

MAC Report	
Application for a Maritime Area Consent (MAC) under Section 79 of Maritime Area Planning Act 2021, as amended (the Act)	
Application Details	
MAC Applicant:	Kerry County Council
MAC Reference No:	MAC240060
Location:	Renard Pier, Co. Kerry
Date Application received:	26 June 2025
Proposed Maritime Usage:	Kerry County Council has applied for a MAC under Section 79 of the Act for the widening of an existing slipway at Renard Pier, Renard, Co. Kerry. The proposed works include the construction, use, operation and maintenance of a slipway, including all associated decommissioning, demolition, rehabilitation, and any other works required on foot of any development permission relating to the infrastructure.
Recommendation:	To approve the granting of the MAC sought with conditions attached.

Document Control			
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1. Overview

On 26 June 2025 Kerry County Council submitted a Maritime Area Consent (MAC) application to MARA under Section 79 of the Maritime Area Planning Act 2021, as amended (the Act) for the construction, use, operation and maintenance of a slipway including all associated decommissioning, demolition, rehabilitation, and any other works required on foot of any development permission relating to the infrastructure.

2. Background

Renard ferry slipway is located at Renard Point on the Iveragh Peninsula, on the southwest coast of County Kerry, adjacent to Valentia Island. The existing slipway serves as the mainland terminal for the ferry crossing to Valentia Island's Knightstown Pier and has historically connected the island to the mainland across the adjacent short stretch of water. Distinct from the existing ferry slipway, the existing fishing pier at Renard services the region's small-scale commercial fishing sector. The fishing pier has been enhanced in recent years with structural repairs and improvements undertaken by Kerry County Council primarily to support increased fish landings. It should be noted that the existing fishing pier at Renard is not the subject of this application and is situated wholly outside of the proposed MAC area.

The proposed scheme, the subject of this MAC application, relates to improvement works to the existing slipway which supports the operation of the summer car ferry service to Valentia Island. The proposed works do not relate to a maritime usage which is primarily or wholly in support of sea fishing or aquaculture.

The widening of the existing ferry slipway is proposed to facilitate growing tourism demand for the ferry and also to enable larger vehicles to utilise the ferry crossing. The existing ferry slipway pre-dates the existing fishing pier, and was constructed circa. 1909 by the then Commissioners of Public Works under the *Marine Works (Ireland) Acts 1902–1911*. Those Acts gave statutory authority to the Commissioners of Public Works to construct and occupy state foreshore for the purposes of the development and operation of public marine infrastructure. Over the years, responsibility for the operation, maintenance and development of local coastal infrastructure has transferred to the relevant local authorities via a series of legislative enactments and transfers of function. Responsibility for operation and maintenance of the slipway at Renard now rests with Kerry County Council.

As with much of the coastal infrastructure constructed pursuant to the *Marine Works (Ireland) Act*, the lawful occupation of the foreshore by the existing slipway at Renard originates from continuing statutory marine works title, rather than from consent under the 1933 Foreshore Act as amended. Regularisation of the existing ferry slipway, under Section 106 of the MAP Act, is not therefore required. A MAC is however required for the proposed widening works and any associated temporary works.

3. Proposed Maritime Usage

The proposed works include the widening of the ferry slipway at Renard by circa. 5m to accommodate larger vehicles and buses. The proposed MAC area required will be wider in the inter tidal zone to accommodate enabling works. The length of the extension will extend for 85m from the High Water Mark (HWM). Above the HWM (outside of the maritime area) improvement works are proposed to widen the existing road to meet the new slipway extension and accommodate the larger vehicles that will make use of the proposed upgraded ferry access.

The total MAC area being applied for is 596m². A MAC term of 50 years has been sought by the applicant in respect of the proposed maritime usage. The applicant has stated that the design standards utilised will adhere to industry best practice and Transport Infrastructure Ireland Design Guidelines. The standard codes adhered to will be BS:6349 British Standard Code of Practice for Maritime Structure, The Yacht Harbour Association Code of Practice and the EN 1992-1-1: Eurocode 2 (Design of Concrete Structures). The MAC area sought by the Applicant is illustrated in *Figure 1*.

