

Appropriate Assessment – Stage 1: Screening Report

Cruise Terminal Reorientation – Pedestrian Link & Public Realm

at

Dún Laoghaire Harbour Cruise Terminal

On behalf of

**Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County
Council**





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Title: Appropriate Assessment – Stage 1: Screening Report, Cruise Terminal Reorientation – Pedestrian Link & Public Realm, Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, Dún Laoghaire Harbour Cruise Terminal

Job Number: E2464

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Revision Record

Issue No.	Date	Description	Remark	Prepared	Checked	Approved
01	10/08/2026	AA Screening Report	FINAL	SK	AK	KB

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Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council
Dún Laoghaire Harbour Cruise Terminal

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1 INTRODUCTION

Malone O'Regan Environmental (MOR Environmental) was commissioned by Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council ('DLRCC') to undertake an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report ('AA') to assess the potential adverse effects, if any, of the proposed Cruise Terminal Reorientation – Pedestrian Link and Public Realm ('the Proposed Development') at Dún Laoghaire Harbour Cruise Terminal Harbour Rd, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin (ITM OS Reference 724489 728899) on nearby sites with European conservation designations (i.e., Natura 2000 sites).

The Proposed Development will be located on a site that is circa ('ca.') 0.28 hectares ('ha') in size and is located within the townland of Dunleary (Dún Laoghaire), Co. Dublin, ca. 0.4km northeast of Dún Laoghaire Village and is shown in Figure 1-1 ('the Site').

The purpose of this assessment was to determine the appropriateness, or otherwise, of the proposed works in the context of the conservation objectives of European Designated sites through the research and interpretation of the best scientific, geographic and engineering knowledge. This report seeks to determine whether the Proposed Development will, on its own or in combination with other plans/projects have a significant effect on the integrity of European Designated sites within a defined zone of influence of the Site. This AA has been prepared without considering measures intended to avoid or reduce an impact on a European Designated site.

Figure 1-1: Site Location



1.1 Site Context

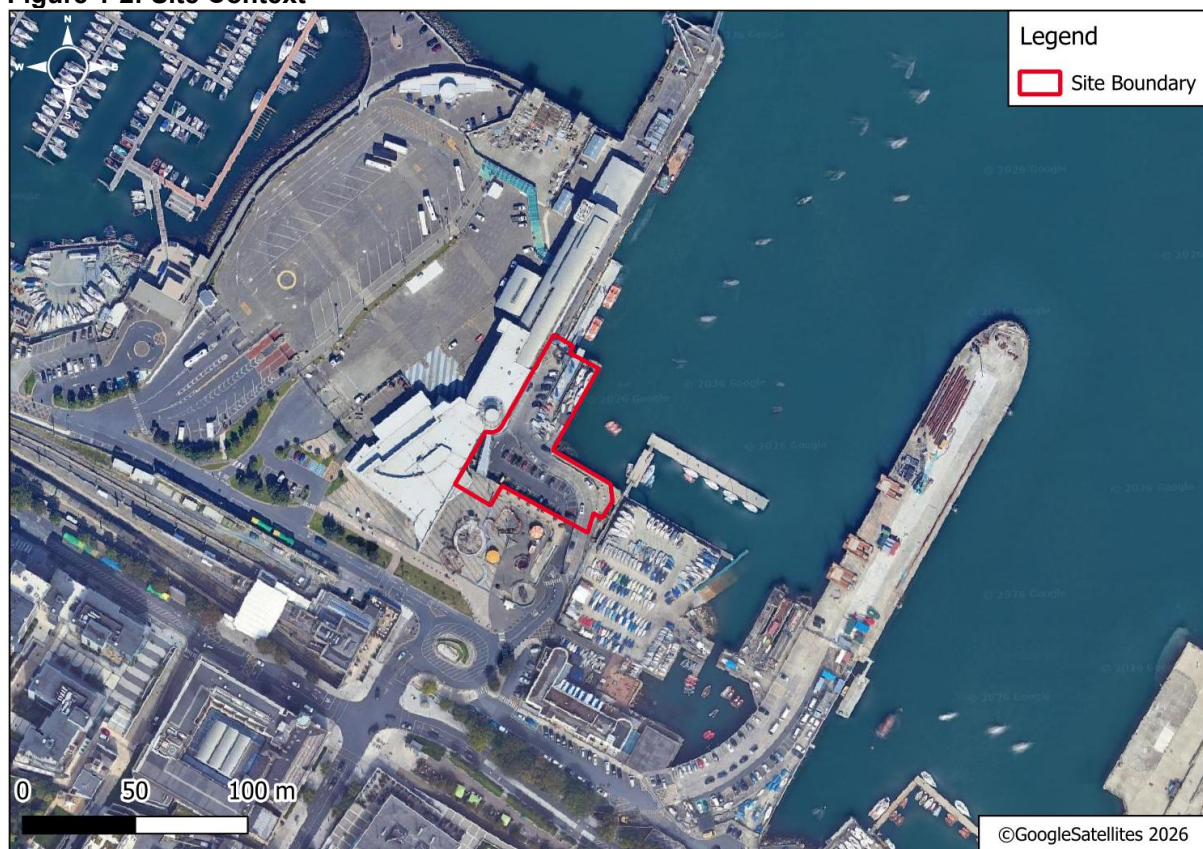
The Site is located within the existing Cruise Terminal area at Dún Laoghaire Harbour ('the harbour'). The harbour is located ca. 12km south of Dublin City Centre and was constructed in the early 19th century to act as the original entry port for the city of Dublin. The harbour is

made up of the East Pier, the West Pier, the Coast Guard Cottages, the Coal Harbour, Carlisle Pier, the Ferry Terminal Building, carparking and mooring and jetties for the boats located within the harbour.

The harbour itself lies to the north and east of the Site, along with associated marine infrastructure and facilities such as the Royal St. George Yacht Club and Dublin Bay Cruises. The Carlisle Pier is located ca. 140m to the east of the Site and the East Pier is located ca. 310m to the east of the Site and the west pier is located ca. 810m to the west of the Site.

Along the western perimeter of the Site, there is an existing large-scale commercial building, beyond which lies an extensive car park and the Dún Laoghaire Marina. The land to the south comprises additional car parking areas, public realm spaces, and Harbour Road.

Figure 1-2: Site Context



1.2 Watercourses within the Vicinity of the Site

As per Environmental Protection Agency ('EPA') maps, Dublin Bay is the only hydrological feature of note within close proximity of the Site. Dublin Bay forms part of the South Dublin Bay SAC, North Dublin Bay SAC, Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC, South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA North-West Irish Sea SPA, North Bull Island SPA and Dalkey Islands SPA.

Under the Water Framework Directive ('WFD') 2000/60/EC, the EPA classifies the status and the risk of not achieving good water quality status for all waterbodies in Ireland [1]. According to the river waterbody WFD 2019-2024, the water quality within Dublin Bay is considered to be 'good,' and the status of this river is considered 'not at risk' [1].

The Site is situated within the Liffey and Dublin Bay WFD Catchment [Catchment_ID: 09] and the Dodder_SC_010 subcatchment [Subcatchment_ID: 09_16] [1].

The location of the key surface water features in the vicinity of the Site are illustrated in Figure 1-3 below.

Figure 1-3: Watercourses in the Vicinity of the Site



1.2.1 OPW Flood Maps

The Office of Public Works (‘OPW’) Flood Maps identify Drainage Districts, Arterial Drainage Schemes and Benefitted Areas [2]. Arterial Drainage Schemes were works that were carried out under the Arterial Drainage Act, 1945 to improve land for agriculture and to mitigate flooding. The Benefitted land identifies land that was drained as part of the Drainage District with the aim to improve land for agriculture and to mitigate flooding.

As per OPW Flood Maps, there are no Drainage Districts, Arterial Drainage Schemes or Benefitted Areas located within the vicinity of the Site [2].

1.2.2 Drainage Ditches

No drainage ditches were identified during the Site walkover.

1.3 Statement of Authority

This report was reviewed and approved by Ms. Kathryn Broderick, Principal Consultant - Ecologist. Kathryn has over 10 years of experience working in the ecological consultancy sector. As part of her role, Kathryn is required to undertake habitat surveys and appraisals as well as specialist protected species surveys in support of Ecological Impact Assessments and Appropriate Assessments. Kathryn has also completed a diploma in Environmental Law and Planning, which had a focus on EIA and AA assessment, which has provided her with a comprehensive understanding of the legal context and requirements of these types of assessments.

1.4 Regulatory Context

The following guidance documents were adhered to for the preparation of this AA report:

- OPR Practice Note PN01, *Appropriate Assessment for Screening for Development Management*, The Office of the Planning Regulator [3];
- *Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites. Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*, European Commission [4];
- *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland*, Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management [5];
- *Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provision of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*, European Commission [6];
- *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland, Guidance for Planning Authorities*, DoEGLH [7]; and,
- *Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive; Guidance for Planning Authorities. Circular NPW 1/10 and PSSP 2/10*, DoEGLH [8].

This AA was prepared in accordance with and in compliance with the following legislation:

The Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Flora and Fauna better known as “The Habitats Directive”. This provides the framework for legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. Articles 3 to 9 provide the legislative means to protect habitats and species of community interest through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of sites known as Natura 2000. The Habitats Directive was transposed into Irish law by the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations (S.I. 477 / 2011) (as amended) [9].

For completeness, the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) states “*European site*” means:

- A candidate site of Community Importance (‘cSCI’);
- A site of Community Importance (‘SCI’);
- A Special Area of Conservation (‘SAC’);
- A candidate Special Area of Conservation (‘cSAC’); or,
- A Special Protection Area (‘SPA’).

These are Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (79/409/EEC as amended 2009/149/EC) (better known as “The Birds Directive”).

Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to affect European sites (Annex 1.1). Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for Appropriate Assessment.

“Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the [Natura 2000] site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, shall be subjected to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implication for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public”.

