

Galway Harbour Company



Galway Harbour Extension

Response to An Bord Pleanála Sept. 2024

EIS Addendum Chapter 1

Introduction & Background



Table of Contents

1.1. INTRODUCTION	2
1.2 REVIEW OF ANY MATERIAL CHANGES TO THE CHAPTER IN THE ORIGINAL EIS	4
1.3 CONCLUSION.....	6

List of Appendices

- Appendix 1.1 An Bord Pleanála Request for Further Information, letter dated 16 July 2024**
- Appendix 1.2 Site Layout Plan Drawing 2139-2117, as per original**

1.1. Introduction

Chapter 1 of the Environmental Impact Statement (“EIS”) as submitted in January 2014 sets out the proposed development of the Galway Harbour Extension (“GHE”). This Chapter of the EIS is provided by Brendan Rudden of TOBIN. Brendan is an Associate Director and Operations Manager in TOBIN and is in the role of project co-ordinator for GHE since the start of the planning process. Brendan has over 21 years of experience in TOBIN and is a Chartered Engineer. Brendan has been involved in this project from its inception. Brendan performed a key role at the oral hearing for GHE and has been involved in numerous private and public sector projects over his professional career.

The chapter details the Geography and History of Galway, the Port circumstances and constraints and then outlines the brief, the site and the proposal. The chapter provides the context for the proposal, including the background to the project and the reasons for the development. The EIS was submitted as part of the planning application which was lodged directly to An Bord Pleanála (“ABP”) as a Strategic Infrastructure Development (“SID”) in January 2014. The following table outlines the planning timeline.

Table 1.1: Planning Timeline from lodgement to date

Date	Action / Step
10 January 2014	Galway Harbour Extension SID planning application lodged to ABP
24 May 2014	ABP Request Further Information (“RFI”)
16 October 2014	Galway Harbour Company (“GHC”) Response to the RFI from ABP
12 January 2015 to 23 January 2015	Oral Hearing
29 September 2015	ABP Statement of Appropriate Assessment (and invite to Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (“IROPI”) process)
26 April 2019	Compensatory Measures lodged
24 March 2021	Statement of Case forwarded by ABP to the Minister recommending that the development should be granted consent, for IROPI and the Minister’s opinion on Compensatory Measures sought
24 March 2021 – 3 August 2021	Consideration of Compensatory Measures by Department officials and National Parks and Wildlife Service (“NPWS”)

3 August 2021	NPWS response to Minister's Office raising queries on Compensatory Measures submitted by GHC
3 September 2021	Department letter to ABP enclosing NPWS comments
21 October 2021	ABP letter to GHC requesting comments on the NPWS letter
10 October 2022	GHC Response to ABP following consultations with NPWS
26 May 2023	ABP issued GHC response to the Minister's office
April 2024	Minister responds to ABP. Letter from Minister of State for Nature, Heritage and Electoral Reform to Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage on 21 February. Letter from Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage to ABP dated 27 February 2024

ABP issued a request for further information dated 16 July 2024 (See Appendix 1.1) with the request extracted from the letter as follows:

“Having regard to the passage of time since the application was submitted to An Bord Pleanála, the applicant is requested to provide to the Board any updated information and any other relevant information which you may wish the Board to consider in its determination of the application. This information may include, in particular, any updates in relation to the Environmental Impact Statement.”

In order to provide a comprehensive and complete response to the request for further information as received from ABP, this addendum to the EIS has been prepared and Galway Harbour Company and its experts engaged in relation to the matter have carried out the appropriate procedures as follows:

- Assessment and review including a comprehensive review of the chapters of the EIS originally submitted (January 2014),
- Assessment and review of the subsequent Addenda to the EIS (Submitted by way of response to Request for Further Information (“RFI”) dated October 2014, as well as at the Oral Hearing January 2015 and the chapters of the Natura Impact Statement (“NIS”) and Compensatory Measures proposed,
- Review of new data available since and an assessment of validity of earlier conclusions,

This process results in the Chapters of this EIS Addendum then following the format as outlined below in so far as relevant:

1. Introduction.
2. Report format.
3. Review of any material changes to relevant chapter in original EIS.
4. Summary of previous conclusions of chapter in original EIS.
5. Any additional surveys, data or policy developments of relevance.
6. Assessment of validity of earlier conclusions or any necessary amendments to same.
7. Conclusion.

1.2 Review of any material changes to the chapter in the original EIS

Chapter 1 identifies the context for the project, the reasons the project is required and the details of the proposal. There are no changes to the details of the project, the context of the project and the need for same remain as before save that there is additional need for the project to cater for the likely development of offshore renewable energy installations.

The Trans European Network – Transport (“TEN-T”) network of July 2024 includes the Port of Galway as a comprehensive Port for the first time (See Chapter 2 for further details).

