



Development

PROTECTED STRUCTURE: change of use of the building from retail and gym to a 463no. bedspace tourist hostel with ancillary communal space, retail space, a cafe and all associated site development and excavation works above and below ground.

Location

1-4 Camden Street Lower, Dublin 2,
D02PX82

Planning Authority

Dublin City Council South

Planning Authority Reg. Ref.

WEB5468/25

Applicant(s)

Balrath Investments ULC

Type of Application

Permission

Planning Authority Decision

Refuse Permission

Type of Appeal

First Party Normal Planning Appeal

Appellant(s)

Balrath Investments ULC

Observer(s)

Paul and Marie O'Reilly

Paul McSweeney

Philip O'Reilly

Grantham Street Residents Association
(GRA)

West of Camden Residents Association
Matthew Brennan

Date of Site Inspection

15th April 2026

Inspector

Sarah O'Mahony

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Appendix 1: Environmental Impact Assessment Screening

Appendix 2: Appropriate Assessment Screening

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The 0.09ha site is situated on the corner of Camden Street and Montague Street in the southside of Dublin city centre. It is situated 200m southwest of St. Stephen's Green and 170m west of the Iveagh Gardens.
- 1.2. It comprises a part 2, 3 and 4 storey over basement 19th century building which is a protected structure (ref. 1146). Adjacent land uses are a mix of commercial, retail and residential.
- 1.3. It has retail uses on the ground floor and a gym on the first and second floors. The use of the third floor and basement are unknown. There is active street frontage at Camden Street and at the western part of Montague Street.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. Planning permission is sought to change of use of the existing building from retail and gym to a 463no. bedspace tourist hostel with ancillary communal space at basement level and retail and café/reception at ground floor level (total gross floor area c. 3,777 sqm) and to alter and extend the building to form a six storey over basement structure.
- 2.2. The development will consist of:
 - the refurbishment, extension and alteration of the existing structures on site comprising the renovation of the existing Protected Structure at Nos. 1-4 Camden Street Lower (including internal alterations and re-configuration);
 - the relocation of the existing 19th century staircase to serve the new communal space;
 - the provision of one additional setback floor above the existing three floor building facing Camden Street Lower;
 - the provision of two additional floors above the existing 5 bay four floor building facing Montague Street;
 - the provision of four additional floors above the existing 4 bay two floor building facing Montague Street;

- and the removal of non-original features from the structure.

2.3. The development will result in:

- An overall increase of 2no. stories to comprise a six floor over basement building comprising a 463no. bedspace tourist hostel accessed via Montague Street with external courtyard (c. 2,680 sqm);
- a ground floor café/hostel reception unit (c. 37 sqm);
- a retail unit accessed via Camden Street Lower (c. 418 sqm);
- all with ancillary cycle parking at ground floor level, plant room at basement level, substation, attenuation storage, bin storage, lift core, signage, SuDs features including green and blue roof, elevational amendments and all associated site development and excavation works above and below ground.

2.4. The following documentation was submitted with the application together with all standard and statutory notices and drawings etc:

Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment	Flood Risk Assessment
Architectural Design Statement	Planning Report
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment with photomontages	Justification for Alteration
Basement Impact Assessment	Construction Management Plan
Appropriate Assessment Screening Report	Engineering Service Report
Daylight and Sunlight Analysis	Archaeological Assessment
Visitor Accommodation Audit	

Table 1: Additional application Documents

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

Dublin City Council issued a notification to refuse permission in December 2025 for 2no. reasons as follows:

1. Having regard to the scale and massing of the proposed extension to a protected structure and within a designated conservation area, it is considered that the proposed development would be overbearing on the protected structure, and would seriously injure the special architectural character, setting, significance, and legibility of the area. Furthermore, it is considered that the proposed development would be incongruous with the established streetscape of Camden Street Lower. The proposed development would be contrary to the Dublin City Council Height Strategy (Appendix 3) and Policy BHA2 of the Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028 insofar as the proposed development would detract from the setting of the protected structures and would be contrary to Policy BHA9 of the development plan, which relates to development within or affecting a conservation area. The proposed development would set an undesirable precedent for similar type development, would devalue property in the vicinity and would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
2. Having regard to the size and scale of the proposed hostel, it is considered that the proposed change of uses would not accord with the principles of the Z4 urban village zoning, in which the function is to serve the needs of the surrounding catchment by providing a range of retail, commercial, cultural, social and community functions. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the core principles of the Z4 zoning objective and of the 2022-2028 Dublin City Development Plan, set an undesirable precedent for similar type development, devalue property in the vicinity and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. Planning Reports

