

**SUB THRESHOLD EIA SCREENING REPORT**  
**PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT: Railyard Apartments**

*Criteria for determining whether a development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment as per the requirements of Article 120 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended*

<b>1. CHARACTERISTICS OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT</b>	
Size of Proposed Development	<p><i>The overall site area is 0.2744 ha or 2744 sqm approximately.</i></p> <p><i>The proposed development will comprise of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>The construction of 217 no. dwelling units including,</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>25 no. studio apartments</i></li> <li>• <i>92 no. 1-bedroom apartments</i></li> <li>• <i>88 no. 2-bedroom apartments</i></li> <li>• <i>12 no. 3-bedroom apartments</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>- <i>In a building that ranges from 8 to 11 storeys.</i></li> <li>- <i>The provision of an external public realm area at ground level.</i></li> <li>- <i>The provision of internal communal space areas at ground floor, 1st floor, and 2nd floor, and 2 no. external rooftop terraces.</i></li> <li>- <i>The provision of a ground floor community/arts use, with external seating area and a ground floor creche with external covered play area.</i></li> <li>- <i>The provision of ground level plant, ancillary uses, and bin store.</i></li> <li>- <i>Bicycle spaces at lower ground floor and ground floor level; additional visitor bicycle spaces; and a set down delivery area at ground floor level on Albert Street.</i></li> <li>- <i>Set back of the eastern boundary wall to the north and south.</i></li> <li>- <i>All site development, public realm and landscaping works.</i></li> <li>- <i>The proposed development also involves the demolition of the existing two-storey building.</i></li> </ul>
Cumulation with other Proposed Development	<p><i>An assessment of recently permitted projects identified on Cork City Council's online planning system has concluded that there is no potential for the Proposed Development to combine with other existing and/or approved projects to result in cumulative impacts to the environment.</i></p>
The nature of any associated demolition works (* see article 8 of SI 235 of 2008)	<p><i>The proposed development involves the demolition of an existing two-storey building. There are no significant impacts that will arise from the demolition works on any adjacent sensitive receptors. The works will be carried out as per the Construction, Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to be agreed with Cork City Council prior to commencement of the development.</i></p>
Use of Natural Resources	<p><i>The footprint of the proposed development is restricted to an existing brownfield site. Construction related activities will be restricted to the footprint of the proposed development site, as well as the adjacent public road. Works on the public road will be coordinated with Cork City Council and the adjacent businesses and residents. Material that will be excavated within the proposed development site will be disposed of at an approved facility in accordance with the Construction &amp; Demolition (C&amp;D) Waste Management Procedures set out in the Construction and Demolition Report.</i></p> <p><i>Water required for the construction phase and operation phase of the proposed development will be supplied by the existing mains water supply. Uisce Éireann has confirmed that there is adequate water to meet the future needs of the proposed development.</i></p> <p><i>Resources in the form of hydrocarbons will be required for energy and electricity during the construction phase of the proposed development. Other building raw materials will be required during the construction phase. However, the natural resources required will be typical of those required for the development and operation of a residential development and their provision will not have the potential to result in significant effects on the environment.</i></p>
Production of Waste	<p><i>It is proposed that all excavated material will be removed from the site to an appropriately licensed facility. Soil for disposal from the site is classified as waste and, accordingly, soil for disposal will be processed in accordance with all applicable waste management legislation.</i></p> <p><i>During construction of the proposed development, there will be construction waste generated, which will be processed in the manner identified in the Construction and Demolition Report.</i></p> <p><i>A temporary segregation bay will be constructed at the site for the duration of the construction phase of the proposed development. The bay will include segregated areas for recyclable waste streams, such as gypsum (plasterboard), cardboard, timber, concrete/blocks/tiles etc.</i></p> <p><i>Cardboard will be segregated on site. The cardboard will be flattened and placed in a covered skip or tied and covered, to prevent the card getting wet. A recycling contractor will collect it as required.</i></p> <p><i>There will be a separate skip for plasterboard at the site. A specialist contractor will be engaged to ensure that the plasterboard is recycled, insofar as is practicable. Reprocessed gypsum powder, which makes up to 94% of the plasterboard, can be reprocessed into new plasterboard or converted for use in soil conditioners for the agricultural industry. The paper, which makes up to 6% of the plasterboard, can be reused in various industries.</i></p> <p><i>Excess excavated soil will be disposed of off-site. Soil will be removed and disposed of by licensed contractors and this material will be used for fill material on other sites, or capping purposes, e.g. at a landfill.</i></p>

