
Chapter 11: Landscape & Visual Analysis

Chapter 11

Landscape and Visual Analysis

11.1 Introduction

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) was prepared by Evelyn Sikora of Cunnane Stratton Reynolds.

The study was informed by a desktop study and a survey of the site and receiving environment in September 2018. The assessment is in accordance with the methodology prescribed in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd edition, 2013 (GLVIA) published by the UK Landscape Institute and the Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment.

The report identifies and discusses the landscape and visual constraints and effects in relation to the proposed development at Trinity Wharf, in Wexford Town.

11.2 Methodology

Ireland is a signatory to the European Landscape Convention (ELC). The ELC defines landscape as 'an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors'. This definition is important in that it expands beyond the idea that landscape is only a matter of aesthetics and visual amenity. It encourages a focus on landscape as a resource in its own right - a shared resource providing a complex range of cultural, environmental and economic benefits to individuals and society.

As a cultural resource, the landscape functions as the setting for our day-to-day lives, also providing opportunities for recreation and aesthetic enjoyment and inspiration. It contributes to the sense of place experienced by individuals and communities and provides a link to the past as a record of historic socio-economic and environmental conditions. As an environmental resource, the landscape provides habitat for fauna and flora. It receives, stores, conveys and cleans water, and vegetation in the landscape stores carbon and produces oxygen. As an economic resource, the landscape provides the raw materials and space for the production of food, materials (e.g. timber, aggregates) and energy (e.g. carbon-based fuels, wind, solar), living space and areas for recreation and tourism activities.

Forces for Landscape Change

Landscape is not unchanging. Many different pressures have progressively altered familiar landscapes over time and will continue to do so in the future, creating new landscapes. For example, within the receiving environment, the environs of the proposed development have altered over the last thousand years, from wilderness to agriculture and settlement.

Many of the drivers for change arise from the requirement for development to meet the needs of a growing population and economy. The concept of sustainable development recognises that change must and will occur to meet the needs of the present, but that it should not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs. This involves finding an appropriate balance between economic, social and environmental forces and values.

The reversibility of change is an important consideration. If change must occur to meet a current need, can it be reversed to return the resource (in this case, the landscape) to its previous state to allow for development or management for future needs.

Climate change is one of the major factors likely to bring about future change in the landscape, and it is accepted to be the most serious long-term threat to the natural environment, as well as economic activity (particularly primary production) and society. The need for climate change mitigation and adaptation, which includes the management of water and more extreme weather and rainfall patterns, is part of this.

Guidance

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of and the effects of change resulting from development on both the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity.

The methodology for assessment of the landscape and visual effects is informed by the following key guidance documents, namely:

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition 2013, published by the UK Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (hereafter referred to as the GLVIA).

References are also made to the '*Landscape and Landscape Assessment – Consultation Draft of Guidelines for Planning Authorities*' document, published in 2000 by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

Use of the Term 'Effect' vs 'Impact'

The GLVIA advises that the terms 'impact' and 'effect' should be clearly distinguished and consistently used in the preparation of an LVIA.

'*Impact*' is defined as the action being taken. In the case of the proposed works, the impact would include the construction of the proposed development.

'*Effect*' is defined as the change or changes resulting from those actions, e.g. a change in landscape character, or changes to the composition, character and quality of views in the receiving environment. This report focusses on these effects.

Assessment of Both 'Landscape' and 'Visual' Effects

Another key distinction to make in a LVIA is that between landscape effects and the visual effects of development.

'Landscape' results from the interplay between the physical, natural and cultural components of our surroundings. Different combinations of these elements and their spatial distribution create the distinctive character of landscapes in different places. 'Landscape character assessment' is the method used in LVIA to describe landscape, and by which to understand the potential effects of a development on the landscape as 'a resource'. Character is not just about the physical elements and features that make up a landscape, but also embraces the aesthetic, perceptual and experiential aspects of landscape that make a place distinctive.

Views and 'visual amenity' refer to the interrelationship between people and the landscape. The GLVIA prescribes that effects on views and visual amenity should be assessed separately from landscape, although the two topics are inherently linked.

Visual assessment is concerned with changes that arise in the composition of available views, the response of people to these changes and the overall effects on the area's visual amenity.

The assessment of landscape and visual effects included a desktop study, review of the proposed development drawings and visualisations, and a number of site visits which were carried out in September 2018.

Methodology for Landscape Assessment

In Section 11.5.2 of this report the landscape effects of the development are assessed. Landscape impact assessment considers the likely nature and scale of changes to the main landscape elements and characteristics, and the consequential effect on landscape character and value. Existing trends of change in the landscape are taken into account. The potential landscape effect is assessed based on measurement of the landscape sensitivity against the magnitude of change which would result from the development.

Sensitivity of the Landscape Resource

Landscape Sensitivity: Landscape sensitivity is a function of its land use, landscape patterns and scale, visual enclosure and distribution of visual receptors, scope for mitigation, and the value placed on the landscape. It also relates to the nature and scale of development proposed. It includes consideration of landscape values as well as the susceptibility of the landscape to the proposed change.

Landscape values can be identified by the presence of landscape designations or policies which indicate particular values, either on a national or local level. In addition, a number of criteria are used to assess the value of a landscape. These are described further in Section 11.3 below.

Landscape susceptibility is defined in the GLVIA as *the ability of the landscape receptor to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline scenario and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies.*

Susceptibility also relates to the type of development – a landscape may be highly susceptible to certain types of development but have a low susceptibility to other types of development.

Sensitivity is therefore a combination of Landscape value and Susceptibility. Landscape Values are discussed in Section 11.3, while Landscape Susceptibility is discussed in Section 11.4.

For the purpose of assessment, five categories are used to classify the landscape sensitivity of the receiving environment as detailed in Table 11.1.

Table 11.1 Categories of Landscape Sensitivity

Sensitivity	Description
Very High	Areas where the landscape exhibits a very strong, positive character with valued elements, features and characteristics that combine to give an experience of unity, richness and harmony. The character of the landscape is such that its capacity for accommodating change in the form of development is very low. These attributes are recognised in landscape policy or designations as being of national or international value and the principle management objective for the area is protection of the existing character from change.
High	Areas where the landscape exhibits strong, positive character with valued elements, features and characteristics. The character of the landscape is such that it has limited/low capacity for accommodating change in the form of development. These attributes are recognised in landscape policy or designations as being of national, regional or county value and the principle management objective for the area is conservation of the existing character.
Medium	Areas where the landscape has certain valued elements, features or characteristics but where the character is mixed or not particularly strong. The character of the landscape is such that there is some capacity for change in the form of development. These areas may be recognised in landscape policy at local or county level and the principle management objective may be to consolidate landscape character or facilitate appropriate, necessary change
Low	Areas where the landscape has few valued elements, features or characteristics and the character is weak. The character of the landscape is such that it has capacity for change; where development would make no significant change or would make a positive change. Such landscapes are generally unrecognised in policy and where the principle management objective is to facilitate change through development, repair, restoration or enhancement.
Negligible	Areas where the landscape exhibits negative character, with no valued elements, features or characteristics. The character of the landscape is such that its capacity for accommodating change is high; where development would make no significant change or would make a positive change. Such landscapes include derelict industrial lands or extraction sites, as well as sites or areas that are designated for a particular type of development. The principle management objective for the area is to facilitate change in the landscape through development, repair or restoration.

Magnitude of Landscape Change: The magnitude of change is a factor of the scale, extent and degree of change imposed on the landscape with reference to its key elements, features and characteristics (also known as 'landscape receptors'). Five categories are used to classify magnitude of landscape change as per Table 11.2.

Table 11.2 Magnitude of Landscape Change

Magnitude of Change	Description
Very High	Change that is large in extent, resulting in the loss of or major alteration to key elements, features or characteristics of the landscape (i.e. landscape receptors), and/or introduction of large elements considered totally uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in fundamental change in the character of the landscape with loss of landscape quality and perceived value.

Magnitude of Change	Description
High	Change that is moderate to large in extent, resulting in major alteration or compromise of important landscape receptors, and/or introduction of large elements considered uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in change to the character of the landscape with loss of landscape quality and perceived value.
Medium	Change that is moderate in extent, resulting in partial loss or alteration of landscape receptors, and/or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily substantially uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in change to the character of the landscape but not necessarily reduction in landscape quality and perceived value.
Low	Change that is moderate or limited in scale, resulting in minor alteration of landscape receptors, and/or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in minor change to the character of the landscape and no reduction in landscape quality and perceived value.
Negligible	Change that is limited in scale, resulting in no alteration to landscape receptors, and/or introduction of elements that are characteristic of the context. Such development results in no change to the landscape character, quality or perceived value.

Significance of Effects

In order to classify the significance of effects, the predicted magnitude of change is measured against the sensitivity of the landscape/viewpoint, using the following guide:

Table 11.3 Significance of Effects

		Sensitivity of the Landscape Resource				
		Very High	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
Magnitude of Change	Very High	Profound	Profound-Very Significant	Very Significant-Significant	Moderate	Slight
	High	Profound-Very Significant	Very Significant	Significant	Moderate-Slight	Slight-Not Significant
	Medium	Very Significant-Significant	Significant	Moderate	Slight	Not Significant
	Low	Moderate	Moderate-Slight	Slight	Not significant	Imperceptible
	Negligible	Slight	Slight-Not Significant	Not significant	Imperceptible	Imperceptible

The matrix above is used *as a guide only*. The assessor also uses professional judgement informed by their expertise, experience and common sense, to arrive at a classification of significance that is reasonable and justifiable.

Landscape effects are also classified as positive, neutral or negative/adverse (see definitions under Quality and Timescale below). Development has the potential to improve the environment as well as damage it. In certain situations, there might be policy encouraging a type of change in the landscape, and if a development achieves

the objective of the policy the resulting effect might be positive, even if the landscape character is profoundly changed.

There are seven classifications of significance, namely: (1) imperceptible, (2) not significant, (3) slight, (4) moderate, (5) significant, (6) very significant, (7) profound.

Methodology for Visual Assessment

In Section 11.5.3 of this report the visual effects of the development are assessed. Visual assessment considers the changes to the composition character of views, the value of the views, and the visual amenity experienced by visual receptors (groups of people). The assessment is made for a number of viewpoints selected to represent the range of visual receptors in the receiving environment. The significance of the visual effects experienced at these locations is assessed by measuring the visual receptor sensitivity against the magnitude of change to the view resulting from the development.

Sensitivity of the Viewpoint/Visual Receptor

Visual receptor sensitivity is a function of two main considerations:

- *Susceptibility of the visual receptor to change.* This depends on the occupation or activity of the people experiencing the view, and the extent to which their attention or interest is focussed on the views or visual amenity they experience at that location.

Visual receptors most susceptible to change include residents at home, people engaged in outdoor recreation focused on the landscape (e.g. trail users), and visitors to heritage or other attractions and places of community congregation where the setting contributes to the experience.

Visual receptors less susceptible to change include travellers on road, rail and other transport routes (unless on recognised scenic routes which would be more susceptible), people engaged in outdoor recreation or sports where the surrounding landscape does not influence the experience, and people in their place of work or shopping where the setting does not influence their experience.

- *Value attached to the view.* This depends to a large extent on the subjective opinion of the visual receptor but also on factors such as policy and designations (e.g. scenic routes, protected views), or the view or setting being associated with a heritage asset, visitor attraction or having some other cultural status (e.g. by appearing in arts).

Visual receptor susceptibility and value of the viewpoints which are assessed, are discussed further in Section 11.5. For the purpose of assessment, five categories are used to classify a viewpoint's sensitivity:

Table 11.4 Categories of Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Sensitivity	Description
Very High	Iconic viewpoints - towards or from a landscape feature or area - that are recognised in policy or otherwise designated as being of national value. The composition, character and quality of the view are such that its capacity for accommodating change in the form of development is very low. The principle management objective for the view is its protection from change.

Sensitivity	Description
High	Viewpoints that that are recognised in policy or otherwise designated as being of value, or viewpoints that are highly valued by people that experience them regularly (such as views from houses or outdoor recreation features focussed on the landscape). The composition, character and quality of the view may be such that its capacity for accommodating compositional change in the form of development may or may not be low. The principle management objective for the view is its protection from change that reduces visual amenity.
Medium	Viewpoints representing people travelling through or past the affected landscape in cars or on public transport, i.e. viewing but not focused on the landscape.
Low	Viewpoints reflecting people involved in activities not focused on the landscape e.g. people at their place of work or engaged in similar activities such as shopping, etc. The view may present an attractive backdrop to these activities but is not regarded as an important element of these activities.
Negligible	Viewpoints reflecting people involved in activities not focused on the landscape e.g. people at their place of work or engaged in similar activities such as shopping where the view has no relevance or is of poor quality.

Magnitude of Change to the View

Classification of the magnitude of change takes into account the size or scale of the intrusion of development into the view (relative to the other elements and features in the composition, i.e. its relative visual dominance), the degree to which it contrasts or integrates with the other elements and the general character of the view, and the way in which the change will be experienced (e.g. in full view, partial or peripheral, or glimpses). It also takes into account the geographical extent of the change, the duration and the reversibility of the visual effects.

Five categories are used to classify magnitude of change to a view:

Table 11.5 Categories of Visual Change

Magnitude of Change	Description
Very High	Full or extensive intrusion of the development in the view, or partial intrusion that obstructs valued features or characteristics, or introduction of elements that are completely out of character in the context, to the extent that the development becomes the dominant the composition and defines the character of the view and the visual amenity
High	Extensive intrusion of the development in the view, or partial intrusion that obstructs valued features, or introduction of elements that may be considered uncharacteristic in the context, to the extent that the development becomes co-dominant with other elements in the composition and affects the character of the view and the visual amenity.
Medium	Partial intrusion of the development in the view, or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in change to the composition but not necessarily the character of the view or the visual amenity
Low	Minor intrusion of the development into the view, or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in minor alteration to the composition and character of the view but no change to visual amenity
Negligible	Barely discernible intrusion of the development into the view, or introduction of elements that are characteristic in the context, resulting in slight change to the composition of the view and no change in visual amenity.

Significance of Visual Effects

As for landscape effects, in order to classify the importance of visual effects, the magnitude of change to the view is measured against the sensitivity of the viewpoint. The seven categories as set out by the EPA (2017) are used to describe the significance of the effect.

Visual effects are also classified as positive, neutral or negative. This is an inherently subjective exercise. Visual receptors' attitudes to development of various types varies and this affects their perception of the visual effects of development.

Quality and Timescale

The predicted impacts are also classified as beneficial, neutral or adverse. This is not an absolute exercise; in particular, visual receptors' attitudes to development, and thus their response to the impact of a development, will vary. However, the methodology applied is designed to provide robust justification for the conclusions drawn. These qualitative impacts/effects are defined as:

- Adverse – Scheme at variance with landform, scale, pattern. Would degrade, diminish or destroy the integrity of valued features, elements or their setting or cause the quality of the landscape(townscape)/view to be diminished;
- Neutral – Scheme complements the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape(townscape)/view and maintains landscape quality;
- Beneficial – improves landscape(townscape)/view quality and character, fits with the scale, landform and pattern and enables the restoration of valued characteristic features or repairs / removes damage caused by existing land uses.

