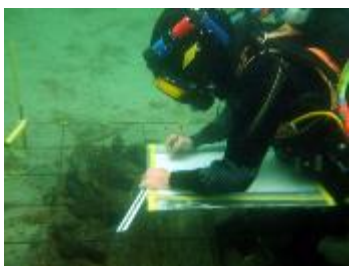
Archaeological Assessment
Dublin Port, Tugboat Pontoon project

Archaeological Assessment
Dublin Port, Tugboat Pontoon project

Client: RPS for DPC

21/02/2018

Project Director **Niall Brady**

Beverley Studios, Church Terrace, Bray, Co. Wicklow www.adco-ie.com

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Dublin Port Company proposes to relocate its Tugboat berths to a new floating pontoon to be constructed in Berth 50.

Archaeological assessment of the new project is directed to identify the archaeological risk associated with the development and include mitigations that will resolve any associated archaeological requirement.

The proposed works is to develop a new access/egress road and pontoon. The pontoon will comprise a floating structure secured to the quay through a combination. of propriety fenders and secondary steel structures. There will be no in-water piling required. An access/egress gantry will provide all-tide access to the pontoon from the quayside.

The existing archaeological record indicates that prior to the reclamation of this part of the Port, the area was part of a sandbank system that was a feature of the tidal mudflats which formed the estuary of the Tolka River as it merged into that of the Liffey. There is no known archaeological feature associated with the location.

Inspection on site comprised a walkover survey conducted on 09/02/2018. The site area is part of the modern working port and there are no known features of archaeological or cultural heritage interest exposed above the waterline.

The impacts arising from the proposed works carry no archaeological risk.

This report finds no archaeological reason why the proposed development should not proceed.

This report recommends that further archaeological requirement should not be necessary.

Recommendations are subject to the approval of the National Monuments Service at the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Dublin Port Company proposes to relocate its Tugboat berths to a new floating pontoon to be constructed at the north end of Berth 50, centred on ITM 719887E 734628N. The present report assesses the archaeological risk associated with the development, to inform Foreshore Licensed consent for the development.

The assessment is based on a desktop review and a walkover site inspection that took place on 09/02/2018.

2.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed works is to develop a new access/egress road and pontoon. The pontoon will comprise a floating structure secured to the quay through a combination. of propriety fenders and secondary steel structures. There will be no in-water piling required. An access/egress gantry will provide all-tide access to the pontoon from the quayside.

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3.0 THE RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT

The existing archaeological record indicates that prior to the reclamation of this part of the Port, the area was part of a sandbank system that was part of the tidal mudflats which formed the estuary of the Tolka River as it merged into that of the Liffey and Dublin Bay. There is no known archaeological feature associated with the location.

John Rocque's map 'A Survey of City Harbour Bay and Environs of Dublin' of 1757 indicates that what is now the north end of Berth 50 may have been open water in the mid-eighteenth century and formed part of 'Clontarf Pool', a deep-water location within the wider estuary of the Tolka River that lay between 'Clontarf Oyster Bed' to the north, and 'Brown's Patch' mudflat to the south and west (Figure 2a). Clontarf Pool is referred to in earlier documents as a haven for shipping intending to unload their cargo for the Dublin market because they were unable to navigate what had become a shallow and constricted river channel up-river to the quays of the historic city.

The First Edition Ordnance Survey (OS) six-inch map series in 1840 is the first metrically accurate sequence of mapped data, and allowance needs to be made for

this distinction when making direct comparison with earlier maps such as Rocque's. The OS shows a different disposition of the mudflats and channels, and the present location is recorded as mudflat that lay south the channel now named simply as 'The Pool' (Figure 2b).

By the early 1900s when later editions of OS mapping occurred, the location is recorded as open water, with a small islet of mudflat indicated, perhaps reflecting the absence of detailed recording of the intertidal foreshore more than anything else (Figure 3). The location lay outside the developed deep-water port that was Alexandra Basin to the west.

