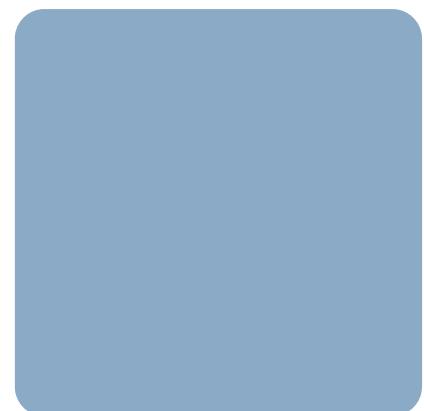
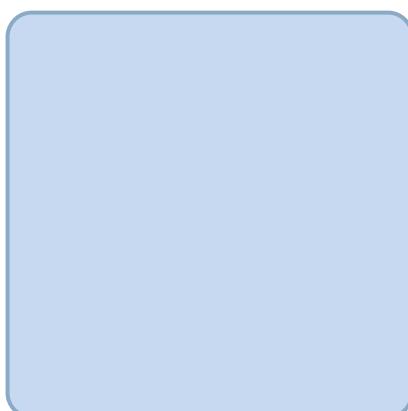
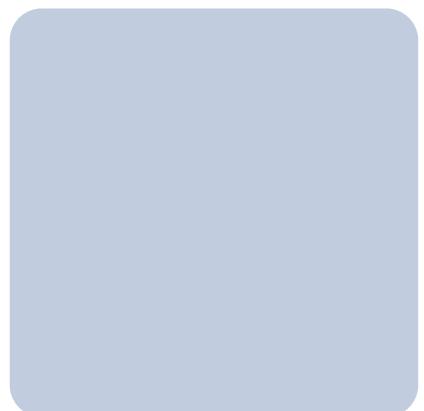
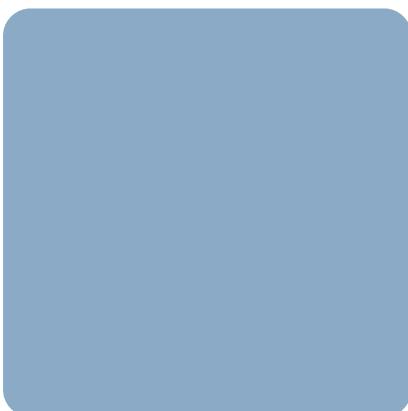


Dublin Port Company

DFT Road Access and Pontoons

Screening for appropriate assessment Report



Quality Management

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I. INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared by RPS on behalf of Dublin Port Company (DPC). The purpose of the report is to document a screening for appropriate assessment exercise that RPS has conducted on behalf of the project promoter in support of applications for consent to competent authorities.

It is intended that Dublin City Council in its function as a Planning Authority shall be furnished with this report in relation to an application for Planning Permission, to assist the Planning Authority in fulfilling its duties in accordance with Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

It is also intended that the Marine Planning and Foreshore Section of the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government in its function as Public Authority shall be furnished with this report in relation to an allied Foreshore Licence application, to assist the Public Authority in fulfilling its duties in accordance with Part V of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 as amended.

This domestic legislation transposes certain aspects of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. A key protection mechanism of the Habitats Directive is the requirement to subject plans and projects to Appropriate Assessment (AA) in line with the requirements of Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of Directive 92/43/EEC.

AA considers the implications of any plan or project on the Natura 2000 site network before any decision is made to allow the plan or project to proceed. Such an assessment must take into consideration the possible effects a plan or project may have in combination with other plans and projects

This report documents evaluation and analysis seeking to establish whether or not a decision to consent the construction and operation of a heavy duty floating dock (pontoon), access walkway, access road, boundary security and lighting at Berth 50 within the Dublin Port Operational Zone (DPOZ) is likely to have a significant effect on any European site.

The exercise considers the proposed development individually and in combination with other relevant plans or projects, and has been undertaken in view of best scientific knowledge and in view of the conservation objectives of the site(s) concerned.

The project is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of any site as a European Site.

