



Irish National Sailing and Powerboat School

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Submission relating to

National Marine Planning Framework Baseline Report

To whom it may concern,

The Irish National Sailing & Powerboat School welcomes the forthcoming implementation of a Marine Spatial Plan and supports what in our view is a much-needed strategic approach to managing our marine space.

Irish National Sailing & Powerboat School – Introduction

The Irish National Sailing & Powerboat School was founded in 1978 as a community sailing project by Alistair Rumball with the purpose of getting people who would otherwise never have set foot on a boat onto the water in a safe and enjoyable manner. This has proved an extremely successful model and we have grown steadily since to be the largest sailing school in Ireland and the UK. Our ethos is centred around being a community orientated, professionally managed sailing school, fostering strong links to local schools, sailing clubs and other groups.

Training programmes include a busy children's Summer course schedule from our base in Dun Laoghaire training over 2,500 youngsters each year. Adult sailing and powerboat programmes run year-round, with courses from beginner to advanced on offer to both private, commercial and state customers. In addition, we have an extensive school's sailing programme, introducing primary and secondary school students to the marine environment. We've also initiated a marine ecology programme, recognised by Science Foundation Ireland as part of their network of "Discover Primary Science and Maths" Centres. We also offer programmes to youth groups, community groups, sports teams, guides and scouts.

This is made possible by our dedicated team of 8 full time staff and over 100 instructors, most of whom are school and college aged. The skills they develop in training people to sail or powerboat go on to stand to this cohort, with transferable skills that enhance their employment opportunities in a wide variety of sectors.

In 2018 we introduced over 7,000 people to the water, providing a safe and affordable gateway to marine participation in Ireland on 12 month-of-the-year basis.

If you're interested in learning more about our story, please view our up to date company profile available here: <https://www.inss.ie/fileupload/Company%20Profile%20December%202018.pdf>

In addition to training activities, we're heavily involved in the provision of marine services and consultancy to film and television productions. We have recently completed 8 series with the "Vikings"

TV series serving as marine coordinators. Previous feature projects have included “Saving Private Ryan”, “The Guard”, “PS I Love You”, “Robin Hood” and television productions including “Treasure Island” and “Peter Pan”. This aspect of the business involves operating in marine and inland environments and has allowed us to develop an extensive expertise outside of the traditional sail training sphere on a national wide level.

Consultation Responses

In response to the consultation on the baseline report we have structured our feedback to address the areas in which we have relevant experience, acquired over 40 years of training and operating in the marine environment all over Ireland.

Consultation Question 1: The Baseline Report is intended to capture and summarise all of the sectoral activities that are taking place in Ireland’s marine spaces. Thinking about your own knowledge and experience, are there gaps in what is presented in this report and, if so, how can they be addressed?

We note in section 21.2 (Sport and Recreation – Sailing) that a picture of the health of the industry is provided. We generally do not provide numbers to “Irish Sailing” the national governing body for sailing and powerboating, so therefore the scale of sailing is likely to be underestimated. Reported participation of 19,000 sailing club members, 13,500 event participants and 6,000 people who participated in Irish Sailing’s Try Sailing initiative are unlikely to include the 7,000 people who participate on a programme from the Irish National Sailing & Powerboat School. We would also suggest that other commercial operators may not be included in this figure.

We also note that there is a detailed section on marine tourism. In our experience of the industry involved with marine training for leisure users, and the businesses providing services to these users, tends to be focused under the “tourism heading”. While services offered by providers such as us are relevant to tourists, the significant proportion of the work undertaken serves the domestic local market. We would suggest exploring a heading that captures these sectors, focussing on the economic benefits these activities have on coastal communities including the cultural and heritage benefits this activity supports.

Groupings such as the Marine Industry Federation (which we note and welcome their inclusion on the stakeholder advisory group) may be best placed to assist in providing data as to the scale and contribution of the businesses that support sports and recreational use of our marine space.

Consultation Question 2: Thinking about how we enjoy, protect, or derive economic and social benefits from our seas, what things would you like the marine plan to address?

The Irish National Sailing & Powerboat School supports the increased utilisation of our seas for both economic and social objectives. In response to this consultation question we have limited our

observations to three specific things we would like the marine plan to address which fall within our area of expertise.

Maintenance and Enhancement of Access to the Marine Environment

We currently enjoy relatively unburdened access to the marine space to deliver recreational and commercial training. We would seek, in so far as is possible, for this easy access not to be hindered but instead enhanced. Dun Laoghaire harbour used to be a relatively busy commercial ferry port, and as such we are well used to operating within the constraints imposed by large scale commercial activity. We would like to see the impact of any new activity to be considered in the context of access to safe space to train and develop recreational skills, and where large-scale development is undertaken, accommodation is made for novice and less experienced boaters to develop the skills they need to enjoy the marine environment.

We believe there is a greater contribution to Ireland economy and social fabric to be made by the water sports and marine leisure sector, and ensuring easy access to the marine space is vital for this.

Safety at Sea – Increased use leading to increased conflicts

Increased use of our waters will increase the likelihood of marine users meeting each other, or their equipment, while on the water. The marine plan should address how these conflicts can be minimised, for example, through ensuring that any equipment installed is safe for other marine users to be around. For example, this can be as simple as ensuring that fishing gear is not only clearly marked, but that lines used must not be positioned to be floating on or near the surface to catch other vessels unaware. We would also support the encouragement of all marine users to ensure that they are appropriately trained to use the marine space. We would also support any effort that would be made to educate all users of the other user's needs are, assisting in avoiding conflict by understanding what actions the other user is likely to take while at sea, and how each other's limitations may affect user's ability to react to each other.

