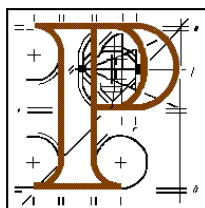


An Bord Pleanála



Inspector's Report.

Case Ref. No: 03. PC0245

Issue: SID Pre-application – whether project is or is not strategic infrastructure development.

Proposed Development: Proposed covered walkways.

Location: Shannon Airport, Shannon, Co Clare.

Applicants: Shannon Airport Authority DAC.

Planning Authority: Clare County Council.

Inspector: Philip Green.

1.0 Proposed Development.

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

- 104 m. of open sided walkway through centre of car park.
- 27 m. of open sided walkway at rear of taxi rank
- 90m. of lean to open sided walkway wrapping around southern and eastern side of airport building known as Wings 4 & 5.

1.2 It is stated that the development is required as airport passengers using car hire pick up facilities are exposed to the weather while checking and collecting their hire cars prior to departure from the airport. Matter has been raised at the Airport Operators Committee meeting forum and a number of competing airports have provided similar facilities.

1.3 Drawings are provided which identify the works which include steel work (powder coated dark grey) and triple walled lexan sheeting roof covering to match existing covered walkways. Open sided walkways will be 2.5m. in height and 1.8m. wide and open sided lean to walkway will be 2.75m. in height and 1.8m. wide.

2.0 Applicant's case.

2.1 Shannon Airport is Ireland's third busiest airport and during 2016 1.748 million passengers travelled through the airport. 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 an extension of two previous covered walkway developments. It would comprise of operational efficiencies (from a customer service perspective) 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, draft Clare County Development Plan 2017-2023 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 including improved facilities for airport passengers and improved levels of customer service.

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, 03. PC0211 and 03.PC0225. In all those pre application consultation cases despite cited 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 a

part of the airport's ancillary passenger service infrastructure. It would provide enhanced facilities in this respect. Notwithstanding this I do not however consider that the extent and nature of 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 would in particular draw the Board's attention to previous pre app consultation cases 03.PC0194, 03. PC0177 and 03. PC0160 and other requests for minor development works at Shannon Airport which have been determined not to constitute strategic infrastructure.

5.0 Recommendation.

- 5.1 I recommend that the Shannon Airport Authority DAC be informed that the proposed development at Shannon Airport consisting of proposed covered walkways as described on the plans and particulars received by An Bord Pleanala on 19th April 2017 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.
24th May 2017