2. APPROACH

2.1 Guidance documents

Appropriate Assessment Guidelines for Planning Authorities have been published by the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG, 2010a). In addition to the advice available from the Department, the European Commission has published a number of documents which provide a significant body of guidance on the requirements of Appropriate Assessment, most notably including, '*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*' (EC, 2001), which sets out the principles of how to approach decision making during the process. These principal national and European guidelines have been followed in the preparation this NIS. The following list identifies these and other pertinent guidance documents:

- Communication from the Commission on the Precautionary Principle., Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg (EC, 2000a);
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg (EC, 2000b);
- Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Articles 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Brussels (EC, 2001);
- Guidance document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitats Directive' 92/43/EEC – Clarification of the concepts of: alternative solutions, imperative reasons of overriding public interest, compensatory measures, overall coherence, opinion of the commission; (EC, 2007);
- Estuaries and Coastal Zones within the Context of the Birds and Habitats Directives - Technical Supporting Document on their Dual Roles as Natura 2000 Sites and as Waterways and Locations for Ports. European Commission (EC, 2009);
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland. Guidance for Planning Authorities. Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin (DEHLG, 2010a);
- Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government Circular NPW 1/10 and PSSP 2/10 on Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive – Guidance for Planning Authorities (DEHLG, 2010b);
- Guidance document on the implementation of the birds and habitats directive in estuaries and coastal zones with particular attention to port development and dredging. European Commission (EC, 2011a);
- European Commission Staff Working Document 'Integrating biodiversity and nature protection into port development' (EC, 2011b);
- Marine Natura Impact Statements in Irish Special Areas of Conservation: A working document, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Dublin (NPWS, 2012); and
- Interpretation Manual of European Union Habitats. Version EUR 28. European Commission (EC, 2013).

2.2 Likely Significant Effect

The threshold for a likely significant effect is treated in the screening exercise as being above a *de minimis* level. A *de minimis* effect is a level of risk that is too small to be concerned with when considering ecological requirements of an Annex I habitat or a population of Annex II species present on a European site necessary to ensure their favourable conservation condition. If low level effects on habitats or individuals of species are judged to be in this order of magnitude and that judgment has been made in the absence of reasonable scientific doubt, then those effects are not considered to be likely significant effects.

"the requirement that the effect in question be 'significant' exists in order to lay down a *de minimis* threshold. Plans or projects that have no appreciable effect on a European site are thereby excluded. If all plans or projects capable of having any effect whatsoever on the site were to be caught by Article 6(3), activities on or near the site would risk being impossible by reason of legislative overkill".

[Paragraphs 46-50 of the Opinion of the Advocate General in CJEU case C-258/11]

2.3 Mitigation Measures

In relation to mitigation measures, EC (2001) states that “project and plan proponents are often encouraged to design mitigation measures into their proposals at the outset. However, it is important to recognise that the screening assessment should be carried out in the absence of any consideration of mitigation measures that form part of a project or plan and are designed to avoid or reduce the impact of a project or plan on a Natura 2000 site”. This direction in the European Commission’s guidance document is unambiguous in that it does not promote the inclusion of mitigation at screening stage. A body of relevant case law has focused on the application of mitigation at the first stage of this type of assessment, which confirms that mitigation measures which are simple, straightforward and considered integral to the works, and whose nature and effectiveness is plainly established and there is a clear mechanism for it to be implemented, can be considered at this first stage.

For this project, certain measures are described in sections 3.3 and 3.4 of the accompanying method statement and have been included as part of the project as proposed. They have not been applied as a result of any ecological or environmental assessment:

- 1) Suitable and sufficient barrier protection measures will be provided to prevent spillage to the marine environment.
- 2) Specialist dust suppression measures will be employed in accordance with best practice.
- 3) Measures will be employed as directed in BS5228-1: 2009 *Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites*; and
- 4) Low noise plant and equipment will be employed as far as possible. Where this is not available, noise barriers will be provided to limit travel beyond the site and specialist equipment provided to protect those within the site.
- 5) A detailed Construction Management Plan will be submitted to the consenting authorities by the selected Specialist Contractor(s) to provide:
 - implementation detail on these mitigation measures and specify equipment proposed;
 - details of waste management procedures and disposal of residual waste material including disposal locations; and
 - details of construction traffic management looking at routing and impact on port operational activities and the surrounding road network as well as the bringing to and taking away of materials from site.

Such measures are simple and straightforward, and their effectiveness is plainly established – they are not novel techniques. Any reasonably informed and competent contractor could implement such measures.

3. THE PROJECT

3.1 The site of proposed development

The subject site is located within the Dublin Port Operational Zone (DPOZ) and has boundaries along Alexandra Road and Terminal Road North as shown in Figure 1. Stena Line and DFT are the current operators to the east and west of the site, respectively. The site boundary for this application is defined on drawing CP1750-170157-2000-I, submitted with this report as part of the application for consent.

