



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report

ACP-323291-25

Development	The development of a 220/110kV Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) substation
Location	On East Wall Road, Dublin 1, County Dublin
Planning Authority	Dublin City Council
Applicant(s)	EirGrid PLC
Type of Application	Application for approval under section 182A of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended.
Prescribed Bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DAU• TII• Uisce Eireann
Observers	Marion Murnane Martin Ivers & Family Peter McCarthy Sinead Collins Veronica Kennedy
Date of Site Inspection	20 th November 2025.
Inspector	A. Considine

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This case concerns an application for strategic infrastructure under section 182A of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended. It is made on foot of pre-application discussions with the Commission under ABP-322217-25 for the Central Dublin Substation Project which comprises of the construction of a new transmission substation in East Wall, Dublin 3, where the Commission decided that the development would fall within the scope of section 182A of the Act and would be strategic infrastructure.

2.0 Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The subject site comprises the existing ESB Gateway Car Park and adjoining brownfield lands at East Wall Road in Dublin 3. The site has a stated area of 1.124ha and is within the ownership of the ESB. In addition, there is a strip of land along the East Wall Road footpath which is owned by Dublin City Council which is also included as part of the proposed development site.

3.0 Proposed Development

- 3.1 The Proposed Development comprises of:
- Change of use from car park to electricity infrastructure;
 - Demolition of existing buildings, structures and general site clearance;
 - 1 no. 2-storey 220kV Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) substation building occupying an area of c. 51.8m x 22.2m and 20m in height to include the GIS switchgear comprising of insulated circuit breakers, disconnectors and other high voltage equipment, an emergency diesel generator, all necessary welfare facilities, office spaces, and monitoring and control equipment required for the operation and maintenance of the substation;
 - 1 no. 2-storey 110kV GIS substation building occupying an area of c. 51m x 15.9m and 16.5m in height to include the GIS switchgear comprising of insulated circuit breakers, disconnectors and other high voltage equipment, an emergency diesel generator, all necessary welfare facilities,

office spaces, and monitoring and control equipment required for the operation and maintenance of the substations;

- 3 no. transformers to transform electrical power from 220kV to 110kV and associated acoustic enclosures (c. 5.3m in height) and c 1m high lightning protection rods extending to a height of c. 11m above ground level;
- Electrical cables located within the site boundary;
- Site lighting within the substation compound;
- Closure of all existing entrances to the site and the provision of new vehicular and pedestrian access from East Wall Road;
- Ancillary car parking spaces including internal access roads;
- 2.6 m high palisade security fence and associated gates;
- A public-facing fence and associated gates along East Wall Road varying in height from c. 2.4m to c. 3m;
- Public realm improvements including the provision of seating areas and landscaping;
- Associated utility connections including water supply, foul drainage and surface water drainage, including the provision of an underground storm water attenuation tank; and
- All other associated ancillary above and below ground development, including works comprising or relating to construction works, roadworks and excavation.

The proposed substation will tie into the existing Belcamp – Shellybanks 220kV circuit which runs along the northern side of the M50 motorway. This connection does not form part of the proposed SID planning application.

3.2 The application to the Commission includes:

- Relevant statutory particulars documents
- Relevant drawings
- Architectural Design Statement prepared by BDA
- Planning and Environmental Considerations Report prepared by RPS
- Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report prepared by RPS

- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening prepared by RPS
- Engineering Services Report prepared by RPS
- Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan prepared by RPS
- Photomontages prepared by RPS
- Public Engagement Report

The applicant has created a standalone website for the development -

<https://www.eirgridcentraldublin.ie>

- 3.3 As part of the Powering Up Dublin programme, a new 220kV/110kV Gas Insulated Substation (GIS) has been identified as the best solution to address Dublin City's growing electricity demand. This GIS will be looped into one of the existing 220kV circuits in the North Inner City. The new station will strengthen the electricity grid in Dublin city and is a key enabler in meeting the growing demand for electricity that has resulted from increased economic activity and population growth. The project will support a variety of developments, will improve the security of supply in the City centre and will bring renewable energy onto the grid.
- 3.4 The submitted public engagement report, dated July 2025, sets out the need for the project and notes that the site was selected following extensive analysis of the sites identified, landowner and stakeholder engagement. The public and stakeholder engagement carried out in line with EirGrid's 6-step approach to developing the grid is summarised in the report. The process is noted to have begun in 2022 with the identification of the need to reinforce the grid in Dublin. Engagement in this regard included as follows:
- EirGrid hosted an Energy Citizen's Roadshow event in October 2022.
 - An information event was held in nearby Ringsend in the consultation period for the cable replacement programme in May 2023.
 - An information event was held in the Sean O'Casey Community Centre in East Wall to present the Best Performing Options for the Finglas to North Wall cable and the North Wall to Poolbeg cable in February 2024.
- 3.5 The report, at Sections 3 and 4 identifies the processes of identify the future needs analysis (Step 1) and considering the range of technical options and to

establish a short-list of options for further investigation (Step 2) including location and sites. Step 3 involves the consideration of options in more detail with the preferred option and refined study area identified. Public engagement was undertaken at this point over a 3-week campaign in the East Wall area including:

- Public information events
- Distribution of project brochures to over 5000 homes
- Notifying Ministers, TDs and local councillors in the area
- Newspaper advertisements
- Dublin Infrastructure Forum briefing on the project.

Feedback from the public engagement from Step 3 was relayed to the project team.

- 3.6 Following the feedback from the public engagements, the final project design was presented to the local community in June 2025 for final consultation. To support this consultation, the EirGrid Public Engagement Team hand delivered project brochures to homes and businesses in the East Wall area, and the brochure was printed in both English and Irish, and included a FreePost feedback form. 3 in person sessions were also held, which attracted 74 attendees, with a further drop-in clinic hosted to provide a more private and focused setting for residents to discuss the project. Section 5.3 of the Public Engagement Report sets out a summary of the feedback received.

4.0 Consultations

4.1 Prescribed Bodies

Details of the application to the Commission were circulated to the following prescribed bodies:

- Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage.
- Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications.
- Dublin City Council

- Commission for Regulation of Utilities.
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII).
- Uisce Eireann (UE)
- Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI).
- Office of Public Works
- An Taisce.
- The Heritage Council.
- An Chomhairle Ealaíon (The Arts Council).
- Failte Ireland.
- ESB
- Health Service Executive (HSE).

4.2 Prescribed Bodies Submissions

4.2.1 Development Applications Unit

The submission from the Departments notes agreement with the Planning & Environmental Considerations Report (PECR) in terms of the findings in relation to Archaeology and Cultural Heritage. The report recommends the inclusion of 4 conditions in the event of a grant of permission.

4.2.2 Transport Infrastructure Ireland

The report notes the location of the site adjacent to the Dublin Tunnel and Dublin Tunnel Control Centre. The Tunnel is a critical part of the national road network, and its uninterrupted operation must be maintained throughout the construction and operation of the proposed development. It is acknowledged that the proposed cable connection to this substation that is to cross the M50 in proximity to the Dublin Tunnel portals is to be the subject of a separate future development consent application.

National policy requires the protection of the capacity, safety and efficiency of the existing national road network. The Dublin Tunnel, part of the M50, provides access to Dublin Port – a Tier 1 Port. The strategic role of the Dublin Tunnel, and the requirement for its protection is highlighted, in addition to access to the Dublin Tunnel Control Centre.

While the submitted PECR commits that the appointed contractor will prepare a Traffic Management Plan in consultation with DCC, TII and An Garda Síochána, there is a repeat of the commitment to a Contractor prepared Construction Traffic Management Plan, without explicit requirements to consult TII. Clear, embedded TII consultation in the formulation of the proposed Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) is required and conditions are included.

4.2.3 Uisce Éireann

The report notes that the applicant engaged with UÉ via a Pre-Connection Enquiry and that a Confirmation of Feasibility has issued advising that water and wastewater connections are feasible without infrastructure upgrade. Approximately 15m of new 250mm ID pipe will be required and a meter will be installed on the connection main. The development will require the diversion of an existing 24" cast iron water main which has been confirmed. 5 no. conditions are recommended for inclusion in a grant of permission.

4.3 Public Submissions

The Commission has received 5 third-party observations with regard to the proposed development. These submissions are summarised as follows:

4.3.1 Martin Ivers & Family

Mr. Ivers and his family reside opposite the project site and raise the following concerns about the impact of the project on their health, safety, property and community.

- The large-scale industrial energy facility is inappropriate in a residential setting and within a few hundred metres of a primary school. East Wall is a residential community and not an industrial zone.
- Health and safety risks associated with electromagnetic fields (EMFs) generated by high-voltage substations.
- Visual impacts associated with the 20m high substation buildings and acoustic pollution from the low-frequency humming from the substation, which can cause disturbance, especially at night.

- The development will cause a drop in property values and diminish the quality of life for residents.
- The community was not adequately informed or consulted.
- No evidence that alternative sites were considered.

4.3.2 **Peter McCarthy**

Mr. McCarthy raises the following concerns regarding the proposed development:

- The proposed development directly conflicts with the Z6 Employment / Enterprise Zoning afforded to the site. The Development Plan explicitly provides that Z7 zoning (Dublin Port) is the correct and preferred location for heavy utilities, industrial and infrastructural facilities.
- The use of scarce Z6 land for a substation removes the opportunity for high-value, mixed use, job-creating development.
- The site is immediately adjacent to a long-established community. Health impacts, noise and visual impacts are incompatible with both Z6 and residential amenity protection policies.
- East Wall has already borne disproportionate infrastructural loads including the Port Tunnel and rapid residential intensification with no increase in green space.
- More suitable sites are available in Dublin Port lands (Z7) which could be secured. There is no planning rationale for prioritising ESB convenience over proper planning and zoning compliance.
- The application is incomplete without
 - A full geotechnical survey
 - Hydrogeological and contamination risk assessment
 - Independent EMP, noise and air quality studies.

It is requested that permission be refused.

4.3.3 **Sinead Collins**

Ms. Collins raises the following concerns regarding the proposed development:

- The proposal provides no opportunity for enterprise or employment creation for the community of East Wall beyond its construction and does not comply with zoning.
- The site is ideal for residential development which would better serve the community of East Wall and the surrounding areas.
- In terms of the public engagement report, the main comment was that people did not want to have a large substation developed in their community. This is not reflected strongly enough in the feedback summary.
- The site is identified as the 'Best Performing Option' because Dublin Port were not willing to accommodate the development on their lands. This is not a strong rationale for the siting of the proposed development. The process of the multi criteria analysis as regards the choice of site is flawed.
- Numerous off-site community gains were mentioned during the public engagement session, but Ms. Collins fails to see any community gains in the current proposal which is considered misleading.

It is requested that the Commission refuse permission.

4.3.4 **Veronica Kennedy**

Ms. Kennedys submission mirrors those concerns raised by Mr. Ivers and family as detailed in Section 4.3.1 above.

4.3.5 **Marion Murnane**

Ms. Murnane raises the following concerns regarding the proposed development:

- Visual impact – given the location in the immediate vicinity of a main road, close to a residential terrace. The proposed development will result in intensification of an industrial nature in an area which has experienced a sharp increase in population with a recent refugee centre and residential units.
- Screening – the lack of vision for screening and green development further aggravates the heavy industrial character of the development.

- Lighting – significant and permanent lighting pollution and will give the development a prison like character.
- Emergency/fire/H&S – the development has high risk emergency concerns, and access to the site will be hampered due to heavy traffic, intensified due to Croke Park matches and concerts and Point Depot concerts. The site will accommodate 3000 litres of diesel increasing the risk of fire, explosions and contamination.
- Traffic – the construction phase will result in disruption to commuters, port tunnel traffic, school runs, retail, residents and all users of East Wall Road – as detailed in Eirgrids report.
- Tourism – no account has been taken as to the future development of the East Wall Road which is becoming a destination for tourists. The visual impact of the development will detract from the tourism revenue and uplift to the area.
- Water pressure – current issues with water services in the area.
- Property devaluation – the scale of the project and associated traffic and risk issues will affect property values.
- Noise – the development will give rise to continued nuisance of noise from the substation and increased noise outputs during emergencies.
- Vibrations – the Eirgrid report confirms that the land in the area is reclaimed and that the soil is poor for structural development. There is a risk to existing properties with structural issues due to subsidence to experience further damage.
- Suitability of the site – the site is selected over others because of ownership and not suitability of location as indicated by the applicant. The impact on residential dwellings is downplayed, and the applicants report is disingenuous with regard to biodiversity and visual amenity. The development is suited to an industrial zoned area such as Dublin Port. The applicant has failed to carry out a robust examination of alternative locations before a last resort location close to a residential area.

- Consultation – the process was disingenuous, and residents were not informed of the initial consultation process. At the consultation, no design or understanding of the scale of the development was furnished and the observer questions the number of leaflets circulated.
- It is concluded that the area needs affordable housing, nursing care facilities, open spaces and needs to be viewed as a sensitive area to be upgraded. The development will intensify the industrialisation on a site which does not have the capacity to balance the need for more electricity with the requirements of the residents in the area.

