

Galway Harbour Company



Galway Harbour Extension

Response to An Bord Pleanála Sept. 2024

EIS Addendum Chapter 3

Alternatives

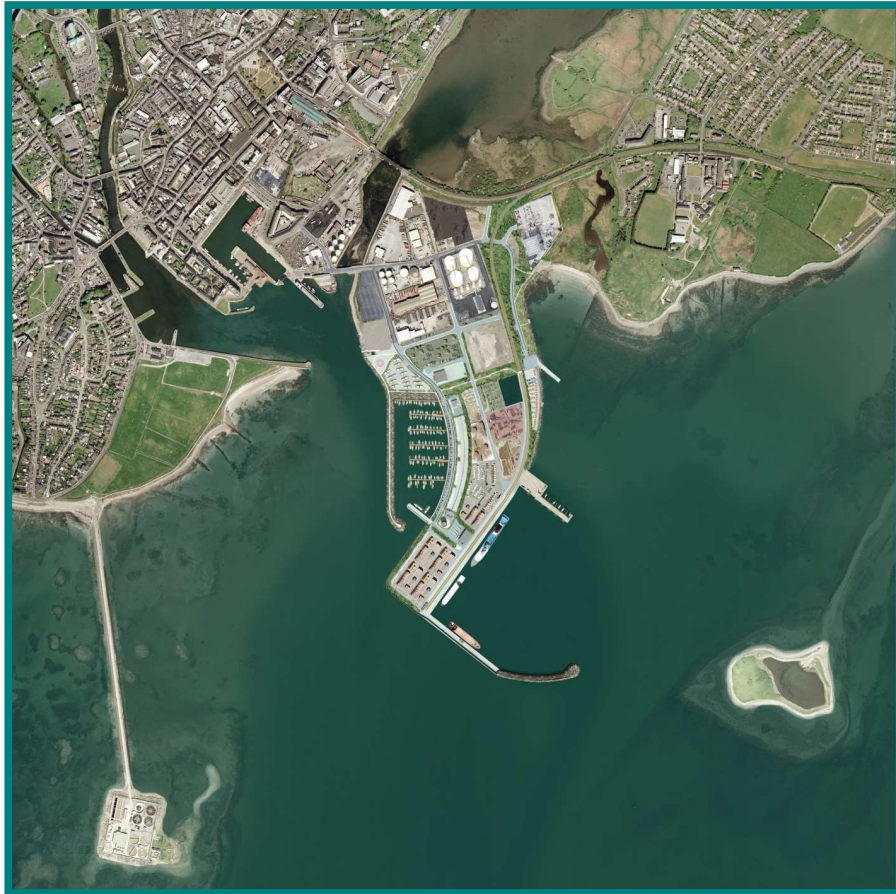


Table of Contents

3.1. INTRODUCTION	2
3.2. REVIEW OF ANY MATERIAL CHANGES TO RELEVANT CHAPTER IN ORIGINAL EIS.....	2
3.3. STATEMENT OF AUTHORITY.....	2
3.4. REPORT FORMAT	2
3.5. SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS CONCLUSIONS OF CHAPTER IN ORIGINAL EIS	3
3.6. ANY ADDITIONAL SURVEYS, DATA OR POLICY DEVELOPMENTS OF RELEVANCE	4
3.7. CONCLUSION	4

3.1. Introduction

3.2. Review of any material changes to relevant chapter in original EIS

The original EIS chapter provides an outline of the main alternatives which were studied at each stage and an indication of main reasons for choosing the proposed development, taking into account the environmental effects. Alternatives assessed include:

1. 'Do Nothing'
2. Improvements to the existing inner harbour
3. Alternative scale/designs as proposed
4. Alternative locations in the inner Galway Bay (i.e. Tawin & Mutton Island)
5. Alternative ports beyond Galway Bay (i.e. ports of national significance as defined in the National Ports Policy)
6. Alternatives abroad

The assessment of alternative solutions concluded as follows:

- Project objectives cannot be met in a 'do nothing' scenario
- The outcome in the case of improvements to the existing Inner Harbour is similar to the 'do nothing' scenario
- The alternative scales/designs and alternative locations in Inner Galway Bay are more damaging to the Natura 2000 sites
- Alternative solutions beyond Galway Bay do not meet the project objectives
- The project aims cannot be met by locating the facility abroad

3.3. Statement of Authority

This chapter has been compiled by Pamela Harty who is a Project Director with MKO with over 15 years of experience in both private practice and local authorities. Pamela completed a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) Geography & Legal Science, NUI Galway (2006) and a Masters in Regional & Urban Planning, UCD (2008). Pamela has been the Project Planning Consultant on a significant range of energy infrastructure, commercial, student housing and residential projects.

