



In compliance with the provisions of Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) and in compliance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2001 and pursuant to the requirements of the above, notice is hereby given of Dublin City Council's intention to carry out the following works:

Application No: 7004/23

Proposal: LAW: Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) - Part VIII

Planning permission for a development on a small island just east of the weir within the River Liffey near Islandbridge, the Development will consist of:

- (a) A floating pontoon system within the River Liffey anchored to the existing island shore.
- (b) A new stone and concrete platform built out from the riverbank and connected to the pontoon by a new gangway.
- (c) The removal of vegetation on approach to the pontoon and installation of a new access walkway from the south upper River Liffey at the weir to the new pontoon located north on the lower River Liffey.
- (d) The temporary removal, refurbishment and reinstatement of an existing steel footbridge located on the island.
- (e) The removal of poor existing vegetation, pruning of existing healthy trees and the replanting of 25 new high-quality trees and growing shrubs all native to Ireland.
- (f) All ancillary works relating to the above, such as temporary regrading of land during site works for access onto the island.

Applicant: Culture, Recreation and Economic Services Department

Location: River Liffey Pontoon, Islandbridge, Dublin 8

LOCATION & DESCRIPTION:

The proposed development is located on an island on the River Liffey, to the east of Islandbridge. The surrounding area of the proposed site is highly urban aside from Phoenix Park, which is located just north of the proposed development and the Memorial Gardens

which is located to the southwest of the proposed site. In a wider landscape context, the site is situated in Dublin City, which is a highly urbanised area with the River Liffey flowing in an easterly direction into Dublin Bay.

The subject small island is accessed on foot from the Bellevue apartment complex to the east. It is currently used by rowers to access the lower section of the River Liffey. Rowers use an existing slip on the southern side of the island and carry their boats to a cutout section of the bank on the northern side. From this area, they can access the lower section of the River Liffey.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

The subject stretch of the River Liffey near Islandbridge, is home to over 13 Rowing Clubs – one of which belongs to Dublin City Council. In order to link the eastern length of the Liffey from Islandbridge, the Culture, Recreation & Economic Services Department of Dublin City Council is proposing a pontoon to be built on one of the small islands east of the weir - this will allow rowers to start at Islandbridge and have access down to Ringsend and vice versa safely.

To this end, the development comprises a pontoon with associated walkways to facilitate access to the river for rowing boats and kayaks. The project will provide for a platform that would minimize damage to bankside vegetation when launching and retrieving boats, and allow a safe platform for kayakers and boaters to embark and disembark.

The works proposed plan to combine the following elements:

- a) A floating pontoon system within the River Liffey anchored to the existing island shore.
- b) A new stone and concrete platform built out from the riverbank and connected to the pontoon by a new gangway.
- c) The removal of vegetation on approach to the pontoon and installation of a new access walkway from the south upper River Liffey at the weir to the new pontoon located north on the lower River Liffey.
- d) The temporary removal, refurbishment and reinstatement of an existing steel footbridge located on the island.
- e) The removal of poor existing vegetation, pruning of existing healthy trees and the replanting of 25 new high-quality trees and growing shrubs all native to Ireland.
- f) Temporary regrading of land during site works for access onto the island

The extent of the proposed are is illustrated on the extract from the proposed site layout plan shown at figure 1 below:



CIVIL SERVICE
TRAINING
GROUND

ADR
MALONE O'BRIEN
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

28 Fitz
Charles
Dublin 9
Tel: +353
1 452 2211
Email: info@adr.ie

DUBLIN CITY
COUNCIL

RIVER LIFFEY BOAT
PONTOON
ISLANDBRIDGE, DUBLIN

21036 104

Figure 1 – Proposed Development.
RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

There is no relevant planning history relating to the subject site.

OBSERVATIONS:

Plans and particulars of the proposed works were available for inspection, at the Civic Offices, Wood Quay, Dublin 8, from 9th November 2023. The plans were also available online on Citizen Space. Submissions and observations regarding the proposed development could be made up to and including 20th December 2023. A total of 12 no. third party observations/submissions were received. A summary of the key issues raised is attached to Appendix A of this report.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Archaeology Department

It has been demonstrated that the site is one of archaeological potential due to its nature as an historic island on the River Liffey. It is the recommendation that Archaeological Monitoring, as per section 3.7 of the Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (1999) shall be carried out in the event of a grant of planning permission for this application in order to preserve or preserve by record archaeological material likely to be damaged or destroyed in the course of development. The below condition is a replication of the example including in the submitted letter from the DAU dated 9.12.22.

Transportation Planning Department

No objections subject to conditions.

PRESCRIBED BODIES

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| 1. Irish Water | No report. |
| 2. Irish Rail | No report. |
| 3. Depart Housing, Local Govt & Heritage | Report received. |

DUBLIN CITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022-2028 CONTEXT:

Dublin City Council's policy regarding such developments is set down in the Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028

Chapter 10 Green Infrastructure and Recreation

Section: 10.5.1 – 'Green Infrastructure' of the City Development Plan

Green infrastructure (GI) has a critically important role to play in making Dublin a climate resilient, healthy and green city. GI can be defined as an interconnected network of green space (or blue in the case of water features) that conserves natural ecosystem values and functions and provides associated benefits to human populations. The city's green and blue

spaces include (interalia) rivers & canals that perform multiple functions to deliver a wealth of social, environmental and economic benefits to the city. Key relevant Policies are as follows:

- G11: Green Infrastructure Assets: To identify and protect the integrity of the city's GI assets, as appropriate, and to enhance and expand the connectivity, multi-functionality, and accessibility of the city's green infrastructure network, while addressing gaps in the network.
- G13: Multi-functionality (GI) To ensure delivery of multifunctional green and civic spaces that meet community needs, support biodiversity, promote active and passive recreation, flood and surface water management and local habitat improvements. The multi-functionality of spaces will be balanced against the need to protect and enhance local habitat and the recreational and functional requirements of parks
- G14: Accessibility To ensure universal design for access for all to the green infrastructure network. Priority of access is to be given to pedestrians over all other users. In line with the Parks Strategy, access to facilities and to public parks and open spaces will be provided equally to all citizens and inequalities of access shall be identified and addressed.
- G104: Engage with Community: To engage with and involve corporate volunteers, landowners and relevant agencies to support their communities in the development and delivery of green infrastructure programmes.

Section 10.5.2 – Biodiversity

The city has a wide range of habitats which have been mapped. These include natural and semi-natural grasslands, wetlands and watercourses, dunes, woodland and hedgerows, stone walls, street trees, scrub and cultivated ground.