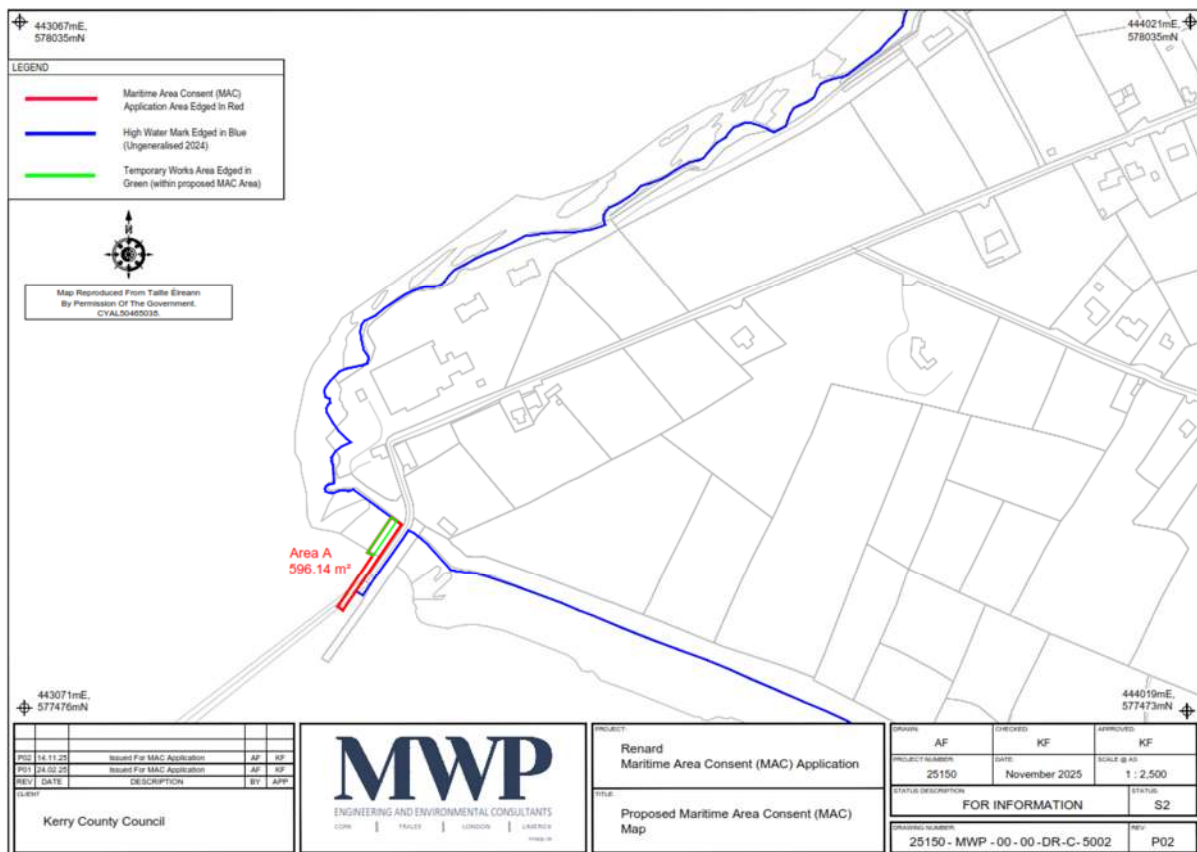


Figure 1 – Applicant’s drawing showing proposed MAC area as applied for.

4. Site Visit

Richard Browne, Chartered Engineer and Director at McCarthy Browne visited the site on behalf of MARA on 4th November 2025. The main pier was noted to be used for commercial fishing and a fish market is located within the harbour area. The inspection highlighted recent widening of the existing pier by way of sheet pile encapsulation and over-slabbing outside of the MAC area.

Photographs 1 to 4 detail the character of the site in the vicinity of the proposed works.



Photograph 1 – Access road and pier looking southwest. [RB 4/11/2025]



Photograph 2 – Access road and pier looking northeast. [RB 4/11/2025]



Photograph 3 – Toe of existing slipway. [RB 4/11/2025]



Photograph 4 – Overview of existing pier and slipway. [RB 4/11/2025]

No existing infrastructure or occupation, which would conflict with the proposed maritime usage, was noted within the proposed MAC area during the site visit.

5. Review of Legislation & Associated Consents

5.1 Applicable Provisions of the Maritime Area Planning Act, 2021 as amended (the Act)

Under the Act, MARA has responsibility for granting MACs.

Schedule 3 and Schedule 4 of the Act specifies maritime usages for which a MAC is not required, including where the proposed maritime usage falls under the remit of another enactment, is navigation or fishing, is a licensable activity under Schedule 7 or where the activity is to be undertaken on private land. The proposed maritime usage is not considered to fall under those listed under Schedule 3 or 4 of the Act.

The applicant has stated that the proposed maritime usage requires development permission. In accordance with Section 75(1) of the Act, a MAC is required before an application for development permission can be lodged with the relevant consent authority.