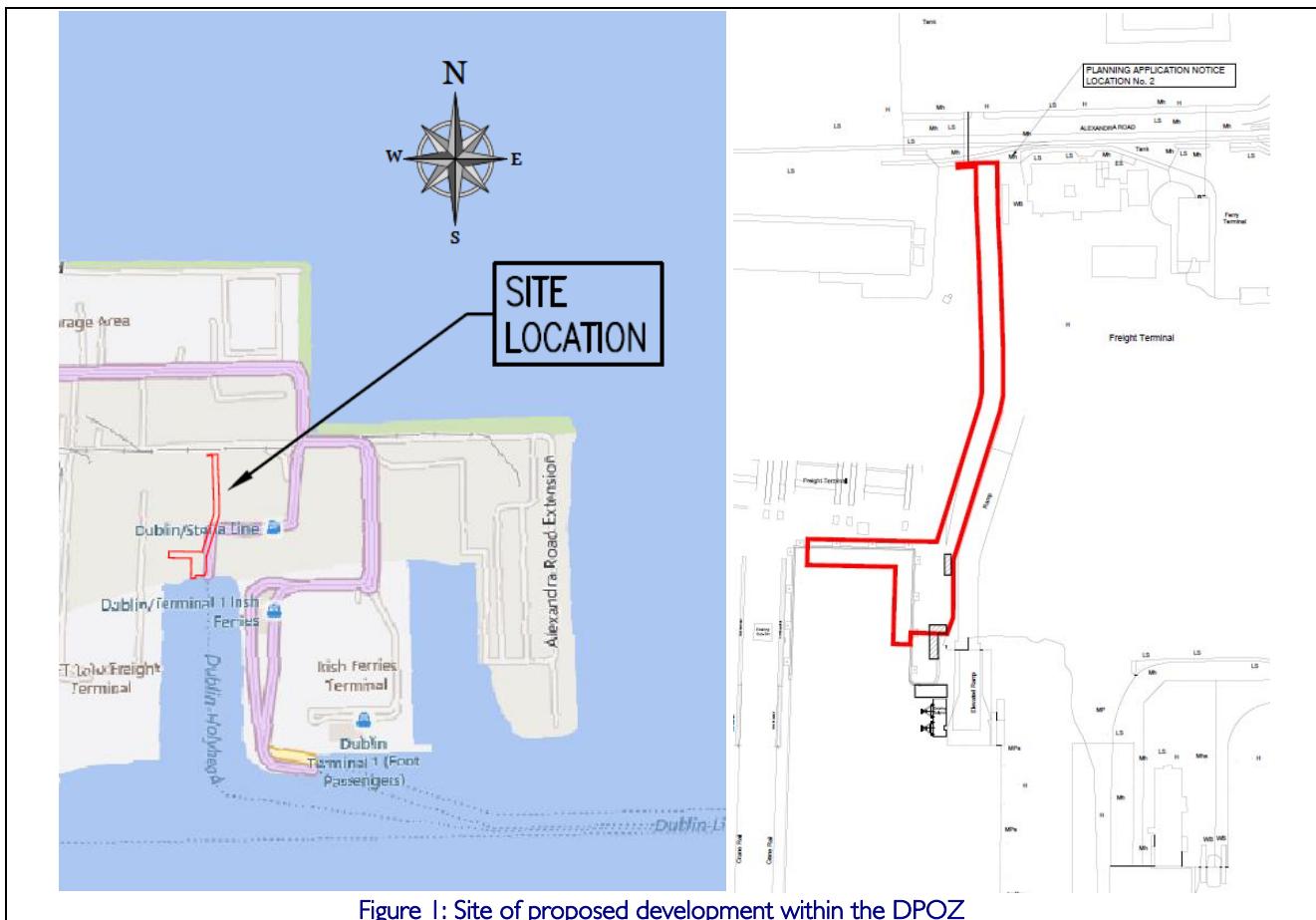


Figure 1: Site of proposed development within the DPOZ

3.2 Context of proposed development

The current arrangement for access to and securing of the harbour tugs at the berth is an unconventional system with a number of health and safety concerns. The current system is not fit-for-purpose despite modifications to try and reduce the risk factors. DPC require a heavy duty pontoon capable of safely mooring and accessing/egressing 2 No. 24m harbour tugs (Beaufort and Shackleton). A new road, gate, car park, security fencing and lighting are also required and are included in this report.

3.3 Description of proposed development

3.3.1 Overview

The upgrade of the berth and road, the subject application, includes for the provision of a new road, pontoon system, car park, lighting, CCTV and new security fencing along sections of the boundary of the proposed scheme together with a security gate.