- G19: European Union Natura 2000 Sites: To conserve, manage, protect and restore the favourable conservation condition of all qualifying interest/special conservation interests of all European sites designated, or proposed to be designated, under the EU Birds and Habitats Directives, as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) (European / Natura 2000 sites).
- G113: Areas of Ecological Importance for Protected Species: To ensure the protection, conservation and enhancement of all areas of ecological importance for protected species, and especially those listed in the EU Birds and Habitats Directives, including those identified as supporting the favourable conservation condition of any European sites, in accordance with development standards set out in this plan.
- G114 Ecological / Wildlife Corridors: To maintain and strengthen the integrity of the city's ecological corridors and stepping stones which enable species to move through the city, by increasing their connectivity [to be shown in the proposed Green Infrastructure Strategy] under Article 10 of the EU Habitats Directive. Development proposals should not compromise their ecological functions and should realise opportunities to contribute to enhancing the nature conservation value of them by landscaping that provides complementary habitats. An Ecological Impact Assessment will be required

for any proposed development likely to have a significant impact on habitats and species of interest on or adjacent an ecological corridor.

Section 10.5.5

Rivers and Canals' advises that the city's rivers and canals and their riparian zones / towpaths form important elements of the city's GI network. These waterways and their riparian zones serve as wildlife corridors and aquatic habitats, floodplains, green spaces, the setting for heritage features / development, areas of beauty and tranquillity and a means of connection in the city. Many facilitate river focused amenity, sports and riverside cycle and walkways. The River Liffey is the city's key waterbody and urban space. It links Dublin Bay to the Phoenix Park and to the wider region and has important civic, amenity, ecological, historical and cultural connections.

GI023: Manage / Protect / Enhance Parks To continue to manage and protect and/or enhance the city's parks and public open spaces to meet the social, recreational, conservation and ecological needs of the city and to consider the development of appropriate complementary facilities which do not detract from the amenities of spaces.

GI29: Protect Character of River Corridors To protect, maintain, and enhance the watercourses and their river corridors in the city and to ensure that development does not cover or encroach upon rivers and their banks. To maintain natural river banks and restore them as part of any new development. The creation and/or enhancement of river corridors will be required and river restoration opportunities where possible will be supported to help improve water quality, and ecology, provide natural flood relief as well as providing amenity and leisure benefits.

GI32: Linear Parks and Recreational Use of Waterways Aspects To develop linear parks, sustainable riverine access, walkways, cycleways and water focused recreational, sporting and tourism amenities which enhance appreciation of rivers in a manner that ensures that any adverse environmental effects are avoided and ecological enhancements, where appropriate, are employed to ensure a net biodiversity gain. Where lands along the waterways are in private ownership, it shall be policy in any development proposal to secure public access along the waterway.

GI33: River Liffey To recognise the unique character, importance and potential of the River Liffey to the city and to protect and enhance its civic, ecological, amenity, historical and cultural connections. To promote the sustainable development of this key resource for amenity and recreational uses in and along the river and its development as a green corridor in the city. In this regard, Dublin City Council will work with river based organisations and relevant stakeholders who use the river.

GI34 New Development and Public Open Space along River Corridors To ensure that new development, in terms of siting and design, responds to the character, importance and setting of the city's rivers where the context allows, and to require public open space which is to be provided as part of new development, to supplement riparian buffer zones so as to support the attainment of 'good ecological status' or higher for water bodies, flood management, the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem functions.

Section 10.5.7 Trees

GI40 - Tree Planting – General

To require appropriate and long-term tree and native hedgerow planting in the planning of new development, urban spaces, streets, roads and infrastructure projects. New development should seek to provide for additional tree planting using a diversity of species including native species as appropriate to the location of the development in the interests of natural heritage, amenity, environmental quality and climate resilience.

GI41 – Protect Existing Trees as Part of New Development

To protect existing trees as part of new development, particularly those that are of visual, biodiversity or amenity quality and significance. There will be a presumption in favour of retaining and safeguarding trees that make a valuable contribution to the environment.

GIO41 - Dublin City Tree Strategy 2016

To support the implementation of the Dublin City Tree Strategy 2016 and any future revision thereof, which sets a vision for the long-term planting, protection and maintenance of trees, hedgerows and woodlands within Dublin City.

GI46: To Improve and Upgrade/ Provide Access to Sports / Recreational Facilities To improve and upgrade existing sports/recreational facilities in the city and to ensure the availability of and equal access to a range of recreational facilities to the general population of all ages and groups (including women/girls and minority sports) at locations throughout the city, including housing complexes. In areas where a deficiency exists, Dublin City Council will work with the providers of such facilities, including schools, institutions and private operators, to ensure access to the local population.

GIO54: Water Sports and Leisure Activities To support the development of a public lido at George's Dock, and to strive to achieve this within the first three years of the Development Plan being adopted, and to provide other water sports and leisure activities in the city centre and at the River Liffey, canals and other key water bodies

SI10 Managing Development Within and Adjacent to River Corridors To require development proposals that are within or adjacent to river corridors in the City (excluding the Camac River) to provide for a minimum setback distance of 10-15m from the top of the river bank in order to create an appropriate riparian zone. The Council will support riparian zones greater than 10 metres depending on site-specific characteristics and where such zones can integrate with public/communal open space

Chapter 11: Built Heritage and Archaeology

BHA9: Conservation Areas

To protect the special interest and character of all Dublin's Conservation Areas – identified under Z8 and Z2 zoning objectives and denoted by red line conservation hatching on the zoning maps. Development within or affecting a Conservation Area must contribute positively to its character and distinctiveness and take opportunities to protect and enhance the character and appearance of the area and its setting, wherever possible.

BHA26: It is the policy of the Dublin City Development Plan 2022-28 to protect and preserve monuments, Sites and Zones of Archaeological interest.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

This Part VIII application is for the proposed installation of a pontoon with associated walkways to facilitate access to the River for rowing boats and kayaks. As noted above, under the current Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028 the site is zoned Z9 – (open space) with the objective ‘to preserve, provide and improve recreational amenity, open space and ecosystem services’. Section 14.7.9 of the Plan advises that the only new type of development allowed in these areas, are amenity/recreational uses and those associated with open space use. The provision of a sports facility and recreational uses and water-based recreational activities, is listed as ‘open for consideration’ within lands Zoned Z9.

Section 14.3.1 of the City Development Plan advises that an ‘open for consideration’ use may be permitted where the planning authority is satisfied that the proposed development would be compatible with the overall policies and objectives for the zone, and would otherwise be consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

The Culture, Recreation and Economic Services Departments of Dublin City Council has a remit for providing sports and recreational opportunities and facilities within the city of Dublin. The rationale for the proposed construction of the pontoon is to facilitate and enhance safe access for the rowing clubs in the area. The Department has indicated that this stretch of the River Liffey near Islandbridge is home to over 13 rowing clubs, catering for just over 700 members. These clubs have been established since the 20th century and form a valuable part of the community that animates the river.

Rowing boats currently use an existing slip on the southern side of the island. The slip is in poor condition, having been roughly formed using a number of sandbags filled with cement. From the slip, rowers carry their boats across the island and, from a cutout section of the bank, launch them into the lower section of the River Liffey. The Culture, Recreation and Economic Services Department considers that this current arrangement is dangerous due to the uneven ground across the island and the difficulty in accessing the lower reaches of the river.

