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Mary Mc Donough  
9 Grattan Road  
Galway

7 March 2014

**An Bord Pleanála**  
64 Marborough Street  
Dublin 1

**RE: Submission on Planning Application Ref: 61.PC0150  
Galway Harbour Extension Application for Permission in  
Respect of a Strategic Infrastructure Development**

Dear Sir/Madame

I, Mary McDonough wish to make a submission to Bord Pleanála in regard to the Planning Application above, Ref: 61.PC0150 and enclose a fee of €50 as requested.

**Dangers of Flooding**

As having suffered for many years, the area of Claddagh, Grattan Road, Spanish Arch and all areas in the locality have and are suffering from effects of high tides, storms and global warming have increased the areas' mentioned vulnerability to tidal influences and climate change, which can only get worse as predicted by the impending forecasts by the U.S. Department of Defence who states that

“Climate change poses another significant challenge for the world at large. As greenhouse gas emissions increase, sea levels are rising, average global temperatures are increasing, and severe weather patterns are accelerating.”

. I am aware that Galway City Council has embarked on a flood study of Galway City which is not due until 2015 which is too late especially for the people of Galway if this application for the harbour extension is allowed.

The Storms in January 2014 have shown the significant and damaging impact on local and surrounding areas. The use of models in the Harbour Board submission do not assess accurately and realistically the potential damage from storms and associated flooding on the Claddagh area.

### **Visual Amenities**

The visual amenities of the area will be impacted by the scale of the Harbour Development which is comparable to the size of Loch Atalia. It will devalue the price of residences in the area on the principle of unhampered views of the Bay. The Harbour Board in its submission submitted photographs from the Claddagh area showing a distorted and out of proportion view of the development. This development will have a significant and negative impact on the skyline from the Claddagh because of its significant size. In addition, there are serious issues associated with noise (from the development and the sounds of the trains and tankers leaving the Dock area) and light pollution.

### **Environmental Issues**

The Galway Harbour Company have publicly conceded that “development of the proposed new port will have an (damaging) impact on the ecology of the site at Inner Galway Bay, a designated European Natura 2000 Habitat” That statement went further in acknowledging that it would be impossible to argue otherwise”.(Connacht Sentinel, August 14,2012). By admitting this, the company hope that the European Commission will look kindly on their application which it has submitted through the avenue of I.R.O.P.I. (Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest). By going this route, they may avoid any lengthy delays which may be caused by reasons of appeals being processed though the court systems in Ireland. An Taisce’s 2010 submission to the Government’s Port Policy Review suggested government “should ensure incentives and governance frameworks exist so that port management, design, development and operation be predicated on the needs to limit and avoid impacts on Natura 2000 sites in particular and observance with the European Birds and Habitat Directives.” Such requirements would engender a culture and practise whereby the approach taken for example by Dublin Port Company, to maximise its profits by selling backlots in the port, and then advance a case to infill some 58 acres of Dublin Bay based on the need for further space- would be discouraged. An Bord Pleanála refused the latest Dublin Gateway application from the Dublin Port Company on the basis of impacts to the Natura 2000 Sites and protected habitats and species on the bay. The failure to incentivise and govern state agencies and major operators results in consistent and frequent attempts to advance proposals which fly in the face of European legislation and result in delays in delivering infrastructure with the associated costs of the same. Underlying core principles need to be addressed to resolve this issue at source.

The latest proposal from the Galway Harbour Company to infill some 58 acres of Galway Bay having previously sold off land – is an effective profit-maximising land grab being advanced at the expense of Galway Bay’s Natura 2000 sites. In light of all this information, would it not be better to delay this planning application until at least we have some idea what government ports policy is! We already know that it is government policy to reduce Ireland’s dependence on fossil fuel imports. An Taisce has submitted that there is no requirement for additional oil or coal import capacity, since current levels needs to be substantially reduced to meet climate emission reduction levels required and reduce unsustainable energy import dependency.

By ensuring that Galway Port's existing land-bank is fully developed for high-quality city centre family housing, together with the suggested cultural/educational and leisure developments (School of Music, Sailing facilities and a multi-purpose Performance Venue) as well as other more commercial uses, Galway City Council might add to its dwindling rates revenue and be less likely to have to cut services to its existing customers.

Also, no mention is made in the submission about the possible impact to the Brent Geese (a protected species) who visit the Claddagh foreshore and at times South Park itself.

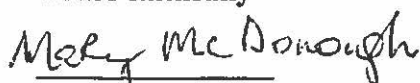
The impact on the native salmon going and coming to Lough Corrib has been understated in the submission. It is suggested that blasting in the development stage be curtailed in July to September. The report fails to consider that native salmon use the waterway throughout the year and as such will have a negative effect on already reduced salmon stock numbers.

The risk of a Oil spill in the Claddagh and surrounding area is much higher now as all unloading was done previously in Galway Docks ( a confined area).

The concept of promoting Galway as a major international location for cruise liners has no advantage to Galway and its environs. Long distance cruisers which generally extend over a one to two week period are significantly more damaging on a per passenger emission basis than a long haul aviation trip and represent one of the single most unsustainable areas of global tourism growth. As for promoting this development to create a deep water docks to allow cargo in, we now have a functioning motorway system and it is possible that produce imported through Dublin Port or any other can be delivered to Galway in a couple of hours or if by rail overnight.

I would appreciate the opportunity to make an oral submission if and when an Oral Hearing takes part in Galway.

**Yours faithfully**

  
**Mary McDonough**

