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(Please quote in all related correspondence)

9 December 2022

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**Re: Preplanning consultation regarding a project on the River Liffey at Islandbridge, where Dublin City Council will construct a pontoon linking the west and east of the river at the second island.**

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I refer to correspondence received in connection with the above.

Outlined below are underwater archaeological observations/recommendations of the Department.

### **Underwater Archaeology**

The application and supporting documents, including the report entitled 'An Archaeological, Architectural and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment of Proposed Pontoon at Islandbridge, Dublin 8 (Rubicon Heritage, Sept. 2021)', have been reviewed by the Department. As noted in the archaeological assessment report, the proposed development area is situated within the zone of archaeological potential for Dublin City and a bridge site (DU018-020274-) and the site of a water-mill (DU018-020276) lie approximately 280m to the east of the proposed development. Built heritage structures are also noted within and in the environs of the proposed development area on the first edition six-inches to one mile Ordnance Survey map and the 25-inches to a mile (c. 1900) Ordnance Survey map. Recorded Monuments are subject to statutory protection in the Record of Monuments and Places established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1930-2014. Under Section 12(c) of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 any person (including a landowner) proposing to carry out, or to cause or to permit the carrying out of, any work at or in relation to a Recorded Monument must give notice in writing to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage two months before commencing that work. Receipt of planning consultation is regarded as compliance with the Section 12 requirements. Furthermore, the Wreck Inventory of Ireland contains numerous entries for losses in the River Liffey in the environs of the proposed development area and it is therefore possible that it contains wrecks or elements of lost vessels, including archaeological objects underwater, which have been previously



undocumented. Over 18,000 wrecks have been recorded to date from Irish waterways and the marine environment, ranging from small fishing boats, dugout canoes and coastal traders to steamships and ocean going ships. Though earlier sources have been included where obtainable, the Inventory is largely based on documentary sources available from after 1700AD. As such, previously unrecorded wreck sites, including those dating to earlier periods, may await discovery in the area under consideration here. Section 3 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1987 is the primary piece of legislation for the protection of wrecks over 100 years old and archaeological objects underwater irrespective of age. Wrecks that are less than 100 years old and archaeological objects or the potential location of such a wreck or archaeological object can also be protected under Section 3 of the 1987 (Amendment) Act.

In light of the above and given that the proposed development includes in-water works (including rock armour, in-stream piling, insertion of stone filled gabions) that could potentially impact on archaeological materials in the river bed at this location the Department recommends that an Underwater Archaeological Impact Assessment (UAIA) report be compiled and submitted to this Department for review and comment. The UAIA should be undertaken and submitted to this Department prior to the commencement of any construction works in order to facilitate the formulation of appropriate archaeological mitigation recommendations.

#### **Archaeological Recommendations**

1. The developer shall commission an Underwater Archaeological Impact Assessment (UAIA) report which shall include the following:
  - a. A desktop assessment that addresses the underwater, archaeological and built (including maritime/fishing/industrial) heritage of the proposed development area. The assessment shall include a full inventory and mapping of the sites of all identified archaeological/cultural heritage features and structures (including those identified underwater) and shall also include maps/drawings that clearly indicate any proposed impacts on these assets/areas of archaeological potential arising from the proposed project. The UAIA shall assess all proposed in-water development and shall also assess any proposed Site Investigation impacts and potential secondary or indirect impacts such as construction works to facilitate access and areas of scouring as a result of potential changes in hydrology.
  - b. The UAIA shall include a licensed dive assessment centred on (but not confined to) the area(s) where in-water works are proposed, accompanied by a hand-held metal detection survey, undertaken by a suitably licensed and experienced underwater archaeologist with metal detection experience. All archaeological diving should comply with the Health and Safety Authority's Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Diving) Regulations 2018/2019. A Dive Survey Licence (Section 3 1987 National Monuments Act) and Detection Device consent (Section 2 1987



National Monuments Act) will be required for all of these works. Please allow 5-6 weeks to facilitate the processing of archaeological licences.

- c. Having completed the work, the archaeologist shall submit a written report to the Department and Dublin City Archaeologist describing the findings of the UAIA, including the results of the dive survey. The report should comment on the degree to which the extent, location and levels of all proposed works and other sub-surface/in-water works required for a development may impact upon any archaeological remains. This report should be illustrated with appropriate plans, sections and photographs. Where archaeological materials are shown to be present, further mitigation measures will be required. These may include recommendations for institution of appropriate buffer zones, redesign to allow for preservation in situ, excavation and/or monitoring as deemed appropriate. The Department will advise the developer with regard to these matters. No construction works shall commence until the Department has had the opportunity to fully evaluate the findings of the UAIA and the Department's recommendations (and those, if any, of the Dublin City Archaeologist) have been received.
  - d. A Construction Environment Management Plan should incorporate any significant findings that emerge from the UAIA process, including but not limited to, the location of any archaeological or cultural heritage constraints relevant to a proposed development and present appropriate mitigation measures to protect the archaeological or cultural heritage environment.
2. Archaeological monitoring is to take place of all works that involve groundworks or any impacts to the riverbed and riverbanks, as below:
- a. The services of a suitably qualified and suitably experienced underwater archaeologist shall be engaged to carry out the archaeological monitoring.
  - b. The archaeological monitoring shall be licensed by the Department and a detailed method statement that sets out the monitoring strategy is to accompany a licence application.
  - c. A Finds Retrieval Strategy shall be included in the methodology and all excavated deposits shall be spread and metal detected (under licence) to recover any archaeological objects that they may contain.
- b) The monitoring archaeologist shall obtain a dive survey licence in order to facilitate investigation of underwater archaeological materials should they be uncovered/identified.
  - c) Please note vetting of licence applications by the Department takes 3-4 weeks.
  - d) A communication strategy is to form part of the monitoring strategy to ensure full communication is in place between the monitoring archaeologist and the plant operator(s) at all times during works. The archaeological personnel undertaking the



monitoring will be in a position to monitor directly all elements of the works, to ensure they have unobstructed views of the excavations, and the plant and machinery operators shall be prepared to facilitate the archaeological personnel in the undertaking of their monitoring work.

- e) Should archaeological materials be found during the course of monitoring, the archaeologist shall have work on the affected area of the site stopped pending further archaeological investigation and a decision by the Department and Dublin City Archaeologist regarding appropriate mitigation. The developer shall be prepared to be advised by the Department with regard to any mitigating action (preservation in-situ and/or excavation). The developer shall facilitate the archaeologist in recording any material found.
- f) The Planning Authority, the Department and Dublin City Archaeologist shall be furnished with a final archaeological report describing the results of the monitoring and any subsequent required archaeological investigative work/excavation required, following the completion of all archaeological work on site and any necessary post-excavation specialist analysis. All resulting and associated archaeological costs shall be borne by the developer.

The above observations/recommendations are based on the papers submitted to this Department on a pre-planning basis and are made without prejudice to any observations that the Minister may make in the context of any consultation arising on foot of any development application referred to the Minister, by the planning authority, in his role as statutory consultee under the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended.

You are requested to send any further communications to this Department's Development Applications Unit (DAU) at [manager.dau@npws.gov.ie](mailto:manager.dau@npws.gov.ie), or to the following address:

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