The proposed development will allow for the rowers to gain access in a safer and more secure environment. This project will also support partnerships with the local rowing clubs. Dublin City Council currently own and operate the Municipal rowing Centre that would also benefit from the proposed development.

Overall, the proposal aims to deliver improved facilities to citizens whilst promoting health and wellbeing opportunities. In these terms, it is considered that the proposal accords with the relevant Policies of the City Development Plan, namely:

- Policy GI023 which seeks to continue to manage and protect and/or enhance the city’s parks and public open spaces to meet the social, recreational, conservation and ecological needs of the city and to consider the development of appropriate complementary facilities which do not detract from the amenities of spaces.

- Policy GI33 which seeks to promote the sustainable development of this key resource for amenity and recreational uses in and along the river and its development as a green corridor in the city; and
- Policy GI46 which seeks to Improve and Upgrade/ Provide Access to Sports / Recreational Facilities.

Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposal is considered acceptable in principle.

Impact on River Liffey

The proposed development is to construct a floating pontoon system within the River Liffey which will be accessed via a new concrete platform built out from the riverbank and connected to the pontoon by a new gangway.

In terms of construction, steel piles will be driven through the river bed to support the proposed pontoon. The concrete platform will be constructed using a number of precast caisson structures which will be filled with clean, crushed stone and topped with an insitu concrete deck slab. Rock fill placed against the side of the caissons and the riverbank will provide scour protection to the edges of the concrete platform.

The works also include the removal of vegetation on the approach to the pontoon and the construction of a new access walkway which will be used by rowers carrying boats between the upper and lower reaches of the River Liffey, either side of the existing weir at Islandbridge.

There is an existing footbridge located on the island which will be removed in order to facilitate the construction works. The structural arrangement of the bridge also needs to be modified to accommodate proposed changes to the adjoining ground levels. The bridge will be temporarily removed and reinstated upon completion of the other works.

Policy GI29: 'Protect Character of River Corridors' aims to protect, maintain, and enhance the watercourses and their river corridors in the city and to ensure that development does not cover or encroach upon rivers and their banks. To maintain natural river banks and restore them as part of any new development. The impact of the proposal, the extent of the works outlined above on the key characteristics and Ecological Features of the River Liffey at this location are considered below:

Impact on Trees

The tree cover on the subject site is dominated by early-mature and mature sycamore, with a number of willow and ash. An arboricultural report prepared in accordance with BS5837: 2012 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations', has been submitted with the application.

The construction of the proposed walkway will provide a link from the southern side of the island to the proposed pontoon on the northern side. It is understood that the final design of the proposal was based on the route that is currently used by rowing clubs, as it provides the

best staging point for accessing the river and locating the pontoon. According to the arboricultural report, this element of the proposal will require the removal of the following trees:

- Two B Category (Trees of moderate quality with an estimated life expectancy of at least 20 years); and
- Three C Category (Trees of low quality with an estimated life expectancy of at least 10 years, or young trees with a stem diameter below 150mm).

The arboricultural report considers that the extent of tree removal is not significant as they are not of high quality. Although the loss of these trees will have an initial impact on the island's visual appearance and canopy cover, the overall impact on the wider local landscape will be minimal due to the extent of vegetation and tree cover along this area of the Liffey. .

In addition to these tree removals, the arboricultural report recommends that 7no. U Category trees should be removed for arboricultural reasons. These trees are defined as those being in such a condition that they cannot realistically be retained as living trees in the context of the current land use for longer than 10 years i.e. are in a relatively poor condition with a limited future life expectancy. Three of these trees will only be felled to a specified height and their main stem will be retained for habitat and biodiversity reasons.

A tree replacement planting plan has been produced and is shown at Appendix B of the arboricultural report. It proposes the planting of 17 new high-quality trees and 10 large growing shrubs. It is considered that this planting will mitigate the loss of the trees required to be removed, whilst improving the diversity of species across the island.

The proposed loss of trees has been assessed and will not have a significant visual impact on the character and appearance of the wider local landscape. The development proposal has taken into consideration the loss of these trees and has proposed new planting that will replace the canopy cover lost whilst improving the diversity of species on the island.

The submission received from the Dept of Housing, Local government & Heritage raises the issue regarding the removal of 7no. U Category trees. It is submitted that although these trees may be of considerable biodiversity value, harbouring fungi and insects in decayed wood. The Department consequently considers that these trees should be retained unless their removal is necessary for safety reasons or because they directly obstruct the works proposed. A condition to this effect has been suggested.

Having regard to the above, it is considered that the constraints posed by the existing trees have been adequately assessed in the arboricultural report. Where impacts occur i.e. the required loss of trees, this has been addressed via the sensitive design of the proposal and mitigation measures i.e. new tree planting.

The protection of the retained trees on the site during the proposed development works can be achieved by continuing to follow the recommendations in BS5837:2012 and through arboricultural supervision at key stages of construction.

Ecology & Biodiversity

In accordance with the requirements of Policy G114 – ‘Ecological/Wildlife Corridors’ of the City Development Plan, an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) was prepared by CAAS Ltd and submitted with the application. It is based on the results of a multidisciplinary ecological site visit carried out in December 2021, June 2022 and November 2022; an additional, dedicated otter survey was undertaken of the island in June 2023.

No Annex I habitats were found on site. The habitats present are of high local importance in terms of support for local biodiversity, resource availability, and ecological connectivity across an urban landscape to other pockets of ecological value in the urban Dublin landscape.

No evidence of badger setts was found on site and there was no evidence was found of otter activity on the island / proposed site. The EclA advises that this could indicate low use of the site by these mammals, especially given that the surveys were conducted during the optimum season for signs. This could be attributed to the current baseline levels of disturbance on the site from fishing and kayaking, the intermittent flooding of the island in the winter months.

The EclA also referenced the Dublin Otter Survey carried out in 2019 which recorded an otter spraint located approximately 500m from the proposed site, and an otter holt 750m from the proposed site. In its submission, the Dept of Housing, Local Government & Heritage highlighted the Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) guidelines which state that development works should only be carried out within 50m of an occupied holt or 150m of a holt containing a bitch otter and young cubs. The Department has therefore recommended that a condition be imposed to require an otter survey to be undertaken by an otter specialist of the River Liffey, its banks and adjacent areas within a 150m of the proposed development works and if necessary, a licence to derogate from the Habitats Directive to disturb any holts of couches identified must be applied for from the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Page 25 of the EclA, indicates that a survey for otter holts and signs (spraints and tracks) on the island was carried out in the optimal season for surveying in 2022, and an additional survey carried out in 2023 – no signs of otter on site or within the local area of the site were found. The proposed development does not represent the introduction of a new use to the subject island, but will improve the safe access to the island for use by kayakers, and reduce bank erosion of the island. Thus, the EclA confirms that it is not envisaged that the proposed project will result in a change in the use of the island by non volant mammals in the operational phase of the proposed project as it will be in keeping with current levels of disturbance and site use. There may be some disturbance or reduced use of the island for foraging by non-volant mammals caused by the proposed project during the construction phase, but due to the small scale and temporary nature of the proposed project’s construction phase, this disturbance is deemed to be very low to negligible and temporary as a result.