4.4 Planning Authority

- 4.4.1 The planning authority submitted a Planning Report on the proposed development to the Board on the 24th September 2025.
- 4.4.2 The report sets out the details of the SID process, the details of the proposed development and the site location. The report notes that the site currently presents as an underutilised brownfield site, with the western portion used for car parking.
- 4.4.3 The report further notes the relevant policies pertaining to the site and the proposed development. It is noted that the proposed development forms part of the wider Powering Up Dublin Project, which is fully in accordance with, and supported by, the RSES's climate change and energy infrastructure RPOs, and notes that the proposed development as a 'public service installation' is a permissible use on the Zone 6 – Employment / Enterprise zoning afforded in the City Development Plan.
- 4.4.4 The PAs report notes no objection from internal departments within the Council – Environment & Transportation, Drainage and Parks, with recommended conditions noted.
- 4.4.5 The Planning Assessment from the Council notes the need for the project under the Powering Up Dublin Programme to strengthen key electricity infrastructure in the city. The proposed development is noted to be acceptable in terms of the zoning objective for the site. It is considered that the proposed

public realm improvements and high-quality landscaping will reinforce East Wall Road as a 'Core Pedestrian Spine' in accordance with the SDRA 6 Docklands. Further to the above, the report submits:

Visual Impacts

- The proposed large-scale buildings, located towards the public facing front boundary will screen the associated transformers, car parking and other services to the rear of the site. The buildings have been designed to provide visual interest to the streetscape.
- The greatest visual impact will be in the immediate vicinity of East Wall Road, with unlikely impacts on long views.
- Concerns regarding visual impacts were raised during the pre-application meetings and the applicant was advised that the design and finish should demonstrate a positive contribution to the overall legibility of this part of East Wall. While acknowledging the selected materials and finishes, it is noted that there is scope for further discussion and agreement with DCC regarding specific details of finishes, without affecting the principle, nature and extent of the proposed development.

Landscaping & Boundary Treatment

- It is noted that the boundary treatment and planting designs have evolved with key security considerations, and notes that the use of green walls on the GIS Substation buildings is not considered feasible due to electrical safety and other technical and engineering constraints.
- The recommended conditions of the Parks Department are noted and further agreement with the Parks and Landscape Services regarding the boundary treatment and landscaping should be agreed in the event that permission is granted.

Drainage

- No objections

Transportation

- No traffic compliance comments noted.

- Proposal to remove 40m of Active Travel delineator cycleway kerb to widen and improve the entrance and exit is considered excessive.
- Requests that a condition be included to require the applicant to liaise with the Environment & Transportation division regarding Active Travel and public realm changes.

Transportation Planning Division

- Report notes no prior discussions with Eirgrid PLC prior to lodgement of the application, but TPD is generally supportive of the project.
- Notes that the proposed vehicular entrance will likely impact on the East Coast Trail two-way cycle way.
- Unobstructed footpath width behind the proposed trees along footpath edge is unclear. Changes to the footpath within DCC lands requires that the applicant liaise with the E&T Section of DCC to agree details.
- The quantum of car parking proposed is considered acceptable
- An updated CMP to be conditioned for the duration of the construction works.

Air & Noise

- No significant effects anticipated. Mitigation and monitoring measures included in Chapter 10 of the Planning & Considerations Report to be adhered to.

Noise & Vibration

- The predicted noise impact at the nearest high sensitivity NSL without mitigation is medium, and the significance of effect is deemed to be significant during night-time periods.
- Mitigation measures (including transformer noise enclosures) have been incorporated into the design, with no significant residual effects arising.

EIA & AA

- An Coimisiún Pleanála should satisfy themselves regarding the adequacy of documentation submitted.

4.4.6 The report concludes noting that the proposed development while critical for the city's growth will arguably prohibit any additional homes in this portion of the SDRA lands and is regrettable. However, it is acknowledged that the site has not been identified as an "Opportunity" site in the SDRA. Overall, given the current need for the critical electricity infrastructure, the zoning of the site and its context adjacent to the Dublin Port Tunnel lands, the planning authority are overall supportive of the proposal subject to final agreement of the design, materials and boundary treatments. 10 conditions are recommended for inclusion in any grant of permission.

4.5 Applicant's Response

4.5.1 The submissions on the file from the PA, prescribed bodies and public observers have been circulated to the applicant. The applicant was invited to make a submission on the observations received in relation to the application by letter dated 10 October 2025. A response was received on the 6th November 2025, addressing each of the submission made.

4.5.2 Dublin City Council –

The applicant notes the general support for the project and compliance with national, regional and local policy. In terms of the detailed issues, the following is noted:

- **Land use** – The Council confirms that the proposed development is permissible under the Zone 6 – Employment / Enterprise zoning objective and aligns with the definition of a 'public service installation'.
There are no site specific objectives relating to the site in terms of its location within SDRA 6 – Docklands, and the Council states that the proposed public realm improvements and high quality landscaping will reinforce East Wall Road as a 'Core Pedestrian Spine' in accordance with the SDRA.
- **Visual Impact** – The applicant welcomes the recognition of the design approach taken to address visual impact and confirms commitment to further engagement regarding final materials and finishes. EirGrid would

welcome a condition of permission requiring further consultation with DCC to agree details.

- **Landscaping and Boundary Treatment** – Pre-application meetings with the Council advised that high-quality treatment of public facing boundary would be required. Issues raised are addressed and where recommendations made are not feasible, these are clarified. The applicant would welcome a condition facilitating further consultation with DCCs Parks and Landscape Services to agree detailed landscape design.
- **Drainage** – Submission notes no objections subject to compliance with the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works and compliance with 7 recommendations in DCCs submission. The applicant has no objection.
- **Transportation** – the submission notes general support for the project and that agreements relating to changes to the public road can be addressed by way of condition. The particular issues raised by DCC in terms of impacts to cycleway, the CMP and further liaison with the relevant DCC Sections to agree details in relation to active travel are noted and accepted.
- **Air and Noise** – DCC acknowledges that, with appropriate mitigation measures in place, noise levels will remain within acceptable limits. DCC recommends that noise mitigation and monitoring measures be implemented through construction and operational phases and that the CMP includes noise control measures, hours of operation and compliance with relevant standards. The applicant is committed to implementing all such measures.
- **EIA & AA** – DCC acknowledge that ACP is the competent authority.
- **Conclusion & Recommended Conditions** – DCC is generally supportive of the project and of the 10 conditions recommended, it is asked that ACP consider and apply only necessary conditions.
 - In relation to DCC recommended condition 2, and the submission of a Communication Plan, the Commission is referred to EirGrids

‘Stakeholder Engagement Plan 2025’, which sets out EirGrids approach to such engagements and is suitable to serve as a communications plan.

- In relation to recommended condition 9(b), and reduced working hours to those proposed, the applicant considers that the 7am to 7pm Monday to Friday and 8.00am to 4.30pm on Saturdays are reasonable given the city centre location.

The applicant confirms commitment to continue engagement with DCC to agree details.

4.5.3 Transport Infrastructure Ireland –

The applicant advises that they are fully supportive of the 5 no. recommendations included in TII submission

4.5.4 Uisce Eireann –

The applicant notes that UE has advised that connections to existing infrastructure and the proposed diversion of the existing 24-inch cast iron water main are feasible.

4.5.5 DAU –

The applicant notes that the Department is broadly in agreement with the findings of the AIA and is supportive of the inclusion of the recommended 4 conditions.

4.5.6 Third Parties -

The applicant has responded to the third-party submissions collectively under the following headings:

- Site selection and land use zoning objectives -
The applicant submits that a Multi-Criteria Analysis was undertaken to determine site selection, with the subject site identified as the best option. While close to an existing residential area, the design has been developed in consultation with the community, DCC and other stakeholders. The zoning of the site provides for public service installation and DCC confirmed that the proposed development is permissible.

- Impact on residential amenity -
The proposed development has been designed to respond to the site context, with a focus on protecting existing residential amenity, including upgrades to the public realm and improving walkability of East Wall Road. An assessment of perceived cumulative burden on the area indicates that the majority of applications have been for minor works. The project will not contribute to a cumulative burden on the area.
- Visual impact -
Given the acknowledged scale of the proposed development, the potential impacts were a key design consideration from the outset, and the application included a Architectural Design Statement prepared by BDA. The layout was developed to reduce visual prominence with carefully considered building forms and façade treatments, with landscaping proposed along East Wall Road. Visual impact will be moderate but not significant – year 1 of operation, and there is scope for further discussion and agreement with DCC regarding specific details of finishes.
- Air quality -
Section 12 of the Planning and Environmental Constraints Report concludes that there will be no significant effects on air quality anticipated as a result of the Proposed Development.
- Noise & vibration -
The assessment found that there was the potential for a significant effect on noise and vibration impacts due to construction activities, and noise impacts due to operational activities. To mitigate against these impacts, the PECR includes a number of measures (as set out in Section 12.5 of the PECF), no significant impacts occurring as a result of the proposed development.
- Site lighting -
The lighting design for the substation compound prioritises minimising light pollution. All external lighting will be mounted and directed inwards, facing the buildings and internal operational areas, to avoid light spill beyond the site boundary and reduce visual impacts on nearby residential receptors.

- **Traffic -**
The applicant acknowledges the importance of managing construction impacts and confirms that an updated Construction Management Plan (CMP) will be prepared and agreed with DCC prior to commencement of development.
- **Health & Safety -**
Extensive scientific research has found no hazardous effects from long term exposure to low levels of EMFs. This includes the small amounts of extremely low frequency EMFs produced by electricity infrastructure. In terms of emergency access concerns, the internal roads have been designed to ensure adequate turning space for maintenance and emergency vehicles. A Fire Safety Certificate application will be submitted to DCC prior to the commencement of construction, in line with the standard process for substation developments.
- **Water pressure -**
The proposed development is an unmanned substation with occasional access for operation, inspection and maintenance. Therefore, it is not anticipated that the Proposed Development will add any significant pressure to existing water services in the local area.
- **European Sites -**
The proposed development assessed the likelihood of significant impacts on European Sites, and the Report to Inform Screening for AA concluded that although hydrological connectivity was identified, given the scale and nature of Proposed Development, the setback distance between the Proposed Development and the closest coastal waterbody, and the negligible potential for any surface water run-off, the magnitude of the impacts would not result in a likely significant effect to any European Sites. It was concluded that any impacts will be localised and therefore not deemed significant.
- **Property Devaluation -**
The site is located in an urban area which is characterised by a rich tapestry of uses and built forms, including an existing substation and

railway adjacent to residential properties. . The central location lands in the vicinity of the subject site in Dublin 3 offers purchasers the attractive opportunity to enjoy a richly served 15-minute city. Having regard to the foregoing, it is considered that the concerns relating to property devaluation are unfounded. The proposed development will deliver significant upgrades to the public realm, enhancing the overall appearance of the area and improving the pedestrian experience.

- **Community Consultation -**
Refers to the Public Engagement Report, and submits that it is considered that the community was fully consulted in relation to the Proposed Development prior to the site notice erection, with a commitment to continued consultation.
- **Community Benefit Fund -**
The Community Benefit Fund will become live once the project has received its planning approval, and the fund will be released on a phased basis as the project progresses and aims to support local communities affected by infrastructure projects, providing financial assistance for community, sustainability, and biodiversity initiatives.

4.5.7 The response concludes that issues raised in the submissions are fully addressed in the application documentation.

5.0 Planning History

The following planning applications are relevant to the proposed development:

Application site:

PA ref: 2766/21: Permission granted for the continued use of a temporary surface car park to provide ancillary parking for ESB staff

PA ref: 3052/16: Permission granted for the provision of a temporary surface car park for a period of 5 years.

Adjacent lands:

PA ref: 5175/22: Permission granted to EWD3 Developments Limited for amendments to Reg. Ref. 3091/20 for a change of use of land and provision of an ESB substation, ESB Meter/Switch Room and all associated development.

PA ref: 4202/22: Permission granted to erect c. 482 sq.m or 99.90 kWp of photovoltaic panels on the roof of the existing retail unit at East Wall with all associated site works at Lidl Ireland GMBH.

PA ref: 2552/15: Permission granted to Fingleton White for the development of an c. 14.4 km aviation fuel pipeline from Dublin Port to Dublin Airport.

There have been a number of port-related developments at Dublin Port, approximately 600m to the southeast of the proposed development site.

6.0 Policy Context

6.1 EU, National and Regional Legislation/Policy

EU, national and regional policy documents are relevant in respect of the proposed development and include:

- Europe 2030 Climate and Energy framework and Renewable Energy Directive 2009/28/EC & 2018/2001/EU.
- Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework, 2018.