Impacts/effects are also categorised according to their longevity or timescale:

- Temporary – Lasting for one year or less;
- Short Term – Lasting one to seven years;
- Medium Term – Lasting seven to fifteen years;
- Long Term – Lasting fifteen years to sixty years;
- Permanent – Lasting over sixty years.

A statement is made as to the appropriateness of the proposed development based on the combined assessment of the predicted landscape and visual effects. This methodology, in accordance with the various guidelines for LVIA, results in a conclusion as to the appropriateness of the proposed development based on objective assessment of its likely landscape and visual impacts.

11.3 Study Area

The study area for both landscape and visual effects was determined through desktop study and site visits. A site visit was carried out in September 2018. The study area for visual effects tends to be more extensive than for landscape effects, as visual effects can occur at some distances. While the majority of the visual effects will be apparent in close proximity to the site, and the main landscape effects also occurring around the site, there are potential wider landscape and visual effects which are taken into account also.

In this instance, the landscape effects of the proposed development include landscape effects in the vicinity of the site in Wexford Town, but also consideration of the wider

landscape character of the Coastal Landscape. With regard to visual effects, the study area is relatively extensive as the assessment of visual effects on receptors at Raven Point and Rosslare Point were included. Therefore, the Study Area, which is relatively extensive, and takes in much of Wexford Harbour, is illustrated below. However, the area closer to the site which is described in some more detail, is shown in by the smaller ellipse, in Plate 11.1 below



Plate 11.1 Landscape and Visual Study Area

11.3.1 Relationship to other assessments

The Landscape and Visual Assessment contains references to the historic character of the surrounds of Wexford Town and notes the presence of certain structures such as the Town Walls, and some buildings and structures which are valued such as those indicated on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) or part of an Architectural Conservation Area. These contribute to the character of the area and townscape and serve to indicate that buildings, structures or areas are valued.

The assessment of landscape and visual effects may include references, where appropriate, to the historic features, especially if in the context of their character or as a location for a photomontage, and views to or from historic areas may be included.

However, the effects of the development on these historic structures, and on their setting, are not directly assessed in the LVIA but are assessed in the Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Chapter (Chapter 14) and the Architectural Heritage, (Chapter 15).

11.4 Description of Receiving Environment

This section describes both the policy context of the proposed development site, as well as the character of the landscape. This section also identifies potential visual receptors, as well as the extent of likely visibility of the proposed development.

11.4.1 Landscape Policy Context

The Trinity Wharf site lies in Wexford Town, along the waterfront. Therefore, the following section includes policies and objectives from the Wexford County Development Plan 2013-2019 (hereafter referred as the Plan) as well as the Wexford Town and Environs Plan (hereafter referred to as the TEP).

Wexford County Development Plan 2013-2019

Landscape Character Assessment

The Plan includes reference to the Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) for County Wexford, which was prepared for the 2007-2013 Plan. The LCA is provided as Appendix 3 to the current Plan. The LCA is a relatively broad level assessment and divides the County into four main landscape types or units – Uplands, Lowlands, River Valleys and Coastal areas. Areas which are deemed Landscapes of Greater Sensitivity are also indicated.

Plate 11.2 below shows Map 13: Landscape Character Units from the Development Plan, with the site location indicated. The site of the proposed development lies in the Coastal Area. These are described in the LCA as areas which are similar in characteristics to the Lowlands but have more scenic appearance and is described as very sensitive to development. The Plan describes long straight beaches backed by low cliffs and sand dunes and dunes as characteristic of Coastal areas, and notes that these are punctuated by promontories and slob (which lie north and south of Wexford Harbour). A number of settlements including Wexford, Rosslare Strand and Rosslare Harbour lie within the Coastal area. The Plan notes that parts of the coast are considered sensitive to development.

Landscapes of Greater Sensitivity

The site is not located within a Landscape of Greater Sensitivity. The nearest Landscapes of Greater Sensitivity are located at Wexford Harbour, The Raven nature reserve, The Wexford Slob and Rosslare Point. Several of these are publicly accessible locations and are included in the list of sensitive visual receptors.

These areas also represent features in the landscape and seascape which have the most visual interest and prominence, and which are considered generally more sensitive to development. The Plan also notes that many of these landscapes have profound historical, socio-cultural and/or religious interest.

The Plan notes that the Council will assess the visual impact of developments within these areas, or in the vicinity of these boundaries, on the Landscapes of Greater Sensitivity. The site of the proposed development is not within or near a boundary, and the nearest landscape so designated is approximately 2.8km from the site. The nearest publicly accessible point is approximately 4.2km, and potential impacts on a number of these Landscapes are considered in Section 11.5.

It should however be noted that as set out in Section 11.2 above, the GLVIA guidelines emphasis that landscape sensitivity is also related to the type of development, and not only the type of landscape.

Plate 11.2 below shows the extract from the Development Plan:



Plate 11.2 Site and Landscape Character (Wexford CDP 2013-2019)

The Plan contains a number of policies and objectives relating to landscape character, landscape sensitivity and development within the landscape. Those relevant are as follows:

Objective L04: *To require all developments to be appropriate in scale and sited, designed and landscaped having regard to their setting in the landscape so as to ensure that any potential adverse visual impacts are minimised.*

Objectives L05: *To prohibit developments which are likely to have significant adverse visual impacts, either individually or cumulatively, on the character of the Uplands, River Valley or Coastal landscape or a Landscape of Greater Sensitivity and where there is no overriding need for the development to be in that particular location.*

Objective L06: *To ensure that, where an overriding need is demonstrated for a particular development in an Upland, River Valley or Coastal landscape unit or on or in the vicinity of a Landscape of Greater Sensitivity, careful consideration is given to site selection. The development should be appropriate in scale and be sited, designed and landscaped in a manner which minimises potential adverse impacts on the subject landscape and will be required to comply with all normal planning and environmental criteria and the development management standards contained in Chapter 18.*

Objective L07: *To encourage appropriate development which would enhance an existing degraded landscape, and/or which would enhance and introduce views to or from a Landscape of Greater Sensitivity from public viewpoints, subject to compliance with all normal planning and environmental criteria and the development management standards contained in Chapter 18.*

Objective L09: *To require developments to be sited, designed and landscaped in manner which has regard to the site-specific characteristics of the natural and built landscape for example, developments should be sited, designed and landscaped to minimise loss of natural features such as mature trees and hedging and built features.*

Objective TM15: *To protect the views and vistas from waterways from inappropriate development which would detract from the amenity of the waterways.*

Green Infrastructure:

Section 14.3 of the Plan notes the intention of the Council to prepare a Green Infrastructure Strategy for Wexford, and there are a number of relevant policies and objectives, which are as follows:

- **Objective GI01:** *To ensure the protection, enhancement and maintenance of the natural environment and recognise the economic, social, environmental and physical value of green spaces through the integration of Green Infrastructure planning and development in the planning process.*
- **Objective GI02:** *To develop and implement a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the county within the lifetime of the Plan in consultation with adjoining local authorities, key stakeholders and the public, subject to compliance with Articles 6 and 10 of the Habitats Directive. The Strategy will integrate policies and objectives under a number of headings including; natural heritage, parks and open spaces, built heritage and archaeology, water management, flooding and climate change allowing for a strategic approach to green space planning in the County.*
- **Objective GI04:** *To ensure the principles of Green Infrastructure and the County Green Infrastructure Strategy are used to inform the development management process in terms of design and layout of new residential schemes, business and industrial developments and other relevant projects, for example, through the integration of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) into the overall site concept and layout.*

Views and Prospects

There are no specific references to protected views in the Plan, but there are general references to views to and from waterways in Objective TM15 above.

Architectural Guidance

Section 17.3 of the Plan includes some detailed guidance in terms of design, scale, form and profile, while 17.4 contains guidance in relation to landmark buildings. Due to the nature of the development and the prominent waterfront location in Wexford town, it is considered the following aspects of guidance are relevant:

- *For buildings at prominent sites, for example corner sites, end of streets or closing off vistas, it may be appropriate to increase building height to provide a greater emphasis on the building, but there will also be a greater expectation of design quality and architectural treatment. Corner sites should equally address both street frontages.*
- *A landmark building must make a positive contribution to the appearance and activity of the streetscape.*
- *Landmark buildings should aid in the permeability of their context.*
- *Landmark buildings can better integrate with their surrounds by providing internal or external spaces for public access such as parks, cafes, shops and thoroughfares.*
- *Particular attention must be paid to the impact that a landmark building may have upon adjacent heritage sites or areas of special urban character.*
- *The impact that a landmark building may have upon natural features, such as waterways or landscapes, or public spaces is also an important consideration.*

Wexford Town and Environs Plan 2009-2015 (as extended to 2019)

The Wexford TEP outlines a general overview of the town and its context. It describes Wexford town's significant agricultural hinterland and notes the scenic quality of the coastal landscape in which the town is set. The Plan mentions these aspects of the town and environs, which also function as tourist attractions, including the Raven nature reserve, Curracloe Beach, and Wexford Harbour itself and the town walls.

The urban form is also described in the town, and in particular the striking setting of the town, which is in the Slaney estuary, which is itself an important part of the character of the town. A bridge connects the town centre with the small settlement of Ferrybank, on the opposite bank. A bridge also connects the town with the area of Ferrycarrig to the north.

The town originates where the Slaney meets the sea, and the medieval origins of the town are evident in the central spine from Main Street which runs north - south, with narrow lanes leading off this. The Plan notes that this is an attractive scale for the pedestrian with small scale plots, while it describes the waterfront area, just a short distance to the east, as an area with larger scale plots, describing it as a 'service edge' to the town centre.

The Plan also notes that the form of the town is relatively compact but there is noticeable development on the agricultural lands between the town and the bypass.

A key component of the development strategy is to enhance the compact urban form, and to provide a wide range of dwelling types and densities to stem the current spread of residential development into the surrounding towns and rural areas. This is also to enhance the existing town centre and its role as a market place, meeting place and living place.

Wexford town has been divided into 20 masterplan zones, which outline future development of each zone. The site of the proposed development at Trinity Wharf is located within Zone 13B.

A number of sites in the town are identified as 'Key Opportunity Sites'. These include Trinity Wharf.

Masterplan Zoning

Plate 11.3 below illustrates the zoning for the Trinity Wharf Site area 13B.

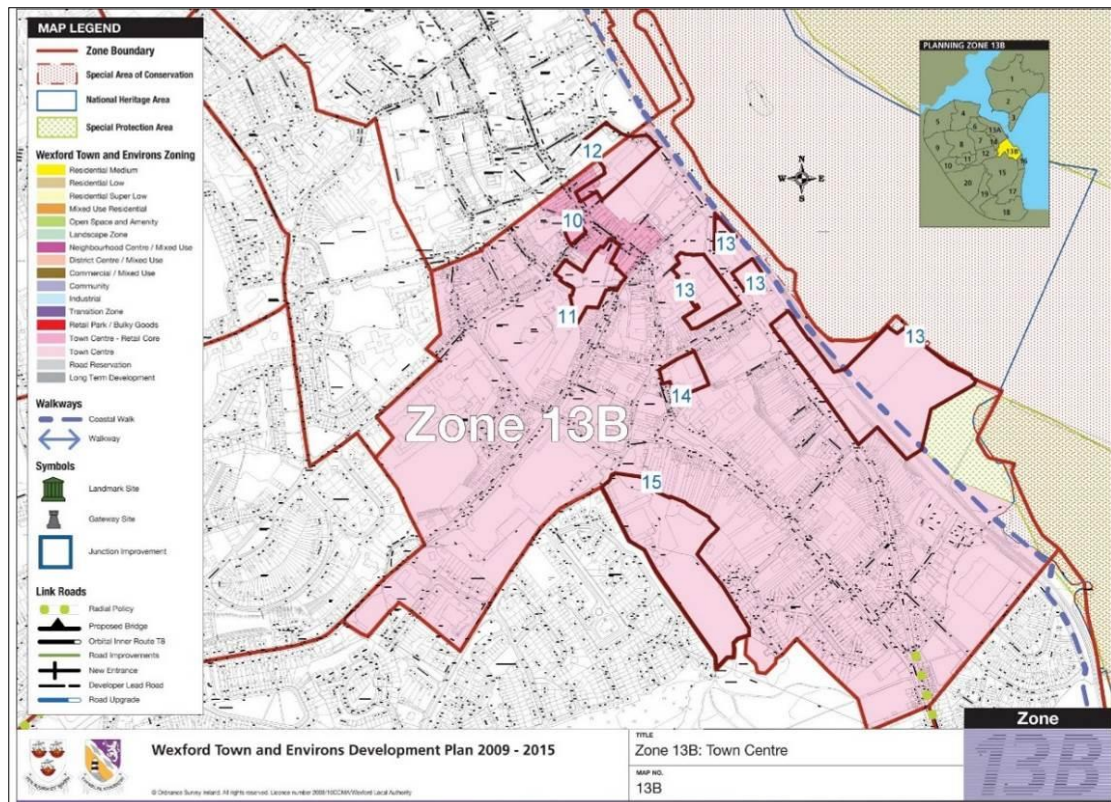


Plate 11.3: Masterplan zoning for 13B, Town Centre (Wexford Town and Environs Plan 2009-2015 as extended)

The Masterplan zoning for the town centre identifies opportunities and constraints for a number of areas in the town centre. The Trinity Street areas is zoned as Town Centre – Retail Core, with a small portion to the southeast designated as SPA. A Coastal Walkway objective runs along the railway line through the Trinity Wharf site. This runs from north of Wexford Bridge to the southern extents of the town.

Wexford harbour, adjacent to the site, is designated SAC and SPA.

The following opportunities and constraints are identified:

'A number of sites exist that offer development and redevelopment opportunities. Existing lanes such as Sinnott Place, Slaughterhouse lane could see redevelopment of 3-4 storeys to create and enhance pedestrian routes from South Main Street to Trinity Wharf. Redevelopment opportunities could include the Talbot Hotel car park, Wexford Building Supplies, Trinity Hire and redevelopment of garages and warehouses to town centre retailing. The Council will consider the development potential of lands which are currently located within the SAC/SPA, but which may be suitable for future development subject to agreement with the Department of Environment, the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Dept. of the Marine. If sites become available new buildings of 5-6 storeys could be developed along this road. Whilst this may not happen in the lifetime of this Plan there is a long term objective to expand the town centre retail core from South Main Street to the Trinity Wharf site.'

Views and Prospects

The Wexford Town Development Plan does not contain a list of protected or scenic views.

Recreation and Tourism

The following objectives are included:

- TO1: Explore the possible provision of a heritage trail in the town.
- TO2: To ensure the full recreational potential of the River Slaney and its estuary is realised.
- TO3: Provide a pedestrian walkway along the banks of the River Slaney estuary.

Architectural Conservation Areas

There are three Architectural Conservation Areas in Wexford Town. The closest ACA is approximately 285 m from the site.

Town Walls Conservation Plan

The centre of the town along the Main Street spine was once surrounded by walls, and remnants of the walls are still visible. The Town Walls Conservation Plan was put in place to identify the significance of the Wexford Town Walls, the threats to significance, and to proposed policies for the future protection and management of the walls.

The closest section of town walls to the site on Trinity Wharf is the section on Barrack Street. This area does not have views of the site.

