



Manannan Marine
Port Alena, Rosnakilly, Kilmeena
Westport, Co Mayo
098 42511

PLANNING APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Galway Harbour Extension

To: **The Secretary**
An Bord Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1

Planning Reference Number: **61.PA0033**

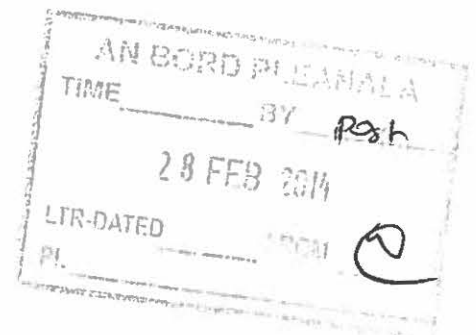
Closing Date for Receipt of Submissions: **11 March 2014**

Date: **24 February, 2014**

Fee enclosed: **€50.00**

28/2/14
CL 650
B123377

SUBMITTED BY
Captain Alex Blackwell
Manannan Marine
A division of Knowledge Clinic Limited



Introduction

Marine Infrastructure has historically been side lined or ignored entirely along the west coast of Ireland. The provision of a full service marina and commercial harbour in Galway with associated ancillary facilities will go a long way towards making the west coast of Ireland accessible to visiting yachts and shipping, while at the same time making the sea accessible to people visiting by land.

The development of the Galway Harbour Extension is highly desirable from a number of aspects. We wholeheartedly endorse this development. Those aspects pertaining to marine leisure and tourism are briefly outlined in the following.

Our expertise includes marine tourism, journalism, and marketing, as well as marine biology, coastal development concerns and regulations, installation and maintenance of swing moorings and floating docks. We are also long distance cruising sailors, who have spent years sailing the coasts of the United States and Western Europe.

Our understanding of marinas and the need therefore is derived from the other island nations we have visited personally by yacht (Madeiras, Canaries, Caribbean nations, Azores), as well as much of the east coast of the United States and the west coast of Europe. As cruisers who have visited many marinas, we are uniquely qualified to comment from the user, marketer, as well as the developer perspectives.

Marina Tourism

There are several categories of people who would benefit from and be able to utilize the development of the Galway Harbour Extension. All of these groups will support local businesses in the vicinity of Galway marina. They will thus support and help create much needed employment in the area.

Non-resident marina tenants (people renting slips in the marina).

These are people who might reside elsewhere in Ireland or outside the country and would keep a boat in a marina for their use while on holiday, for a season, or for the full year. A marina provides a draw for these people, who may also lease or purchase a holiday home or apartment. They will utilize local suppliers of groceries, fuel, and marine supplies.

Marina tenants from Galway and environs

Local people from Galway and as far north as Clew Bay already keep their yachts in Galway. The provision of a significant number of additional berths will quickly attract further tenants, each of whom will also contribute to the local economy through the utilization of services.

Owners & crew of visiting or transient yachts

There are significant fleets of yachts cruising Western Europe each year. These boats might come from any of the coastal continental countries from Sweden/Norway through to Portugal. Many also come from the UK or from around the Irish coast. These would normally be short-term tenants of slips. There is a group within these yachts where the owner will sail for a period, leave his or her yacht, and then return at a later date to continue their cruise. Others may choose to overwinter in a suitable harbour. This past winter, we have for example, overwintered our yacht in Galway.

The visiting yachts are either individuals, or may travel from point to point in large fleets or cruising rallies. Hundreds of vessels from Sweden alone and far more from the Netherlands, Germany, France, and the UK would jump at the chance to visit Ireland, much as they visit Scotland for the Malts Cruises in droves. Currently, the west of Ireland is generally not on the itinerary of any of these. The chief element preventing them from doing so is the absence of marinas and safe harbours all along the coast that can accommodate them. The Galway Harbour Extension will provide critical infrastructure here.

Ireland is also a logical but often overlooked stop for yachts transiting the Atlantic from the US, Canada, and the Caribbean via the Azores, or directly as we have done. Currently, most head straight for England bypassing Ireland. Developing a full service marina in Galway would provide a safer, closer destination to shorten the transatlantic crossing. Galway would also benefit from the money spent by crew on arrival for reprovisioning, refuelling, and enjoying the sights.

