

# **PROPOSED PART 8 DEVELOPMENT**

## **Storage Facilities for Fishermen at South Quay, Arklow**

## **Introduction:**

Arklow Harbour is situated at the mouth of the Avoca River approximately 1.2 miles north of Arklow Head. It has the characteristics of a river port being elongated, which in the case of Arklow is in an East to West direction. Arklow Harbour is midway between Dublin, 38 nautical miles north, and Rosslare Port, 35 nautical miles south. The main harbour entrance is delimited by two parallel piers that run in an east-north-east direction.

There are three commercial berths provided on the North Quay and a lay-by berth on the South Quay. Just off South Quay is a wet dock of approximately 5.5 acres, which has a 14 metre wide entrance. Arklow Harbour is one of the better protected harbours on the east coast with the inner harbour offers almost complete protection from winds in any direction. Average water depths in Arklow are circa 2.5m Lowest Astronomical Tide LAT with 3m LAT available at some berths. Tides at Arklow have an average range of circa 0.8m. The mean high water spring tide is 1.4 and the mean low water spring tide is 0.6m.

## **Proposed Development:**

Wicklow County Council was awarded funding under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) South East Fisheries Local Action Group Programme (FLAG) administered by Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) for the development of storage facilities for fishermen at Arklow Harbour. A maximum grant of up to €140,000.00 was allocated to Wicklow County Council based on a total investment of €200,000.00 (pro rata) with the balance funded by Wicklow County Council. The proposed development involves the construction for storage facilities for active registered fishermen operating registered fishing vessels. The current storage facilities used by fishermen are 40 foot containers held under licence agreements with Wicklow County Council. These containers are not only unsightly but are inadequate as they do not meet the requirements of fishermen. The proposed development will enhance working conditions and provide more secure, accessible and aesthetically pleasing facilities.

The proposed works include:

- Removal of the existing containers
- Construction of up to 14 individual storage units with internal dimensions of approximately 35 sq metres. The overall size of the development is 527m<sup>2</sup>.
- Each unit would be equipped with separate electrical points
- Concrete work slabs of approximately 8m by 4metres will be provided at designated locations between the units
- Subject to additional funding an application will be made to Irish Water to connect the units to mains water.

The proposed development is located at the lower eastern side of the inner harbour / wet dock off the South Quay at an area currently occupied by forty foot containers used by fishermen.

## Arklow Development Plan

The Arklow Development Plan 2018 to 2024 emphasis the importance of the Harbour by identifying it as one of the key areas. Arklow's waterfront is considered to be "a key recreational and tourism amenity, the quays and harbour are an infrastructural asset and an important source of economic activity associated with the town". The Plan notes that "pursuing an enhanced role for this area would benefit the town as a whole". It further notes that "whilst it is important that the port remains commercially competitive there may be opportunities for the enhancement of the area alongside the sustainable regeneration and re-development of the port, harbour and quay areas".

The location of the proposed development is within as area zoned as "Waterfront". Arklow's "Waterfront Zone" comprises the port, marinas, harbour, quays, north and south beaches and adjoining lands. The 'Waterfront Zone' (WZ) is made up of two distinct areas north and south of the river.

Both the north and south marinas facilitate shipping and commercial fishing related activity. The Arklow Development Plan notes that in terms of infrastructure the port, quays and marinas are important physical infrastructural assets with daily shipping activities. The waterfront area plays an important role in the infrastructural provision for the town. Facilitating the continued use and enhancement of such infrastructure is important in any development proposals for this area.

The importance of supporting the fishing industry is noted in the strategic objectives of the Waterfront Zone. Strategic Objective WZ3 provides for the following

**"To support existing and proposed water related and maritime activities in the Waterfront Zone including sailing, fishing, other water sports and commercial shipping activities, including the development of jetties, marinas and other support infrastructure"**

Chapter 4 of the Arklow Development Plan covers the area of Economic Development and Employment. This chapter notes that the maritime sector in Arklow benefits from a host of assets and activities capable of expansion and development including: shore-side services, shipping services, repair and maintenance, fishing, tourism and leisure, servicing of the off-shore renewable energy industry, maritime financial services etc. Wicklow County Council supports the identification and realisation of the economic opportunities within this sector.