- National Development Plan, 2021-2030.
- Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, as amended.
- Climate Action Plan, 2024.
- Energy Security in Ireland to 2030 – Energy Security Package (November 2023).
- National Energy Security Framework (April 2022).
- Policy Statement on Security of Electricity Supply (November 2021).
- Ireland’s Grid Development Strategy 2017: Your Grid, Your Tomorrow.
- Ireland’s Transition to a low carbon Energy Future 2015-2030.
- National Mitigation Plan, 2017.
- National Adaption Framework, 2018.
- National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030
- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midlands Region 2019-2031.
- Dublin Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (the MASP) (prepared as part of the RSES)

The legislation and policy documents essentially promote, and set targets for, transition to a low carbon and climate resilient society and support the development of associated infrastructure, including the development of the electricity transmission system, to support this transition (e.g., to accommodate more diverse flows), subject to environmental safeguards.

6.2 Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028

- 6.2.1 The Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028 is the relevant policy document pertaining to the subject site and development. The proposed development site is located on lands zoned ‘Zone 6 - Employment / Enterprise’ as identified in the CDP. It is the stated vision for this objective: *“To provide for the creation and protection of enterprise and facilitate opportunities for employment creation.”* Under this zoning objective, a ‘public service installation’ is a permissible use. Appendix 15 – Land Use Definitions of the CDP identifies this use as: “A building, or part thereof, a roadway or land used for the

provision of public services including those provided by statutory undertakers. Public services include all service installations necessary for electricity, gas, telephone, radio, telecommunications, television, data transmission, drainage, including wastewater treatment plants.”

6.2.2 Chapter 9 of the plan relates to Sustainable Environmental Infrastructure and Flood Risk, which identifies strategic issues including the *“facilitating the provision of critical energy utilities and the transition to alternative, renewable, decarbonised and decentralised energy sources”*. The following objectives relating to energy infrastructure includes as follows:

SI49 - Support for Energy Utilities: *“To support the development of enhanced electricity gas supplies, and associated transmission and distribution networks, to serve the existing and future needs of the City, and to facilitate new transmission infrastructure projects and technologies including those to facilitate linkages of renewable energy proposals to the electricity and gas transmission grid that might be brought forward in the lifetime of this Plan. In this respect, the City Council will have regard to the ‘Guiding Principles’ for facilitating the provision of energy networks set out by the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (2019-2031).”*

SI51 - Renewable Energy Use and Generation: *“To promote renewable energy generation, use and storage at appropriate locations within the built and natural environment to meet national objectives towards achieving a low carbon economy by 2050.”*

SIO28 - EirGrid Development Strategy: *“To support EirGrid’s Grid Development Strategy - Your Grid, Your Tomorrow (2017), Implementation Plan 2017 - 2022 and Transmission Development Plan (TDP) 2016 and any subsequent plans prepared during the lifetime of this Plan, in order to provide for the safe, secure and reliable supply of electricity.”*

SIO30 - Facilitating Offshore Renewable Energy: *“To support the sustainable development of Ireland’s offshore renewable energy resources in accordance with the National Marine Planning Framework (2021) and*

Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan (2019) and its successor, including any associated domestic and international grid connection enhancements.”

6.2.3 Chapter 13 of the CDP identifies 17 no. Strategic Development Regeneration Areas (SDRAs) and sets out the overarching framework and guiding principles for the future development of each these areas. The subject site lies within the northern portion of ‘SDRA 6 Docklands’ and the CDP requires that all future land uses within this SDRA shall accord with the focused requirements of the relevant development plan zonings. The following objectives relate to SDRA 6:

“To enhance public realm to accommodate increased pedestrian movement. To support public realm improvements in East Wall to enhance permeability and connectivity to the wider area”.

The East Wall Road, which forms the southwestern boundary of the project site, is identified as a “Core Pedestrian Spine”, with linked roads also identified for “Access and Permeability”.

6.2.4 Chapter 15 of the CDP sets out development standards and criteria to be considered in the development management process to ensure achievement of the core strategy and relevant policies and objectives, including for architectural and urban design parameters, landscaping and green infrastructure, surface water management and flood risk, sustainable movement and transport, built heritage and archaeology and light and noise.

6.3 Dublin City Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029

Climate Neutral Dublin 2030 sets out the actions that Dublin City Council is taking to prepare our city and the people living here for the known impacts of climate change, including flooding, sea level rise, extreme weather events and drought. This Plan includes a number of actions to building a resilient city including R3 – Climate Resilient Critical Infrastructure, which seeks to ensure that utilities etc are maintained and upgraded, in partnership with various bodies including ESB and EirGrid.

7.0 Natural Heritage Designations

7.1 The site is not located within any Natura 2000 site. The closest Natura 2000 site is the South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (Site Code: 004024) which is located approximately 170m to the north of the site. In addition to the above, the following sites are located within the established Zone of Influence:

- South Dublin Bay SAC (000210) c.2.4 km south-east
- North Bull Island SPA (004006) c.3.1 km east
- North Dublin Bay SAC (000206) c.3.2 km east
- Northwest Irish Sea SPA (004236) c.5.4 km east
- Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC (003000) c.9.3 km east
- Howth Head SAC (00202) c.8.9 km east
- Baldoyle Bay SPA (004016) c.8.2 km north-east
- Baldoyle Bay SAC (000199) c. 8.0 km north-east
- Dalkey Islands SPA (004172) c.12.3 km south-east
- Howth Head Coast SPA (004113) c.11.6 km east
- Ireland's Eye SAC (002193) c.11.9 km north-east
- Ireland's Eye SPA (004117) c.11.7 km north-east
- Malahide Estuary SAC (000205) c.11.0 km north
- Wicklow Mountains SAC (002122) c.13.5 km south
- Wicklow Mountains SPA (004040) c.13.8 km south
- Malahide Estuary SPA (004025) c.11.3 km north
- Glenasmole Valley SAC (001209) c.14.2 km south-west
- Rogerstown Estuary SPA (004015) c.16.0 km north
- Lambay Island SPA (004069) c.19.3 km north-east

7.2 In addition to the Natura 2000 sites, the following Proposed /Natural Heritage Areas lie in proximity to the site:

- North Dublin Bay pNHA (000206) c.152m north-west
- Royal Canal pNHA (002103) c.715m south-west
- Grand Canal pNHA (002104) c.1.3km south
- South Dublin Bay pNHA (000210) c.2.4km south-east
- Santry Demesne pNHA (000178) c.4.5km north
- Liffey Valley pNHA (000128) c.8km west
- Baldoyl Bay pNHA (000199) c.8.1km north-east
- Howth Head pNHA (000202) c.8.6km east
- Dalkey Coastal Zone And Killiney Hill pNHA (001206) c.9.6 south-east
- Irelands Eye pNHA (000203) c.11.8km north-east.

8.0 EIA Screening

8.1 The applicant submitted an Environmental Impact Screening Report as part of the suite of documents in support of the proposed development. The proposed development comprises the development of a 220/110kV Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) substation, at East Wall, Dublin, on a site covering 1.124ha. The grid connection, which will tie the proposed substation into the existing Belcamp – Shellybanks 220kV circuit which runs along the northern side of the M50 motorway, does not form part of this planning application, but is considered for the purposes of EIA Screening.

8.2 Part 1 of Schedule 5 Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended includes a list of projects for which mandatory EIA is required. Part 2 of Schedule 5 includes a list of projects where, if specified thresholds are exceeded, an EIA is required. The following Classes of Development are considered relevant to the subject project:

Class of Development 3. Energy Industry

- (a) *Industrial installations for the production of electricity, steam and hot water not included in Part 1 of this Schedule with a heat output of 300 megawatts or more.*
- (b) *Industrial installations for carrying gas, steam and hot water with a potential heat output of 300 megawatts or more, or transmission of electrical energy by overhead cables not included in Part 1 of this Schedule, where the voltage would be 200 kilovolts or more.*

Class of Development 10. Infrastructure projects

- (b)(iv) *Urban development which would involve an area greater than 2 hectares in the case of a business district, 10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 20 hectares elsewhere.*

(In this paragraph, “business district” means a district within a city or town in which the predominant land use is retail or commercial use.)

The proposed development would not come within the projects outlined within either Annex I or Annex II to Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU nor is it a class as set out in either Part 1 or Part 2 of Schedule 5 (Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended) as detailed above, and therefore a mandatory EIAR is not required.

- 8.3 In terms of sub-threshold developments, no element of the project falls into a class of development prescribed in Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. Therefore, sub-threshold screening for EIA is not required.
- 8.4 Whilst an EIA is not required, the applicant prepared a Planning and Environmental Considerations Report in support of the project, to ensure that the appropriate planning requirements and environmental effects are considered.

The environmental topics considered include:

- Population and Human Health
- Biodiversity
- Surface Water & Flooding
- Soils, Geology and Hydrogeology
- Landscape and Visual Amenity
- Air Quality
- Climate
- Noise & Vibration
- Archaeology, Architecture and Cultural Heritage
- Traffic and Transport
- Material Assets
- Major Accidents and Disasters

8.5 An assessment of the environmental topics is included below, in the Assessment section of this report.

8.6 **EIA Screening Conclusion**

The proposed development is not a class for the purposes of EIA as per the classes of development set out in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended (or Part V of the 1994 Roads Regulations). No mandatory requirement for EIA therefore arises and there is also no requirement for a screening determination. Refer to Form 1 in Appendix 1 of report.

9.0 **Format of Assessment**

9.1 Having regard to the requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, there are two parts to my assessment –

- planning assessment, and
- appropriate assessment screening.

As detailed in Section 8 of this report, the project does not require mandatory EIA. Matters relating to environmental considerations are assessed under the Planning Assessment below.

10.0 Planning Assessment

10.1 Context

10.1.1 The Commission will note that a number of third parties have made observations on the project. These issues are detailed above in Section 4.3 of this report and issues raised are considered in the following assessment.

10.1.2 Having examined the application details and all other documentation on file, including all of the submissions received in relation to the application, and inspected the site, I consider that the main issues in the planning assessment relate to the following matters:

- Principle & Compliance with Policy
- Site selection & suitability
- Roads & Traffic
- Residential amenity
 - Visual impact
 - Noise & Vibration
 - Light pollution
 - Property values
 - Health & Safety
- Environmental Considerations
- Public Consultation
- Water Services

Issues raised in respect of appropriate assessment are addressed in section 12 of this report.

10.2 Principle & Compliance with Policy

10.2.1 Principle

The applicant has submitted that the proposed development has been identified as the best solution to address the growing electrical demands for Dublin City under the Powering Up Dublin programme. The GIS will be looped into one of the existing 220kV circuits in the North Inner City, and is identified as a key enabler in meeting the growing demand for electricity that has

resulted from increased economic activity and population growth. The project will support a variety of developments, will improve the security of supply in the City centre and will bring renewable energy onto the grid. In addition, the subject site is identified as a brownfield site, which Dublin City Council consider to be underutilised, with the western portion used for car parking. In this context, I am satisfied that the principle of development is acceptable.

10.2.2 Policy Compliance

10.2.2.1 In terms of policy, the Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028 is the relevant policy document pertaining to the subject site and development. Chapter 9 of the plan relates to Sustainable Environmental Infrastructure and Flood Risk, which identifies strategic issues including the *“facilitating the provision of critical energy utilities and the transition to alternative, renewable, decarbonised and decentralised energy sources”*. The following objectives relating to energy infrastructure includes as follows:

SI49 - Support for Energy Utilities: *“To support the development of enhanced electricity gas supplies, and associated transmission and distribution networks, to serve the existing and future needs of the City, and to facilitate new transmission infrastructure projects and technologies including those to facilitate linkages of renewable energy proposals to the electricity and gas transmission grid that might be brought forward in the lifetime of this Plan. In this respect, the City Council will have regard to the ‘Guiding Principles’ for facilitating the provision of energy networks set out by the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (2019-2031).”*

SI51 - Renewable Energy Use and Generation: *“To promote renewable energy generation, use and storage at appropriate locations within the built and natural environment to meet national objectives towards achieving a low carbon economy by 2050.”*

SIO28 - EirGrid Development Strategy: *“To support EirGrid’s Grid Development Strategy - Your Grid, Your Tomorrow (2017),*

Implementation Plan 2017 - 2022 and Transmission Development Plan (TDP) 2016 and any subsequent plans prepared during the lifetime of this Plan, in order to provide for the safe, secure and reliable supply of electricity.”

In terms of compliance with the above policy objectives, I am satisfied that the proposed development generally accords.

10.2.2.2 Chapter 13 of the CDP identifies 17 no. Strategic Development Regeneration Areas (SDRAs) and sets out the overarching framework and guiding principles for the future development of each these areas. The subject site lies within the northern portion of ‘SDRA 6 Docklands’ and the CDP requires that all future land uses within this SDRA shall accord with the focused requirements of the relevant development plan zonings. The following objectives relate to SDRA 6:

In terms of Green Infrastructure -

“To promote and facilitate the delivery of the Port Greenway and to enhance the amenity of East Wall Road through tree planting, improved pedestrian facilities, and potential expansion of quality public realm.”

