

CUNNANE STRATTON REYNOLDS

Planning Statement

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For

White Water Rafting Centre, Georges' Dock and Custom house Quay, Dublin

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Disclaimer: The advice in this report has been informed by a search of the available online planning history and development plan zoning objectives for the site in question, and excludes consideration of other existing or potential, perceived or actual issues including but not exclusively relating to wayleaves, other rights of way, ownership, availability or otherwise of access, flood risk, infrastructural constraints, and of other advices produced in relation to the site by other parties. Our advice has been prepared without consultation with any other party including the local authority in whose jurisdiction the site is located. We reserve the right to amend the advice contained in the report based upon the availability of further information as and when it may become available. The site boundary indicated in Figures 1 is indicative only.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared by Cunnane Stratton Reynolds on behalf of Dublin City Council to form part of a Part 8 application for the Whitewater Rafting Centre and ancillary development at Georges Dock and Custom House Quay, Dublin1.

The purpose of this report is to demonstrate consistency with the proper planning and development of the area, and why a Part 8 application, referred to in the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), should be granted planning permission. This statement should be read in conjunction with the Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report, also prepared by Cunnane Stratton Reynolds and the Stage 1 Appropriate Assessment Screening Report prepared by Altamar Ltd.

2.0 SITE LOCATION

The application site is located within the Docklands area of Dublin City Centre. It is irregular in shape, with the majority of the site comprising of the Georges Dock (now dry basin) with an extended area within the application red line along Custom House Quay to comprise the associated current Dublin City Council dockland office building. The George's Dock Red Line Luas stop is located approximately 50m to the north east of the site. Connolly Main Line Rail Station is located some 500m to the north west of the site.

The application site is located within the International Financial Services Centre which was instituted as a means of attracting global financial services into this part of the country and this part of Ireland's capital city specifically. There is a strong predominance of financial based offices in close proximity to the site with the nearest residential development being located in the Inner Dock at Custom House Harbour some 200m to the north.

Immediately to the north of the site and on the southern side of Mayor Street are two buildings comprising coffee shop, convenience shop and delicatessens and cafes. Beyond these and further to the north, on the other side of Mayor Street, are located two office blocks namely George's Dock House and an office block occupied by JP Morgan. Immediately to the west is an area of predominantly grassed public open space overlooking the lock located on site and which is surrounded on three sides by IFSC. The eastern side of the site is characterised by a tree lined promenade with the CHQ running the length of the application site and which comprises the Ely Restaurant and Bar, serviced incubator offices, the Irish Family History Museum and the EPIC Irish Emigration Museum. The southern part of the site is in part bounded by the River Liffey and by the R801 (Custom House Quay).

