

S.37

File With

## SECTION 131 FORM

Appeal No

ABP— 314485-22

Defer Re O/H

☐

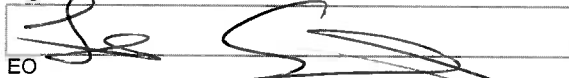
Having considered the contents of the submission dated/received 20/12/24  
from Chambers Ireland I recommend that section 131 of the Planning  
and Development Act, 2000 ~~be~~ not be invoked at this stage for the following reason(s):

no w

Section 131 not to be invoked at this stage.

Section 131 to be invoked — allow 2/4 weeks for reply.

Signed



EO

Date

24/12/24

Signed



SEO/SAO

Date



M

Please prepare BP — Section 131 notice enclosing a copy of the attached submission.

To



Task No



Allow 2/3/4 weeks

BP

Signed



EO

Date



Signed



AA

Date





An  
Bord  
Pleanála

## Planning Appeal Online Observation

Online Reference  
NPA-OBS-004120

BP40 10 issue  
✓ 24/12

### Online Observation Details

Contact Name  
James Kiernan

Lodgement Date  
20/12/2024 10:25:06

Case Number / Description  
314485

### Payment Details

Payment Method  
Online Payment

Cardholder Name  
James Kiernan

Payment Amount  
€50.00

### Processing Section

S.131 Consideration Required

☒ Yes — See attached 131 Form

☐ N/A — Invalid

Signed

*Cathy Conlon*

EO

Date

23/12/24

### Fee Refund Requisition

Please Arrange a Refund of Fee of

€

Lodgement No

LDG— 07 8950-24

Reason for Refund

Documents Returned to Observer

☐ Yes ☐ No

Request Emailed to Senior Executive Officer for Approval

☐ Yes ☐ No

Signed

EO

Date

### Finance Section

Payment Reference

ch\_3QY3OIB1CW0EN5FC1SbAZYHC

Checked Against Fee Income Online

EO/AA (Accounts Section)

Amount

€

Refund Date

Authorised By (1)

SEO (Finance)

Authorised By (2)

Chief Officer/Director of Corporate Affairs/SAO/Board  
Member

Date

Date



**Chambers  
Ireland**  
Advancing business together



## **Draft Decision regarding Dublin Airport North Runway: ABP-314485-22**

**Submission by**

**Chambers Ireland**

**11 St. Stephen's Green**

**Dublin 2**

**December 2024**

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## Key Points

- Dublin Airport is crucial for Ireland's connectivity and competitiveness due to its scale and location.
- The Draft Decision by An Bord Pleanála which proposes a 60% reduction in nighttime flights will harm connectivity and competitiveness on the island of Ireland.
- Chambers Ireland supports a noise quota system, which encourages the use of quieter aircraft at night and enhances connectivity without reducing capacity.
- The proposed reduction in night flights could negatively impact early morning flight slots that are crucial for business travel due to Ireland's time difference with continental Europe.
- Restrictions on night flights could lead to increased costs for airlines and reduced flight connections, impacting trade and business opportunities.

## About Chambers Ireland

Chambers Ireland is an all-island business organisation with a unique geographical reach. Our members are the Chambers of Commerce in the cities and towns throughout the country – active in every constituency. Each of our member Chambers is central to their local business community and all seek to promote thriving local economies that can support sustainable cities and communities.

Our Network has pledged to advocate for and support the advancement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As SDG Champions, we use the Goals as a framework to identify policy priorities and communicate our recommendations. We have a particular focus on five of the goals encompassing decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11), Gender Equality (SDG 5), Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure (SDG 9) and climate action (SDG 13).<sup>1</sup> In the context of the current consultation, SDGs 8 and 9 are the most relevant.

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<sup>1</sup> The Chambers Ireland SDGs. Available at: <https://chambers.ie/sustainable-development-goals/>

## General

The affiliated Chamber Network recognises the importance of sustainable transport infrastructure. Specifically, we are fully in favour of infrastructure<sup>2</sup> that increases connectivity and enhances our competitiveness as a small open economy. Connectivity is not only critical for the movement of people; it is essential for trade and a key component in facilitating businesses to access new markets and ensuring the smooth functioning of their supply chains.

