Our Ref: 06D.PC0155

Your Ref: Dun Laoghaire Cruise S.G.

An Bord Pleanála

Stephen Little and Associates,
6 Upper Mount Street,
Dublin 2.

16th May 2013

Re: Construction of a new Cruise Berth Facility at Dun Laoghaire Harbour, Dub Laoghaire, County Dublin.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I have been asked by An Bord Pleanála to refer further to the above-mentioned pre-application consultation request.

Please find enclosed a copy of the written record of the meeting of the 10th May, 2013 which is marked 'Private and Confidential' for your information.

If you have any queries in relation to the matter please contact the undersigned officer of the Board.

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

Yours faithfully,

Kieran Somers
Executive Officer
Direct Line:01-8737107

Encls.

PC07.LTR

STEPHEN LITTLE & ASSOCIATES
RECEIVED
1 : MAY 2013
JOB REF:
TIME: ACTION:

06D.PC0155

Record of the first pre-application consultation meeting between An Bord Pleanála and Dun Laoghaire Cruise Stakeholder Group in relation to the construction of a new Cruise Berth Facility at Dun Laoghaire Harbour, Dun Laoghaire, County Dublin.

- **Venue:** Offices of An Bord Pleanála
- **Date:** 10th May, 2013 (11 a.m.)

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Present:

Representing An Bord Pleanála
Philip Green – Assistant Director of Planning
Conor McGrath – Senior Planning Inspector
Marcella Doyle - Senior Executive Officer
Kieran Somers - Executive Officer

Representing the Prospective Applicant (Dun Laoghaire Cruise Harbour Stakeholder Group)
Gerry Dunne, Dun Laoghaire Cruise Harbour Stakeholder Group
Richard Shakespeare, Dun Laoghaire Cruise Harbour Stakeholder Group
Philip Cowman, Dun Laoghaire Harbour Master
Paul O' Connell, Waterman-Moylan
Annette Hughes, DKM
Stephen Little, Stephen Little and Associates

- The meeting was chaired by Philip Green.

Introduction:

The Board referred to the letter received by it from the prospective applicant on the 8th March, 2013 formally requesting pre-application consultations with the Board. It advised the prospective applicant that the instant meeting essentially constituted an information gathering exercise for the Board; it also invited the prospective applicant to outline the nature of the proposed development and to highlight any matters it wished to receive advice on from the Board.

The Board mentioned general procedures in relation to the pre-application consultation process as follows:

- The Board will keep a record of this meeting and any other meetings, if held. Such record would form part of the file which will be made available publicly at the conclusion of the process.

- The Board will serve formal notice at the conclusion of the process as to whether or not the proposed development is SID. It may form a preliminary view at an early stage in the process as to whether the proposed development would likely constitute strategic infrastructure.

- A further meeting or meetings may be held in respect of the proposed development.

- Further information may be requested by the Board and public consultations may also be directed by the Board.

- The Board may hold consultations in respect of the proposed development with other bodies.

- The holding of consultations does not prejudice the Board in any way and cannot be relied upon in the formal planning process or any legal proceedings.

Presentation by the prospective applicant:

The prospective applicant stated that the central matter on which it wishes to receive advice from the Board is whether the proposed development would constitute strategic infrastructure. In response to this, the Board advised that the formal decision of the Board can not be given until the formal conclusion of the consultation process although it repeated that a preliminary opinion may be imparted at an earlier stage during consultations. In relation to EIS scoping, the Board pointed out that any formal scoping exercise by it can only be carried out following an SID determination by the Board, and not in tandem with consultations.

The prospective applicant outlined the project as one involving the construction of a new cruise quay to accommodate existing and next generation size cruise ships. It stated that the proposal is to construct a dedicated cruise berth to facilitate cruise ships which have a capacity of between 3,000-5,000 passengers. It said that it has examined how to facilitate such a proposed development in terms of factors such as manoeuvrability/turning movements and adequate depth; the proposed new quay will measure 120 metres in length and 20 metres in width and dredging will be required to facilitate the requisite depth (dredging to a depth of 10 metres was stated to be necessary in order to accommodate cruise ships). On-going maintenance dredging requirements would be minimal. The prospective applicant also outlined the various structures and provisions required for passenger movements on and off the cruise ships. Coach facilities were referred to as an example of such landside provisions which would be entailed. Reorganisation of existing moorings and uses within the harbour, as set out in the Harbour Masterplan, are separate to this project and not interdependent.

The prospective applicant said that it is envisaged that the new berth could accommodate two ships at the same time if such need arises; two 340 metre vessels could be accommodated by the proposed new quay, while other smaller vessels accommodated elsewhere; the prospective applicant added that it is an industry requirement that the harbour be simultaneously capable of facilitating two cruise ships. Noting this position, the Board enquired as to whether the berthing of two ships at the same time would require additional works. The prospective applicant replied that additional dredging would be necessary. The Board remarked that this type of potential arrangement which would facilitated by the

proposed development should be clearly referred to and addressed in the planning application documentation and environmental impact assessment.

The prospective applicant said that economies of scale are dictating the pace of development in the cruise industry and that facilities constructed in the present time will have to be capable of accommodating 340 metre size ships.

The Board enquired as to the essential difference between container ships and passenger ships in the context of length and berthing depth required. The prospective applicant responded that a cruise ship is quite a shallow depth ship whereas a cargo ship requires much more berthing depth and also substantial landside facilities for the processing of containers. The prospective applicant confirmed to the Board that, in terms of cruise ships, the trend is towards greater length and that current worldwide orders for new cruise ships corroborate this.