- The Case Planner's recommendation to refuse permission is consistent with the decision which was issued.
- Appropriate Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment issues were screened out.
- It states that the large-scale tourist hostel, *'while technically a permissible use within the Z4 zoning, is not appropriate in the context of the zoning's core principles and*

does not serve the surrounding residential communities'. This is clarified where it states: *'Given the loss of the existing sport and recreational use on the site, the size and scale of the proposed hostel and the existing tourist and nighttime facilities within the area, the proposed use at this location would not support the general principles of the Key Urban Villages/Urban Villages. It is considered that the proposed development would not function to serve the needs of the surrounding residential catchment.'*

- It also states that *'the Planning Authority has a concern with the significant increase in plot ratio above the recommended ranges given that the site is a protected structure in a conservation area'* and due to *'its height, scale, bulk and massing the proposed development would cause serious injury to the special architectural character and setting of the Protected Structure and the designated conservation area'*.

- It noted the daylight and sunlight report and highlighted concerns regarding impacts to nos. 40 and 6 Montague Street and that the development would be taller than the prevailing building height and would impact protected structures, implying that a robust justification for taller building heights has not been achieved.

- The report provided a summary of items discussed at pre-planning consultation which highlighted the Planning Authority's concerns regarding the proposed use and scale of the development, with associated impacts to built heritage.

3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

- Conservation Officer: *'The CO agrees with the findings of the Conservation Consultant who on page 18 of the AHIA report states that "The addition of new floors above the existing buildings will result in 'significant' effects on the architectural heritage of the protected structure'*. The CO supports a lower scaled vertical extension of one storey only and also supports the proposed materials and finishes with a curved corner detail. Relocation of the 19th century staircase was considered unacceptable and revisions to the shopfront design were also recommended. A refusal of permission is recommended *by reasons of its height, scale, bulk, massing and materials, the proposed development would cause serious injury to the special architectural character and setting of the Protected Structure, considered to be "the most distinguished building on Camden Street"*.

- Drainage Division: No objection subject to standard conditions.
- Environmental Health Officer: No objection subject to standard conditions.
- Transportation Planning Division: A further information request was made regarding servicing requirements from Montague Street to address concerns about the impact to this narrow public shared surface street with limited capacity already experiencing congestion, as well as matters such as a waste management strategy and revised cycle parking. The absence of car parking was considered acceptable however a Workplace Travel Plan or Mobility Management Plan was required.
- City Archaeologist: No objection subject to a condition for an Archaeological Assessment, with testing, as per section 3.6 of the Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (1999).

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

- National Transport Authority: No response.
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland: No observations to make beyond a recommendation to include a Section 49 financial levy for light rail.
- Uisce Éireann: No response.
- NPWS: No response.
- An Taisce: No response.
- The Heritage Council: No response.
- Fáilte Ireland: No response.
- The Arts Council: No response.

3.4. Third Party Observations

3.5. 13no. observations were received from the following:

Akin Jabar	Paul McSweeney
Andrew Shortt	Jason Warner and Zuzana Warner
Cliona Harmey	Philip O'Reilly
Gintare Petrauskaite	Sarah Pierce

West of Camden Residents Association	Grantham Street Residents Association
Matthew Brennan	Paul O'Reilly and Marie O'Reilly
P. Ó Raghallaigh	

Table 2: Third Party Observations

3.6. The following matters were raised in the observations:

- Built heritage impacts
- Residential amenity impacts
- Impact on existing businesses
- Impact of proposed use, lack of residential uses, loss of community uses. Lack of justification. Overconcentration of night time and tourist uses. Impact to Camden St character.
- Overdevelopment, visual impact, excessive height, inappropriate finishes.
- Construction impacts
- Structural integrity of basement works. Request to undertake surveys of adjoining buildings.
- Operational noise from mechanical plant, patrons and balconies. Request made to remove western terrace and to relocate hostel entrance to Camden St, reduce operational hours or move night time access to another location.
- Operational efficiency
- Water services capacity
- Poor application documentation and lack of operational information.
- Road and footpath capacity, lack of parking.
- Non-compliance with CDP
- Poor quality residential accommodation impacted by ventilation, fire safety and amenity.
- Duration of stays.
- Daylight and sunlight impacts