Accordingly, the subject of this application is considered to fall under Section 75(1) of the Act.

5.2 Existing Consents & Authorisations

A search of the MARA's GIS database was undertaken on 05 February 2026 to assess potential spatial overlaps between the proposed MAC area and any existing foreshore authorisations or MARA licences and consents. The proposed MAC area does not overlap with any existing MACs or Maritime Usage Licence (MUL) or applications for the same. The application does not overlap with any existing foreshore authorisations.

The Marine Institute's Ireland's Marine Atlas database was searched on 05 February 2026 for spatial overlap between the proposed MAC areas and any Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) foreshore authorisations for aquaculture sites. There are no licenced aquaculture operations overlapping with, or in close proximity to, the proposed MAC area.

In summary, no existing MACs, MULs, foreshore authorisations (including those for aquaculture) or applications for the same were identified as overlapping the proposed MAC application area.

5.3 Development Permission

Kerry County Council have stated that the proposed works require development permission. The applicant has indicated that they intend to apply for development permission should they be successful in obtaining a MAC for the proposed project. No application for development permission has been made in advance of seeking a MAC from MARA. Owing to the nature and scale of the proposed works, it is considered reasonable that the MAC Holder (if successful in obtaining a MAC) should submit a valid application for development consent to the relevant planning authority within 18 months of the issuance of a MAC.

The applicant in their development permission application to the relevant planning authority is required to include a Rehabilitation Schedule detailing how the applicant proposes to rehabilitate the maritime area in accordance with Part 4, Chapter 8 of the Act.

5.4 Ownership

A search was undertaken of Tailte Éireann's Land Registry on 05 February 2026 for any document granting or affecting rights to land in order to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest with the MAC area being applied for as outlined in the proposed MAC Map.

No conflicts of interest affecting the proposed MAC area were identified.

6. Assessment

6.1 Schedule 5

The MAC application was submitted on 04 June 2025 with the appropriate fee paid on 26 June 2025 and reviewed for completeness on 30 June 2025. The application was deemed complete by MARA on 02 July 2025.

A request for additional information was issued on 23 October 2025 under Section 79(3) of the Act and the associated response received relating to matters for general and technical assessment on 14 November 2025.

Schedule 5 of the Act sets out the criteria to which MARA must have regard when assessing a MAC application. This report sets out the assessment undertaken pursuant to Section 5 of the Act. The assessment is summarised in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Synopsis of the assessment of the application with regard to the requirements of Schedule 5

Schedule 5 Requirements		Synopsis	Assessment
1.	The nature, scope and duration of the occupation of the maritime area concerned for the purposes of the proposed maritime usage.	<p>Details of the proposed maritime usage, including the nature scope and duration are described in Section 3 & 4 above. The applicant has stated that the design standards utilised will adhere to industry best practice and Transport Infrastructure Ireland Design Guidelines. The standard codes adhered to will be BS:6349 British Standard Code of Practice for Maritime Structure, The Yacht Harbour Association Code of Practice and the EN 1992-1-1: Eurocode 2 (Design of Concrete Structures).</p> <p>It is considered that a design life for the structure of circa 50 years, with proper maintenance and repair, should be achievable. Accordingly, a MAC term of 50 years (allowing for planning, construction and rehabilitation/decommissioning phases) is recommended.</p> <p>The proposed maritime usage is considered satisfactory, having regard to the nature, scope and duration.</p>	Satisfactory
2.	Whether the proposed maritime usage is in the public interest.	<p>The Applicant stated that <i>“The proposed works for the Renard pier/slipway aligns with objectives of the National Development Plan 2021 – 2030. It aligns particularly with Chapter 8: Strengthen Rural Economies and Communities: Strategic Investment Priorities – Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. Within this section, investment in projects that help increase access and enhance Ireland’s tourism offering are to be supported. In relation to Renard, the opportunity to increase tourist traffic to Valentia, and thus increase Valentia Islands profile as a ‘must-see’ tourist destination in Ireland, due to its recent presence in media regarding the Trans-Atlantic Cable Station is to be promoted. This can create a direct impact through the requirement of ferry operators with increased capacity and tour guides, increasing employment opportunities in the area. Indirectly, the increase in tourists can have a knock-on effect for other businesses in the area, particularly those in hospitality.”</i></p>	Satisfactory
3.	The location and spatial extent of the occupation of the maritime area concerned for the purposes of the proposed maritime usage.	<p>The total MAC area, as applied for by the applicant, is 596m². This area comprises a permanent works area of 425m² and a temporary works area of 171m². The MAC MAP denotes these areas separately as Area A (permanent works) and Area B (temporary works).</p> <p>Details of the location, relevant consents, ownership and development permissions are provided in Sections 2 to 5 above.</p> <p>Based on the searches and site visit undertaken, nothing was identified that would preclude the granting of a MAC in the proposed area.</p> <p>Accordingly, the proposed maritime usage is considered satisfactory, having regard to the location and spatial extent of the occupation.</p> <p>The total recommended MAC area is 596m² as illustrated in Figure 2 (Proposed MAC Map) in Section 7.</p>	Satisfactory