The Habitats Directive promotes a hierarchy of avoidance, mitigation, and compensatory measures. First, the project should aim to avoid any negative impacts on European sites by identifying possible impacts early in the planning stage and designing the project in order to avoid such impacts. Second, mitigation measures should be applied, if necessary, during the AA process to the point, where no adverse impacts on the site(s) remain. If the project is still likely to result in adverse effects, and no further practicable mitigation is possible, it must be rejected unless it follows the process established under Article 6(4). If the project is required for imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI test) under Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, then compensation measures are required for any remaining adverse effects.

1.5 Stages of Appropriate Assessment

There are four distinct stages to undertaking an AA as outlined in current European Union (EU) and Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government ('DoEHLG') guidance:

Stage 1: Screening

This process identifies the potential impacts of a plan or project on a Natura site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant. If potentially significant impacts are identified, the plan or project cannot be screened out and must proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment

Where potentially significant impacts are identified, an assessment of the potential mitigation of those impacts is required; this stage considers the appropriateness of those mitigation measures in the context of maintaining the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites. If potential significant impacts cannot be eliminated with appropriate mitigation measures, the assessment must proceed to Stage 3.

Stage 3: Assessment of Alternatives Solutions

This process examines alternative ways to achieve the objectives of the plan or project that avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site if mitigation measures are deemed insufficient.

Stage 4: Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI)

Assessment where no alternative solution exists for a plan or project and where adverse impacts remain. This includes an assessment of compensatory measures, where in the case of projects or plans, can be considered necessary for IROPI.

2 SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

Screening determines whether Appropriate Assessment is necessary by examining:

1. Whether a plan or project can be excluded from AA requirements because it is directly connected with, or necessary to, the management of a European Designated site; and,
2. Whether the project will have a potentially significant effect on a European Designated site, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, in view of the site's conservation objectives.

Screening involves the following:

- i) Description of a plan or project;
- ii) Identification of relevant European Designated sites and compilation of information on their qualifying interests and conservation objectives;
- iii) Assessment of likely effects – direct, indirect, and cumulative – undertaken on the basis of available information as a desk study or field survey or primary research as necessary; and,
- iv) Screening Statement with conclusions.

2.1 Methodology

2.1.1 Determining Zone of Influence

The starting point for this assessment was to determine the Zone of Influence. The Zone of Influence ('Zol') comprises the area in which the Proposed Development may potentially affect the conservation objectives (or qualifying interests) of a European Designated site.

Previous guidance for 'Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland' noted that a distance of 15km is recommended for the identification of relevant European sites [7]. However, guidance from the Office of the Planning Regulator ('OPR') and guidance from the NPWS recommend that the distance should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with reference to the nature, size and location of the project, the sensitivities of the ecological receptors, and the potential for in-combination effects (cumulative) [8, 3]. For some projects the distance could be greater than 15km, and in some cases less than 100m.

Definition of the zone of influence for the proposed works includes evaluating the following:

- Identification of the European Designated sites that are situated within, in close vicinity or downstream within the zone of influence of the Proposed Development;
- Identification of the designated habitats and species and Conservation Objectives for the identified European Designated sites;
- Identification of the environmental conditions that stabilise and increase the qualifying interests of the European Designated sites towards favourable conservation status;
- Identification of the threats/impacts – actual or potential that could negatively impact the conservation objectives for the European Designated sites;
- Identifying the activities of the proposed works that could give rise to significant adverse impacts; and,
- Identification of other plans or projects for which in-combination impacts would likely have significant adverse effects.

2.1.2 Source-Pathway-Receptor Model

European Designated sites are only at risk from significant effects where a source-pathway-receptor link exists between a Proposed Development and European Designated sites. This can take the form of a direct impact (e.g. where the Proposed Development is located within / in close vicinity to the boundary of a European Designated site), or an indirect impact where impacts outside of the European Designated site but affect ecological receptors within (e.g. impacts to water quality which can affect estuarine habitats at a distance from the impact source).

The likely effects of the Proposed Development on any European Designated site have been assessed using a source-pathway-receptor model. A source-pathway-receptor model is a standard tool used in environmental assessment and is recommended by OPR Guidance [10, 11]. The model comprises of:

- A *source*: any potential impacts from the Proposed Development, e.g. the runoff of sediment / construction pollution.
- A *pathway*: the means or route by which a source can affect the ecological receptor.
- A *receptor*: the qualifying interests and / or special conservation interests of the European Designated sites.

In order to establish the Zone of Influence of the Proposed Development works, the likely key environmental impacts / changes associated with the Proposed Development were determined having regard to the project characteristics set out in Section 3.3 of this report. Zone of Influence for various potential impact pathways are discussed in Section 4.1.

2.1.3 Desk Based Studies

A desk-based review of information sources was completed, which included the following sources of information:

- Review of aerial maps of the Site and surrounding area;
- The National Parks and Wildlife Service ('NPWS') website was consulted with regard to the most up to date detail on conservation objectives for the European Designated sites relevant to this assessment [12];
- The National Biodiversity Data Centre ('NBDC') website was consulted with regard to species distributions [13];
- The Environmental Protection Agency ('EPA') Maps website was consulted to obtain details about watercourses in the vicinity of the Site [1];
- Bird Watch Ireland – The publicly available Site Summary Irish Wetland Bird Survey ('I-WeBS') data was reviewed with regard to wintering waterbird population within the vicinity of the Site [14];
- The Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council Planning Portal to obtain details about existing / proposed developments in the vicinity of the Site [15]; and,
- The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage's planning portal – the National Planning Application Database was reviewed to obtain details about existing / proposed developments in the vicinity of the Site [16].

2.1.4 Field Survey

An initial site walkover was undertaken on 9th October 2025 and a follow up survey was completed on 31st March 2026 by suitably qualified MOR Environmental Ecologists. This

survey aimed to assess the extent and quality of habitats present on the Site and to identify any potential ecological receptors associated with the European sites.

During the site walkover, a habitat survey was undertaken using the Heritage Council's '*Guide to Habitats in Ireland*' [17] and conducted in line with the Heritage Council's '*Best Practice Guidance for Habitat Survey & Mapping*' [18]. This is the standard habitat classification system used in Ireland and includes both a desk-based and field-based assessment.

The assessments were extended to also identify the potential for these habitats to support other features of nature conservation importance, such as species afforded legal protection under either Irish or European legislation.

2.1.4.1 Protected Species Surveys

The Site was assessed for its potential to support notable species which have been designated as conservation interest species for European sites within 15km of the Site.

Harbour Porpoise

The harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*) is Ireland's smallest cetacean, and also the most commonly recorded around the Irish coast. Harbour porpoises are listed under Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive as an animal species of community interest whose conservation requires the designation of SACs. Three SACs have harbour porpoises listed as a Qualifying Interest in Ireland; two are in the southwest, while a further SAC has been designated on the east coast extending from Rockabill to Dalkey Island and is located 2.8km from the Site.

The Site was assessed for its potential to support harbour porpoise which have been designated as conservation interest species for European sites within 15km of the Site. An appraisal of the suitability of the Site and surrounding waters for harbour porpoise was completed. This assessment considered habitat suitability, levels of vessel activity and disturbance, and the potential for the area to support foraging, commuting or resting harbour porpoise.

The survey was informed by a review of available records from the NBDC and the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group ('IWDG').

Breeding Bird Surveys

The Site was assessed for its potential to support important assemblages of birds of rare or notable species which have been designated as conservation interest species for European sites within 15km of the Site.

Following the desk-based assessment and the initial habitat assessment, it was deemed necessary to conduct breeding bird surveys to determine whether any birds were nesting on-site or in the immediate vicinity of the Site. These surveys included:

- Breeding bird vantage point survey ('VP') on 31st March 2026; and,
- Breeding bird boat-based survey on 4th April 2026.

During the VP survey, one suitably qualified and experienced MOR Environmental Ecologist was positioned at a VP within the harbour that had clear views of the Site and the nearby Carlisle Pier, see Figure 2-1 below.

During the survey, all birds that were observed within the Site and the nearby harbour were recorded, and their behaviours were noted. Birds were classified as non-breeding, possibly breeding and confirmed breeding based on the behaviours exhibited. The criteria for each classification are described below:

- Non-breeding – Birds that were flying over the Site, birds that were foraging and not calling, birds that were loafing;

- Possible Breeding – Birds observed in suitable nesting habitat and displaying either territorial and/or courtship behaviours, nest building behaviours or observed visiting a possible nest; and,
- Confirmed Breeding – Birds observed either on the nest or carrying faecal sac or food, sighting of a nest with eggs / chicks, used nests, eggshells or recently fledged young.

Following the initial VP survey, it was deemed necessary to undertake a breeding bird survey from a boat in order to access under the pier on which the Site is located and also under the nearby Carlisle Pier. The boat survey assessed all accessible areas to identify suitable breeding habitat for black guillemots (*Cephus grylle*) and potential nests under the piers.

The survey methodology utilised for the boat survey was adapted from the Seabird Monitoring Handbook [19], specifically for black guillemots. The survey methodology utilised for these surveys was adapted from Seabird Monitoring Handbook [19]. The methodology utilised entailed visiting the full extent of the survey area, counting all adult birds seen on water, on shore and on structures within the study area and locating crevices and holes observed to be potentially utilised by black guillemots. A torch was used to illuminate any crevices or dark recesses under the piers. Nest sites were recorded as apparently occupied nests ('AON') if it was visited and entered by adults (probable or confirmed breeding status). All potentially nesting species were recorded.

The survey was undertaken at sunrise to coincide with the likely visiting of AON sites by adults, as fish delivery is known to be highest during the morning and evening, in order to avoid under-recording sites where foraging adults were absent.

Figure 2-1: Bird Survey VP Location



Table 2-1: Bird Survey Metadata

Date	Survey	Start – End Time	Sunrise	Weather Conditions
------	--------	------------------	---------	--------------------

31/03/2026	VP Survey	07:00 – 10:00	07:01	9-12°C, Overcast, Light Breeze
16/04/2026	Boat Survey	07:00 - 10:00	06:23	9-12°C, Clear skies, Light Breeze

Invasive Species

The Site was visually assessed for the presence of any noxious / invasive species that are regulated under the European Union (Invasive Alien Species) Regulations 2024 (S.I. No. 374/2024) [20] such as Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*) and Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*).