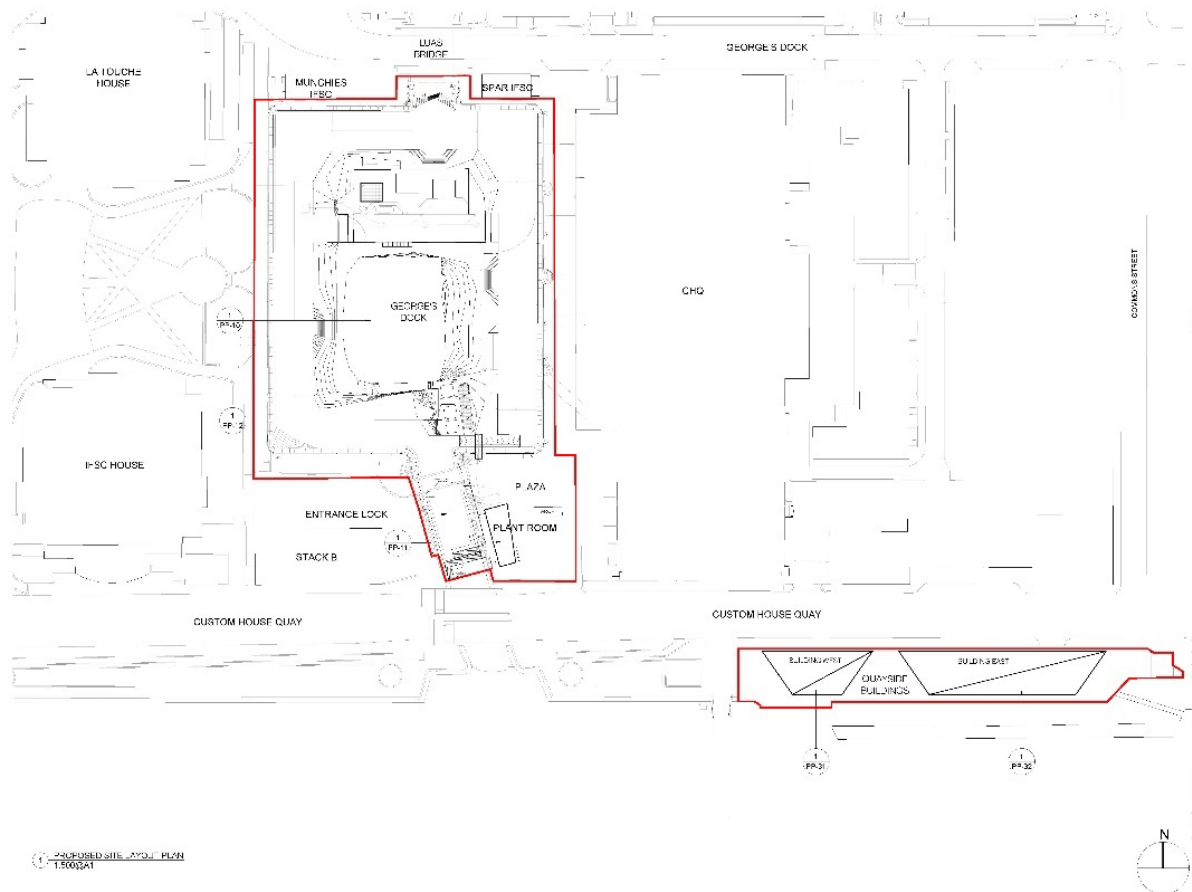


Figure 1; Site outline

Georges Dock was built in the 1820s as a working maritime dock in proximity to the Custom House. The surrounds of dock were developed in the late 1990s and early 2000s with the establishment of the International Financial Services Centre to the west of the site and the renovation of the last remaining docklands warehouse, now the CHQ building, to the east. The dock itself is largely unchanged, though a large concrete wall isolates it from the River Liffey and a temporary platform to host public events was installed in 2003.

The Triumphal Arch, currently located outside the adjacent CHQ building, was located here in 1988 from its original position to the end of Amien St. The arch is a protected structure (NIAH-50011219).

The quayside buildings were developed between 1988 and 1994 as a marketing suite, which eventually supported the functions of the Dublin Docklands Development Authority and absorbed into Dublin City Council upon dissolution of the DDDA on the 1st of March 2016.

The site is not located within the North Lotts and Grand Canal Dock SDZ Planning Scheme 2014 but it is located within the Water Animation Strategy for the Docklands Area where active sports and events will be accommodated. The site and public area around it are used on an annual basis for the Oktoberfest which runs for a 5 week period per year where large gatherings of people are accommodated and also at further periodic and shorter events each year including Christmas Fairs and Fringe Festival Events.

Apart from the dock, other predominant features of the site include the Triumphal Arch in the south east corner of the site, the lock and Shertzer Bridge in the south west corner and other docklands artefacts.

There is a pedestrian crossing linking the two elements of the application site across the R801. On the R801 within 100m of the application site are located Dublin Bus stops serving routes 33d/X, 41X, 90, 142, 151, 747 and 757 Express Service to Dublin Airport. There is also a Bus Eireann stop located within 100m of the site serving the X2, X7, X12, 100X and 101X routes. There is also a Big Dublin Bus tourist bus stop no. 29 servicing the site.

Sean O Casey Bridge is located a few metres from the existing quayside City Council offices providing direct and convenient access across the River Liffey at this point.

