



Galway Harbour Company DAC (trading as The Port of Galway)
Comhlacht Cuain na Gaillimhe DAC (ag trádáil mar Calafort na Gaillimhe)

The Galway Harbour Company wish to make a submission on the 'National Marine Planning Framework – Baseline Report'. The purpose of this submission is to ensure that the finalised and adopted 'National Marine Planning Framework' takes cognisance of the importance and potential of Galway Port and Inner Dock area to the future development of marine planning in the western region.

Galway Port is an important transport facility serving both Galway City and the wider western region. Coastal connectivity is a crucial element of the development of the West of Ireland. The port has significant potential for expansion for freight, fishing, cruise and renewable energy projects. Improvement of port facilities is of strategic importance to Galway city and region. It is also of strategic importance to the future Marine Planning in the area. Improved port facilities will ensure that the natural marine facilities of the area are being utilised to their maximum potential for the benefit of future generations of Galwegians.

As part of the company's initial submission, we would like to note the following:

- 1 Regularisation of legacy foreshore issues
- 2 Potential Harnessing the power of ocean wealth on the west of Ireland.
- 3 Access issues for the west of Ireland to be addressed by the development of the Port of Galway

1 Regularisation of Legacy Foreshore Issues

The Galway Harbour Company has a number of legacy foreshore issues within the port estate which need to be regularised. There is currently no system in place to process applications for the regularisation of legacy foreshore issues. We feel that it is vital that legacy foreshore issues be addressed in the National Marine Planning Framework. The regularisation of the legacy foreshore issues will allow all ports and marine areas, including the port of Galway, to develop in a sustainable and planned manner.

2 Potential Harnessing the power of ocean wealth on the west coast of Ireland

The Galway Harbour Company submitted a planning application, in relation to a major port expansion, to An Bord Pleanála as a Strategic Infrastructural Development in January 2014. The port expansion comprises some 20 hectares and extends 980 metres into deep water. Given the strategic location of the Port of Galway, this development has the potential to harness the potential of offshore renewable energy on the West coast of Ireland. The National Marine Planning Framework will enable the port of Galway to capitalise on this potential industry, which will in turn generate employment and enhanced economic activity for the city and region.

Directors – Mr. M. O’Gorman (Chairperson), Mr. F. Greene, Mr. C. McCarthy, Mr. R. McCabe. Mr. C. O’Dowd.

Mr. S. Garvey (Company Secretary)

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Harnessing the potential of Ireland's Ocean Economy can help generate thousands of jobs in the West of Ireland and also help achieve Ireland's target of €6.4bn and 29,000 jobs from the Blue Economy by 2020 and 2.4% of GDP by 2030. 140 million acres of ocean bed rests off the West and N-West NUTs Regions and thus Galway Port is ideally situated to capture the obvious economic benefits for the Western Region, particularly in the area of Marine Renewable Energy which has seen a turnover by the sector of €59m, an increase of activity of 119% (2014-2019). With three Marine Research Centres in Galway (Marine Institute, NUI Galway Ryan Institute and GMIT Marine and Fresh Water Research Centre) and the National Research Ship RV Celtic Explorer based in Galway, the Port of Galway has great potential for innovation and growth and helping Ireland achieve its maritime economic and employment goals as set out in *Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth – an integrated Marine Plan for Ireland*.

The strategy consists of two components:

- 1 Developing sectors that have high potential for sustainable jobs and growth:
 - a. Coastal and Maritime Tourism
 - b. Ocean Energy
 - c. Blue biotechnology
 - d. Aquaculture
 - e. Seabed mining
- 2 Essential components to provide Knowledge, legal certainty and security in the Blue Economy:
 - a. Marine Knowledge – Galway already has three research centres
 - b. Maritime Spatial Planning – The Marine Institute in Rinville West, Oranmore, Co Galway is tasked with ensuring an efficient and sustainable management of activities at sea
 - c. Maritime surveillance – Galway is a base for Irish Patrol Ships.
- 3 Access issues for the West of Ireland to be addressed by the development of the Port of Galway**

Given its location, the Port of Galway is of significant importance to the North Western region of Ireland. In order to ensure balanced regional development and ease of movement of goods and people in and out of the region, the port development is a vital development for the area.

The Galway Harbour Extension will be the single largest single infrastructural development in Galway City and the West of Ireland seaboard over the next 10 years. As a priority, it is essential that the development of the port extension and the marine area be taken into account in the adopted version of the *'National Marine Planning Framework'*. It is a medium-term development in terms of construction extending from 2019 to 2028. The concurrent development/emergence of the Galway Harbour Inner Dock development should also be noted. The draft masterplan is currently being completed and this mixed-use development of over 88,000sq metres will complement significantly the emergence of the port extension and the ongoing development of the Galway seaboard and marine area.