Our Case Number: PA0033

An Bord Pleanála

Thomas Cox
Claddagh Residents Association
14 Upper Fairhill Road
Claddagh
Galway

Date: 27 May 2025

Re: Galway Harbour Extension
Renmore and Townparks Townlands, Galway

Dear Sir / Madam,

An Bord Pleanála has received your recent letter in relation to the above mentioned case. The contents of your letter have been noted.

If you have any queries in relation to the matter please contact the undersigned officer of the Board at laps@pleanala.ie

Please quote the above-mentioned An Bord Pleanála reference number in any correspondence or telephone contact with the Board.

Yours faithfully,

Lauren Griffin
Executive Officer
Direct Line: 01-8737244

CH08

Lauren Griffin

From: Lauren Griffin
Sent: Tuesday, 27 May 2025 12:03
To: claddaghresidentsassociation@gmail.com
Subject: RE: Galway Harbour Extension Renmore & Townparks Townlands Galway Case Number PA0033

A Chara,

The Board acknowledges receipt of your email, official correspondence will issue in due course.

Kind regards,

Lauren

From: Thomas Cox <claddaghresidentsassociation@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, 27 May 2025 10:06
To: LAPS <laps@pleanala.ie>
Cc: Peter Rabbitt <prabbitt@outlook.com>
Subject: Galway Harbour Extension Renmore & Townparks Townlands Galway Case Number PA0033

> **Caution:** This is an **External Email** and may have malicious content. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments. When in doubt, contact the ICT Helpdesk.

Dear Sir/Madam

Please see the formal reply to the matter below.

We have included a report into the recent Storm Eowyn by UOG including two articles from local newspapers.

Regards

Thomas Cox
Honorary Secretary

Claddagh Residents Association

(Established 1969)

c/o 14 Upper Fairhill Road
Claddagh
Galway

27 May 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Claddagh Residents Association responds to An Bord Pleanála's invitation to make an observation to Tobin's submission to the 'Galway Harbour Extension...'

In summary The Bord must consider the human aspect when deciding on this large infrastructural project. It will have a major impact on our community and Galway.
A sizable area of Galway Bay will see infill displace the water and the question arises where will those displaced waters be diverted to? Also, where will the Corrib water exiting the mouth of the river end up? The fear is that with the increase in storms and flooding the Claddagh area in particular will see waters inundate South Park and the homes of our community.

The Claddagh Residents Association (CRA) note that Tobin's response to storm and flood risks and their response to recent storms can be managed and that adequate protections can be incorporated in the Harbour Extension causes alarm in our community.

The OPW has said that Galway must have adequate flood defences but there are no signs of work on their plans. It appears that no remedial work will take place before 2030. There has been no work on flood defences in the Claddagh after many storms and flooding since our original submission in 2014.
It is worth reminding the Bord that there has been NO work on flood relief measures since our original submission in 2014:

"...Flood Relief Measures
The Village of Claddagh has had significant issues with flooding over the years and there is evidence 100 year tidal/weather events are becoming more and more frequent. With a development of the scale of the Harbour Development the CRA are very concerned that consideration hasn't been given to improve existing flood relief measures to compensate from the changing of the tidal movements. In a recent Hydrologists Report commissioned in relation to South Park certain areas of the park were identified as weak in regard to flood risk. We believe these changes should be made at a minimum to avoid any adverse impact of a development the scale proposed.

Tel: 091 583 354 claddaghresidentsassociation@gmail.com Mob: 086 828 6363

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We are also aware that in response to the Hydrologists Report above Galway City Council has embarked on a Flood Study which is not due until 2015 and as a result we feel it should be incorporated into this project as it will significantly affect it..."

It seems clear at present in 2025 that no work will be done on defences before 2030.