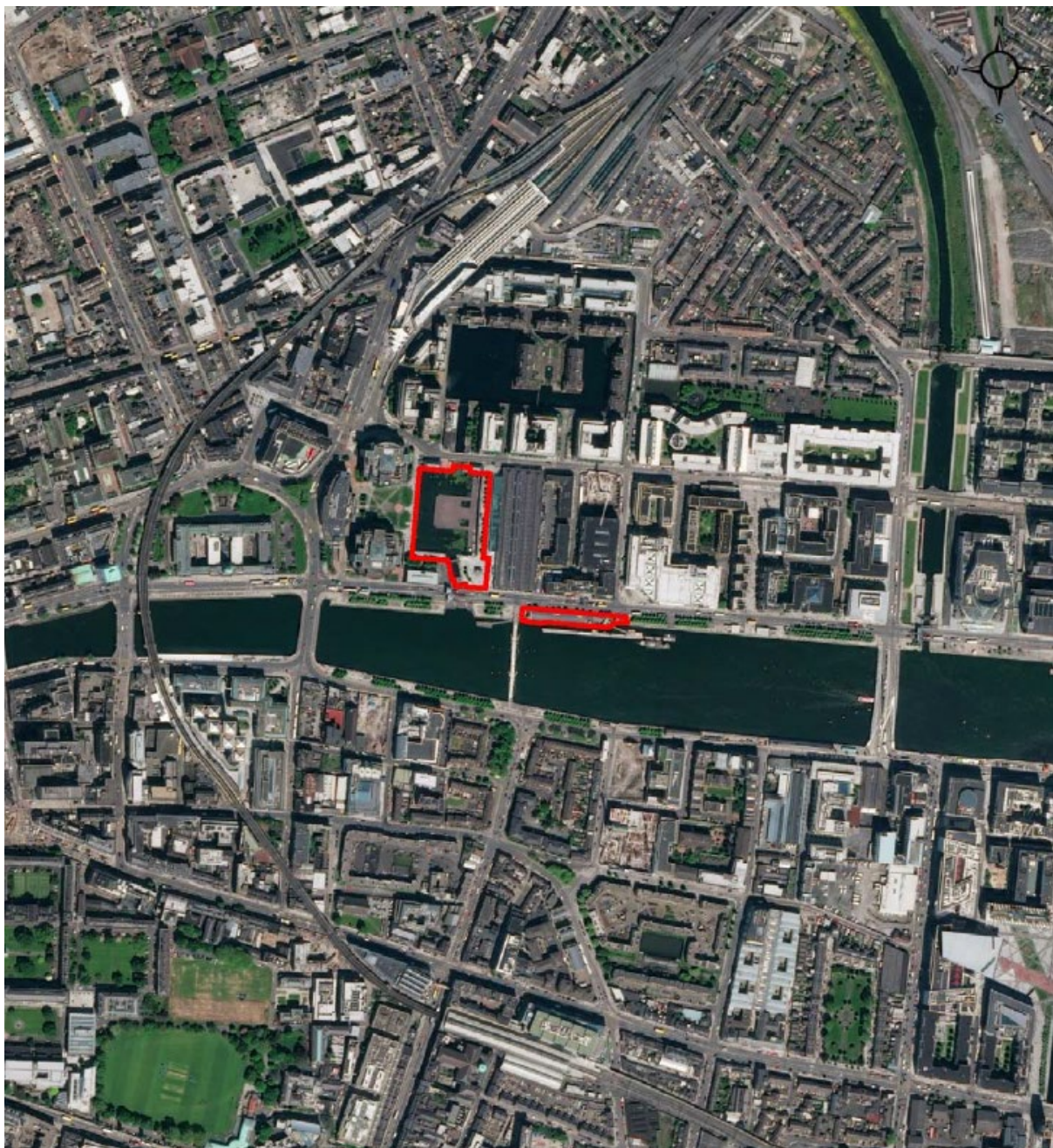


Figure 2; Aerial view of the Site-

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed project consists of a new city centre urban activity located in Dublin's Docklands and set within the historic environs of George's Dock.

The project comprises four principal parts:

1. provision of a white water rafting course utilising the existing George's Dock basin, which is a protected structure, including;
 - a. a central flat water training facility including water polo amenity,
 - b. white water slalom course,
 - c. kayak/raft conveyor,
 - d. pumping station and water treatment plant,
 - e. a mechanical control centre and electrical substations,
 - f. enhancement of existing public lighting and provision of low illumination level floodlighting for waterbased activities; and
 - g. swift water rescue centre with floodable urban street with mock enclosures forming a 'rescue village'.
2. The demolition of former Dublin Docklands Development Authority office building and removal of 6 no. existing trees at Custom House Quay. Construction of two new quayside buildings with a combined total floor area of 763.98 m² and maximum height of 5.5m. The east building incorporating land based activities including changing rooms, reception, staff amenity area, equipment storage. The west building comprising replacement offices and conference room for the use of Dublin City Council Docklands office. Ancillary landscaped public open space between these proposed quayside buildings including surface water attenuation area and quayside walkway;
3. Reconfigured and resurfaced public open space where necessary to the existing plaza at Georges's Dock, including the removal of 4 no. existing trees, making good any damage caused by construction work, and the provision of temporary construction compound. Connection to public surface water drainage system; and
4. Conservation and protection works to the lock gate and quay walls together with retention and protection of the triumphal arch on site and the partial removal of the timber boardwalk and insertion of access structures to the canal channel at the sea wall.

The development of the white water rafting course and pool in George's Dock is illustrated below and will consist of;

- heritage and remediation works on the dock walls;
- the construction of a concrete structure which will form the contours of the separated watersports areas and swift water rescue training;
- power and water pumping infrastructure within the southeast corner; and
- a raft conveyor and bridge.