Orla McCafferty is a Project Planner at MKO and also worked on compiling this chapter. Orla completed a Master of Regional and Urban Planning (MRUP), University College Dublin (2021) and a BA, Arts with Geography and Sociology and Politics, NUI Galway (2019). Orla has worked on a large range of projects including Strategic Housing Developments, and has Project management skills in commercial, educational, public infrastructure and residential projects of various scales, as well as various strategic projects.

3.4. Report Format

The purpose of this report is to provide an update in relation to the main alternatives studied for the proposed development.

The following alternatives were considered:

- Option A: Do Nothing- Zero Option- i.e. continue to operate Galway Harbour at its current location and subject to existing tidal constraints, limits on ship size and limited quay length.
- Option B: Alternative locations within Galway Bay- possibility of developing new port facilities at Mutton Island or Tawin Island or expanding existing harbour facilities at Rossaveel (37 kilometres west of Galway City) to cater for commercial freight.

-
- Option C: Alternative locations outside Galway Bay, such as Shannon-Foynes Port or other ports that would be capable of handling the existing and planned future commercial freight tonnage at Galway Port.
 - Option D: Alternative configurations for a port expansion, including alternative layouts and more limited extensions with a smaller footprint to provide some but not all of the proposed activities.

It is noted that development at Rossaveel Fishery Harbour Centre was permitted under Pl. Ref. 17/967 and extended under Pl. Ref. 23/218. The development consents for Rossaveel were subject to a Judicial Review challenge by Wild Ireland Defence CLG (High Court Record Number 2023 1007 JR). It is understood that Galway County Council have subsequently conceded this challenge. A review of the ePlanning system was undertaken on 30 August 2024 and there is no evidence that a new application in relation to the development has been submitted.

The proposed development at Rossaveel Fishery Harbour Centre, if permitted, will consist of a deep-water quay which will provide 200 metres of outside berthing frontage at Rossaveel Harbour. A reclamation area will also be constructed directly behind the deep-water quay which will provide a hard surfaced link to the existing onshore. The development will also include low concrete sea walls, a rock armour revetment, access road, lighting, drainage infrastructure and other ancillary site works.

The proposed Galway Harbour Extension seeks to 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.
- 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 harbour to allow positive road traffic and environmental benefits.

Based on the above description of the previously permitted development at Rossaveel and the requirements of the Galway Harbour Extension project, it is clear that, even if the proposed development at Rossaveel were applied for again, it would not meet the project objectives for the Galway Harbour Extension. It is also clear that to option to relocate to Rossaveel would not be feasible due to its distance from, and lack of connectivity with Galway City. These conclusions are supported by the Statement of Case in support of the proposed development issued by An Bord Pleanála on 24 March 2021 (see Appendix 2.2.).

3.5. Summary of previous conclusions of chapter in original EIS

The previous EIS Chapter 3 drew the following conclusions:

- *Project objectives cannot be met in a ‘do nothing’ scenario*
- *The outcome in the case of improvements to the existing Inner Harbour is similar to the ‘do nothing’ scenario*
- *The alternative scales/designs and alternative locations in Inner Galway Bay are more damaging to the Natura 2000 site*
- *Alternatives beyond Galway Bay do not meet the project objectives*
- *The project aims cannot be met by locating the facility abroad*

GHE therefore represents the least damaging option environmentally in terms of meeting the project objectives, including compliance with national policy and the socio-economic wellbeing of the region.

3.6. Any additional surveys, data or policy developments of relevance

A review of the National Planning Applications Database map viewer identified the planning application which is referred to in section 3.4 above. As outlined in section 3.4 above, this project would not meet the requirements of the proposed Galway Harbour Extension.

3.7. Conclusion

In MKO's professional opinion, the findings and conclusions of the original EIS, - 'Chapter 3 Alternatives' remain valid.