4.	Guidelines issued under Section 7 which are relevant to the proposed maritime usage.	No such guidelines have been published to date.	Not applicable
5.	Whether the Applicant is a fit and proper person (within the meaning of Schedule 2) to be granted a MAC, both at the time the application is made and at the time that the MAC application concerned is determined by the MARA.	In accordance with S.I. No. 467/2025 - Maritime Area Planning Act 2021 (Fit and Proper Person) Order 2025 the Applicant has been declared as a fit and proper person to be granted and to hold any MAC in accordance with Section 90(1)(b) of the Act.	Satisfactory
6.	Whether the Applicant is tax compliant, both at the time the application is made and at the time that the MAC application concerned is determined by the MARA.	The Applicant submitted Tax Registration Number and Tax Clearance Access Number (TCAN) which was used to view the Applicant's tax clearance certificate. Based on the review of the tax clearance certificate, the Applicant is considered tax compliant.	Satisfactory
7.	In the case of any maritime usage relating to offshore renewable energy (within the meaning of section 100), the consistency of the MAC application concerned with the development plans of the transmission system operator (within the meaning of section 100).	Not applicable	Not Applicable
8.	The National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF).	Based on a review of the application, MARA has had regard to the National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF) and it is considered that the proposed project aligns with the overall objectives of the NMPF, including the sport and recreation, economic and social objectives set out therein.	Satisfactory

		<p>It is considered that the proposed project aligns with the following economic, social and key sectoral policy objectives of the NMPF: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-existence Policy 1 – Proposals should demonstrate that they have considered how to optimise the use of space, including through consideration of opportunities for co-existence and co-operation with other activities, enhancing other activities where appropriate • Access Policy 2 - Proposals demonstrating appropriate enhanced and inclusive public access to and within the maritime area, and that consider the future provision of services for tourism and recreation activities, should be supported, subject to the outcome of statutory environmental assessment processes and subsequent decision by the competent authority, and where they contribute to the policies and objectives of this NMPF. • Social Benefits Policy 1 - Proposals that enhance or promote social benefits should be supported. • Social Benefits Policy 2 - Proposals that increase the understanding and enjoyment of the marine environment (including its natural, historic and social value), or that promote conservation management and increased education and skills, should be supported. • Tourism Policy 3 - Proposals for tourism development should seek to optimise facilities and use of space by taking a cross-sectoral development approach that provides for multiple activities, whilst minimising the extent to which the proposal is likely to adversely impact on the natural environment. <p>In the application, the Applicant states that the proposed project is consistent with the environmental objectives of the NMPF.</p> <p>The proposed works constitute development which require planning permission and environmental assessment of the proposed maritime usage, which is undertaken at development permission stage by the relevant planning authority. This above assessment does not prejudice any consideration and determination that the relevant Planning Authority may make in relation to the NMPF when considering the Planning Application for this development.</p> <p>Based on the above, MARA is satisfied that the proposed works align with the above overall objectives and policy objectives of the NMPF.</p>	
9.	The extent and nature of the preparatory work already undertaken by the Applicant towards ensuring the efficacious undertaking of the	While the applicant has not submitted any details in relation to preparatory works already undertaken, it was apparent from the site inspection that the applicant has recently conducted works to the adjacent fishing pier at Renard and would therefore be familiar with the ground conditions in the vicinity of the proposed slipway widening works.	Satisfactory