In fact flooding fears have increased particularly with the river Corrib overflows due to storms as we believe that because of works on the Docks side with the infill on the reclaimed land that has already taken place the river water exit to Galway Bay has been restricted during high tides. We feel that as no counter measures, none whatsoever, have been put in place since our submission we have no confidence in the Authorities putting measures in place to compensate for the massive infill planned for the Bay particularly on the west side of Hare island and in front of South Park.

Today Claddagh residents are unable to purchase flood insurance and yet developers plan to fill in a sizable section of Galway Bay which is a flood plain.

Another quote from our 2014 submission is still relevant:

"...Scale of the Development In the current financial climate the harbour would appear to be underutilised, the CRA aren't convinced that the scale of landfill proposed is required to achieve the same berthing areas for Liners & Tankers and a result would propose a smaller narrower jetty which may be more appropriate to provide the same traffic.

1 Cubic Metre of Structure/Landfill displaces 1000Litres of water so there will be significant displacement of water to an area that is already identified as a flood risk with no measures identified to mitigate that..."

2025 Storm Eowyn research by University of Galway has raised fears among residents as it states that the highest ever storm surge was recorded at 2.6 metres above the normal predicted tide height at Galway Docks and that Galway had a close shave as the storm hit at low and ebbing tide. The study revealed that had the storm arrived at high tide 'all along the coastline, there would have been serious flooding...particularly severe in areas between Grattan Road and Renmore along the shores of Lough Atalia and including the city centre.' '...Overall their extensive research suggests that flooding has increased in frequency and severity in recent decades...'

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Dr. Olbert stated in their study that 'our analysis of the drivers of flooding in Ireland show that the anthropogenic climate change-that's the change related to human activity-will drive more rainfall and generate more intense flooding...Our analysis also shows that a rise in mean sea level rise will significantly increase the risk of coastal flooding in the future.'
Attached are copies of newspaper and other articles brought to the attention of the CRA.

Wastewater: Quote from our 2014 submission:
"A development of this size will contribute to additional demands on the existing wastewater and sewerage treatment. Most Cruise Liners, certainly the size depicted in the Marketing Material available from the application and YouTube are like small towns.'
'...The existing wastewater treatment plant on Mutton Island is at capacity and already causing the residents of Claddagh distress with odours and noise. We believe that additional capacity in a location away from the existing site at Mutton Island should be incorporated into the plan to prevent the over filling of existing "at capacity" infrastructure..."

Residents have a continuing fear that the Wastewater treatment plant on Mutton Island will be overwhelmed particularly in summertime when Galway's population increases. There have been problems with spillages through the years and storm drains located at the Claddagh Basin and Grattan Road beach have overflowed after heavy rainfall. Again, residents have no confidence that the Authorities can adequately deal with sewerage discharges. We point to the failure to deal with, for years, 'the scum' type substance that comes from the canal, diverted to the river Corrib and regularly ends up in the Claddagh Basin, along Nimmo's Pier and the Claddagh beach. The boats are often surrounded by this unsightly scum. Volunteers regularly clean the Claddagh beach at Nimmo's Pier as waste, e.g. nappies, ends up on the beach instead of the Mutton Island Plant.

While the issues highlighted are the responsibility of the Galway City Council and Health Authorities it is noted that the Harbour Activities are now the ultimate responsibility of Local Authorities including Galway since the Harbour Extension Plan was submitted eleven years ago.

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Environmental Impact: CRA 2014 submission

"–...Environmental Impact: The CRA has concerns that due to the Scale of development it would have a detrimental impact on this natural habitat. We feel that the focus of the application is based towards the actual site not giving any major (cognisance)... to the neighbouring areas."

Today the CRA point out that the two Galway Authorities receive the lowest funding for such a large County from the Government. The fear is that promised projects for the community such as the upgrading of South Park that was promised over 20 years ago. Other areas seem to get priority, and plans are continually 'kicked down the road' Lack of funds is continually sited.