Galway has a unique advantage over other destinations, in that as part of the marina expansion, the inner harbour will be converted to housing many more berths. We have experienced personally what a wonderful venue this is with its immediate access to the city, shopping, restaurants and pubs. This will quickly prove to be a major attraction to transient yachts.

Large Yachts

Once Galway Marina has been developed, the west of Ireland can become a desirable yachting destination that will attract the super and mega yachts. Often chartered, they cruise to interesting and often remote destinations, but require premium levels of service. This is a highly lucrative market segment that is increasingly unsatisfied in the Mediterranean due to increasing fees, government levies and overcrowding.

Cruise ships

Galway is already attracting the cruise ship industry. There is also an opportunity to support eco-cruises which are increasing in popularity and a natural fit for Ireland's ecotourism focus. This typically involves smaller cruise ships which would be able to avail of a larger marina's facilities and would bring significant numbers of tourists in to a given destination. Ireland's natural coastal beauty, pristine waters, and abundant sea life would be attractive to this new market segment.

Owners & crew of transportable water craft

There is a group of Irish and foreign nationals who own smaller vessels which can be transported on a trailer or on the roof of a car. Some of these will rent slips in Galway marina, while others, would be attracted by the marina facilities, including boat ramps, service facilities and might launch their boats for a daily sail, paddle, or cruise.

Charterers

These are tourists (Irish or foreign visitors) who will come to Galway marina specifically to hire a boat (sail or power) from a local resident or firm and go fishing or cruising for a period. These are jobs that will be directly attributable to the planned development of Galway Harbour.

Day trippers

These are tourists visiting an area who would go out on a fishing, kayaking, wildlife watching, sailing, diving, or pleasure day trip as part of their holiday experience in the Galway region.

Onlookers

Marinas are a major attraction for tourists who just want to see the pretty boats. Galway Marina will add value to the amenity of a tourism destination. It will attract people who want to dine with a seaside view and watch the activities on the water. Many enjoy a stroll down the docks to get a closer look and dream about far off places.

Locals

Local boat owners, marina tenants, guests, business venues, and onlookers all also benefit from a marine amenity such as Galway Marina. Fuel suppliers, pubs, restaurants, shops, supermarkets, chandleries, ironmongers, boat mechanics and service providers all benefit, creating and supporting local employment.

28 FEB 2011



Manannan Marine
Port Alena, Rosnakilly, Kilmeena
Westport, Co. Mayo
4, 2011

Captain Alex Blackwell
Master Mariner
Consultant to the Marine Leisure Sector

Alex Blackwell is a water sports enthusiast and adventurer, as well as strong proponent for the maritime heritage and marine ecosystems of our Irish waters. He holds a commercial Master's license from the US Coast Guard with sailing and towing endorsements and serves as co-owner and master of a 57-foot sailing yacht. He has sailed across the Atlantic three times since 2008 and spent years sailing both sides of the Atlantic as well as throughout the Caribbean and Atlantic Islands. Having had the opportunity to interact with and study the marine industry in many countries, Alex has a keen understanding of what works well, what is best avoided, and what the international sailing (marine tourism) community is looking for.

Alex has a long standing involvement in and a deep commitment to the Irish Marine Sector. With a Master of Science degree in Marine Biology, Alex launched one of the first oyster hatcheries in Ireland. At the same time he shipped oysters throughout Europe and introduced them to the local restaurant trade. He is past chairman of the shellfish growers committee of the Irish Aquaculture Association, was a long time director of the Clew Bay Oyster Cooperative Society, and has worked as a commercial fisherman. As a result, Alex has a deep understanding of the development and regulatory processes in the marine sector.

Aboard their cruising sailboat Alex and his wife, Daria, are frequent visitors to harbours and islands along the western Irish coast. Alex is a BSAC and PADI US Divers licensed sub-aqua diver. Passionate about developing marine tourism in Ireland, Alex has recently become the Irish Port Captain for the Seven Seas Cruising Association with over 10,000 active sailing members globally. He is also Port Captain on the west coast for the Ocean Cruising Club. He is thus the go-to person for foreign yachts visiting the country.

Alex is an active member of the Irish Cruising Club, Ocean Cruising Club, American Yacht Club, Seven Seas Cruising Association, and Mayo Sailing Club.

