

1.0 INTRODUCTION, SCOPING & CONSULTATION

1.1 Project Summary

The Port of Cork (POC) has appointed a team of specialist consultants to compile an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed alterations to the permitted Ringaskiddy Port Redevelopment. The EIS is required by An Bord Pleanála (the Board) under Section 146C of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) (the Act). A comprehensive description of the proposed alterations is included in Chapter 3 of this EIS.

1.2 Planning Context

Under ABP Ref. No. PA00035m the Board decided on 28th May 2015 to grant a 10-year planning permission for the redevelopment of the existing port facilities at Ringaskiddy. During the detailed design of the proposed works it became evident that the long-term sustainability of the project could be significantly improved by making a number of alterations to the infrastructural works and the landside operations of the permitted container terminal.

On 20th July 2016, POC submitted to the Board a request under Section 146B(1) of the Act to alter the terms of the permission granted under PA00035. On 6th September 2016, the Board determined in accordance with Section 146B(2)(a) of the Act that the proposed alteration would constitute a material alteration to the terms of the development.

The Board therefore decided to invoke Section 146B(8). This required the applicant to publish details of the application and to make a copy of the application documents available to the prescribed bodies and the public. A total of 19 submissions/observations were made.

On 28th October 2016, the Board determined under 146B(4) of the Act that the proposed alteration would be likely to have significant effects on the environment and that an environmental impact statement (EIS) was therefore required in accordance with the provisions of Section 146C (see Appendix 1.3).

1.3 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) - Concept

EIA is a key instrument of European Union environmental policy and a procedure required under the terms of European Union Directives 2011/92/EU (Consolidated EIA Directive) on assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment.

1.4 Environmental Impact Statement - Structure

- Non-Technical Summary
- Volume I. EIS: Main Statement
- Volume II. EIS: Figures & Photomontages
- Volume III. EIS: Appendices

The EIS should be read in conjunction with the associated planning submission to An Bord Pleanála including the planning application drawings. Where figures referenced in the chapters of this EIS are not located within the relevant chapter, they are provided in EIS Volume II. Where appendices are referenced in the chapters of this EIS, they are provided in EIS Volume III.

The EIS comprises the following chapters:

- 01 – Introduction;
- 02 – Need for Alterations & Outline of Alternatives;
- 03 – Project Description;
- 04 – Planning Policy;
- 05 – Human Environment;
- 06 – Cultural Heritage;

- 07 – Landscape and Visual Impact;
- 08 – Traffic and Transportation;
- 09 – Noise and Vibration;
- 10 – Air Quality and Climate;
- 11 – Soils and Geology;
- 12 – Coastal Processes;
- 13 – Water Environment;
- 14 – Marine Ecology
- 15 – Terrestrial Ecology and Ornithology;
- 16 – Interactions / Inter-Relationships;
- 17 – Summary of Response to Observations submitted to An Bord Pleanála.

1.5 Methodology

The EIS follows the format of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Statements (March 2002). The EPA Advice Notes on Current Practices (in the preparation of Environmental Impact Statements) (September 2003) details the topics usually addressed for particular project types.

Whilst details of the methodology used in each individual discipline are given in the relevant chapter of the document each EIS chapter broadly conforms to the following format:

- An Introduction describing the purpose of the chapter;
- A description of the Methodology used in the chapter;
- A description of the aspects of the Existing Environment relevant to the environmental topic under consideration in the context of the proposed alterations;
- An assessment of the likely or potential Impact (including cumulative) of the proposed alterations to the permitted Ringaskiddy Port Redevelopment on the environmental topic;
- Recommendations for Mitigation measures to avoid, reduce or remedy where possible, any significant negative impacts identified; and
- An assessment of the Residual Impact.

1.6 Scoping & Consultation

1.6.1 Introduction

The scope of the EIS is set out in the Board's letter of 28th October 2016 which in turn closely follows the wording of Section 146C of the Act. The POC is required to prepare an environmental impact statement in relation to the proposed alteration of the terms of the development permitted.

This means that the EIS should be focussed on the potential impact of the proposed alterations in the context of the permitted development. The key requirement is that the direct and indirect effects of the alterations, and the cumulative effects of the alterations with the permitted development, are to be considered and assessed.

The scope of the EIS includes the information which is generally required under Section 177 of the Act and Article 94 and Schedule 6 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended) (the Regulations). The EIS should also include any other information prescribed in these Regulations to the extent that it is relevant to:

- the given stage of the consent procedure and to the specific characteristics of the development or type of development concerned, and
- the environmental features likely to be affected.

1.6.2 An Bord Pleanála statutory consultation with relevant bodies

On 6th September 2016, the Board required POC to give notice of the proposed alterations to the prescribed bodies and to invite submissions or observations in relation to the proposal. The Board had regard to the submissions and observations made before deciding under Section 146B(4) of the Act that the proposal would be likely to have significant effects on the environment and that an EIS would therefore be required under Section 146C.

The statutory and non-statutory consultees listed below were informed of the proposed alterations to the permitted Ringaskiddy Redevelopment and invited to submit their comments on the proposals:

- Cork County Council
- Cork City Council
- Minister for Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government
- Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (Development Applications Unit)
- Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment
- Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport
- Minister for Agriculture, Food and Marine
- Minister for Justice and Equality
- Minister for Defence
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland
- National Transport Authority
- Southern Regional Assembly
- An Chomhairle Ealaíon
- Fáilte Ireland
- An Taisce
- Heritage Council
- Inland Fisheries Ireland
- Iarnród Éireann
- Commission for Railway Regulation
- Irish Water
- Irish Aviation Authority
- Office of Public Works
- Birdwatch Ireland
- Health and Safety Authority
- Health Service Executive

The responses received from the Statutory Bodies are provided in Volume III EIS Appendices – Appendix 1.1.

1.6.3 Public Consultation & Submissions

On 7th September 2016, An Bord Pleanála published a notice of the proposed alterations and invited submissions from the wider public with a closing date for submissions on 7th October 2016.

A copy of all submissions from the public and interest groups are provided in Volume III EIS Appendices – Appendix 1.2.