



STATEMENT TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS NETWORKS

RE: NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN - REVIEW TO RENEW

16TH FEBRUARY 2021

Port of Waterford made its submission to the Review to Renew consultation on the 28th January 2021. This statement to the Joint Committee provides an over-view of that submission.

Port of Waterford operates from Belview Port and handles over 1.5 million tonnes of bulk products (mainly agri-related) together with another 100k+ tonnes of break bulk (mainly timber, steel and project cargoes).

The Port also operates in the Container/Lo-Lo sector handling 50k TEU annually, with spare capacity to significantly increase that throughput.

Belview has excellent inland connectivity including direct access to the M9 and active rail connections into the port.

Strategic Positioning

Port of Waterford is a Tier 2 Port of National Significance and provides infrastructure that is relevant both regionally and nationally.

The National Development Plan (NDP) provides enabling investment to implement the National Planning Framework (NPF) which sets the vision and strategy for the development of the country, balanced across all of our regions, towns and cities, out to the year 2040.

The importance of port connectivity in the context of Brexit and climate change is clearly signposted within the NPF with the inclusion of the following National Strategic Outcomes:

- Outcome 2: Enhanced Regional Accessibility
- Outcome 4: Sustainable Mobility
- Outcome 6: High-Quality International Connectivity

Programme for Government 2020

The Programme for Government states that the Government will work with the Country's port companies to ensure they have the capacity, finance and policy supports to deliver in the years ahead.

Challenges and Opportunities for Port Development

Port of Waterford's masterplan sets out its strategic response to NPF policies and current challenges with respect to Port Development and the wider commercial environment. It identifies development priorities to 2044 that could be implemented in order to meet the needs of the economy over the next 25 years. Off-shore wind investment as well as capacity constraints in Dublin, exacerbated by Brexit, will accelerate the requirement for new capacity and the need for Waterford's Masterplan projects.

Improving Connectivity and Sustainability

We are currently witnessing the relevance that Rosslare has assumed around the provision of services to Roll on/Roll off freight for direct to Europe connections. Waterford has the potential and available capacity to have a similar impact in terms rail freight and Lift on/Lift off services, with direct Lo/Lo services to Europe providing a viable option against using the UK Land-bridge or more expensive direct Ro/Ro routes.

Utilising best transport/logistics options also has the ability to make a significant contribution to transport de-carbonisation.

We have requested an enhanced focus in the NDP around rail freight development in terms of overall support for network viability and investment in rolling stock capacity. In Waterford the portside element and connections are in place with no additional investment required.

On and Off-Shore Wind

Off-Shore wind investment is a key component of the Climate Action Plan and support for off-shore installations represents a significant opportunity for the Country over the next few years. The Port is actively involved in facilitating on-shore wind installations and should be seen as a significant enabler.

Port investment will be required and strategy alignment between the Southeast Ports on this issue is highly desirable. This opportunity will require the acceleration of some or all of the projects identified in the Port of Waterford Masterplan.

Conclusion

The Port of Waterford submission requested that the revised NDP:

- Includes support for the Port of Waterford Master Plan 2020-2044 and the capital projects identified in this Plan.
- Supports the delivery of a rail freight network and investment to facilitate Off-Shore wind.
- Ensures that prescribed bodies have sufficient capacity and resources to engage with capital project development and delivery.

Thank you.

Frank Ronan
Chief Executive