The Plan notes that impacts of development are not solely related to views in the immediate vicinity of the walls; it notes that views to the walls from the walls and to the surrounding streetscape are available in some areas. It also mentions areas of the town where views of the walls are available, notably the Market Square and St. Patrick's Graveyard.

Policy 15 in the Plan states:

Views to and from the town walls should be enhanced to reinforce the role of the town walls in the Wexford and Environs Development Plan

Section 1-3 of the Wexford TEP also contains design guidance in relation to building form, profile, scale and massing, connectivity with the surrounds, as well as advice on landmark buildings, which is similar to the advice contained in the County Development Plan. The TEP advocates that :

- *Building form, scale, profile and massing are the larger scale design elements which will define the appearance of a building from a distance and influence how it sits in its streetscape context.*
- *A new development must consider and respond to its context in this regard, particularly in relation to any heritage sites, or buildings and spaces of significance.*

Regarding landmark buildings, the TEP notes that a 'landmark building' is any building that is higher than its context, one that may shape a town's skyline or that is of an exceptionally high architectural quality. It also notes that any proposal for a landmark building should identify elements that create local character, and which will be important features or constraints in the development of proposals for landmark buildings. This will include:

- Streetscape – the scale and height of buildings and the urban grain;
- Important local views and panoramas;
- The Town's skyline;

- The topography; and
- Landmarks and their settings.

The Plan notes that well designed and sited landmark buildings can be seen to bring advantages to an urban area, and states that with rapid changes occurring in Wexford Town Centre, that it is imperative that proposals for any landmark buildings are rigorously and strategically assessed in terms of their siting, detailed design quality and function. As the Development Plan also states, landmark buildings are to make a positive contribution to the appearance and activity of the streetscape.

Policy Summary

- There are a number of Landscapes of Greater Sensitivity in the wider environs of the site but the site itself does not lie within such an area;
- Views and vistas to and from waterways are considered important in policy;
- The historic character of Wexford town and the town walls are recognised in policy;
- There is policy support for the redevelopment of Trinity Wharf and it is zoned as part of the Town Centre;
- Objectives also include a walkway along the Wexford town waterfront;
- Design guidance regarding landmark buildings and the impact on their surroundings is emphasised in the TEP; and
- Policy in the TEP relating to Zone 13b Trinity Street notes that 5-6 storey buildings are considered appropriate.

Wexford Quays Economic Development and Spatial Implementation Plan – Stage 2B Report

Wexford Quays Economic Development and Spatial Implementation Plan as commissioned by Wexford County Council aims to provide a strategic vision for the revitalisation and regeneration of the Wexford Quays area.

The Strategic Plan aims to address the urgent need to promote economic development and physical growth and to revitalise the town's economy with proposals that enhance the town's physical attractiveness and wellbeing as a place for people work, shop, visit and live.

Though this Strategy is not a part of the Development Plan, it is seen as an important document as it carries out detailed analysis of the town and also carried out extensive consultation with stakeholders.

Its recommendations include the development of Trinity Wharf, but, importantly, this is set, in the context of a number of objectives for the wider town and includes measures which relate to the waterfront area, the Crescent and the wider town, and seeks to connect the site to the town's waterfront. The Plan is soon to be presented to the Elected Members of Wexford County Council and aims to provide a strategic vision for the revitalisation and regeneration of the Wexford Quays area.

Plate 11.4 below shows the Overall Vision as included in the Strategic Plan, which shows the vision for whole of the Waterfront areas, including visions for the Trinity Wharf area.



Plate 11.4: Overall Vision set out in Wexford Quays Economic Development and Spatial Implementation Plan

The objectives include:

- The development of Trinity Wharf, connected with the rest of the town centre by a direct connection with The Crescent by an extended Paul Quay;
- The transformation of the Crescent as a focal point for the town centre between the Quays and Trinity Wharf;
- Public realm improvements along the waterfront, quays and the streets, lanes and squares connecting with Main Street to create a varied and pedestrian-friendly public realm;
- Development of a north-south 'Heritage Route';
- Measures to encourage the upgrade and improvement of the quality and care of the existing built fabric throughout the town centre; and
- A coordinated lighting strategy.

The Strategy includes the commissioning of a site-specific masterplan for Trinity Wharf which was developed by Scott Tallon Walker in 2018 and informed the design of the proposed development.

11.4.2 Site Location and Context

Historic Context

[illegible]

An aerial image taken in 1961 (see Plate 11.6 below) shows Trinity Wharf had a considerable number of warehouse buildings on the site. The Wexford- Rosslare railway line, opened in 1882, is also visible in the image. The railway lines took up a considerable portion of land adjacent to Trinity Street, north of the site, and the Wexford South railway station was located adjacent to Trinity Street, north of the site.



Plate 11.6 Previous Industrial uses on site (Source: Wexford County Council)

Images from the 1990s also show warehousing on the site, which would have restricted views to the harbour from several locations. The site, having previously been occupied for over 100 years with warehouses as above, was cleared in the early 2000s following the closure of Wexford Electronix in 2001 and is currently vacant.

The site, Trinity Wharf, is a prominent brownfield waterfront site slightly southeast of the historic medieval centre of Wexford Town, and along the southern end of the quay front. In Plate 11.7 below, the main town centre area is shown close to the site.



Plate 11.7 Trinity Wharf – Site Location (Source: Bing Maps)

The Dublin to Rosslare railway line runs along the length of the waterfront, and divides the promenade, just south of Wexford Bridge, from the rest of the town. It also divides the Trinity Wharf site from the town. Waterfront open spaces and walkways are found to the north of the site, on both sides of Wexford Bridge. Open space is also located southwest of the site, where Trespan Rock Park or The Rocks, an area of rock outcrops and woods, is a popular amenity area and is elevated in relation to the site.

Immediately around the site there is a mix of industrial and commercial units along Trinity Street, with small scale, mainly nineteenth and twentieth dwellings in close proximity to the area. Further south some large-scale industrial buildings are noticeable.

The site is largely bounded by the water, to the east, north and south, while the land side to the west is bordered by the Railway line. West of the Railway line are the rear of the buildings and residences which line Trinity Street and William Street Lower. These are illustrated in Plate 11.8 below:



Plate 11.8 Trinity Wharf, looking south– the site is bounded by Wexford Harbour to the east, and the Dublin-Rosslare railway line to the west.

Access

The site is currently accessed in a number of ways, but all accesses involve crossing the Dublin-Rosslare railway line which runs through Wexford Town, along the waterfront. There are number of unauthorised informal pedestrian access points which involve walking alongside and crossing the railway line, one of which is shown in Plate 11.8 above. There is an access point from Trinity Street, which is gated and would also involve crossing the railway line, as seen in Plate 11.9 below.



Plate 11.9 Trinity Street- access point between buildings

The site is both visually and physically somewhat cut off from its surrounds.

Landform – Topography and Drainage

Site and immediate environs

The topography of the site and immediate environs is relatively level, with the site and adjacent railway line on low-lying ground (the site was reclaimed) on the waterfront. Plate 11.10 below shows the view over the site, looking back to the higher ground to the west. The ground rises along Trinity Street and towards William Street Lower as one moves south, away from the town centre.



Plate 11.10 Low lying topography on the site with rising ground to the west

Plate 11.11 below shows a view over the site from Batt Street, to the south, which shows the difference in height between Batt Street and the site, which is at a much lower level.



Plate 11.11 View of lower topography of Trinity Wharf from the end of Batt Street

Wider Vicinity

In the wider vicinity, low lying ground along the waterfront contrasts with rising ground as one moves west, away from the water. An escarpment, visible in certain areas of the town, in particular the area known as 'The Rocks', shows a considerable change in level between the ground to the west of the site. The land rises to the northwest as one moves along Main Street, and also to the southwest, as one moves south along William Street. Plate 11.12 below shows the topography of the site and surrounds as seen from across the river in Ferrybank.



Plate 11.12 Ground levels rise as one moves away from the waterfront

Drainage

The site is a waterfront site, and there are no signs of a watercourse on site. The surrounding land drains to the harbour.

Landcover –Vegetation and Buildings

Site and immediate environs

The site is in an urban location, but currently derelict, with little evidence of the relatively recent industrial uses of meat processing plant and manufacturing. The site, along Wexford's waterfront, comprises man-made, reclaimed land. The site was initially reclaimed in approximately 1832, and used as a dockyard, and subsequently extended. Plates 11.5 and 11.6 illustrate the former warehouses and industrial

buildings on the site as well as the railway adjacent to Trinity Street. An extensive area of Wexford's waterfront, including the present Railway line and a number of shipping yards were created from this reclaimed land.

The main elements include vegetation, stone quay walls, as shown in Plate 11.13 below, as well as a larger central wall, and areas of concrete shown in Plate 11.14.



Plate 11.13 Northern boundary of Trinity Wharf, showing vegetation and waterfront wall

Vegetation has colonised parts of the site, and species are typical of a derelict site, including Buddleja, Willow, as well as grasses. In some parts of the site, concrete still remains on the ground, as shown in Plate 11.14 below.



Plate 11.14 Walls, vegetation and areas of concrete on site

The main elements which remain on site are masonry walls, visible along the waterfront, as well as walls which divide parts of the site, as seen in Plate 11.14 above. Boulders and chunks of concrete are visible, and the dereliction of the site is evident. Some large areas of concrete slab are visible as in Plate 11.15 below.



Plate 11.15 Concrete areas on site

The site has few elements which contribute to its character, and the areas along the water's edge remain the more interesting areas of the site due to the views from the waterfront. Along the eastern edge, remains of the wharf structure is evident, as seen in Plate 11.16 below:

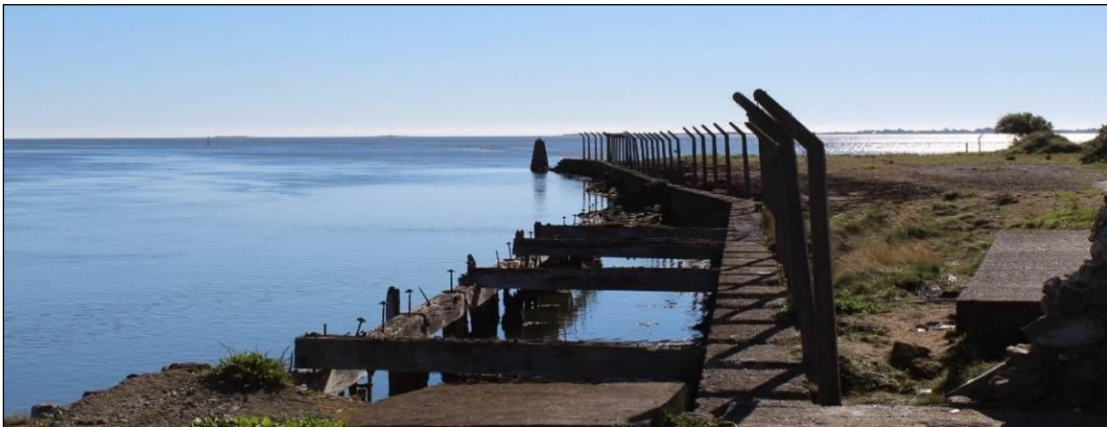


Plate 11.16 Wharf remnants along eastern edge

The railway line divides the site from its surrounds. On the opposite side of the railway line, vegetation and buildings along Trinity Street and William Street form a buffer with the site. The illustrations below (Plates 11.17-11.18) show the character of this 'transition zone' between the site and its surroundings. The buildings and vegetation serve to restrict views between the site and Trinity Street and contribute to the isolated and derelict character of the site, which has few connections to its immediate context. Plate 11.18 shows the site's proximity to the town's waterfront.



Plate 11.17 Walls, industrial units and vegetation to west of railway line (looking south)



Plate 11.18 Fences and industrial units to west of railway line (looking north)

Built Form – Trinity Street and William Street Lower

Trinity Street's current form is influenced by the previous land uses including the lands formerly occupied by the railway, adjacent to the eastern side of Trinity Street, which were subsequently built over with warehouses and large footprint buildings. The buildings and properties which back onto the railway line include those along Trinity Street and William Street Lower. The character of Trinity Street is somewhat mixed, with large-scale plot sizes to the east, (on the site of the former railway tracks) backing onto the railway line, which are mainly occupied by industrial units, as shown in Plates 11.17-11.18 above and Plates 11.19-11.21 below. These are interspersed with several sections of industrial fencing and gates and serve to restrict views of the water and of the Trinity Wharf site. There is at present, almost no visual connectivity between this street and the Trinity Wharf site. The buildings along William Street are small scale residential dwellings.





Plate 11.19-21 Large scale units along eastern side of Trinity Street

Close to the junction of Trinity Street and William Street Lower, a vacant plot of land with fencing (shown in Plate 11.20 above) allows limited views to the sea in the direction of the site. This is the site of a former warehouse, which was demolished in the recent past, circa 2008.

Plates 11.22 and 11.23 show the small-scale residential areas along the western side of Trinity Street, and at Trinity Place, which are of a different scale and character to the built form on the opposite side of the street. Several narrow lanes and streets lead from Trinity Street north to The Faythe.



Plates 11.22-23 Smaller scale residential terraces and lanes on western side of Trinity street

William Street Lower, which is a continuation of Trinity Street to the south, consists of terraced two storey buildings, which, although not part of an Architectural Conservation Area, have an identifiable and distinctive character, are of a similar scale and design, giving the appearance of a relatively intact streetscape. Some of these buildings are protected structures. The gardens of some of these dwellings slope down towards the railway line.



Plate 11.24 Smaller scale terraces on William Street looking towards site

Wider context

The wider areas include the wider Wexford Town, including certain areas notable for character of built form and urban grain. The residential areas east of the site include distinctive nineteenth and twentieth century buildings in the vicinity of The Faythe, with more recent residential developments to the west and southwest. To the south, built form includes more recent residential developments and some industrial buildings on the waterfront, with most of the built form to the east of the Rosslare Road (R370). An area of considerable natural vegetation including The Rocks amenity area is located southwest of the site. The distinctive form of the medieval town lies to the northwest of the site, with enclosed narrow streets and lanes. The waterfront area along Commercial Quay, south of Wexford Bridge, has its own character with a wide waterfront promenade and open views to the harbour, with buildings on the western side divided by the road and railway line.

Land use

Site and immediate environs

The site is a derelict site which was formerly occupied by a number of warehouse buildings, demolished in the early 2000s. The site was, at the time of the site visit, used informally by members of the public for walking, though access is unauthorised. The railway line runs directly adjacent to the Trinity Wharf site. Industrial and commercial uses are found along the eastern side of Trinity Street, while residential uses are found along the northern end as well as the western side of Trinity Street, and along William Street Lower (see Plate 11.22 above). Other local land uses include the Talbot Hotel which is located at the northern end of Trinity Street.

Wider context

Surrounding land uses in the wider town include industrial, commercial, cultural and residential. The railway line is present along the waterfront of the town. The extensive waterfront areas to the north of the site are used for shopping and recreation as well as berthing for fishing vessels. Areas used for recreation include those to the southwest (The Rocks) and north and northeast (the waterfront and Ferrybank areas).

Summary of landscape character of site and immediate environs

The character of the site itself is largely defined by its location, as it is surrounded on water by three sides, rather than any strong features or landscape elements on the site itself. It is a derelict site with a remote character due to its inaccessibility except along the railway track. The site does not contribute significantly to the landscape character of the areas around it and is largely distinct in character from its surrounds.