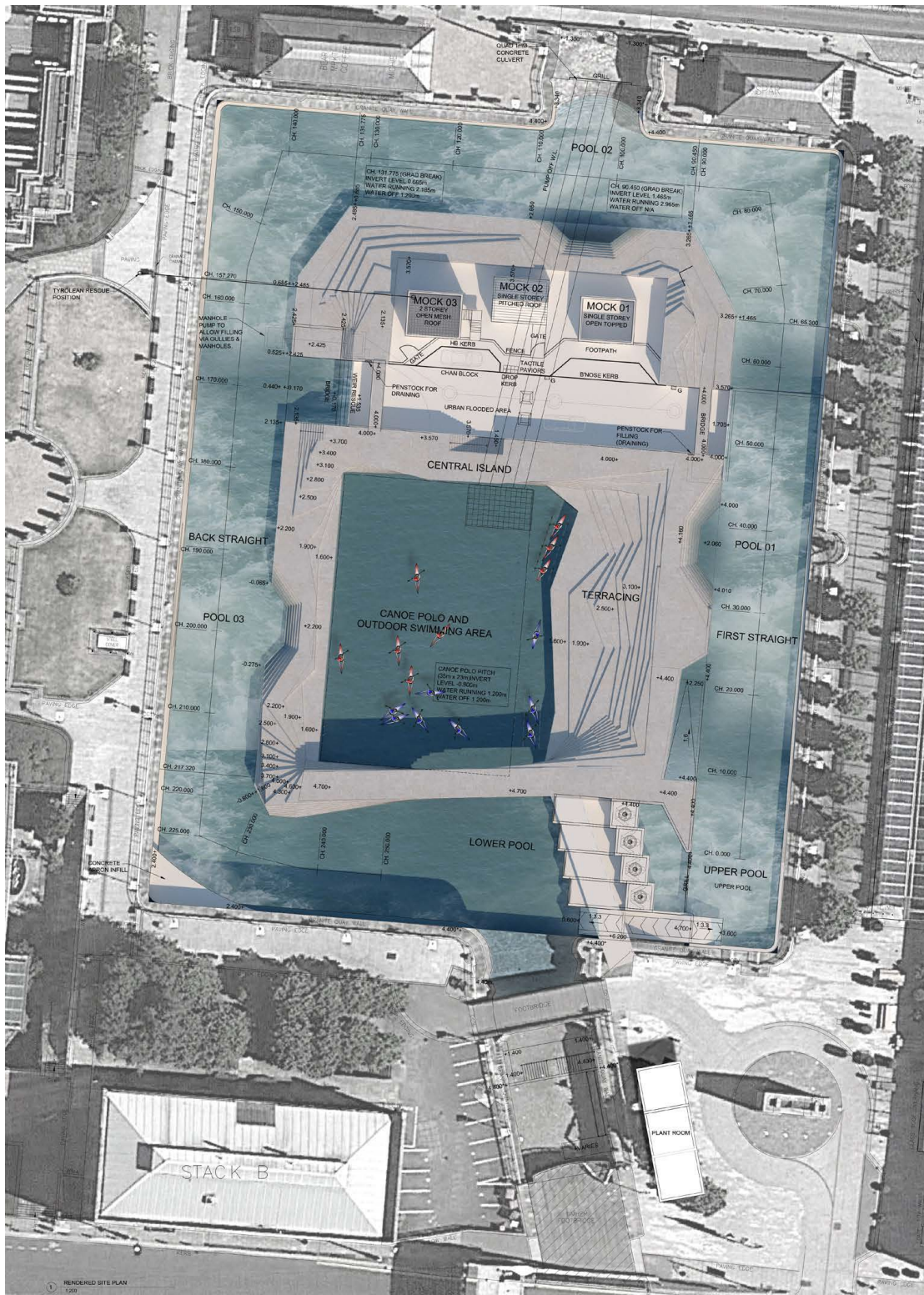


Figure 3; Indicative Design for George's Dock

3.1 The Quayside Buildings

The 2 no. proposed quayside buildings will be contained within the location of the existing Dublin Docklands Office building, which it is proposed to demolish. The new replacement buildings along the quayside to replace the existing DCC offices in this location will consist of:

- A public pavilion building which will include
 - Welcome area;
 - Changing rooms;
 - Public bathrooms;
 - Staff amenity areas;
 - A lecture area;
 - Equipment storage; and
 - Quayside walkway and entry to the pontoon.
- A public open space between the buildings

The experience of the WWRC begins in the East Building for most users as outlined above. The movement of people through the building is structured to allow flow from the point of arrival and through control of the 'wet' and 'dry' areas, which is described in detail in the Architectural Design Statement. Participants will enter the east building by the courtyard and progress through the building in stages from check in to kitting out, instruction briefing and changing before exiting by the east exit to the covered storage and pontoon.

The east building also contains administration and backroom facilities for staff, guides and coaches, storage for hire equipment and support services such as a laundry and bin storage.

The west building contains replacement offices for Dublin City Council and conference room for the use of DCC and the WWRC. These can be entered from either end depending on user and function.

The buildings frame a quayside walkway attached which addresses the Liffey and provides for access under part M of the building regulations. From the walkway there will be the existing access to the pontoon and the Jeannie Johnson berth, a potential future berth extension and second access gangway will be facilitated at the Quay wall with detailed design to be agreed with the conservation department of the local authority. The potential future berth extension and second access gangway will be subject to licencing with Dublin Port if it proceeds. The development will require the removal of 6 no. mature trees at the roadside in addition to 4 no. trees at George's Dock Basin.

3.2 The WWRC course and Rescue Village

From the Quayside buildings, most users will approach the whitewater rafting course by kayak from the river pontoon to the sea wall. They will come from the channel to a wash area behind the electrical substation. From here they will enter George's basin and the course for one of the uses.

George's basin will be transformed into a whitewater rafting course with inner perimeter access from a terrace which encloses the flat water pool and swift water rescue village. The Swift Water Rescue Village will consist of 3 structures which can be selectively flooded and will be used to run simulations and drills for the purposes of training emergency rescue personnel.

The course length is 250m and water flow will travel in an anticlockwise direction starting from the upper pool down to the lower pool in an 11m wide channel. This has vertical sides and access to left side only via stepped terraces, the flow rate is 14m³/sec, served by four pumps with variable frequency drives located in the pumping station. The course has 3m head and ends in the lower pool at the base of the kayak conveyor.

3.3 Temporary Construction, Remediation and Protection Works

In addition to the development within the Dock and at the Quayside Buildings there will be the following works:

- Temporary construction compound in the public plaza;
- The remediation of any disturbance to the public plaza during construction;
- New access between the dock and river sides of the separating sea wall adjacent to the lock gates; and
- Conservation and protection works to the lock gate.

