



**Marine Engineering Division**

**Report on Aquaculture Licence Application**

**Application Reference No:** T10/351

**Report Prepared By:** Edwina Ford

**Date:** 17/12/2021

**Applicant:** Michael Lavelle

**Location:** Glosh, Blacksod, Ballina, Co. Mayo

**Applicant Type:** Aquaculture/Foreshore Licence Application

**Sites:**

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**Site Area (Ha):**

24ha
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**Species:**  
Seaweed:  
**Brown Algae** – (*Laminaria Digitata*, *Laminaria Hyperborea*, *Saccarina Latissima*, *Alaria Esculenta* and *Saccarorhiza Polyschides*, *Himanthalia Elongata*)  
**Red Algae** – (*Chondrus Crispus*, *Palmaria Palmata*, *Porphyra Dioica*, *Linearis*, *Umbilicalis* and *Asparagopsis Armata*, *Osmundia Pinnatifida*)  
**Green Algae** – (*Ulva Lactuca*, *Ulva Compressa/Intestinalis*)

Shellfish:  
Native Oysters (*Ostrea edulis*), Pacific Oysters (*Magalana Gigas*), Mussels (*Mytilus edulis*), King Scallop (*Pecten maximus*), Queen scallop (*Aequipecten opercularis*)

**Cultivation Method:** Intensive

**Intertidal/Non-Intertidal:** Sub-tidal

**Annual Production Estimates:** Seaweed: 83 tonnes wet weight all species  
Shellfish: 110 tonnes (Mussels only)

**Shellfish Waters Designation:** Yes  No   
Reference: Blacksod Bay Designation map No15

**Environmental Designation:** Yes  No   
Reference: Blacksod / Broadhaven SPA (004037) and Mullet/Blacksod Bay Complex SAC (000470)

**Development Plans**

Yes  No

Reference: Mayo County Development Plan 2014-2020 (Councillors agreed to extend the Development Plan review period on the 26th of July 2021, following a commencement order to extend the plan process arising from Covid disruptions (Section 9A of Planning & Development Act (amendment) 2021). The review process is due to recommence on the 1st of February 2022 with the consideration of the Chief Executive's Report and Draft Mayo County Development Plan

**Pre-Consultation Meeting**

Yes  No

Date:

## Drawing Validation Sheet

**OSI Maps**

Yes  No

Comment:

6" scale maps prepared by GIS Mapping Section.

**BA Chart**

Yes  No

Comment:

BA Charts prepared by GIS Mapping Section.

**Farm Layout Drawing**

Yes  No

Directional Arrow Yes  No

Scale Yes  No

Title Block Yes  No

Date Yes  No

Comment: Drawings submitted are suitable.

**Drawings of structures**

Yes  No

Comment:

Drawings submitted are suitable

**Details of Proposed Navigation Marking**

Yes  No

Comment:

No details of Navigation marking

**Site Access Indicated**

Yes  No

Comment:

Site access map submitted is suitable

**Site Co-Ordinates Indicated**

Yes  No

Comment:

Site co-ordinates indicated in application.

**Site Overlap**

Yes  No

Comment:

No site overlap

**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**

Suitable site location maps have been submitted with the application. The site is located west of Moyrahan Point and Ardelly Point in the middle of Blacksod Bay, Belmullet, Co. Mayo. Blacksod Bay is bounded on its western side by the Mullet Peninsula. The Bay is fed by numerous small rivers and streams and a canal links Blacksod Bay to Broadhaven Bay to the north through the town of Belmullet. The aquaculture at this location has been in existence for many years. The North Mayo Co-Op (T10/028A) has an extensive bottom culture license adjacent to the site. This application is for submerged rope and barrel culture for the cultivation of seaweed. Longlines with flotation barrels for mussel cultivation and longlines with hanging lantern nets for scallop cultivation. The consistency of the seabed at this location is suitable for the aquaculture proposed with depth of water approx. 10m. The Wild Atlantic Way surrounds Blacksod Bay with a point of interest at Blacksod Harbour. The area applied for is visible from the shore. There is a quay in Belmullet and one in Saleen that harbours relatively large boats. Any access to these quays should not be restricted. Proposed access is from Belmullet Pier approx. 5km to the southwest. There is a water sports leisure centre and Summer College in Elly Bay and any aquaculture activity should not interfere with people using this facility. Nor should any aquaculture activity interfere with the public beaches in the area.

### **Site Management**

This is a new application for shellfish and seaweed cultivation using 46 submerged single longlines for seaweed with a production estimate of 67 tonnes wet weight in year 5. 12 No 110m double rope and barrel longlines for the cultivation of mussels with a production estimate of 110 tonnes in year 5, at Blacksod Bay, Co Mayo. This site is 24ha in size and approximately 7km from Blacksod Pier that has a crane. Seed is to be locally sourced as well as from hatcheries in Ireland, UK and France. The applicant intends to trial 2 No 220m single longlines for the cultivation of scallop's and oysters

### **Proposed Site Layout and Structures**

The location of the site is approximately 3km from Moyrahan Point in Belmullet Bay with approximately 10m depth of water. The site layout drawing shows the longlines positioned in a north - south direction with 46 No 220m submerged longlines. 12 No Flotation barrels and double header longlines and 2 No 220 single header longlines. All barrels should be battleship grey in colour and set out uniformly.

This site is located in a high energy environment; in the middle of the bay with little shelter. Great care should be taken to ensure appropriate anchors are deployed and that any structure that breaks free are retrieved and properly disposed of. It would be prudent to phase the development of this site over a number of growing seasons to ensure structures are robust enough for the environment and that the structures stay within the site boundary. The farm site layout and detail of structures to be licensed for this application have been prepared and are suitable for advertising and attachment to any licence issued for the site.

### **Land Based Facilities / Site Access**

The operator proposes to access the site using Blacksod Pier. Details of the access route were included with the application.

### **Navigation**

The proposed navigational marking scheme should be approved by CIL. Applicant is to maintain all navigation markers as specified by the license. No details of navigation marking were included with this application.

**Visual Impact**

The Mayo County Development Plan 2014-2020 and supplementary document, Landscape appraisal for Co. Mayo indicates there are scenic routes surrounding Blacksod Bay. The site can't be seen from land. The proposed farm layout and type of structures adhere to the best practices outlined in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of Marine Aquaculture, 2001. The licence conditions will specify the orientation of the structures on the sites to minimise the visual impact.

**Impact / Cumulative Impact**

There is fishing and marine leisure in the area. There is a large sandy beach used for bathing and recreation to the east of the bay which is a public amenity and aquaculture operations should not interfere with this amenity.

The navigational marking will reduce the impact of the aquaculture on navigation in the area. The AA indicates the site is described as fine sand with *Angulus fabula* community complex. The 2017 report supporting Appropriate Assessment of Aquaculture and risk assessment of fisheries in Mullet/Blacksod Bay complex SAC(site code: 0470) should be consulted for details of the aquaculture activity that may pose a potential significant negative impact on the Mullet Blacksod Bay complex SAC.

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