3.3.2 General Site Clearance

The site will generally be cleared of containers, overgrowth, existing walls where outlined, plinths, fences, bollards, etc, and removed from site for reuse within the DPOZ or for disposal at an approved licensed facility.

3.3.3 Earthworks

Once the general site clearance is completed, those areas of the site identified for resurfacing will then be reduced to formation level in preparation of a new pavement and foundation construction described in subsequent sections.

3.3.4 Drainage & Utilities

Drainage

There is no proposed drainage work required for this proposed development.

Utilities

Ducting will be installed in order to provide the pontoons with power and to provide street lighting along the access road. Ducting will also be required for the CCTV installation. Ducting will be provided below new pedestrian footpaths and plinths.

3.3.5 Pavement

Traffic volumes have not been confirmed, but heavy traffic loadings are likely as with other locations within the DPOZ. A heavy duty pavement will be required. A pavement already exists in the area. It is envisaged that the new roadway will be an extension of the existing pavement and that only a small portion of the road will require a brand new pavement construction. This will have to be confirmed following a review of Ground Investigation data. Specialist contractors will be engaged to carry out the required site investigative works. A proposed pavement layout is provided on drawing CPI750-170157-2100-1.

3.3.6 Boundary Security

The eastern side of the site is bound by an existing fence that separates Stena Line and DFT. This fence is to remain in place. The western side of the site requires a new palisade fence to separate the new road from the DFT operational area.

3.3.7 CCTV and Lighting

Foundations for a 8m CCTV pole and 15m high perimeter lighting columns are proposed as part of the works (see drawing CPI750-170157-2100-1). 1 No. CCTV pole and 7 No. lighting columns are proposed. When pavement construction is complete, above ground services will be commissioned and installed. An elevation of the fence, CCTV and lighting columns is shown on drawing CPI750-170157-4100-3.

Localised lighting is proposed to illuminate the pontoons, access walkway and car park for safe access.

As used in recent similar yard projects in the port, lighting will be modern LED technology, energy efficient lighting suitable for marine environments. The light fittings include high directional features limiting glare, over spill and light pollution. Further energy saving measures include lux (photocell) detection, movement detection and dimming control which reduce light levels to 25% when no activity is detected in the area.

3.3.8 Pontoon System

The proposed pontoon system comprises a number of floating dock sections (pontoons), which rise and fall with the tide. An access walkway will connect the pontoons to the quay wall. The pontoons and walkway shall be clamped to vertical guides to keep them in position as shown in Figure 1C of Drawing No. CP1750_002_A00615_4100_1 *Typical Construction Details (Sheet 1)*. The vertical guides shall be fixed to the existing sheet pile quay wall as indicated in Drawing No. CP1750_002_A00615_2100_1 *Pontoon Layout*. The access walkway shall also be designed to rise and fall with the tides. The proposed pontoons and walkway shall be manufactured off-site. There is no marine piling required as part of the proposed development.

The proposed pontoon will incorporate life-saving equipment, lights and electrical junction box (to connect the tugs to a shore power supply). The pontoon will be illuminated by pole mounted LED fittings to lux levels indicated by CIBSE standards. The fittings will be modern low glare and low spill luminaires suitable for a Marine environment.

The edges of the pontoon shall be strongly fendered. Specialist contractors will be engaged to carry out the required marine works. A proposed pontoon layout is provided on drawing CP1750-170157-2100-1 included with this application.

4. SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

4.1 European sites in Dublin Bay

There is a significant aggregation of designated sites in and around Dublin Bay, including European sites (SACs and SPAs), NHAs and pNHAs, Ramsar sites, IBAs and Nature Reserves. It is a coastal wetland complex of considerable nature conservation value. In 2015, North Bull Island Biosphere Reserve was expanded in 2015 to take in the whole of Dublin Bay and now extends to over 300 km². This screening exercise considers European sites designated under European Council Directives 92/43/EEC and 2009/147/EC. The proposed development must be screened against those European sites for which a pathway of effect can be reasonably established between a receptor and the source of effect. European sites in proximity to the proposed development are illustrated in Figure 2. The most up-to-date Conservation Objectives for the European sites being considered are outlined in Table 4.1.

4.2 Establishing an impact pathway

The possibility of significant effects is considered in this report using the source-pathway-receptor model. 'Source' is defined as the individual elements of the proposed works that have the potential to affect the identified ecological receptors. 'Pathway' is defined as the means or route by which a source can affect the ecological receptor. 'Ecological receptor' is defined as the Special Conservation Interests (for SPAs) or Qualifying Interests (of SACs) for which conservation objectives have been set for the European sites being screened. Each element can exist independently however an effect is created when there is a linkage between the source, pathway and receptor.