4.0 Planning History

- 2314/12: Planning permission refused for a new ground floor shop front entrance, the reinstatement of four flagpoles at roof level, the reinstatement of ten light fittings at roof parapet level and the provision of a third-floor mezzanine floor (23sq.m).
- 3940/08: Planning permission granted for an internally illuminated sign and logos to the ground floor fascia.
- 6033/07: Retention permission refused for existing ground floor fascia signage and security camera.
- 4942/07: Planning permission granted for removal of existing signage to Montague Street and Camden Street at ground floor level with erection of 2 no. pin mounted, internally illuminated perplex signage (pms 5825) with external grade mirror polished stainless steel framing to Camden Street (1 no.) and 1 no. to Montague Street at ground floor level only (2 no. in total). Existing graphics to window / glazing to both elevations, Camden Street and Montague Street to be altered to allow natural light to internal retail space.
- 5842/05: Planning permission granted for a new glazed screen to eliminate the recessed area at the ground floor (southern end) of 1 - 4 Lower Camden Street, Dublin 2.
- 4277/02: Planning permission granted for a change of use offices on 1st, 2nd and 3rd floors to commercial gym with ground floor entrance lobby to Camden Street and fire exit to Montague Street to include provision of a new atrium (total area 1227 sq.m) all at an existing building at corner of Camden Street and Montague Street, Dublin 2.
- 4270/02: Planning permission granted for a change of use from Building Society Offices with basement storage to retail at ground floor and part 1st floor with basement storage - (831 sq m), a new shop front with signage and canopies to both elevations and a first floor extension (26 sq.m) to new roof garden all to an existing building at the corner of Camden Street and Montague Street, Dublin 2.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Development Plan

5.1.1. The site is governed by the policies and provisions contained in the Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028 (referred to hereafter as the CDP). The site is zoned Z4 as 'key urban villages/urban villages' where the objective is *to provide for and improve mixed-services facilities*. It states: *'Key Urban Villages and Urban Villages (formerly district centres) function to serve the needs of the surrounding catchment providing a range of retail, commercial, cultural, social and community functions that are easily accessible by foot, bicycle or public transport; in line with the concept of the 15-minute city.'* It also states *'Urban Villages zoned Z4 are typically smaller in scale and provide a more localised role for the daily shopping needs and local services of a residential community.'* Higher density mixed uses are promoted and hostel (tourist) uses are noted to be amongst the list of permissible uses.

5.1.2. Policy Objective CCUV20 refers to 'Mixed Use Key Urban Villages/Urban Villages' and seeks to:

'Support the development, regeneration and or consolidation of Key Urban Villages/urban villages as appropriate, to ensure these centres continue to develop their mixed used role and function adding vitality to these centres including through the provision of residential development.'

5.1.3. The western half of the site is also situated within a conservation area as identified on the zoning maps by red hatching. Chapter 11 provides protection for the city's built heritage and Section 11.5.3 outlines how conservation areas are separate and distinct to Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs). They do not have a statutory basis in the same manner as ACAs but are recognised as areas with conservation merit which warrant protection. Policy BHA9 applies which is set out below.

BHA9 *It is the Policy of Dublin City Council to protect the special interest and character of all Dublin's Conservation Areas – identified under Z8 and Z2 zoning objectives and denoted by red line conservation hatching on the zoning maps. Development within or affecting a Conservation Area must contribute positively to its character and distinctiveness and take opportunities to protect and enhance the character and appearance of the area and its setting, wherever possible.*

Enhancement opportunities may include:

- 1. Replacement or improvement of any building, feature or element which detracts from the character of the area or its setting.*
- 2. Re-instatement of missing architectural detail or important features.*
- 3. Improvement of open spaces and the wider public realm and reinstatement of historic routes and characteristic plot patterns.*
- 4. Contemporary architecture of exceptional design quality, which is in harmony with the Conservation Area.*
- 5. The repair and retention of shop and pub fronts of architectural interest.*
- 6. Retention of buildings and features that contribute to the overall character and integrity of the Conservation Area.*
- 7. The return of buildings to residential use.*

Changes of use will be acceptable where in compliance with the zoning objectives and where they make a positive contribution to the character, function and appearance of the Conservation Area and its setting. The Council will consider the contribution of existing uses to the special interest of an area when assessing change of use applications, and will promote compatible uses which ensure future long-term viability.