CRA Submission 2014;
'Traffic (Construction & Operational) This development will affect traffic coming in and out of the new development, in the absence of the Outer City Bypass it will cause significant increase in traffic problems throughout the city...Consideration should also be given for a port tunnel or exclusively transferring cargo via a Rail Depot on the outskirts of the City in/out of the port which would again reduce the amount of haulage traffic...'

Again, since the CRA Submission in 2014 Galway's traffic problems have not been solved. Work on the Harbour Extension will cause further problems for Galway's roads. The rail network has not improved as there is still only one track into Galway. The railways are unable to cater adequately for passengers wishing to come into Galway by rail and there will be a need for a massive investment to cater for freight from the Docks.

We would urge ABP to take our concerns into consideration in deciding this major infrastructural project.

Yours sincerely

Thomas Cox
Honorary Secretary
CRA

Tel: 091 583 354 claddaghresidentsassociation@gmail.com Mob: 086 828 6363

Tidal research shows Storm Éowyn generated the highest storm surges ever recorded

Storms breaking in rocks in Co Galway in April 202, © PA Archive/PA Images
22/04/2025 | 10:33 AM**KENNETH FOX**

A research team at the University of Galway has revealed that Storm Éowyn generated the highest storm surges ever recorded at key locations on Ireland's western seaboard.

By analysing sea level information from 47 datasets provided by the Irish National Tide Gauge Network and the Office of Public Works, the team based at the University's School of Engineering has highlighted the unprecedented power of the storm's surge, more than 2.5 metres above the normal predicted tidal water level

Storm Éowyn, one of the most powerful storms to hit Ireland in recent years, also saw record-breaking winds.

The highest gust recorded was 184 km/h, with the highest 10-minute wind speed reaching 142 km/h at Mace Head Atmospheric Research Station in Co Galway.

Despite the severity of Storm Éowyn in other ways and the devastation wrought by hurricane-force winds and lasting damage to power and water supplies, the timing of the tides during storm landfall meant little to no flooding impacts.

The research team highlighted data from three coastal locations during Storm Éowyn - Galway Port, Limerick Docks and Shannon Airport.

At Galway Port, the storm surge peaked at 2.60 meters above the normal predicted astronomical tide, the highest ever recorded at this station since its operation began in 2007

At Limerick Docks, the highest surge along the western coastline was recorded, reaching 2.99 meters above tidal level.At Shannon Airport, the tidal gauge recorded a surge of 2.70 meters.

Had these surges occurred a week earlier during the high water spring tide, the water levels would. have been much higher, with data predicting that the water level at Galway Port would have reached 4.96m, Limerick Dock at 5.85m, and Shannon Airport at 5.43m above mean sea level, inundating the areas.

Dr Indiana Olbert from the School of Engineering at the University of Galway said: "Extensive research suggests that flooding has increased in frequency and severity in recent decades around the world, which is attributed to climate change.

"Our analysis of the drivers of flooding in Ireland shows that the anthropogenic climate change – the changes related to human activity - will drive more extreme rainfall and generate more intense flooding. Such changes are likely to continue with further warming. In future, we will witness more extreme weather events that will result in devastating floods.

"Our analysis also shows that a rise in mean sea level rise will significantly increase the risk of coastal flooding in the future.

"The data we have recovered from the hours around Storm Éowyn shows just how narrowly tens of thousands of people avoided tidal inundation and threats to cities, towns and coastal communities. It is hard to imagine how narrowly we avoided unprecedented storm surge flooding and inundation, in particular in towns and cities."

https://emea01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.breakingnews.ie%2Fireland%2Ftidal-research-shows-storm-eowyn-generated-the-highest-storm-surges-ever-recorded-1754511.html&data=05%7C02%7C%7C95129456743c45d9e8ad08dd8d4e18b3%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C638822088766348450%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=qiqFNpUzA%2FeGqy%2BZEbfxnNF%2FoguUdNbmnADzCR3ovWo%3D&reserved=0

CLOSE SHAVE!