Details in relation to the Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests of European sites in Dublin Bay are provided in Table 4.2. The information contained in these tables is based on publicly available data on these European Sites, sourced from NPWS in October 2017.

Table 4.1: European Sites located within Dublin Bay and environs

Site Code	Site Name	Site Specific Conservation Objectives	Published
IE000210	South Dublin Bay SAC	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of 1 no. Annex I habitat type in the SAC, as defined by 4 no. attributes and targets	22.08.2013 (v1)
IE003000	Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of 1 no. Annex I habitat type in the SAC, as defined by 3 no. attributes and targets; and of 1 no. Annex II species in the SAC, as defined by 2 no. attributes and targets	07.05.2013 (v1)
IE000206	North Dublin Bay SAC	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of 9 no. Annex I habitat type in the SAC, as defined by a range of attributes and targets; and of 1 no. Annex II species in the SAC, as defined by 5 no. attributes and targets	06.11.2013 (v1)
IE000202	Howth Head SAC	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of 2 no. Annex I habitat type in the SAC, as defined by a range of attributes and targets.	06.12.2016 (v1)
IE003015	Codling Fault Zone SAC	Site specific COs have not been published. Generic CO is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of the Annex I habitat.	15.08.2016
IE000204	Lambay Island SAC	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of 2 no. Annex I habitat type in the SAC, as defined by a range of attributes and targets; and of 2 no. Annex II species in the SAC, as defined by 5 no. attributes and targets	22.07.2013 (v1)
IE004006	North Bull Island SPA	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of 17 no. Annex I species in the SPA, as defined by 2 no. attributes and targets; and of wetland habitats in the SPA as a resource for the regularly-occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it, as measured by 1 no. attribute and target	09.03.2015 (v1)
IE004024	South Dublin Bay & River Tolka Estuary SPA	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of 13 no. Annex I species in the SPA, as defined by 2 no. attributes and targets; and of wetland habitats in the SPA as a resource for the regularly-occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it, as measured by 1 no. attribute and target	09.03.2015 (v1)
IE004172	Dalkey Islands SPA	Site specific COs have not been published. Generic CO is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the 3 no. bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.	15.08.2016
IE004113	Howth Head Coast SPA	Site specific COs have not been published. Generic CO is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.	15.08.2016

Table 4.2: European Sites located within Dublin Bay and environs

Site Code	Site Name	Special Conservation Interests (SPAs) or Qualifying Interests (SACs)	Distance from project
IE000210	South Dublin Bay SAC (also Sandymount Strand/Tolka Estuary Ramsar site)	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]	4.7km by sea around the Great South Wall
IE003000	Rockbill to Dalkey Island SAC	Reefs [1170] Harbour porpoise (<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>) [1351]	7.6km by sea
IE000206	North Dublin Bay SAC (also North Bull Island Ramsar site)	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]; Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]; <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonizing mud and sand [1310]; <i>Spartina</i> swards (<i>Spartinio maritima</i>) [1320]; Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330]; Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritim</i>) [1410]; Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]; Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120]; Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]; Humid dune slacks [2190]; Petalwort (<i>Petalophyllum ralfsi</i>) [1395]	2.9km by sea
IE000202	Howth Head SAC	Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] European dry heaths [4030]	7.7km by sea
IE003015	Colding Fault Zone SAC	This is a newly proposed site. Consultation with NPWS has revealed that this candidate SAC has been designated for Leaking Gas Structures [1180]. Conservation Objectives have not yet been developed for the site.	34km by sea
IE000204	Lambay Island SAC	Reefs [1170]; Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]; Grey seal <i>Halichoerus grypus</i> [1364]; Harbour seal <i>Phoca vitulina</i> [1365]	24km by sea
IE004006	North Bull Island SPA	Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046]; Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048]; Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052]; Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054]; Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056]; Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143]; Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130]; Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140]; Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141]; Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144]; Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149]; Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156]; Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157]; Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160]; Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162]; Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) [A169]; Black-headed Gull (<i>Larus ridibundus</i>) [A179]; Wetlands & Waterbirds [A999]	2.9km by sea
IE004024	South Dublin Bay & River Tolka Estuary SPA	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>) [A140]; Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143]; Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144]; Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149]; Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157]; Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162]; Black-headed Gull (<i>Croicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179]; Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) [A192]; Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193]; Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194]; Wetlands & Waterbirds [A999]	1km by sea, and 185m E (straight line distance) of the proposed sliding gate on Alexandra Road
IE004172	Dalkey Islands SPA	Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) [A192]; Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193]; Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194]	11.4km by sea
IE004113	Howth Head Coast SPA	Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188]	10.4km by sea