The majority of the facility operations will be catering to the user categories described below. However there may be occasional national white water kayaking events to International Canoeing Federation standards which will require temporary facility upgrade and spectator seating. The necessary consents will be acquired prior to these events where necessary

It is anticipated that very few matches involving water polo or canoe polo or kayaking events will attract any substantial number of spectators where temporary spectator facilities will be required and where necessary lighting enhanced to international competition standard will be installed. Such international competition standard lighting will be provided on a temporary basis for such occasional competition. The expected level of enhanced illumination may be supplemented to 200 lux on occasion and that for predominant matches, training and recreational activity lighting where it may be occasionally required for one-off events, but generally would be maintained at a level of 100 lux.

The training and educational element of the facility will be used by Dublin Fire Brigade and the emergency services during normal business hours unless occasional night time training is specifically required and recreational bookings will not be made available during those periods. Any rescue exercises in the evening would also be finished by 22.00 hours.

Operational hours of the proposed development will not exceed 22.00 hrs Monday to Sunday for all activities.

3.4 Users and Activities

The Whitewater Rafting centre will cater for a number of different types of user based upon experience, activity and arrival route. We have condensed them into 4 categories;

User A - External Paddler –

This will be a person with their own kayak arriving to use the centre for training. They will arrive via kerbside drop off at the designated point or will be paddling in or delivered by shuttle from the public landing stages at Ringsend (approximately 6 minutes away). There is projected to

be approximately 7 of these users per day on average. Their initial contact with the centre will be via the quayside buildings.

User B - Resident Club Paddler or Rental Paddler –

This user will be arriving without equipment and will approach the centre from either existing parking facilities or public transport. Kayak drop off is not required as these will use the WWRC rental fleet or club / private kayak stored in designated secure storage on the river pontoons. Their initial contact with the centre will be via the quayside buildings.

User C - Rafter and general visitor/spectator –

Similar to User B, this user will be arriving without equipment. Many of these arrivals will largely be made up of group bookings, but on the day purchases will be common during the peak season. They will usually approach the centre from private group transport such as minibuses or public transport. Their initial contact with the centre will be via the quayside buildings.

User D - Fire & Rescue Personnel

This user group will be the most divergent from the typical user, but will arrive in groups for planned training using the Swift Water Rescue Village. They have their own access arrangements and equipment. Their arrival will be directly to the rafting course but will be coordinated and arranged from the quayside buildings.

4.0 PLANNING HISTORY

George's Dock formed part of the Custom House Docks Development Authority under the Custom House Docks Area Urban Renewal Act 1986 by the Dublin Docklands Development Authority. The proposed building area to the Quayside was included within the development area by the Custom House Docks Area, 1st Extension, Urban Renewal (Amendment) Act 1987.

The existing quayside office building was not indicated for any particular use zoning in the Custom House Docks Development Authority Planning Scheme, 1994, but as a quayside building was indicated for small retail or public use. It has been in use since 1994 as the Dublin Docklands Development offices, now part of Dublin City Council. This development did not require planning permission.

Public realm works to George's Dock, including the backfill of stone and insertion of the pontoon was completed under the section 25 process as part of the 1994 Planning Scheme. Under this scheme the development was to be temporary and as such the removal of the pontoon and backfill is the final stage of this Section 25 permitted development.

There are no current planning applications before the local authority for determination within or directly adjoining the application site.

5.0 PLANNING POLICY

5.1 National Planning Framework

The National Planning Framework (NPF) identifies that the Republic's population could increase by a further one million people over the period to 2040. Government planning policy acknowledges that this is going to require an enormous shift in thinking in how and where

people live, work, participate in recreation and travel. It will also require maximising the development potential of existing sites and making the most of available infrastructure, getting value from investment in public transport in particular, and to locate development where it will minimise the need to travel and promoted linked trips. There is also a requirement for planning to assist in the promotion of healthy lifestyles and for a range of facilities and services to be provided that assist in improving quality of life. To address these challenges the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government produced the National Planning Framework (NPF) on behalf of Government, with input from other Departments and Agencies.

The aim of the NPF is to direct future development and investment in Ireland to sustainable locations and to promote sustainable development and proper planning across the entire State. The NDP (Ireland 2040) articulates shared national development goals, including improved living standards, quality of life, prosperity, competitiveness and environmental sustainability and provide greater clarity for private sector investment.

Chapter 3 of the NPF looks at the development of Ireland's urban spaces. Section 3.8 "Achieving Urban Infill/Brownfield Development" states:

"Ireland 2040 targets a significant proportion of future urban development on infill/brownfield development sites within the built envelope of existing urban areas. This is applicable to all scales of settlement, from the largest city, to the smallest village.

This means encouraging more people, jobs and activity generally within our existing urban areas, rather than new development mainly taking place on the fields outside and requires a change in outlook. The plan sets out a number of objectives to drive and deliver development over the plan period."

Ireland 2040 targets a significant proportion of future urban development on infill/brownfield development sites within the built envelope of existing urban areas. This means encouraging more people, jobs and activity including social and recreational activities within existing urban areas, rather than development of greenfield sites and expanding existing development boundaries.

This application is an excellent example of the reuse of a brownfield site with former water features that are not being used to anywhere near their potential with the site having access to an excellent transport network and providing activation of public space and the waterfront and greater use and utilisation of an existing passive recreation asset in an area of the city centre where opportunities for recreational facilities are limited given land prices and ownership patterns. The Mulvey Report commissioned by the Government confirms this for the north inner city area.