The Site was also assessed for the presence of non-regulated invasive species that have the potential to impact local biodiversity.

2.1.4.2 Survey Limitations

The habitat survey was undertaken outside of the optimal botanical season for flowering plants, which is usually considered to be April – September inclusive. However, given the absence of any vegetated areas on the Site, the timing of the survey is not a limitation.

Therefore, it can be stated that there are no other survey limitations.

2.1.5 Consultation

Consultation was undertaken with Martina O'Brien, DLR Biodiversity Officer. All comments, guidance and opinions received were considered as part of this assessment.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Proposed Development

DLRCC are proposing to construct a new ramp and steps connecting Harbour Plaza with the lower St Michael's Pier. The latter is to become a new resurfaced public plaza with a gift kiosk, planting, seating, new railings, and views of the sea.

Construction of the new external access ramp and adjoining steps is to provide universal, wheelchair-accessible egress for all members of the public, while streamlining and simplifying the journey from boat to Dún Laoghaire Town for cruise ferry passengers.

The proposed works consist of:

- The removal of the two existing access stairs (one from the upper plaza level to the lower plaza level and one from the upper plaza level to the existing building);
- Partial demolition and making good of a low wall at Harbour Plaza;
- Reconfiguration of the parking and access arrangements, including partial demolition of a low wall and amendments to vehicular routes within the lower/undercroft parking level;
- Diversion of existing drainage and underground services;
- Construction of a new access ramp and stairs to link the upper and lower plaza levels;
- Provision of new line markings to the car park and access road areas;
- Relocation of kiosk and moveable sheltered walkways;
- Provision of new historic lifeboat display, along with,
- New planting and landscaping throughout.

3.2 Drainage

Surface Water Drainage

Due to the close proximity of the proposed works to the sea, no uncontrolled runoff of surface water from the works area will be permitted from the Site.

During the Construction and Demolition Phase, all runoff from the area of works and compound it to pass through a silt bag and petrol separator prior to being discharged into the existing surface water network for discharge. All surface water gullies and access points within the area of works and compound are to be bunged to prevent direct runoff from occurring.

During the Operational Phase, the Proposed Development will not alter the existing surface water drainage regime, and no changes to current surface water drainage arrangements are proposed.

Foul Water

No foul water will occur as part of the Proposed Development.

3.2.1 Site Access

Access to the Proposed Development will be via the Harbour Road. The Contractor will establish a site boundary with the provision of appropriate signage, construction of hoarding, and welfare facilities, site office, and establishment of appropriate access and egress.

Controlled access points to the site, in the form of gates or doors, will be kept locked for any time that these areas are not monitored (e.g. outside working hours). The hoarding shall be a

minimum of 2m high, solid, painted, well-maintained and contain graphics relating to the Proposed Development.

3.2.2 Construction Compound

The construction compound will be located on-site and shall primarily consist of:

- Site Offices & associated welfare facilities;
- Materials drop-off and storage areas;
- Set down areas for HGVs;
- Temporary car parking facilities; and,
- Temporary fencing and hoarding.

Materials are to be stored on will be stored in a safe manner and will minimise the risk of any negative environmental effects and will be managed on a 'just-in-time' basis.

3.3 Construction and Demolition Procedures

During the Construction and Demolition Phase, the methods of working will comply with all relevant legislation and best practice guidelines in reducing the environmental adverse effects of the works. Although Construction and Demolition Phase adverse effects are generally of a short-term duration and are localised in nature, the adverse effects will be reduced as far as practicable through compliance with current construction industry guidelines.

An outline Construction Environmental Management Plan ('CEMP') has been prepared by Donnachadh O'Brien and Associates Consulting Engineers. A final CEMP will be submitted to the planning authority in advance of works commencing at the Site. The following guidance will be referred to and will be followed during the Construction and Demolition Phase of the Proposed Development to prevent water pollution that may occur within the area:

- CIRIA Guidance C532: *Control of Water Pollution from Construction Sites. Guidance for Consultants and Contractors* [21];
- CIRIA Guidance C741: *Environmental good practice on site guide* [22];
- CIRIA Guidance C750D: *Groundwater control: design and practice* [23];
- CIRIA Guidance C692: *Environmental Good Practice on Site* [24];
- Enterprise Ireland, *Best Practice Guide BPGCS005 – Oil Storage Guidelines* [25];
- CIRIA Guidance C811: *Environmental Good Practice on Site, 5th Edition* [26];
- Government of Ireland, *Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013* [27];
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland ('TII'), *Road Drainage and the Water Environment DN-DNG-03065* [28];
- ICE Earthworks, *A Guide* [29];
- TII, *Specification for Road Works Series 600 – Earthworks* [30]; and,
- Inland Fisheries Ireland ('IFI'), *"Guidelines on Protection of Fisheries During Construction Works in and Adjacent to Waters"* [31].

The proposed works will aim to be completed in approximately 3-4 months from the grant of planning conditions. Working hours will generally be restricted to between 07:00 – 18:00 hours Monday to Friday inclusive and between 09:00 – 16:00 hours on Saturdays.

Construction work will not be permitted on Sundays, public holidays or at night-time except where safety concerns necessitate it or if agreed in advance with the Planning Authority.

4 IDENTIFICATION OF EUROPEAN DESIGNATED SITES

In accordance with the European Commission Methodological Guidance [32] a list of European Designated sites that can be potentially affected by the Proposed Development has been compiled. Guidance for Planning Authorities prepared by the Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government [7] states that defining the likely zone of impact for the screening and the approach used will depend on the nature, size, location and the likely significant effects of the project. The key variables determining whether or not a particular European Designated site is likely to be negatively affected by a project are:

- The physical distance from the Site to the European Designated site;
- The presence of impact pathways;
- The sensitivities of the ecological receptors; and,
- The potential for in-combination effects.

All SPAs and SACs within 15km have been considered to assess their ecological pathways and functional links. As acknowledged in the OPR guidelines [3], few projects have a zone of influence this large, however the identification of European Designated sites within 15km has become widely accepted as the starting point for the screening process. For this reason, all SPAs and SACs in 15km have been identified for consideration as part of the screening.

There are 18 European sites located within 15km of the Site - these are identified in Figure 4-1 and Table 4-1.

Figure 4-1: European Designated sites within 15km of the Site

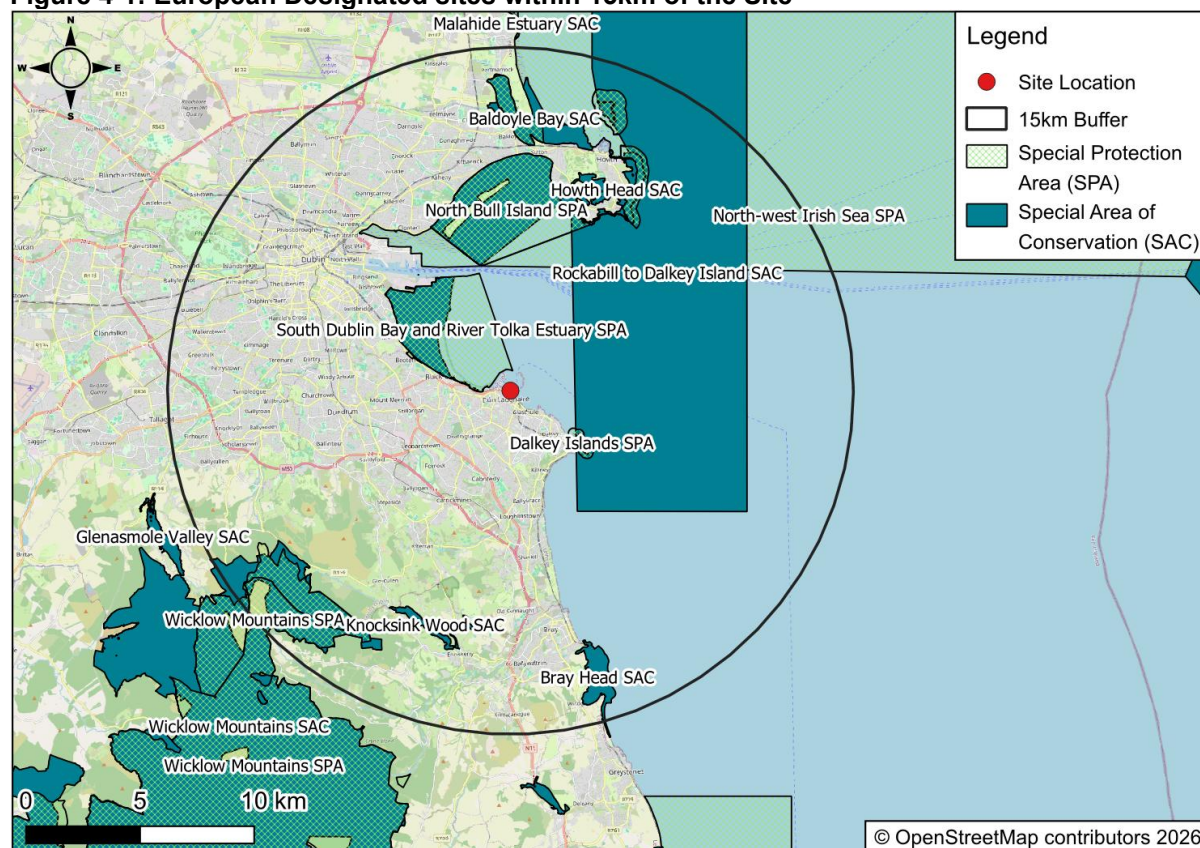


Table 4-1: European Designated Sites within 15km of the Site

Site Name	Code	Distance (km)	Direction from the Site
Special Areas of Conservation ('SAC')			
South Dublin Bay SAC	000210	Ca. 1.4km	W
Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC	003000	Ca. 2.8km	E
North Dublin Bay SAC	000206	Ca. 5.6km	N
Howth Head SAC	000202	Ca. 8.5km	NE
Ballyman Glen SAC	000713	Ca. 10km	S
Knocksink Wood SAC	000725	Ca. 10.4km	SW
Baldoyle Bay SAC	000199	Ca. 10.8km	N
Bray Head SAC	000714	Ca. 11.4km	SE
Wicklow Mountains SAC	002122	Ca. 11.7km	SW
Ireland's Eye SAC	002193	Ca. 12.4km	NE
Special Protection Area ('SPA')			
South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA	004024	Ca. 0.8km	NW
Dalkey Islands SPA	004172	Ca. 3.1km	SE
North Bull Island SPA	004006	Ca. 5.5km	N
Howth Head Coast SPA	004113	Ca. 9km	NE
Baldoyle Bay SPA	004016	Ca. 10.8km	N
Ireland's Eye SPA	004117	Ca. 12km	NE
Wicklow Mountains SPA	004040	Ca. 12km	SW
Northwest Irish Sea SPA	004236	Ca. 5.5km	N

In addition, Lambay Island SAC, located ca.22km north of the Site, has also been included within the screening assessment as a precautionary measure. Although the SAC lies beyond the initial 15 km search radius, it is designated for species including harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*), grey seal (*Halichoerus grypus*) and harbour seal (*Phoca vitulina*). These highly mobile marine mammal species are known to utilise the coastal waters of Dublin Bay, including waters in the vicinity of the Site, for commuting and foraging. Therefore, Lambay Island SAC has been taken forward for consideration to ensure that any potential ecological connectivity associated with these qualifying interests has been appropriately assessed at the screening stage.