Éowyn research reveals near-miss that could have left much of city under water

The University of Galway storm surge research team Dr Niall Madden, School of Mathematical and Statistical Sciences, Dr Indiana Olbert, School of Engineering, and Alexander Shchepetkin, School of Engineering, at the docks in Port of Galway.

WE knew we were gripped in the storm of generation as it happened, but now a research team at the University of Galway has revealed how close we came to utter devastation as Storm Éowyn did its worst all along the west coast.

As it was, they confirmed what was evident from the impact. Storm Éowyn generated the highest storm surges ever recorded at key locations on Ireland's western seaboard.

The researchers revealed that, at Galway Port, the storm surge peaked at 2.60 metres above the normal predicted astronomical tide, the highest ever recorded at this station since its operation began in 2007.

The highest surge along the western coastline was recorded at Limerick Docks – reaching 2.90 metres above tidal level – and at Shannon Airport, the tidal gauge recorded surge of 2.70 metres.

Had these surges occurred a week earlier during the high-water spring tide, the water levels would have been much higher – with data predicting that the water level at Galway Port would have reached 4.96m, Limerick Dock at 5.85m, and Shannon Airport at 5.43m above average sea level – inundating the areas.

The university team has also produced maps showing whole swathes of the city and county would have been flooded in the event of water levels at 2.5 metres above normal.

All along the city's coastline, there would have been serious flooding, from Silverstrand to Ballyloughane, particularly severe in areas between Grattan Road and Renmore on the shores of Lough Atalia and including the city centre.

Large stretches of the county coastline, including Kilcolgan and Oranmore, would also have been under water.

> 'IN AN ODD WAY, WE WERE INCREDIBLY LUCKY'

Dr Niall Madden, Mathematical and Statistical Sciences at University of Galway, confirmed, that, in spite of how devastating Storm Éowyn was, "in an odd way, we were incredibly lucky".

"The worst of the storm surge coincided with a low and ebbing tide. Had it hit just a few hours earlier, on a full or flooding tide, Galway could have been dealing with a double disaster of record high winds and record high flooding," he said.

The team, based at the University's School of Engineering, analysed sea level information from 47 datasets provided by the Irish National Tide Gauge Network and the Office of Public Works.

That underlined the unprecedented power of the storm's surge – more than 2.5 metres above the normal predicted tidal water level.

Storm Éowyn, one of the most powerful storms to hit Ireland in recent years, also saw record breaking winds. The highest gust recorded was 184 km/h, with the highest 10-minute wind speed reaching 142 km/h at Mace Head Atmospheric Research Station in County Galway.

The only positive outcome was that despite the severity of Storm Éowyn in other ways and the devastation wrought by hurricane force winds and lasting damage to power and water supplies – the timing of the tides during storm landfall meant little to no flooding impacts.

"The data we have recovered from the hours around Storm Éowyn shows just how narrowly tens of thousands of people avoided tidal inundation and threats to cities, towns and coastal communities said Dr Indiana Olbert, School of Engineering at University of Galway's College of Science and Engineering.

"It is hard to imagine how narrowly we avoided unprecedented storm surge flooding and an inundation, in particular in towns and cities," she added.

Overall, their extensive research suggests that flooding has increased in frequency and severity in recent decades around the world and this is attributed to climate change.

"Our analysis of the drivers of flooding in Ireland show that the anthropogenic climate change – that's the changes related to human activity – will drive more extreme rainfall and generate more intense flooding," said Dr Olbert.

"Such changes are likely to continue with further warming. In future we will witness more extreme weather events that will result in devastating floods.

"Our analysis also shows that a rise in mean sea level rise will significantly increase the risk of coastal flooding in the future.

This map of the Galway coastline shows how an increase of 2.5 metres in water levels during a storm surge would have left the areas of the city in red flooded.

