An Roinn Talmhaíochta, Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Marine Engineering Division

Report on Aquaculture Licence Application

Application Reference No: T05-125N2

Report Prepared by:	**Jerome McCarthy**
Date:	24th November 2023
Applicant	Bantry Harbour Mussels Ltd.
Location	Bantry Bay, Co. Cork
Applicant Type	Aquaculture/Foreshore Licence Renewal
Site Area (Ha)	7.1
Species	Blue Mussels (Mytilus edulis)
Cultivation Method	Rope longlines
Intertidal/Non-Intertidal	Non-intertidal
Source of Seed / Spat	Natural spat collection on collection rope.
Annual Production Estimates	75 tonne of half grown mussels
Shellfish Waters Designation	Yes ☒ No ☐
Reference:	Bantry Shellfish Waters Directive Area, SI 200 of 1994
Environmental Designation	Yes ☐ No ☒
Reference:	Not applicable
Development Plans	Yes ☒ No ☐
Reference:	Cork County Development Plan 2022, Sections 7.26 and 8.20
Pre-Consultation Meeting	Yes ☒ No ☐
Date:	Various, 2022 and 2023

Drawing Validation Sheet

OSI Maps	**Yes**	☒	**No**	☐	
Comment:	1:10,560 scale OSI map prepared by GIS unit				
BA Chart	**Yes**	☒	**No**	☐	
Comment:	1:24,000 scale BA Chart prepared by GIS unit				
Farm Layout Drawing	**Yes**	☒	**No**	☐	
	Directional Arrow	Yes	☒	No	☐
	Scale	Yes	☒	No	☐
	Title Block	Yes	☒	No	☐
	Date	Yes	☒	No	☐
Comment:	Drawing submitted is suitable				
Drawings of structures	**Yes**	☒	**No**	☐	
Comment:	Typical suspended longline detail supplied.				
Details of Proposed Navigation Marking	**Yes**	☐	**No**	☒	
Comment:	A group marking scheme is in place.				
Site Access Indicated	**Yes**	☒	**No**	☐	
Comment:	Drawing submitted is suitable				
Site Co-Ordinates Indicated	**Yes**	☒	**No**	☐	
Comment:	Site co-ordinates included on site layout drawing				
Site Overlap	**Yes**	☒	**No**	☐	
Comment:	The site overlaps existing site T05-125N2, which is licensed, and being renewed.				
Oyster Fishery Order Overlap	**Yes**	☐	**No**	☒	
Comment:					

☒ **The application is submitted with each of the requirements listed and is therefore deemed to be a valid application.**

☐ **AFMD should be aware that insufficient details have been submitted as per above.**

Site Suitability Assessment

Site Location
The application is for the renewal of an existing site located in a relatively sheltered location in Inner Bantry Bay, Co. Cork. The aquaculture in this part of Bantry Bay has been in existence for many years, which indicates that the hydrodynamic regime is suitable for this type of aquaculture.

Site Management
The applicant has been operating at this location for a number of years and is an experienced mussel farm operator. The site was inspected in June 2023 and no issues were noted.

Proposed Site Layout and Structures
The structures at this site have been in place for a number of years and consist of the suspended longline method. The layout consists of a single block of 6 no 220m longlines. The proposed longline layout will not cause an obstruction or nuisance. The flotation barrels should be battleship grey in colour - any white or non grey barrels must be changed as required. A maximum of 6 no. mussel longlines should be permitted within the proposed site.

Land Based Facilities / Site Access
Bantry Pier is used by mussel farmers on a daily basis to access sites and carry out operations associated with the aquaculture industry. The pier is suitable as an access point for this site.

Navigation
The proposed site does not impact significantly on navigation routes. There is commercial shipping including cruise liners, oil tankers and fishing as well as marine leisure in the area. The site lies within the existing Special Uniform Marking Scheme (SUMS) for the area operated by BIM and this SUMS reduces the impact of the aquaculture on navigation in the area.

Visual Impact
This site and the other aquaculture sites in Inner Bantry Bay can be seen from the adjacent N71 route between Glengarriff and Bantry. This route forms part of the Wild Atlantic Way and is designated as scenic route S111 in the Cork County Development Plan 2022. The surrounding area is designated as high value landscape. In general, the sea views are obscured and limited from the scenic route. The aquaculture in Bantry Bay has been in place for some time and has become embedded in the landscape.

The proposed farm layout and type of structures adheres to the best practices outlined in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of Marine Aquaculture, 2001.

Impact / Cumulative Impact
There is commercial shipping including cruise liners, oil tankers and fishing, as well as marine leisure activity in the area. The focus of marine leisure in this area is mainly around Whiddy Island and Bantry Harbour. The group marking scheme reduces the impact of the aquaculture on navigation in the area.

The aquaculture in this part of Bantry Bay has been in place for some time and there is no increase in impact due to the renewal of this licence.

Marine Engineering Division has no objection to the licensing of this site subject to the above.