## Local Economic and Community Plan

The economic element of the Local Economic and Community Plan was developed by the Economic Strategic Policy Committee and the Enterprise Directorate of the Council. The LECP sets out 10 overarching goals for economic and community development within County Wicklow including goal 8 which states:

"Capitalise on Wicklow's unique attributes and proximity to the Dublin market, excellent quality of life, human capital, tourism, landscape, marine, agricultural and forestry resources"

## Environmental Issues

The proposal has undergone Appropriate Assessment Screening under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). Wicklow County Council has carried out a screening of the proposed development to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if the development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, would be likely to have a significant effect on a European site. Accordingly, Wicklow County Council has determined that the proposed development would not be likely to have a significant effect on a European site. The subject site does not impact on statutory environmental designations such as Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) or Special Area of Conservation (SACs).

## Flood Risk Assessment:

Arklow Flood Defense Scheme Feasibility Report (2017) predicts a 1:200 return period (0.5% Annual Exceedance Probability, AEP) event at approximately 1.82 metres above Ordnance Datum. This is just below the proposed floor level in the storage units (2.08 m to 2.35 m OD). As the proposed use of the storage facilities is dockside, the 2009 OPW Guidelines for Planning Authorities would consider the storage facilities as being in Zone A:

*Zone A - High probability of flooding. Most types of development would be considered inappropriate in this zone. Development in this zone should be avoided and/or only considered in exceptional circumstances, such as in city and town centres, or in the case of essential infrastructure that cannot be located elsewhere, and where the Justification Test has been applied. Only water-compatible development, such as docks and marinas, **dockside activities that require a waterside location**, amenity open space, outdoor sports and recreation, would be considered appropriate in this zone*

Also, the guidelines would consider the proposed storage in Flood Zone B.

*Less vulnerable development, such as retail, commercial and industrial uses, sites used for short-let for caravans and camping and secondary strategic transport and utilities infrastructure, **and water-compatible development** might be considered appropriate in this zone.*

However, as per an examination of the published CFRAMs (OPW's Floodinfo.ie), and specifically the coastal zone flood mapping for Arklow, the proposed development will be in Flood Zone C,

*ie where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is low (less than 0.1% or 1 in 1000 for both river and coastal flooding)*

The Arklow Flood Defense Scheme is planning a wall around the Dock, to be tied in to the kerb just behind the proposed huts, thus the proposed huts are compatible with the proposed Flood Defense Scheme.

## **Traffic Impact:**

The proposed development will sit on virtually the same site as the current containers and there should be no significant impact on traffic. The existing road to the south beach runs to the rear of the proposed site and will not be impacted by the proposals. Yellow boxes will be marked on the quay to the front of the units to discourage unauthorised parking which would prevent access to the units.

## **Construction:**

The construction of the new huts will be a concrete slab supporting solid blockwork with a flat render finish to the front rear and side of the blocks of units.

The Units will be split into three blocks. Two of six units each and one of two units (each unit 30m<sup>2</sup> internal area.). Each block will be separated by an 8m wide by 5.6m deep concrete hard standing.

The units will have a standing seam curved roof that at the front of the units will be 3.8m from the finished slab level and 2.8m from the finished slab level at the back. The curve will be formed on a 19m radius to provide an interesting feature to the units rather than them having a monopitched constant sloped roof.

Access to the units will be via double swing doors that have the ability to open 180 degrees. A 1.5m concrete slab to the front of the unit (nominal fall of 1:50 from the unit) will then lead onto a ramp at a fall of 1:12 down to the existing level of the quay hardstanding / access road / path.

Colours of render finish to the elevations, doors and roof finish are to be agreed with the planning authority as part of the part 8 planning process.

## **Services:**

### Power & Lighting

Power will be supplied from the existing electrical service on the south quay by providing new ducted service to each individual unit which will be supplied with a pay as you go meter.

### Water & Foul Drainage

Fishermen / Occupiers will be able to avail of the existing supply tap on the quayside of the harbour until such additional funding becomes available for a buried looped water main service to be installed with a metered supply connection to each unit.

### Waste

Fishermen / Occupiers of the storage facilities will be able to avail of the existing waste facilities in the harbour / skip service managed by Wicklow County Council.