The prospective applicant referred to the Dun Laoghaire Harbour Masterplan 2011-2030 and said that this indicates the general objectives of the harbour and, crucially, identifies the marine leisure sector as an area to develop as an important harbour function. The prospective applicant said that the Dun Laoghaire Cruise Harbour Stakeholder Group was formed to progress the project; in respect of the Dun Laoghaire Harbour Company, the prospective applicant noted that the company's role would be to attract cruise ships to the harbour; thereafter, the main benefits accruing from a business/economic perspective would be to the wider business community and hinterland. The prospective applicant also confirmed that meetings/discussions have been held with major cruise operators.

Other matters:

The Board alluded to the fact that it is currently also in pre-application consultations with Dublin Port Company regarding a proposed development which incorporates the construction of new berths to cater for cruise vessels. The Board enquired as to how the instant proposal would sit with such a proposed development particularly in market and economic terms. The prospective applicant replied that in general terms there is a very real commercial incentive to progress this project as Dublin and its surrounding hinterland is viewed as a must-see location. Noting that the Board is holding consultations in respect of Dublin Port, the prospective applicant said that Dublin Port is primarily an industrial port and Dun Laoghaire a marine tourism/leisure one; it added that such a type of port involves less constraints on ship and passenger movements than an industrial one. Current constraints on ship movements to and from Dublin Port make it less attractive to cruise operators. The prospective applicant asserted that cruise companies prefer dedicated cruise berths and that the overall strategy is to enhance the passenger experience. It noted that there are substantial facilities available in Dun Laoghaire in terms of transport to Dublin city centre and other locations.
Commenting on the rapid pace at which the European cruise business is growing, the prospective applicant said there are very tangible economic benefits to be attained for the Dublin region as a whole. It said that it has established that Dublin is an anchor destination in respect of liaisons held to date with major cruise operators. Such appeal would contribute towards significant growth in the tourist

industry for the region and would have consequent positive economic impacts it contended. The local and wider economic benefits have been established through economic studies, copies of which are to be forwarded to the Board.

The prospective applicant emphasized that there is an important issue in respect of the timing of delivery of the instant project so as to ensure that it would not miss out on the market share which is currently, and will be, obtainable. In this regard, the prospective applicant stated that it is its intention to have the project up and running within a few years so as to properly capitalise on the market share.

Board's comments/questions:

The Board enquired as to the status of the masterplan and the role which Dun Laoghaire County Council has in respect of this. The prospective applicant advised that a local area plan is currently being prepared by the local authority. Although the masterplan is not a statutory document, the prospective applicant stated that it expects this to be referenced in the local area plan (which itself is expected to be available in draft format in a matter of months – the prospective applicant said that it would be in a position to indicate a timeline to the Board regarding this).

The Board mentioned a number of matters relating to the proposed development which it said would be likely issues for it in any consideration of a formal planning application; these were as follows:

- Effects of the proposed development on and interactions with other uses of the harbour – the Board commented that this matter would have to be addressed in some detail. The prospective applicant replied that the proposed berthing facility should not interfere with existing uses.

- Dredging and increased depths – the Board said that any changes in the conditions in the harbour resulting from dredging could be a significant issue.

- Potential effects on historic pier structures.

- Dredging spoil and disposal of same.

- Potential effects on the recently designated candidate Special Area of Conservation Rockabill to Dalkey Island.

- Effects on marine ecology.

The Board enquired as to the likely timing of any planning application. The prospective applicant replied that there was no definite timescale as of yet although it added that it would hope to receive a formal determination as to the SID status of the project from the Board by way of pre-application consultations as expeditiously as possible.

The Board enquired as to the level and scope of consultations held to date between the prospective applicant and other harbour user groups, stakeholders and prescribed bodies. The prospective applicant replied that discussions have taken place between it and other user groups and stakeholders; however, it added that these have not been elevated to a technical level of discussion just yet.

The Board indicated that it might be in the prospective applicants interest to seek the views of certain prescribed bodies prior to the lodging of any formal planning application. It mentioned in particular the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) who might have concerns regarding effects on marine ecology.

The Board also referred to the fact that appropriate survey work and baseline data research should be conducted by the prospective applicant prior to any application being made, and in the interest of producing a robust EIS. It remarked that such survey work in preparation for a planning application might have some consequences for the exact timing of lodgement.

The Board enquired as to whether the proposed development which would utilise the existing terminal building would entail any alterations to the existing ferry terminal building, at the harbour. The prospective applicant replied that the building, which is owned by the harbour company, has the necessary facilities to cater for extra numbers of passengers and would not require any alterations.

Conclusion:

The Board asked the prospective applicant if there were any questions it wished to ask or any areas requiring elucidation. Replying to the prospective applicant's request, the Board said that a preliminary view as to the SID status of the project could be sought from the SID division of the Board and communicated at a further meeting.

The Board requested that, prior to a further meeting, the prospective applicant forward to it the economic analysis document mentioned earlier in the meeting.

The prospective applicant indicated that following an SID determination, it might formally request EIS scoping by the Board. The Board advised the prospective applicant that scoping may take between 12-18 weeks and that the exercise involves it contacting relevant prescribed bodies and inviting feedback from them. It also informed the prospective applicant that a fee of €5,000 must be submitted with a scoping request.

The Board undertook to revert to the prospective applicant within 4 weeks approximately of the instant meeting. In the meantime, the Board said that it would forward the record of this meeting to the prospective applicant.

The meeting concluded at 12.45 p.m.

Philip Green

Philip Green
Assistant Director of Planning