

17/7/18



Therese O'Keefe
Aquaculture and Foreshore Management Division
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
Clogheen,
Clonakilty Co. Cork
P85 TX47

Re: T05/545A

Dear Ms. O'Keefe,

I received your letter concerning our application for an aquaculture licence in Ballymacoda Bay, Co. Cork.

Having reviewed the point raised in the various letters from objectors it looks like the point addressed in the letters is identical to each other which suggests that the letter was drafted by one individual and then just rehashed to suit others' agenda.

The main issues are with potential plastic pollution and visual/amenity impact.

May I point out that the application is for a new area and for people to say that we never clean the beach is an untruth which is put into paint the worst possible picture. How do we need to clean a site that does not exist? Regular clean-ups are undertaken by current operators in the bay and we would plan to continue and even do more frequent clean-ups in conjunction with the people who are concerned, if they wish to work together.

As regards the visual/amenity impact, the trestles are not visible all the time as the area is tidal. If the trestles were always visible then how would any oysters on them grow? The site will be marked as per licence requirements. For people to say otherwise at this point is jumping the gun somewhat. We are of the opinion that there is enough room in the bay for everyone to enjoy.

I trust I have answered the points raised satisfactorily and I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Killian Tighe" followed by a flourish.

Killian Tighe, Marc Perdriel and Michel Mousset.



Baile mhic oda iascliogan teoranta
perdriel marc
3 harbor row
cobh.co.cork

Thérèse O'Keefe
Aquaculture and Foreshore Management Division
National Seafood Centre
Clonakilty
Co. Cork
P85 TX47

Re : Observations made on application of site T05/482 B and T05/545 A

Dear Thérèse,

Thank you for forwarding on the various observations regarding the new application of this site.

I will address the observations individually before summing up in a conclusion for our general renewal licences but as well 482 B and 545 A.
as i may be concern , we do believe the objections have been similar between the newel licences 393 / 482 A / 491 A and the new licences 482 B and 545 A

after the answer to the different objections parties , we would be please to let you have a look to the conclusion

Response to observations made by the Marine Institute :

The site is not an application for a new aquaculture licence as stated in the submission.
The site has been used and had trestles on it
is currently in use.

We agree that the site is located within the designated shellfish growing waters and that the water quality is good for oyster farming and that oyster farming here does not cause any damage to the habitat. In fact oyster farming is beneficial to the ecosystem.

We have a clearly defined access route which we stick to when accessing and egressing the site and the substratum is very good for tractor use.

We will work with BIM to draw up a plan for dealing with potential Invasive Species.

We have a fish Health Authorisation cert from the Marine Institute for dealing with other issues such as disease.

Response to Observations made by Inland Fisheries Ireland

Site T05/482B and T05/545 A are not obstructing the passage of fish into or out of the Womanagh River. It would appear that reference to this may have been made by IFI to applications T05/517A which does cover the mouth of the river. Sites 395/482A and 491A have been operational for many years now without any negative affect on the fish stocks in the Womanagh River. We agree with IFI that our operations have no impact on fish access to the Munster Blackwater given our considerable distance from the mouth of that river system.

IFI refer to expansion of aquaculture maybe posing a physical impediment to both ascending and descending salmonids. As mentionned renewal of sites 395A/482A and 491A is not expansion but maintaining aquaculture at current levels.

The licences 482 B and 545 A are extensions to the right side of the bay , water sides, which are a little extensions of the area going into the deep water and not to the beach side

Again the IFI refer to new infrastructure maybe causing an issue with predation. Again we are not deploying new infrastructure. The appropriate assessment has concluded that no new sites will be licensed only renewal sites.

We have not conflicted with small boat angling in our time in this area so we don't see our continued presence on our renewal sites and new licences application as changing this status.

Our oyster are *Crassostrea Gigas* which are used oyster farmers all over Ireland. And we adhere to Marine Instutute procedures for this species.

Response to observations made by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaelteacht :

We believe that the Appropriate Assessment Process for the SPA takes an ultra-conservative approach to potential impacts on SCI bird populations and we would remind you that renewal sites only cover less than 7% of the area of the SPA. The appropriate assessment is based on the spatial overlap of birds and aquaculture activities and any measured bird responses is a precautionary one.

