

Dún Laoghaire, Harbour

Cruise Passenger Realignment and Public Realm Improvement Project

Design and Planning Report



dlr Ailtirí/ dlr Architects

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2007-DLR-ZZ-ZZ-RP-A - 001

CONTENTS

0.1	LIST OF PART 8 DOCUMENTS	3
1.0	INTRODUCTION	4
2.0	HISTORIC USES AND EVOLUTION OF THE SITE	7
3.0	SCOPE OF WORKS	9
4.0	PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS	15
5.0	PLANNING CONTEXT	19
6.0	CONCLUSION	19

0.1 LIST OF PART 8 DOCUMENTS

Ref	Title	Scale	Format
Architects			
2007-DLR-ZZ-ZZ-RP-A - 001	Design and Planning Report	NTS	A4
2007-DLR-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A - 100	Site Location Plan	1:1000	A1
2007-DLR-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A - 101	Existing Site Plan Lower and Upper Plaza Level	1:200	A1
2007-DLR-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A - 110	Proposed Site Plan Lower and Upper Plaza Level	1:200	A1
2007-DLR-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A - 201	Existing Sections	1:200	A1
2007-DLR-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A - 202	Proposed Sections	1:200	A1
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Civil & Structural			
2625-DOB-XX-SI-RP-C-0001-S2.P01_IDR	Infrastructure Design Report	NTS	A4
2625-DOB-XX-SI-RP-C-0002-S2.P01_CEMP	Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan	NTS	A4
2625-DOB-XX-SI-DR-C-0010	Existing Services	1:200	A1
2625-DOB-XX-SI-DR-C-0300	Proposed Surface Water Drainage	1:200	A1
2625-DOB-XX-SI-DR-C-0500	Proposed Layout	1:200	A1
2625-DOB-XX-SI-DR-C-0700	Proposed Road Markings	1:200	A1
2625-DOB-XX-SI-DR-C-0750	Proposed Auto Tracking	1:200	A1
2625-DOB-XX-SK-DR-C-0301	Typical Drainage Details	Varies	A1
Ecology			
-	AA Screening Report	NTS	A4
-	EIA Screening Report	NTS	A4
-	Ecological Impact Assessment	NTS	A4
Notices			
-	Newspaper Notice	-	-
-	Site Notice	-	A4
Determination			
-	AA Screening Determination	-	-
-	EIA Screening Determination	-	-

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council are proposing to construct a new ramp and steps connecting Harbour Plaza with the lower St Michael's Pier beyond.

The aim of this project is to re organise and streamline the journey the cruise passengers make from the cruise tender boats into Dún Laoghaire Town, creating an accessible direct line of movement from where the passengers alight on the pontoon, along a rejuvenated and pedestrian-centred pier, up a new ramp/steps to the Harbour Plaza, and onto Marine Road and the town centre beyond.

The enhanced public realm and connectivity will also be enjoyed by the public, providing greater access to the harbour, whilst allowing the space within the old ferry terminal carpark to be used more efficiently.

