

# CITY OF GALWAY SHIPPING CO. LTD.

Tom McElwain  
22<sup>nd</sup> January 2015.

I represent City of Galway Shipping Company who is the main Agent for most ships that call to the port of Galway. A ship's Agent looks after all the requirements for ships and is in essence the owner in situ. Some of our statutory duties include liaising with Customs + Excise, Immigration, HSE, Marine Survey Office, Port State Control and Galway Port. We look after all the ships' requirements and these are many and varied including dealing with shippers, receivers and brokers.

I have been working in Galway Port for over 36 years and prior to that I sailed deepsea for many years. With my deepsea experience I have sailed into many ports worldwide. I would regard Galway Port as one of the more user friendly ports for shipowners to send their ships to. However, the major drawback to Galway is the port limitations. The port limitations have been dealt with by other people and I don't intend in going over that again. We are in continuous communications with shipowners regarding these port limitations.

They are all aware of the proposed new port developments which are in the pipeline for nearly 10 years and they are always asking us for updates. Shipowners who have a regular service to a port have to tailor their ship sizes to the size and limitations of that port. Galway is no different and this entails that newly built ships have to be built to suit the limitations in Galway. There is a long lead-in time for the design and construction of new ships and this is an expensive operation for shipowners. Consequently, it is imperative that shipowners know what limitations they have to contend with and they must know them for many years going forward.

Galway Port has served Galway and the whole West of Ireland for many centuries. Galway has a very proud maritime tradition and it is imperative that this tradition is retained. Galway must be able to supply the infrastructure that will allow bigger ships service the needs of shippers and receivers throughout the West of Ireland.

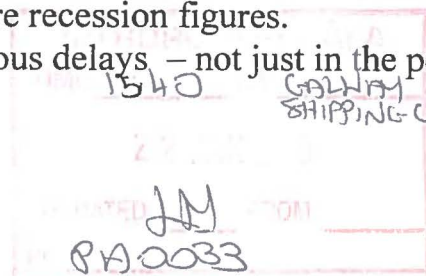
The present facilities are no longer fit for purpose.

Do we here in this room want to oversee the closure of Galway Port and see the demise of a proud maritime tradition together with the redundancy of many hundreds of people who are currently making a good living from the docks. ?

This is what we will see if the new port does not get the go ahead.

The West of Ireland needs a major seaport. Figures released by Dublin Port last week indicated that their throughput for the year 2014 had increased by 7%. This brought the throughput back to pre recession figures.

Pre recession Dublin Port experienced serious delays – not just in the port but also on the roads to and from the port.





With the continuous growth of Dublin Port there is every possibility that these delays will occur again. Furthermore, the growth of traffic on the roads will cause congestion plus higher emissions from trucks. Europe recognises that cargo carried by sea causes much less emissions than the same cargo carried by road. Do we want our children and grandchildren to suffer the effects of this pollution. ?

Many years ago, a certain element of the population did their utmost to stop Canon Horan building Knock Airport. Figures recently released show that Knock Airport had a throughput of over 700,000 pax in 2014. That figure alone vindicates the building of the Airport on the “foggy, boggy lands of Mayo”.

A major seaport in Galway could and would galvanise the tourist business in the West of Ireland. We have been Agents for all pax ships calling at Galway. All the pax were landed by tender from their mothership anchored off Mutton Island. The feedback from the pax on Galway and the hinterlands has always been extremely positive. However, we cannot say the same of their comments on being landed by tender. Most pax on these cruises tend to be elderly and having to use the tenders for coming ashore is not very comfortable for them. However, it is amazing the number of pax who will brave the elements and overcome the difficulties of using a tender in order to land and see the West of Ireland. Imagine the reaction of pax if they could just step ashore in the new port.

Finally Chairman, I believe passionately in this project. I am by a longshot the oldest person employed and associated with Galway Docks. When I started in the docks, Galway Harbour Company and Port was in a poor state but hard work and dedication from its staff /Directors/Commissioners has seen it rise to be one of the few profitable Port Companies in the country. I have seen the enormous value of the docks to Galway and the hinterland and I do hope that I will not see the demise of this great port. It will certainly be the end of Galway port if this project does not go ahead.

Thanking you

