
Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction to this Document

The following Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) has been prepared by Roughan & O'Donovan Consulting Engineers and a team of specialists on behalf of Wexford County Council to assess the development proposed for the site, as designed by Scott Tallon Walker Architects.

This EIAR is prepared for the Trinity Wharf Development, hereafter referred to as the 'proposed development', and comprises: "*a statement of the effects, if any, which proposed development, if carried out, would have on the environment*" (Draft Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports, (EPA, 2017)). It has been prepared in respect of the proposed development which is supported by the Trinity Wharf Wexford Masterplan, as designed by a multi-disciplinary team on behalf of Wexford County Council.

Wexford County Council as a local authority performs functions essential for the promotion of economic development in the county. Such functions have traditionally included the physical planning remit to make towns and counties more attractive places to live, work and invest, the capacity to directly invest in roads, water, recreation, enterprise, tourism, heritage and cultural assets. In 2014, as part of a wider reform process, this role was strengthened through the creation of Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) as offices within the 31 local authorities to provide enhanced resources to support start-ups and microenterprises in their areas.

In 2016, the economic development role played by local authorities was further expanded; the newly established Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) adopted Local Economic and Community Plans, which represent a coordinated approach to local community and economic development, led by the County and City Councils. Local authorities, working with the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation, are also coordinating the implementation of the Regional Action Plans for Jobs. As noted in an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) review of local development in Ireland (OECD, 2013), these reforms present Ireland with the opportunity to follow the path of many OECD countries in creating new environments for economic development.

Accordingly, Wexford County Council has embarked on an ambitious programme of economic development projects for County Wexford. A cornerstone of this strategy is the proposed Trinity Wharf Development. This project represents a commitment by Wexford County Council to revitalise, regenerate and facilitate the redevelopment of the core urban centre of Wexford Town for the benefit of the town's employees, residents and visitors. The primary objective of the Trinity Wharf Development is to position Wexford as a regionally attractive location for business, particularly financial services, and to increase sustainable employment opportunities within the region.

This EIAR for the proposed development is presented in three volumes; the standalone Non-Technical Summary as Volume 1, this Volume 2 contains the main text, and Volume 3 contains the associated figures. A separate Natura Impact Statement (NIS), which complements the EIAR and vice versa has also been prepared and is provided as a separate document to this EIAR. This EIAR forms part of the application for the proposed development which will be submitted to An Bord Pleanála for approval. The following text outlines the volume and chapter layout of this EIAR:

Volume 1: Non – Technical Summary

Volume 2: Main Text

- Chapter 1: Introduction
- Chapter 2: Need for the Proposed Development
- Chapter 3: Alternatives Considered
- Chapter 4: Description of the Proposed Development
- Chapter 5: Traffic Analysis
- Chapter 6: Population & Human Health
- Chapter 7: Biodiversity
- Chapter 8: Soils & Geology
- Chapter 9: Hydrogeology
- Chapter 10: Hydrology
- Chapter 11: Landscape & Visual Analysis
- Chapter 12: Noise & Vibration
- Chapter 13: Air Quality & Climate
- Chapter 14: Archaeological & Cultural Heritage
- Chapter 15: Architectural Heritage
- Chapter 16: Material Assets & Land
- Chapter 17: Interrelationships, Major Accidents and Cumulative Effects
- Chapter 18: Mitigation Measures

Volume 3: Figures

1.2 Overview

Proposed Development Overview

The proposed development includes a new sustainable urban quarter with a high-quality public realm, mix of modern office space, hotel accommodation, multi-storey car parking, a landmark cultural and events building and 58 residential units. The proposed development also includes the provision of a 64-berth marina and a new boardwalk linking Trinity Wharf with Paul Quay and the Crescent in Wexford Town. The mixed-use, urban quarter development proposed for the Trinity Wharf site will be a key part of the town's economic development and urban regeneration.

The existing brownfield site extends over 3.6 ha and is located adjacent to the Dublin to Rosslare railway line. The land is reclaimed and was formerly occupied by a number of industrial uses. The site is located in a desirable position, close to Wexford town centre, on the southern end of Wexford Quays and affords exceptional views across Wexford Harbour.

The Trinity Wharf Development will create employment opportunities and provide public amenities that will benefit the community in a sustainable way into the future. The proposed Trinity Wharf Development is located in the Electoral District (ED) of Wexford Urban No. 2 which is located on the south side of Wexford Town. The ED has a Pobal Maps Deprivation score of -11.29 while the average deprivation score for the county is -4.81. This area of Wexford Town is considered disadvantaged. The proposed development will build on the existing connections which this vibrant community already has with the sea, creating a contemporary public realm

experience by blending the traditional with the new. The strong community spirit and sense of place that exists within the community will be complemented by the proposed development, combining people and place in a new urban quarter. The proposed development, within the heart of Wexford Town, offers sustainable solutions that break the circle of social and spatial polarisation.