In terms of Movement & Transport -

“To support public realm improvements in East Wall to enhance permeability and connectivity to the wider area”.

The East Wall Road, which forms the southwestern boundary of the project site, is identified as a “Core Pedestrian Spine”, with linked roads also identified for “Access and Permeability”. Having regard to the details of public realm works provided in support of the proposed development, I am generally satisfied that the proposed development complies with these requirements, and if permitted, would not prevent the realisation of these objectives.

10.2.2.3 Chapter 15 of the CDP sets out development standards and criteria to be considered in the development management process to ensure achievement of the core strategy and relevant policies and objectives, including for architectural and urban design parameters, landscaping and

green infrastructure, surface water management and flood risk, sustainable movement and transport, built heritage and archaeology and light and noise. In principle, I am satisfied that the proposed development has had due regard to the provisions of the Development Standards presented above. Further assessment of these parameters is included under following sections of this assessment.

10.2.2.4 Further to the above, I refer the Commission to the Dublin City Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 - Climate Neutral Dublin 2030 which sets out the actions that Dublin City Council is taking to prepare our city and the people living here for the known impacts of climate change, including flooding, sea level rise, extreme weather events and drought. This Plan includes a number of actions to building a resilient city including R3 – Climate Resilient Critical Infrastructure, which seeks to ensure that utilities etc are maintained and upgraded, in partnership with various bodies including ESB and EirGrid. In this regard, I am satisfied that the principle of the proposed development is acceptable.

10.2.3 Zoning Compliance

10.2.3.1 In terms of compliance with the zoning objective afforded to the project site, the proposed development site is located on lands zoned 'Zone 6 - Employment / Enterprise' as identified in the CDP. It is the stated vision for this objective: *"To provide for the creation and protection of enterprise and facilitate opportunities for employment creation."* Under this zoning objective, a 'public service installation' is a permissible use. Appendix 15 – Land Use Definitions of the CDP identifies this use as: "A building, or part thereof, a roadway or land used for the provision of public services including those provided by statutory undertakers. Public services include all service installations necessary for electricity, gas, telephone, radio, telecommunications, television, data transmission, drainage, including wastewater treatment plants."

10.2.3.2 In this regard, the Commission will note that Dublin City Council have concluded that the proposed development, which forms part of the wider

Powering Up Dublin Project, which is fully in accordance with, and supported by, the RSES's climate change and energy infrastructure RPOs, and notes that the proposed development as a 'public service installation' is a permissible use on the Zone 6 – Employment / Enterprise zoning afforded in the City Development Plan.

10.2.3.3 Third party submissions contend that the proposed development directly conflicts with the Z6 Employment / Enterprise Zoning afforded to the site, suggesting that the Development Plan explicitly provides that Z7 zoning (Dublin Port) is the correct and preferred location for heavy utilities, industrial and infrastructural facilities. Having considered the CDPs Chapter 14 (Land-use Zoning) I am satisfied that the principle of the proposed development fully accords with the Zone 6 permissible uses and as such, a grant of permission in this instance would not conflict with the zoning afforded to the site.

10.3 Site Selection & Suitability

10.3.1 A number of third parties have raised concerns that the site is not suitable for the nature of the development proposed. While the issue of principle and compliance with policy and zoning is addressed above, third party residents in the East Wall area consider that the large-scale industrial energy facility is inappropriate in a residential setting and within a few hundred metres of a primary school. It is further submitted that East Wall is a residential community and not an industrial zone. Submissions suggest that more suitable sites are available in Dublin Port lands (Z7) which could be secured and ultimately that there is no planning rationale for prioritising ESB convenience over proper planning and zoning compliance.

10.3.2 In response, the applicant submits that a Multi-Criteria Analysis was undertaken to determine site selection, with the subject site identified as the best option. While close to an existing residential area, the design has been developed in consultation with the community, DCC and other stakeholders. The zoning of the site provides for public service installation and DCC confirmed that the proposed development is permissible.

10.3.3 While I acknowledge the third-party submissions, including the contention that the proposed development, if permitted would occupy Z6 lands for other potential for enterprise or employment creation opportunities, I am satisfied that the need for the proposed development has been clearly established and that the applicant presented an assessment of alternatives which I consider to be reasonable. That third-party owned lands were considered and said third party was not willing to provide the lands for the development, I consider this to be a reasonable criterion in the overall consideration of site selection. While I accept the arguments made by third parties in terms of residential amenity and biodiversity impacts which I will address further below in this assessment, I am satisfied that the site selection process is reasonable.

10.4 Roads & Traffic

10.4.1 The report submitted from TII notes the location of the site adjacent to the Dublin Tunnel and Dublin Tunnel Control Centre, which is a critical part of the national road network. National policy requires the protection of the capacity, safety and efficiency of the existing national road network. The Dublin Tunnel, part of the M50, provides access to Dublin Port – a Tier 1 Port. The strategic role of the Dublin Tunnel, and the requirement for its protection is highlighted, in addition to access to the Dublin Tunnel Control Centre. It is submitted that its uninterrupted operation must be maintained throughout the construction and operation of the proposed development. The TII requires the inclusion of a condition with 5 parts in any grant of planning permission which requires clear, embedded TII consultation in the formulation of the proposed Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP). I have no objections to the inclusion of this condition as proposed.

In addition to the above, the TII acknowledged that the proposed cable connection to this substation that is to cross the M50 in proximity to the Dublin Tunnel portals is to be the subject of a separate future development consent application. No permission for said connection is associated with this application.

- 10.4.2 The Planning Authority's Transportation Department raised no traffic compliance issues associated with the proposed development, with the Transportation Planning Division indicating general support of for the project. It is noted that the proposed vehicular entrance will likely impact on the East Coast Trail two-way cycle lane, with the proposal to remove approximately 40m of Active Travel delineator cycleway kerb to widen and improve the entrance / exit to the site. The PA consider this take to be excessive. Other issues raised relate to the available unobstructed footpath behind the proposed trees along the footpath edge. The PA request that a condition be included to require the applicant to consult with the Environment & Transport Division of the Council regarding Active Travel and public realm changes.
- 10.4.3 In response to the PAs submission, the applicant has advised that the proposed entrance has been designed to accommodate safe and efficient access for operational and emergency vehicles, including abnormal loads such as the 220kV transformers. However, the applicant is open to further engagement with DCC to refine the detail of the entrance and to the inclusion of a condition of permission to facilitate said engagement and agreement. In addition, the applicant confirms that an updated CMP will be prepared and submitted to DCC, including the Environment and Transportation section in terms of active travel and public realm changes prior to commencement of development.
- 10.4.4 Third party submissions have raised concerns that East Wall has already borne disproportionate infrastructural loads including the Port Tunnel and rapid residential intensification with no increase in green space. Further concerns are noted in terms of traffic during the construction phase, which will result in disruption to commuters, port tunnel traffic, school runs, retail, residents and all users of East Wall Road. In acknowledging the potential traffic impacts, the applicant submits that an updated CMP will be prepared and agreed with DCC prior to commencement of development, which will include a scheduling of construction traffic to avoid peak hours and minimise disruption to neighbouring properties, including schools.
- 10.4.5 In terms of traffic and transport, I refer the Commission to Chapter 8 of the applicants Planning and Environmental Considerations Report (PECR). It

is noted that the project, once constructed will result in minimal traffic as the substation will operate unmanned. Therefore, only the construction phase of the project, estimated to be approximately 3 years, has been assessed. The traffic assessment has been informed by commissioned traffic surveys undertaken by IDASO Ltd in May 2025, and include Junction Turning Counts, Automatic Traffic Counts and Road Safety Data, to establish the baseline traffic conditions. Traffic counts conducted on East Wall Road (R131) indicate an average two-way daily traffic volume of 14,977 passenger car units (PCUs) for weekdays. It is anticipated that during the peak of construction around 150 weekday vehicle movements would be required. This represents an increase of approximately 1%, which is considered negligible, with no perceptible cumulative impacts associated with the grid connection – not part of this application. A number of mitigation measures are also proposed and abnormal loads associated with the project will comply with the Road Traffic (Construction and Use of Vehicles) Regulations 2003 (S.I. No. 5 of 2003) and the maximum height restrictions outlined in S.I. No. 366 of 2008.

10.4.6 Having considered all of the information presented, together with all of the submissions received, I am satisfied that the impacts associated with the construction phase of the project have been identified and are reasonably addressed. While I acknowledge that impacts may arise, these will be temporary and given the strategic nature of the proposed development, I am satisfied that any impacts are reasonable within the short timeframe identified.

10.5 Residential Amenity

10.5.1 Visual impact

10.5.1.1 A number of third-party observers have raised concerns over the visual impacts associated with the proposed development, given the location in the immediate vicinity of a main road, close to a residential terrace. It is contended that the proposed development will result in intensification of an industrial nature in an area which has experienced a sharp increase in population with a recent refugee centre and residential units. Of note, third parties consider that the lack of vision for screening and green development further aggravates the heavy industrial character of the development.

10.5.1.2 The Planning Authority also note that concerns regarding visual impacts were raised during the pre-application meetings whereby the applicant was advised that the design and finish of the development should demonstrate a positive contribution to the overall legibility of this part of East Wall.

10.5.1.3 The proposed development involves the construction of two substation buildings, one which will rise to 20m and the second to 16.5m in height. In addition, three transformers are proposed which will have an overall height of 11m. The boundary along East Wall Road will include a 2.6m high palisade security fence and gates as well as public realm improvements along East Wall Road. The GIS buildings are designed to meet EirGrid's specific requirements, based on the operational / technical requirements, and will also provide all necessary welfare facilities, office spaces, monitoring and control equipment required for the operation and maintenance of the substations. It is noted that the design for this urban site involves a more bespoke proposal which evolved following consultations with DCC and the public. The layout of the site will have the two GIS buildings located towards the East Wall Road boundary which in turn, will offer screening for the transformers and other services which will be located to the rear of the site, adjacent to the M50 Port Tunnel Toll Plaza. I would acknowledge that the standard design for such projects has not been brought forward in this instance, and the submitted Architectural Design Statement sets out the evolution of the design for the GIS buildings to provide visual interest and minimise the industrial look.

10.5.1.4 The design submitted for consideration is described as follows:

- The 110kV building, narrower and slightly smaller in scale sits slightly skewed to the East Wall Road. The precast cladding panels slope to soften the scale of the building given that it sits closer to the street and houses across the road. The metal cladding to the upper levels is intended to partly reflect the sky but with a semi-reflective textured finish.
- The 220kV building sits parallel to the East Wall Road but further back within the site, also forming a physical noise barrier to the transformers

behind. The cladding maintains the horizontal banding for the design within reflects the sloped form of the 110kV building.

The applicant has indicated that a condition of permission to further discuss and agree details of materials and finishes with DCC would be accepted, and DCC has also indicated that such a condition regarding the specific details of finishes, without affecting the principle, nature and extent of the proposed development, would be appropriate. In this context, I would also note that the use of green walls on the GIS Substation buildings is not considered feasible due to electrical safety and other technical and engineering constraints.

10.5.1.5 Further to the above, the applicant has submitted details regarding the boundary treatment and landscaping proposals. I would acknowledge that the design in this regard is presented based on the primary and fundamental security and public safety functions. The proposal includes a buffer zone of planting which will comprise a mix of shrub and ornamental planting along with street tree planting, as illustrated in Drawing CP1273-RPS-03-PL-SL-D-A-2150 prepared by RPS. A pyracantha hedge is proposed to be located in front of the palisade fence but behind the decorative railing.

10.5.1.6 The submitted Planning and Environmental Constraints Report, at Chapter 13, sets out the assessment of the effects of the project on the landscape and visual impacts. The direct impacts of the project on East Wall Road include the loss of scrub vegetation and the introduction of the proposed structures into a brownfield site, which is currently used as a car park at the western end and a derelict, overgrown site to the east. Beyond the site, there is a mix of residential and industrial developments, and it is assessed that the significance of the effect of the project on visual amenity ranges from negligible to moderate adverse and not significant. The significance is considered to reduce as the proposed boundary planting matures. I further note that DCC considers that the proposed public realm improvements and high-quality landscaping will reinforce East Wall Road as a 'Core Pedestrian Spine' in accordance with the SDRA 6 Docklands.

10.5.1.7 The Commission will note that an issue relating to visual impact was also raised in the context of tourism in that, no account has been taken as to

the future development of the East Wall Road which is becoming a destination for tourists. Third parties have suggested that the visual impact of the development will detract from the tourism revenue and uplift to the area. There has been no evidence presented to corroborate this contention.