With the eastern extension of the port that is a feature of its twentieth-century development, the location is eventually reclaimed. Berth 50 becomes formally defined although its north end remained irregular up to 2005 (Figure 4a). Further development of Berth 50 has taken place, extending the berth to the north. This work would have required the excavation of the introduced fills to seabed level. The quayside was then given shape by sets of Larsen piles, which is how the site presents itself today (Figure 4b).

There is no known archaeological feature associated with the location.

4.0 WALKOVER INSPECTION

Inspection on site comprised a walkover survey conducted on 09/02/2018. The inspection confirmed the constructed nature of the berth and associated quay area, none of which retain any features of archaeological interest (Plates 1–4).

5.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The impacts arising from the proposed works carry no archaeological risk. The road access works represent an upgrading of an existing modern surface. The pontoon will be secured directly to the existing Larsen piles/sheet-piling and will otherwise float on the water's surface. There are no sub-surface fittings to the seabed (piling or other), and as such there will be no impact on the seabed.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

This report finds no archaeological reason why the proposed development should not proceed.

In the absence of any impacts with historic levels and with the seabed, this report recommends that further archaeological requirement should not be necessary.

6.1 Pre-construction Measures

None.

6.2 Construction Phase Measures

None.

PLEASE NOTE: All of the above observations and conclusions are based on the archaeological information and information supplied for the Tugboat Pontoon project. Should any alteration occur, further assessment may be required.

PLEASE NOTE: the above recommendations are subject to the approval of the National Monuments Service at the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

