

An
Bord
Pleanála

Planning Appeal Online Observation

Online Reference: (NPA-OBS-
000752)

Online Observation Details

Contact Name:	Mags Geaney La Rocque
Lodgement Date:	11/04/2022 13:08:49
Case Number / Description:	312981

Payment Details

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Mags Geaney La Rocque
14 Toureen terrace,
Passage West,
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An Bord Pleanála,
64 Marlborough Street,
Dublin 1.

11-04-2022

RE: Observation on PL04.312981 – Belvelly Port Facility, Marino (Townland), Marino Point, Cobh, Co. Cork (Cork County Council ref. 20/6955)

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to make this observation on the appeal of Cllr Marcia D'Alton in relation to the development which Gouldings and the Belvelly Marino Development Company propose at Marino Point.

As a resident of Passage West, my sincere concerns about the proposed development at Marino Point are described below. This town of 5,800 people is one that understands shipping and the impact of living close to a port. Although I acknowledge that Marino Point is zoned for industrial development and that the proposed Gouldings/Port of Cork move from Centre Park Road and the City Quays could be good for Cork City, this cannot be at the expense of the quality of life of Passage West residents. Previous activity at Marino Point had severe and long-lasting impacts on the development of Passage West. This cannot be allowed again. It is therefore critical that the planning application would be honest in its assessment of potential impact on Passage West and would employ the best of modern technology and monitoring to minimise those impacts.

This is one of many emails I have sent to complaints at Port of Cork, alongside many, many phone calls also to them for the last few years. After multiple complaints from the residents, David Browne, Business Development Support Manager, Port of Cork responded to this email and all my other emails of complaint that followed. He contacted us, the residents, by email to warn us of the dates and times that ships were berthing at Marino Point. Some ships were turning off the noise but again some weren't. So we were left with the situation of knowing when the ships were arriving and departing, which changed all the time anyway, so the noisy ships continued to wreak havoc with our sleep. We have lived here for 12 years and there has always been marine traffic, transient and passing through. However, there were no noisy ships berthing at Marino Point, making horrendous noise through the night keeping us awake. This is noise pollution and having invested in our homes financially, what can we do? Nothing... if Port of Cork doesn't take action and be accountable to the residents of Passage West. Cork Harbour should be for all citizens to enjoy. Marino Point is too close to residential homes for the operations that are being carried out there during the night by berthing ships.

Complaints@portofcork.ie
04/09/2021

Dear Port of Cork,

I am emailing you at 6am from my house on Toureen Terrace, Passage West. Unfortunately, our household has been kept awake yet again by a ship docked in Marino Point. I rang the Gardai about the noise and was told to ring Port of Cork. Sadly, the residents here are doing the night shift along

side the 24 hr Port Operations workers. Sleep is a basic human right, we have all invested in our homes and yet it seems, though Port of Cork is aware of the multiple complaints, nothing has been done. This weekend the 3rd and 4th of September 2021 of being kept awake by the constant humming of the ships engines or generators, or whatever part of the ship that constantly makes noise, is an exact replica of last weekend 27th and 28th of August 2021. On the 28th of August 2021, I rang Port of Cork in the early hours. I was ringing to report the noise of the particular ship that was docked at Marino Point since the Thursday 26th of August 2021, you can imagine being told yet again that he could only log the complaint, our family were at the end of our tether. Being kept awake 4 nights in a row will do that to a person. I said we are awake all night and yet have to go to school and work and it is unacceptable. Marino Point is so close to Toureen Terrace, with double glazing, windows closed, with shutters, ear plugs, etc the noise of the ship / ships is incessant. I said to Kevin the Port of Cork should be ashamed of itself for causing so much distress to the residents of Passage West by preventing them from sleeping due to the noise pollution from the ships. This problem of sleep deprivation due to the Port of Cork allowing ships to dock noisily through out the night, so near to Toureen Terrace, so near to residential areas is an ongoing problem that is extremely stressful. Being kept awake 4 nights in a row is no joke and is very bad for our health. We pay our taxes and are law abiding citizens and surely Port of Cork has responsibilities to ensure their operations do not harm the residents of the harbour, Mags Geaney La Rocque

1. Noise from jetty operations at night-time

Marino Point is only 500 metres from some homes in Passage West. Also, because Passage West slopes steeply up from the waterfront, many of the homes on the Passage West hills, although appearing to be at a distance from Marino Point, are actually remarkably close as the crow flies. Noise at Marino Point is heard clearly at both low and higher altitudes in Passage West. The narrow body of water that separates Marino Point from Passage West does not absorb sound. As is commonly known, sound travels over water. This is our experience in Passage West.