10.5.1.8 Given the context of the proposed development site, and while I acknowledge that the scale of the proposed buildings exceeds the existing residential buildings in the area, there are examples of high-rise buildings to the west of the site. I am further satisfied that the overall design and finishes of the buildings will reduce impacts and that the landscaping plans, particularly along East Wall Road, will further mitigate said visual impacts, and likely improve the existing public realm on the north side of East Wall Road. The Commission will also note the recommended conditions of DCCs Parks Department. I am satisfied that these conditions are reasonable and in the event of a grant of planning permission, should be included to ensure agreement with the Parks and Landscape Services regarding the boundary treatment and landscaping to be agreed prior to the commencement of development.

10.5.2 Noise & Vibration

10.5.2.1 Third Parties have raised concerns that the proposed development will give rise to continued nuisance of noise from the substation and increased noise outputs during emergencies. It is further contended that acoustic pollution from the low-frequency humming from the substation, which can cause disturbance, especially at night. The submitted PECR notes that there is a potential for increased noise emissions due to the construction works and from associated traffic, while the operational phase of the development will result in noise sources from fixed plant and transformers. Such matters are considered in Chapter 12 of the PECR which considers key parameters associated with construction activities and associated traffic, vibration associated with construction activities and noise associated with the operational phase of the development. The PECR acknowledges the high number of sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the site including residential properties and schools. In terms of vibrations, third-parties note the Eirgrid report confirms that the land in the area is reclaimed and that the soil is poor

for structural development, and therefore, there is a risk to existing properties with structural issues due to subsidence to experience further damage.

10.5.2.2 A baseline noise survey was conducted in order to characterise the existing environment over a period of eight days in March 2025, which included 1 unattended and 2 attended surveys. The results indicate that local road traffic noise was dominant and continuous during the day, and this noise source remained dominant in the night-time surveys. Other noise sources included distant road traffic noise, occasional distant aircraft, local activity and distant industrial noise. Daytime L_{Aeq} noise levels ranged from 65-68dB at the attended locations, and 59-75dB at the unattended site, while nighttime levels ranged from 63-68dB and 52-88dB respectively.

10.5.2.3 During the construction phase, noise levels generated by site clearance and demolition activities are predicted to exceed the BS 5228 70dB L_{Aeq} noise threshold at several noise sensitive locations (NSLs), indicating a moderate significance of effect. Mitigation measures are proposed for these short-term activities. All other activities associated with the construction phase will fall below the BS 5228 70dB L_{Aeq} noise threshold such that the significance of the effects is deemed to be not significant to slight moderate. While not comprising part of this application, the predicted noise associated with the grid connection works are below BS 5228 70dB L_{Aeq} noise threshold save for at one modelled NSL, where at R12, a commercial property, the predicted noise levels are 77dB, reducing to 69dB when the vibratory piling rig is not operating. This piece of equipment is likely to be used for approximately 1 day during the set up of the HDD rig.

10.5.2.4 In terms of vibrations, construction vibrations arise during rock-breaking and the use of heavy construction equipment close to sensitive properties. Consideration of potential vibration impacts in the submitted PECR has been limited to properties within 50 m of the site. Vibration levels are predicted to be 1.6 mm/s for the vibratory roller, and 2.4 mm/s for the road roller. The magnitude of impact for these activities is predicted to be medium, and, given the likely limited duration, the significance of effect is moderate. As such, residents within 50m of the proposed works area will be given prior

warning but no adverse structural impacts to any properties are anticipated as a result of these works.

10.5.2.5 In terms of operational noise, it is noted that the substation once commissioned, will operate 24-hours per day, seven days a week. The proposed three transformers are identified as the main source of noise during this phase of the development. The noise levels at the nearest NSLs were predicted using a three-dimensional model using iNoise noise modelling software, and the substation transformers without mitigation were modelled. Noise from the substation is tonal close to the source and tones were identified at 100 Hz and 200 Hz one-third octave bands. It is likely that 100 Hz tonal noise will be audible at the nearest NSLs. The predicted noise impact at the nearest high sensitivity NSL without mitigation is medium, and the significance of effect is deemed to be significant during night-time periods, where complaints are assessed as likely. As such, mitigation measures are proposed having been incorporated into the design. On implementation, no significant residual effects are assessed as arising. I note DCCs acceptance in this regard.

10.5.2.6 Section 12.5 of the submitted Planning & Environmental Constraints Report sets out the mitigation measures to be implemented, including best practice measures during the construction and operational phases of the project to ensure noise levels are controlled. Measures include monitoring of the construction phase measures with the agreement of the local authority. In terms of the operational phase, acoustic enclosures are proposed and when implemented, predicted rated noise levels associated with the transformers will be more than 10dB below the current background noise levels. These measures will meet the BS 4142 requirements, the proposed development will also meet the Neighbourhood Noise criteria in EirGrid Document Reference: XDS-GFS-00-001-R4 at the nearest NSL for all periods. The result is that no significant residual effects arise as a result of the development, and the significance of residual effect is predicted to be negligible.

10.5.2.7 I have considered all of the submissions raising noise as a potential impact on residential amenity as well as the information submitted with the application. I am satisfied that potential effects on noise and vibration would

be avoided, managed and mitigated by the measures which form part of the proposed scheme, the proposed mitigation measures and through suitable conditions. I am therefore satisfied that the proposed development would not have any unacceptable direct, indirect or cumulative effects on noise and vibration.

10.5.3 Light pollution

10.5.3.1 Third parties have raised concerns regarding the proposed lighting scheme proposed for the development, suggesting that the significant and permanent lighting pollution and will give the development a prison like character. I note that the City Development Plan also seeks to minimise the impact of external lighting (and noise) at sensitive locations with the following policies noted;

- G118 – Minimise Impact – Light and Noise: *“To minimise the environmental impact of external lighting and noise at sensitive locations to achieve a sustainable balance between the needs of an area, the safety of walking and cycling routes and the protection of sensitive species such as bats (see also Section 9.5.9 Public & External Lighting).”*
- S141 – Lighting Standards: *“To provide and maintain high quality and appropriate street/ outdoor lighting on public roads, footways, cycleways, public realm throughout the City in accordance with the Council’s Vision Statement for Public Lighting in Dublin City and related public lighting projects. In general, the lighting of roads and public amenity areas shall be provided in accordance with the requirements of the latest Public Lighting Standards IS EN13201 and further updates.”*
- S142 – Light Pollution: *“To not allow unnecessary, inappropriate or excessive artificial lighting and to ensure that the design of public and external lighting proposals minimises light spillage or pollution and has due regard to the character, environmental sensitivity and residential amenity of the surrounding area.”*

10.5.3.2 The PECR submitted with the application notes that the lighting design for the substation compound prioritises minimising light pollution, particularly given its location within a residential area. All external lighting will be mounted and directed inwards, facing the buildings and internal operational areas, to

avoid light spill beyond the site boundary and reduce visual impacts on nearby residential receptors. Security lighting will also be provided, designed to operate on motion sensors or timers where appropriate to limit unnecessary continuous illumination. It is submitted that the lighting and security strategy has been carefully designed to balance operational requirements with the need to minimise environmental and visual impacts on surrounding residential properties. During the construction phase, construction lighting will comprise of low energy LED lighting and security lighting which will be directional in order to minimise light spill.

10.5.3.3 Having regard to the information presented, and given the context of the application site, I am satisfied that the proposed development has appropriately considered the lighting scheme to minimise impacts on adjacent residential properties. The design represents embedded mitigation, and I am therefore satisfied that the proposed development would not have any unacceptable direct, indirect or cumulative effects on residential amenity.

10.5.4 Property values

10.5.4.1 It is contended by third-parties that the scale of the proposed development, together with the associated traffic and risk issues will affect property values and will cause a drop in property values, diminishing the quality of life for residents. In response, the applicant considers such concerns to be unfounded.

10.5.4.2 The subject site lies within a city centre location which is characterised by a wide range and variety of uses, including residential ranging from long established terraced housing to modern 9+ storey apartments, industrial development at the port, schools and commercial uses. The existing site is currently occupied in part by a carpark while the eastern area of the site is currently unused. There is a small substation located at the eastern side of the site. The need for the proposed development has been established noting that Dublin City Centre currently gets its power from existing transmission substations in Finglas, Ringsend and Inchicore. It is projected that these existing transmission stations will reach their capacity limits in the coming years, and as such, there is a need for a centrally located substation to support Dublin's growing electricity needs.

10.5.4.3 The Commission will note the site is zoned Z6 Employment/Enterprise, while third-parties have indicated a preference for housing at this site. I would note that residential use is not included as a permissible use for the Z6 zoning afforded to the site, and only embassy residential is identified as being open for consideration. As part of the Powering Up Dublin programme, a new 220kV/110kV Gas Insulated Substation (GIS) has been identified as the best solution to address the city's growing electricity demand which will support further development in the city centre including development which will support employment and enterprise.

10.5.4.4 The overall design approach for the development and the landscaping proposals along East Wall Road will enhance the overall appearance and improve the pedestrian spine in accordance with the provisions of the CDP for SDRA 6 Docklands. No evidence to suggest that the development will devalue property has been submitted and as such, I am satisfied that the public realm upgrades will contribute to the amenity of the wider area.

10.5.5 Health & Safety

10.5.5.1 Health & Safety issues have been identified by third parties associated with electromagnetic fields (EMFs) generated by high-voltage substations. In addition, it is submitted that the development has high risk emergency concerns, and access to the site will be hampered due to heavy traffic, intensified due to Croke Park matches and concerts and Point Depot concerts. The site will accommodate 3000 litres of diesel increasing the risk of fire, explosions and contamination.

10.5.5.2 The applicant has responded noting that extensive scientific research has found no hazardous effects from long term exposure to low levels of EMFs. This includes the small amounts of extremely low frequency EMFs produced by electricity infrastructure. In terms of emergency access concerns, the internal roads have been designed to ensure adequate turning space for maintenance and emergency vehicles. A Fire Safety Certificate application will be submitted to DCC prior to the commencement of construction, in line with the standard process for substation developments.

10.5.5.3 It is proposed that a Project Supervisor will be appointed for the construction phase of the development who will be responsible for developing the Construction Stage Health and Safety Plan, co-ordinating the works of appointed contractors and providing the PSDP with information required in the Safety File. It is further noted that EirGrid designs, develops and operates the transmission grid in accordance with stringent safety recommendations which are made by national and international agencies. Several of these recommendations come from the International Commission for Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP). The proposed development has been designed to ensure that the strength of the electric and magnetic fields during operation of the proposed development will comply with the EirGrid EMF policy and by extension comply with the ICNIRP and EU guidelines on exposure of the general public to EMF. The proposed development is not a COMAH establishment.

10.5.5.4 I am satisfied that potential health and safety risks to construction workers will be mitigated through best practice construction methods and compliance with health and safety standards.

10.6 Environmental Considerations

10.6.1 Biodiversity

10.6.1.1 Chapter 15 of the submitted Planning and Environmental Constraints Report relates to Biodiversity and details the results of the desk study and field survey completed to establish the baseline ecological conditions at the site. A separate Report to Inform Screening for Appropriate Assessment has been prepared which focus on European Sites and the features for which these sites are designated. The site surveys were undertaken between September 2024 and June 2025 and included surveys of habitats, protected flora, invasive alien plants and animals, bats and breeding birds.

10.6.1.2 The subject site is not located within or adjoining any internationally or nationally designated sites for nature conservation, with the closest pNHA, North Dublin Bay pNHA (site code 000206), located c. 153 m north-west and South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (site code 004024), located approximately 250 m from the proposed development (and c170m from the

grid connection). Table 15.3 of the PECR identifies the Designated Sites within the Zone of Influence.

10.6.1.3 The site includes hardstanding areas, and brownfield habitats, with no Annex I habitat located within the footprint of the proposed development. The desk study returned no Annex II flora species, and no species protected under the Flora Protection Order 2022. No protected plant species listed on the Flora Protection Order 2022, or those listed on the EU Habitats Directive were observed during surveys. No invasive alien plant or animal species were recorded during the field survey.

10.6.1.4 In terms of fauna, the surveys did not find suitable trees or vegetation containing potential bat roosting features, with all trees and scrubs classified as having a suitability of 'none'. Of the structures proposed for removal, one was determined to have low suitability for roosting bats due to missing brickwork. This structure consisted of a block and plaster, flat-roofed shed, containing electrical substation. An emergence survey of the structure which was determined to have roosting potential was carried out on 17th June 2025, with no bats recorded. No evidence of protected mammal species was recorded during the surveys.

10.6.1.5 In terms of birds, four species were recorded as exhibiting signs of probable breeding (three green listed, one amber listed), while six species were recorded as exhibiting signs of possible breeding (five green listed, one amber). While the site offers some nesting and foraging habitat for breeding birds, its significance as a suitable breeding bird habitat is minimal especially with notably more suitable habitat within Fairview Park to the northwest of the site. The site does not offer significant suitable foraging or nesting habitat to any SCI species.

10.6.1.6 No significant habitat is present within the Zol of the Proposed Development for significant populations of protected amphibian and reptile species or terrestrial invertebrates to occur, and no important ecological features were identified on the site.