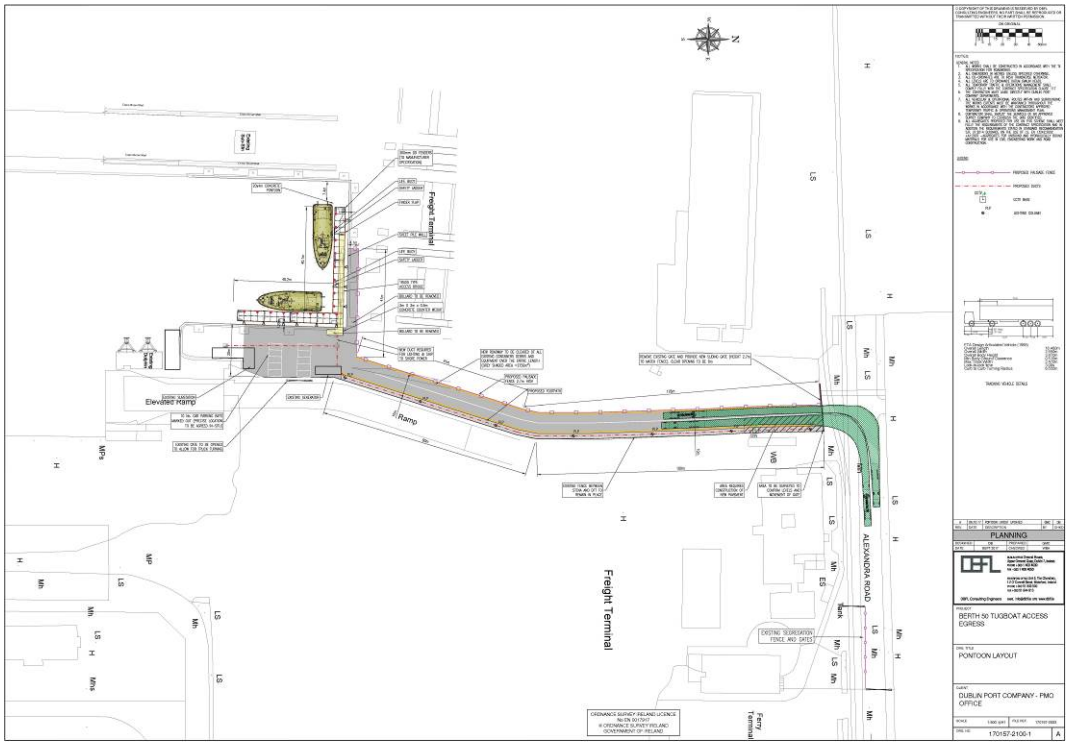
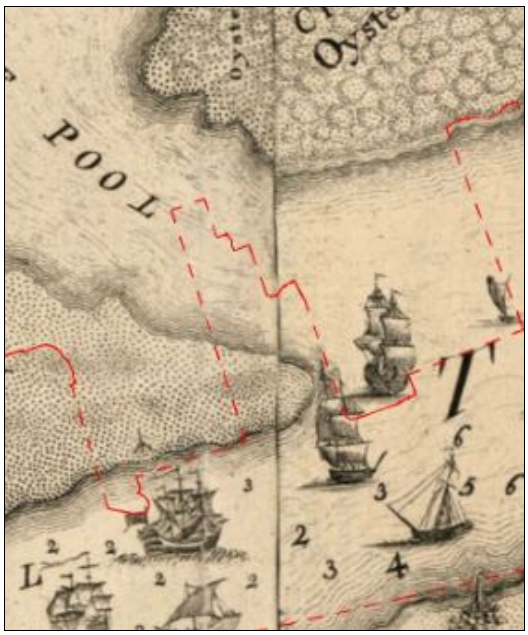
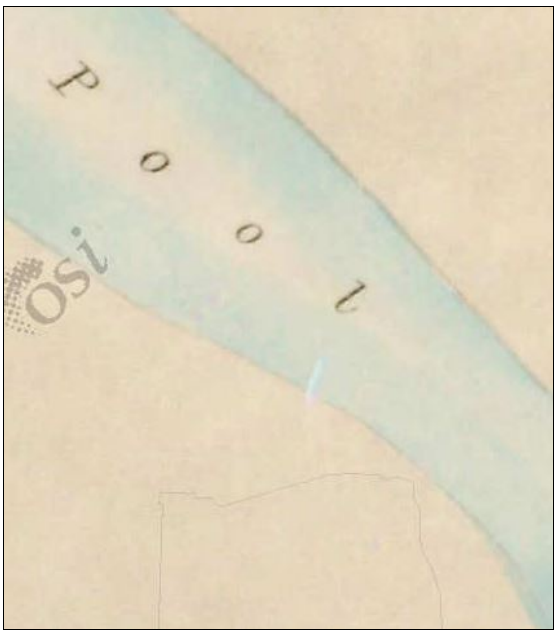