	<p><i>Environmental testing of the soil samples recovered during the site investigation process has been undertaken. From a review of the environmental testing results, it is concluded that no material encountered is classified as Hazardous and that all material is within the inert &amp; stable non-hazardous limits. It was noted that there were some instances where the material exceeds inert limit values and that a further extensive investigation will be undertaken and submitted to the planning authority prior to construction. All classifications for contaminations are in accordance with the EU Waste Framework Directive.</i></p> <p><i>As plastic is now considered a highly recyclable material, much of the plastic generated during construction will be diverted from landfill and recycled. Clean plastic will be segregated at source and kept as clean as possible and stored in a dedicated covered skip.</i></p> <p><i>There will be timber waste generated from the construction works as off-cuts or damaged pieces of timber. Timber that is uncontaminated, i.e. free from paints, preservatives, glues etc, will all be recycled. It will be stored on site in a designated skip and collected by a recycling contractor. Such companies shred the timber and use it for manufacture of wood products or for landscaping (wood chips etc).</i></p> <p><i>Steel is a highly recyclable material. A segregated skip will be available for steel storage on site pending recycling by a specialist contractor.</i></p> <p><i>A specialised contractor will also be engaged to carry out an environmental clean-up in order to remove all traces of contaminated material from the site. All waste arising during this process will be disposed of at a suitably licensed disposal facility.</i></p> <p><i>The roof of some of the warehouse structures comprise asbestos cement. These asbestos cement elements will be removed and disposed of by an appropriately licensed contractor at an appropriately licensed facility.</i></p> <p><i>There will be a general skip or receptacle for C&amp;D waste not suitable for reuse or recovery. This skip will include polystyrene, contaminated cardboard, plastic etc. The contractors will be required to recycle as much municipal waste as possible, i.e. cardboard, plastic, metals and glass. General wet waste will be presented separately for recovery. Food waste will be segregated with separate receptacles for collection and disposal.</i></p> <p><i>Prior to removal off site, the municipal waste receptacle will be examined to ascertain that recyclable materials have not been placed there. If this is the case, efforts will be made to determine the cause of the waste not being segregated correctly.</i></p> <p><i>During the operational phase, the waste generated will be typical of a commercial/business development. The management of waste generated on site will follow the waste management hierarchy of reduce, reuse and recycle followed ultimately by disposal.</i></p> <p><i>All waste generated will be disposed of by a licenced waste contractor.</i></p> <p><i>Wastewater generated during the operation phase will be directed to the existing Carrigrennan WWTP. A pre-connection enquiry has been submitted to Uisce Éireann, which has responded with a Confirmation of Feasibility. An examination of treated wastewater discharges from the Carrigrennan WWTP to Cork Harbour and its implication for the water quality of the harbour has been completed through a review of the latest Annual Environmental Report (AER) for the WWTP. The latest AER concluded that the treated discharges from the WWTP are not having an observable effect on water quality.</i></p> <p><i>In light of the foregoing and the procedures to be put in place to manage, treat and dispose of all waste materials arising as a result of the proposed development, there will be no potential for waste generated as a result of the proposed development to result in significant impacts to the environment.</i></p>
Pollution and Nuisances	<p><i>Potential pollution and nuisance effects that could arise as a result of the proposed development relate to Water, Noise &amp; Vibration, Air &amp; Traffic.</i></p> <p><b><i>Water</i></b></p> <p><i>The effects to surface waters (i.e. the River Lee) that could arise during the construction phase include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Spills/leaks during construction could result in surface water contaminated with suspended solids or hydrocarbons entering the River Lee via the existing drainage system on site, which would, if they occurred, lead to a negative effect on water quality; and</i></li> <li>• <i>During limited dewatering, excess water, which may contain silt/sediment could potentially enter the River Lee and possibly affect water quality.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>These potential effects are typical of any construction site and best practice measures will be put in place and the effective implementation of these measures will ensure that spills/leaks are eliminated, whilst standard measures to treat surface water during the limited dewatering of excavations will be carried out throughout the construction phase.</i></p> <p><i>The operational phase of the proposed development will represent a negligible risk of generating contaminated surface water runoff. No car parking is to be provided and as such there will be no risk of fuel leakage that can arise from car parking. The surface water management infrastructure comprises SuDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems) that will reduce surface water flows and treat surface water generated at the proposed development site via a nature-based solution e.g.</i></p>