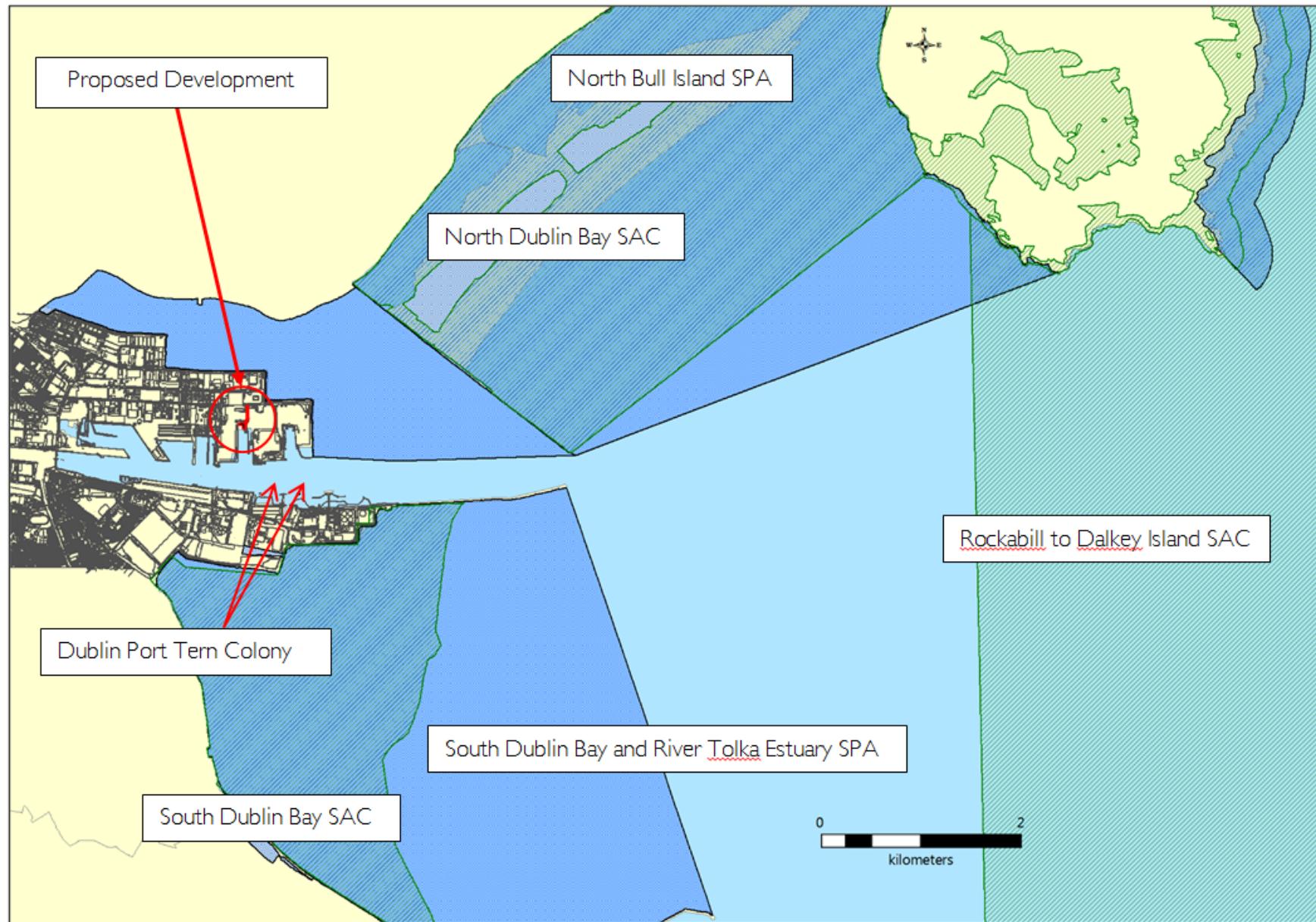


Figure 2: Location of proposed development in relation to nearby European sites

4.2.1 Water Quality

At construction stage, there is a possibility that suspended sediments and / or contaminants may enter the marine environment during activities undertaken by marine plant. The outline method statement and Section 2.3 above note that suitable and sufficient barrier protection measures will be provided to prevent spillage to the marine environment, and that a detailed Construction Management Plan will be prepared by the selected Specialist Contractor(s) and submitted to the consenting authorities to provide implementation detail on these mitigation measures and specify equipment proposed.