Figure 1: Project drawing showing proposed Pontoon Layout

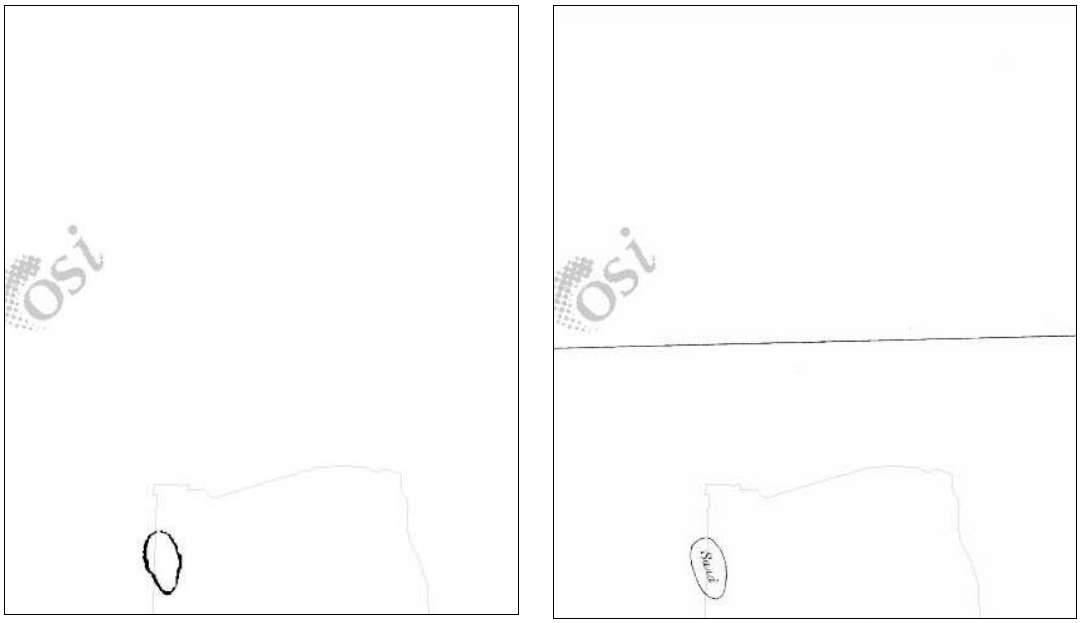


A: Rocque, 1757



B: First Edition OS 6-inch, 1843

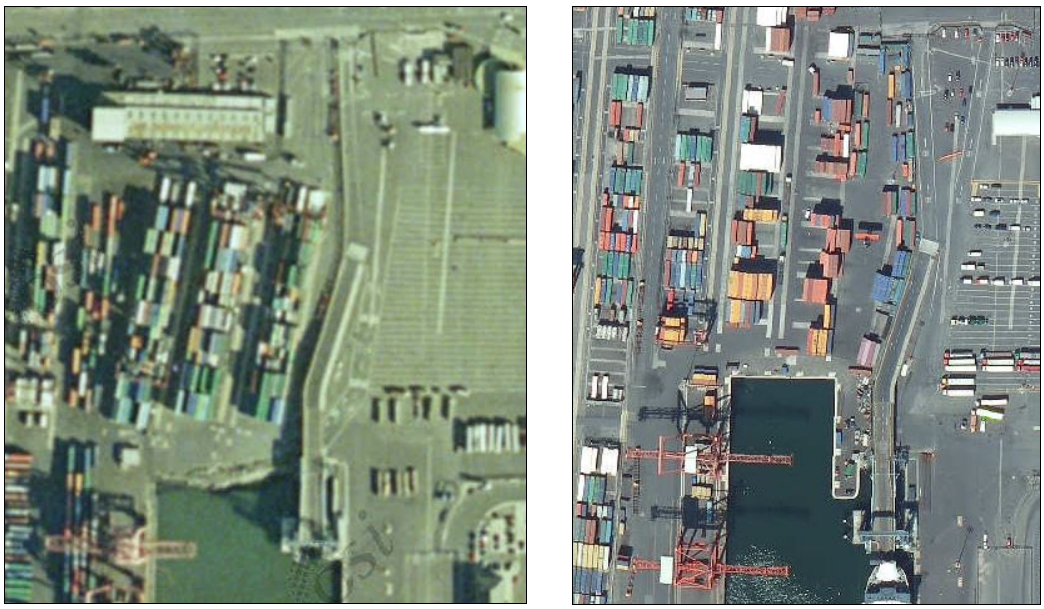
Figure 2: Historic maps showing nature of land/sea area prior to reclamation. The outline of the current berths is overlaid on both maps.



A: Third Edition OS, *c*. 1911 **B: 25-inch OS, *c*. 1920**

Figure 3: Historic maps showing nature of land/sea area prior to reclamation. The outline of the current berths is overlaid oan both maps.

Source: http://webgis.archaeology.ie/historicenvironment/



A: 2005 B: 2010

Figure 4: Ortho images showing Berth 50 since the sea area was reclaimed.