In these terms, the EclA recommends that a pre-construction survey for otter holts is carried out by a qualified ecologist prior to any construction works taking place. In the event that a holt is recorded, consultation with the project ecologist and the NPWS will determine the next steps for the project – and as per the requested by the Department, a derogation licence will be sought from the National Parks & wildlife Service if required.

In terms of Bats, the survey found that there were no potential roost features (PRFs) within the proposed site works area, or within any of the trees to be felled as part of the Arborist recommendations. It has been suggested that this is due to the fact that there are no trees with any features suitable for bat roosting within these areas. A dead and decaying tree located on the eastern site of the island, has potential to support bat roosts, however this tree will not be felled, but retained for biodiversity with minor maintenance on the top thin branches for safety. Therefore, there will be no impact to bat roosting habitat as a result of the proposed project.

The River Liffey is a Salmonid River, and is protected under the Salmonid River Regs S.I. No. 293/1988. As the construction phase of the proposed development will interact with the River Liffey, there is potential for impacts on any potential salmon spawning sites upstream from the proposed development during the construction phase. Mitigation measures are provided in Section 5 of the EclA which seek to minimise any potential impacts on salmon spawns, these aim to:

- a) Ensure measures are put in place and maintained during the construction phase to ensure the protection of the River Liffey;
- b) Retain native vegetation where possible; and,
- c) Ensure standard best practice is maintained for the construction phase regarding invasive species.

As the construction phase of the subject development is the only phase identified as having potential impacts, a Construction Environmental Management Plan has been produced for the proposal. As per best practice, all elements of the mitigation provided for in the submitted EclA will be agreed to by the contractor along with construction phase best practice measures. This will be carried out prior to commencement of the development. Particular emphasis will be placed how the above sensitive ecological aspects of the proposed site, and the overall biodiversity of the proposed site, will be protected and monitored during the construction phase with regard to water quality, dust, noise, lighting and invasive species.

Two invasive species, Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam, which are both subject to restrictions (Third Schedule) under Regulation 49 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011, were recorded on site during the site visits. An Invasive Species Management Plan has therefore been produced by a Invas Biosecurity which details appropriate methodology to remove the species in an ecologically sensitive manner that will be agreed with the arborist and construction team prior to any works taking place.

Based on the ecological information submitted with the application, and the nature of the works proposed, it is not considered that there will be a net decrease in terms of the ecological integrity of the site due to the maintenance of the vast majority of natural features and vegetation and maintenance of existing habitats across the site.

Having regard to the construction phase measures and the mitigation measures as set out in the EclA, it is considered that the potential impacts to the biodiversity/ecology of the existing environment will be negligible, and of a temporary duration (i.e., construction phase only).

The operational phase will be in keeping with the current recreational function, activities and condition of the site current use in terms of both human pressures and ecological condition.

Archaeology

It has been demonstrated that the site is one of archaeological potential due to its nature as an historic island on the River Liffey. Riverine archaeological features, such as weirs and submerged landscapes, harbours, jetties, landing places, prehistoric and later fish traps and bridge sites may survive within the portion of the river bed to be impacted. Wrecks over 100 years old and archaeological objects underwater, irrespective of their age or location, are protected under Section 3 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1987. Groundworks associated with the proposed pontoon may impact on archaeological and industrial features within the Recorded Monument DU018-020.

It is the recommendation of City Council's Archaeology officer that Archaeological Monitoring, as per section 3.7 of the Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (1999) and as described below, shall be carried out in order to preserve or preserve by record archaeological material likely to be damaged or destroyed in the course of development.

Transportation & Access

Access onto the island is currently via a stepped pedestrian route from the rear of the adjoining Bellevue apartment complex. This route is too constrained to be viable as a construction access. Instead, it is proposed that construction access would be provided via different routes.

It is proposed that the primary access route would be from the southern side of the river via the OPW carpark located within the National War Memorial Gardens. Construction vehicles will use the existing access road between South Circular Road and the OPW carpark.

The existing vehicular access to the OPW carpark will be maintained for the duration of the works. A temporary river crossing will need to be constructed for the construction period in order to access the island from the southern side of the river.

A secondary access route along the River Liffey is also proposed. The larger components will be delivered to a DCC facility located on the northern bank of the River Liffey, immediately upstream of Islandbridge. From here, they will be carried by barge to the pontoon location or, in the case of the floating pontoon units, they will be towed into position.

Construction traffic will be limited and will also be restricted to certain times of day, with the aim of keeping disruption to existing traffic to a minimum and preserving public enjoyment of the adjoining OPW gardens. It is noted the appointed Contractor will submit a Traffic Management Plan prior to commencement, envisaged measures have been noted.

As indicated above, there is an existing vehicular access to OPW car park which will be maintained for the duration of the works. The appointed Works Contractor will be required to implement all necessary traffic management measures including directional / warning signage. This is acceptable to the division.

The existing access road between South Circular Road and the OPW carpark does not include formal footpaths on either side of the road, a rough path exists on the northern side of the road, separated from the carriageway by low hedging. Pedestrians are observed to use the carriageway instead of the path as it provides a stable walking surface.

It is proposed to provide temporary signage and barriers to encourage pedestrians to use the path for the duration of the works. The works are expected to take around 4 months to complete. The number of truck movements is expected to be modest with no more than 3-4 truck deliveries per day. Therefore, it is not expected that the works will have a significant impact on existing pedestrian access.

Conclusion

The subject site is zoned Z9 – (open space) with the objective ‘to preserve, provide and improve recreational amenity, open space and ecosystem services’. The proposal seeks to make safe and enhance an existing recreational and amenity facility along the River Liffey and therefore represents an appropriate form of development within this zoning objective.

The issues raised by the third party submissions have been duly noted and addressed within this report, and the planning issues addressed. The Planning Authority is supportive of the proposed construction of the pontoon is to facilitate and enhance safe access for the rowing clubs in the area. The proposal is considered to be compatible with the overall policies and objectives for the Z9 Zoning and is consistent with the provisions of Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028 and is in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Appropriate Assessment

The Planning Authority completed an Appropriate Assessment screening exercise in relation to the potential effects of the proposed pontoon development on IIsandbridge on designated European sites, taking into account the proposed development’s small scale, temporary timeline, and its nature in the context of the urban, highly developed local environment setting, and the submitted Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment. In carrying out the screening exercise, the Planning Authority concluded that, by itself or in combination with other development in the vicinity, the proposed development would not be likely to have a significant effect on any European site in view of the conservation objectives of such sites, or the overall integrity of any Natura 2000 site and that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is therefore not required.

