

# Galway Harbour Company



## Galway Harbour Extension

Response to An Bord Pleanála Sept. 2024

EIS Addendum Chapter 13.1

Architectural / Cultural

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### **13.1.1. Introduction**

This chapter is prepared by Paul Mannion. Paul is an Associate with Scott Tallon Walker Architects, leading the Galway studio of the practice. He is responsible for the direction of a wide variety of institutional and commercial projects in both the west of Ireland and the UK. Paul has particular interests in conservation and master planning/urbanism and has worked on the campus masterplan and the conservation of the Quadrangle building of the University of Galway campus, as well long-term planning of University Hospital Galway across two sites and the Vision Plan for Galway Inner Harbour. Paul is motivated by design at every level: design to achieve quality, an elegant solution, and a sustainable future. He supports the teaching of architecture & urbanism at the School of Engineering at University of Galway.

Chapter 13.1 of the original Environmental Impact Statement (“EIS”) relates to the Architectural / Cultural aspects of the proposed Galway Harbour Extension (“GHE”). The chapter outlines the cultural impact of the movement of various operations from the existing Harbour which will stay entirely in its place but its functions will change. The chapter provided a visual assessment of the works proposed at Lough Atalia Bridge which were then completed in 2015.

The impact of the proposed new port development is considered less a land reclamation project from the bay area and more as a physical and cultural extension of the city in the 2014 document. This consideration was supported by reference to a separate study titled “Physical, Cultural and Architectural Study”. This study referenced the 2010 vision for the inner harbour as an extension of the city centre as a second source of identity for the city. Since then the Galway Harbour Company commissioned a Vision Document, underpinned by a planning framework, in anticipation of the new port development, to transform the existing inner harbour lands into a high-density, walkable, zero-carbon district for urban living and working. The vision is to extend the city centre around the existing docks and reconnect it to Galway Bay with a new harbour waterfront, a variety of attractive public spaces, and walking and cycle routes that connect with the wider city. The proposed uses include a mix of residential apartments and a variety of work environments, for start-ups, scale-ups and firms locating to Galway. A range of visitor, cultural and leisure activities are proposed around and reusing the existing docks. This Vision Document supports National, Regional and City Planning Objectives to develop Galway as a compact, sustainable city by 2040. The underpinning planning framework to the Vision Document responds to and addresses the current environmental challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss – it is based on creating a compact city, reusing brownfield land, and minimising environmental impact. This document is looks forward to the development of the new port and

represents Galway Harbour Company's vision as to how it envisages the inner harbour lands will be utilised in the future.

The planning framework for the future of the inner harbour includes principles for sustainable flood management to counter tidal surges and increased rainfall events, and for nature and biodiversity to be integrated throughout to benefit people's health and wellbeing. The framework also includes principles to minimise both embodied and operational carbon. In addition to the provision of housing and places of employment, the opportunity to redevelop the inner harbour lands will open up very extensive waterfront recreation areas and multi-function public spaces in the city centre. It will also continue the promenade-South Park waterfront 'greenway' from the Spanish Arch to Renmore. The opportunity to develop in line with this framework, therefore, will result in a significant extension of the public realm within the city centre area. The framework itself recognises the completed development of the adjacent Bonham Quay site and anticipates the proposals emerging for the Ceannt Station area.

#### ***13.1.2. Report Format***

The purpose of this report is to bring the EIS up to date. There are no changes to the proposed development and so the purpose of this section of the EIS Addendum 2024 is to confirm if there are any updates required to Chapter 13.1.

#### ***13.1.3. Review of any material changes to relevant chapter in original EIS.***

The original EIS Chapter 13.1 outlines the cultural impact of the movement of various operations from the existing Harbour and provides a visual assessment of the works proposed at Lough Atalia Bridge.

#### ***13.1.4. Summary of previous conclusions of chapter in original EIS.***

##### **13.1.4.1. Cultural Loss Conclusion**

The cultural loss is not measurable in any objective way, but will be a loss nevertheless. However, the loss is insignificant in comparison to the potential loss of the overall shipping industry to Galway, which the relocated harbour is designed to prevent.