4.1 Identification of European Designated Sites within Zol

The Zol comprises the area in which the Proposed Development may potentially affect the conservation objectives (or qualifying interests) of a European Designated site. The definition of Zol for the proposed works, as outlined in Section 2.1, is evaluated by multiple factors and discussed below. Please note that the extent of Zol differs for different environmental aspects, e.g. air, water, etc.

4.1.1 Habitat Loss / Degradation

The Site is not located within or adjacent to any European sites, and no designated habitats were identified within the Site. The Site comprises the existing Harbour Cruise Pier and is located within an area of artificial surfaces and hardstanding only. Therefore, it can be stated that there will be no direct impacts associated with designated habitat loss as a result of the Proposed Development.

Given the intervening distances, and the lack of direct hydrological connection, the North Dublin Bay SAC, Howth Head SAC, Ballyman Glen SAC, Knocksink Wood SAC, Baldoyle Bay SAC, Bray Head SAC, Wicklow Mountains SAC, Ireland's Eye SAC, North Bull Island SPA, Howth Head Coast SPA, Baldoyle Bay SPA, Ireland's Eye SPA, Wicklow Mountains SPA and Lambay Island SAC, it can be stated that there will be no direct impacts associated with designated habitat loss / degradation as a result of the Proposed Development on these sites.

However, given the proximity of the Site to Dublin Bay which forms part of the the South Dublin Bay SAC, Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC, Dalkey Islands SPA and South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA, further consideration has been given to disturbance to protect designated species. For further details see water quality impairment below.

4.1.2 Water Quality Impairment

Potential water quality impacts would typically be associated with the release of sediment and other pollutants to surface water during the Construction and Demolition Phase of the Proposed Development. Therefore, the Zol would be considered to include the receiving waterbodies adjacent to and downstream of the Site during the Construction and Demolition Phase within 5km, which is the distance used as the starting point for the assessment of waterbodies based on accepted best practice and professional expertise.

The Site is located adjacent to Dublin Bay but is situated within the enclosed environment of Dún Laoghaire Harbour. Given the small scale and localised nature of the Proposed Development, together with the absence of direct hydrological connectivity, likely significant effects on North Dublin Bay SAC, Howth Head SAC, Ballyman Glen SAC, Knocksink Wood SAC, Baldoyle Bay SAC, Bray Head SAC, Wicklow Mountains SAC, Ireland's Eye SAC, North Bull Island SPA, Howth Head Coast SPA, Baldoyle Bay SPA, Ireland's Eye SPA and Wicklow Mountains SPA can be objectively excluded. These sites are therefore screened out from further consideration.

However, South Dublin Bay SAC, Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC, Dalkey Islands SPA and South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA are located within 5km of the Site and are hydrologically connected via the waters of Dún Laoghaire Harbour and Dublin Bay. Consequently, these European sites are considered to lie within the Zol for water quality impacts and are screened in for further assessment.

4.1.3 Air Quality Impairment

According to the Institute of Air Quality Management ('IAQM') Guidelines, potential adverse effects from dust arising from construction to ecological receptors occurs within 50m of a construction Site [33]. This is a temporary nuisance only.

No impacts associated with dust will arise as a result of the Proposed Development, given that all European Designated sites are located outside of this zone.

4.1.4 Noise / Disturbance

Noise from the construction activity has the potential to cause disturbance to resting, foraging and commuting qualifying species of the European Designated sites. Individual species will provoke different behavioural responses to disturbances at different distances from the source of disturbance.

- Transport Infrastructure Ireland (formerly the National Roads Authority) has produced a series of best practice planning and construction guidelines for the treatment of certain protected mammal species, which indicate that disturbance to terrestrial mammals would not extend beyond 150m [34];
- Studies have noted that different types of disturbance stimuli are characterized by different avifaunal reactions, however, in general a distance of 300m can be used to represent the maximum likely disturbance distance for waterfowl [35]; and,
- National Parks and Wildlife Service ('NPWS') has prepared a '*Guidance to Manage the Risk to Marine Mammals from Man-made Sound Sources in Irish Waters*' and provides technical guidance in relation to specific maritime sound-producing plans or projects. In accordance with this guidance, disturbance effects on marine mammals are generally expected to be confined to distances of approximately 500-1000m from the source, depending on the type and intensity of the works being undertaken such as dredging or pile-driving [36].

All works will be confined to the red line boundary and no piling, dredging or other in-water works are proposed. Therefore, there is no pathway for underwater noise impacts. Any potential disturbance effects are expected to be restricted to the terrestrial and nearshore environment immediately surrounding the Site.

The Zol for noise / disturbance is therefore established at the Site with a 300m buffer.

None of the European sites listed in Table 4-1 are located within the 300m noise and disturbance Zol. However, South Dublin Bay SAC, Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC, Dalkey Islands SPA and South Dublin Bay, River Tolka Estuary SPA and Lambay Island SAC have been brought forward for further assessment on a precautionary basis.

This is based on their close proximity to the Site and the potential for qualifying species, particularly mobile bird species and marine mammals, to utilise Dún Laoghaire Harbour and adjacent waters for foraging, commuting purposes. Therefore, a potential pathway for disturbance effects cannot be objectively excluded, and these European sites have been screened in for further consideration.

4.1.5 Invasive Species

No medium or high-impact invasive species (including those that are regulated under the European Union (Invasive Alien Species) Regulations 2024 (S.I. No. 374/2024) [20]) were recorded within the Site.

4.2 Zol Conclusion

The Site is not located within or directly adjacent to any European Designated sites, however, the boundaries of 18 are located within 15km from the Site.

Given the short duration of the construction works, distance separating the Site from the North Dublin Bay SAC, Howth Head SAC, Ballyman Glen SAC, Knocksink Wood SAC, Baldoyle Bay SAC, Bray Head SAC, Wicklow Mountains SAC, Ireland's Eye SAC, North Bull Island SPA,

Howth Head Coast SPA, Baldoyle Bay SPA, Ireland's Eye SPA, Northwest Irish Sea SPA, and the Wicklow Mountains SPA, and the intervening lands separating the Site from the European Designated sites and the lack of impact pathways, it is considered that the Proposed Development will not result in adverse effects to these European Designated sites and they have therefore been screened out from further consideration.

The following European Designated sites listed in Table 4-2 have been screened in for further consideration to assess potential adverse effects resulting from the Proposed Development.

Table 4-2: European Designated Sites within Zol

Site Name	Code	Distance at closest point and source-pathway-receptor link
South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA	004024	The Site is located 0.8km east of the South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA, see Figure 4-1. Given the close proximity of the Site to the SPA, potential indirect impairment of water quality and disturbance to designated species will be taken forward for further consideration.
South Dublin Bay SAC	000210	The Site is located 1.4km from the South Dublin Bay SAC, see Figure 4-1. Given the close proximity of the Site to the SAC, potential disturbance effects to designated species and potential indirect water quality impairment will be taken forward for further consideration.
Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC	003000	The Site is located 2.8km from the South Dublin Bay SAC, see Figure 4-1. Given the close proximity of the Site to the SAC, potential disturbance effects to designated species, potential indirect water quality impairment will be taken forward for further consideration.
Dalkey Islands SPA	004172	The Site is located 3.1km from the Dalkey Islands SPA, see Figure 4-1. Given the close proximity of the Site to the SPA, potential indirect impairment of water quality and disturbance to designated species will be taken forward for further consideration.
Lambay Island SAC		The Site is located 22km from the Lambay Island SAC. Given the potential disturbance effects to designated species, potential indirect water quality impairment will be taken forward for further consideration.

The screening assessment for individual designated habitats and species for each of the screened in European sites and the potential for them to be adversely affected by the Proposed Development are presented in Section 6 below.

Further information on the screened in European sites is provided below.

4.3 South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (Site Code: 000210)

The South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA comprises a substantial part of Dublin Bay. It includes the intertidal area between the River Liffey and Dún Laoghaire, and the estuary of the River Tolka to the north of the River Liffey, as well as Booterstown Marsh. A portion of the shallow marine waters of the bay is also included.

This SPA is an important site for wintering waterfowl being an integral part of the internationally important Dublin Bay complex. This site supports internationally important populations of Light-bellied Brent Goose and nationally important numbers of Oystercatcher, Ringed Plover, Grey Plover, Knot, Sanderling, Dunlin, Bar-tailed Godwit, Redshank and Black-headed Gull and also supports populations of Great Crested Grebe, Curlew and Turnstone.

This site is a significant site for wintering gulls, with a nationally important population of Black-headed Gull, and also Common Gull and Herring Gull. Also, this site is selected for designation for its autumn tern populations: Roseate Tern, Common Tern and Arctic Tern. See Table 4-3 for designated bird species.