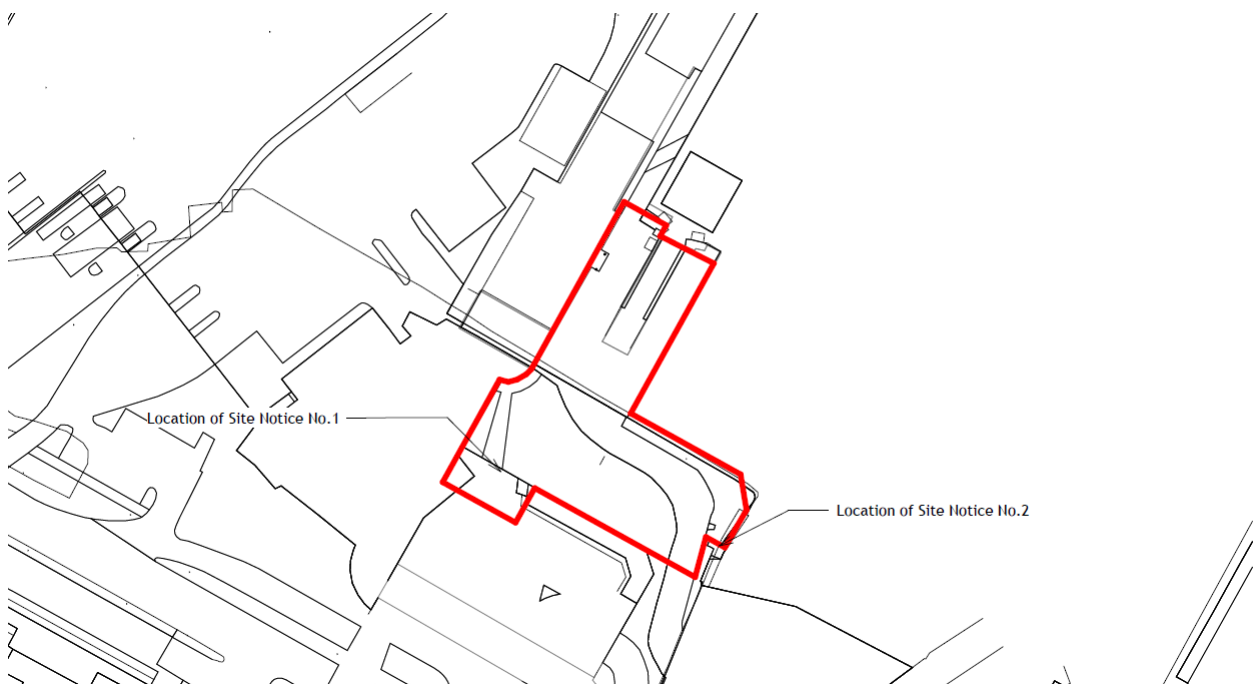


Figure 1. Extract from OS Map, showing area of this Part 8 Application outlined in red. NTS

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is owned by Dún Laoghaire Harbour. Red shading below denotes DLR Harbour Foreshore. Cyan shading denotes DLR Harbour Leasehold Proposed.



Figure 2. Ownership Diagram. NTS

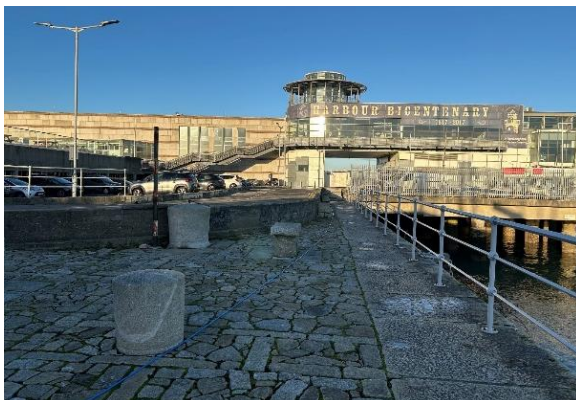


Figure 3 & 4. Photos of Old Ferry Terminal from Historic Pier



Figure 5, 6 & 7. Photos from St. Michael's Pier

The site is to the east side of the existing ferry terminal on St. Michael's Pier, Dún Laoghaire.

Currently, the site is accessible to the public via a small metal staircase to the West or via vehicular routes to the East, but these arrangements are convoluted, unclear and not safely accessible by all. Much of the site is currently blocked off with temporary fencing and used for storage of boats and equipment. This provides a physical and visual barrier.

As referenced above, the site is also where cruise ferry passengers first arrive in Dún Laoghaire. Due to the inaccessible nature of current arrangements, passengers wishing to visit Dún Laoghaire are guided through a carpark to the West. At present, the site does not provide a welcoming environment for the public and visitors alike.

2.0 HISTORIC USES + EVOLUTION OF THE SITE



Figure 8. New Wharf built in 1819. NTS

The new wharf constructed in 1819 provided one of the first berths for small vessels in the harbour. The little boat harbour, it would seem was mainly for the use of revenue personnel. It had a small boat slip, four sets of steps and a crane. This harbour is intact buried beneath the car ferry terminal carpark near the entrance to the Marina.