- 5.1.4. As noted previously, the structure on the site is included on the Dublin City Record of Protected Structures and therefore policy BHA2 applies as set out below. Please note there is an error in the numbering of the sub-headings which arises from the adopted CDP text.

BHA2 *It is the Policy of Dublin City Council that development will conserve and enhance protected structures and their curtilage and will:*

- a) Ensure that any development proposals to protected structures, their curtilage and setting shall have regard to the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2011) published by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.*

- b) *Protect structures included on the RPS from any works that would negatively impact their special character and appearance.*
- c) *Ensure that works are carried out in line with best conservation practice as advised by a suitably qualified person with expertise in architectural conservation.*
- d) *Ensure that any development, modification, alteration, or extension affecting a protected structure and/or its setting is sensitively sited and designed, and is appropriate in terms of the proposed scale, mass, height, density, layout and materials.*
- c) *Ensure that the form and structural integrity of the protected structure is retained in any redevelopment and ensure that new development does not adversely impact the curtilage or the special character of the protected structure.*
- d) *Respect the historic fabric and the special interest of the interior, including its plan form, hierarchy of spaces, structure and architectural detail, fixtures and fittings and materials.*
- e) *Ensure that new and adapted uses are compatible with the architectural character and special interest(s) of the protected structure.*
- f) *Protect and retain important elements of built heritage including historic gardens, stone walls, entrance gates and piers and any other associated curtilage features.*
- g) *Ensure historic landscapes, gardens and trees (in good condition) associated with protected structures are protected from inappropriate development.*
- h) *Have regard to ecological considerations for example, protection of species such as bats.*

5.1.5. Policy Objective CEE28 refers to visitor accommodation and seeks to:

Consider applications for additional hotel, tourist hostel and aparthotel development having regard to:

- *the existing character of the area in which the development is proposed including local amenities and facilities;*

- *the existing and proposed mix of uses (including existing levels of visitor accommodation i.e. existing and permitted hotel, aparthotel, Bed and Breakfast, short-term letting and student accommodation uses) in the vicinity of any proposed development;*
- *the existing and proposed type of existing visitor accommodation i.e. Hotel Classification/Rating, Hostel Accommodation, Family Accommodation, Alternative Accommodation etc., in the vicinity of any proposed development;*
- *the impact of additional visitor accommodation on the wider objective to provide a rich and vibrant range of uses in the city centre including residential, social, cultural and economic functions;*
- *the need to prevent an unacceptable intensification of activity, particularly in predominantly residential areas;*
- *the opportunity presented to provide high quality, designed for purpose spaces that can generate activity at street level and accommodate evening and night-time activities – see also Chapter 12, Objective CUO38.*

5.1.6. Chapter 15 sets out development management standards and I note the following under the heading of bed and breakfast/guesthouse:

In determining planning applications for change of use to bed and breakfast, guesthouse, hotel or tourist hostel in residential areas, the planning authority will have regard to the following:

- *Size and nature of facility.*
- *The effect on the amenity of neighbouring residents.*
- *The standard of accommodation for the intended occupiers of the premises.*
- *The availability of adequate, safe and convenient arrangements for car parking and servicing.*
- *The type of advertising proposed.*
- *The effect on listed buildings and/or conservation areas.*
- *The number of existing facilities in the area.*

5.2. **Natural Heritage Designations**

- 5.2.1. The site is situated 660m north of the Grand Canal proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) and 3.4km west of South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Special Protection Area, South Dublin Bay Special Area of Conservation and South Dublin Bay pNHA.

6.0 EIA Screening

- 6.1. The proposed development has been subject to preliminary examination for environmental impact assessment (refer to Form 1 and Form 2 in Appendices of this report). Having regard to the characteristics and location of the proposed development and the types and characteristics of potential impacts, it is considered that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. The proposed development, therefore, does not trigger a requirement for environmental impact assessment screening and an EIAR is not required.

7.0 The Appeal

7.1. First Party Appeal

- 7.1.1. One first party appeal was received which raises the grounds summarised below. The appeal was accompanied by the following documentation:

- Appeal Statement
- Addendum to the Architectural Design Statement
- Visual Impact Assessment photomontages
- Daylight and Sunlight Analysis
- Addendum to the Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment.