The former industrial uses of the site are still apparent, due to the presence of built form on the site until relatively recently, being only partially covered by emergent vegetation. The area can be described as an area in transition between the industrial and warehousing and the residential area. The policies support for the redevelopment of the area recognises this.

The immediate vicinity of the site, including the Trinity Street area and nearby streets and quays vary in character from Trinity Street's mix of warehouse buildings and 19th and 20th century terraces. Some of these streets and terraces have a distinctive character including some buildings which are protected structures. Views of the harbour are also a feature of the areas' character, which range from open and extensive views of the harbour from the areas mainly to the north but also some to the of the site, as well as some glimpses from the streets west of the site.

Summary of landscape character of wider context

The wider context of Wexford town with its waterfront, medieval centre and urban form, situated within Wexford Harbour has a distinctive character and the element of water is an important characteristic of the area.

The medieval town centre and town wall remnants, though not far from the proposed development, has a dense urban form and creates a sense of enclosure, restricting views to the waterfront. South Main street, the main spine, runs parallel to the water, though some views of the harbour are available from the perpendicular streets and lanes, such as King Street.

The distinctive enclosed character of the medieval town is vastly different to the site's immediate surroundings at Trinity Wharf, and also distinct from the waterfront area. The main view south along South Main Street is terminated by the Barracks, preventing further views, as seen in Plate 11.25:



Plate 11.25 & 11.26 Views along South Main Street and Barrack Street

Plate 11.26 above shows the view from Barrack Street, which is one of the locations where the town wall remains, seen to the right of the image. It is also the site of

Wexford Castle and the current location of the Barracks, which is a distinctive building of considerable height seen just to the right of the image, behind the wall. The narrow street with high walls and buildings, prevents views out to the wider town, the waterfront and to the site.

Certain areas of the town and in particular the waterfront areas in the vicinity of Wexford Bridge and Ferrybank as well as the amenity area known as The Rocks, are characterised by their openness and extensive views over Wexford town and the harbour.

Summary of Landscape Values

Landscape value can be indicated by formal designations, such as landscape designations, cultural landscape designations, protected views or scenic routes, or important tourist designations. Elements which are locally valued are more difficult to identify, and a number of criteria are included below which help to identify elements of landscape value on the site and surrounds:

- **Policy and Designations:** There are a number of Landscapes of Greater Sensitivity in the wider environs of the site – within Wexford Harbour - but the site itself does not lie within such an area and has no landscape related designations. Policy is supportive in principle of the site's redevelopment. Urban design guidance is contained in both the County Development and Town and Environs Plans.
- **Landscape Quality/Condition:** The site is located in an urban area. The site itself can be described as degraded and derelict, and there are opportunities to improve the landscape quality and condition of the site. Important characteristics include the views, in particular those over Wexford Harbour, and the proximity to the water, which are a key feature of the site's character. However, in the vicinity of the site there are examples of urban terraces with a strong historic character. Parts of the wider environs of the Waterfront and the medieval town are considered to be townscape areas of high quality.
- **Cultural features:** There are few distinctive features on the site itself. The remains of the wharf and quay walls are elements of the site's history. The townscape quality is varied in the immediate vicinity of the site, but there are valued elements such as the surrounding nineteenth and twentieth century terraces, town walls and historic character of the town centre and waterfront areas.
- **Aesthetic quality:** There are pleasant views from the site and surrounds to the water and to locations such as The Raven and over the harbour. There are also good views to the Wexford townscape and waterfront. The waterfront location and associated views is a key feature of the site's character. In the wider townscape, views to the harbour have a high scenic quality.
- **Sense of naturalness/Wildness:** The site has a partly remote character, though it is not physically remote from its surrounds, but the derelict nature of the site, the difficulty in accessing the site and its location as an area of land surrounded by water on three sides, contribute to a sense of remoteness, and of an abandoned landscape. There is not a strong sense of naturalness, as the former industrial uses are evident in the large areas of concrete on the site.
- **Public Accessibility and Recreation Value:** The site has no formal public access, is currently fenced off and is not a public space. Unauthorised access does occur in the area however with the site also being known for antisocial behaviour. At the time of the site visit it was informally used by the public as a walking area and therefore may have been used for recreation. In the wider

area, the waterfront area to the north of the site along Paul Quay and up to Commercial quay, and the Ferrybank area, is a popular recreation location.

Overall, the site itself would be considered of Low to Moderate landscape value. There are no formal landscape or visual amenity designations on the site. There are ecological designations which apply to the site - the southern section of the site is within the SAC. The site is surrounded by the Slaney River Valley SAC and the southern side bounds the Wexford Harbour and Slobbs SPA. All associated ecological designations are discussed further in Chapter 7 Biodiversity of this EIAR.

However, the wider surrounds of the town contain some elements of Moderate to High landscape value, in areas such as the waterfront, and the core of the medieval town. The overall landscape sensitivity of the site to this type of development is discussed further in Section 11.4.

Visual Amenity

There are considerable views of scenic quality from the site. The most striking element of the site is its waterfront location, surrounded as it is by water on three sides. The proximity to water, and the views across the water over Wexford Harbour, are key characteristics of the site.

Views to the north and north west include Wexford townscape along the waterfront to Wexford Bridge, as seen in Plate 11.27 below. Prominent elements include the Church of the Assumption spire, as well as the waterfront. In the distance hills can be seen behind Wexford Bridge, to the right of the image.



Plate 11.27 Views to Wexford townscape and waterfront from the site

Other notable views include the view to Wexford Bridge and Ferrybank to the north, towards the relatively flat coastline.



Plate 11.28 Views to Wexford Bridge and Ferrybank

Looking towards the mouth of the harbour to the east, the wooded peninsula of The Raven nature reserve, can be seen in the distance.



Plate 11.29 Views towards Raven Point

Views to the south east are also available from the site. Plate 11.30 below shows a view in which Rosslare Point is visible in the distance, in good weather.



Plate 11.30 Views towards Rosslare Strand

Views to the west, towards the town, towards Trinity Street and William Street Lower, show a mixture of residential and industrial buildings, including telecommunications towers, as illustrated in Plates 11.31 and 11.32 below.



Plate 11.31 Views west towards Trinity Street



Plate 11.32 Views towards William Street Lower and Batt Street

Views from the streets surrounding Trinity Wharf are varied, but some contain or frame views or glimpses of the harbour, while others are pleasant views of nineteenth and twentieth century streetscapes. Some views along Trinity Street are of the warehouses and steel fences which block sea views and detract from the streetscape as seen in Plates 11.19-21.

Visual Amenity – wider context

Views to the harbour are considered important, and a characteristic of the area. Views, often panoramic, are available from the waterfront promenade to the north of the site along Paul Quay, the waterfront further north as far as Wexford Bridge, as well as from some locations south of the site at Harbour View and the end of Batt Street. As illustrated below, views from the waterfront at Commercial Quay and to the south and east are more open and expansive, but views to the north, to Wexford Bridge and Ferrybank, are also remarkable, as shown in Plate 11.34.



Plate 11.33 Wexford's distinctive waterfront – view south from Commercial Quay towards site



Plate 11.34 Wexford's distinctive waterfront – view north to Wexford Bridge



Plate 11.35 View east over harbour towards ballast bank and Raven Point

Plate 11.35 above shows there are also remarkable views to the east towards Raven Point, from the waterfront area.

Visual amenity is also remarkable from Wexford Bridge, and Ferrybank areas where scenic and panoramic views of Wexford's waterfront and townscape are obtained. Visual amenity in the medieval town is focussed on the narrow streets with dense urban form and narrow perpendicular lanes, some of which have glimpses of the sea.

11.4.3 Zone of Visual Influence

The Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI) is determined by identifying the areas where the proposed development is likely to be visible. This is then used to identify potentially sensitive visual receptors and identify locations for photomontages.

While a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) map can be used to show theoretical visibility for certain projects, such as wind energy developments, this is less suited to urban areas, as it only includes topographical information and does not include buildings or vegetation. For developments in an urban context, these are not suitable as much of the visibility depends on the presence or absence of buildings.

The Study Area illustrated in Plate 11.1 in Section 11.3 shows a considerable area including the wider Wexford Harbour, which represents areas which are potentially within the Zone of Visual Influence. Topography and structures, such as buildings and vegetation will depend on whether the proposed development is visible or not.

Visual Receptors and Viewpoint Selection

The GLVIA (2013) Guidelines note that the types of viewers (or visual receptors) who will be affected by the development, and the places they will be affected, should be identified. People have differing responses to changes in views and visual amenity, and this is known as susceptibility. The susceptibility of a viewer, therefore, depends on the context such as the location, as well as their activity, or reason for being in a particular place. A person may be involved in recreation, or be a resident, at work, passing through a landscape, on roads or other means. Certain activities or locations in the landscape may be specifically associated with the experience and enjoyment of the landscape, such as the use of waymarked trails, tourist trails or scenic routes. Therefore, when combined with the value of the view, visual receptor sensitivity is described for all viewpoints, and is an important component of the viewpoint selection.

Table 11.3 outlines the of varying categories of visual receptor sensitivity, which range from Very High to Negligible.

Following desktop studies and a site visit, a number of potentially sensitive visual receptors were identified, and were chosen as viewpoint locations for photomontages which are used as tools to assist in the assessment of visual effects.

These include locations in the immediate environs of the site, representing residential receptors along Trinity Street, William Street, and people enjoying the amenities along the waterfront to the north or engaged in recreation in this area. Other locations include Wexford Bridge, the amenity area and public amenity walk at Ferrybank and areas of Wexford Town to the west and southwest of the site, which also have potential visibility where visual receptors may be sensitive. Elevated areas of the town, such as the Rocks amenity area, and high buildings which overlook the town, including the Wexford Opera House, and hotel buildings also have potential visibility. Visual receptors in The Rocks amenity area are also considered of High sensitivity.

More distant viewpoints with potentially sensitive visual receptors were included, and these include Raven Point, and Rosslare Point, both which are within Landscapes of Greater Sensitivity, though at some distance from the site.

A number of locations in Wexford town including the medieval centre, were also visited to assess potential visibility. These include the closest sections of the Wexford Town Wall, at Barrack Street, and at the King Street and Bride Street Car Parks. It is not expected that these locations will have visibility of the proposed development. Views from the medieval town along South Main Street tend to be restricted to the streets and to views framed by the streets, as the dense urban form restricts views to the waterfront and towards the site.

Viewpoint Locations

A wide selection of viewpoints were chosen, both in close proximity to the site, to represent potentially sensitive visual receptors such as residents, and more distant viewpoints, which represent other sensitive viewers, from public walkways, amenity areas, or important viewpoints including prominent views over the town. These viewpoints represent publicly accessible viewpoints, both in close proximity and at a distance, at various elevations, views from the town in the vicinity of the site, and views along transport routes and public amenity areas. The viewpoints also include views where the whole development is visible as well as partially visible.

A number of viewpoints from the surrounding Landscapes of Greater Sensitivity, including Raven Point, and Rosslare Point, were included at the request of the Planning Authority. A view from the junction of The Faythe and William Street Lower was also requested and included.

The views of the proposed development site include a number of locations in the town, including parts of Trinity Street, William Street Upper, the waterfront promenade north of the site and Wexford Bridge. Views are also available from Ferrybank waterfront walkway, given its waterfront location.

The site is not within the viewshed of any protected views. Figures 11.3A-11.3C in Volume 3 of the EIAR indicate the proposed photo locations.

Table 1.6 Viewpoint Locations

Viewpoint Number	Description
1	View from the steps to the waterfront path/amenity area at Ferrybank

Viewpoint Number	Description
2	View from Wexford Bridge towards development
3	View from the waterfront promenade looking south to site
4	View from Crescent Quay towards proposed development
5	View from the southern side of breakwater towards the proposed development
6	Views from along the waterfront looking south towards the site
7	View from Church of the Assumption grounds over town and towards the proposed development
8	View from Trespan Rock/Rocklands amenity area
9	View from the junction of The Faythe/William Street Lower
10	View from Harbour View/Gulbar road junction
11	View from the end of Batt Street towards Wexford Harbour and site
12	View looking along Fisher's Row from junction with The Faythe
13	View form Trinity Street south of junction with Fisher's Row
14	View from the end of the Fisher's Row terrace of dwellings which overlook the site
15	View from junction of Fisher's Row and Trinity Street
16	View opposite site entrance on Trinity Street
17	View opposite Trinity Motors on Trinity Street
18	View opposite Trinity Motors on Trinity Street
19	View south along Trinity Street
20	View from Rosslare Strand
21	View from The Raven (Raven Point) Nature Reserve

11.4.4 Photomontages

Photomontage were produced form the 21 viewpoints listed above. The technical details, including the grid co-ordinates of each viewpoint, is included in Volume 3, Figures 11.1 and 11.2.

The GLVIA 3 defines photomontages as /the superimposition of an image onto a photography for the purpose of creating a representation of potential changes to any view. It also notes that visual representations can never be the same as the real experience of the change that is to take place. The Landscape Institute (LI) guidance, currently being reviewed, notes that the two-dimensional photographic images and photomontages alone cannot capture or reflect the complexity underlying the visual experience and should be therefore be considered as an approximation of the three-dimensional experiences that an observer would receive in the field.

11.5 Description of Potential Effects

11.5.1 Proposed Development – Key Elements

Chapter 4 includes a detailed description of the proposed development. As illustrated in plate 11.36 (see also Figure 4.6 of Volume 3), the main elements include eight relatively large footprint buildings, five of which are located along the waterfront of the site. On the side facing Trinity Street, two buildings – an office block and a multi storey car park are seen, with a residential building to the southern side, which has a small

frontage towards Trinity Street. Other key elements of the design are a new entrance to Trinity Street and a pedestrian and cycle path connecting Trinity Wharf to Paul Quay and a central public events plaza. A walkway runs along the southern and eastern waterfront of the site while the marina development is to the north of the site. Some planting is also proposed along Trinity Street near the vehicular site entrance.