Table 4-3: Qualifying Annex I Species of Birds for South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA

Species Names	Scientific Name	Code
Light-bellied Brent Goose	<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>	A046
Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	A130
Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	A137
Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	A141
Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>	A143
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	A149
Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	A157
Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	A162
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	A179
Roseate Tern	<i>Sterna dougallii</i>	A192
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	A193
Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	A194
Wetland and Waterbirds		A999

4.4 South Dublin Bay SAC (Site Code: 000210)

The South Dublin Bay SAC (000210) extends from the South Wall to the west pier in Dún Laoghaire. It is an intertidal site with extensive areas of sand and mudflats. The sediments are predominantly sands but grade to sandy muds near the shore at Merrion Gates. The main channel which drains the area is Cockle Lake.

This SAC is of considerable conservation significance for multiple reasons:

- This SAC is of considerable conservation significance for a number of E.U. Habitats Directive Annex I habitats that it contains, (See Table 4-4); and,
- Ornithological importance: This SAC supports important habitat for a number of waterfowl species including, Oystercatcher, Ringed Plover, Sanderling, Dunlin and Redshank. Up to 100 Turnstones are usual in the south bay during winter. Brent Goose regularly occur in numbers of international importance (average peak 299). Bar-tailed Godwit, a species listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive, also occur. Large numbers of gulls roost in South Dublin Bay including, Black-headed Gulls and Common Gulls. It is also an important tern roost in the autumn, regularly holding 2000-3000 terns including Roseate Terns, a species listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive. South Dublin Bay is largely protected as a Special Protection Area

At low tide the inner parts of the south bay are used for amenity purposes. Bait digging is a regular activity on the sandy flats. At high tide some areas have windsurfing and jet-skiing.

Table 4-4: Qualifying Annex I Habitats for the South Dublin Bay SAC

Qualifying Habitats (* denotes Priority Habitat)	Code	Site Specific Conservation Objective
Tidal Mudflats and Sandflats	1140	Maintain favourable conservation condition
Annual vegetation of drift lines	1210	Maintain favourable conservation condition
<i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand	1310	Maintain favourable conservation condition
Embryonic shifting dunes	2110	Maintain favourable conservation condition

4.5 Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC (Site Code: 003000)

This SAC comprises dynamic inshore and coastal waters of the western Irish Sea, extending southwards in a 7 km wide and 40 km long strip from Rockabill, past Howth Head, across Dublin Bay to Frazer Bank in south Co. Dublin. It includes Dalkey, Muglins and Rockabill Islands, and encompasses sandy and muddy seabeds, reefs, sandbanks and islands.

The site is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for habitats and species listed under Annex I and II of the E.U. Habitats Directive (see Table 4-5 and 4-6).

Reef habitat is relatively uncommon on Ireland's east coast but is well represented here, particularly around offshore islands. Intertidal and subtidal surveys record a diverse marine community including seaweeds (*Fucus serratus*, *Laminaria hyperborea*), sponges, anemones, molluscs and echinoderms, supported by strong tidal currents and rich suspended matter.

The site is a key habitat for Harbour Porpoise, which occur year-round and at stable, favourable levels. Porpoises with calves have been observed regularly. Common and Grey Seals also use nearby haul-out sites, and other marine mammals recorded include Bottlenose Dolphin, Minke Whale, Fin Whale and Killer Whale.

This area is also an important bird habitat, particularly for large post-breeding flocks of Arctic, Common and Roseate Terns (approx. 2,000 individuals) around Dalkey Island, as well as other seabirds such as Kittiwake, Guillemot, Razorbill, Puffin, Fulmar, and Gannet.

This site is of high conservation value for its Reef habitat and Harbour Porpoise population, both listed under the E.U. Habitats Directive.

Table 4-5: Qualifying Annex I Habitats for the Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC

Qualifying Habitats (* denotes Priority Habitat)	Code	Site Specific Conservation Objective
Reefs	1170	Maintain favourable conservation condition

Table 4-6: Qualifying Annex II Species for the Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC

Species	Species Name	Code
Mammals listed on Annex II of the Habitats Directive	Harbour Porpoise (<i>Phocoena Phocoena</i>)	1351

4.6 Dalkey Islands SPA (Site Code: 004172)

The Dalkey Islands SPA includes Dalkey Island, Lamb Island, Maiden Rock, nearby reefs, and surrounding waters (200 m radius) off Sorrento Point, Co. Dublin. Dalkey Island is the largest and low-lying, with thin peat and boulder clay soils and mainly grassland vegetation,

plus patches of bracken and hogweed. Lamb Island has similar but sparser vegetation, while Maiden Rock is bare granite.

The site is protected under the EU Birds Directive for its importance to Roseate, Common, and Arctic Terns (*Sterna spp.*). It serves as both a breeding and staging site. Common Tern is the most numerous, with Arctic and smaller numbers of Roseate Terns also nesting. A conservation programme begun in 1995 (BirdWatch Ireland/National Parks & Wildlife Service) has improved breeding numbers, and Roseate Terns have successfully returned to nest—one of only three Irish sites for this rare species.

Dalkey Islands also form part of a major post-breeding and pre-migration roost for up to 2,000 terns each autumn (July–September), likely from Dublin and possibly international colonies. Other breeding birds include Great Black-backed Gull, Shelduck, and Oystercatcher, with occasional wintering Turnstone and Purple Sandpiper.

Overall, Dalkey Islands SPA is of high conservation value, especially for Roseate, Common, and Arctic Terns—all listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive.

Table 4-7: Qualifying Annex I Species of Birds for Dalkey Islands SPA

Species Names	Scientific Name	Code
Roseate Tern	<i>Sterna dougallii</i>	A192
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	A193
Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	A194

4.7 Lambay Island SAC (Site Code: 000204)

Lambay Island is a large (250 ha) inhabited island lying 4 km off Portrane on the north Co. Dublin coast. It is privately owned and is accessible by boat from Rogerstown Quay. The island rises to 127 m and is surrounded by steep cliffs on the north, east and south slopes. Lambay Island is flanked by extensive areas of reef habitat.

Lambay Island has good examples of vegetated sea cliffs, a habitat listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive, and these cliffs hold internationally important populations of seabirds. The most numerous species is the Guillemot, with almost 52,000 individuals on the cliffs.

Lambay supports the principal breeding colony of Grey Seal on the east coast of Ireland, numbering 196-252 seals, across all ages. It also contains regionally significant numbers of Common Seal, of which up to 47 individuals have been counted at the site. Grey Seals and Common Seals occur year-round and the island's intertidal shorelines, coves and caves are used by resting and moulting seals.

Species Names	Scientific Name	Code
Reefs		1170
Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts		1230
Harbour Porpoise	<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>	1351
Grey Seal	<i>Halichoerus grypus</i>	1364
Harbour Seal	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>	1365

4.8 Conservation Objectives

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain a favourable conservation status at candidate and designated Natura 2000 Sites. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations that will ensure the ecological integrity of these sites.

According to the EU Habitats Directive, favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- Its natural range, and area it covers within that range, is stable or increasing;
- The specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future; and,
- The conservation status of its typical species is favourable as defined below.

The favourable conservation status of a species achieved when:

- Population data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself;
- The natural range of the species is neither being reduced or likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future; and
- There is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

Conservation objectives for all identified Natura 2000 SAC sites are as follows:

‘To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.’

Conservation objectives for all identified Natura 2000 SPA sites are as follows:

‘To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.’

The full report for the conservation objectives for the South Dublin Bay and River Tolka SPA¹, South Dublin Bay SAC², Rockabill to Dalkey Islands SAC³ and Dalkey Islands SPA⁴ can be found on the NPWS website [12].

¹ https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO004024.pdf

² https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000210.pdf

³ https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO003000.pdf

⁴ https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO004172.pdf

5 STUDY RESULTS

Prior to conducting any field surveys, a desk-based review of information sources was completed. This baseline information provided valuable insight into the types of flora and fauna that may occur on the Site and allowed for the identification of features / habitats located off-site that may require further assessment.

5.1 Desk Based Study Results

5.1.1 NBDC Records

Table 5-1 provides a summary of records of legally protected or otherwise notable species protected under the South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA, Dalkey Islands SPA, South Dublin Bay SAC and Lambay Island SAC that occurred within 2km of the Site at the time of writing this report [13]. The NBDC records were checked on 23rd June 2026. The following NBDC grid squares were checked: O22J, O2330, O2430, O2530, O2630, O22P, O2629, O2627, O2527, O2427, O2327 [13].

Only species recorded within the past 10 years were included in Table 5-1. The parameter of 10 years was chosen to allow for habitat adaptation and modification. It is considered that any records over 10 years old are not representative of the current distribution of species populations.