The appropriate assessment is also based on displacement assumptions from previous limited studies that attempted to assess the interaction between birds and aquaculture and also the winter bird monitoring data for SCI birds is very patchy and therefore of dubious reliability. We note that for these two species mentioned above (the species of key

concern when it comes to renewal applications) that both population trends are favourable and they are doing well. Indeed the Sanderling population is increasing in this bay despite being only stable at a national trend level and the black-tailed godwit is increasing also as is the national trend for this bird. Clearly there is plenty of feeding area available for these species to thrive and they have not been affected by our presence here for the last 14 years. So if one considers that only site T05/395A had trestles on it in 2005 and between then and now sites T05/482A and 491A were developed with trestles added and farming commenced and all did not alter the increasing population trend line of these bird one bit. That in itself speaks volumes about the reality on the ground which is that our oyster farming on these three sites does not negatively impact at all with these two bird species which are of such concern based on model/theory heavily loaded with assumptions. No model can complete with this reality.

Response to Observations from Ballymacoda Ladysbridge Community Council (BLCC) made on :

The winter of 2017/2018 was one of the worst winters on record for easterly gales and storms. We note that the BLCC do acknowledge that this is a severe weather issue and that they brought it up at their February meeting which was during the winter when we were dealing with the situation. We do conduct regular clean-ups as your Department is aware of and we note that the BLCC do acknowledge that we conduct 'regular' clean ups. It is not true that we would deliberately leave damaged bags on the shore. We endeavour to collect any of our waste and indeed we also pick up general waste when we conduct our regular shore cleaning exercise. If bags do come off during severe weather it takes time to fix the problem as the severe weather is ongoing. In these situations it is very easy of anyone/group who don't like oyster farming to portray us as being totally negligent of our licence conditions which is certainly not the case. We are highly aware of our environment and the concerns of beach users.

I can assure you that we will continue to conduct regular beach clean ups as frequently as possible.

Response to Observations from Ballymacoda Ladysbridge Community Council made on :

Same as above .

Response to Observations from Ballymacoda Ladysbridge Community Council made on :

1: Waste Removal Requirements :

I am not aware of any oyster farmers in Ireland who have their fish culture Licence number attached to their trestles and oyster bags. Indeed it would be a costly exercise and would possibly bring more potential plastic items into the marine environment that could be lost during severe weather.

Trestles normally do not move (at the most small numbers get upturned in storms) and oyster bags can be identified by the method of closing or the make of bags therefore it would be futile to attempt to mark them.

We will ensure that the road is kept clean of any rubbers accidentally dropping off the trailer. This is not something that happens all of the time. Again this may have been a once off event that the BLCC are bringing up.

2 : Visual impact on Amenity of Youghal Bay

We congratulate those involved in the development of coastal walking routes on a voluntary basis.

Our oyster farms do not detract from the visual amenity of the bay. We feel that the issue of litter from aquaculture is being inflated to support a move to have us removed and does not reflect the reality on the ground. As mentioned previously it is very easy for anyone with that agenda to portray us in the worst light possible. We take shore cleaning very seriously.

3: Actual marking of sites

our actual licence have poles in place : and if we had our extensions with licence 482 B AND 545 A we would be ready to put them before any new bags coming

4: Site access

The access route map has been updated to the Department upon renewal. We adhere to a very narrowly defined access route and are not damaging the habitat.

The access road to the shore has an uneven surface not because of our tractors and trailers but because of the surface never having been finished properly, the steepness of the road and the added effect of run off from rain.

5: Noise/ Aural Pollution

Yes it is true that we work night tides on spring tides and we do try to keep noise to a minimum. It only takes a few minutes from our shed to get onto shore. Once at oyster farm nobody can hear us.

Oyster farming removes bacteria and virus from the water column and improves the

clarity of the water as well as vast quantities of nitrogen and phosphorus that enter into the bay from agriculture and wastewater so our activities we fit in well/help with the Green Coast award and the Blue Flag Awards for the local coast.

Response to Observations Submitted by Sea view House Ring Ballymacoda :

All trestles rust but they actually look 'rustier' when now. Once deployed they get colonised by marine life and the bright rust colour disappears. Oyster farms from a distance look like a dark patch/area on the shore sometimes indistinguishable from a dark area of seaweed or a dark rocky area of shore. In addition the structures are only visible at a certain point during the tidal cycle and only during daylight hours. So the visual impact is actually very low.

We take cleaning up after ourselves very seriously so we have not failed to follow that condition.

Our navigational marks are being repaired after bad weather. we hope , it will be understood, that after the huge hurricane in october , we have been dealing and ordered , new poles and yellow cross to replace the ones which were damage after that storm, unfortunately what we needed and sizes , were complicate to find at the last minute, fortunately , as you are reading this letter, we have got them , and our team has been working on it fast and properly .

