



HEAD OFFICE:
ORANMORE, GALWAY, IRELAND.
 TEL: (091) 484800 / 794650
 FAX: (091) 794675
 Email: info@coldchon.ie
 Web: www.coldchon.ie

SLIGO OFFICE:
DEEPWATER QUAY, SLIGO.
 TEL: (071) 9161952
 FAX: (071) 9169361

TECHNOLOGY LEADERS IN THE MANUFACTURE OF CATIONIC BITUMEN EMULSIONS & MACADAM BINDERS

An Bord Pleanála
 64 Marlborough Street,
 Dublin 1.

AN BORD PLEANÁLA
 Received: 26/2/14
 Fee: €250
 Receipt No. B123359

Friday, 21 February 2014

AN BORD PLEANÁLA
 TIME _____ BY post
 26 FEB 2014
 LTR-DATED _____ FROM ✓
 PL _____

Re: Planning Ref 61.PA.0033

A chara,

I am writing to you to support the very welcome news that Galway Harbour Company has applied to An Bord Pleanála for a much needed extension to the harbour facilities in Galway.

Cold Chon supplies bitumen to the road construction industry employing almost 100 staff in the West of Ireland. In 1997, the Company took the strategic decision to build a Bitumen Storage Terminal in the Galway Harbour Enterprise Park and at start up this terminal had a storage capacity of 6,000 tonnes.

The ability to import bitumen directly into Galway by ship has brought considerable benefit to not only Cold Chon, but to Galway and the region as a whole. This considerable investment highlights our commitment to local jobs and the local economy.

To emphasise this commitment, since start-up we have continued to invest in & expand the capacity at our terminal in Galway, and this currently stands at 20,000 tonnes. Furthermore, we have secured planning permission for an additional 12,000 tonnes capacity, and it is envisaged that this will come into operation in tandem with the port expansion. Should planning permission for the port expansion be refused, we do not intend to proceed with the proposed terminal expansion with the consequent impact on job security and business growth.

Prior to building our facility in Galway docks, bitumen had to be hauled by road from Dublin. The consequent removal of those trucks off our national road network has benefited the entire community, through the reduction in carbon emissions, traffic volumes and congestion, and other environmental impacts. Safety on our roads has also been enhanced.

Since 1998, we have imported a very considerable quantity of bitumen by ship into Galway, with all the economic benefit that that brings to all of the various stakeholders. However the restriction on the size of the ship that can enter the dock gates, as well as the time delay incurred due to having to wait for high water to berth, has placed an undue burden on our operations and threatens the very viability of our business.

It is not solely a case of the transportation costs being the only concern to us: obviously larger ships with no time delay in berthing would dramatically reduce the cost per tonne into Galway.

However, something we see as equally important is the consistency of supply of bitumen. This is something that has become increasingly volatile in recent years, and is a matter of grave concern to us from a strategic point of view. Ships in the North Western Europe (NWE) Trade become difficult to source especially during summer months due to the high demand for these vessel types, and naturally this coincides with our busiest period for road maintenance.

Directors: L. Henry, J. Killeen, L. Talbot
 Registered in Ireland, No. 8588





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In addition to this, the actual availability of bitumen itself is also becoming very erratic. It is for these reasons that we are planning to be in a position to carry a larger buffer stock in our terminal in Galway. This can only be made possible if the expansion of the harbour goes ahead facilitating the larger vessels. The knock-on effect of all this uncertainty is that not alone the cost per tonne is increased, but more importantly the consistency of supply is threatened.

With the extension of the harbour it will allow us to import bitumen direct from North Carolina, USA and Venezuela, in much larger ships, into Galway and in the longer term potentially make Galway the bitumen hub for North Western Europe.

In summary, the harbour extension will allow us to proceed with expansion of our terminal, grow our markets, operate more efficiently, and ultimately secure and enhance local employment.

On the other hand, a failure to extend the harbour will jeopardise the future development of the Company, limit our ability to enter new markets and impact employment.

We have shown our commitment to Galway and the West of Ireland for nearly 80 years and we feel that this forward thinking proposed development of the harbour will be of massive benefit to the entire region for generations to come and we support it whole heartedly.

Thanking you in advance.

Is mise,


 Liam Henry

Encl. cheque