At operational phase, there will be no new draining associated with the proposed development. As such, there will be no change to the existing drainage regime, and no new emissions to the marine environment as a result of operational phase.

There is no likely significant risk of suspended sediments and / or contaminants escaping into the marine environment to provide a hydrological pathway of effect leading to a deterioration of wetland, marine and coastal habitats with respect to their water quality and favourable conservation status which are listed as QIs or SCIs for European sites in Dublin Bay.

On this basis it is reasonable to exclude the possibility of significant effects on wetland, marine and coastal habitats and species as set out below and with reference to Table 4.2:

- Reef QI habitat of Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC
- Reef QI habitat of Lambay Island SAC
- Leaking gas structure QI habitat of Codling Fault Zone SAC
- Coastal cliff and heathland QI habitats of Howth Head SAC;
- Coastal cliff QI habitat of Lambay Island SAC;
- Mudflats and sandflats QI habitats of South Dublin Bay SAC;
- 10 no. Annex I habitat QIs and 1 no. Annex II species QI of North Dublin Bay SAC;
- wetlands & waterbirds SCI of South Dublin Bay & River Tolka Estuary SPA; and
- wetland & waterbirds SCI of North Bull Island SPA

4.2.2 Underwater Noise

There will be marine works associated with the proposed development as described in Section 3.3.85 above, however marine piling is not proposed. The works will not produce any underwater acoustic energy of a magnitude which may result in disturbance or injury to individuals of species of marine mammals which are QIs of Lambay Island SAC or Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC. Underwater noise resulting from construction or operational activities is unlikely to be detected beyond background levels outside of Berth 50.

On this basis it is reasonable to exclude the possibility of significant effects on Harbour Seal; Grey Seal; or Harbour Porpoise in Lambay Island SAC or Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC.

4.2.3 Aerial Noise and Visual disturbance

Activities associated with the construction and operation of the proposed development are located (at their closest point) 185m west of the nearest part of South Dublin Bay & River Tolka Estuary SPA located behind the seawall bund at the junction of Alexandra Road and Terminal Road North. The SPA is screened at this point by landscaping to 4m high, and fencing. There is no possibility of visual disturbance upon the overwintering assemblage.

The proposed development at this proximity comprises new pavement overlay and installation of a sliding gate. This will occur in an area currently experiencing high levels of traffic movement and industrial port noise.

In addition to the overwintering wader and waterbird assemblage, the SPA is designated for its breeding and passage tern colonies. Figure 2 illustrates the location of the Dublin Port tern nesting locations in relation to the proposed demolition works. The works are located in excess of 800m from any tern nesting location.

This industrial landscape and the above ground components separating the proposed development from the nearest part of the SPA used by overwintering species, allied with the distance between the works and the sensitive receptors for both breeding and overwintering SCIs, provides ample attenuation of noise sources at the site of proposed development. Overwintering SCI use of the SPA concentrates at the shallow and shoreline locations of high tide roost sites and low tide feeding areas which are sufficiently far from the proposed works that there will be no likely significant effects. It is very unlikely that noise levels will be elevated beyond background at the nearest SPA location.

The terns which breed in the Port area are habituated to frequent shipping traffic and smaller boats passing close to the colony locations. Monitoring of breeding success shows no significant effects of this activity on the long-term viability of the colony which has been increasing during the period 1995-2017. This is a busy and noisy operational Port. Quayside demolition works at a distance greater than 2km from any tern nesting location will not result in any noise or visual effects resulting in loss of attractiveness of the nesting sites.

On this basis it is reasonable to exclude the possibility of significant effects on all remaining SCIs of South Dublin Bay & River Tolka Estuary SPA.

North Bull Island SPA, Howth Head Coast SPA and Dalkey Islands SPA are all located at even greater distances. It is reasonable to exclude the possibility of significant effects on any SCIs of these three SPAs.

4.3 Summary of the Screening Assessment

Tables 4.3 and 4.4 summarise the above considerations in relation to potential impact pathways upon the Qualifying Interests of the SAC sites and Special Conservation Interests of SPA sites listed in Table 4.2.