PhotoScan by Google Photos

Harbour housing plans under spotlight after storm surge

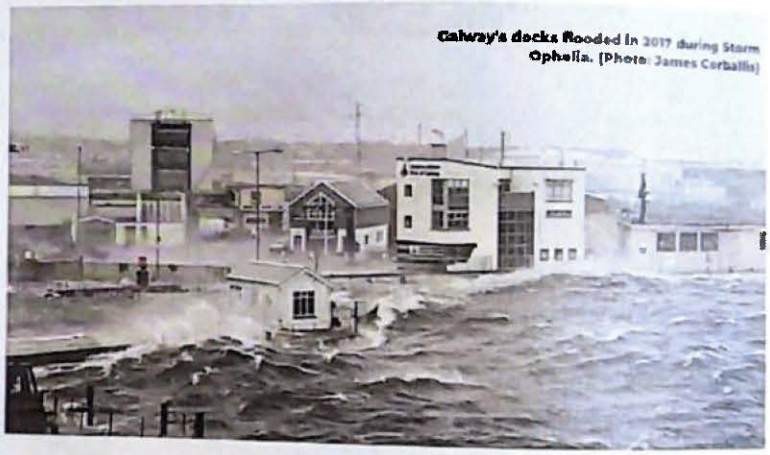
By Maxim Kelly

Questions have been raised about flood defences for a proposed residential development on lands around the Port of Galway as academics publish new storm surge projections.

Last week the state owned Land Development Agency was given the green light to apply for planning permission for 356 apartments in four towers blocks on over six acres of lands stretching from the entrance to Lough Atalia to the Commercial Docks

University of Galway storm surge research team, Dr Niall Madden, Dr Indiana Olbert, School of Engineering, and Alexander Shchepetkin. (Photo: Aengus McMahon)

Model imagery of the areas at risk of a 2.5m storm surge or sea level rise in the Galway Bay area (Credit: Climate Central)



Galway's docks flooded in 2017 during Storm Ophelia. (Photo: James Corbally)

INDUSTRY IN THE WEST

The Galway Advertiser are running an **Industry in the West** supplement on the 15th of May to highlight the diverse range of industries operating in the West of Ireland.

To advertise in this supplement please contact Maire on 091 530 951 or sales@galwayadvertiser.ie

Galway Advertiser

In January, tidal gauges at the docks recorded the largest ever storm surge due to Storm Eowyn, which battered the area during an ebbing tide. New modelling from the University of Galway predicts the possibility of massive flooding of the area if a storm of similar strength makes landfall at high tide.

Speaking in a private capacity, Derrick Hambleton, former chairman of An Taisce Galway, said he was worried that Galway city's flood prevention measures are still only at a preliminary design stage, according to publicly available information from the Office of Public Works (OPW).

"I would be concerned about the implications for a number of current planning applications in the city that are perhaps vulnerable to any future storms, especially where flood prevention measures are unlikely to be in place inside the next ten years," he said.

The OPW commissioned JBA Consultants to draw up a report on flood prevention measures in 2015, but to date no infrastructure has been designed for Galway city's coastal areas.

The OPW says it has committed €100m per year expenditure on national flood prevention up to 2030. For comparison, the Scottish government spent €56m last year on just one coastal flood prevention scheme in the town of Millport including a 400m breakwater using 140,000 tons of rock armour.

Last year, the Environmental Protection Agency warned that urban areas of Galway were highly exposed to increased storm surges and coastal erosion due to sea level rises.

Planning officials in Galway City Council say they have not yet received a formal planning application from the LDA for its dockland project expected to include buildings higher than five storeys.

"Where a development, including residential development, is proposed in identified flood risk areas in Galway City, the type or nature of the development needs to be carefully considered and the potential risks mitigated and managed through on-site location, layout and design of the development to reduce flood risk to an acceptable level," planners said in a statement.

Recommendations from the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) elements of the city's development plan may be applicable alongside technical flood risk assessment recommendations published as ministerial guidelines in 2009.

A spokesperson for the LDA did not respond to enquiries.

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