In the context of the draft decision ABP-314485-22, our position on the North runway is framed in these terms.<sup>3</sup> Dublin Airport is central Ireland's economic position as a small open economy at the heart of Europe. Due to our location as an island, it is critical that we have strong connectivity with Britain, Europe and the wider world. Being the principal international gateway on the island of Ireland for trade, investment and tourism, Dublin Airport has the scale to provide a level of connectivity which provides a unique service to Irish business. This should not be forgotten in any decision regarding the North Runway.

Competitiveness is a major issue for both Ireland and the European Union. The newly-finalised European Commission – following on from the Draghi and Letta reports – will place a strong

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<sup>2</sup> For example, <https://chambers.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/CycleConnects-Submission-Nov-2022.pdf>; <https://chambers.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Chambers-Ireland-Submission-on-the-All-Island-Strategic-Rail-Consultation.pdf>; <https://chambers.ie/press-releases/chambers-ireland-welcomes-the-all-island-strategic-rail-review/>;

<sup>3</sup> See further previous submissions by Chambers Ireland regarding the North Runway: <https://chambers.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Chambers-Ireland-submission-on-the-north-runway.pdf>; <https://chambers.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Chambers-Ireland-Fingal-CoCo-North-Runway-Submission.pdf>



emphasis on competitiveness over the coming mandate.<sup>4</sup> The Draghi report is based on the idea of 'clean technology competitiveness' where a transition to greater efficiencies can be made alongside technological change.

Chambers Ireland's view of how Dublin Airport should develop is likewise based on the idea that technological change – through creating a framework which incentivises the use of quieter aircraft at nighttime – can be achieved alongside maintaining the capacity that the Irish economy requires. An Bord Pleanála's (ABP) draft decision makes the mistake of combining implementation of a noise quota system – which has the potential to be very effective – with an injurious reduction in the overall effectiveness of Dublin airport.

## Draft Decision

The Draft Decision of An Bord Pleanála will, if implemented, lead to a reduction in nighttime flights by 60%.<sup>5</sup> In September planners ruled in favour of the DAA to replace the cap on night-time aircraft movement at the airport with a noise quota system. ABP has accepted this but has argued that in addition – there must be a reduction in the total number of flights per night. It updates Condition 5 of the original 2007 grant of planning permission for the North Runway. This condition originally stated that the average number of night-time aircraft movements at the airport shall not exceed 65 per night (between 23.00 and 07.00). The Draft Decision would limit the number of movements to an annual average of 35 per night (11.30-07.00).

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<sup>4</sup> For Chambers Ireland's perspective on the reports: <https://chambers.ie/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Chambers-Ireland-EU-Priorities-2024.pdf> pages 9-11.

<sup>5</sup> Inspector's Report ABP-314485-22. (2024). [www.pleanala.ie](http://www.pleanala.ie), 64 Marlborough St Dublin D01 V902 Dublin : An Bord Pleanála, p.189. Available at: <https://www.pleanala.ie/anbordpleanala/media/abp/cases/reports/314/r314485.pdf?r=273113182869>



This could mean an average of between 41-42 per night during the summer and between 26 - 27 per night during winter or an average of c.99 per night during the 92- busy summer period and c.14 per night. A replacement of the blunt instrument of cap on night-time flights with a noise quota is desirable because if implemented as part of a wider effective policy, it would enhance Ireland's connectivity and competitiveness. The introduction of noise quotas in addition to a further reduction in the number of night-time flights will harm what it was intended to enhance. The noise quota system is an industry-standard approach for managing aircraft noise at night at many international airports. This system will encourage the use of quieter aircraft at night-time – reducing disruption to neighboring communities and also reducing the need to avoid red-eye flights. Chambers Ireland supports this position as it would ensure that the overall effects of night noise at Dublin Airport are less than envisaged under the planning permission granted in 2007. This would avoid the need to reduce the capacity of morning and evening flight slots and safeguard the established connections that Dublin Airport has to European and international destinations – and ultimately protect Irish business competitiveness globally.