10.6.1.7 Mitigation measures proposed for the construction phase of the development include standard best practice such as the reassessment of

buildings for potential roosting bats or nesting birds and the site for invasive alien species. Vegetation clearance and demolition will occur outside of the breeding bird season and during the operational phase, all external lighting will be directed inwards to avoid light spill.

10.6.1.8 I am satisfied that if permitted, the project will not give rise to significant or cumulative effects and no significant residual adverse effects are likely.

10.6.2 Archaeology, Architecture & Cultural Heritage

10.6.2.1 Chapter 14 of the submitted Planning and Environmental Constraints Report relates to Archaeology, Architecture and Cultural Heritage. The chapter includes an assessment of the grid connection, notwithstanding that this element does not comprise part of this proposed development. The assessment methodology used a desktop study, and a review of a suite of information and data sets, and the PECR includes a description of the receiving environment, noting that the subject site is in an estuarine location prior to any reclamation activities that were begun in the latter part of the 17th Century. The subject site was reclaimed in the middle of the 20th century and no recorded monuments are noted to be within or near the site and the site is described as having a low to moderate level of potential for the survival of buried archaeological remains as the area was disturbed with hard surfaces and former industrial / commercial structures which were demolished c. 2010. There is potential for direct negative impact to subsurface archaeological features, and the application includes mitigation measures during the construction phase of the project.

10.6.2.2 The Commission will note the submission from the DAU with regard to heritage related matters, and which states broad agreement with the findings of the desk-based Archaeological Impact Assessment carried out for the site. The Department recommends the inclusion of 4 conditions which are noted to align with the OPR Practice Note PN03: Planning Conditions (October 2022), with appropriate site-specific additions/adaptations based on the particular characteristics of this development and informed by the findings of the application. I have no objection to the inclusion of these conditions as written.

10.6.3 Water Environment & Flood Risk Assessment

10.6.3.1 Potential effects on the water environment are considered to be minimal as a minimum amount of excavation is required. A new storm water drainage system is proposed to manage runoff from hard standing areas, building roofs, internal access roads, and car parking within the substation compound. Chapter 5 of the submitted Engineering Services Report notes that collected surface water runoff will pass through an oil/petrol interceptor to remove hydrocarbons and other potential contaminants before entering an underground attenuation system. The discharge rate is designed on the basis of a 1 in 100-year return period critical storm with 20% climate change allowance, and will be limited to a maximum of 5l/s during a 1 in 100 Year storm.

10.6.3.2 Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SuDS) measures are proposed to be provided within the Proposed Development, to mitigate the adverse effects of urban stormwater drainage by replicating the natural predevelopment catchment characteristics of the site. The Drainage Planning, Policy and Development Control (DPPDC) section of Dublin City Council has advised no objection to this development, subject to a number of recommendations and the developer complying with the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works Version 6.0. I have no objections to the proposed development in this regard.

10.6.3.3 In terms of flood risk potential, the Commission will note the submission of a Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment (SSFRA) as part of the application documentation. While no flood events are noted on the subject site, a number of events were recorded within 2.5km of the site, with the mapped extent of the Tolka 2002 flood (ID-5)(page 15 of the Site-Specific FRA) shown to be 100 meters away from the proposed development site. The main source of flooding noted include significant rainfall (both continuous and torrential), rising sea levels, river overflow, and the failure of drainage systems to manage excess water. The report also notes that the subject site lies outside of the benefitting area associated with the 2no. OPW flood relief schemes – Tolka and Spencer Dock Flood Relief Schemes - which provide

flood defences near the site, suggesting that the current site levels are above the potential flood extents without the schemes in place.

10.6.3.4 In terms of predictive flooding, the Eastern CFRAM Study included assessment of fluvial flooding from the Tolka River and River Liffey in the vicinity of the site. The NIFM flood mapping of the River Tolka identifies potential for significant flood risk upstream of the rail line, but no flooding extending to the site location in any event. Coastal flooding risk analysis also shows the site outside any such flooding extents with flooding along the road frontage of East Wall Road is indicated in the NCFHM 0.1% AEP flood event. The Dublin Pluvial Study assesses the risk of surface water flooding in Dublin and there is potential for flooding in the proposed development site.

10.6.3.5 The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), prepared as part of the Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028, indicates that the proposed development site is within Flood Zone C with a low risk of flooding. The Stage 2 FRA was carried out to consider the potential flood risk to the site from pluvial flooding. While the Dublin Pluvial Study identifies a high probability of pluvial flooding within the site, the study does not include detailed surface features, elevation levels or inclusion of the existing drainage network. Mitigation measures are proposed to appropriately manage rainfall and surface water runoff and to minimise flood risk elsewhere.

10.6.3.6 I have considered the content of the SSFRA and note the residual risks identified – being the failure of existing defences and the blockage of surface water drainage network. In terms of the existing defences, and given that the subject site lies outside of the benefitting lands associated with the defences identified, I am satisfied that such a risk is low. I further note the design details associated with the surface water drainage system proposed for the site which includes catchpit manholes located upstream of the geocellular attenuation tank, designed to collect silt and debris and help prevent blockages within the drainage network, as well as oil/petrol interceptors. In terms of access to the site, it is noted that the development proposes an unmanned substation which will have restricted access. Overall, I am satisfied that the surface water drainage and attenuation systems have been designed to accommodate increased rainfall intensity, with a 20% climate change

allowance applied to the design storm event. The mitigation and management measures ensure that flood risk to people, property, and the surrounding environment is minimised and maintained at acceptable levels. I have no objection to the proposed development in this regard.

10.7 Public Consultation

10.7.1 It is submitted by a number of third parties that the community was not adequately informed or consulted. It is further contended that the process was disingenuous, and residents were not informed of the initial consultation process. At the consultation, no design or understanding of the scale of the development was furnished and the observer questions the number of leaflets circulated. It is further submitted that the main comment at the public engagement meetings was that people did not want to have a large substation developed in their community, and that this is not reflected strongly enough in the feedback summary.

10.7.2 I refer the Commission to the Public Engagement Report submitted with the application for the development. It is noted that prior to the current proposed project, EirGrid has been actively engaging in the Central Dublin area as part of the wider Powering Up Dublin programme, with EirGrid's Shaping Our Electricity Future public consultation in 2021 and an Energy Citizens Roadshow event in October 2022. Other information events were held in 2023 and 2024. Following the identification of the Best Performing Option, the applicant advises that multiple public engagement and information sharing activities were undertaken during the 3-week campaign in the East Wall area, including

- Public information events – drop in events and one-to-one meetings where requested
- Project brochures delivered to over 5000 homes in the area
- Notification sent to public representatives
- Dublin Infrastructure Forum briefing on the project
- Advertisement in the local newspaper

10.7.3 Section 4.4 of the Public Engagement Report sets out the range of feedback and themes raised during the process, which includes concerns about the proximity of the station to homes and schools, the level of industrial development, lack of green spaces, noise, EMF levels, consultation concerns, visual impacts and the preference that the station be located on Dublin Port lands instead. The report specifically identifies the ‘significant level of frustration’ expressed by the local community and I note that the project was updated and amended to reflect the feedback from stakeholders and the community. Prior to the submission of the planning application, the final design intent was presented to the local community for a final consultation in June 2025 over three public information events with 74 attendees across the events.

10.7.4 I have had regard to all submissions on file in terms of concerns relating to the level of public consultation undertaken by the applicant. I further acknowledge the Public Engagement Report included in the application. I am satisfied that appropriate consultation was carried out by the applicant prior to the submission of the application and I note the commitment to continued consultation going forward.

10.8 Water Services

10.8.1 While a third party has raised a concern regarding current issues with water services, and water pressure in particular, in the area, the Commission will note that Uisce Éireann has confirmed that water and wastewater connections are feasible without infrastructure upgrade. The project will require approx. 15m of new 250mm ID pipe and the diversion of an existing 24” cast iron water main. UÉ has confirmed these requirements, and 5 no. conditions are recommended for inclusion in a grant of permission. These conditions are standard in the main and I have no objection to their inclusion in any decision to grant permission.

10.8.2 I note the recommended inclusion of condition 4 by Uisce Éireann which states as follows:

4. The development shall not impact public drinking water sources and/or abstraction point(s) and/or abstraction infrastructure*.

An assessment of the public water supply source protection areas has revealed that the site is not located within any such locations and therefore, this condition is not considered necessary.

10.9 Other Issues

10.9.1 Hydrogeological and Contamination Risk

10.9.1.1 A third party raised concerns in terms of the need for a hydrogeological and contamination risk assessment. I refer the Commission to Chapter 16 of the submitted PECR which addresses Soils, Geology & Hydrogeology, and which specifically identifies potential for significant effects associated with the construction of the project as including accidental emissions and release of potentially hazardous substances which may result in localised contamination of soils / subsoils underlying the site and groundwater (via migration through soil) and the potential to encounter contaminated soil which could be disturbed during the construction works, resulting in mobilisation of possible contaminants. The historical uses associated with the site are also acknowledged as giving potential for contaminated land to be encountered.

10.9.1.2 Section 4.2 of the submitted PECR sets out the construction phase activities and includes confirmation that confirmatory ground investigations will be required to confirm the existing ground conditions at the site. This is based on a review of historical geotechnical reports which are available and relate to sites adjacent to the subject site, indicating that the ground conditions consist of made ground extending in depths to some 4m to 5.0m below ground level. Based on this available data, a conservative approach has been adopted for the preliminary design of the Proposed Development which has assumed that the soil bearing capacity is poor and as such the proposed substation structures have been designed to be supported on piled foundations which will provide adequate support to the proposed structures.

10.9.1.3 The ground investigations will include hand dug inspection pits, 6 no. boreholes, 2 no. trial pits, 4 no. silt trenches and materials sampling and

testing. A conservative approach is proposed and assumes contamination is likely present. Section 4.2.12 of the PECR sets out the procedures to be followed with regard to waste management including should areas of unknown contamination be encountered. Further to the above, mitigation measures are proposed to be implemented in the construction phase in the event that contaminated land is encountered.

10.9.1.4 I am satisfied that issues around contamination risk have been appropriately considered in the submitted application and mitigation measures proposed are reasonable.

10.9.2 Community Gains

10.9.2.1 A third party queried the topic of community gain, noting that numerous off-site community gains were mentioned during the public engagement session. It is submitted that the third party fails to see any community gains in the current proposal which is considered misleading.

10.9.2.2 The applicant has, in Section 4.5 of the PECR, noted that the proposed development has the potential to provide significant additional investment in community initiatives which will benefit local residents and businesses through an annual Community Benefit Fund. The Community Benefit Fund will become live once the project has received its planning approval, and the fund will be released on a phased basis as the project progresses. The fund, which comprises EirGrids Community Benefit Policy, seeks to support local communities affected by infrastructure projects, by providing financial assistance for community, sustainability, and biodiversity initiatives.

10.9.2.3 I am satisfied that the operation of the fund comprises part of the development proposal and will be implemented in the event of a grant of permission and development. While the applicant does not consider it necessary to include a condition affecting the community benefit fund, the Commission will note that DCC has recommended the inclusion of such a condition. I am satisfied that the condition should be included in the event of a grant of permission.

10.9.3 Hours of operation

10.9.3.1 The applicant has sought permission for construction hours as 7am to 7pm Monday to Friday and 8.00am to 4.30pm on Saturdays. Dublin City Council have recommended the inclusion of a condition which reduces these hours to 7.00am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, and 8.00am to 2.00pm on Saturdays. Permission to work outside of these hours must be subject to the approval of Dublin City Council. The applicant has requested that the hours sought be accepted as reasonable given the city centre location.

10.9.3.2 I note the provisions of Chapter 15 of the City Development Plan 2022-2028 which deals with Development Standards, and in particular, section 15.18.1.4, which deals with Hours of Operation. This section of the Plan states as follows:

On sites where noise generated by construction would seriously affect residential amenity, the site and building works must be carried out between 0700 and 1800 hours Monday to Friday only, and between 0800 and 1400 hours on Saturdays only. No works shall be carried out on Sundays or bank holidays.

However, deviation from these times may be permitted in exceptional circumstances, where prior written approval has been received from Dublin City Council. Such approval may be given subject to conditions pertaining to the particular circumstances being set by Dublin City Council.

As such, and given the proximity of the site to existing residential areas, I am satisfied that the DCC condition relating to hours of operation during the construction phase should be included in any grant of planning permission. Should the applicant wish to extend these hours, approval should be sought from Dublin City Council as provided for in the City Development Plan.

11.0 Appropriate Assessment

11.1 Screening Determination

11.1.1. The Commission is referred to Appendix 2 of this report.

11.1.2. Based on the information provided in the screening report, my site visit and review of the conservation objectives and supporting documents, I concur with the applicants' findings that the potential for significant effects on the conservation objectives of all European Sites identified within, and beyond, the zone of influence can be screened out with confidence because of the separation distances and the lack of substantive ecological linkages or pathways between the proposed works and the identified European sites.