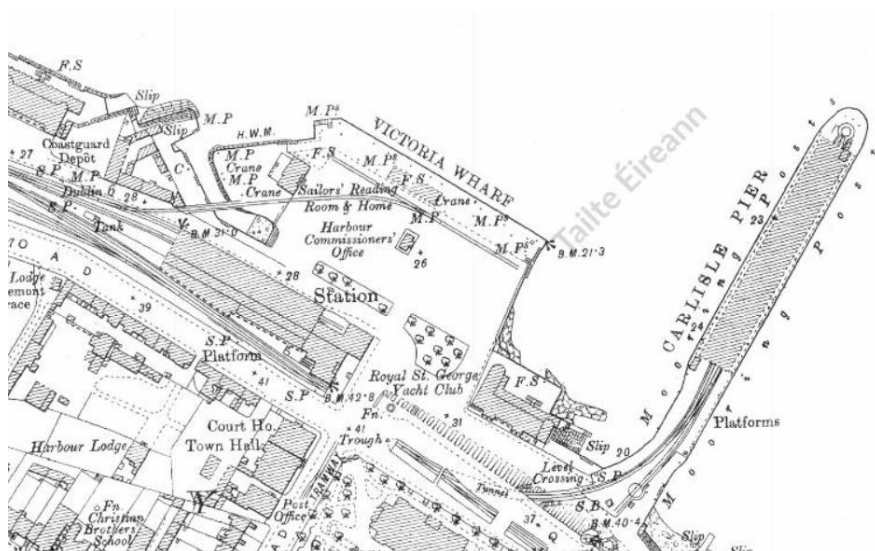


Figure 9. Renamed Victoria Wharf in 1837 in honour of the British Queen. NTS

From 1837 the newly named Victoria Wharf was used for packet boats and later Royal Navy troopships. Victoria Wharf gave direct access to the new railway station.

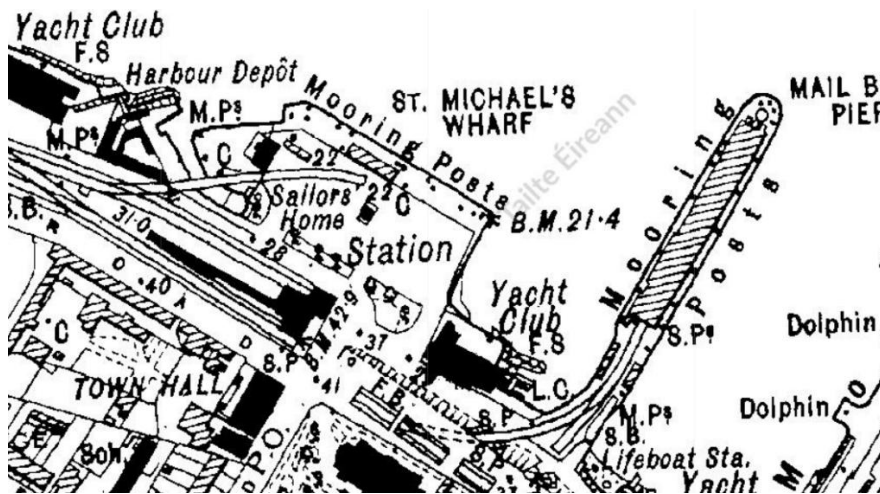


Figure 10. Renamed St. Michael's Wharf following political changes in Ireland. NTS

In 1870 a low building known as the Sailor's Home or Seamen's Rest was constructed on the Wharf. The object of the Seaman's Rest or Reading Room was to lure sailor's away from the evils of drink and encourage reading and recreation. The building was used to house the Maritime Museum which moved to the former Mariners' Church in Moran Park when the Sailor's House was demolished in the 1960s to make way for the car ferry terminal.