- 7.1.2. The applicant made the following grounds of appeal:

- The applicant should have been afforded the opportunity to address the Planning Authority's concerns via a further information request. The applicant has demonstrated a willingness to work with the Planning Authority as demonstrated through design changes made on foot of the pre planning consultation.
- The site is an ideal location for the proposed use, which is permissible under the zoning objective, due to its proximity to tourist attractions, activities and events in

the city centre as well as its highly accessible location close to public transport. The development will provide high quality tourist infrastructure assisting in promoting and enhancing Dublin as a world class tourist destination.

- The ground floor retail unit and café will enhance the urban environment adding to the attractiveness of the streetscape while maintaining active uses compliant with the zoning objective.
- Amendments are proposed to address concerns raised in the Case Planner's report as follows:
 - Removal of the fifth floor.
 - Increased setback of the fourth floor.
 - Retain the 19th century staircase in its current location which does not connect to any first floor features.
 - Reinstate a traditional shopfront directly informed by the original architectural drawings.
 - The proposed changes result in a reduction of bedspaces to 394no.
- The site is situated in a key urban village which is identified as a key location for height. Appendix 3 of the CDP promotes innovative mixed use development including buildings between 5-8 stories in key areas. The proposed 5 storey building therefore aligns with the height strategy.
- The appeal sets out an assessment of the development against the performance criteria required in appendix 3 which considers the development to be appropriate and acceptable. It states the following inter alia:
 - Retail and café spaces are entirely appropriate and consistent with the uses typical of Camden st.
 - The corner plot lends itself to being an appropriate location for a taller building from a wayfinding and legibility perspective. The now reduced scale will now appear significantly higher than the prevailing height.
 - Enhanced public realm and improved passive surveillance and street frontage.

- Proximity to public transport makes it an appropriate location for increased density.
- The reduced scale has been sensitively designed and considered in an addendum AHIA.
- The appeal acknowledges the Planning Authority's view that the design submitted was inconsistent with the prevailing building height but also highlights emerging height precedents in the area. The revised proposal has little visibility in most views in the conservation area and impacts on both it and the protected structure are minimised to comply with BHA 2 and BHA 9.
- An updated daylight and sunlight analysis report is submitted. Despite obvious constraints of the city centre location, 82% of windows assessed met the BRE criteria for daylight, 96% for summer sunlight and 86% for winter sunlight and therefore the impact on neighbouring buildings is limited. Impacts to nos. 4 and 6 are acknowledged and reduced in the revised scheme however any extension to the subject site would result in some level of impact and the results of the analysis are not unusual or unexpected in the urban location. The site represents an inefficient land use which is underutilised in the context of compact growth.
- With regard to built heritage impacts, the vertical extension has been scaled back, the staircase will be retained and the shopfront has been revised to reflect the original fixture and fittings. The Conservation Officer's report does not accurately describe the context of Montague Street and the applicant considers the development is not overbearing.
- In terms of the land use, the appeal highlights that each proposed use is permitted in the zoning objective and would not detract from the area. The appeal notes that the Local Authority is promoting residential development in the city centre however there is no obligation, policy or legislation to provide residential or other uses that may be the preference of the Local Authority. Further, the existing building has always been in commercial use with no evidence of residential uses and therefore does not prejudice or displace residential uses.
- Three separate uses are proposed which align with the requirements of section 14.7.45 of the CDP regarding principles for urban villages. A community use is not

proposed however two of the three uses would be utilised by the community. The development provides increased ground floor activation and contributes to a sustainable urban neighbourhood.

- The café and retail uses are not referenced in the refusal reason and it is therefore clear that permission was refused on the basis of the tourist hostel, despite the Case Planner's report noting there is an '*acute lack of this type of accommodation across the city*'.
- Loss of the gym does not constitute a contravention from general principles of the CDP as a change of use of business types on a high street is not uncommon and the area has access to a range of sport and recreational facilities as listed in the appeal.
- The Visitor Accommodation Audit identified a severe lack of such accommodation and therefore the reduced scale is a balanced compromise in achieving the Planning Authority's concerns regarding the scale of the hostel while also supporting the tourism industry which is recognised by the Planning Authority as a central pillar of the city's economy.
- No night time facilities such as a bar, pub or restaurant are proposed and the suggestion that a hostel directly contributes to the night time economy is unfounded. It may increase the number of temporary residents in an area but not necessarily increase the volumes of people using existing night time facilities. Additional numbers of patrons visiting existing night time facilities would be marginal in the context of those businesses are already used.
- The proposed use is fully compliant with policy CEE 28 and avoids overconcentration, particularly with regard to the difference between hotels and hostels as determined by listed planning history. The appeal welcomes that the Planning Authority shares this view, even if not expressly stated, as it was not provided as a reason for refusal. An updated list of hostel and hotel accommodation proposals is provided which does not change the conclusion of the audit that there is no overconcentration of hostels in the area.