Client and Design Team

Wexford County Council, as the client, appointed Scott Tallon Walker as Project Team Lead, Architects and Masterplanners who have appointed Roughan & O'Donovan to undertake Engineering Consultancy Services including design, environmental assessment and preparation of the EIAR and NIS for the Trinity Wharf Development.

The project design, led by Scott Tallon Walker Architects, has been developed by a multidisciplinary team with further inputs from the following team members:

- IN2 – Mechanical and Electrical, Energy Strategy and Environmental Services;
- The Paul Hogarth Company – Landscape Architects;
- RPS Group – Marina Design; and
- Pederson Focus – Photomontages.

EIAR Study Team

Roughan & O'Donovan has led the preparation of this EIAR with the assistance of the Design Team members listed above and the following specialist environmental consultants, who have undertaken studies for the following environmental topics. Table 1.1 below outlines the experience and qualifications of the contributors.

Table 1.1 EIAR Authors

Topic	Specialist Contributors	Company	Qualifications	Experience (Years)
Chapters 1-4 Introduction, Background to the Proposed Development, Alternatives Considered and Description of the Proposed Development	Barry Corrigan	ROD	BSc, Dip EIA & SEA, MIEMA, CEnv	18
	Stephen Harper	ROD	MEng, CEng MIEI	10
	Mark Kilcullen	ROD	BE (Civil), MSc, CEng MIEI FCons EI	27
Traffic Analysis	John Ahern	ROD	BAI	7
	John Bell	ROD	BEng, MIEI, CEng	17
Population and Human Health	Frances O'Kelly	ROD	MSc, BSc, MIPI	12
Biodiversity	Patrick O'Shea	ROD	BA, MSc	6
	Owen O'Keefe	ROD	BSc (Hons) ACIEEM	3
Soils and Geology	Fintan Buggy	ROD	BSc, MSc Soil Mechanics, CEng, MICE, PE MIEI	36

Topic	Specialist Contributors	Company	Qualifications	Experience (Years)
	Karlo Martinovic	ROD	BE, MSc, PhD, CEng MIEI	8
Hydrology and Hydrogeology	Dr Patrick Morrissey	ROD	BA, BAI, MSc Env Eng; PGDip Stats; PhD Groundwater Hydrology MIEI	10
Landscape and Visual Analysis	Evelyn Sikora	Cunnane Stratton Reynolds	BA, MPlan	12
Photomontages	Jesper Pederson	Pederson Focus Ltd.	B. Eng.	20
Noise and Vibration	Gary Duffy	Enfonic	BEng, MIOA	30
Air Quality and Climate	Ciara Nolan	AWN Consulting Ltd.	BSc, MSc	2
Archaeological, Architectural and Cultural Heritage	Aislinn Collins	CRDS Ltd.	BA, MA, PGDip, DipEIAMgmt	18
Underwater Archaeology	Dr Niall Brady	ADCO Ltd.	BA, MA, PhD Medieval Studies	20
Material Assets and Land	Barry Corrigan	ROD	BSc Hons, Dip EIA	18
Interrelationships, Major Accidents and Cumulative Effects	Barry Corrigan	ROD	BSc Hons, Dip EIA	18
Mitigation Measures	Barry Corrigan	ROD	BSc Hons, Dip EIA	18

1.3 Environmental Impact Assessment Legislation

1.3.1 Introduction

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is defined by Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU as follows:

“Environmental Impact Assessment” means a process consisting of:

- (i) *the preparation of an environmental impact assessment report by the developer, as referred to in Article 5(1) and (2);*
- (ii) *the carrying out of consultations as referred to in Article 6 and, where relevant, Article 7;*
- (iii) *the examination by the competent authority of the information presented in the environmental impact assessment report and any supplementary information provided, where necessary, by the developer in accordance with Article 5(3), and any relevant information received through the consultations under Articles 6 and 7;*
- (iv) *the reasoned conclusion by the competent authority on the significant effects of the project on the environment, taking into account the results of the examination referred to in point (iii) and, where appropriate, its own supplementary examination; and*

(v) the integration of the competent authority's reasoned conclusion into any of the decisions referred to in Article 8a."

1.3.2 Environmental Impact Assessment

EIA requirements derive from Council Directive 85/337/EEC (as amended by Directives 97/11/EC, 2003/35/EC and 2009/31/EC) and as codified and replaced by Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and the Council on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment. Directive 2011/92/EU has since been amended by Directive 2014/52/EU of the European Parliament.

The requirements of these directives have been transposed into Irish law through the Planning and Development Acts (2000 – 2018), the Regulations made under the European Communities Act (1972) including the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1989 – 2006, the European Union (Environmental Impact Assessment and Habitats) Regulations 2011 and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations) 2011. Directive 2014/52/EU of the European Parliament has recently been transposed into Irish law through the European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 (S.I. No. 296 of 2018).