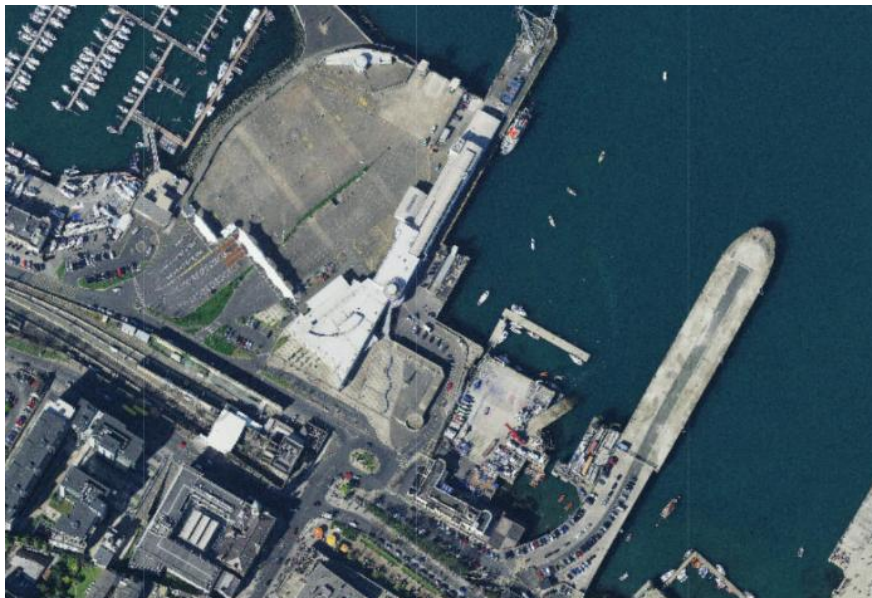


Figure 11. Car Ferry Terminal changes constructed between 1964-1969. NTS

The British Naval history with the site is noted in the following ways. In 1854, 20,000 troops left Kingstown for the British/ Crimean War and returned in 1856 in diminished numbers. In 1917 the British military stationed a naval base and auxiliary patrol office at Victoria Wharf. The former Navy steps remain present and visible on the site but are inaccessible.

3.0 SCOPE OF WORKS

The nature and extent of the proposed development is outlined below. This description should be read in conjunction with the supporting drawings and reports.



Figure 12. 3D Visual of Proposed Steps and Ramp. NTS



Figure 13. 3D Visual of Proposed Plaza and Relocated Kiosk. NTS

PROPOSED WORKS

Removal works

- Remove existing staircase from upper plaza to former ferry terminal first floor terrace and make good and complete terrace balustrade as necessary.
- Remove existing external stair from upper plaza to lower plaza levels
- Close one existing car egress opening to undercroft carpark
- Remove all existing temporary fencing, original low railings and high galvanised fencing around existing boat ramp.
- Remove existing raised hut structure and associated steps
- Remove section of existing low wall surrounding external carpark at lower plaza level to create new vehicular egress.
- Remove existing reproduction railings from 1995

Proposed construction works

- New free-standing ramp/stair structure to be installed
- New planter, incorporating seating to be installed adjacent to the new ramp/stairs as a buffer between enhanced public realm and existing carpark.
- New planter between the new ramp/stairs and the existing ferry terminal building to be installed.
- New seating and planters in select locations along pier edge to be installed.
- New railings required around pier and existing boat ramp.
- New fencing/gate required where raised hut removed.
- Existing slipway to house future display of historic boat (outside the scope of this Part 8).
- Top of existing slipway to be infilled to provide level approach to relocated tourist kiosk
- Relocate existing kiosk to serve as gift shop.



Figure 14. 3D Visual of Proposed Steps and Ramp. NTS

MATERIALS & BUILT FORM

The material palette for the project to take into consideration the existing architectural language of the harbour, and the architectural intent of the Dún Laoghaire Harbour Masterplan.



A limited palette of granite, concrete, metal and timber has been selected to coordinate with existing public realm in the vicinity and provide a calm backdrop.



Figure 15. 3D Visual toward Proposed Steps and Ramp from the Upper Plaza. NTS

PLANTING

The space will be further enhanced by planting, such as holm oak, pinus nigra nigra, tamarix Ramosissima, Liriope Muscari, Ligustrum Japoni Texanum.



4.0 PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS

DUBLIN ARRAY WIND FARM

The Dublin Array is a proposed offshore wind farm on the Kish and Bray Banks, approximately 10km from the coastlines of Counties Dublin and Wicklow. Dún Laoghaire Harbour was identified as the preferred location for the operation and maintenance base, and this is a core recommendation within the 2021 Economic Plan for Dún Laoghaire as commissioned by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council. The proposed location on St. Michael's Pier & old ferry terminal car park will necessitate the route for the cruise passengers to be re orientated.

HARBOUR MASTERPLAN

The Dún Laoghaire Harbour Masterplan was published in December 2025 and is available to view online. <https://www.dlrcoco.ie/dun-laoghaire-harbour/harbour-information/dun-laoghaire-harbour-master-plan>. It serves as an introduction to the vision and guiding principles for the development of Dún Laoghaire Harbour. Within the masterplan there are proposals for different sections of the harbour with varying timelines. Each proposed project will reflect the design ambitions of the masterplan in terms of landscaping, public realm design, heritage and conservation, social infrastructure, planning and connectivity.

This site is described under section 6.2.2. The long-term ambition for this site is the creation of a primary focal point connecting the harbour and Dún Laoghaire town. It is proposed that the site will serve as a civic gateway to the harbour creating a new point where the town and sea most visibly meet.