Source: http://webgis.archaeology.ie/historicenvironment/

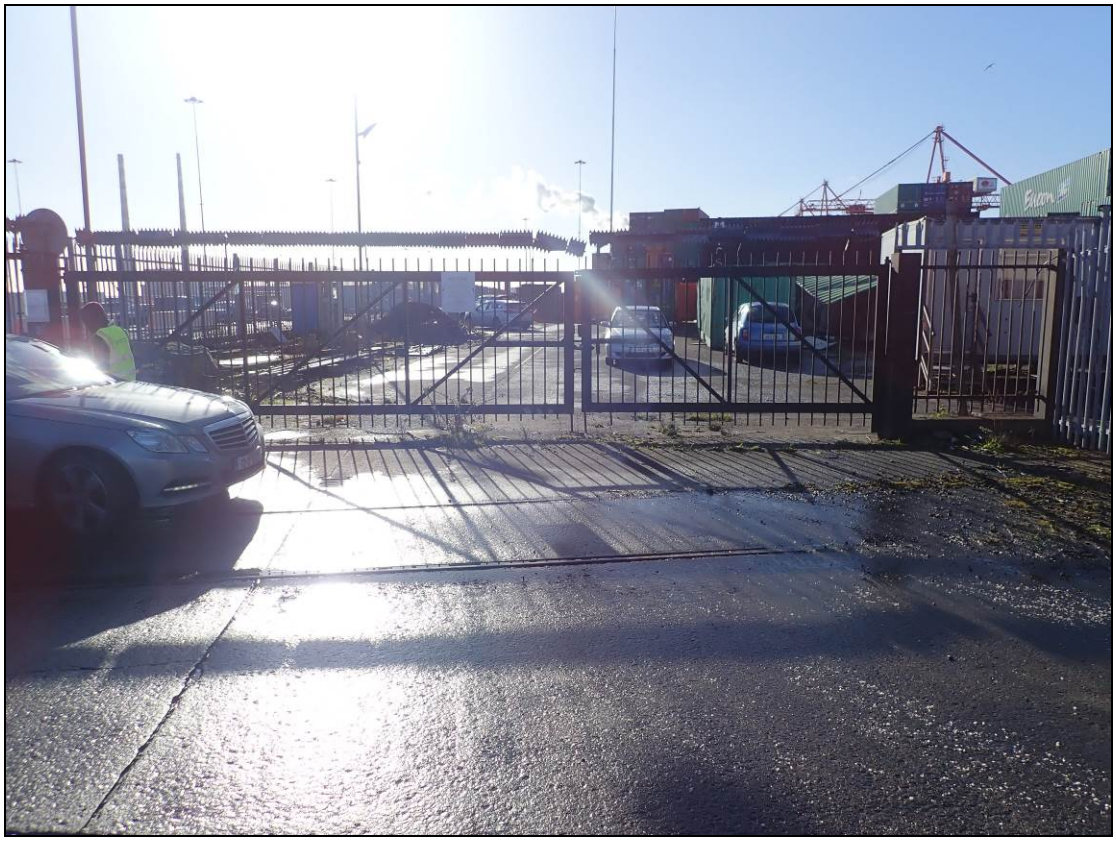


Plate 1: View looking south at entrance to site.