Table 5-1: NBDC Records for Species Designated for the South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA, Dalkey Islands SPA, South Dublin Bay SAC and Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC within 2km of the Site

Common Name	Scientific Name	Date of Last Record *	Designation
Bird Species			
Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisea</i>	05/09/2024	Wildlife Acts 1976 / 2000
			EU Habitats Directive Annex I Bird Species
			Birds of Conservation Concern Amber List
Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	10/12/2024	Wildlife Acts 1976 / 2000
			EU Habitats Directive Annex I Bird Species
			Birds of Conservation Concern Red List
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	05/03/2023	Wildlife Acts 1976 / 2000
			Birds of Conservation Concern Amber List
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	16/05/2025	Wildlife Acts 1976 / 2000
			EU Habitats Directive Annex I Bird Species
			Birds of Conservation Concern Amber List
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	20/09/2025	Wildlife Acts 1976 / 2000
			EU Habitats Directive Annex I Bird Species
			Birds of Conservation Concern Red List
Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	06/05/2025	Wildlife Acts 1976 / 2000
			Birds of Conservation Concern Red List
Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	25/10/2024	Wildlife Acts 1976 / 2000

Common Name	Scientific Name	Date of Last Record *	Designation
			Birds of Conservation Concern Red List
Red Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>	11/06/2024	Wildlife Acts 1976 / 2000 Birds of Conservation Concern Red List
Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	29/09/2025	Wildlife Acts 1976 / 2000 Birds of Conservation Concern Amber List
Roseate Tern	<i>Sterna dougallii</i>	05/09/2024	Wildlife Acts 1976 / 2000 EU Habitats Directive Annex I Bird Species Birds of Conservation Concern Amber List Threatened Species: OSPAR Convention
Aquatic Species*			
Harbour Porpoise	<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>	06/11/2023	Wildlife Acts 1976 / 2000 EU Habitats Directive Annex II and IV Threatened Species OSPAR Convention
Common Seal	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>	13/02/2024	Wildlife Acts 1976 / 2000 EU Habitats Directive Annex II
Grey Seal	<i>Halichoerus grypus</i>	10/11/2025	Wildlife Acts 1976 / 2000 EU Habitats Directive Annex II and IV
Invasive species**			
Brown Rat	<i>Rattus norvegicus</i>	22/09/2018	High Impact Invasive Species Regulation S.I. 374 (Ireland)
Eastern Grey Squirrel	<i>Sciurus carolinensis</i>	26/10/2024	High Impact Invasive Species Regulation S.I. 374 (Ireland)
Harlequin Ladybird	<i>Harmonia axyridis</i>	28/09/2025	High Impact Invasive Species Regulation S.I. 374 (Ireland)
Japanese Knotweed	<i>Reynoutria japonica</i>	27/05/2023	High Impact Invasive Species Regulation S.I. 374 (Ireland)
Three-cornered Garlic	<i>Allium triquetrum</i>	29/03/2025	Medium Impact Invasive Species Regulation S.I. 374 (Ireland)

* The OSPAR Convention to Protect the Marine Environment of the Northeast Atlantic has identified a number of marine species and habitats which require protection. According to the NPWS, "Ireland committed to establishing marine protected areas to protect biodiversity (i.e., OSPAR MPAs). No legislation is currently used in Ireland to legally underpin protected areas established to fulfil commitments under international conventions. Therefore, since the creation of OSPAR MPAs would not afford any legal protection to the relevant areas on their own, Ireland (like other OSPAR contracting Parties) established a number of its SACs as OSPAR MPAs for marine habitats." [37]. Therefore, the marine species and habitats listed under this convention fall under the protection of the EU Habitats Directive and their associated European sites.

**Note that only Invasive Species regulated under S.I. 374 (2024) were included in Table 5-1 [9].

The NBDC held no records for designated species under the Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC within 2km of the Site within the last 10 years [13].

5.1.2 I-WeBS Data

The Site is not located within any I-WeBS sites, given its location within the marina. However, a review of the Site Summary Tables for Dublin Bay (Site Code: 0U404) and South Dublin Coastline (Site Code: 0U915) was undertaken in order to gain an understanding into the potential assemblage of bird populations that may utilise the areas within the vicinity of the Site.

The I-WeBS data for both sites were publicly available for the wintering seasons between the years 2013/14 and 2022/23. A total of 63 species were recorded during this period. A total of 63 species were recorded in the Dublin Bay site and a total of 32 species were recorded in the South Dublin Coastline site.

The species designated under the South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA and the Dalkey Islands SPA were recorded within these I-WeBS sites. However, it should be noted that gull and tern species do not have designated thresholds of national and international importance.

Of the species recorded, a total of 25 species were recorded at numbers of national importance, and a total of six species were recorded at numbers of international importance, see Table 5-2 below.

Table 5-2: Wintering Bird Species recorded at numbers of National Importance (N) and International Importance (I) in the Dublin Bay and South Dublin Coastline I-WeBS sites from 2013/14 to 2022/23 Winter Seasons

2013/14 to 2022/23 Winter Seasons												
Designation	I-WeBS Site	Species	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Species Designated under the South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA	Dublin Bay	Bar-tailed Godwit	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	N	I
		Dunlin	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
		Grey Plover	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
		Knot	N	N	N	I	I	I	I	I	I	N
		Light-bellied Brent Goose	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
		Oystercatcher	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
		Redshank	I	N	N	N	N	N	N	I	I	N
		Ringed Plover				N	N	N	N		N	N
		Sanderling	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Species Designated under the South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA under 'Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]'		Black-tailed Godwit	I	N	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
		Cormorant	N				N		N	N	N	
		Curlew	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
		Golden Plover	N		N	N	N	N	N			
		Great Crested Grebe	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

		Greenshank	N	N	N	N		N	N	N	N	N
		Grey Heron	N	N	N	N		N	N		N	
		Little Egret	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
		Pintail	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
		Red-breasted Merganser	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
		Shelduck	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	I	N	N
		Shoveler	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
		Teal	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
		Turnstone	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
		Wigeon	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
	South Dublin Coastline	Cormorant						N	N	N		

It should be noted that none of these species identified are considered to exclusively occur within this area and will likely move through the Dublin Bay coastline.

5.1.3 Irish Whale and Dolphin Group

A review of the IWDG 12-month archive of verified sightings identified four records of cetacean species within Dublin Bay, in proximity to Dún Laoghaire Harbour and Scotsman's Bay [38]. No records were identified within Dún Laoghaire Harbour itself.

Table 5-3: Irish Whale and Dolphin Group Verified Sightings

Record Number	Sighting Date	Species	Location
#51098	17/08/2025	Harbour Porpoise	Dún Laoghaire
#51310	21/09/2025	Harbour Porpoise	Dún Laoghaire
#55235	26/04/2026	Dolphin species, possibly Harbour Porpoise	Dún Laoghaire
#50670	12/07/2025	Harbour Porpoise	Scotsmans Bay, Dún Laoghaire
#50885	02/08/2025	Harbour Porpoise	Dún Laoghaire

5.2 Field Based Study Results

The following section provides details of the field-based assessment that was undertaken for the Site on the 9th October 2025 and 31st March 2026.

A description of the habitats and features of ecological significance are outlined below and illustrated in Figure 5-1.

Buildings and Artificial Surfaces (BL1) / Sea Walls, Piers and Jetties (CC1)

The majority of the Site comprises existing hardstanding associated with the cruise terminal, access roads and surface car parking areas. These habitats are characterised by concrete, asphalt and paved surfaces. A section of the Site comprises harbour infrastructure including a pier and associated boat storage area. This structure form part of the enclosed harbour environment and consists primarily of concrete and stone piers.

No notable species were present with only isolated ruderal species noted.

Figure 5-1: Habitat Map



5.2.1 Breeding Bird Survey Results

During the VP and Boat survey, a total of nine species were recorded within the survey area. This included eight species recorded flying over the Site, roosting on infrastructure within the wider harbour or foraging within the harbour waters, which were all classified as non-breeding within the Site due to the fact that they did not interact with the Site:

- Green-listed species: greater black-backed gull (*Larus marinus*) and hooded crow (*Corvus cornix*); and,
- Amber-listed species: cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*), guillemot (*Uria aalge*), herring gull (*Larus argentatus*), lesser black-backed gull (*Larus fuscus*), sandwich tern (*Sterna sandvicensis*) and shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*).

In addition, black guillemot (*Cepphus grille*) (Amber-listed) were noted flying under the Carlisle Pier and foraging within the adjacent waters during the VP survey. During the VP survey, there were no clear views under the Carlisle Pier, and therefore, the boat survey was conducted.

Black Guillemot Results

VP Survey

During the VP survey, four black guillemots were observed flying, and one individual was recorded calling from beneath the Carlisle Pier. Three individuals were observed foraging within the harbour to the west of the Carlisle Pier, while eight individuals were recorded on the water around the pier.

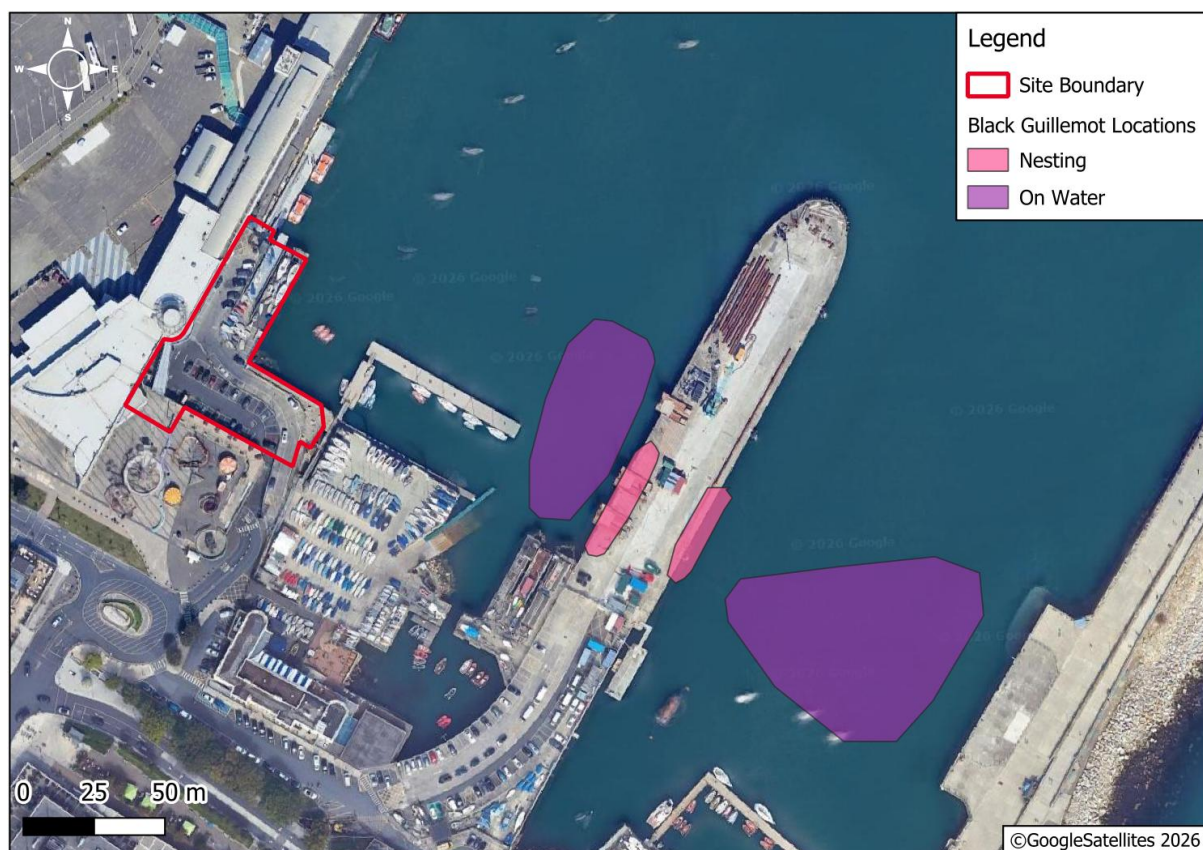
Boat Survey

During the boat-based survey, four breeding pairs of black guillemot were identified nesting beneath the western side of the Carlisle Pier, with a further two breeding pairs recorded beneath the eastern side. In addition, 16 individuals were observed on the water to the west of Carlisle Pier, and eight individuals were recorded on the water to the east.