- The hostel use is in keeping with the character of the area which is defined by a range of commercial activities including retail, café/restaurant and general business. Residential uses are noted but are not the areas primary use.
- The reason for refusal states the development would devalue property in the area however this is not supported in the Case Planner's report. Proving that property values would be impacted would be impossible in the absence of empirical data. Property values have increased in the last 10-15 years and given the site is situated in an area with commercial and evening/night time activities, it would be challenging to demonstrate that the development would impact property values. Furthermore, given the scale of the development, any potential adverse impacts can be mitigated by conditions and mitigation measures such as operational management plans to address concerns about persons entering and exiting the building.
- With the exception of the Conservation Officer, no other internal department recommended a refusal of permission. The Transport Department requested further information regarding cycle parking, servicing and access strategies which the applicant suggests can be dealt with via conditions.

7.2. Planning Authority Response

- Request made to uphold the decision, and in the event of a grant of permission to apply conditions requiring the payment of a bond for unspecified requirements, to pay a Section 48 financial development contribution and a Section 49 financial development contribution in lieu of Luas Cross City.

7.3. Observations

7.3.1. 6 no. observations were received from:

- Grantham Street Residents Association
- West of Camden Residents Association
- Matthew Brennan
- Philip O'Reilly
- Paul McSweeney
- Paul & Marie O'Reilly

7.3.2. The following matters were raised in the observations:

- Visual impact due to the scale, height, massing and finishes.
- Built heritage and archaeology impacts.
- No additional passive surveillance. No need for public realm upgrades.
- Impact on character of area.
- Property devaluation and misrepresentation of extent of residential development in the area.
- Uncoordinated development.
- Construction impacts – noise, vibration, traffic, access and basement structural integrity.
- Operational noise and particularly from western terraces and balconies. Request made to omit terrace.
- Waste management.
- Access and servicing concerns.
- Operational management including late night entry.
- Sunlight and daylight impacts.
- Wastewater and water supplies and capacity.
- Impacts to neighbouring businesses.
- Car and bicycle parking.
- There are conflicting CDP policies and objectives which require the Planning Authority to prioritise and it was correctly done in this instance.
- Duration of stay and quality of accommodation. Basement level communal amenity area is inappropriate and the courtyard measurements are inaccurate.
- Anti-social behaviour. Development will contribute to further night time uses/activity of the area. Failure to address cumulative impacts.

- There is an overconcentration of coffee shops, hospitality businesses and late-night drinking venues. If permission is granted, then a condition should be provided to ensure the café does not become a late-night establishment.
- Overconcentration of tourist accommodation.
- Overtourism results in depopulation of the receiving area.
- Residential use would be more appropriate. The Local Authority would be amenable to convert the existing building to residential uses. The planning system should aim to facilitate residential uses rather than undermine them such as by facilitating developers to gain planning permission for large sites and preclude small scale residential infill schemes.
- Scale of revisions are inadequate to address refusal reasons or resident's concerns.
- Efficient use of existing buildings is outside the scope of the planning system.
- The existing building should be refurbished and restored with appropriate uses.

8.0 **Assessment**

8.1. Having examined the application details and all other documentation on file, including all of the submissions received in relation to the appeal, the report/s of the local authority, and having inspected the site, and having regard to the relevant local/regional/national policies and guidance, I consider that the substantive issues in this appeal to be considered are as follows

- Proposed Use
- Built Heritage Impact
- Other Issues

8.2. **Proposed Use**

8.2.1. Refusal reason no. 2 considered the scale of the hostel and associated change of use of the upper floors of the building would not accord with the principles of the Z4 urban village zoning as it would not serve the needs of the surrounding catchment

and would therefore be contrary to the core principles of the Z4 objective, set an undesirable precedent and devalue property.