EIA

The Planning Authority completed an EIA Screening having regard to the nature of the development, comprising the proposed pontoon development on IIsandbridge, and the likelihood of it causing significant environmental impacts. The screening has followed the

relevant legislation and has had regard to the relevant guidance. The proposed project does not correspond to or have similar characteristics to any of the project types that require an EIA. It does not fall into a project type in Part 2 of Schedule 5 and is considered not to be 'sub threshold development' and it is therefore not required to review it against the Schedule 7 criteria. The Planning Authority concluded that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development. The proposed development does not need to be subject to Environment Impact Assessment and no Environment Impact Assessment Report is required for it.

Recommendation

The proposed development is considered to be in accordance with the Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028. Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed works, it is considered that the proposed development would positively contribute to the amenities of the area and subject to compliance with the recommendations set out below it is considered that the proposed development is in the interests of proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

It is recommended that the Elected Members approve the proposed development and the proposing Department should have regard to the following recommendations:

1. General:

All mitigation, environmental commitments and monitoring measures identified in the Archaeological, Architectural and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment, Ecological Impact Assessment, Invasive Alien Species Survey and Arboricultural Report, shall be implemented in full as part of the proposed development

2. Transportation

Prior to commencement of development, and on appointment of a main contractor, a Construction Management Plan shall be submitted to the planning authority for written agreement. This plan shall provide details of intended construction practice for the development, including traffic management, hours of working, noise and dust management measures and off-site disposal of construction waste. The Construction Traffic Management Plan shall seek to minimise impact on the public road and potential conflict with pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.

3. Trees

That any trees to be removed during the proposed development works should only be felled on the grounds of safety or because they directly obstruct these works.

A tree replacement planting plan as shown at Appendix B of the Arboricultural Report shall be fully implemented prior to the operation of the pontoon development.

4. Biodiversity/ecology

A survey for the presence of otter holts should be conducted by a suitably qualified ecologist on the island and its outer perimeter as well as any banks opposite the proposed development within a distance of not less than 150 metres prior to any works taking place on the site. If an otter holt is recorded within 150 metres, the National Parks and Wildlife Service should be contacted and a derogation licence should be sought.

A survey for the presence of bat roosts should be completed on all of the trees on the proposed development site by a suitably qualified bat ecologist. This should take place at least 4 weeks prior to any works taking place on the site, including any pre construction clearance. If bat roosts are present, a derogation licence from the National Parks and Wildlife Service is required prior to any works taking place.

The proposed development should produce a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), which includes measures to use bat friendly lighting during the construction phase. The plan should include measures to limit the hours of operation of the lights, including switching off lights prior to dusk and throughout the night. The following should be consulted: Lighting for Bats (Guidance Note 08/18 - Bats and artificial lighting in the UK, published by Bat Conservation Trust and Institution of Lighting Professionals, 2018) along with any updated guidelines 2023.

The CEMP should be approved by the project ecologist and in consultation with Inland Fisheries and the DCC Protection of Waterbodies Office prior to any works taking place on the proposed development site.

Site clearance works, including removal of existing buildings and vegetation should avoid the nesting season (from 1st March to 31st August inclusive). If works must take place during this period, then the applicant must hire a suitably qualified ecologist to inspect all trees and foliage on the site for nesting birds' prior to any works taking place. If any nests are present, then the ecologist must apply for a licence from the National Parks and Wildlife Service and submit a copy of any approved licences to the Dublin City Biodiversity Officer.

A survey for the rare toothwort *Lathraea squamaria* should be conducted by a suitably qualified ecologist prior to any works taking place on the proposed development site. If recorded, appropriate mitigation measures should be instigated to ensure that there is no destruction of the *Lathraea squamaria*. The ecologist should also coordinate with the Dublin City Biodiversity Officer.

The recommendations and measures contained in the Invasive Alien Species (IAS) Management Plan produced by Invas Biosecurity (dated February 2023) shall be fully implemented prior to any works taking place on the site. Any works should be conducted by a registered Invasive Alien Species specialist.

5. Archaeology Division:

No construction or site preparation work shall be carried out on the site until the following archaeological requirements are complied with

Archaeological monitoring is to take place of all works that involve groundworks or any impacts to the riverbed and riverbanks, as outlined in the submitted report and as follows:

- i. The services of a suitably qualified and suitably experienced underwater archaeologist shall be engaged to carry out the archaeological monitoring.
 - ii. The archaeological monitoring shall be licensed by the Department and a detailed method statement that sets out the monitoring strategy is to accompany a licence application.
 - iii. A Finds Retrieval Strategy shall be included in the methodology and all excavated deposits shall be spread and metal detected (under licence) to recover any archaeological objects that they may contain.
- a) The monitoring archaeologist shall obtain a dive survey licence in order to facilitate investigation of underwater archaeological materials should they be uncovered/identified.
 - b) Please note vetting of licence applications by the Department takes 3-4 weeks.
 - c) A communication strategy is to form part of the monitoring strategy to ensure full communication is in place between the monitoring archaeologist and the plant operator(s) at all times during works. The archaeological personnel undertaking the monitoring will be in a position to monitor directly all elements of the works, to ensure they have unobstructed views of the excavations, and the plant and machinery operators shall be prepared to facilitate the archaeological personnel in the undertaking of their monitoring work.
 - d) Should archaeological materials be found during the course of monitoring, the archaeologist shall have work on the affected area of the site stopped pending further archaeological investigation and a decision by the Department and Dublin City Archaeologist regarding appropriate mitigation. The developer shall be prepared to be advised by the Department with regard to any mitigating action (preservation in-situ and/or excavation). The developer shall facilitate the archaeologist in recording any material found.
 - e) The Planning Authority, the Department and Dublin City Archaeologist shall be furnished with a final archaeological report describing the results of the monitoring and any subsequent required archaeological investigative work/excavation required, following the completion of all archaeological work on site and any necessary post-excavation specialist analysis. All resulting and associated archaeological costs shall be borne by the developer.

The Area Committee as appropriate were informed of the initiation of the Part 8 planning process for the proposed development and the recommendation of the Planning Department at its meetings on the **19th April 2023** and **21st February 2024** respectively.

The project is being funded by The Culture, Recreation, Economic Services Department. The project's current indicative timeline for completion is the end of Q1 2025.

Accordingly, it is recommended that a decision be made by Elected Members of the Council to proceed with the proposed development.

This report is submitted to the City Council pursuant to Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).