Operational noise from Marino Point is not such a concern during the day when the busyness of life has its own range of sound. It is however a very grave concern during the night. The Port of Cork says that it is a 24/7/365 port. They say that although they try to carry out their shipping operations during the day, there will be times when either due to weather or shipping schedules, it will be necessary to berth and load/offload ships at night. The impact of the noise and vibration from ships being guided into Marino Point by tugs at night with their collective engines running either forward or astern as the ship is manoeuvred alongside the jetty cannot be underestimated. This kind of night-time noise is not described in the planning application. It is essential that it is evaluated and its impact is minimised. When a ship is manoeuvring in the river, it can be as near as 350-400 metres from the Passage West waterfront.

2. Noise from ships' generators at night-time

When a ship is alongside the jetty, its generators run through the night. The generators run even when the ship's engines are off and when there is no loading/unloading. The generators provide the power that is essential for the ship's crew to live comfortably. However ironically, the noise from these generators can make a night's sleep very uncomfortable in Passage West. Their sound is like a low rumbling that seems to penetrate the walls of a home. The impact of generators at night was not mentioned in the planning application yet it is this impact that is most feared in Passage West. The planning application suggests that up to 100 ships will berth at Marino Point each year and that each will take 1-2 days to load/offload. In the case of fertiliser ships, offloading may take longer because it is dependent on dry weather. The implication for Passage West is that generators are likely to be running at the jetty on most nights of the week. It is essential that the impact of these generators is evaluated and that disturbance to Passage West residents is minimised.

3. Water quality in Lough Mahon

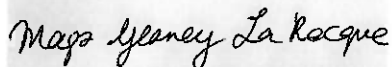
Passage West's greatest asset is its waterfront location on Cork Harbour. The waterside greenway running from Hop Island to Passage West is one of the most popular amenities in South Cork. When IFI was operating at Marino Point, the water in Lough Mahon was eutrophic. Since the closure of Lough Mahon, the treatment of sewerage from Cork City and the recent construction of the Lower Harbour sewerage scheme, Lough Mahon has become progressively cleaner. But it remains under pressure. At the moment, Lough Mahon is at risk of not meeting its water quality objectives. The heritage and future of our town is inextricably linked to Cork Harbour and it is vital for us that water quality would not be affected by the reintroduction of fertilisers to Marino Point. We want to see the best of technology employed by the proposed development to ensure that even under adverse conditions there is no loss of fertiliser material from ships, from handling on the quayside, from the ship to shore transfer operations or from the proposed Gouldings facility.

4. Responsibility for the proposed development

What is proposed in this planning application is the first step in the development of a portside industrial park with multiple operators. I ask the Board to define who will be responsible for impacts from that park. If a night-time activity at the jetty is causing disturbance in Passage West and I ring the Port of Cork to complain, I do not want to be told that the ship is servicing Gouldings and so has nothing to do with the Port. I want to know that I can connect with someone who will have the authority to take positive steps to resolve my issue. If it is evident that bulk unloading at the Marino Point quayside is causing material loss into the water and I ring the Port of Cork to complain, I do not want to be told that each jetty user is responsible for their own quayside cleanliness. If a ship is expected late at night, it is not one bit helpful that Cork County Council's Environment Department would be notified. It is we in Passage West, Marino Point's nearest neighbours, who need to be notified. Who will take responsibility for doing this? It is vital that one defined body would have responsibility for environmental impact and community liaison so that two-way communication can effectively be established between the proposed Belvelly Port Facility and residents in Passage West.

I ask the Board to please give consideration to my very real concerns as outlined. The relevant fee of €50 accompanies this observation.

Yours,



Mags Geaney La Rocque



Aoife La Rocque (Daughter)

