



**An
Bord
Pleanála**

Inspector's Report.

Case Ref. No:	06F PC0230.
Issue:	SID Pre-application – whether project is or is not strategic infrastructure development.
Proposed Development:	CHC search and rescue facility comprising a double hangar, office development and ancillary works.
Location:	Huntstown, Dublin Airport, Co. Dublin
Applicants:	CHC Ireland Limited.
Planning Authority:	Fingal County Council.
Inspector:	Philip Green.

1.0 Proposed Development.

1.1 Virtus Project Management on behalf of CHC Ireland has submitted this request for a pre application consultation. Attached with the request is an introductory letter, explanatory design statement and set of drawings illustrating the location, design and layout of the proposed development and statement indicating that the prospective applicants are of the opinion that the proposed development does not constitute strategic infrastructure.

1.2 The proposed development consists of:

- New double bay single storey hangar with floor area of 1228 sq.m. and attached 2 storey operational control unit, maintenance and staff facilities with total floor area of 762.5 sq.m. (combined floor area approx. 2000 sq.m.).
- Staff and visitor car park with 18 spaces to the front of the building
- Improved road access, realignment of landside/airside fence and associated landscape works
- Demolition of existing temporary membrane hangar (596 sq.m.) and existing 2 storey operational control units (272sq.m.)

1.3 The development is intended to provide replacement and permanent facilities for CHC Ireland who provide the Search and Rescue Services on behalf of the Irish Coast Guard. It is stated that the land is in the ownership of the DAA who have given consent for the development of these new facilities within their lands.

1.4 In the submitted Design Statement the prospective applicant sets out the context, purpose, construction, operation and design considerations for the propose development.

1.5 The position and operation of the hangar is determined by the functional requirements of helicopter movement paths and required working space and requirement to stay operational until the new development is completed. Future airport developments are safeguarded with the main personal entrance on to the R108. On operation 6 persons will be present and the facility will be manned 24hours a day with maximum of 12-15 persons at any one time.

2.0 Applicant's case.

2.1 Proposed development not considered to meet any of the criteria listed within the Seventh Schedule. Prospective applicants are however seeking clarification from the Board at the request of the DAA.

2.2 CHC are an independent operator located at the airport. There are obvious advantages to CHC and the DAA having the search and rescue base for the east coast located at Dublin Airport ie improved

response times and air traffic clearance procedures however the hangar base could also operate independently away from the airport.

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:

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 it 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 Dublin Airport is an 'airport' falling within the class defined in the Seventh Schedule (see 3.1 above). Given the nature and purpose of the proposed development it is debatable whether the proposed development falls within the definition for airport categories of strategic transport infrastructure as defined above. For example I consider it unlikely that the majority of the SAR service would be in conjunction with and related to passenger or cargo traffic associated with the airport (albeit that some such emergency might arise) and thus the proposed development itself might not be considered to constitute strategic infrastructure. However it might also be considered to constitute an incidental 'facility or installation related to the airport' in terms of the nature of the activity and the associated movement of aircraft notwithstanding that it is an entirely compatible and consistent use within the airport lands. Further, there are stated operational

benefits from its location within the airport grounds even though the prospective applicants have indicated that the activity could operate independently away from the airport.

- 4.2** The Service's continued efficient and effective operation is clearly of national and regional social significance and importance in terms of public health and safety. In these respects it might reasonably be deemed to constitute strategic infrastructure within the terms of at least s. 37A(2)(a).
- 4.3** Notwithstanding this the emergency SAR facility is already provided in temporary facilities at this general location of the airport. I consider that this is material to this determination. In addition the physical works proposed are not substantial in their own right. The upgrading to permanent replacement facilities would in my opinion not, on balance, be such to constitute strategic infrastructure justifying a direct application to An Bord Pleanála. The Board will recall similar types of circumstances arising under the separate provisions of s. 182E for electricity transmission related development (such as sub stations) where prospective applicants have been advised that replacement locations and/or designs for already permitted sub stations in certain circumstances would not constitute strategic infrastructure. The proposed development in this case seeks to replace the existing temporary facilities and in such circumstances therefore, I agree with the prospective applicant that this proposed development does not constitute a strategic infrastructure development.
- 4.4** The Board should note that previous application and pre application consultation requests in the vicinity of this site (lands to the south) including 06F PA0014 (for a new control tower), PC0217 (for widening access junction from regional road and staff car park with 30 spaces), 06F PC0094 (extension to existing hangar) and 06F. PC0090 (installation of portacabins). All these other pre apps were deemed not to constitute strategic infrastructure. Files are attached to the current request file.

Recommendation.

I recommend that CHC Ireland Limited be informed that the proposed development consisting of a CHC search and rescue facility comprising a double hangar, office development and ancillary works at Huntstown, Dublin Airport, Co. Dublin as set out in the plans and particulars lodged with the Board on the 30th September 2016 being a replacement development for the existing search and rescue facility located and currently operating from the airport does not constitute strategic infrastructure as defined in the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, and that a planning application should be made in the first instance to Fingal County Council.

Philip Green,
Assistant Director of Planning.
14th October 2016.