A combination of a noise quota with an overall reduction in number of permissible flights per night means that the benefits of avoiding a reduction in capacity for business are dissolved. As a result our competitiveness and connectivity are further reduced. Connectivity is essential in the international marketplace. It is of fundamental importance to be able to easily access markets and destinations. As a small, open economy, Ireland is crucially dependent on its air links to facilitate business and trading. Air access is critical for Ireland's economic development. An InterVISTAS report in 2019<sup>6</sup> found that Dublin Airport's connectivity grew by 59% in the last five years, making it the second fastest growing major airport in Europe. Any change to this has critical

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<sup>6</sup> 6 InterVISTAS (2019), Dublin Airport Economic Impact Study 2019. Available at:  
[https://www.dublinairport.com/docs/default-source/2016-economic-impact-assessment/economic-impact-report\\_2019.pdf?sfvrsn=6e7767da\\_6](https://www.dublinairport.com/docs/default-source/2016-economic-impact-assessment/economic-impact-report_2019.pdf?sfvrsn=6e7767da_6)

and far-reaching implications for the wider economy as the value of exports with well-connected countries is typically five to six times<sup>7</sup> that of trade with poorly connected countries.

Competitiveness will also be negatively impacted by the proposals in the Draft Decision. Early morning flights between 6am and 8am are already the most popular slots of the day in Dublin Airport. The advantages of having flexible operations during this peak morning flight window is essential for the economy given Ireland's one hour time difference with continental Europe. A reduction in the number of night flights will see businesses losing the benefit of being able to return employees to Ireland in the same day as they travelled to another European country. This risks reducing the number of business travelers considerably.

Additionally, the restrictions on late arrivals and early departures that these conditions will result increases the costs for the client airlines that wish to use Dublin Airport. This is because their planes will need to spend less time in the air and more time on the ground. If planes are to be in position for 7am flights, they will need to have arrived back to Ireland at least 8 hours before, whereas the 10pm-12am slot has previously enabled the carriers who are based in Dublin Airport to return that night to operate the next day. As a result, airlines will be forced to base aircraft in other countries, meaning that Irish travelers would undoubtedly experience a reduction in the number of flight connections along many routes. This will ultimately negatively impact trade and the associated business opportunities.

## Aircraft Noise (Dublin Airport) Regulation Act 2019

ABP must now be requested to fundamentally reexamine their process and decision to ensure that the correct process is followed. This includes ensuring proper consideration of the

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

requirement for the above operating restrictions and noise mitigation measures to be set against the adopted Noise Abatement Objective (NAO).

Section 9.7 of the 2019 Act states:

“[m]easures or a combination of measures taken in accordance with the Aircraft Noise Regulation, this Act and the Act of 2000 for the airport shall not be more restrictive than is necessary in order to achieve the noise abatement objective”.

The practical impact of this section is that if ABP are of the view that the NAO will be achieved by the existing noise mitigation measures or operating restrictions, which elements of the supporting documents appear to suggest, **no additional noise mitigation measures or operating restrictions are permitted.**

The ABP ‘Draft Decision’ and Inspector’s Report do not properly engage with the NAO, and the Draft Decision makes no clear determination on whether ANCA’s RD meets the NAO. This is a critical error in the process undertaken by ABP. Following this, if ABP determined that additional or modified noise mitigation measures or operating restrictions were required (such as those proposed to be imposed by conditions 3(e), 5 and 6), the Balanced Approach must be applied by ABP to identify and select possible mitigation measures. This has not occurred.

In conclusion, the new draft conditions introduced by ABP are non-compliant with EU Regulation 598 and the 2019 Act.

In our view the proposed restriction on North Runway use as set out in condition (3e) and proposed movement limit as set out in condition 5 are neither justified nor required to achieve the NAO, and would have a catastrophic impact on operations at Dublin Airport. We therefore request that they are removed.