Resolution:

That Dublin City Council notes the contents of Report No. 75/2024 and hereby approves the contents therein

Richard Shakespeare
Chief Executive

21st February 2024

Appendix A

Consultees and Third Party Submissions/Observations

Consultees

Irish Water, Colvill House, 24 - 26, Talbot Street, Dublin 1

National Transport Authority (NTA), Head of Planning and Data Analysis, Harcourt Lane, Dublin, D02 WT20

Archaeology - Archaeology/Heritage, Block 3, Floor 3, Civic Offices, Wood Quay, Dublin 8

Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Government Offices, Newtown Road, Wexford, Co. Wexford, Y35 AP90

Third Party Submissions:

1. John Bird o.b.o. Bellevue Apartments, Islandbridge OMC
2. Nial Ring
3. Dave Corry
4. Frank Tate
5. Tomás O'Madaoin
6. Andreas Buttimer
7. Carolyn Ingram
8. Gearoid Cox
9. Jude McHugh
10. Mags O'Brien
11. Marcin Odachowski
12. Megan Walsh

Submissions received in respect of the Part 8 Proposal

Negative	Positive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently the site location is an unspoilt rest area for curragh users. • Currently provides an amenity for teenagers and OAPs. • Area of unspoilt natural beauty/animal sanctuary treasured by the Draiocht Na Life group. • Pontoon generally detrimental to the site proposed. • Pontoon represents invasion to its inhabitants. • The delicate area should be protected based on proximity to the city. • Multiple bridges on river where only one boat can pass at a time during high tide hours. • Rowers veering towards bridges central arches (with backs turned) at risk. • Record of a collision between boats opposite the Guinness brewery. • No consideration given to the high speed rowing community and slow speed social users. • Very narrow sections of river between Heuston station and Sarah bridge with overgrowth that threatens safety. • Project must be done carefully. • The ecological impact must be considered on the island. • Lack of information on how the pontoon will be managed. • Lack of health and safety assessment Re: high performance rowing crews. • Lack of engagement with all river users. • Objection to the proposal to build a jetty on an island on island bridge. • Proposal goes against good conservation practice by removing vegetation essential to Biodiversity. • Species at risk are birds, Atlantic salmon. • Juvenile and adult salmon take refuge in the immediate area. • Species will be disturbed. • Disruption to natural habitat around the weir. • Disruption to wildlife, nesting birds and aquatic ecosystems. • Cormorants very active in the location. • Noise may disrupt wildlife habitats and interfere with animal behaviour. • Decline in biodiversity may impact swans herons and cormorants. • Introduction of eventual introduction of invasive species and people assoc with the pontoon. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draiocht Na Life are supportive of animation of the River Liffey. • Support for Liffey animation demonstrated by the attendance of Draiocht Na Life. • Safety and expanded access to the river. • Greater Safety for rowers. • Better use of the river. • Less congestion of the river. • Passive supervision of the weir, the island, and the garden and frontage of the Bellevue Apartments. • Greater interest and animation of the river. • Greater use of the river by fit rowers including members of Garda rowing club. • New tree planting.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative ecological impact. • Sensitive habitat for Perch, King fishers, nesting Swans, Sparrow hawks, Jays, Cormorats, Wood Pigeons, Herons, Ducks, Moorhens, Doves, Otters, Seals, Buntings, Finches, Wood Peckers, Teals and Bats. • People avoid the area during nesting season. • Boats may upset swan nesting. • Concerns about a seal spotted swimming in this section of the liffey. • Pontoon will be constructed through the ecologically sensitive area. • Totally devastating to the nesting grounds of the fauna. • DCC destroying ecosystem shows an alarming disregard for nature and biodiversity. • Habitat loss is a huge problem for Dublin wildlife. • Proposed pontoon location threatens the only natural habitat that exists below the weir accessible to wildlife and humans. • Many building projects have destroyed habitats. • Fish shelter under canopies of huge old trees. • Recently trees have fallen in storms preventing navigation. • Otters have made this their home. • Bats thrive in areas such as the island over bodies of water (now threatened). • Enough habitat loss occurs in Dublin to provide housing. • Longterm detrimental affects outweigh benefits of the pontoon. • The proposal must consider the impact of alterations to the riverbed. • Flow patterns could affect sediment transport, aquatic vegetation, ecological balance. • Pontoon construction requires alteration to the riverbank impact stability and integrity of landscape. • The pontoon will have a negative visual impact. • Wrong location/ resident against sports activity on the Liffey. • Construction methodology involved using barges to transport materials. • Erratic river flow presents an obstacle to this. • Fallen trees in river have obstructed barges. • Proposed pontoon aims to facilitate rowing from 90 mins to 4 hours daily (negative). 	
---	--

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A less invasive/ environmentally friendly approach would be to schedule use above the weir. • This would eliminate the need to construct the Pontoon. • Extending opening hours could improve accessibility to the flat non tidal part above the weir. • Construction will require dredging or potentially excavating to accommodate movement of materials. • Benefits of Pontoon does not justify costs. • Existing structure in place by Kayakers. • Destructive proposal to serve only a small group i.e. Kayakers. • DCC priorities are not balanced with protecting Irish nature and coexisting with it non-destructively. • Dublin needs long term focused Planning, not destructive approach to habitats. • The OMC concerned regarding the temporary loss of car parking near the rowing club. This would result in overspill into the local roads which have no footpaths. Can temporary parking with protection of vulnerable surfaces be provided for duration of construction. • The security aspects of the proposed planting on the island. Is it better to have low-level minimal planting across the island, or to plant the areas not required for boat access with species such as thorn or nettle? • Will there be an annual charge for use of the facility. If so, can there be a reduced fee for Bellevue Apartments residents? • Will access to the island pontoon by solely from the rover or will there be land access? • Will the land access be gated? • Can the OMC be given a Key to facilitate passive supervision and facilitate resident's use? • Concerns regarding use of the Sarah Court in Bellevue Apts by construction traffic. The traffic should be re-routed through the OPW car park/compound. • Can the contractor be confined to a clearly defined part of the island with penalties if this infringed? • Clarification of proposals for the control of invasive species. • The ecological survey were carried out during limited time period. The island are used by Kingfishers which are a protected species. A swan's nest at the location of the proposed pontoon was noted. a seal also fishes below the weir. These issues should be addressed and it 	
---	--

should be confined that no unnecessary silt would be released and that no percussive works are undertaken when the seal is observed to be fishing.