11.1.3. In accordance with Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and on the basis of the information presented and available to me and considered in this AA Screening, I conclude that that the proposed development would not have a likely significant effect on any European Site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. It is therefore determined that Appropriate Assessment (stage 2), under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, is not required. This conclusion is based on:

- Objective information presented in the Screening Report
- The limited zone of influence of potential impacts, restricted to the immediate vicinity of the proposed development.
- Standard pollution controls that would be employed regardless of proximity to a European site and effectiveness of same
- Distance from European Sites,
- The absence of meaningful pathway to any European site
- Impacts predicted would not affect the conservation objectives.

11.1.4. In reaching the conclusion of the screening assessment, no account was taken of measures intended to avoid or reduce the potentially harmful effects of the project on any European Site.

12.0 Recommendation

Having regard to the foregoing, I recommend that permission for the proposed development be granted, subject to conditions, for the following reasons and considerations as outlined in the Draft Order below.

DRAFT ORDER

Reasons and Considerations

The Board performed its functions in relation to the making of its decision, in a manner consistent with Section 15(1) of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Act 2015, as amended by Section 17 of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, (consistent with the relevant provisions of the Climate Action Plan 2024 and Climate Action Plan 2025 and the Long-term Strategy on Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions 2024, the National Adaptation Framework; Planning for a Climate Resilient Ireland June 2024 and the relevant sectoral adaptation plans in particular the Electricity and Gas Sectoral Plan 2019 and in furtherance of the objective of mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the effects of climate change in the State), and otherwise had regard to:

- (a) European, national, regional and local planning, energy, climate and other policy of relevance, including in particular the following:

European Policy/Legislation including:

- Directive 2014/52/EU amending Directive 2011/92/EU (Environmental Impact Assessment Directive);
- Directive 92/43/EEC (Habitats Directive) and Directive 79/409/EEC as amended by 2009/147/EC (Birds Directive);
- Directive 2000/60/EC (Water Framework Directive)

National Policy and Guidance including:

- Project Ireland 2040: National Planning Framework (“NPF”), First Revision of the NPF;
- National Development Plan 2021-2030
- The objectives and targets of the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030;
- Policy Statement on Security of Electricity Supply (November 2021);
- National Energy Security Framework (April 2022);
- National Energy and Climate Action Plan (2021-2030);

Regional and Local Planning Policy, including in particular:

- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midlands Region 2019-2031;
- Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028;

- (b) The location, nature, scale and layout of the proposed development
- (c) The range of mitigation measures set out in the Planning and Environmental Constraints Report
- (d) The submissions received in relation to the application by all participants.
- (e) The Inspector’s report and recommendation.

Appropriate Assessment Stage 1 Screening Determination

The Commission completed an Appropriate Assessment screening exercise in relation to the potential effects of the proposed development on designated European sites, taking into account the nature, scale and location of the proposed development, the absence of any pathways from the site to designated European sites and the information for the Screening for Appropriate Assessment submitted with the application, the Inspector’s Report and submissions on file. In completing the screening exercise, the Board adopted the report of the Inspector and concluded that, by itself or in combination with other development in the vicinity, the proposed development would not be likely to have a significant effect on any European site in view of the conservation objectives of such sites, and that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not, therefore, required.

Proper Planning and Sustainable Development

It is considered that, subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, the proposed development would be in accordance with European, national, and regional energy policies and with the provisions of the Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028, would not seriously injure the visual or residential amenities of the area or otherwise of property in the vicinity or have an of unacceptable impact on the character of the landscape or on cultural or archaeological heritage, would not have a significant adverse impact on ecology, would be acceptable in terms of traffic impacts and safety and would make a positive contribution to improving security of energy supply requirements in Dublin City Centre as part of the Powering Up Dublin Programme. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

CONDITIONS

1. The proposed development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application dated 1st August 2025, except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the following conditions. Where such conditions require details to be agreed with the Planning Authority, the developer shall agree such details in writing with the Planning Authority prior to commencement of development and the proposed development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed particulars.

Reason: In the interest of clarity.

2. All mitigation, environmental commitments and monitoring measures identified in the Planning and Environmental Constraints Report shall be implemented in full, and reflected in the Construction and Environmental Management Plan for the development.

Reason: To protect the environment.

3. Prior to commencement of development, final details of the materials, colours and textures of all the external finishes to the proposed substation buildings and all boundary treatments, shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority.

A panel of the proposed finishes shall be placed on site to enable the planning authority to adjudicate on the proposals. Any proposed render finish to be self-finish in a suitable colour and shall not require painting. Construction materials and detailing shall adhere to the principles of sustainability and energy efficiency, and high maintenance detailing shall be avoided.

Reason: in the interest of visual amenity and to ensure an appropriate high standard of development

4. Prior to the commencement of the development, the works within the existing / proposed sections of public road shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the planning authority. All works to the public road shall accord with the requirements of the Environment and Transportation sections of DCC, including the Active Travel route. Materials in public areas shall be in accordance with the document Construction Standards for Roads and Street Works in Dublin City Council. All works shall be completed prior to the occupation of the development and shall be carried out at the expense of the applicant.

Reason: In the interests of public safety.

5. a) The construction of the development shall be managed in accordance with a Construction and Environmental Management Plan, which shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development. This plan shall incorporate, but is not limited to, details of intended construction practice for the development, demolition works, noise management measures, traffic management, dust management measures and off-site disposal of demolition waste.

b) A Traffic Management Plan shall be prepared and shall be agreed in writing with Transport Infrastructure Ireland and the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development. The TMP shall include all traffic and

transport mitigation measures, timing and routing of construction traffic to and from the construction site, associated directional signage, arrangements for the delivery of abnormal loads to the site and shall accord with the requirements of TII in the operation and maintenance of the national road network. The Traffic Management Plan shall seek to minimise impact on the public road and potential conflict with pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.

Reason: in the interests of environmental protection, public safety and road safety.

6. Prior to commencement of development, a Resource Waste Management Plan (RWMP), as set out in the Environmental Protection Agency's Best Practice Guidelines for the Preparation of Resource and Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects (2021), shall be prepared and submitted to the planning authority for written agreement. The Resource Waste Management Plan shall include specific proposals as to how the Resource Waste Management Plan will be measured and monitored for effectiveness. All records (including for waste and all resources) pursuant to the Resource Waste Management Plan shall be made available for inspection at the site office at all times.

Reason: In the interest of reducing waste and encouraging recycling and proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

7. Water supply and drainage arrangements, including the attenuation and disposal of surface water, and flood risk management shall comply with the requirements of Uisce Eireann and the planning authority for such works and services as appropriate.

Reason: in the interest of public health and to ensure a proper standard of development.

8. A Project Archaeologist shall be appointed to oversee and advise on all aspects of the scheme from design, through inception to completion.
 - a. The Project Archaeologist shall liaise with the Department and the Planning Authority to agree in advance an overall strategy for archaeological works to be carried out both in advance of and in parallel with construction of the development.
 - b. This shall include the scope of any Archaeological Monitoring as well as any additional mitigation measures that may be required to protect archaeological heritage.

Reason: To ensure the continued preservation (either in situ or by record) of places, caves, sites, features or other objects of archaeological interest.

9. All mitigation measures in relation to archaeology and cultural heritage as set out in in Chapter 14 of the PECR (Courtney Deery Heritage Consultancy Ltd; date July 2025) shall be implemented in full, except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with conditions of this permission. The planning authority and the Department shall be furnished with a final archaeological report describing the results of any 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.

Reason: To ensure the continued preservation (either in situ or by record) of places, caves, sites, features or other objects of archaeological interest

10. (a) All lighting shall be operated in such a manner as to prevent light overspill to areas outside of compounds and works areas.
- (b) Prior to the commencement of development, the developer shall submit a detailed lighting plan for the written agreement of the Planning Authority. The plan shall include the type, duration, colour of light and direction of all external lighting to be installed within the external areas of the development site. Proposals should ensure that the area is adequately light without using more light than necessary, eliminate or

minimise glare and excessive lighting, prevent light trespass and minimise skyglow.

Reason: In the interests of clarity, and of visual and residential amenity and protection of local biodiversity.

11. Prior to commencement of development, a detailed specification of hard and soft landscaping including boundary treatments, car parking, fence design and colour shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the Parks and Landscape Services Division of Dublin City Council. The agreed specification shall be fully implemented in the first available planting season following the substantial completion of the development.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

12. The developer shall ensure that all plant and machinery used during the works should be thoroughly cleaned and washed before delivery to the site to prevent the spread of hazardous invasive species and pathogens.

Reason: In the interest of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

13. Site development and building works shall be carried out only between the hours of 0700 to 1800 Mondays to Fridays inclusive, between 0800 to 1400 hours on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays or public holidays. Deviation from these times will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances where prior written approval has been received from the planning authority.

Reason: In order to safeguard the amenities of property in the vicinity.

14. Prior to commencement of development, the undertaker shall lodge with the planning authority a bond of an insurance company, a cash deposit, or other security to secure the provision and satisfactory completion of the

development, coupled with an agreement empowering the planning authority to apply such security or part thereof to the satisfactory completion of any part of the development.

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory completion of the development.

15. Prior to commencement of development details of the management and operation of the proposed annual community benefit fund which will be released on a phased basis as the project progresses, shall be submitted to the planning authority for written agreement.

Reason: it is considered reasonable that the operators of the facility should contribute towards the cost of environmental, recreational or community facilities which will be of benefit to the community in the area.

I confirm that this report represents my professional planning assessment, judgement and opinion on the matter assigned to me and that no person has influenced or sought to influence, directly or indirectly, the exercise of my professional judgement in an improper or inappropriate way.

A. Considine

Senior Planning Inspector

27th November 2025

Appendices

Appendix 1: Environmental Impact Assessment - Pre-Screening

Appendix 2: Screening for Appropriate Assessment

Appendix 1: EIA Pre-Screening

Case Reference	ACP-323291-25
Proposed Development Summary	The development of a 220/110kV Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) substation
Development Address	On East Wall Road, Dublin 1, County Dublin
In all cases check box /or leave blank	
1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, it is a 'Project'. Proceed to Q2.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No, No further action required.
2. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 1, Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, it is a Class specified in Part 1.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Class specified in Part 1. Proceed to Q3	
3. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) OR a prescribed type of proposed road development under Article 8 of Roads Regulations 1994, AND does it meet/exceed the thresholds?	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	The development is not of a Class Specified in Part 2, Schedule 5 or a prescribed type of proposed road development under Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994. No Screening required.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class and meets/exceeds the threshold.	State the Class and state the relevant threshold
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class but is sub-threshold.	State the Class and state the relevant threshold

4. Has Schedule 7A information been submitted AND is the development a Class of Development for the purposes of the EIA Directive (as identified in Q3)?	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Screening Determination required (Complete Form 3)
No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pre-screening determination conclusion remains as above (Q1 to Q3)

Appendix 2: Screening for Appropriate Assessment

Introduction:

1. Under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, an Appropriate Assessment must be undertaken for any plan or programme not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site but likely to have a significant effect on the site in view of its conservation objectives. The site is not located within any Natura 2000 site and no Annex I habitats located within the footprint of the Proposed Development site. The development the subject of this application is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site.
2. The purpose of AA screening, is to determine whether appropriate assessment is necessary by examining:
 - a) whether a plan or project can be excluded from AA requirements because it is directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site, and
 - b) the likely effects of a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, on a Natura 2000 site in view of its conservation objectives and considering whether these effects will be significant.
3. Guidance on Appropriate Assessment is provided by the EU and the NPWS in the following documents:
 - Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites – methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2001).
 - Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG), 2009.

Both documents provide guidance on Screening for Appropriate Assessment and the process of Appropriate Assessment itself.

4. The application included a Report to Inform Screening for Appropriate Assessment. This report was prepared by RPS Group Limited and is dated July 2025. The report has been prepared in accordance with the relevant guidelines and sets out the assessment protocol which includes a description of the project and the associated likely environmental impacts, the details of the European Sites which fall within the Zol of the project and a consideration of the likely significant effects, on its own and

in combination with other plans and projects. In addition to the desk study, it is noted that field surveys were undertaken in the preparation of the environmental documentation, including the AA Screening Report, between September 2024 and June 2025.

5. The report concluded that it can be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the Proposed Development and Grid Connection (not part of the subject planning application), individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site and that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not required. Having regard to the information presented, together with the full suite of documents submitted as part of this application, I am satisfied that adequate information is provided in order to screen for Appropriate Assessment.

Description of the Project

6. Please refer to section 3.0 of this report for full development description.
7. In terms of AA, the Board will note that the development is not directly connected or necessary to the management of a European Site. There are 20 Natura 2000 Sites occurring within the identified Zone of Influence, which includes sites where potential pathways for likely significant effects are identified. The proposed development is examined in terms of any potential for the proposed development to give rise to significant effects on European sites, i.e. designated Special Conservation Areas (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA), within the likely Zone of Influence.