A number of pigeons were also identified nesting to the southwest and north of Carlisle Pier.

In total, six black guillemot nests were recorded under and along the Carlisle Pier and black guillemot were confirmed as breeding under the Carlisle Pier. Refer to Figure 5-2 for nest locations. There was no breeding of any bird species recorded under the Site. Additionally, no other waterbird species was recorded breeding under the piers.

Figure 5-2: Black Guillemot Boat Survey Locations



5.2.1.1 Harbour Porpoise

The NBDC held records of harbour porpoise within 2km of the Site over the past 10 years [13].

Furthermore, as per IWDG, four records of cetacean species within Dublin Bay, in proximity to Dún Laoghaire Harbour and Scotsman's Bay. No records for harbour porpoise were identified within Dún Laoghaire Harbour itself.

No suitable habitat for these species was identified onsite, as it is comprised entirely of hardstanding. In addition, no observation of harbour porpoise was noted during the site walkover and breeding bird surveys completed.

5.2.1.2 Grey and Harbour Seals

The NBDC held records of grey seals within 2km of the Site over the past 10 years [39].

During the breeding bird VP survey, a single seal, considered likely to be a grey seal, was observed swimming within Dún Laoghaire Harbour. During the subsequent boat-based survey, four seals, considered likely to be grey seals, were recorded beneath the pier. Two individuals were observed in the water, while two others were resting (hauled out) on the adjacent rock armour and rocky ledges.

No evidence of breeding activity or established haul-out sites was identified within the Site or the immediate surrounding area.

5.2.2 Invasive Species

No invasive species were identified within the Site.

6 SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL EFFECTS

Using professional experience, guidance and judgement, the following factors have been taken into account in identifying potential significant impacts on the identified European Designated sites:

- Distance from any European Designated site;
- Qualifying Interests;
- Special Conservation Interests;
- Conservation Objectives;
- The nature of the onsite habitats;
- The location of the Site; and,
- The scale of the Proposed Development.

Based on these factors, the following two potential significant impacts have been taken forward for further consideration:

- Loss of, or disturbance to, habitats or species during Construction and Demolition Phase; and,
- Potential Impairment of Water Quality.

The screening exercise did not identify any other factors that will result in any direct or indirect loss or disturbance to any of the Annex I habitats or Annex I or II species for which the European sites are designated.

6.1 Loss of, or Disturbance to, Habitats or Species During Construction

No Annex I habitats for which any European Site are designated were recorded within or in the vicinity of the Site. The onsite habitats are comprised of existing hardstanding and are considered unsuitable for designated species. In addition, given the nature of the Proposed Development there will be no significant changes in on-site habitats.

Although the general disturbance distance for the designated species is 300m as outlined in section 4.1.4, it is considered that minimal disturbance will occur to any species utilising the Site or surrounding area. This conclusion is based on the fact that the majority of the designated species are highly mobile and will move away from any temporary disturbance.

While some bird species associated with the SPA's within the immediate vicinity of the Site may be subject to temporary disturbances during the Construction and Demolition Phase, it is not considered that these disturbances will result in significant effects on these species. This is based on the Site being located in a heavily modified harbour environment with high levels of anthropogenic disturbance in which birds utilising the area are already habituated.

No evidence of harbour porpoise was recorded onsite or within Dún Laoghaire Harbour at the time of the surveys completed. Furthermore, no records were identified following a review of the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group verified sightings database within the confines of Dún Laoghaire Harbour. Furthermore, the enclosed nature of Dún Laoghaire Harbour and the presence of the harbour walls render the area suboptimal for harbour porpoise.

Consequently, the Site and Dún Laoghaire Harbour is not considered to be an area of importance for the breeding, foraging or commuting activities of this species.

Evidence of grey seal was recorded within the Site. The regular presence of seals within the harbour is consistent with the use of sheltered harbour environments for opportunistic foraging, resting and temporary haul-out. No evidence of breeding activity or established haul-out sites was identified within the Site. Furthermore, Lambay Island SAC is located ca. 22km from the Site and therefore there is no direct or indirect impact pathway by which the Proposed Development could affect the breeding, moulting or haul-out habitats supporting the seal populations associated with Lambay Island SAC. Overall, it is considered that the Proposed Development will not result in the direct or indirect loss of or disturbance to Annex I habitats or Annex II species for which the South Dublin Bay SAC, Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC, South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA, Dalkey Islands SPA and Lambay Island are designated. This conclusion is based on:

- The scale and localised nature of the Proposed Development;
- All works will be confined to the red line boundary;
- The Site being located in a heavily modified harbour environment with high levels of anthropogenic disturbance;
- The enclosed nature of Dún Laoghaire Harbour and the presence of the harbour walls;
- No in-water works will be undertaken;
- The ability of the harbour walls to act as a hydrological barrier; and,
- No direct discharges to Dún Laoghaire Harbour or Dublin Bay will occur during construction or operation.

During the Operational Phase of the Proposed Development, it is considered that there will be no disturbances to any designated species. This conclusion is based on the fact that all designated species utilising the Site and immediate surroundings would be habituated to the current anthropogenic noises from the Site, including Dún Laoghaire Harbour and adjacent urban Dún Laoghaire Town Centre.

On the basis of the Source-Pathway-Receptor ('SPR') risk assessment principle there is no ecological or functional link between the Site and any European site in 15km. Therefore, there is no potential for any adverse effects to occur as result of disturbance from the Proposed Development on South Dublin Bay SAC, Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC, South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA, Dalkey Islands SPA and Lambay Island SAC or any other European sites or any of the qualifying species of interest.

6.2 Potential Impairment of Water Quality

Potential impacts on water quality during the Construction and Demolition Phase would primarily arise from the accidental release of sediment, hydrocarbons, concrete washings or other contaminants to surface waters.

Although the Site is hydrologically connected to Dublin Bay, the enclosed nature of Dún Laoghaire Harbour and the presence of the harbour walls provide a degree of separation from the wider marine environment. The harbour walls restrict the movement and dispersion of suspended material, such that any accidental release of sediment or contaminants would be expected to remain localised and subject to significant dilution before reaching the open bay.

Furthermore, all works will be confined to the red line boundary, no piling, dredging or other in-water works are proposed. Furthermore, no direct discharges to Dún Laoghaire Harbour or Dublin Bay will occur during either the Construction, Demolition or Operational Phase.

Overall, it is considered that the Proposed Development will not result in the deterioration of water quality or indirectly affect the Annex I habitats or Annex II species for which South Dublin

Bay SAC, Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC, South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA and Dalkey Islands SPA are designated. This conclusion is based on:

The small scale and localised nature of the Proposed Development;

- All works being confined to the red line boundary;
- The enclosed nature of Dún Laoghaire Harbour and the attenuating effect of the harbour walls;
- The absence of any in-water works;
- The absence of direct discharges to Dún Laoghaire Harbour or Dublin Bay during construction or operation; and,
- The dilution and dispersive capacity of the receiving waters.

During the Operational Phase, no changes to the existing surface water drainage regime are proposed. Consequently, no impacts on water quality are predicted during operation.

On the basis of the Source-Pathway-Receptor (SPR) principle, no pathway exists by which the Proposed Development could adversely affect the conservation objectives of South Dublin Bay SAC, Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC, South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA, Dalkey Islands SPA or Lambay Island SAC. Therefore, no likely significant effects on these European sites, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, are predicted as a result of water quality impacts arising from the Proposed Development

6.3 Analysis of 'In-Combination' Effects

The Habitats Directive requires competent authorities to make an appropriate assessment of any plan or project which is likely to have a significant effect alone or in-combination with other plans and projects. As described above, the proposed work alone is unlikely to have any direct or indirect adverse effects on any of the European sites located within 15km of the Site.

6.3.1 Dún Laoghaire Harbour Masterplan

DLR has published a Dún Laoghaire Harbour Masterplan. The Masterplan sets out guiding principles to reimagine Dún Laoghaire Harbour as a dynamic, multifunctional space that honours its maritime heritage while embracing contemporary needs and opportunities [40].

The plan sets out a phased approach to the regeneration of the harbour area over an estimated 20-year period, with the objective of enhancing its recreational, cultural, residential, and tourism functions while maintaining its heritage and maritime character. A key feature of the strategy is the creation of a unified sequence of spaces linking the Harbour's distinct areas—Carlisle Pier, the Old Harbour, St. Michael's Pier, the Gut and more—into a cohesive experience. Each location will retain its unique character while contributing to an overall sense of flow, inviting people to explore, dwell and return.

The plan includes 30+ projects grouped into six key quarters:

- Urban Quarter;
- East Pier Quarter;
- Active Quarter;
- Marina Quarter;
- National Water Sports Campus Quarter; and,
- West Pier and Gut.

Projects are prioritised as short, medium and long-term, with some early activation initiatives already underway.

A Dún Laoghaire Harbour Masterplan Supporting Information for Screening for Appropriate Assessment and Natura Impact Report was prepared and it was concluded that *‘Following the assessment of potential adverse effects on European sites (as detailed in Section 4) it is concluded that the proposed development activities associated with the Masterplan will not result in any Adverse Effect on Site Integrity for any designated site screened into assessment. This conclusion applies to effects both alone and in combination.’* [41]

Given that this Masterplan is phased, it is extremely unlikely that any of the works will overlap in timeframes with any of the works proposed as part of this Proposed Development.