We do not detract from the beauty of Youghal bay and its coastline. Just look at the Wild Atlantic.

Way and its integrated Taste the Atlantic trail which incorporates oyster farms among other aquaculture activities. Similar Trails could be established in the south coast. Oyster farming is good for the environment and could become a great asset to the local community if they embraced it.

In general the remaining comments made are literally a copy/cut and paste of the BLCC observations or vice versa which we have commented on above.

Response to the observations made by the Capel Clean Coast Group (a sub committee of the Ballymacoda Ladysbridge Community Council (BLCC) :

1 Noise/Aural Pollution

Yes it is true that we work night tides on spring tides and we do try to keep noise to a minimum. It only takes a few minutes from our shed to get onto the shore. Once at oyster farm nobody can hear us.

2 :Requirements for Marking Sites

Our site marks (poles) have taken a lot of damage this winter due to various storms. We are urgently addressing this and hope to have all broken poles replaced as soon as possible and we will verify that with your Department. As for leaning poles we will address replacing those as soon as we make up new poles (parts are being ordered). we hope , it will be understood, that after the huge hurricane in october , we have been dealing and ordered , new poles and yellow cross to replace the ones which were damage after that storm, unfortunately what we needed and sizes , were complicate to find at the last minute, fortunately , as you are reading this letter, we have got them , and our team has been working on it fast and properly .

3 : Site Access

We are not aware of driving through any mussel bed on our access route. The access route map has been updated to the Department upon renewal. We adhere to a very narrowly defined access route and are not damaging the habitat.

4 : Visual Impact on the amenity of Youghal Bay

All trestles rust but they actually look 'rustier' when new. Once deployed they get colonised by marine life and the bright rust colour disappears. Oyster farms from a distance look like a dark patch/area on the shore sometimes indistinguishable from a dark area of seaweed or a dark rocky area of shore. In addition the structures are only visible at a certain point during the tidal cycle and only during daylight hours. So the visual impact is actually very low.

We take cleaning up after ourselves very seriously so we have not failed to follow that condition.

We do not detract from the beauty of Youghal bay and its coastline. Just look at the Wild Atlantic Way and its integrated Taste the Atlantic trail which incorporates oyster farms among other aquaculture activities. Similar Trails could be established in the south coast. Oyster farming is good for the environment and could become a great asset to the local community if they embraced it.

5 : Actual waste removal requirements

I am not aware of any oyster farmers in Ireland who have their fish culture Licence number attached to their trestles and oyster bags. Indeed it would be a costly exercise and would possibly bring more potential plastic items into the marine environment that could be lost during severe weather.

Trestles normally do not move (at the most small numbers get upturned in storms) and oyster bags can be identified by the method of closing or the make of bags therefore it would be futile to attempt to mark them.

We do conduct regular clean-ups as your Department is aware of and we note that the BLCC do acknowledge that we conduct 'regular' clean ups. We endeavour to collect any of our waste and indeed we also pick up general waste when we conduct our regular shore cleaning exercise. If bags do come off during severe weather it takes time to fix the problem as the severe weather is ongoing.

In these situations it is very easy of anybody/group who don't like oyster farming to portray us as being totally negligent of our licence conditions which is certainly not the case. We are highly aware of our environment and the concerns of beach users. we do not mind neither, cleaning others stuffs coming from the sea , such as tyres, clothes, bottles , fish net , plastic boxes , or any other things , so far we keep the beach clean and beautiful.

I can assure you that we will continue to conduct regular beach clean ups as frequently as possible

6 : Coastal Recreation

We are all for coastal walks and recreation. Our marking scheme is under repair as a matter of urgency after damage this winter. We will increase our efforts regarding beach cleans and report to DAFM of such efforts as we have done in the past. However it must be restated that it can be very easier for anyone with an agenda to remove us from the bay to portray us in the worst possible light. We believe that oyster farming and coastal tourism and the environment are compatible.

The author of the observations Capel Clean Coast recommends that The operators in the Ballymacoda Bay area should be stripped of their licences even if only to highlight to others that blatant and continues disregard for the stipulations of their licences will not be allowed.

In response to this i would say that this recommendation clearly shows that there is an agenda to have us removed. Furthermore it would appear that this author has a national agenda as he wants our punishment to be seen by the National industry as a whole as an example of what can happen to any of the national oyster farmers.