The NPF supports the provision of recreational infrastructure to enhance quality of life as a key strategy. This states that development must *"integrate with our built, cultural and natural heritage, which has intrinsic value in defining the character of urban and rural areas and adding to their attractiveness and sense of place."*

The proposal is a unique but sympathetic re-utilisation of an underused extremely accessible urban brownfield site served by enhanced public transport, providing a significantly improved recreational facility in an area where there are relatively few sporting or recreational facilities in a sustainable location. This is consistent with national policy and guidance seeking to improve social capital and encourage healthier lifestyles.

The proposed development is also consistent with, and is of a type of active recreation in this location envisaged in the 'Water Animation Strategy for the Docklands Area' prepared in accordance with the 'North Lotts and Grand Canal Dock SDZ Planning Scheme 2014'. The Strategy envisages George's Dock being developed as an 'Active Zone' and the proposed development is considered entirely consistent with this objective as active sport and sporting events will be catered for in the proposed development to complement the occasional existing social and cultural events taking place there. It should be noted that the application site is not located within the North Lotts and Grand Canal Dock SDZ Planning Scheme even though it comes within the remit of the Water Animation Strategy.

5.2 National Sports Policy 2018 – 2027

The National Sports Policy 2018 was produced by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport to promote health and wellbeing throughout Ireland.

Action 13 states;

Apart from investment in traditional sports infrastructure we will examine how the wider natural and built environment can facilitate participation in sport and physical activity. This consideration will also take account of the type of activities towards which adults are increasingly gravitating such as running, cycling, outdoor adventure pursuits, recreational walking, etc.

The development is in full compliance with Action 13 and helps achieve the aims of the National Sports Policy as well encouraging a healthier population in accordance national health policy.

5.3 Draft Eastern Midlands Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy

The Eastern Midlands Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy is currently at draft stage and consultation ended on 23rd of January earlier this year. The location of the White Water Rafting Centre and associated amenities and facilities proposed as a part of the reuse or intensification of an existing waterways is supported by Regional Policy Objective 6.16 of the RSES.

RPO 6.16: Support the maintenance of, and enhanced access to, state lands such as National Parks, Forest Parks, Waterways, etc for recreation and tourism purposes.

The provision of such a facility of regional or potentially national importance is consistent with Proposed Regional Policy Objective 9.19.

RPO 9.19: Local authorities shall seek to support the planned provision of easily accessible social, community, cultural and recreational facilities and ensure that all communities have access to a range of facilities that meet the needs of the communities they serve

As with the NPF, compact urban form is central to the objectives of the Eastern Midlands RSES. The proposal is compliant with emerging regional planning guidance therefore.

5.3 Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022

The application site is covered by two zonings in the Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022. The dock basin is zoned Z11 whose zoning objective is ‘to protect and improve canal, coastal and river amenities.’ The land element of the application site including the quayside where DCC offices are located, and area around the basin within the site, are zoned as Z9 whose objective is ‘to preserve, provide and improve recreational amenity and open space and green networks.’

The proposed white water recreational amenity is consistent with the Z11 zoning. The provision of the two buildings along the quays for primarily recreational and amenity value are also consistent with the Z9 zoning which seeks to improve recreation and for which recreation buildings are open for consideration.

The City Plan has a strong focus on retaining, enhancing and providing for new recreational facilities and activities across the entire City. In section 4.5.1.2 *Approach to the Docklands and the Port*, the City Plan identifies the Dockland area as a key location for recreation, especially water based recreation.

“The active use of the public realm in the Docklands to host events and the use of the waterbodies, such as the Grand Canal Dock, for active leisure or recreational uses significantly enhances the vitality of this evolving urban environment.”

The proposed development is entirely consistent with this aim of the City Plan. The relevant recreational and open space policies contained within the Development Plan are:

SC4: To promote a variety of recreational and cultural events in the city’s civic spaces.

GI10: To continue to manage and protect and/or enhance public open spaces to meet the social, recreational, conservation and ecological needs of the city and to consider the development of appropriate complementary facilities which do not detract from the amenities of spaces.

GI31: To improve on existing sports/ recreational facilities in the city through the implementation of the Dublin City Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2009–2016 and to ensure the availability of a range of recreational facilities to the general population of all ages and groups at locations throughout the city, including ice-skating. In areas where a deficiency exists, Dublin City Council will work with the providers of such facilities, including schools, institutions and private operators, to ensure access to the local population.

The proposal is compliant with and actively encouraged by these provisions of the City Plan. The proposed development greatly enhances the range of recreational activities available in the city in accordance with policy SC4. The proposal meets, not just the social and recreational needs of GI31 for the city, but also complies with the conservation and ecological protection requirements set out in Policy GI10. The amenity of this space will be enhanced from the works proposed and an increase in sports and recreation activity in a currently greatly underutilised recreational asset to the whole city and to the city centre in particular. The proposed recreational activity provides an unusual, significant and potentially attractive additional dimension to the range of sports activities available within not just the city but the city centre in particular. The development does not fall within any local area plan and is adjacent to but not contained within the North Lotts Strategic Development Zone.

The application site is located within the Docklands Conservation Area and contained a protected structure – George’s Dock Basin.