6.3.2 EPlan Website

A review of the Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council Planning eplan website outlined multiple projects within the immediate vicinity that are considered likely in-combination with the Proposed Development to result in significant impacts on European sites [15]. Please see Table 6-1.

Table 6-1: Planning Applications within the vicinity of the Site

Application Ref	Decision	Development Description	Appropriate Assessment	Cumulative and In combination Effects
D19A/0947	Granted 07/02/2020	– <i>Permission for: 1. The removal / deletion of condition number 2 of the Grant of Planning Permission Register Reference Number D18A/0078, Final Grant Number, P/2128/18, approval date 6th September 2018. 2. Redesign of the Ground Floor entrance foyer internal area by the deletion of the ground floor Restaurant and food vending café elements of the above described approved development and its substitution by a "food court" element.</i>	An AA Screening was submitted within the Planner's Report and concluded "The proposed development has been screened for AA (report on file) and it has been determined that the development proposed, which provides for internal changes to the permitted development would not significantly impact upon Natura 2000 Site."	None Identified
D18A/0078	Granted 30/07/2018	– <i>Permission for: 1. The Change of Use of the existing building from passenger ferry terminal and 1st floor restaurant associated offices and stand-alone shed to the following: A. Ground floor restaurant (approx. 176 sqm). B. Option for proposed restaurant to be 2 storey (total approx. 390 sqm). C. Co-working and team-spaces on 3 floors (approx. 2,274 sqm). D. Audio and visual media studios and workshops co-workers informal meeting area and agri/food/beverage R&D space (approx. 574 sqm). E. Work spaces for marine and maritime associated use (897 sqm). F. Marine technology and R&D space (approx. 234 sqm). G. Food/coffee vending outlet</i>	Stage 1 AA was submitted within the Planner's Report and concluded: "The proposed development has no implications for the nearby Natura sites in Dublin Bay. The subject site is an existing area of hard standing/car parking. The proposed development will increase the range of uses of the subject site. However, as the proposed events will be held intermittently and will utilise the existing utilities and services, it is anticipated that the increase in usage and discharges will be dispersed over a prolonged period of time, thus mitigating any potential impacts."	None Identified

Application Ref	Decision	Development Description	Appropriate Assessment	Cumulative and In combination Effects
		(approx. 12 sqm). H. New toilet accommodation (approx. 62 sqm), all of which will be contained with the existing external walls of the buildings. 2. The change of the previous use of the hard-standing area to the west of the terminal building from vehicle waiting area to car park for the sole use of the users of the main building and associated fencing (approx. 4,570 sqm). 3. External signage, including illuminated signage, to be located on the existing building façades. 4. Creation of external deck to perimeter of 2nd floor mezzanine glazed tower. 5. Creation of new windows in the external façade. 6. Bicycle stand areas, including e-use of baggage offloading area to sheltered bicycle parking.		
D12A/0131	Granted 02/08/20212	- Permission is sought for a 5 year temporary change of use of part of the ground floor of the ferry terminal 237.5 sq.m in area from Terminal use to Exhibition use at Saint Michael's Pier.	The application cover letter that was submitted stated that "The proposed development has no implications for the nearby Natura sites in Dublin Bay. The building is an existing one; there is nothing about the change of use in terms of population density or discharges that will change.	None Identified
D05A/0512	Grant Permission and Refuse Permission 14/06/2005	The development will consist of the erection of new external commercial signage for Stena Line comprising eight new signs as follows:- Sign 1 : freestanding "totem" type signage structure (with signage to both sides) adjacent to Harbour Road close to the vehicular boarding entrance; Signs 2(A) &	Not available online.	None Identified

Application Ref	Decision	Development Description	Appropriate Assessment	Cumulative and In combination Effects
		<i>2 (B): two no applied signs on the canopies of the vehicular entrance (in the plane of the canvas - i.e. not protruding above same); Sign 3:- on the south façade of the Terminal Buildings; Sign 4 freestanding "totem" type signage structure(with signage to both sides) adjacent to the Terminal Building on the Plaza, Sign 5 over the southern pedestrian entrance to the Terminal Building; Sign 6 on the south façade of the Motorist Lounge Building (adjacent to the berth); Sign 7 over the eastern pedestrian entrance to the Terminal Building off the Plaza. The proposed development is within the curtilage of a protected structure(s).</i>		
D12A/0192	Grant Permission	<i>Permission is sought to use the existing hard standing/car park (18,100 sq.m in area) for use during non ferry operational times for events at which the audience comprises less than 5,000 people including concerts, markets, fairs, open air cinema, roller skating rink, ice skating rink, cultural, sporting and recreational events and event car parking.</i>	As outlined in the Planner's Report in relation to the AA complete that 'in relation to Appropriate Assessment, the proposed development has no implications for the nearby Natura 2000 sites in Dublin Bay'	None Identified
D10A/0606 and PL06D.238335	Refused by DLR and Granted by ABP	<i>Retention of development being demolition of business premises (former Terminal Building) of 6376 sqm, 3 year temporary permission for retention of:- 80.7m long 2.4 to 2.585 m overall height new galvanised palisade security fence partially on a concrete spud wall - 109.95 m long 2.4m high existing old galvanised</i>	Not available online.	None Identified

Application Ref	Decision	Development Description	Appropriate Assessment	Cumulative and In combination Effects
		palisade security fence inclusive of 2 no. sets of double gates each set 5 metres wide - 23.3 m long 2.185 m overall height new railings and stone plinth wall inclusive of 1 no. set of gates 2.72m wide - 20.58 long .93 m high new concrete wall. 25.117 long 1.820 m high new railings - 29.724 m long existing old railings 2.05m high inclusive of 2 no. sets of double gates each set 4.37 m wide and one side gate .97 m wide - 14.7 m long existing concrete wall .93m high - 47.95 long existing old steel railings 1.03 high - 35 no. car parking spaces that formerly attached to the Terminal Building now used for public pay and display parking - 1 no. ticket dispensing machine - 1,683 sq m of new tarmacadam surfacing replacing previous defective surfacing and a 3 year temporary permission for: - 12 no. parking spaces that formerly attached to the Terminal Building moved in a south easterly direction to improve circulation and 37 no. new additional spaces all for public pay and display parking - other usage of the car parking area for seasonal boat storage, cultural, social, recreational or sporting events - boat storage to the area of the pier outside the fenced-in area - 10 new bicycle stands to cater for 20 bicycles - ground marking required for the new parking spaces and relocated old spaces.		
REF12225	S5 - Dec Not Exempt	Relevant planning permissions; D18A/0078 and D19A/0947. Above	As outlined in the Planner's Report in relation to the AA complete that	None Identified

Application Ref	Decision	Development Description	Appropriate Assessment	Cumulative and In combination Effects
		developments have commenced. Proposed additional works pertain to; 1.The creation of additional floor area inside the building by the addition of new mezzanine floor and the infilling of 2 existing stairwells 2.fenestration alterations in East facade. 3. New roof plant.	The proposed development has been screened for Appropriate Assessment (report on file) and it has been determined that the proposed development will not significantly impact upon a European Site. The proposed development has been assessed against all the restrictions to exempted development as set out within Article 9(1) and it has been determined that there are no restrictions that would prevent the works which are the subject of this Section 5 application from constituting exempted development under that Article of the Regulations.	
D03A/0080	Grant Permission	Installation of two sets of steelwork on existing piles.	Not available online.	None Identified

Due to the small scale and short timeframes of both the Proposed Development and the proposed projects listed in Table 6-1 along with the DLR Masterplan, it is considered unlikely to have any cumulative impacts on any European sites in the context of the existing infrastructure and associated activities taking place at the Site.

This statement is supported by:

- I. The distances separating the Site from European sites; and,
- II. The small scale and localised nature of the proposed works.

Taking the above into account, it is therefore concluded that the Proposed Development will not result in any likely significant effects in-combination with any other plans or projects on the South Dublin Bay SAC, Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC, North Dublin Bay SAC, Howth Head SAC, Ballyman Glen SAC, Knocksink Wood SAC, Baldoyle Bay SAC, Bray Head SAC, Wicklow Mountains SAC, Ireland's Eye SAC, South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA, Dalkey Islands SPA, North Bull Island SPA, Howth Head Coast SPA, Baldoyle Bay SPA, Ireland's Eye SPA and Wicklow Mountains SPA.

7 SCREENING CONCLUSIONS AND STATEMENT

The screening process has examined the details of the Proposed Development and has considered the potential for causing adverse effects on European sites and their qualifying features of interests within a 15km radius of the Site.

18 designated sites - the South Dublin Bay SAC, Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC, North Dublin Bay SAC, Howth Head SAC, Ballyman Glen SAC, Knocksink Wood SAC, Baldoyle Bay SAC, Bray Head SAC, Wicklow Mountains SAC, Ireland's Eye SAC, South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA, Dalkey Islands SPA, North Bull Island SPA, Howth Head Coast SPA, Baldoyle Bay SPA, Ireland's Eye SPA, Northwest Irish Sea SPA, and the Wicklow Mountains SPA are located within a 15km radius of the Site.

Lambay Island SAC is located within 22km radius of the Site and was considered on a precautionary basis given the designation for harbour porpoise, grey seal and harbour seal.

However, given scale and localised nature of the Proposed Development, and the lack of direct impact pathways between the Site and European sites, as described in Section 4 and Section 6, it can be concluded that the Proposed Development will not result in any significant impacts either directly or indirectly on the conservation objectives or status of the listed European sites and will not result in the direct loss or disturbance of any Annex I habitats and / or Annex II species for which the European sites are designated.

It has been objectively concluded, following an examination, analysis, and evaluation of the relevant information, that the Developments either alone, or in-combination with other plans, projects or land uses, have not had and will not have any direct or indirect significant effects on any European sites in light of the site's conservation objectives and best scientific knowledge, and no reasonable scientific doubt exists in relation to this conclusion.

Accordingly, the progression to Stage 2 of AA process (i.e., preparation of a Natura Impact Statement) is not considered necessary.

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