I would be confident that if all our rubbers and bags were made of fluorescent material as the author recommends that we would be accused of creating 'light pollution' and of scaring birds away and of creating a greater negative visual impact. The recommendation clearly have been made by someone with quite extreme anti oyster farming sentiment and I suspect it wouldn't matter how compliant we were that it wouldn't be good enough and that only a complete removal will suffice to keep the author of such comments satisfied.

From now on when we perform a clean-up we will copy the DAFM in with our efforts and what we gathered. That then can be given to the clean coasts group as proof of our efforts. Furthermore we will assist with beach clean ups organised by the group in April and also in June and July during the high tourist season.

Response to observations made by Fisherman who operate from Knockadoon Head

We note that there are remarkable similarities in content of observation submitted by this group and observations made by some of the other local groups.

Nonetheless we agree that marking scheme has to be repaired ASAP and we are doing that currently.

We as mentioned previously have undertaken beach cleans and will increase our efforts in that regard and report to DAFM when we have done so. In this way DAFM will be able to assess our efforts and advice accordingly.

In conclusion we would make the following comments to the DAFM regarding the

observations made to submissions made on our applications for renewal and new sites.

1: . This is disappointing for us especially for sites 482B and 546A which would be good sites. it would develop the company , but would offer more full time jobs for some people.

with the same working time, but with the same equipment.

compare to other bays, where are many people , many tractors and many sheds.

even becoming an attractive place for curious tourists which would be curious about aquaculture system and development.

From my personal experiences and my team experiences, we have been pleased to see tourist families, walking through the oysters farm , asking questions about the work in place, how was the process of the oysters, even curious about trying some oysters to have an idea of the taste.

becoming a part of the Irish aquaculture heritage, explaining the cultivating system to tourists is always a good feeling for us and our work.

2: we have operated our sites very well in the past and I'm sure your Department would agree apart from issues regarding bags coming off we have well run sites that are kept lined out correctly.

3: When it comes to renewal licences and new licences in the bay we feel that the appropriate assessment has been ultra conservative in its approach and we are confident that we are not having a negative impact on any bird species for the activities on the three renewal sites. Population trend data would confirm this and we only account for about 7% of the SPA.

4: The various non-state agency observations made by local interest groups/people are remarkably similar in content suggesting a coordinated nature to the observations and we would draw this to the attention of DAFM to highlight that in reality possibly a very small number of people are aligning against the renewals.

5 : We will engage in a clearly defined manner with DAFM and local groups regarding cleaning of the shore.

6: We have repaired our poles using better materials that will work better in all weather conditions. We will inform DAFM of when this is complete which will be soon.

7. As we know , me and my team , try to be as discreet as possible , days, and nights, unfortunately, we belong to the kind of professional work which belongs to the sea, contrary to most work , the sea decide itself how are the low and high tide, we are the subject of that natural way to follow as the tide book can show it. we can only adapt ourselves to it, without any possibilities to act against it. and because Ballymacoda bay is one of the most complicated bays in Ireland , we have to,

in a professional way of doing a really good job with our oyster , to work night time , early, late during days on the beach.

As director, chief, worker, and father , like our team , we would prefer to spend our nights with children, or even our tide week end, but that job is different than any normal one, as i said , tide timetable can't be move.

after 14 years in ballymacoda , i saw objections coming from different communities, personal house owner, why not, trying to keep our beach , beautiful and tryiing to have a relation altogether about the good cleaning and involmnet, to be in touch , even few times a year to have a good look on the beach, making some special cleaning days if by mistake my team had forgotten few elastic, and instead of being opponents by indirect letters.. to be beach mates for our nice and beautifull bay.

We do believe that the licences 482B and 545 A would be only the continuation to the sea of our oyster farm, they need like the other renewal licences 395 482A 491A the same kind of good coefficient to be work on it , which mean : not more working time on the beach or extra days or night , contrary to what would be licence 517 A and B and 595 where could be people working all the time . and we dont want it.

as we could see on the map of ballymacoda the licence 482 B and 545 A from my acknowledge would be on the good high from the beach point to keep a suitable production oyster farming , not to high but at the same level as we are already working in for many years .

we would increase our production systems with two cycle , but as well would create more employment in the company to keep our production in a good way maybe 8 to 10 new people for working on the beach .

we confirm that the extension of that two new licences would be under our same policy of cleaning and beach cleaning policy as we do have for the last 10 years , before tide and after tide work, as to keep the inside beach from oysters to the shore always clean up

Yours Sincerely

marc perdriel
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directors of Baile mhic oda iascliogan teoranta