This project serves as an initial step toward realising the ambition of the masterplan to reconnect the harbour and Dún Laoghaire town in a more direct and visible way. This underused yet pivotal site will start the process of connecting the town inhabitants with the harbour from Marine Road. This project also begins the process of establishing sightlines between the water and the town centre. The long-term ambition to reinforce the connection between urban life and maritime landscape is respected.



Figure 6. Extract from DL Masterplan, Pavilion Garden

ACCESSIBILITY

The steps and ramp have been designed to be inclusive in accordance with universal design principles and will be universally accessible to people with disabilities serving needs of all members of the community. The route is generous, following a safe, logical, and clear path and will be clearly identified to promote ease of use and wayfinding. Seating and gathering proposals are also accessible and inclusive.

SIGHT LINES AND PERSONAL SECURITY

Due consideration has been given to sight lines and personal security with balustrades providing clear sightlines to the ramp. Planting height, fencing, seating and the overall design allow for clear views throughout the plaza. The ambition is to foster a safe and welcoming environment for all.

ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

Climate action considerations have informed the design process with the aim of minimising the impact on the environment.

APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

Malone O'Regan Environmental were procured to produce an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and has reviewed the proposed development with respect to the requirement for an Appropriate Assessment and has submitted a report, included in Part 8 documentation.

Having reviewed and considered this Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and general information on the nature of the project, the Council has been able to conclude that the proposed project is not likely to have significant effects on European sites arising from the proposed works, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Malone O'Regan Environmental was procured to produce an Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report and has reviewed the proposed development with respect to the requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment and has submitted a report, included in Part 8 documentation.

Having reviewed and considered this Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report and general information on the nature of the project, the Council has determined that an EIAR is not required in this instance.

ECOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Malone O'Regan Environmental was procured to produce an Ecological Impact Assessment and has submitted a report, included in Part 8 documentation.

The council is in acceptance with the conclusions that the proposed development will not adversely affect the environment.

5.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

Under the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028, the site is subject to zoning objective W: To provide for waterfront development and harbour related uses.

POLICY

This development at Dún Laoghaire Ferry Pier will tie in with the relevant national and regional policy. It also aligns with the following specific policies as outlined in the **Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council County Development Plan 2022-2028** (adopted 21st April 2022).

The Development Plan sets out an approach centred on the core principle of sustainability with a focus on creating vibrant, liveable, climate resilient communities. There is a "focus on coastal amenities which are an integral part of the unique character of the county"¹. The development plan is consistent with both the 'National Planning Framework' (2018) (NPF) and the 'Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy' (2019) (RSES).

This proposed development supports the NPF's National Strategic Outcome No.7: Enhanced Amenity & Heritage. This aligns with the county plan policy objective NPF1– National Planning Framework:

"It is a Policy Objective of the Council to ensure consistency with and support the achievement of the National Strategic Outcomes and National Policy Objectives of the National Planning Framework."²

The Development Plan's main objective "to embrace inclusiveness, champion quality of life through healthy placemaking, grow and attract a diverse innovative economy and deliver this in a manner that enhances our environment for future generations"³ is supported by these proposed works.

¹ p.v, Curran, F. Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council (2022), County Development Plan 2022-2028

² p.11, Ibid

³ p.2, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council (2022), County Development Plan 2022-2028

The overarching vision of the development plan is underpinned by five Strategic County Outcomes which permeate all its policy objectives.⁴

Objective 1. Creation of a Climate Resilient County

The proposed development supports local residents' enjoyment of local amenities.

Objective 2. Creation of a Compact and Connected County

With this development, existing public transport links are utilised, and existing amenities are capitalised on through the improvement of on-site amenities.

Objective 3. Creation of a Network of Liveable Towns and Villages

The development enriches the liveability of the DLR county by enabling greater enjoyment of the coastal activities.

Objective 4. Creation of an Inclusive and Healthy County

This project supports inclusivity by improving accessibility to the harbour and the sea and it promotes healthy outdoor activities.

Objective 5. Creation of a Vibrant Economic County

The proposed stairs, ramp and enhancements to the pier will provide an improved experience for tourists arriving by ferry as well as those enjoying the amenity provided by the pier.

COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN OBJECTIVES

Policy Objective PHP15: Healthy County Plan

This development supports "access to opportunities that help achieve good physical health and positive mental health and wellbeing."⁵

Policy Objective T31: Accessibility

"It is a Policy Objective of the county development plan to support suitable access for people with disabilities, including improvements to transport, streets and public spaces. Accessibility primarily concerns people with reduced mobility, persons with disabilities, older persons and children. (Consistent with RPO 9.1 and 9.10 of the RSES)."⁶

This proposed development supports this objective with the provision of a new ambulant disabled stair and ramp connecting the Harbour Plaza with the lower pier level.