Marine Restricted Areas

We fully understand the need for certain activities to enjoy exclusive use of certain areas of marine space to operate safely and efficiently. We would encourage that a one-size fits all approach is not taken if and Marine Restricted Area is to be established in the future and detailed examination would take place as to whether small boat and recreational activities would need be excluded and that stakeholders and industry representatives are engaged in this process.

Consultation Question 3: Do the Marine Plan Objectives broadly capture or reflect things you want to see in the plan? If not, and in the context of the high level nature of these overarching objectives, are there additional objectives that should be included or should the draft objectives be amended?

We are satisfied the Marine Plan Objective broadly reflect both what we would like to see in the plan and align with our school's ethos as developed over the last 40 years.

Consultation Question 4: The objectives of a marine plan can be supported or achieved in a number of statutory ways. Some countries have used a policy based approach to guide decisions of statutory authorities with respect to specific sectoral developments or activities. Others have opted for a more prescriptive zoning approach (similar to on-land zoning through County Development Plans in Ireland). Taking account of the extent of Ireland’s marine area and the varying degree of activity that take place in our waters what do you think would be the most appropriate means of supporting the objectives of Ireland’s marine plan – prescriptive, policy or somewhere in the middle?

We have no observations to make on this consultation question from our area of expertise.

Consultation Question 5: How can the marine plan be best aligned with the NPF?

We have no observations to make on this consultation question based on our area of expertise.

Consultation Question 6: How can Ireland’s marine plan be used as part of Ireland’s climate change adaption measures?

We have no observations to make on this consultation question based on our area of expertise.

Consultation Question 7: What measures do you think should be put in place to support optimal transboundary (including cross-border with Northern Ireland and with other parts of the UK) cooperation on marine planning?

We would encourage transboundary cooperation to ensure that sea routes between marinas and major sailing destinations remain un-impeded facilitating both cruising and racing between these destinations. We would encourage that any Marine Restricted Areas (for example for offshore wind) take into account these sea routes and that minimal detours would be required.

Consultation Question 8: What infrastructure investments need to be made in order to maximise the sustainable potential of our ocean resources?

Ireland has a fantastic network of high-quality marinas around the coastline, essential for developing a tourism offering centred around yacht cruising. Currently the network, although very well developed has a number of small gaps. We would support any infrastructural investment that eases use of the marine space for commercial training and recreational activities.

These users will need support services and an increase in marine recreation will benefit the marine industry as a whole, helping to sustain the cultural and heritage aspects of coastal communities by providing employment prospects within them.

Consultation Question 9: Environmental Assessment will be an important part of the preparation of Ireland's draft marine plan and the plan itself. What are the relevant significant issues to be addressed by the SEA and AA processes and what environmental objectives should be used?

We have no observations to make on this consultation question based on our area of expertise.

Consultation Question 10: This document is an important milestone in the development of a single national marine plan for the entirety of Ireland's marine area. Thinking about the delivery of forward planning goals, what do you think would be the appropriate spatial hierarchy for future marine planning; for example regional marine planning, a coastal zone or bay approach?

The area of our operations, other businesses like ours, and indeed most leisure users occurs well within 3 nautical miles of MHW. Our preference would be for a consistent set of rules for this area on a nationwide basis, effectively a coastal zone plan (albeit taking into account that large scale commercial activities generally facilitate the maintenance and provision of shoreside marine infrastructure for small boaters, so as to not exclude a large scale commercial activity that may have the knock on effect of actually improving access to the water for a great number of people).

Notwithstanding our preference for clear and consistent national set of rules, we also feel that there may be advantages to specific plans for areas where there is the potential to increase commercial leisure service activities, recreational activities and indeed tourism related activities. Dublin Bay would be a prime example of where all three of these activities intermingle with fisheries and commercial shipping from Dublin Port. While most activities are well represented, the tourism potential for the bay is not yet realised in any great degree. In cases such as this, we can see the benefit for targeted plans to boost a range of related activities to enhance local economic and social prospects.

Consultation Question 11: What levers are needed to deliver greater efficiencies in administration and governance, when it comes to implementing and monitoring the NMPF?

We have no observations to make on this consultation question based on our area of expertise.

Consultation Question 12: What are the key indicators for measuring the successful implementation of the NMPF?

Our overarching principal has been to make the marine environment as accessible as possible to the widest range of people in a manner where safe participation is the number one objective.

We would consider the successful implementation of the NMPF to include an increased level of economic and social use of the sea in a manner that does not compromise the safety of both current and future users.

Summary and Correspondence Details

We would like to re-iterate our support for the National Marine Planning Framework and indeed our support for increased economic productivity from our seas. We are approaching this from a viewpoint to increase participation and education in the marine environment, yielding economic, but equally important social, cultural and heritage benefits for participants. We have spent 40 years working very hard to dispel the notion that leisure use of the seas is an exclusive activity and support any actions underway to increase the use of the sea by all.

The Irish National Sailing & Powerboat School would like to thank the MSP team for their efforts informing us of the information surrounding this process, in particular for welcoming us to the Commissioners of Irish Light's in Dun Laoghaire for one of the series of information sessions and indeed for the Baseline Report's launch in DCU. Both events were very informative and coupled with excellent information provided by the team via social media updates, have greatly aided our engagement with this consultation.

We look forward to continuing this engaging again in the future.

Best Regards,

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