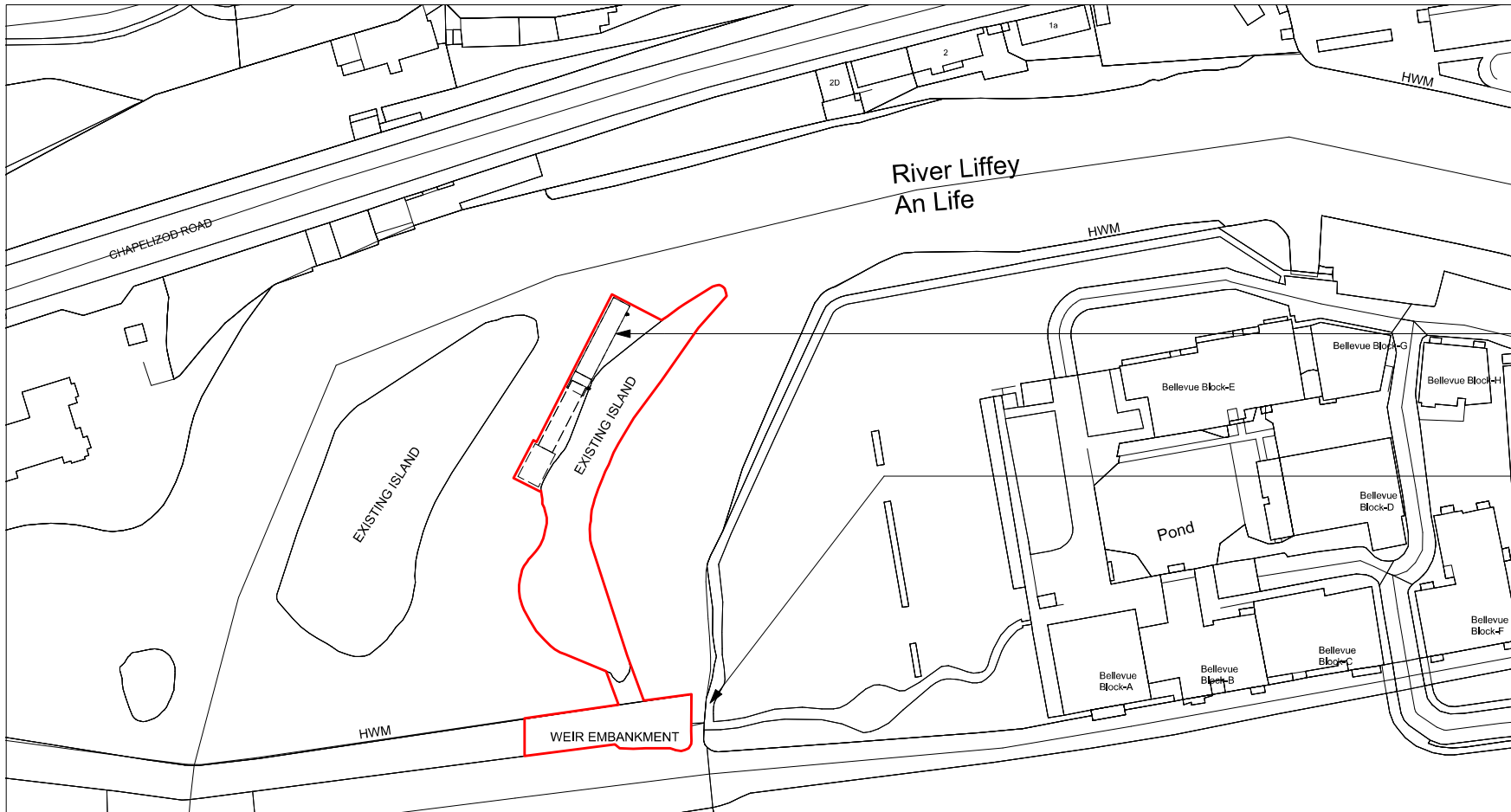
In March 2023 Cllr Cat O’Driscoll, Chair of the DCC Arts, Culture, Recreation & Leisure SPC held a workshop event at Mansion House entitled “Reimagining the Liffey”. Many stakeholders attended to contribute towards the reanimation of the Liffey. However, they were not contacted or asked for any input into this proposal which is part of a long terms strategy for the use of the river. On this basis, the proposal is contrary to Policy GI33 of the Dublin City development Plan 2022-2023 which is stated as follows:

New Development and Public Open Space along River Corridors To ensure that new development, in terms of siting and design, responds to the character, importance and setting of the city’s rivers where the context allows, and to require public open space which is to be provided as part of new development, to supplement riparian buffer zones so as to support the attainment of ‘good ecological status’ or higher for water bodies, flood management, the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem functions.

- Wrong location for the proposed pontoon. The site is an unspoilt habitat to kingfishers. Nesting swans, sparrow hawks, Jays, Cormorants, wood pigeons, herons, Ducks, Moorhens, Doves & Bats which are not mentioned in the environmental impact statement. Additional wildlife includes otters & seals (photo provided).
- Concerns regarding ecological impacts due to continual erosion – will be exacerbated due to the proposed intensification.
- No parking is proposed. The proposal to occupy one quarter of existing car park during construction will affect drop-off & collection times for Gael Scoil in se Chor – potential risk to children.
- No indication of security/policing of the development.
- No indication of intended users of the facility.
- The proposal does not comply with Part M of the Building Control regulations in terms of wheelchair users.
- As acknowledged in the application, there is a high risk of pollution to the river and the island due to pouring concrete. The proposed construction is extremely convoluted as it involves transporting

materials from the north bank of the river at the bridge requiring complex scheduling & management around high tides & water management.

- Cls.33 of the Archaeology report, the history fording point is closer than stated and therefore closer to the proposed development site.
- No W.C. facilities proposed.
- The proposal is not justifiable in terms of tax payer's money relative to the amount of people that would actually use it.
- There was no consultation with the residents on both sides of the riverbank or local school which are users of the existing amenity.
- The river below the weir is used by Currach Rowers from Poolbeg, individual kayakers, groups of paddle boarders, barge gatherings etc. the proposal would likely result in a risk of accidents and collisions along the river below the weir down to O'Connell Bridge.



Outline of Proposed Pontoon

Existing access to island by gate and bridge

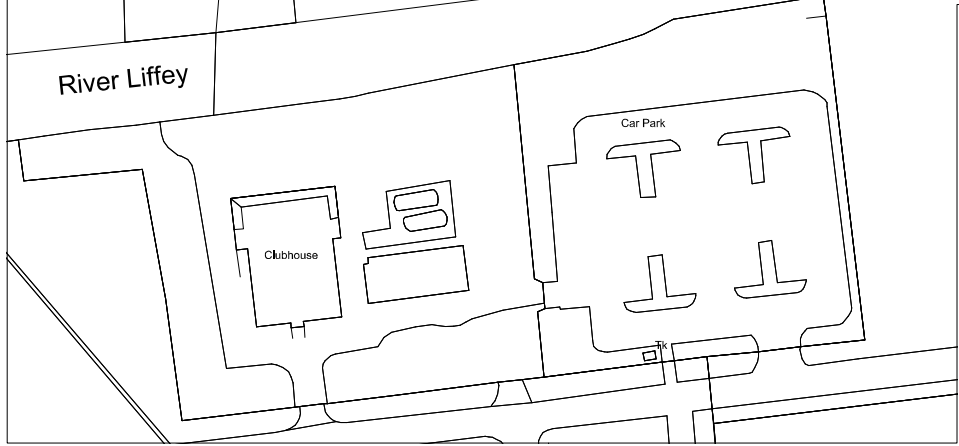
OSI Licence Number: 50267932

Clip Extent / Area of Interest (AOI):
 LLX,LLY= 709857.3669,732485.6835
 LRX,LRX= 714779.3669,732485.6835
 ULX,ULY= 709857.3669,736119.6835
 URX,URY= 714779.3669,736119.6835

Centre Point Coordinates:
 X,Y = 712318.3669,734302.6835

Reference Index: Map Series | Map Sheets
 1:1,000 | 3263-01
 1:1,000 | 3263-06

Data Extraction Date: 13-May-2022



1 Site Location Map
 Scale: 1:1000

0 10 20 30 40 M

Denotes extent of application site boundary

Site Area: 1761sqm

Use figured dimensions only. Do not scale drawings. Read in conjunction with specification and consultants drawings. Report any discrepancies in drawings to Architect before putting work in hand. Check all dimensions on site. This drawing is the copyright of Sean Harrington Architects, and may not be reproduced, in whole or part, without prior agreement.

