

The Secretary
An Bord Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1

Re: PA 0033 Galway Harbour Extension

Dear Sir/ Madam,

I refer to the above mentioned proposed Galway Harbour Extension. Fáilte Ireland welcomes this proposed development which it is considered could contribute significantly to the development of marine tourism in the area.

At present, marine tourism in Ireland contributes significantly to the tourism economy. Like tourism in general however, it has the potential to contribute even further. It is estimated that in 2011, marine tourism represented 10% of total tourism revenue – some (€547m). This is when we aggregate across all water-based activities, islands, coastal walks, amenities, etc. Given the correct development strategy, it is reasonable to aspire to doubling marine tourism's share of total tourism revenue by 2020. This would mean that the sector could ultimately have a 20% share - generating some €1.4bn in revenue (ref *Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth- An Integrated Marine Plan for Ireland*).

How our visitors access and engage with the coastline and marine environment is very significant. For the majority of visitors, access to the coastline is from the land. Therefore a range of both sea-to-land, but also land-to sea solutions and opportunities must be provided for our visitors also. This can range across water-based activities such as surfing, sailing, kayaking, wildlife watching etc., to coastal walks, attractions and services. It is considered that this proposal will allow greater access for both locals and visitors alike and will support access for land to sea and sea to land activities.

In relation to Cruise tourism specifically, the number of Cruise line ships coming to Ireland has grown over the last number of years. The sector is growing worldwide and international demand for the product remains strong. In 2010 Fáilte Ireland conducted a survey for industry partners in collaboration with Cruise Ireland. The survey gathered information on passenger numbers, satisfaction, and behaviour in the port destination. Industry stakeholders in Ireland were also surveyed to gather insights on potential, development needs and future trends. In-depth interviews were conducted with the big five cruise line companies worldwide. The consensus is that Ireland is poised for growth and development. Therefore the inclusion of facilities within this application which seek to improve the attractiveness and experience of Galway as a cruise tourism destination can only be welcomed.



Fáilte Ireland

National Tourism Development Authority

The close proximity of the proposed Galway Harbour Extension to Galway City and the amenities and facilities therein, is a position aspect of the proposed development, providing cruise ship visitors with a wide range of things to see and do on a visit to Galway. Galway City is also located on the newly launched Wild Atlantic Way, thereby providing good access to Connemara and the wider hinterland for the touring visitor.

We therefore respectfully request that An Bord Pleánala takes our comments in to consideration when reaching a decision on this application.

Yours sincerely,

Eoin McDonnell

Projects Officer

Destinations Development