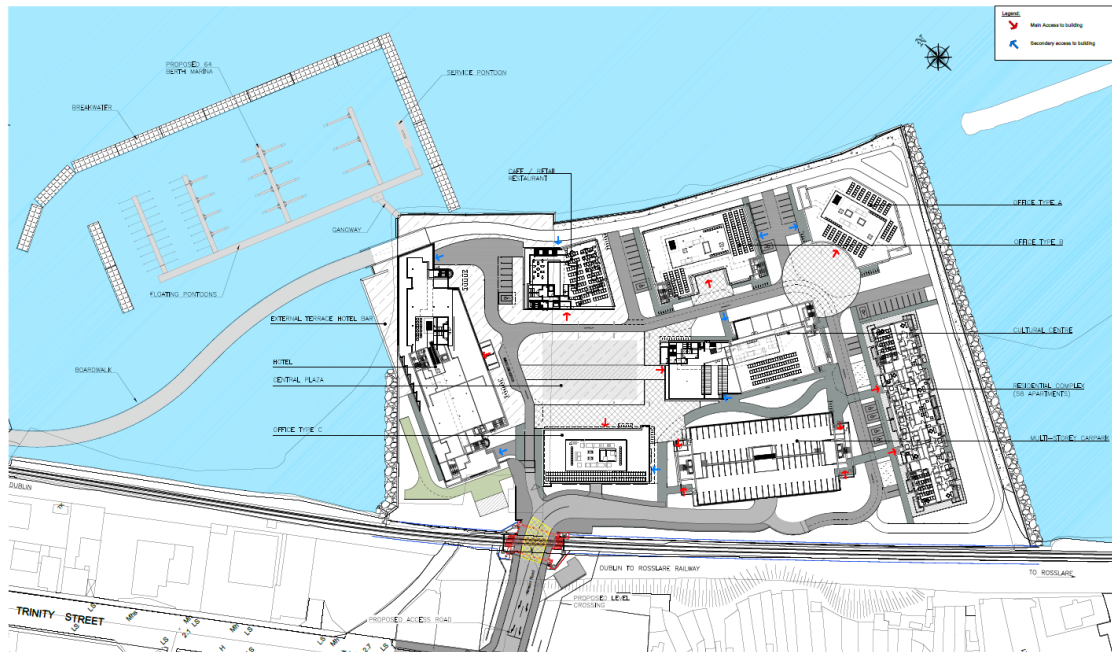


Plate 11.36 Proposed Site Layout

A summary of the main elements which are relevant to the LVIA are:

- A six-storey 120-bedroom hotel;
- A six-storey multi-storey car park;
- A five-storey residential building;
- Three five-storey office buildings;
- A two-storey cultural/performance centre;
- A two-storey mixed-use restaurant / café / specialist retail building;
- A single storey management building;
- A new vehicular entrance road with a signalised junction on Trinity Street, widening of Trinity Street, a new railway level crossing and associated works;
- A new sea wall around the site's perimeter comprising sheet pile along the eastern edge, concrete panels and a section of rock armour revetment on the northern edge and rock armour revetment on the southeast edge;
- Public realm and landscape including a public plaza with an open performance / events space and a coastal pathway;
- Boardwalk structure connecting with Paul Quay;
- 64 berth marina; and
- Associated landscaping.

The development is to be progressed in three phases, as outlined in Chapter 4. This chapter assesses the landscape and visual effects of the entire development.

11.5.2 Landscape Effects

The landscape effects are discussed and assessed under the headings of Site and immediate environs, and the Wider context, as per the baseline. Under each heading, the landscape sensitivity and magnitude of change are discussed, and the significance of the effect is then described. Cumulative effects are addressed in Chapter 17 of this EIAR.

Do Nothing Scenario

The site of the proposed development would remain as it is. Management of a derelict site would continue, including boundary security measures targeted at eliminating unauthorised access and anti-social behaviour. Vegetation would continue to encroach on the site.

Landscape Effects - Site and immediate environs

Landscape Sensitivity

The overall landscape sensitivity of the site and immediate environs is considered Medium-

Areas where the landscape has certain valued elements, features or characteristics but where the character is mixed or not particularly strong. The character of the landscape is such that there is some capacity for change in the form of development. These areas may be recognised in landscape policy at local or county level and the principle management objective may be to consolidate landscape character or facilitate appropriate, necessary change

The site itself and immediate environs is considered of Low to Moderate landscape sensitivity. The landscape sensitivity of the receiving environment is a combination of landscape value, and landscape susceptibility – this is defined in the GLVIA the extent to which the landscape is considered able to respond to, and where appropriate, accommodate change arising from the proposed development.

There are no formal landscape or visual amenity designations on the site (A small part of the southern section of the site is within the SAC). Though access is unauthorised, at the time of the site visit, September 2018, observations included a number of people walking on the site. The site itself appeared at the time to have some local value as an informal recreation area (Note the site has since been completely fenced off due to safety concerns). The site's features are not remarkable, but the aesthetic qualities are greatly enhanced by the location and views over Wexford Harbour. The site also has a sense of detachment, and some sense of remoteness, from its surrounds, which may be considered a value for some. Overall the value is considered Low to Moderate. However, the surrounds contain some elements of Moderate to High landscape value, in areas such as the small scale nineteenth and twentieth century streets and terraces close to the site and along the waterfront to the north of the site.

The landscape susceptibility of the site is related to the type of development proposed and its characteristics, considered along with the characteristics of the landscape and of the site, as well as the ability of the site to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation, and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies.

In this regard, it should be noted that the site is zoned as part of the town centre, and that the Wexford Quays Economic Development and Spatial Implementation Plan has identified the site as a redevelopment site as part of a larger plan which also includes proposals for the other parts of the waterfront including Paul Quay and The Crescent.

It is considered that at site level, the landscape has the ability to accommodate some change in the form of this type of development. The site is zoned as part of the town centre. The site is a large and vacant brownfield site at a lower level than the surrounding townscape with few distinctive features, adjacent to Trinity Street which is of varied character and which has been identified along with Trinity Wharf as having potential to be enhanced and developed. The site itself was until relatively recently, the location of several large scale warehouse buildings which have since been demolished. Trinity Street has several residential areas to the west of the street with large scale warehousing to the east, which replaced the former railway tracks. The site itself does not have strong or highly valued characteristics. However, the nature and location of the site as surrounded by water on three sides, will result in any development having the potential to be seen as an extension of the waterfront.

The townscape in the vicinity of the site is extremely varied, ranging from low rise industrial units, to taller residential and commercial buildings as well as the historic core of narrow streets, lanes and relatively low buildings. Areas in the vicinity of the site which have a specific character, such as William Street, The Faythe, Batt Street and Fisher's Row, where the townscape is considered of Medium sensitivity to this type of large scale development at close proximity which may alter the townscape scale and character in this local area.

It is considered that the landscape sensitivity of the site and immediate environs (landscape values and susceptibility combined) at a local level, is Medium, as per the Table 11.1.

Construction Phase Effects

The Construction of the site will be carried out in phases and is expected to last approximately 80 months. Phase 1 will involve the enabling works, Phase 2 the construction of some of the buildings and the marina and Phase 3 the remaining buildings, roads and landscaping. The construction phase will involve landscape effects, which include the movement of construction vehicles and machinery in and out of the site, as well as works on the site itself.

The construction phase will involve a considerable change in the nature of the area which includes the busier Trinity Street but a number of quieter streets including Batt Street, Fisher's Row and other smaller streets including Sea View Terrace. There is an increased potential for noise and dust due to construction machinery along Trinity Street and environs.

Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of change is considered Moderate –

Change that is moderate in extent, resulting in introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily substantially uncharacteristic in the context.

Construction phase landscape effects on the site and immediate vicinity are expected to be Short term, and negative in quality.

Operational Phase Effects - Site and immediate environs

Magnitude of Change

The site is in an urban context, a derelict site, with few valued features, and, along with its immediate surroundings, considered of moderate sensitivity. The proposed

development will be prominent, especially at the local level, and will undoubtedly result in change to the landscape character of this local area.

It is considered that the site's fabric and character will change dramatically, as a result of the proposed development – in particular, due to the construction of a number of large scale and high (five and six storey) buildings and internal roads, walkways, a proposed boardwalk connecting the site to Paul Quay, replacement of the sea wall, construction of a marina, as well as a proposed access junction and street treatment to Trinity Street.

The site character will change with the reintroduction of built form, (there was large scale built form in the form of industrial warehousing on the site prior to its demolition in the early 2000s), however, the key characteristics of the site itself, which include the setting, views and proximity to the water, will remain on the site.

Regarding the change to the character of the immediate vicinity, along Trinity Street, there are existing low-rise industrial buildings along Trinity Street. The magnitude of change will vary, and the northern part of the street will not experience a significant change in character. However, there are also small scale residential terraces, as well as laneways off Trinity Street in the vicinity of the site that will be subject to change in character due to the large scale development in close proximity to these areas. The change in landscape and townscape character will be low in some areas, and more pronounced in others. Views of the harbour from some of the streets and laneways, which contribute to the character, will be obscured or partly obscured but this will vary along the street.

The effects on the character of the surrounding residential areas, will vary. The eastern end of Batt Street, and Fisher's Row for example, will undergo more change in character than other parts. Streets such as William Street and The Faythe will in general, not experience a high magnitude of change to their character.

Landscape effects are a combination of the landscape sensitivity, and the magnitude of the change. It is considered that overall, the magnitude of change of a development of this type on the site and immediate vicinity is High -

Change that is moderate to large in extent, resulting in major alteration or compromise of important landscape receptors, and the introduction of large elements considered uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in change to the character of the landscape.

Significance of Effect

The overall landscape effect on the site and immediate environs is considered to be Moderate to Significant. The duration of the effect is considered Long Term.

The quality of this effect includes both beneficial and adverse effects. The effects at site level on the fabric of the site are largely positive or beneficial, and the development involves the removal of very few existing landscape elements on a site which is derelict and considered of Low sensitivity. The enhanced access and connectivity, provision of a mix of uses, a boardwalk connecting the site to Paul Quay, and the waterfront beyond, and enhanced public space and public events area can also be considered as having a beneficial effect on the site, which is currently almost cut off from its surrounds, and the wider area. The key characteristics of the site, which are the views and the proximity to water will be enhanced and more accessible. A derelict site will be developed into a mixed use site which includes access for pedestrians and cyclists via boardwalk to the site, and to new public spaces.

This development will result in a change to the local landscape character and aesthetics of the area around the site, through the introduction of several tall and large scale buildings on a prominent waterfront site, as well as a marina and other elements.

This change is likely to be perceived as adverse in some areas, where the character is defined by glimpses of the harbour and small scale, narrow terraced streets in the vicinity of the site such as from Fisher's Row, and the eastern end of Batt Street and Gulbar Road, where the open harbour views will change in certain directions. In other areas, such as the eastern side of Trinity Street, the change will be beneficial as the area does not have a strong or distinctive character and is an area in transition. Though the magnitude of the change is considerable, and of a character quite different to the existing context, it is considered that overall, the high design quality of the proposed development is considered to result in a neutral to beneficial effect – which will maintain and, in some cases, improve landscape quality. In most cases, the harbour views and skyline which are an important part of the area's character, though altered by the proposed development, will not be removed, as many viewing locations (Paul Quay, Batt Street, Gulbar Road, Harbour View,) have panoramic views in other directions to the harbour. Views are considered in detail under Visual Effects.

Operational Phase Effects – Wider Landscape

Sensitivity

At the wider level, that of the townscape and wider landscape, the site is part of an urban area, and also described as a sensitive coastal landscape, as described in Section 11.4. The coastal areas are considered to be more susceptible to change than the lowland landscapes, although this site is in an urban context. The landscape sensitivity varies from High to Low, depending on the location.

The wider site context of Wexford town includes some large scale and tall buildings located in the town both to the north along the waterfront and the industrial buildings somewhat south of the site, which indicate some precedent for this type of tall building and areas which are less sensitive. However, the waterfront and promenade area, Wexford Bridge and Ferrybank, and the open space south of the site at Trespan Rock, would all be considered of High sensitivity to this type of development.

Certain areas in this wider landscape, such as coastal areas to the northern and southern shores of Wexford Harbour, including The Raven, Wexford Slobs and Rosslare Point, are designated as 'Landscapes of Greater Sensitivity' and are highly valued. However, in relation to the type of development which is proposed, which is **not located in** these landscapes, a development of a maximum of six storeys on a brownfield, low lying waterfront site, at a distance of approximately 4km from Rosslare Point and 5km from the Raven, these are not considered to be of high susceptibility. Their landscape sensitivity to the proposed development, in Trinity Wharf, is considered Low, as the effects would be on the wider landscape character.

Landscape sensitivity in the wider context varies and is considered **High** in the areas of the town's waterfront, on both sides of the estuary (including the Wexford Bridge and Ferrycarrig area) as well as in the medieval town centre. Landscape sensitivity in the more distant areas of Wexford town and harbour, in particular the Raven Point area and Rosslare Strand area, is considered to be **Low**.

Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of change on the wider landscape and townscape, including the character of the waterfront areas, is considered to range from **Low to Medium**. The

change is considered Medium in areas such as the waterfront to the north and Ferrybank areas -

Change that is moderate in extent, resulting in introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily substantially uncharacteristic in the context.

The change in landscape character will not affect the character of the medieval core of the town. The magnitude of change on the medieval town and the wider town and harbour is considered Low.

Significance of Effects – Wider Landscape

The landscape effects on the wider Wexford townscape, including the waterfront areas, and the Ferrybank area, are considered **Slight to Moderate**. The quality of this effect is considered neutral. Landscape effects on the wider town effects are likely to be neutral to beneficial, as the proposed development extends the town to the south, providing a boardwalk linking the development with Paul Quay will enhance connectivity, activity and footfall along the waterfront and the Crescent area also.

Landscape effects at the wider scale on the character Wexford Harbour and the coastal landscape, including the areas of Raven Point and Rosslare Point are likely to be **Imperceptible to Not Significant** and neutral in quality

11.5.3 Visual Effects

11.5.3.1 Do Nothing Scenario

The views to the site of the proposed development would remain unchanged.

11.5.3.2 Significance of Effects - Construction Phase

During construction there will be a change to the landscape and there will be negative visual impacts for residents and visitors to the areas adjacent to the site associated with construction activity.

Visual receptors in the vicinity of the site including residents, would be of High Sensitivity.

The magnitude of the change during construction is considered to be Medium to High.

Construction of the proposed development in three phases will involve visual effects/which are is considered to be Moderate, negative visual effects. These are expected to be Short term effects.

11.5.3.3 Significance of Effects - Operational Phase

The assessment of Visual Effects are assisted by the preparation of photomontages. These were taken from a variety of locations as described in Section 11.4.3. above). Maps of these locations are included in Volume 3, Figures 11.3A - 11.3C.

The existing and proposed views are provided in Volume 3 of this EIAR as Figures 11.4 – 11.45. The views are discussed below with reference to the visual receptor sensitivity (susceptibility of the visual receptor, as well as the value attached to the view). These, combined with the magnitude of the change, result in the likely visual effect. These are summarised in Table 11.7.

The objective of the photomontages is to represent the proposed development in the landscape context under consideration and are therefore focussed on the view towards the proposed development site and surrounds. It is important to note that in several

viewpoints, the viewer would in reality, experience views of the harbour in several directions, with several locations having panoramic views of Wexford Harbour, depending on the direction in which the viewer is looking.

Viewpoint 1 - Figures 11.4 and 11.5

Existing View

The existing view is taken from the steps leading from the raised amenity area at Ferrybank, which lead to the waterfront path. This view looks southwest towards Trinity Wharf.

The view shows the waterfront path in the foreground, which is at a lower level than the view location. There is a considerable expanse of water in the foreground, which is an important characteristic of the view.

This view towards the southern extents of Wexford town show the topography slopes from an elevated and wooded area (Trespan Rock Park or The Rocks) to the lower lying ground along the waterfront. These trees form a pleasant backdrop to the buildings in the foreground.

The buildings that line the quayside are visible to the right and the warehouses and tall building at Trinity Street are also seen. Beyond this, the buildings along William Street and Batt Street are seen, and the larger scale industrial buildings are visible to the left of the image, somewhat higher than the waterfront. Trinity Wharf is seen in the foreground, to the centre and left of the image.