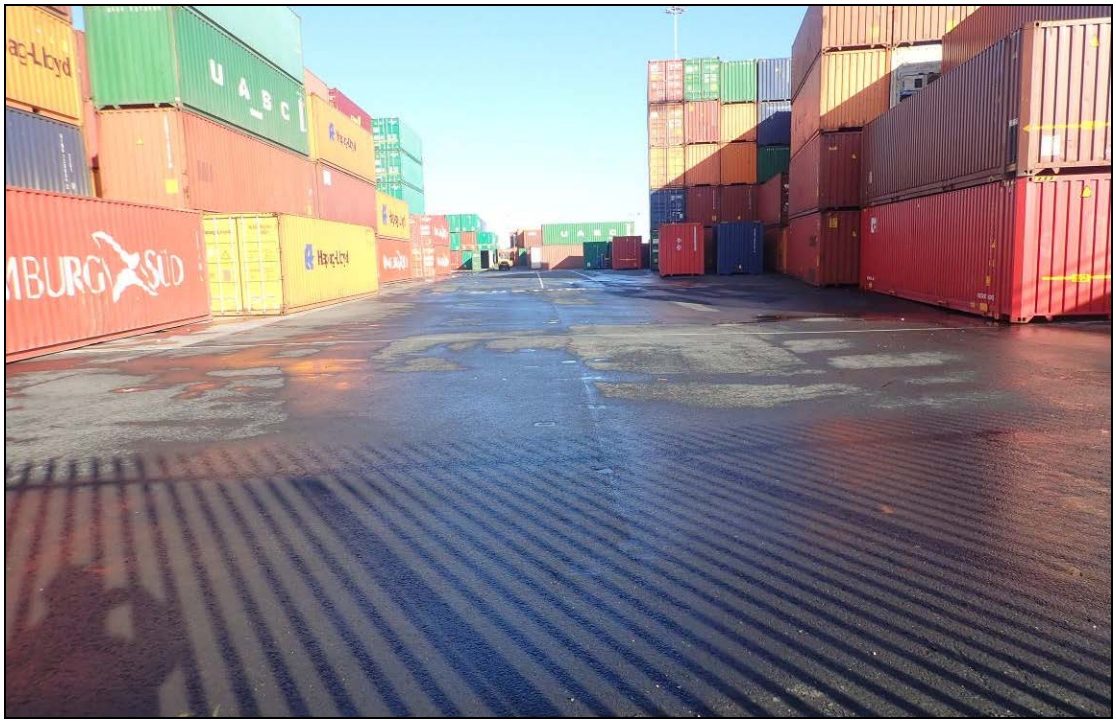


Plate 2: View looking north towards route of upgraded road access.

