sized town with an opportunity for urban strengthening, and as a major fishing port. The NSS does not have any specific policies or objectives in relation to the development of Killybegs.

The Border Regional Authority Planning Guidelines regard Killybegs as one of the most significant fishing ports in the region and its importance and development for the local economy is recognised.

Killybegs is designated as a Port of Regional Significance in the National Ports Policy; however, this classification is principally focused on the local area. The proposed development will not have any material effect on the function of the port or its position in the port hierarchy in the National Ports Policy.

Planning Authority Effects

- The modest scale of the proposed development means that it will not have a significant effect on more than one planning authority.
- No additional cargo will be transported beyond the Donegal County Council area.
- No fisheries traffic is being redirected from other Irish harbours.

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 PC0235), and would revert to the prospective applicant if any further issues arose necessitating a further meeting.

Anne Marie O'Connor
Assistant Director of Planning

April 2017