#### **13.1.4.2. Lough Atalia Bridge Conclusion**

The purpose of the works was both practical and necessary in the context of Health & Safety, Traffic Safety, Vehicular Safety and general risk to the bridge structure and the works was complete in 2015.

#### ***13.1.5. Any additional surveys, data or policy developments of relevance.***

The analysis remain valid in terms of the cultural aspects and the conclusion remains the same as outlined above.

The lowering of the road under Lough Atalia Bridge was completed in 2015 by Galway City Council under a Part XI / Part 8 Planning process.

#### ***13.1.6. Cumulative Impacts***

##### **Purpose of this section**

This section identifies updates to potential cumulative impacts from the GHE project in combination with other developments in the surrounding area which have been built or approved since the EIS was submitted. The EPA defines a cumulative effect as:

*The addition of many minor or insignificant effects, including effects of other projects, to create larger, more significant effects.*

##### **Cumulative assessment area**

Current best practice initially involves identifying the cumulative assessment area. This area encompasses:

- All potential impacts within range of the proposed development
- Other developments which are in potential range of these, including existing developments, developments under construction, and projects previously permitted but not yet built. Mooted projects which are widely recognised, or due to enter the planning process shortly, may also require consideration.

The size of this assessment area varies with discipline. In relation to archaeology, the area typically extends out to 1 km for a project such as the GHE proposal. Taking into account the characteristics of the project, and the likely nature of other potential projects in the local area, the 1 km assessment radius is considered appropriate here.

### **Projects identified in assessment area**

The project team identified an exhaustive list of development projects approved by various authorities in the Galway area since the 2014 EIS was submitted (See Chapter 2). Projects within a 1 km assessment radius of the GHE boundary have been reviewed to determine if:

- Any new relevant sites have been constructed since 2014 in closer proximity to the GHE site than impacts assessed in the 2014 EIS.
- Any new relevant sites have been permitted in proximity to the GHE site in recent years, but which have not yet built.
- Any new proposals of note have been approved within 1 km of the GHE site since 2014, which might affect architecture.
- Any new proposals within 1 km have received permission, but have not yet been built, and may thus result in construction or operational impacts of note in future years.

A fundamental component of the EIA is to consider and assess the potential for cumulative effects of the project with other projects, plans and activities.

The potential for significant effects is mainly due to proximity. In summary the potential for cumulative effects on Architecture is as a result of localised projects. However, the only impact is localised and is not capable of giving rise to cumulative effects.

No significant effects are predicted for the project. This is due to the fact that the other developments already have their mitigation measures in place. All residual impacts are predicted to be not significant.

Table 13.1-1 summarises a review of identified projects listed in the project databases searched. The review indicates that there are no projects of potential cumulative significance, and therefore cumulative impacts are not expected.

Table 13.1-1: Projects of potential cumulative significance.

<b>Database</b>	<b>Analysis</b>
Part 8 applications	No new sites constructed or proposed since 2014 nearer to the GHE boundary than the those assessed in the 2014 EIS, or which might themselves influence architecture and cultural.
An Bord Pleanála cases 2014-2016	No new sites constructed or proposed since 2014 nearer to the GHE boundary than those assessed in the 2014 EIS, or which might themselves influence architecture.
An Bord Pleanála cases 2016-2024	84 projects listed within 1 km of the GHE boundary. None of these are, or will be, nearer to the GHE boundary than those assessed in the 2014 EIS, and none currently, or will in future, influence architecture and cultural.
Waste databases	Permission granted for four projects within 1 km (Colas oil depot, Topaz oil depot, Hazel Mountain Chocolate, wastewater treatment plant). The 2024 baseline survey indicates that none of these influences the architecture.
EPA licensed waste facilities	There are no facilities within 1 km.
EPA licensed IPC facilities	There are no facilities within 1 km.
EIA location point	Most identified points relate to the proposed N6 Galway Bypass, and the proposed Bus Connects scheme. The bypass project does not have any implications for the archaeology proposed GHE development. The Bus Connects scheme does not have any implications for the architectural and cultural in the proposed project. Both projects will have localised impacts with their own mitigations measures similar to the Galway Harbour Extension.
Seveso points	The Circle K oil depot at the Galway Harbour Enterprise Park is the only site in proximity. This facility does not influence the architecture.
Local authority planning applications 2014-2024	136 projects located within 1 km of the GHE boundary. None of these are, or will be, nearer to the GHE boundary than receptors assessed in the 2014 EIS. The following projects were further considered:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ceannt Station original planning reference 1418, Ceannt Station amendment planning reference 2287, Augustine Hill most recent planning reference 2047: These sites have localised site works and will have their own mitigation measures and are designed in accordance with the City Development Plan.</li> <li>- Planning reference 173: Bitumen storage facility at Galway Harbour Enterprise Park. The facility does not include any architectural impacts of significance.</li> <li>- Planning reference 18402: Improvements to sportsground facilities at College Road. Facilities have been located here for many years previously, and thus the development has not resulted in architectural impacts.</li> </ul>
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**Conclusions in relation to impacts**