AA Screening Determination

Screening for Appropriate Assessment Test for likely significant effects	
Step 1: Description of the project and local site characteristics	
Brief description of project	Permission for the development of a 220/110kV Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) substation on East Wall Road, Dublin 1.
Brief description of development site characteristics and potential impact mechanisms	The subject site comprises a brownfield site which is currently partly occupied by a car park with the remaining part currently unused. Historical uses include industrial / commercial. The site is bound by East Wall Road to the south and the M50 and Port Tunnel Control building and Tolling facility. To the south of East Wall Road, there is a primarily residential area with some commercial uses.
Screening report	Yes - prepared by RPS Group Limited and is dated July 2025
Natura Impact Statement	No
Relevant submissions	NA
Step 2. Identification of relevant European sites using the Source-pathway-receptor model	
<p>Twenty European sites were identified as being located within the potential zone of influence of project including the (004024) which is located approximately 170m to the north of the site.</p> <p>I note that the identification of relevant European sites to be included in the report to inform Screening for AA was based on the identification of the ZoI of the proposed development, a source-pathway-receptor model of effects, and the likely significance of any identified effects. The report employed a conservative approach in the identification of the ZoI and</p>	

provided for both mobile and static species and habitats, hydrological and hydrogeological linkages between the project site and European sites.

European Site (code)	Qualifying interests ¹ Link to conservation objectives (NPWS, date)	Distance from proposed development (km)	Ecological connections ²	Consider further in screening ³ Y/N
<p>South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (Site Code: 004024)</p> <p>South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA National Parks & Wildlife Service</p>	<p>Light-bellied Brent Goose, Oystercatcher, Ringed Plover, Grey Plover, Knot, Sanderling, Dunlin, Bar-tailed Godwit, Redshank, Black-headed Gull, Roseate Tern, Common Tern and Arctic Tern.</p> <p>Wetland and Waterbirds</p>	<p>170m to the north of proposed development (70m to grid connection – not part of this application).</p>	<p>Not directly.</p> <p>Potential for indirect effects via surface water management</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>South Dublin Bay SAC (000210)</p> <p>South Dublin Bay SAC National Parks & Wildlife Service</p>	<p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide, Annual vegetation of drift lines, Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand, Embryonic shifting dunes</p>	<p>2.4 km south-east</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Distance too far to result in any likelihood of a significant effect occurring.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>North Bull Island SPA (004006)</p> <p>North Bull Island SPA National Parks & Wildlife Service</p>	<p>Light-bellied Brent Goose, Shelduck, Teal, Pintail, Shoveler, Oystercatcher, Golden Plover, Grey Plover, Knot, Sanderling, Dunlin, Black-tailed Godwit, Bar-tailed Godwit, Curlew, Redshank, Turnstone, Black-headed Gull and Shoveler.</p>	<p>3.1 km east</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Distance too far to result in any likelihood of a significant effect occurring.</p>	<p>No</p>

	Wetland and Waterbirds			
North Dublin Bay SAC (000206) North Dublin Bay SAC National Parks & Wildlife Service	Tidal Mudflats and Sandflats, Annual Vegetation of Drift Lines, Salicornia Mud, Atlantic Salt Meadows, Mediterranean Salt Meadows, Embryonic Shifting Dunes, Marram Dunes (White Dunes), Fixed Dunes (Grey Dunes), Humid Dune Slacks and Petalwort	3.2 km east	No Distance too far to result in any likelihood of a significant effect occurring.	No
Northwest Irish Sea SPA (004236) North-west Irish Sea SPA National Parks & Wildlife Service	Red-throated Diver, Great Northern Diver, Fulmar, Manx Shearwater, Cormorant, Shag, Common Scoter, Black-headed Gull, Common Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Kittiwake, Roseate Tern, Common Tern, Arctic Tern, Little Tern, Guillemot, Razorbill, Puffin, Little Gull.	5.4 km east	No Distance too far to result in any likelihood of a significant effect occurring.	No
Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC (003000) Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC National Parks & Wildlife Service	Reefs Harbour Porpoise	9.3 km east	No Distance too far to result in any likelihood of a significant effect occurring.	No
Howth Head SAC (000202) Howth Head SAC National Parks & Wildlife Service	Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts European dry heaths	8.9 km east	No Distance too far to result in any likelihood of a significant	No

			effect occurring.	
Baldoyle Bay SPA (004016) Baldoyle Bay SPA National Parks & Wildlife Service	Light-bellied Brent Goose, Shelduck, Ringed Plover, Golden Plover, Grey Plover, Bar-tailed Godwit. Wetland and Waterbirds	8.2 km north-east	No Distance too far to result in any likelihood of a significant effect occurring.	No
Baldoyle Bay SAC (000199) Baldoyle Bay SAC National Parks & Wildlife Service	Mudflats and sandflats, Salicornia, Atlantic salt meadows, Mediterranean salt meadows	8.0 km north-east	No Distance too far to result in any likelihood of a significant effect occurring.	No
Dalkey Islands SPA (004172) Dalkey Islands SPA National Parks & Wildlife Service	Roseate Tern, Common Tern, Arctic Tern	12.3 km south-east	No Distance too far to result in any likelihood of a significant effect occurring.	No
Howth Head Coast SPA (004113) Howth Head Coast SPA National Parks & Wildlife Service	Kittiwake	11.6 km east	No Distance too far to result in any likelihood of a significant effect occurring.	No
Ireland's Eye SPA (004117) Ireland's Eye SPA National Parks & Wildlife Service	Cormorant Herring Gull Kittiwake Guillemot Razorbill	11.7 km north-east	No Distance too far to result in any likelihood of a significant effect occurring.	No

<p>Ireland's Eye SAC (002193)</p> <p>Ireland's Eye SAC National Parks & Wildlife Service</p>	<p>Perennial vegetation of stony banks</p> <p>Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts</p>	<p>11.9 km north-east</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Distance too far to result in any likelihood of a significant effect occurring.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Malahide Estuary SAC (000205)</p> <p>Malahide Estuary SAC National Parks & Wildlife Service</p>	<p>Mudflats and sandflats, Salicornia, Atlantic salt meadows, Mediterranean salt meadows, Shifting dunes (white dunes), Fixed coastal dunes (grey dunes)</p>	<p>11.0 km north</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Distance too far to result in any likelihood of a significant effect occurring.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Wicklow Mountains SAC (002122)</p> <p>Wicklow Mountains SAC National Parks & Wildlife Service</p>	<p>Oligotrophic waters, Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds, Northern Atlantic wet heaths, European dry heaths, Alpine and Boreal heaths, Calaminarian grasslands, Species-rich Nardus grasslands, Blanket bogs (* if active bog), Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels, Calcareous rocky slopes, Siliceous rocky slopes, Old sessile oak woods, Otter.</p>	<p>13.5 km south</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Distance too far to result in any likelihood of a significant effect occurring.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Wicklow Mountains SPA (004040)</p> <p>Wicklow Mountains SPA National Parks & Wildlife Service</p>	<p>Merlin</p> <p>Peregrine</p>	<p>13.8 km south</p>	<p>No.</p> <p>No suitable habitat within the subject site for SCI species</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Malahide Estuary SPA (004025)</p> <p>Malahide Estuary SPA National</p>	<p>Great Crested Grebe, Light-bellied Brent Goose, Shelduck, Pintail, Goldeneye,</p>	<p>11.3 km north</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Distance too far to result in</p>	<p>No</p>

Parks & Wildlife Service	Red-breasted Merganser, Oystercatcher, Golden Plover, Grey Plover, Knot, Dunlin, Black-tailed Godwit, Bar-tailed Godwit, Redshank, Wetland and Waterbirds		any likelihood of a significant effect occurring.	
Glenasmole Valley SAC (001209) Glenasmole Valley SAC National Parks & Wildlife Service	Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland, Molinia meadows, Petrifying springs	14.2 km south-west	No Distance too far to result in any likelihood of a significant effect occurring.	No
Rogerstown Estuary SPA (004015) Rogerstown Estuary SPA National Parks & Wildlife Service	Greylag Goose, Light-bellied Brent Goose, Shelduck, Oystercatcher, Ringed Plover, Grey Plover, Knot, Dunlin, Black-tailed Godwit, Redshank, Shoveler, Wetland and Waterbirds	16.0 km north	No Distance too far to result in any likelihood of a significant effect occurring.	No
Lambay Island SPA (004069) Lambay Island SPA National Parks & Wildlife Service	Fulmar, Cormorant, Shag, Greylag Goose, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Herring Gull, Kittiwake, Guillemot, Razorbill, Puffin.	19.3 km north-east	No. No suitable habitat within the subject site for SCI species	No

¹ Summary description / **cross reference to NPWS website** is acceptable at this stage in the report

² Based on source-pathway-receptor: Direct/ indirect/ tentative/ none, via surface water/ ground water/ air/ use of habitats by mobile species

³ If no connections: N

Further Commentary / discussion

It is noted that there is no direct connectivity between the Proposed Development and any surface waterbodies, but collected surface waters, directed through the public surface

water sewer located on East Wall Road, are presumed to ultimately outfall into the Tolka Estuary, north-west of the proposed works area, and unlikely into the Liffey Estuary where impacts on water quality is less likely. The report notes that the proposed development does not intersect any watercourses.

The Proposed Development has connectivity to only one groundwater body (GWB), as it is located entirely within the Dublin (IE_EA-G_008) GWB. This GWB has a status of ‘Good’ for the period of 2019-2024. Given the nature of the proposed development, I am satisfied that the potential

The applicant, in their initial screening consideration, concluded that based on the Zol of effects, South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA is the only European site identified as relevant and assessed against the S-P-R model. No connectivity or pathway for effects were identified, and it was concluded that no likely significant effects for the identified sites, other than the South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA, either alone or in-combination with other plans and projects.

Due to the nature of the development, together with the information available, and the brownfield nature of the application site, I consider that the proposed development would not be expected to generate impacts that could affect anything but the immediate area of the development site, thus having a very limited potential zone of influence on any ecological receptors.

Field surveys were undertaken by the applicant at appropriate season and frequency, using best practice survey methods were employed and have identified downstream hydrological connections between the project and the SAC and SPA.

Step 3. Describe the likely effects of the project (if any, alone or in combination) on European Sites

AA Screening Matrix

Site name Qualifying interests	Possibility of significant effects (alone) in view of the conservation objectives of the site*	
	Impacts	Effects
	No direct impacts.	

<p>South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (Site Code: 004024)</p> <p>Light-bellied Brent Goose, Oystercatcher, Ringed Plover, Grey Plover, Knot, Sanderling, Dunlin, Bar-tailed Godwit, Redshank, Black-headed Gull, Roseate Tern, Common Tern and Arctic Tern.</p> <p>Wetland and Waterbirds</p>	No habitat loss, fragmentation or other direct impact.	No direct effects, and no QI habitat or suitable habitat for QI species recorded within the site.
	<p>Low risk of surface water runoff during construction phase, associated with excavations for foundations and HDD associated with the grid connection, reaching sensitive receptors.</p>	Indirect risk via existing surface water gullies (with petrol interceptors), which discharge to the Tolka Estuary.
		The potential sources of the pollution include silt/suspended solids, hydrocarbons, concrete washings, and/or other contaminants.
		No mitigation measures are considered necessary beyond standard construction best practices.
	Likelihood of significant effects from proposed development (alone): No	
	<p>If No, is there likelihood of significant effects occurring in combination with other plans or projects?</p> <p>Other plans and projects examined in the Screening Report. No other effects of magnitude that could add to other plans and projects.</p>	
<p>Step 4 Conclude if the proposed development could result in likely significant effects on a European site</p>		
<p>Based on the information provided in the screening report, site visit and review of the conservation objectives and supporting documents, I consider that no mitigation measures beyond best practice construction methods are deemed necessary and that the proposed development has no potential to result significant effects on any European Site identified with the Zone of Influence as detailed above.</p> <p>I concur with the applicants' findings that it can be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the Proposed Development and Grid Connection (not part of the subject planning application), individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site. No further assessment is required</p>		

Screening Determination - Finding of No Likely Significant Effects

In accordance with Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and on the basis of the information presented and available to me and considered in this AA Screening, I conclude that that the proposed development would not have a likely significant effect on any European Site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. It is therefore determined that Appropriate Assessment (stage 2), under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, is not required. This conclusion is based on:

- Objective information presented in the Screening Report
- The limited zone of influence of potential impacts, restricted to the immediate vicinity of the proposed development.
- Standard pollution controls that would be employed regardless of proximity to a European site and effectiveness of same
- Distance from European Sites,
- The absence of meaningful pathway to any European site
- Impacts predicted would not affect the conservation objectives.

No measures intended to avoid or reduce harmful effects on European sites were taken into account in reaching this conclusion.