1.3.3 Requirement for EIA

Whilst applications for Local Authority Development are typically made under Section 175 of the Planning and Development Act, this planning application is being made under Section 226 of the Planning and Development Act 2018 as the proposed development will be wholly or partially on the foreshore whilst Section 175 relates to development on land.

"226.—(1) Where development is proposed to be carried out wholly or partly on the foreshore—

- (a) by a local authority that is a planning authority, whether in its capacity as a planning authority or otherwise, or*
- (b) by some other person on behalf of, or jointly or in partnership with, a local authority that is a planning authority, pursuant to an agreement entered into by that local authority whether in its capacity as a planning authority or otherwise, (hereafter in this section referred to as "proposed development"), the local authority concerned shall apply to the Board for approval of the proposed development."*

The proposed development comprises a total area of 5.47 ha including the existing 3.6 ha brownfield site and the area required for the marina, boardwalk, access road and junction to be provided on Trinity Street. The proposed development will involve the construction of a boardwalk, marina and sea wall within the foreshore and therefore mandatorily requires the preparation and submission of an EIAR to the competent authority.

Wexford County Council is therefore submitting an EIAR and NIS to allow An Bord Pleanála as the Competent Authority to carry out the EIA and Appropriate Assessment (AA) for the proposed Trinity Wharf Development.

1.4 Scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report

The preparation of an EIAR for a proposed development is a systematic and iterative process in which the collation and assessment of environmental data and predicted impacts are essentially linked to the development of the design. Chapter 3 of this EIAR summarises the processes that led to the development of the proposal that is described in Chapter 4. Once the preferred design was identified, the process of scoping this EIAR was then followed with an informal Scoping Document which was issued to a number of statutory and non-statutory consultees. Further scoping and consultation were undertaken with bodies, specifically in relation to biodiversity and the Natura 2000 sites. Any responses received have been considered by the project team and addressed in the assessments and design where possible and as appropriate.

1.5 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Guidelines

The following EPA guidelines have informed the EIA process:

- Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Statements, EPA, 2002; and
- Advice notes on Current Practice (in the preparation of Environmental Impact Statements), EPA, 2003.

The following draft EPA guidelines have also been consulted:

- Draft Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports, EPA, August 2017; and
- Draft Advice Notes for Preparing Environmental Impact Statements, EPA, September 2015.

1.6 Non-Statutory Public Consultation Events

A public consultation event was held on the 05th September 2018 from 4pm to 8pm in the Talbot Hotel, Wexford Town where the proposed plans for the development of Trinity Wharf were displayed to the public by members of Wexford County Council and the design team. The consultation event was advertised in the local Wexford People Newspaper on 29th August and 4th September 2018 and information leaflets were created and presented to the attendees at the event. The information presented on display was also made available at the County Hall, in addition to online at www.wexfordcoco.ie until the 14th September for interested parties who could not attend the consultation event.

The purpose of the Public Consultation was as follows:

- To inform the public and local community of the Trinity Wharf Development being planned by Wexford County Council;
- To obtain the opinion of the general public in relation to the proposed development and to the relative importance of several environmental, engineering and economic factors that may influence its development;
- To obtain local knowledge that would help in the identification of possible constraints and to give the community an opportunity to be involved in the early stages of the proposed development; and
- To identify any alternative design recommendations suggested by the existing residents and locals.

Large scale drawings of the development were on display showing the extent of the development and members of the design team were present to explain the information presented, discuss the development with the public and gain as much local knowledge as possible.

The public were also invited to submit observations on the design and to provide any additional thoughts and comments they may have regarding the project. Feedback was invited via feedback forms on the day of the consultation and by email, letter or online form up until the 14th September 2018.

A total of 34 submissions were received from the general public during this period, the majority of which were positive. The main concerns raised at the consultation event and in subsequent written submissions from the public are summarised below:

- Concern that the development will cause further traffic congestion in the area;
- Requirement for further consideration with respect to the cultural centre, including what this will be used for;
- Requirement for further consideration in the marina design in terms of channel depth and provision of a slipway;
- Parking concerns for local residents;
- Concern that the scale of the development will be too large;
- Noise, dust and anti-social behaviour as a result of the development; and
- Consideration be given to the provision of sheltered accommodation for elderly and disabled persons as part of the proposed development.

The full list of responses received as a result of the Public Consultation for the proposed development fed into the design of the Trinity Wharf Development and the alternatives assessed. The concerns raised have been assessed throughout the development of the EIAR and have been incorporated into assessments and designs where possible.

1.7 Difficulties Encountered

No significant difficulties have been encountered in compiling the required information to complete this EIAR.