	<p>rain gardens. In addition, on-site attenuation storage, designed to cater for a 1 in 20-year flood event will be provided.</p> <p><u>Noise &amp; Vibration</u></p> <p>There will be no significant noise impacts from the proposed development on any of the identified adjacent noise sensitive receptors. This conclusion is underpinned by previous scientific investigations and noise impact assessment (CLV Consulting, 2019) prepared for the previously approved SHD development at the proposed development site. The results of these investigations and assessment found that no significant noise impact would be expected from a proposed development at the proposed development site (similar in scale and design to the current proposed development).</p> <p>With regard to vibration, it is noted that the previous scientific investigations and impact assessment (CLV Consulting, 2019) also concluded a low risk of structural or even cosmetic damage to existing nearby dwellings.</p> <p>Standard best practice measures such as the implementation of guidance outlined in the best practice guidelines BS5228: Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites – Part 1 Noise and vibration limit thresholds will be implemented during the construction phase.</p> <p><u>Air</u></p> <p>During the construction phase, works on site will have the potential to generate dust as a result of demolition, earthworks, general construction works and the movement of plant and construction vehicles. The most common impacts are dust soiling and increased ambient PM10 concentrations due to dust arising from activities on the site. Dust impacts are more likely to occur during drier periods as rainfall acts as a natural dust suppressant. Under such conditions dust could be a potential nuisance off site if not adequately mitigated against.</p> <p>However, standard best practice measures will be implemented such that the potential for dust to be generated during the construction phase, and act as a nuisance offsite, is mitigated so that significantly residual nuisance effects is eliminated.</p> <p>With regard to air emissions from construction traffic, these will not have the potential to result in likely significant effects to the environment.</p> <p>Asbestos is known to occur at the former Carey Tool Hire Building (to be demolished as part of the proposed development). The approach to the removal of asbestos-containing material is set out in the Construction and Demolition Report for the proposed development and the effective the implementation of the prescribed asbestos removal measures will ensure that the risk of emission of asbestos to air, in the form of dust, will be eliminated.</p> <p><u>Traffic</u></p> <p>The construction phase will not result in any significant changes to traffic flows at, or surrounding, the proposed development site. Given the fact that no car parking is proposed as part of the operational phase of the proposed development, there will be no potential for changes to the baseline traffic patterns to arise from the operational phase of the proposed development.</p>
Risk of Major Accidents	<p>The construction phase of the proposed development will be managed to adhere to standard HAS (Health &amp; Safety Authority) operating procedures and guidelines. Accordingly, the risk of a major accident or disaster occurring is negligible.</p> <p>The proposed development has been designed to safeguard the proposed building against flood impacts during the operational phase, which has been achieved by setting a minimum floor level of 3.80mOD.</p> <p>The proposed building will be subject to standard regulatory management requirements during the operation phase, the effective implementation of which will avoid the potential for a major accident event to occur.</p>
Risk to Human Health	<p>All best practice and inherent mitigation measures will be implemented. With the effective implementation of these measures, there is no potential for the proposed development to cause a significant effect on human health.</p>