Policy Objective E17: Tourism and Recreation

"It is a Policy Objective to co-operate with the appropriate agencies in promoting sustainable tourism and securing the development of tourist and recreation orientated facilities in the County. Furthermore, the Council will promote the

⁴ p.17, Ibid

⁵ p.80, Ibid

⁶ p.118, Ibid.

implementation of the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Tourism Strategy & Marketing Plan 2017–2022 and any subsequent update thereof.”

“The Council will support the development of accessible and inclusive tourism.”⁷

This proposed development supports these objectives and all five strategic objectives of the **Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Tourism Strategy & Marketing Plan 2017–2022**.

Objective 1:

Enhance journey, sense of arrival and information at key arrival points to raise awareness of what is on offer to encourage visitors to stay, explore and return.

Objective 2:

Connect and raise awareness of the network of key visitor experiences from the coast, the mountains, the towns and villages and connect the network of visitor destinations where possible.

Objective 3:

Develop a suite of signature experiences – activities, products and programmes – to showcase the unique characteristics of the destination, meet the needs of its target markets and substantiate the overall brand proposition.

Objective 4:

Collaborate with key stakeholders to develop an integrated tourism offer and effectively address key challenges to support the on-going growth and development of the tourism industry.

Objective 5:

Implement a new Marketing Strategy for the DLR proposition, leveraging the Destination Dublin brand to enhance awareness of the visitor experiences and attract more tourists to the County.

Policy Objective OSR5: Public Health, Open Space and Healthy Placemaking

“It is a Policy Objective to support the objectives of public health policy including Healthy Ireland and the National Physical Activity Plan (NPAP) 2016, to increase physical activity levels across the whole population thus creating a society, which facilitates people whether at home, at work or at play to lead a more active way of life (consistent with RPO 9.16).”⁸

This proposed development facilitates greater engagement with the sea by providing better access to the harbour.

⁷ p.136, Ibid.

⁸ p.186, Ibid.

Policy Objective OSR11: Water-Based Sports

"It is a Policy Objective to support and encourage water-based sports and maritime leisure activities along the coast."⁹

This proposed development supports this objective by facilitating greater engagement with the sea.

Specific Local Objective SLO40:

"To support and encourage the development of a National Watersports Centre Campus to facilitate training and participation in a varied range of water sports and activities, accessible for all ages and abilities and socio-economic status, to provide a focus for national and international watersports events, subject to the finding of the future feasibility study to be carried out using funding secured under the Large Scale Sports Infrastructure Fund (LSSIF). Site appraisal and analysis of the Harbour environs to identify the optimum location(s) for such a centre to be expedited as an integral part of the forthcoming Dún Laoghaire and Environs Local Area Plan".

Specific Local Objective SLO116:

"To provide a cultural and heritage centre in the environs of the Dún Laoghaire Harbour that focusses on the unique history of emigration from the Carlisle Pier, the construction of the harbour, the role of the harbour in the development of amateur watersports, and the celebration of the first suburban rail line and mail boat service. Any proposals shall be subject to Appropriate Assessment Screening in accordance with the requirements of the EU Habitats Directive and shall ensure the protection and preservation of all designated SACs, SPAs, and pNHA(s) in Dublin Bay and the surrounding area".

The site is within the boundary of a Candidate Architectural Conservation Area which encompasses the entire harbour. As such, while not a statutory designation, it is under consideration for future protection. While not requiring an Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment, the proposed development is of a sensitive design such as to enhance the existing area.

PROTECTED STRUCTURES

While the harbour contains many protected structures — such as the historic buildings facing the harbour from Marine Road, the Coast Guard building, the lighthouses, and the yacht clubs, there are none within the site. The impact of the proposed development is considered negligible on any protected structures.

⁹ p.191, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council (2022), County Development Plan 2022-2028

6.0 CONCLUSION

It is considered that the proposed development will provide improved facilities at St. Michael's Pier, Dún Laoghaire. It is considered that the proposal ties in with the harbour masterplan long-term goals of the site. In addition, it is considered that the proposed development would not significantly detract from the character of the surrounding area and would be in accordance with relevant policy and the provisions of the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

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