Proposed View

The proposed view shows that the buildings of Trinity Wharf occupy a considerable extent of the view, though they do not obstruct any views across the water from this location. The building height is such that they do obscure some of the existing skyline, however the industrial (Glanbia/Danone) buildings also appear behind and to the left of the proposed development and are buildings of comparative scale. The marina development and pedestrian bridge to Paul Quay are also visible in the foreground.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

The visual receptors are those enjoying the view, which is has scenic qualities, those accessing or walking along the pathway, and accessing the caravan park and would be generally of High Sensitivity.

Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of change is considered to be Medium which is described as:

Partial intrusion of the development in the view, or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in change to the composition but not necessarily the character of the view or the visual amenity.

Significance of the Visual Effect

The significance of the visual effect is considered Moderate. The quality of the effect is considered to be neutral.

Viewpoint 2 – Figure 11.6 and 11.7 in Volume 3

Existing View

The existing view is taken from Wexford Bridge. The bridge has extensive views both north and south over the harbour and this view to the south over the harbour to Wexford's waterfront is considered to have scenic qualities. This view shows an expanse of water in the foreground, which is a key component of this view. The nineteenth-century quayside buildings are visible to the right of the image, along the waterfront where several boats are moored. Further along Paul Quay, more recently constructed waterfront buildings are visible. Beyond this, a taller building and some warehouses along Trinity Street, are evident.

In the distance, south of Trinity Street, one can see several residential buildings which overlook the harbour, interspersed with tree clumps, while several taller industrial buildings are visible to the south.

Several boats are seen berthed along the quayside to the right of the image, which is also a waterfront promenade. A breakwater is also visible, while further south, the railway line which runs along the harbour is evident, and the Trinity Wharf site, which derelict and overgrown with vegetation, extends out into the harbour. In the distance, the land on the south side of the harbour, near Rosslare Strand, can be seen. The ballast bank in the harbour can be seen in the foreground.

Proposed View

The proposed view shows the proposed Trinity Wharf development is visible to the left of the view. The buildings range from five to six storey buildings and they considerably extend the built form out into the harbour in the foreground. Though the proposed development very slightly intrudes on the skyline, the scale and mass of the buildings do not obstruct views over the harbour and are seen against the backdrop of the industrial building to the left of the view. Though the development is a noticeable element in the view, the scale of the built form is comparable to that of the waterfront buildings to the right of the image, and the larger industrial buildings in the background. The composition of the view is altered by the development, but the overall character of the view, with the extensive harbour view, the town's setting and backdrop, which are key elements of the view, all remain.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Visual receptors on Wexford Bridge include pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. The views over the harbour and to Wexford Town are panoramic and there are considerable numbers of viewers using the bridge. The pedestrians and cyclists would be the most susceptible to change, with the motorists less so. However, the view is considered to have high scenic value, and overall it is considered the viewers are of High Sensitivity.

Magnitude of Change:

The magnitude of change in the view is considered to be Medium:

Partial intrusion of the development in the view, resulting in change to the composition but not necessarily the character of the view or the visual amenity.

The overall visual effect is considered to be Moderate, and neutral in quality.

Viewpoint 3 – Figures 11.8 and 11.9 in Volume 3

Existing View

The existing view shows the view along the waterfront looking south, towards the site. In the foreground, the quay and the area enclosed by the breakwater are visible, seen here at low tide. To the right of the image, the waterfront promenade and the buildings of Paul Quay are visible along with the higher buildings along Trinity Street. The trees and the buildings along Trinity Street and beyond are also visible, as well as a small information kiosk along the water's edge at the corner of the breakwater arm.

In the background, the breakwater restricts views of the open sea, but the derelict Trinity wharf site with its low vegetation is visible behind this. In the far distance, some views of the land on the south side of Wexford Harbour, at Rosslare, are just discernible. It should be noted that panoramic views of the harbour are available to the east.

Proposed View

The proposed view shows the proposed development visible behind the breakwater, in the centre of the view. The development consists of a number of large scale buildings, up to six storeys in height, along with a marina development to the left, which is relatively large in scale compared to other existing buildings. The pedestrian bridge connecting to Paul Quay is also visible. The proposed building is large in extent and appears in the centre of the view and obstructs some of the views of the to the harbour and to Rosslare Strand beyond, though some views will remain to the left of the proposed building as the Marina development allow some views.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Viewers at this location along the waterfront will vary in sensitivity and a high number of viewers were observed in this area. Viewers include those engaged in recreation (walking and running observed here) and enjoying the surroundings and views to the harbour, those walking or travelling through the town or to work, those working on or accessing boats, as well as those visiting the town and visiting the tourist information kiosk. The value of the view is considered to be medium, as it has some scenic qualities in the view over the water and to the land across the harbour and the water in the foreground will be visible at high tide. The overall visual receptor sensitivity at this location is considered to be Medium to High.

Magnitude of Change:

This constitutes a magnitude of change which is considered to be High as set out in Table 1.4 above:

Partial intrusion that obstructs valued features, to the extent that the development becomes co-dominant with other elements in the composition and affects the character of the view and the visual amenity

Significance of visual effect

The resulting visual effect is considered to be Moderate to Significant.

The quality of the effects are considered to range from adverse to beneficial, where the buildings partially obstruct what was an open view along the waterfront, and the view towards the site is replaced by a large building. However, it should be noted there are still views to the left of the image over the marina, to the harbour and to the land in the distance. Beneficial effects result from the proposed buildings which provide activity and a focal point to the view, and are of comparable scale to the waterfront buildings to the right of the image. The quality of the proposed building, marina and boardwalks is considered of high quality and will enhance the surroundings. The overall effect is considered Neutral.

Viewpoint 4 – Figures 11.10 and 11.11 in Volume 3

Existing View

The existing view shows a view from Crescent Quay, from the artificially constructed wharf dating from the mid nineteenth century, towards the buildings which line Paul Quay. In the foreground, the silted up harbour is visible, with the road bridge seen to the left of the image. To the right of the image, nineteenth century buildings at the corner of Crescent Quay are seen adjacent to the five-storey building on the corner of Paul Quay. A tall building on Trinity Street is also visible to the right of the image. Wexford harbour is not visible from this view.

Proposed View

The proposed view shows the proposed development in the centre of the view, seen here between the information kiosk, and the buildings along Paul Quay. From this view, while the proposed development is noticeable, it is not dominant, and the buildings, while of moderate extent, do not appear higher than others in the image. The building does not obstruct views of the sea as these are not available from this view.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

The visual receptors in this location are considered to be of Medium sensitivity. Viewers would be similar to those along the waterfront in View A, however fewer people would be engaged in recreation activities at this location. The quay itself and a number of buildings on The Crescent are on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) in the Development Plan.

Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of change is considered Low:

Minor intrusion of the development into the view, resulting in minor alteration to the composition and character of the view but no change to visual amenity

Significance of visual effect

The resulting visual effect is considered Slight.

The quality of the effect is considered Neutral.

Viewpoint 5 – Figures 11.12 and 11.13

Existing View

View 5 shows a view taken from the breakwater to the north of the development, which extends out into Wexford Harbour, giving open views across the water towards Trinity Wharf. To the right of the image, a car park is visible along the waterfront, with a 5 storey brick building to the right. Below this several warehouses are visible which are much lower, with taller buildings in the distance. Towards the centre of the view, buildings including residences overlooking the harbour, interspersed with trees, are visible on the higher ground.

In the centre and to the left of the image, the lower ground of Trinity Wharf is visible, with low growing vegetation and the quay wall visible. In the distance across the harbour, the land and vegetation near Rosslare Strand is visible.

Proposed View

The proposed view shows the Trinity Wharf development appears in the centre of the view. The buildings which in the existing view, overlook the site, are obscured from view. The proposed buildings are of a height and mass which obscures some of the views across the harbour towards Rosslare Strand, and the views over the site itself. The buildings are of a moderate to large spatial extent, and of a much larger scale than the surrounds, and appears dominant in relation to the surrounding townscape and waterfront. The existing quay wall is removed, and the open views over the harbour and the land to the south greatly restricted, but not obscured. A pedestrian walkway is seen connecting the site to Paul Quay, across the water.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Visual receptors at this location would be those walking along the breakwater and enjoying the views, and those accessing boats in the breakwater. This is a popular location for recreation, and the view, though not highly scenic, is considered to have some scenic qualities, and viewers are considered to be of High sensitivity.

Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of change is considered to be High, as described in Table 1.4:

Extensive intrusion of the development in the view, or introduction of elements that may be considered uncharacteristic in the context,

Significance of Visual Effect

The visual effect is considered to be Significant:

The design of the building, marina and boardwalk is of a high quality, which is a beneficial effect. However, other aspects of the effect are considered to be adverse, due to the scale, height and mass of the building in the context of its surrounds and effect on the open views to the south and to the land in the distance.

Viewpoint 6 – Figures 11.14 and 11.15 in Volume 3

Existing View

This view shows the continuation of the waterfront walkway along the harbour, at Paul Quay, with a road and an area of car parking in the foreground of the view.

Several warehouse buildings are visible to the right, while beyond these clumps of trees and distant residences are visible. The land slopes down to the now vacant Trinity Wharf, seen in the centre of the view, where the quay walls and low vegetation are discernible. Some views of the land across the harbour are seen in the distance, behind Trinity Wharf and to the left of the image across the sea. The open water and harbour views are considered important elements in the view.

Proposed View

The proposed development appears in the centre of the view. The hotel building and obstructs the open views across the harbour, but some views are available beyond the marina. A pedestrian walkway which is connected to the site by concrete piers, connecting the waterfront at Paul Quay to the proposed development on Trinity Wharf, is also a conspicuous element in the view. The marina is visible to the left but intrudes upon rather than obscures views.

The existing features of the site that were visible, notably the vegetation and quay walls, and some long distance harbour views, are removed. The proposed development is considered to be dominant in the view, and the open views to the south

are much reduced however distant views remain beyond the marina. (It should be noted that there are open views to the harbour to the east and north east from this location).

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

This location has some scenic qualities due to the open waterfront location and distant views, especially in clear weather. This view represents viewers would be those who are walking or cycling, and viewers were also observed sitting on the low wall and feeding birds. These would be considered viewers of High Sensitivity. Viewers would also be those parking their cars and would be considered of Medium Sensitivity.

Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of change is considered High to Very High. High is defined as

Extensive intrusion of the development in the view, to the extent that the development becomes co-dominant with other elements in the composition and affects the character of the view and the visual amenity

Significance of Visual Effect

The visual effect is considered Significant. The quality of the effect is considered to have adverse effects, caused by the intrusion on the relatively open view to the south. The restriction of the open views by the building is considered to be an adverse effect, while the proposed marina does allow some views to the opposite side of the harbour, the open and expansive nature of the views to the south are changed. The beneficial visual effects include the improved appearance of the public space at the end of Paul Quay where the pedestrian walkway connects to the proposed development at Trinity Wharf, as well as the high quality of the overall design. The overall visual effect is considered neutral.

Viewpoint 7 – Figures 11.16 And 11.17 In Volume 3

Existing View

This view shows the view from the grounds of the church, which is in an elevated location to the northwest of the proposed development. The church grounds are bounded by a wall, which is visible in the foreground of the image. The view over the town consists of the roofscape of terraced houses along King Street and Barrack Street, and the Barracks is visible to the left of the image. There is a variety of buildings types, including residential and older stone maltings buildings, and no one building, or element, appears to be dominant.

Proposed View

This view shows the proposed hotel building visible above the roofscape, near to the centre of the view. While the design of proposed development differs from the existing buildings, the form and massing do fit in well with the overall view and do not appear dominant. The proposed development does not block any important views or elements in the landscape.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

This view represents viewers going to and from the church and surroundings. These viewers may congregate in the grounds at certain times, however, are not considered to be solely focussed on their surrounds. The visual receptor sensitivity is considered Low to Medium.

Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of change is considered Low –

Minor intrusion of the development into the view, resulting in minor alteration to the composition and character of the view but no change to visual amenity.

Significance of Visual Effect

The overall visual effect is considered to be Not Significant, Neutral effect.

Viewpoint 8 – Figures 11.18 and 11.19 of Volume 3

Existing View

This view shows the view from the grounds of Trespan Rock Park (also known as The Rocks), which is an important large semi-natural area of open space around the rock escarpment which forms the edge of the plateau above the town. This area is recognised in policy as an important open space. The area is a well-known and well used amenity area, with walkers encountered on the site visit.

This view is taken from the top of the rock outcrop located southwest of the playing pitch, where there are extensive views of the town and the harbour. The views over the harbour are panoramic, and this view captures the view looking across the playing field and trees below, over the harbour to the northeast, with views as far as The Raven nature reserve, from this location.

(It should be noted that views are also available to the Ferrybank area to the northeast, and to Rosslare Strand to the southeast but not shown in the photomontage.)

Proposed View

The proposed view shows the development visible in the middle ground, partly hidden by the trees, with the upper storeys visible. While the buildings are higher than the buildings in the vicinity, and of a greater scale and design to the buildings in the surrounds, they are prominent but do not obstruct the view to the water or across the harbour. The plant storage areas on the rooftops are conspicuous and the green roof planting may not be discernible from this distance. The hotel and office block buildings to the left are more visible, but the other buildings are considerably screened by the intervening vegetation. However, in wintertime glimpses of the buildings are likely through the trees. The overall open and expansive view to the harbour and land beyond, remains.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

The park is noted in the Development Plan and the semi-natural quality and extensive views indicate a valued view. The viewers would be those involved in walking the trails and enjoying the views and considered highly susceptible to change and therefore the visual receptors are considered of High sensitivity.

Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of change is considered to be Medium:

Partial intrusion of the development in the view, or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in change to the composition but not necessarily the character of the view or the visual amenity.

Significance of Visual Effect

The significance of the visual effect is considered Slight. The quality is considered adverse.

Viewpoint 9 – Figures 11.20 and 11.21 in Volume 3

Existing View

This view shows the view from junction of The Faythe with William Street Lower, looking down William Street. This view was one of several views requested by the Planning Authority.

To the right of the image is a grassed area with railings with several tree, with a warehouse building in the backdrop. William Street Lower is lined by buildings, ranging from two storey to three-storey. There are no views of the sea from this location.

Proposed View

The proposed view shows that the development is largely hidden by the intervening buildings, as indicated by the white outline. A relatively small proportion of the development is visible above the row of terraced houses in the distance. Though it does appear of a different scale and form to the buildings in the foreground, it does not dominate.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Visual receptor sensitivity is considered Low to Medium – this view is taken from outside a cluster of several shops and businesses, shop, and viewers would be those walking and driving along the street. There are no indications that the value of the view is high.

Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of change is considered Low –

Minor intrusion of the development into the view, resulting in minor alteration to the composition and character of the view but no change to visual amenity

Significance of Visual Effect

The visual effect is considered Imperceptible to Not Significant, Neutral effect.

Viewpoint 10 – Figures 11.22 and 11.23 of Volume 3

Existing View

This view shows the view from the end of Gulbar Place/Harbour View. Harbour View is a street that overlooks Wexford Harbour, and this view is taken from the edge of this road. The road is elevated, and the area has panoramic views overlooking the harbour. This view shows the view to the north over Trinity Wharf. To the left to the view is an industrial fence dividing the road from the large adjacent factory. The land slopes to the left, down to the railway line and to the Trinity Wharf site in the middle ground. Several boats are moored in the harbour. In the background, the Wexford town waterfront, promenade and fishing boats are seen, while the Wexford Bridge Ferrybank area is also visible. In the far distance, hills are visible.