2. LOCATION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	
Existing Land Use	<p><i>The proposed development will result in the construction of a residential development on an existing brownfield site. The existing land use is commercial use.</i></p>
Relative Abundance, Quality and regenerative Capacity of Natural Resources in the Area	<p><i>The proposed development site is currently representative of a brownfield site. The proposed development site is not sensitive in terms of natural resources.</i></p> <p><i>The proposed development will not have the potential to result in any deterioration in the quality of soils or groundwater occurring at the proposed development site.</i></p> <p><i>Best practice design measures have been implemented to ensure that surface water generated at the proposed development site is managed and treated such that the proposed development does not have the potential to result in the discharge of contaminated surface water from the proposed development site to the receiving environment. These design measures are standard for development projects and are consistent with objectives of Cork City Council, such as Objectives 9.4 and 9.5 of the City Development Plan. The effective implementation of these measures will ensure that the proposed development does not result in a deterioration in surface water quality in the receiving environment.</i></p> <p><i>A range of standard procedures will be put in place to manage, treat and dispose of all waste materials arising as a result of the proposed development and with the implementation of these procedures there will be no potential for waste generated as a result of the proposed development to result in significant negative impacts to the environment. It is further noted that, given the design of the proposed development, with much of the substructure to be constructed at the existing ground level, the volume of excavation and soil to be removed off site will be reduced from the outset.</i></p>
Absorption Capacity of the Natural Environment	<p><i>No works are proposed that will affect wetlands. The proposed development is located immediately to the south of the River Lee, however, no natural riparian zone occurs along this stretch of the river. The proposed development is located adjacent to the lower River Lee which is representative of a river mouth. The proposed development will not result in any direct physical interaction with the River Lee banks or the river mouth. Surface water from the proposed development site is identified as the only pathway connecting the proposed development to the River Lee. In the absence of the implementation of best practice construction approaches during the construction phase or the inclusion of standard design measures, the proposed development could result in the emission of polluted surface water to the Lower River Lee. However, a range of best practice measures will be implemented during the construction phase to manage and treat surface water generated on site, such that the potential for the proposed development to affect the water quality of the River Lee is avoided. Similarly, standard measures will be implemented which will ensure that surface water generated during the operation phase is managed and treated so that only clean water is discharged from the proposed development site to the River Lee.</i></p> <p><i>The proposed development is not located within the coastal zone or the marine environment.</i></p> <p><i>The proposed development is located at a remote distance from mountainous and forested areas.</i></p> <p><i>The proposed development is located at a remote distance from any nature reserves and parks.</i></p> <p><i>The Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment that accompanies the application has concluded that the possibility of the proposed development causing likely significant effects on any qualifying interests of any European site can be excluded.</i></p> <p><i>The section of the Cork Harbour SPA along the River Lee downstream of the proposed development site is broadly contiguous with the boundary of the Douglas River pNHA. Given this broad overlap in the boundary of both the SPA and the pNHA, the findings of the Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment with respect to the exclusion of the possibility of adverse effects to the Cork Harbour SPA are also applicable to the Douglas River pNHA.</i></p> <p><i>In view of the above it can be concluded that the proposed development will not result in any potential for environmental effects to areas designated for natural heritage conservation.</i></p>

3. CHARACTERISTICS OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS	
Extent of the Impact	<i>Minor and localised temporary impacts are identified primarily at construction stage only. Where standard measures are effectively implemented, the proposed development will not have the potential to result in significant environmental effects.</i>
Transfrontier nature of the Impact	<i>Given the size, scale and location of the proposed development potential transfrontier impacts will not arise.</i>
Magnitude and Complexity of the Impact	<i>The proposed development is representative of development that is consistent with the current and ongoing evolution of urban fabric of Cork City centre. The construction phase will be of short-term duration being completed within an estimated timeframe of 24 months. With the effective implementation of standard construction phase measures, the proposed development will not result in intense or complex impacts to the receiving environment.</i>
Probability of the Impact	<i>Impacts during the construction phase associated with disturbance to fauna and nuisance to sensitive receptors will be low and will not have the potential to be significant. The effective implementation of standard construction phase measures will ensure that any disturbance/nuisance effects are a brief and short-lived.</i>

Duration, Frequency and Reversibility of the Impact	<i>It is estimated that the construction phase will last for approximately 24 months. This will represent a short-term impact and any minor construction phase effects would arise during this phase of the proposed development. There is no potential for long-term or permanent significant impacts to arise as a result of the construction phase of the proposed development.</i>
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#### SCREENING CONCLUSION STATEMENT

*The proposed development is deemed a sub-threshold development and has been screened to determine whether an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required. It has been concluded that there will be no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and that an EIA is not required.*

*Please refer to Appendix A for report titled; 'Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report' prepared by Doherty Environmental Consulting Limited dated August 2024.*

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Date:	<i>8th August 2024</i>

## **Appendix A**

### **EIA Screening Report**