From an Architectural perspective all permitted and proposed projects as detailed in Chapter 2 and Appendix 2.1 were reviewed. As the works in the Galway Harbour Extension are localised and remote from the city, the cumulative impact is not significant. No cumulative impacts were identified. The Galway Harbour Extension project will have its own mitigation measures as will any projects that are adjacent and all will be in line with the City Development Plan. Chapter 12 on Landscape and Visual outlines the visual impact in detail.

- No projects of cumulative significance have been constructed since the original EIS was submitted in 2014, and there are no permitted but unbuilt projects of potential cumulative significance.

***13.1.6. Assessment of validity of earlier conclusions or any necessary amendments to same.***

There are no changes to the conclusions due to the passage of time except that the lowering of the road under Lough Atalia Bridge has already been completed in 2015 by Galway City Council under a Part 8 Planning Permission and it has been an overall positive impact as predicted.



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### **13.1.7. Conclusion**

The physical and cultural impact of the harbour extension on Galway City and its environment was assessed. This included not only an assessment of the impact of the proposed development on known sites of architectural or cultural significance but on the physical character of the city, with the cultural impacts concerned with the traditional and social assets.

The people of Galway have both active and passive links with the port of Galway, in a variety of ways. From the port workers / fishers / anglers to the marina users and to the locals visiting the docks to see the variety of vessels that use the facility, the port means different things to different people. The local and tourist interest in the Volvo Ocean Races in the past and the Cruise and Ferries etc recent years, all of which had the existing port at its heart, resonated strongly in the city. Essentially the port is part of Galway life and, with its direct maritime functions, is an essential part of the City's cultural make-up. The proposed extension to the harbour will allow the existing historic port precinct to develop as a sustainable mixed-use urban quarter, a place to live, work and enjoy, integral to the city and city living. This opportunity has given rise to the "Inner Harbour Regeneration Project" referenced in Section 10.6 of the Galway City Development Plan 2023 – 2029. The project relates to the potential development of 17 acres of land situated at the Inner Harbour Lands surrounding the existing gated Galway Docks and to the East towards Lough Atalia Bridge and Lough Atalia Channel. A vision document, underpinned by a planning framework, has been prepared in relation to this project and was released to the public in May 2021.

<https://www.galway-harbour.com/>

The vision document provides that the historic fabric of the Inner Harbour will be secured for access, interpretation and sustainable future uses that will link the historic city centre to the new port area. The historic Inner Harbour will provide a breathing space for the city, by transforming the existing harbour into a public realm event space and by creating 'green/blue links' connecting up pedestrian and cycle routes along the river and waterfront. The proposed port extension will be a new focal point for the ongoing interest in the maritime activities that has characterised the relationship Galway has with its port.

There are no changes to the conclusions due to the passage of time except that the lowering of the road under Lough Atalia Bridge has already been completed in 2015 by Galway City Council under a Part XI / Part 8 Planning process and it has been an overall positive impact as predicted.