The proposed Galway Harbour Extension will accommodate inter-modal transport, facilitate offshore and onshore renewable energy projects which will positively support the delivery of the goals and objectives as set out in various government policies and including the Climate Action Plan 2024.

This chapter does not follow the usual EIS format of interactions, impacts, mitigations and conclusions and, as such, there are no findings to be updated.

The **Site Layout Drg. No. 2139-2117** (Refer to Appendix 1.2) as submitted details the overall proposed planning application layout. The overall planning application development boundaries are outlined in Red and there are no changes to the proposed development.

The development areas are noted on the layout drawing as areas No.’s 1-3. The development proposed at each area is as follows and there are no changes:

- Area 1 – Galway Harbour Extension (“GHE”) 82.89 ha
- Area 2 – Galway Harbour Enterprise Park (“GHEP”) Road & Services Upgrade 1.21 ha
- Area 3 – Lough Atalia Road & Services Upgrade 1.29 ha

The Total Planning Development Area 85.39 ha

The Galway Harbour Extension area of development consists of 82.89 ha broken down as follows:

- Land development area 28.07 ha
- Breakwaters and Revetment area 3.04 ha
- Dredged Area 46.48 ha
- Working Area (Dredge / Marine Construction) 5.30 ha

Land to be reclaimed from Sea 23.89 ha

Existing G.H.E.P. land to be redeveloped 4.18 ha

Total land development / redevelopment 28.07 ha

The development will provide the following:

- 660m of quay berth to -14.9m O.D. depth
- Port development serviced by a channel to -10.9m O.D.
- A 400m turning circle to -10.9m O.D.
- 28.07 ha of land development.
- 660m of sheltered quays including breakwater.
- Western Marina with 216 No. berths.
- Fishing Pier
- Nautical Centre Slipway
- Freight rail link to enable freight and cargo to be efficiently transported to and from the GHE to allow positive road traffic and environmental benefits.

As noted above, the land area to be developed is 28.07 ha.

This will provide the following land use area breakdowns in yards, quays, open space etc:

- Commercial Port back up Yard Areas 6.45 ha
- Commercial Quay Areas 1.72 ha
- Harbour Company Warehouse Yards 1.53 ha
- Future Oil and Bitumen Yard Areas 1.86 ha
- ESB, Security Yard & Fire Water Storage Area 1.08 ha
- Marina Boat Yard, Quay and Village Area 1.83 ha
- Fishing Pier and Yard Area 0.55 ha
- Roads and Access Area 3.97 ha
- Rail Line and Embankment Area 2.20 ha
- Nautical Yard & Slipway Area 0.82 ha
- Passenger Terminal Yard Area 0.34 ha
- Landscaped Area 5.44 ha
- Wave Wall Area 0.28 ha

It will also allow for:

- Parklands and landscaping areas
- Renmore Promenade
- Marina Promenade

The summary above is extracted from the original Chapter and repeated for the ease of this Addendum and there are no changes except that the lowering of the road under Lough Atalia Bridge was completed in 2015 by Galway City Council under a Part 8 Planning Process.

Decommissioning

This project is a permanent structure and therefore it is not envisaged that decommissioning will ever occur.

All levels in this EIS Addendum are to OGSM02 Malin Datum as per the original submission.

1.3 Conclusion

It is evident that the enhancement of Galway Harbour is supported across a range of policies from international to local level as shown in the following Chapter 2 on Planning Policy and the proposal is further supported due to inclusion in TEN-T and advances in policies in favour of offshore renewable energy and city centre development. The previous conclusion is summarised as follows:

1. The existing port is severely constrained.
2. There is a need for a commercial / container scale port for the region.
3. Galway is an appropriate location for the New Port close to the site of the existing harbour.
4. There are environmental benefits from transport of goods by ship to Galway and this will be significantly facilitated by the proposed Harbour Extension.
5. Galway is an appropriate New Port location in line with the long-term strategic role of Galway as a gateway City.

Furthermore, as noted in this chapter previously, the proposed deepwater facilities in the Galway Harbour Extension will be able to accommodate larger ships and, since it will be located in deeper water, dependence on high tide will not be a factor. The reclamation of new harbour lands will provide space for marshalling imports and exports, expansion of existing storage facilities, allowance for passenger and marina facilities and harbour management and container/rail handling facilities. The New Port will remove the heavy goods and oil handling from Galway City Centre, allowing for enhanced marina and amenity use in the Centre of Galway.

The conclusion as previously stated remains that the capacity for 20,000 to 40,000 Tonne vessels or cargo is urgently required if the Port is to survive to serve its hinterland.

In conclusion of this EIS Chapter 1 Addendum, the constraints and the issues which require the development of Galway Harbour Extension are still relevant and the development proposal remains necessary and is urgently required for the reasons as set out in the EIS as originally submitted in 2014