Proposed View

The proposed view shows the Trinity Wharf development is visible as a large-scale element in the view, which obstructs a large proportion of the existing view to the waterfront and Wexford bridge to the north, and the view to the distant hills and landscape extending the built form out into the water. There are no comparable elements of built form of this scale in the view. The design proposed is of high quality,

which is a positive element, while the staggered roofline breaks up the massing of the building, the plant elements on the rooftops are quite noticeable and contrast with the rest of the building.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Residential receptors are located behind the viewing location. However, these are two storey houses but are mainly facing out over the harbour as opposed to the direction of the proposed development. The area is also to be used by locals walking. At the southern end of harbour view, a small harbour known as the Cot Safe or Goodtide harbour is visible, and some boats are moored in this area. The panoramic qualities of the open and extensive views over the harbour in all directions are notable. The value of the view is considered Medium. Viewers are considered of Medium to High sensitivity.

Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of change is considered High:

Partial intrusion that obstructs valued features, to the extent that the development becomes co-dominant with other elements in the composition and affects the character of the view and the visual amenity.

Significance of Visual Effect

The significance of the visual effect is considered to be Significant.

The development blocks open views to the north and changes the skyline dramatically, which is considered an adverse effect. However, views to the right of the image to the land across the harbour, remain open. The building design is of a high quality, which is considered to be a beneficial effect.

It should also be noted that in this location, there are extensive panoramic views to the east and south across Wexford Harbour, which will not be affected. The overall effect is considered however to be adverse.

Viewpoint 11 – Figures 11.24 and 11.25 of Volume 3

Existing View

The existing view shows part of an open and extensive view from the end of Batt Street, a cul-de-sac, which has views over the harbour. It should be noted that views are panoramic, and the image above shows the views in the direction of the development to the northeast. In reality the views are also to the east, as one travels along Batt Street, where the Cot Safe harbour is visible, as well as distant views to The Raven, across the water. Views are also to the southeast over the harbour.

The existing view shows the residences of (Goodtide Harbour) to the left of the view, which look over the harbour. A narrow and informal track runs adjacent to these houses which is used for walking by locals. A fence separates this from an overgrown area which slopes to the railway line and the water. To the right of the image, beyond the dwelling in the foreground, the low lying land of Trinity Wharf is visible, while in the distance, there are views to across the water to the land at Ferrybank, across Wexford Harbour, and the coastline to the east.

Proposed View

The proposed views show the closest building, the residential block, and the office building on the corner, appearing as large scale structures in the view. The buildings

obstruct much of the views over the harbour towards Ferrybank but allow views towards the coastline to the east. While they appear at a lower level to the existing residential buildings, they will significantly alter the views and context from this location and the buildings in the image.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

This view represents a number of residential receptors, where dwellings are facing the sea. This area is also used as a route by small numbers of walkers, as they can access a path to the railway line and across to the land below. The view though not designated has panoramic views of the harbour. Therefore, visual receptors are considered of Medium to High sensitivity.

Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of the change is considered to be High -

Extensive intrusion of the development in the view, or partial intrusion that obstructs valued features, to the extent that the development becomes co-dominant with other elements in the composition and affects the character of the view and the visual amenity.

Significance of Visual Effect

The resulting visual effect is considered to be Significant.

The partial obstruction of the harbour views by a building of large scale and mass, is considered to be an adverse effect, however there are still views available across the harbour, and panoramic views to the east and southeast, which are not shown in the image. The design quality of the building is considered high, but the overall effect is considered adverse.

Viewpoint 12 – Figures 11.26 and 11.27 of Volume 3

Existing View

This view shows the view along Fisher's Row, taken from the junction with Fisher's Row and The Faythe. This street is relatively narrow, composed of terraced houses of varying lengths on both sides, and slopes down towards Trinity Street. The narrow street frames a view over the empty site on Trinity Street, across the sea to the land on the opposite side of the harbour.

Proposed View

The proposed view indicates an office block with 5 storeys, visible in the centre of the view. This building blocks the sea views and changes the character of this street somewhat enclosing the vista with a tall building, of a different scale and mass to the buildings, roofscape and urban form in the foreground.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Visual receptors would include those walking and driving along the street, and some residential receptors, such as those in the dwellings at this junction on The Faythe, who have a view directly down this street. Some views may also be available from gable windows along Fisher's Row, but these numbers would be low. The visual receptor sensitivity is therefore considered High.

Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of change is considered Medium to High:

Partial intrusion of the development in the view, or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the context.

Significance of Visual Effect

The significance of the effect is considered Moderate.

The quality of the effect is considered to be adverse as the framed view of the harbour is completely obstructed. The view which is focussed on the proposed development, is occupied by a large scale building which does not enhance the character of the street or the view.

Viewpoint 13 – Figures 11.28 and 11.19 of Volume 3

Existing View

The existing view is taken from a street corner, and shows a view looking down Trinity Street, with a two storey house and adjacent lower buildings in the foreground, while a fenced vacant site occupies a large proportion of the view. Beyond this, some warehouses are visible. In the distance, in the centre of the view, a glimpse of the sea and the land on the opposite side of the harbour, is seen.

Proposed View

The photomontage shows a partial view of the proposed hotel building, which is largely screened by the buildings in the foreground. The building is higher than the surrounds, but as only a small proportion is visible, and at this angle, it does not appear dominant. Proposals also include planting along Trinity Street, and the proposed entrance to the site.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Viewers in this location are those walking and driving along the street, and this view is in close proximity to a residential view. The view does not have a high value. Visual Receptor sensitivity would be Medium to High.

Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of the change is considered Low:

Significance of Visual Effects

The overall visual effect is considered Not Significant.

The proposed development does not obstruct any sea views or affect any high quality elements in the view. It is considered that while of a different scale to the foreground buildings, the quality of the visual effect is neutral. The proposed planting is likely to have a positive visual effect on the street.

Viewpoint 14 – Figures 11.30 and 11.31 of Volume 3

Existing View

The existing view is taken from the corner of Fisher's Row, and the view shows a yard and the road in the foreground, with an open view over the fenced site across Trinity Street. Between the warehouse building to the left and the other building to the right of the image, a yard enclosed by a steel fence allows views of Wexford Harbour and the Raven nature reserve in the distance.

Proposed View

The proposed view shows several buildings are visible in the centre and left of the image. These buildings are considerably higher and of a larger scale and massing than the surrounds and obstruct large sections of the view to the harbour. However, some views between the buildings still remain to the left of the image. The proposed planting of a hedge and trees along Trinity Street is a positive change to the current view.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

The view is taken directly adjacent to the terrace on Fisher's Row and would represent viewers similar to that from the house to the left, and they are considered of Medium to High sensitivity. Viewers would also be those walking and driving along the street. The views of the harbour are not as extensive as from View 15. The view has some scenic qualities but is not seen as of high value.

Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of change is considered High -

Extensive intrusion of the development in the view, or partial intrusion that obstructs valued features, or introduction of elements that may be considered uncharacteristic in the context.

Significance of Visual Effects

The significance is considered to be Significant.

Regarding the quality of the effect –this ranges from adverse to beneficial. Though the removal of the harbour view is adverse, some positive aspects include the improved and more enclosed street frontage along Trinity Street- as the proposed hedge and trees will improve the streetscape. However, the overall effect is considered Beneficial.

Viewpoint 15 – Figures 11.32 and 11.33 of Volume 3

Existing View

The existing view shows the view from an elevated terrace of houses, at the junction of Fisher's Row and Trinity Street. The houses are at some level above Trinity Street, and the view is taken from the open space just in front of the houses. The view shows a terraced open space in the foreground, sloping down to the street. There is a lane, Seaview Avenue, to the left, but across the road is a warehouse as well as a fenced site which is vacant (a warehouse on the site was demolished). There are extensive views to the sea and across the harbour to the lands at Raven's Point, which extends out into Wexford Harbour.

Proposed View

The proposed view shows the entrance to the development off Trinity Street, and the buildings appearing prominent and in the centre of the view. The buildings almost completely obstruct the view over the harbour, but a glimpse of the sea is visible between the hotel building on the left, and the proposed low retail and café building which is visible along the Trinity Wharf waterfront. The multi-storey car park is visible to the right of the view. Seaview Avenue is slightly widened to allow for a turning area while a junction and railway crossing is also visible.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

The visual receptors are residential viewers and the view is an extensive view over the harbour. Visual receptors are therefore considered of High sensitivity.

Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of change is considered Very High:

Full or extensive intrusion of the development in the view, or partial intrusion that obstructs valued features or characteristics, or introduction of elements that are completely out of character in the context, to the extent that the development becomes the dominant the composition and defines the character of the view and the visual amenity.

Significance of Visual Effects

The visual effect is considered Significant.

While certain aspects of the change are considered adverse, such as the obstruction of the harbour views, glimpses of the harbour will be available, and will be greater when the trees are not in leaf. The buildings, while of a greater scale and massing than the surrounds, constitute an improved design quality when compared to the shed-like structure on the view to the left. The removal of the steel fencing is a positive effect, as is the proposed planting and improved street frontage. The overall effect is neutral.

Viewpoint 16 – Figures 11.34 and 11.35 of Volume 3

Existing View

Existing view shows a view along Trinity Street, where a large fenced site along the street shows a considerable gap in the streetscape. Behind the fence, trees and shrubs are visible, but there are no views beyond. The quality of the streetscape in this location is not high. To the right of the view, terraced houses along the end of William Street are just visible.

Proposed View

Proposed views show the development occupying a considerable extent of the view, in between the warehouse to the left of the view, and extending in the distance. The office block building appears in close proximity to the street frontage, and the buildings serve to enclose the street and the view, though they are set back some distance from the street. The scale of the proposed development is considerably larger than the surrounding buildings, and the massing and form contrast with the small scale vernacular terrace buildings in the right of the image. The proposed entrance treatment, green space and vegetation serves to improve the streetscape, and the removal of the steel industrial style fencing is a positive effect.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Visual Receptor Sensitivity is considered Medium. Though some dwellings are located along this (west side of the street) they are not oriented to face the development directly.

Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of change is considered Very High –

Full or extensive intrusion of the development in the view, to the extent that the development becomes the dominant the composition and defines the character of the view and the visual amenity

Significance of Visual Effects

The visual effect is considered Significant. As noted above, the development does not obscure views, and it is considered that the proposed development is an improvement in this view. The visual effect is considered beneficial.

Viewpoint 17 – Figures 11.36 and 11.37 of Volume 3

Existing View

The existing view shows a view to several warehouses, Trinity Motors to the left of the image, and another warehouse to the right. In the centre are conspicuous signs above a low wall which encloses a car park belonging to Trinity Motors. Fencing to the rear of this area reduces views to the harbour beyond. To the right of the image, an access road is visible. The streetscape on this side of Trinity Street is of low quality, and the scale and type of buildings are very different to the residential elements on the opposite side of the street.

Proposed View

The proposed view shows the proposed buildings clearly visible in the centre of the view to the rear of the existing signage and warehouse buildings. The buildings, though large scale, do not block sea views as these are already obstructed. The six storey hotel building appears as a significantly taller building than the warehouses, but the lack of any defined streetscape and the relatively large scale and footprint of the warehouses means that the change is somewhat less dramatic.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Visual receptors are those walking and driving along the street, but also those residences on the street opposite the Trinity Motors site, which are two storey and will have views similar to this view. The view does not seem to be of high value. Therefore, viewers are considered to be of Medium to High sensitivity.

Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of the change is considered Medium –

Partial intrusion of the development in the view, or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in change to the composition but not necessarily the character of the view or the visual amenity.

Significance of Visual Effects

The visual effect is considered to be Moderate.

The quality of the visual effect is considered neutral to beneficial.

Viewpoint 18 – Figures 11.38 and 11.39 of Volume 3

Existing View

The existing view shows the streetscape in the foreground composed of a variety of large industrial warehouse units interspersed with large signs. As the street rises in level, a terrace of two storey houses along William Street, is visible. This section of the street has a distinctive and a very different character to the large scale units in the foreground. The quality of the streetscape is considered low.

Proposed View

The proposed view shows the proposed office block visible to the rear of the existing signage. The remaining buildings are largely screened by the intervening buildings and structures.

The scale and extent of the proposed development, while large, does not appear unduly obtrusive in the context of the existing streetscape. Some improvements to the street in the form of planting and street trees at the site entrance are also visible.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

The value of the view is not considered to be high. Visual receptors would include those in residences, which are considered to have High Sensitivity, which are located along the western side of the street, from where this view is taken. Visual receptors would also include those walking and driving along the street, who would be of Medium sensitivity.

Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of change is considered to be Low–

Minor intrusion of the development into the view, or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in minor alteration to the composition and character of the view but no change to visual amenity.

Significance of Visual Effects

The overall visual effect is considered to be Imperceptible to Not Significant.

The quality of the effect is considered neutral, to beneficial.

Viewpoint 19 – Figures 11.40 and 11.41 of Volume 3

Existing View

The existing view shows the streetscape in the foreground and middle ground composed of a variety of large industrial warehouse units and a filling station. As the street rises in level, a terrace of two storey houses along William Street, is visible. To the right of the image, rows of coloured terraced two storey dwellings appear of a completely different scale, form and character when compared with the opposite (eastern) side of the street. The appearance of the warehouse type buildings in the foreground creates a somewhat chaotic effect, compared to the residential terraces on the street.

Proposed View

The proposed view shows the proposed hotel and office block are partly visible to the rear of the existing warehousing. The remaining buildings and lower storeys are largely screened by the intervening buildings and structures.

The scale and extent of the proposed development, while large, does not appear unduly obtrusive in the context of the existing warehousing and signage to the left of the image. It does however appear to be of quite a different scale and height, then the residential terraces on the opposite side and far end of the street.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

This view represents the street at a vehicular entrance, rather than an area of residential receptors. Therefore, viewers are those driving and walking along Trinity Street, and those accessing the supermarket or fuel station at this location. The visual receptor sensitivity there is considered to be Low to Medium.

Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of change is considered to be Medium –

Partial intrusion of the development in the view, or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in change to the composition but not necessarily the character of the view or the visual amenity.

Significance of Visual Effects

The overall visual effect is considered to be Slight.

The quality of the effect is considered neutral.

Viewpoint 20 – Figures 11.42 and 11.43 of Volume 3

Existing View

The existing view from Rosslare Strand shows an open view from the strand across the harbour to Wexford town. The town is set against a backdrop of an elevated plateau, which has a high proportion of tree cover. The town's two church spires are distinctive, as is the large industrial building on the waterfront to the left of the image. To the left of the image, a landscape of trees and fields is seen, while to the right and in the distance behind the town, views of distant hills are available.

Proposed View

The proposed view shows the development is seen along the waterfront, and views to the town's skyline, with the distinctive church spires, and backdrop of hills, are maintained. The development is of some extent but is comparable with the extent of the industrial buildings to the left, and the building does not intrude on the skyline.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

This view is taken from Rosslare Strand, which is a Landscape of High Sensitivity. This is a strand and an area where viewers would be walkers and those enjoying the amenities and the scenery and views across the harbour. Visual receptor sensitivity is therefore considered High.

Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of the change is considered Low:

Low - Minor intrusion of the development into the view, resulting in minor alteration to the composition and character of the view but no change to visual amenity.

Significance of Visual Effects

The visual effect is considered Not Significant, neutral visual effect.

Viewpoint 21 – Figures 11.44 and 11.45 of Volume 3

Existing View

The view from the Raven Point shows an open and extensive view across the harbour to Wexford Town, and the townscape is visible in its setting on the water's edge, with the higher land behind. Several larger buildings are discernible, including the industrial buildings to the left, and the more recent waterfront buildings along Paul Quay to the right.

Proposed View

The proposed view shows the development visible along the waterfront, against the backdrop of the town. The proposed development is of a scale and extent comparable with the industrial buildings to the left, but is lower and less prominent than these. The buildings do not obstruct views or the skyline from this view. The magnitude of change is considered Low.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

This view is from Raven Point, which is the tip of the peninsula which is part of The Raven nature reserve, a wooded peninsula which extends into Wexford Harbour. This is visible in many views from Wexford Town. It is a Landscape of Greater Sensitivity and this view was requested by the Planning Authority. The viewers would be walkers, joggers, and those interested in the nature reserve area, and those enjoying the amenities. It is expected that viewers would highly focused on their surroundings, so visual receptors are considered Highly sensitive.

Magnitude of Change

Low - Minor intrusion of the development into the view, or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in minor alteration to the composition and character of the view but no change to visual amenity

The visual effect is considered Not Significant, that is -

An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment but without affecting its sensitivities

The quality of the effect is considered neutral.

Table 11.7 below summarises the visual receptor sensitivity, magnitude of change and significance of effect for each of the viewpoints.

Table 11.7 Summary of effects on Viewpoints

Viewpoint Number	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Significance of Effect	Quality of Effect
1	High	Medium	Moderate	Neutral
2	High	Medium	Moderate	Neutral
3	Medium/High	High	Moderate/Significant	Neutral
4	Medium	Low	Slight	Neutral
5	High	High	Significant	Adverse
6	Medium/High	High/Very High	Significant	Neutral
7	Low/Medium	Low	Not Significant	Neutral
8	High	Medium	Slight	Adverse
9	Low/Medium	Low	Not Significant	Neutral
10	Medium/High	High	Significant	Adverse
11	Medium/High	High	Significant	Adverse
12	High	High	Moderate	Adverse
13	Medium/High	Low	Not Significant	Beneficial
14	Medium/High	High	Significant	Beneficial

Viewpoint Number	Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Significance of Effect	Quality of Effect
15	High	Very High	Significant	Neutral
16	Medium	Very High	Significant	Beneficial
17	Medium/High	Medium	Moderate	Neutral/Beneficial
18	Medium/High	Low	Not Significant	Neutral/Beneficial
19	Low/Medium	Medium	Slight	Neutral
20	High	Low	Not Significant	Neutral
21	High	Low	Not Significant	Neutral

Visual Effects – Summary

The majority of the above photomontages are taken from locations, which represent visual receptors of High sensitivity. These include residents in close proximity to the site, viewers engaged in recreation along the waterfront walkways in the town, or in recreation areas with views such as The Rock amenity area or the open space at Ferrybank. Sensitive visual receptors also include viewers at more distant locations including The Raven and Rosslare Point.

The photomontages show both close up and distant views. A number of the views in close proximity to the site show a considerable magnitude of change, which results in a Medium to Very High magnitude of change. Other viewpoints such as the distant viewpoints across the harbour, have a much lower magnitude of change due to the distance and the setting of the proposed development. Certain viewpoints on Trinity Street will also experience a less dramatic change in visual effect than may be expected. The visual effects range from Not Significant, as shown in views 7,9,13,18,20,21, to Significant, as in views 3,5,6,10,11,14,15, and 16. The visual effects on the different areas of the site and surrounds are discussed below.

The quality of the effect ranges from adverse to neutral and beneficial. Adverse visual effects are likely in the case of the views to the water being obstructed or enclosed by the development, including views which will be experienced by residents, or where the proposed development appears of a greater scale and size than its surroundings.

Beneficial visual effects are likely where the development creates a positive change, such as certain parts of Trinity Street. where the view is considered to be improved, and where the high quality of the built form improves the view.

Neutral effects are likely from the views across from Ferrybank, across the harbour, and Wexford Bridge, where the development sits in well with the existing townscape and backdrop.

Waterfront Views

Wexford's location on the harbour creates its distinctive setting, and its expansive waterfront views are important characteristics of the town.

Views to the water are frequent and range from open and expansive views across the harbour, as shown in Views 1,2,5,6,8,10,11, as well as views where there are smaller glimpses of the sea, from the surrounding urban areas, as shown in View 12 looking along Fisher's Row, and these are also experienced along Parnell Street and Batt Street.

The views to and from the water, acknowledged as important in the Development Plan policy, will undergo a degree of change, as a result of the proposed development. The views looking across the water from Ferrybank and from Wexford Bridge, will experience change, and although the proposed development will be a noticeable element, as it extends into the harbour, it is largely seen against the backdrop of the existing townscape. Additionally, although the development will change the skyline to some degree, these views (Views 1 and 2) show the development to be of a scale and height which is comparable to the other waterfront buildings from these locations, which are at some distance. The magnitude of change is considered Medium, and the visual effects are considered to be neutral. Viewers from the waterfront path at Ferrybank which is at a lower level than the surrounds, are likely to experience greater magnitude of change than those viewing from elevated locations, and from here the development may intrude more upon the skyline. Views further north of Ferrybank, along the waterfront at Crosstown, were considered, but while the proposed development is likely to be visible, Wexford Bridge partly obstructs the view. Viewers are likely to experience a lesser magnitude of change than Views 1 and 2.

A number of views were taken to represent Wexford's waterfront area. This is a popular area which has a promenade, and is popular for recreation, as well as for berthing of fishing vessels and other boats, which gives it a vibrant atmosphere, and the views to Wexford harbour are also an important element of the view. Viewers at these locations, looking south, particularly around Paul Quay, are likely to experience significant changes in the view, as viewers looking south towards the proposed development will experience a 'shortening' of the existing view to the harbour as the proposed development will be viewed large scale building directly in the line of view. The visual effects range from neutral to adverse.

From Paul Quay to Commercial Quay, it is noted the open views to the east over the harbour towards Ferrybank and Raven Point, will remain. These views are illustrated in Plates 11.31-33. It should be noted that night time views, especially those along the waterfront and the immediate vicinity of the site, will change as more lighting will be evident as a result of the proposed development.

Trinity Street and Environs

The proposed development on Trinity Wharf will result in visual effects on the local areas of Trinity Street, and to a lesser extent, the streets leading off Trinity Street, including Fisher's Row, Sea View Avenue and Trinity Place.

Viewpoints 13 - 19 are taken from various locations along Trinity Street. This is a high proportion of views, but these give an indication of the variation in the visual effects along the different parts of Trinity Street.

Approaching from the north, Trinity Street has a mixture of some nineteenth and twentieth century buildings, including terraced buildings with a distinctive character, interspersed with a hotel, and a modern six storey residential development. There is a high proportion of recent warehouse buildings, creating a varied streetscape, and one which has little active frontage along much of the eastern side. The proposed development will have some visual effect on the lower northern part of the street, as shown in View 18, and 19, and while noticeable, this is not considered significant as the buildings are set back somewhat from the street behind the existing warehouse buildings.

As one moves closer to the proposed development, such as in views 14-17, the buildings, while still set back from Trinity Street to some extent, appear more noticeable

and create a larger magnitude of change in the view. The development is considerably higher, and larger in scale and mass than the surrounding buildings, though the industrial warehouse type buildings can also be described as large in scale, but these are not of comparable height. Some views to the harbour which are currently available, will be lost, mainly from the terrace of houses on Fisher's Row. Some glimpses of the harbour will be available but are greatly restricted.

The visual receptors which will experience the greatest magnitude of change, some of which is considered to have significant visual effects, will be the residents on Fisher's Row, on the terrace which faces Trinity Street and currently has sea views as it is somewhat elevated from the surroundings and lies opposite a vacant site (which was the site of a warehouse until 2008). It is considered that there are both negative and positive aspects to the change, and while the streetscape is improved with vegetation and tree planting, and some of the steel fencing removed, the large scale buildings will obstruct much of the harbour views and introduce a considerably larger scale and mass to the view. Viewers looking towards Trinity Street along Fisher's Row will also experience a degree of change as the view of the sea is lost, however views to the sea will be maintained along Batt Street. Some views, such as View 16, show where there are no existing sea views from Trinity Street, that the proposed development will have a positive visual effect by removing the steel fencing and concrete yard, and improving the street with vegetation and trees.

Views from the end of Batt Street and Gulbar Road/Harbour view will have views of the proposed development to the north, and this will result in a reduced view of the harbour, to the northeast. However, views to the east and south will still be available.

A view was taken from the junction of The Faythe and William Street, View 9, and this shows the development be largely screened by foreground buildings, having a minimal visual effect on the area.

Views from the Southwest

Further southwest, an area where the development is considered to be visible but not giving rise to significant visual effects are the views from Trespan Rock/The Rocks, where the proposed development is partly visible but the important and panoramic harbour views are maintained.

Views from the Northwest

A view representing the more elevated areas of the town, at the Church of the Assumption on Bride Street, is included and illustrates that the development, while partially visible from this elevated area, will blend in with the roofscape and not have a significant visual effect.

Medieval Town

As discussed in Section 11.4, views are unlikely from the streets in the medieval core of South Main Street and North Main Street, and the perpendicular lanes and streets, due to the intervening dense built form. Views south along South Main Street are restricted by the Barracks building which is seen at the end of South Main Street as shown in Plate 11.26. The upper storeys of several taller buildings such as White's Hotel and the Opera House may have views of the proposed development.

Landscapes of Greater Sensitivity – Rosslare Strand and The Raven/Raven Point

The areas of Rosslare Strand and The Raven were visited, and photomontages prepared, in order to assess visual effects of the proposed development. It is

considered that while the proposed development is likely to be visible from these areas, in good weather conditions. However, both these locations have views of the other parts of the harbour, and in particular at Raven Point, where views are in all directions, not just in the direction of the proposed development, and the site is not the main focus of the view. The development, while visible is not considered likely to give rise to significant visual effects.

Conclusion – Visual Effects

In conclusion, the proposed development introduces several large scale, 5 and 6 storey buildings, proposed marina and pedestrian boardwalk to a prominent, vacant waterfront site on Trinity Wharf, in Wexford Harbour just south of the town centre. The site was previously the location of a number of industrial and warehouse buildings until recent demolition in the 1990s and have remained undeveloped. As a result of this demolition, and the removal of the built form, several views to the harbour have been opened up as is now reflected in the baseline but which in the past 100 years may have been enclosed.

In terms of visual effects, the views of the harbour are considered characteristic of this area, and are noted in the Development Plan. The proposed development will re-introduce built form on the site, in the form of large scale buildings on this prominent site. Visual effects range from Not Significant, in cases where the development is barely visible, or visible but not in any way dominant, to Significant, where the development is clearly visible and will cause a considerable change in the visual character and amenity of the area.

Some Significant visual effects are likely, in particular in the immediate vicinity of the site, and the waterfront to the north, however visual effects are not considered significant in relation to the wider town including the historic medieval core and the wider Wexford harbour area, including the areas of Raven point and Rosslare Harbour.

The quality of the visual effects, range from adverse to beneficial.

The adverse visual effects are mainly localised, occurring in the vicinity of the site and some views along the waterfront to the north of the site. While the majority of the adverse effects relate to the restriction of long views by a large scale built form, in most cases, views are available in other directions to the harbour, as from the waterfront locations north of the site, and also the end of Batt Street and Gulbar Road/Harbour view. There are very few views where the proposed development will obstruct the only view to the harbour. Some residential views are likely to be affected in the vicinity of the site. Beneficial effects are likely along parts of Trinity Street where the proposed development will improve the streetscape and character. Visual effects on the wider townscape and harbour tend to be neutral in quality.

11.6 Mitigation & Monitoring Measures

Mitigation Measures – Construction Phase

The measures proposed revolve around the implementation of appropriate site management procedures – such as the control of site lighting, storage of materials, placement of compounds, delivery of materials, car parking, etc. Visual impact during the construction phase will be mitigated somewhat through appropriate site management measures and work practices to ensure the site is kept tidy, dust is kept to a minimum, and that any locations close to public areas are kept free from building material and site rubbish.

Site hoarding will be appropriately scaled, finished and maintained for the period of construction of each section of the works as appropriate. To reduce the potential negative impacts during the construction phase, good site management and housekeeping practices will be adhered to. The visual impact of the site compound(s) and scaffolding visible during the construction phase are of a temporary nature only and therefore require no remedial action other than as stated above.

General construction measures are outlined in the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan and Outline Environmental Operating Plan as per Appendices 4.1 and 4.2 of this EIAR which must be undertaken by all contractors.

Mitigation Measures – Operational Phase

Mitigation measures were largely included in the design of the project. The design statement refers to the design rationale, and extensive analysis was undertaken to arrive at the proposed design. The design process analysed the buildings and streetscape in the vicinity of the site and design responses took into account the following;

- The proposed development is in the context of the Wexford Quays Economic Action and Spatial Implementation Plan which aims to connect the site to the Crescent and Paul Quay area and has a number of aims for the surrounding town.
- The scale and height of the buildings (5-6 storeys) were designed to relate to the existing buildings along Paul Quay, particularly when seen from the Ferrybank and Wexford Bridge areas. It was decided that buildings taller than this would have a greater visual effect on the overall harbour. A previous application on the site had proposed taller buildings and a larger marina development. Analysis concluded that buildings of a smaller scale would be better suited to meet the objectives of Wexford County Council for the site. In addition, the Development Plan policy recommends buildings of 5-6 storeys along Trinity Street, so the proposed development is compatible with this.
- The scheme creates connectivity to the town centre and allows for public access by linking Trinity Wharf to Paul Quay via a boardwalk, and also proposed public realm improvements in the Paul Quay area. Other options which connected to the Trinity Wharf site along the railway line were considered but this would have required security fencing and barriers for the railway line, so the connection of a boardwalk at Paul Quay is considered to be preferable and results in a more visually attractive connection that maximises the positive benefit of the waterfront location.
- The design of the proposed hotel building was amended and re-oriented to maximise public access to the waterfront in the location with the most remarkable views from the site.
- The proposed design includes provision of public spaces and walkways including a boardwalk connecting the site to Paul Quay, a coastal walkway and viewpoints, to enhance the views from the site and thus enhance a key characteristic of the site. The proposed boardwalk will provide a new viewing location for views out to the harbour and along the waterfront, as well as addressing the policy for a coastal walkway.
- The landscape plan proposed to enhance the site's character with tree and shrub planting to emphasise the natural character and setting of the site and create a buffer of suitable and robust vegetation along the railway line to integrate development into the wider landscape. The landscape design strategy included in Appendix 4.6 of the EIAR will be implemented as part of the design.

11.7 Residual Effects

The residual effects are expected to be as set out in Section 11.5 above for Landscape and Visual Effects.

11.8 Difficulties Encountered

No difficulties were encountered.