Table 4.3: European site Qualifying Interests screened for possible impact pathways

Relevant Site Code	Qualifying Interest	Impact pathway	Are effects above a <i>de minimis</i> threshold likely?
SPECIES			
IE000206	Petalwort	None established	No pathway to effect has been established. Likely significant effects are not possible.
IE003000 IE000204	Harbour porpoise Grey seal Harbour seal	None established	No pathway to effect has been established. Likely significant effects are not possible.
HABITATS			
IE000206 IE000210	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide	None established	No pathway to effect has been established. Likely significant effects are not possible.
IE003000	Reefs	None established	No pathway to effect has been established. Likely significant effects are not possible.
IE003015	Leaking Gas Structures	None established	No pathway to effect has been established. Likely significant effects are not possible.
IE000206	Annual vegetation of drift lines <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonizing mud and sand <i>Spartina</i> swards Atlantic salt meadows Mediterranean salt meadows Embryonic shifting dunes Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation Humid dune slacks	None established	No pathway to effect has been established. Likely significant effects are not possible.
IE000202	Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts European dry heaths	None established	No pathway to effect has been established. Likely significant effects are not possible.

Table 4.4: European site **Special Conservation Interests** screened for possible impact pathways

Relevant Site Code	Special Conservation Interests		Impact pathway	Are effects above a <i>de minimis</i> level likely?
SPECIES				
IE000406 IE004024	Light-bellied Brent Goose Black-tailed Godwit Bar-tailed Godwit Black-headed Gull Shelduck Oystercatcher Sanderling	Knot Pintail Shoveler Curlew Teal Grey Plover Redshank Turnstone	None established	No pathway to effect has been established. Likely significant effects are not possible.
IE004024	Ringed Plover Dunlin		None established	No pathway to effect has been established. Likely significant effects are not possible.
IE004113	Kittiwake		None established	No pathway to effect has been established. Likely significant effects are not possible.
IE004024	Roseate Tern Common Tern Arctic Tern		None established	No pathway to effect has been established. Likely significant effects are not possible.
IE004172	Roseate Tern Common Tern Arctic Tern		None established	No pathway to effect has been established. Likely significant effects are not possible.
HABITATS				
IE004006 IE004024	Wetlands		None established	No pathway to effect has been established. Likely significant effects are not possible.

4.4 In-combination with other plans and projects

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires that in-combination effects with other plans or projects are considered. On this basis, a range of other projects were considered in terms of their potential to have in-combination effects with the proposed substation. Those projects include –

- Alexandra Basin Redevelopment (ABR) Project
- Decommissioning and replacement of the North Wall - Poolbeg 220kV sub-aqua cable
- Dublin Port Internal Road Network Upgrade project
- Proposed Demolitions at Ocean Pier
- Proposed Substation at Ocean Pier
- Proposed Demolitions at Stack C and other buildings
- Proposed roof mounted solar PV panels on the Dublin Port M&S Building
- Proposed Demolition of the BluGas Yard, Dublin Port
- Yard refurbishment and extension at East Wall Rd, Alexandra Road, Tolka Quay Road

The projects listed above were reviewed and considered in terms of their potential to result in ‘in-combination’ effects likely to have a significant effect on any European site. The author of this report is the same author of the Dublin Port ABR project Natura Impact Statement and screening for appropriate assessment reports for the projects listed above.

Full advantage has been taken of the comprehensive body of scientific research, evaluation and analysis accompanying planning applications at Dublin Port which the author is familiar with in preparing this report. This has facilitated best and most up-to-date scientific knowledge being used in the evaluation and analyses. Likely pathways of effect can be considered without any notable impediment.

As there are no appreciable effects as a result of the proposed development alone which is likely to result in significant effects, there is no pathway of additive effect between the proposed development and the projects listed above for significant cumulative or in-combination effects which can be considered to significantly affect the QIs, SCIs or conservation objectives of the European sites considered in this exercise.

5. CONCLUSION OF THE SCREENING ASSESSMENT

This report has been prepared by RPS on behalf of Dublin Port Company (DPC). The purpose of the report is to document a shadow screening for appropriate assessment that RPS has conducted on behalf of the project promoter in support of applications for consent to competent authorities.

The Screening Assessment was completed in accordance with the approach set out at Section 2 of this report. The potential impacts during the proposed construction or operation of the substation been considered in the context of the European Sites identified, their Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests and any conservation objectives which have been set.

From the findings of the Screening exercise, it is concluded that the proposed heavy duty floating dock (pontoon), access walkway, access road, boundary security and lighting at Berth 50 –

- Is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of any European site;
- Will not give rise to potential significant effects on the Qualifying Interests or Special Conservation Interests of any European site; and
- Will not give rise to potential in-combination or cumulative effects with the other projects considered.

Having regard to the methodology employed and the findings of the screening stage assessment, it has been concluded that Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not required in relation to any European site.

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