The proposed development is consistent with Policy CMC2 which seeks to ensure that the special interest of protected structures is protected. The proposal is also in accordance with section 11.1.5.6 which related to conservation areas and seeks to ensure that new development should have a positive impact on local character.

5.4 Water Animation Strategy 2018

The Strategy is a non-statutory supplementary and companion document to the North Lotts & Grand Canal Dock Strategic Development Zone (SDZ) and the associated public realm strategy. The strategy covers an extended area which includes the proposed development location, in spite of the location falling outside the SDZ area. Within the strategy the Georges’ Dock area is indicated for active zone with a sports based use. This proposed development responds directly to 4 key objectives of the strategy;

Key Objective 2:

To facilitate a range of leisure, cultural and commercial activities that increase the level of engagement with the water.

Key Objective 3:

To compliment and add to the number of attractions in the Docklands and increase the number of tourists visiting the area each year.

Key Objective 4:

To enable desirable existing uses to continue and where possible expand and promote new uses that enhance the enjoyment of the waterways.

Key Objective 5:

To work with and support local water sports and recreation clubs (e.g. rowing clubs) and other voluntary and community organisations utilise the water and to assist in the provision of new facilities to enable this.

Specifically related to this project, it is a planned implementation activity to proceed with detailed design of new water sport training facilities at Georges Dock and Custom House Quay. This proposed development is key to the implementation of the strategy. Level of engagement with the water asset will be substantially increased in this location consistent with key objective 2. The proposal will significantly add to the activities in the Docklands and increase the number of visiting tourists as is consistent with key area objective 3. This use will expand and promote further enjoyment of the waterways consistent with objective 4.

6.0 ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

A detailed description of the Architectural design is available in the Architectural Report by Urban Agency under separate cover.

This statement describes the Quayside Building as modelled on maritime shed-type buildings similar to those populating the Liffey Quays in the past. The East building is separated by a sheltered courtyard from the West building and opens to the quays. The splayed sides allow for views upstream and downstream. The aspect of the building to Custom House Quay will be finished in render with feature metal fins in either a powdercoat or anodised finish. The external courtyard will be a ground concrete feature finish.

The visible elements of the course development will be the terrace and walkway insertion in feature concrete. The course guardrail will be in keeping with the course while satisfying key health and safety concerns.

7.0 ENGINEERING DESIGN

The detailed technical requirements of the WWRC are contained in a number of engineering reports from Patrick Parson Ltd-

- External Lighting Report by Patrick Parsons
- Mobility Management Plan by Patrick Parsons
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Report by Patrick Parsons
- Noise Statement by Patrick Parsons
- Phase 1 Geoenvironmental Report by Patrick Parsons
- Preliminary Waste Management Plan
- Site Servicing Assessment by Patrick Parsons
- Preliminary Construction and Demolition Management Plan by Patrick Parsons

These reports detail the technical requirements and design elements of the course. They assess the issues associated with transport and mobility, hydrology, hydrogeology and Geotech. As the site is an existing urban environment and the development design minimises ground intrusion there are few geotechnical issues associated with the development.

The quayside buildings have been designed to allow 1:100 year flood levels and are compatible with the quayside flood defence procedures set out by Dublin City Council. The white water rafting course is hydrologically separate from the River Liffey and is of a minimal flood risk. There is full separation from the potable water of the course from the River Liffey.

The proposed course benefits from a city centre location with among the states best transport links which will serve the majority of proposed users. The Mobility Management Plan submitted sets out the access and servicing arrangements for the site which will optimise the urban location, maximise sustainable transport use and allow the efficient functioning of the site.

8.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT – SCREENING STATEMENT

An Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report has been undertaken by experienced and competent personnel and the proposed development is considered to be a sub-threshold development with no significant environmental impacts likely that would warrant an EIAR. The characteristics of the proposed development are not considered to be significant due to the surroundings in an urban location with relatively few environmental sensitivities.

In relation to the location of the proposed development, the site is located in an urban environment, providing a leisure use in a historically industrial location which has been in

leisure use for over 15 years. Proposed recreation uses are of a level where any intensification is unlikely to cause harm to either the removed or adjacent office occupiers or visitors to the area. Partaking in other existing recreational and leisure pursuits. The AA Screening Report found that there is no likelihood of any significant effects on any European sites arising from the proposed development, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

Having regard to the criteria outlined in Section 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, it is concluded that the proposed development will have no likely significant effect on the receiving environment and that having regard to the effects of the proposal it is our professional opinion that no adverse impacts occur such as to warrant an Environmental Impact Assessment Report for a sub threshold development.

9.0 APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT – SCREENING STATEMENT

The proposal has been fully assessed by Bryan Deegan of Altemar Ltd. An initial screening of the proposed works, using the precautionary principle (without the use of any mitigation measures) and the Source/Pathway/Receptor links between the proposed works and Natura 2000 sites with the potential to result in significant adverse effects on the conservation objectives and features of interest of the Natura 2000 sites was carried out.. Based on objective assessment, the possibility of significant adverse effects caused by the proposed project was excluded for the Natura 2000 sites considered within the zone of influence. The project is limited in scale and extent and the potential zone of influence is seen to be restricted to the immediate vicinity of the proposed development. However, it should also be noted that no effects are foreseen on Natura 2000 sites beyond 15km from the proposed development due to the limited scale and nature of the project.