REV	NOTES	DATE
1	Issued for Planning	29/05/22

SEÁN HARRINGTON ARCHITECTS

3rd Floor
 12/122 Copel Street
 Dublin 1, Ireland
 t 01 8733 422
 e info@sha.ie

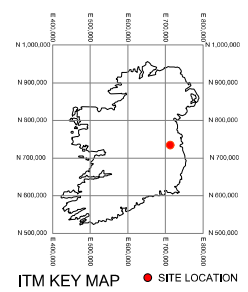
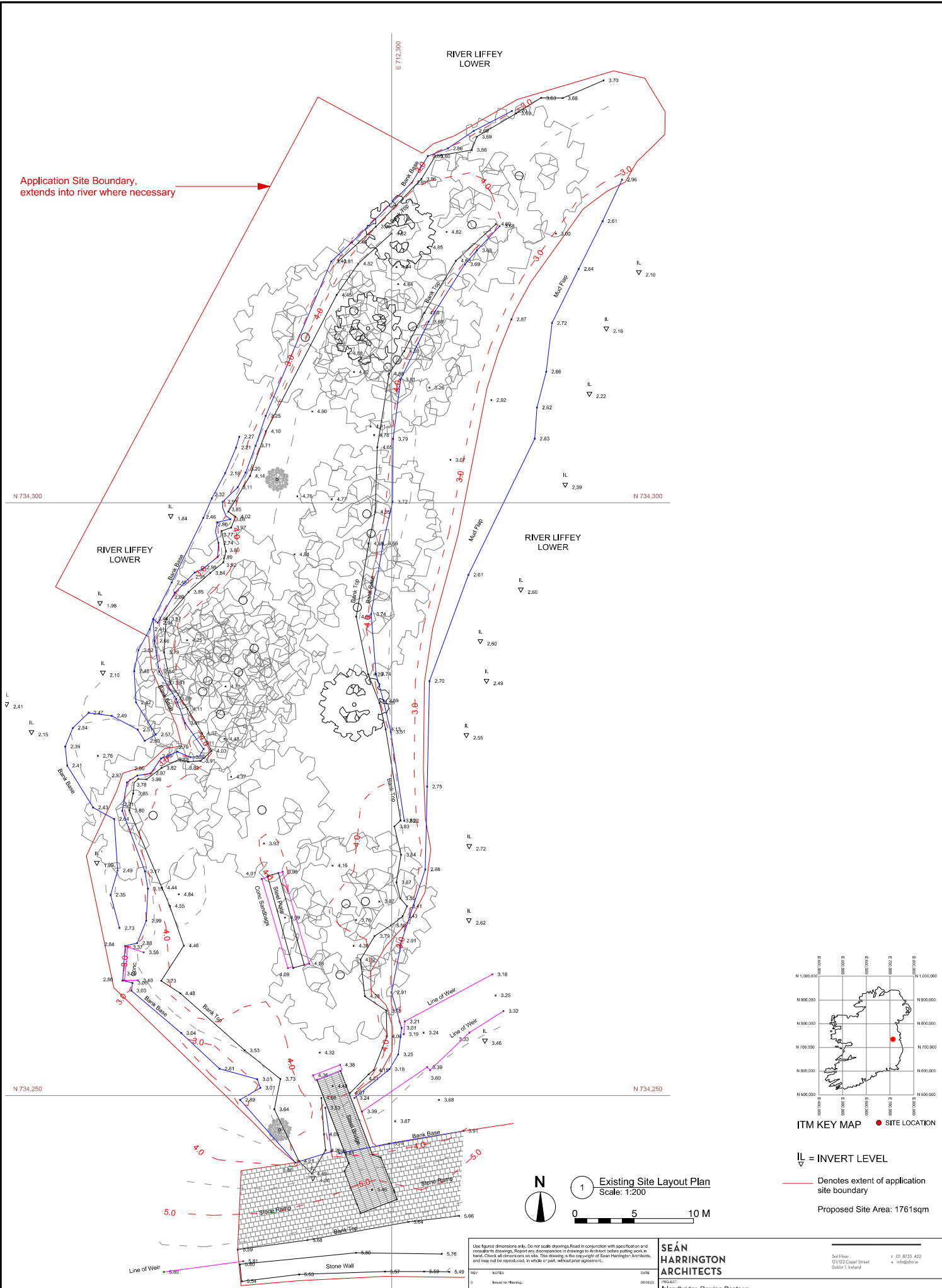
PROJECT:
Islandbridge Rowing Pontoon

CLIENT:
Dublin City Council

DRAWING TITLE:
Site Location Map

PROJECT STAGE: Planning	SCALE: 1:1000	DATE: DEC '22	Project - Orig - Vol - Level - Type - Role - No.	REV NO: 1
SUITABILITY CODE: S2	DRAWN BY: BC	CHECKED BY: SH	379RP-SHA-Z0-ZZ-DR-A-0001	

Application Site Boundary, extends into river where necessary



IL = INVERT LEVEL
 — Denotes extent of application site boundary
 Proposed Site Area: 1761sqm

1 Existing Site Layout Plan
 Scale: 1:200
 0 5 10 M

Use Scaled dimensions only. Do not scale drawings. Read in conjunction with specification and contract drawings. Report any discrepancies in drawings to Architect before putting work in hand. Check all dimensions on site. This drawing is the copyright of Sean Harrington Architects, and may not be reproduced, in whole or part, without prior agreement.

SEÁN HARRINGTON ARCHITECTS 3rd Floor 12/122 Chapel Street Dublin 1, Ireland T: 01 8733 422 E: info@sh.ie	
PROJECT: Islandbridge Rowing Pontoon Dublin City Council	
Existing Site Layout Plan	
PROJECT STAGE: Planning DESIGN CODE: S2	SCALE: 1:200 DESIGN BY: BC CHECKED BY: SH
DATE: 06/05/23	DATE: JUN '23 PROJECT NO.: 379RP-SHA-Z0-ZZ-DR-A-0002 REV. NO.: 0