	proposed maritime usage the subject of the MAC application concerned should the Applicant be granted a MAC in respect of such usage.	<p>The applicant has sought permissions from the adjacent landowner in respect of terrestrial works associated with this project, and a land transfer agreement is underway with the landowner.</p> <p>If successful in obtaining a MAC, the applicant will progress the scheme design and associated environmental studies required to achieve planning permission in respect of the proposed development works.</p> <p>Having regard to the above, and the fact that the proposed works are minor in scale and non-complex in nature, the extent of the preparatory works undertaken are considered acceptable.</p>	
10.	The extent and nature of stakeholder engagement undertaken by the Applicant in respect of the proposed maritime usage.	<p>The Applicant stated that the <i>“Local Community is keen for the pier extension as it will facilitate more employment as well as tourism in the area.”</i></p> <p>Additionally, the Applicant provided letters of support from Valentia Island Community Group and Fraser Ferries, who operate the ferry between Renard and Valentia Island.</p> <p>Having regard to the above, the extent and nature of the stakeholder engagement undertaken is therefore considered satisfactory for a project of this scale and nature.</p>	Satisfactory
11.	Where a competitive process referred to in section 93 or 103 is used, the outcome of such process.	Not applicable	Satisfactory
12.	Any additional criteria specified, for the purposes of this paragraph, in regulations made under section 80(2).	No such regulations have been made to date.	Not applicable

6.2 Rehabilitation Schedule

Under Section 96(1) of the Act, it is required that the holder of a MAC shall, before the expiration of the MAC, rehabilitate that part of the maritime area the subject of the MAC. In accordance with Section 75(5) of the Act, as for MAC applications made to MARA on the basis of Section 75(1) of the Act, the applicant is required to attach a Rehabilitation Schedule to their associated application for development permission.

6.3 Section 83 – Nature of Use

Section 83(1) of the Act requires MARA in the granting of a MAC to specify whether the specific part of the maritime area the subject of that MAC is for exclusive use or not. Section 83(1) provides MARA discretion and flexibility to specify the nature of the use (i.e. exclusive, non-exclusive or may/may not be exclusive).

Having regard to the nature and lifecycle of the proposed maritime usage the subject of this application, it is reasonably foreseeable that Kerry County Council may be required to exclude access to parts of the MAC area on a temporary basis. For example, during the construction, maintenance and decommissioning and rehabilitation phases for health and safety reasons. Such temporary/short-term exclusions may be mandated by the planning authority or other authorities or legislation for specific purposes and durations. In this instance, it is considered that granting of exclusive use for the full term of the MAC is not merited, particularly having regard to co-existence and co-operation objectives of the NMPF. It is considered that exclusive use should only be permitted where use on an exclusive basis is required and provided for under another authorisation or enactment. Accordingly, it is recommended that the MAC is granted on a “may or may not be exclusive” basis contingent on circumstances that may arise after the granting of the MAC” in accordance with Section 83(1)(c) of the Act.

7. Proposed MAC Map (for illustration purposes only)



Figure 2 – Proposed MAC Map

8. Levy

An annual MAC levy has been calculated based on the project type and proposed MAC area in accordance with MARA's MAC levy framework, as set out below.

MAPA Levy Framework Part:	A: Nearshore
Category/Class:	Development (non-commercial)
Tier:	Tier 4
Applicable Rate:	Base Annual Charge of €214.09 plus an add on of 0.2007 per sq.m for areas in excess of 100 sq.
Length or Area:	Area: 596m ²
Calculation:	€214.09 + (€0.2007 * (596.00 - 100.00))
Levy due:	€313.64

The MAC levy has been calculated as €313.64 per annum. All levies are indexed to the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP), applied on an annual basis.

9. Discussion

Based on the assessments undertaken contained herein, it is considered that the proposed MAC application complies with all the necessary requirements of Schedule 5 of the Act, where relevant and appropriate, subject to the following recommended terms and conditions:

a. Terms

MAC Term:	50 Years
Consent Area:	That part of the maritime area marked red on the MAC Map.
MAC Map Title:	Maritime Area Consent Map MAC240060
Permitted Maritime Usage:	The construction, use, operation and maintenance of a slipway, including all associated decommissioning, demolition, rehabilitation, and any other works required on foot of any development permission relating to the infrastructure.

Nature of Usage:	May/May Not be Exclusive
Date by which application for Development Permission must be submitted (subject to Phasing Schedule where applicable):	18 months from date of grant of MAC.
The minimum number of days in which the MAC Holder shall provide the Grantor advance notice in writing of the Holder's intention to commence the Permitted Maritime Usage.	14 Days

b. Conditions and Reasons for Conditions

Section 82 of the Act specifies that MARA may attach to a MAC one or more conditions which fall within the types of conditions specified in Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Act. All conditions contained in Schedule 6; Part 2 are deemed to be attached to a MAC.

The standard suite of MARA conditions reflecting the contractual and statutory relationship that will exist with a grant of consent are also recommended. Reasons for these conditions are set out in the enclosed Section 81(7)(b) Minded to Notice.

It is considered that the application for a MAC complies with all the necessary requirements of Part 4 of the Act, with particular regard to Schedule 5 criteria. Accordingly, it is recommended that the proposed MAC is granted with conditions.