10.0 CONSERVATION

A conservation report completed by Howley Hayes Architects has been submitted with this application under separate cover. It addresses the impact of the proposed development upon the protected structure which is Georges Dock Basin. In relation to the basin it states that the dock walls are in a reasonably stable condition but will require some repairs. The most significant issues include heavily weathered, wide open joints, poor previous repairs in brick and cement, water ingress from behind the dock wall, rusted fixings and biological growth. This development proposed to undertake the required remediation to the dock walls to ensure their continuance and future protection. Overall, the report concludes that The proposed use, a white water rafting facility, is considered appropriate as it will reactivate the dock with a water based activity in line with its location and should be considered favourably, as it would be beneficial to the City if a new and attractive use could be found for the water basin.

In relation to the quayside buildings, it concludes that the two new buildings which are proposed in place of the existing DDDA office, which is of poor architectural merit, and detracts from the visual amenity of the quayside, are designed to an appropriate arrangement and scale and would visually enhance the usual amenity of the area. The development is within the River Liffey Conservation Area.

11.0 PLANNING MERITS

The proposed development is consistent with a range of policies and guidance covering sport and recreation as well as town planning. The proposal is consistent with national health

guidance which supports proposals and actions that benefit the health and wellbeing of the nations population. The proposal also provides a unique sporting and recreational activity in a very central and accessible location where its recreational and sporting benefits can be most enjoyed and experienced and where return on public transport infrastructure can be maximised in accordance with national planning guidance in the form of the National Planning Framework which broadly seeks to maximise the development potential of all sites including recreational sites such as this where increased usage and enjoyment can be experienced without any significant environmental impact and where use of services and public transport can be maximised.

The proposal is consistent with the zoning and objectives of the City Development Plan which seeks to make active use of the public realm in the Docklands for active leisure or recreational uses which significantly enhance the vitality of this evolving urban environment (4.5.1.2 *Approach to the Docklands and Port*). The new buildings accommodate the existing long-established docklands office function in conjunction with new recreational facilities which are directly associated with the proposed open space use- white water rafting. The recreational facilities includes changing areas, storage, and necessary equipment, and falls into similar use as a 'Club house and associated facilities' or 'public service installations' which are both permissible under zoning objective Z9.

The proposal is also consistent with Policy SC4 which seeks to promote a variety of recreational and cultural events in the city's civic spaces. The proposal is also consistent with Policy GI10 in relation to enhancing public open space to meet social and recreational needs whilst at the same time balancing conservation and ecological needs.

The proposal is specifically consistent with the Council's Water Animation Strategy 2018 which seek to facilitate a range of leisure activities that increase the level of engagement with the water in this very location and to compliment and add to the number of attractions in the Docklands and to increase the number of tourists visiting the area each year.

The proposal is also consistent with the City Council's Sport and Active Recreation Strategy that is currently in place. The proposal will be a major catalyst in promoting strong active communities and help support and generate great sporting clubs. In particular it will play a major role in generating a range of exciting events and activities, particularly in this case activities that are different and both exciting to participate in and to watch for people working, living and visiting the city and especially the city centre.

The proposal will assist the City Council in fulfilling its statutory role to:

- Deliver high quality programmes to people visiting, working in and visiting Dublin;
- Encourage physical activity;
- Support and facilitate the staging of sporting events in Dublin; and,
- Work in partnership with agencies, clubs and sporting bodies.

The proposal represents an exciting opportunity to overlap into various sectors including tourism and community welfare. The proposal represents a unique city centre attraction convenient to existing tourism facilities and accommodation.

Finally, the proposal will generate employment and will provide a facility in the north inner city area. The proposed facility represents significant investment in this inner city part of Dublin and is expected to be used by the local community including community groups and schools and will be of significant benefit to the north inner city area where it is identified in other studies

including the Mulvey Report that recreational facilities and activities, and the consequent formation of clubs and societies can greatly enhance a sense of community.

12.0 CONCLUSION

The proposed development is plan led and fully aligned with national, regional and local planning policy and guidance.

The proposal seeks to maximise the use and value of an existing scarce recreational land resource, which is preferable in sequential planning terms, to developing on a new site, nor as well served by public transport and as accessible to visitors, tourists and residents in the city.

The development is compliant with development and leisure policy at national, regional and local level. It would make sympathetic and sustainable use of the site's landscape and cultural heritage, the potential of which has not yet been realised.

The proposal is consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the site and the area.

List of Reports

- EIAR Screening Report by Cunnane Stratton Reynolds
- Architectural Design Statement by Urban Agency
- External Lighting Report by Patrick Parsons
- Mobility Management Plan by Patrick Parsons
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Report by Patrick Parsons
- Noise Statement by Patrick Parsons
- Phase 1 Geoenvironmental Report by Patrick Parsons
- Preliminary Waste Management Plan
- Site Servicing Assessment by Patrick Parsons
- Preliminary Construction and Demolition Management Plan by Patrick Parsons
- Appropriate Assessment Screening Report by Altamar Ltd
- Conservation Report by Howley Hayes

List of Drawings

See attached Schedule