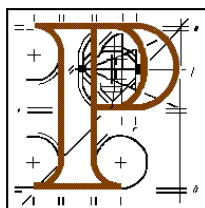


An Bord Pleanála



Inspector's Report.

Case Ref. No:	03. PC0225
Issue:	SID Pre-application – whether project is or is not strategic infrastructure development.
Proposed Development:	Proposed construction of new fire safety ground on north side of Runway 06-24 at the Secondary Radar Equipment site.
Location:	Shannon Airport, Shannon, Co Clare.
Applicants:	Shannon Airport Authority Ltd.
Planning Authority:	Clare County Council.
Inspector:	Philip Green.

1.0 Proposed Development.

1.1 Shannon Airport Authority intend to carry out the following works:

- Construction of new fire training ground on the north side of Runway 06-24 at the Secondary Radar Equipment (SRE) site. The fire training ground is to consist primarily of a simulated steel aircraft shell/fire training rig located on a concrete slab and fitted with a number of gas fires. Ancillary equipment will include a 160,000 litre water storage tank, cooling water supply and recirculation systems, 2 LPG gas storage tanks and control panel.
- The existing fire screen and engine rig which are fed by Jet A1 aviation fuel are to be relocated to the SRE site on a separate concrete slab from which contaminated run off will be drained into an in ground interceptor.
- It is stated that the works are required due to non compliance with aerodrome licensing requirements for appropriate training of Airport Rescue and Fire Fighting personnel principally in area of training in heat, smoke and humidity. Shannon Airport remains the only commercial airport in the State without such a facility. It is also required due to non-compliance with environmental requirements and that the current training ground occupies a site proposed for future hangar development.

1.2 Site location, site layout and site service plans for the above are submitted with the request.

1.3 It is stated that the works will be implemented on a phased basis over the next four years to spread the significant capital investment costs and to allow for the phased withdrawal from the current fire training ground. Three phases are proposed including Phase 1 (2016/17) equipment procurement and site preparation, Phase 2 (2018) installation of ancillary services and Phase 3 (2019) relocation of the fire screen and engine rig and ancillary equipment from the old fire training ground.

2.0 Applicant's case.

2.1 Although passenger numbers are below the two million instances of passenger use per annum the Airport is advised by local authority that it is the capacity capability that is relevant (up to 4.5 million terminal passengers). The Airport therefore is a facility as defined in the Act and is required to enter into pre application discussions.

2.2 No new critical infrastructure is proposed. The proposed development comprises in essence of a relocation and modernisation of an existing fire training facility. It would comprise of operational efficiencies (from an operating and environmental point of view) to airport infrastructure that is already in existence. It is not considered that these operational

efficiencies would in isolation be of strategic economic or social importance to the State or region or contribute substantially to the fulfilment of objectives in the National Spatial Strategy, Clare County Development Plan 2011-2017 or the Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022.

- 2.3** In isolation the proposed development will not have a significant effect on more than one planning authority.
- 2.4** Consultation made under provisions of s. 37(B) of the Act. It is not considered that any new critical infrastructure will be provided as part of the proposed development and the proposed development would comprise operational efficiencies and modernisation to existing infrastructure.

3.0 Legal Provisions.

- 3.1** Of relevance is the following class of development in the Seventh Schedule inserted into the Planning and Development Act 2000 by section 5 of the Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Act 2006:

Transport Infrastructure

2. Development comprising or for the purposes of any of the following:

An airport (with not less than 2 million instances of passenger use per annum) or any runway, taxiway, pier, car park, terminal or other facility or installation related to it (whether as regards passenger traffic or cargo traffic).

- 3.2** Section 37A(1) says that an application for permission for any development specified in the Seventh Schedule shall, if the following condition is satisfied, be made to the Board under section 37E and not to a planning authority. Section 37A (2) says

That condition is that, following consultation under section 37B, the Board serves on the prospective applicant a notice in writing that, in the opinion of the Board, the proposed development would, if carried out, fall within one or more of the following paragraphs, namely –

- (a) the development would be of strategic economic or social importance to the State or the region in which it would be situate,*
- (b) the development would contribute substantially to the fulfilment of any of the objectives in the National Spatial Strategy or in any regional spatial and economic strategy in force in respect of the area or areas in which the development would be situate,*
- (c) the development would have a significant effect on the area of more than one planning authority.*

4.0 Assessment.

- 4.1 I refer the Board to previous cases at Shannon including cases 03. PC144, 03.PC0160, 03.PC0163, 03.PC0164, 03. PC0167, 03. PC0173, 03. PC0177, 03. PC0183, 03. PC0193, 03. PC0194, 03. PC0197 and 03. PC0211. In all those pre application consultation cases despite falling passenger numbers it was accepted by the Board that Shannon Airport would constitute an airport for the purposes of definition under the Seventh Schedule.
- 4.2 I consider that the development proposed and works described can be classified as development comprising or for the purposes of a facility or installation associated with an airport with not less than 2 million instances of passenger use per annum. This development will form an important part of the airport's safety infrastructure and the Board should note the reasoning and purpose of the relocated and enhanced fire training facility. It would provide enhanced facilities related to an essential operational/emergency support service and in that sense it would facilitate the overall efficiency and functioning of the airport. I note also the (non specified) environmental benefits resulting. Notwithstanding this I do not however consider that the proposed works in themselves would satisfy any of the conditions contained in section 37A (2) (a), (b) or (c) of the Act. Therefore I conclude that this proposed development does not constitute a strategic infrastructure development.
- 4.3 I also draw the Board's attention to pre application consultation case 04. PC0188 for a similar proposal at Cork Airport for the relocation of the existing fire training facility which the Board determined did not constitute strategic infrastructure.

5.0 Recommendation.

- 5.1 I recommend that the Shannon Airport Authority Ltd. be informed that the proposed development at Shannon Airport consisting of the proposed construction of new fire safety ground on north side of Runway 06-24 at the Secondary Radar Equipment site as described on the plans and particulars received by An Bord Pleanala on 5th August 2016 does not fall within one or more of the paragraphs specified in the condition contained in section 37A (2) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, and consequently does not constitute strategic infrastructure development. A planning application should be made in the first instance to Clare County Council.

Philip Green,
Assistant Director of Planning.
5th September 2016