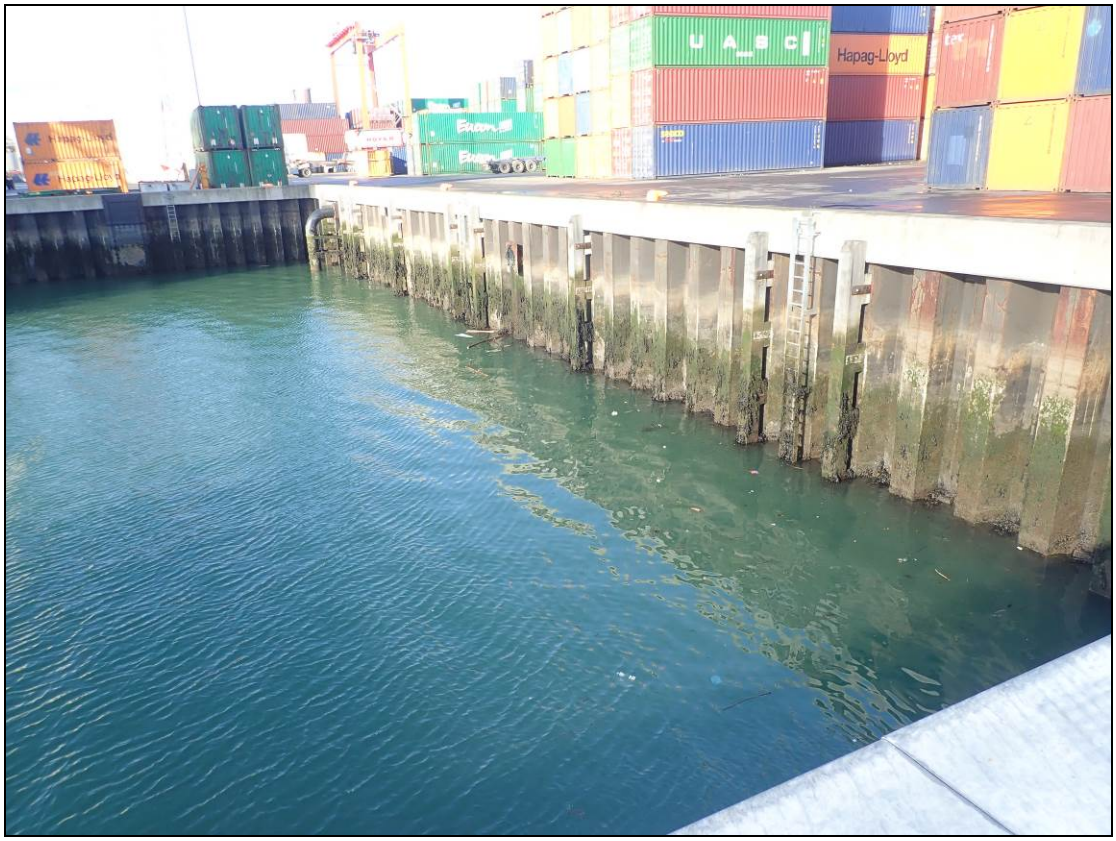


Plate 3: View looking west across north end of Berth 50 where the floating pontoon will be installed, attached to the existing Larsen piles.

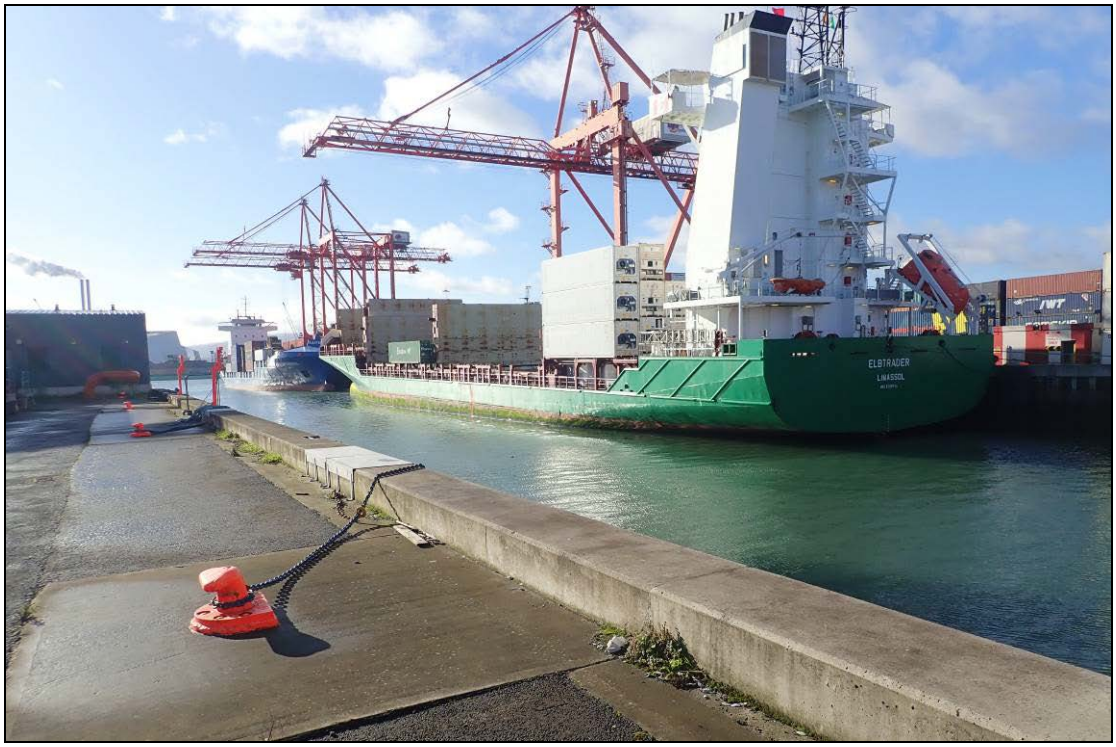


Plate 4: View looking southwest across Berth 50; the existing quayside will be adapted to accommodate vehicular parking.