- 8.2.2. I note that the site is designated as an urban village, and not a key urban village (as per map K and chapter 7 of the CDP). The high-level zoning objective is to provide for and improve mixed-services facilities which the proposal complies with in principle as it introduces a third use onto the site. The objective goes on to state that urban villages function to serve the needs of the surrounding catchment by providing a range of retail, commercial, cultural, social and community functions and are typically smaller in scale, providing a more localised role for the daily shopping needs and local services of a residential community.
- 8.2.3. The proposed uses comprise a tourist hostel, café and retail/shop which are all permitted uses as per the Z4 zoning objective. It should be noted that the café would form part of the hostel reception area. I also note that while the site is situated in an urban village seeking to support the local residential community, it is also situated in within 15minutes walking distance from tourist destinations such as Trinity College, St. Patrick's Cathedral, Teeling Whiskey, the National Museum and the National Concert Hall. The applicant has prepared an audit of tourist accommodation in the area which identifies a need for additional hostel type developments. The Case Planner agreed with this conclusion.
- 8.2.4. A tourist hostel, café and retail/shop are non-residential uses and I note the building currently accommodates a shop and a gym which are also non-residential uses and therefore I agree with the applicant that the proposed use would not remove or prejudice residential uses on the site. The appeal suggests that the proposed hostel and existing shop and gym uses are all commercial uses however I disagree with this conclusion. I note that chapter 15 of the CDP groups together a range of non-residential uses under the heading of commercial development/miscellaneous including tourist accommodation, offices, medical, retail and hospitality uses. In my view however they are commercial in the sense that they are not residential, industrial or recreational uses for example and all require payment of a fee for goods or services. However when regard is had to the classes of development set out in Part 4, schedule 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, I consider a commercial use falls within the provisions of class 2 'Use for the

provision of— (a) financial services, (b) professional services (other than health or medical services), (c) any other services (including use as a betting office), where the services are provided principally to visiting members of the public’ or class 3 ‘Use as an office, other than a use to which class 2 of this Part of this Schedule applies.’ A hostel falls under class 6 which comprises ‘Use as a residential club, a guest house or a hostel (other than a hostel where care is provided)’. In this regard, I do not agree in the context of the spirit of the zoning objective that a hostel, shop or gym comprise commercial uses.

- 8.2.5. The existing shop and gym do provide retail and community functions as per the zoning objective. The proposed café and retail unit also align with this by providing uses which support the local residential community and therefore the hostel is the outstanding use to be discussed in terms of providing mixed-services facilities serving the needs of the surrounding catchment.
- 8.2.6. Once again I note that the principle of a hostel is permissible however in my view it does not strictly serve the needs of a residential community and I consider there is somewhat of a lacuna in the zoning objective in this regard and it is unclear why it is listed as a permissible use. It is nonetheless permitted and I therefore consider the matter of acceptability lies in its scale, how that scale affects residential amenity and the mix of uses on the site with subsequent impacts on the vitality and vibrancy of the urban village.
- 8.2.7. The proposal submitted with the planning application sought 463no. bedspaces which the Planning Authority considered to be of a scale which would not comply with the zoning objective. As part of the appeal the applicant submitted a revised proposal which resulted in a 15% reduction of bedspaces to 394no. I note the floorplans illustrate 213no. single beds and therefore an element of bunk beds would be required to reach the final 394no. bedspaces.
- 8.2.8. This scale of hostel would result in an increased number of visitors in the area resulting in potential noise and disturbance in the immediate surrounds of the site. I do not agree however with suggestions made in the observations and Case Planner’s report that it would result in anti-social behaviour or comprise an overconcentration of hospitality type businesses. In my view a tourist hostel is ancillary to, and does support, existing late-night hospitality uses in the area but

equally it provides a service for general tourism unrelated to night time entertainment. In other words, a hostel could be considered acceptable for the area if that area did not already have pubs and clubs etc. The proposed development would not provide an entertainment function and the layout does not suggest any bar/club type space is proposed which may sell alcohol at night time. A condition could be applied if the Commissioner's considered it necessary to preclude the sale of alcohol at the site and limit the operation hours of the café. The hostel's primary use is for sleep which is a quiet activity. In my view any concerns regarding anti-social behaviour and disturbance could be managed by an operational management plan to include a permanent on-site staff presence.

- 8.2.9. Active street frontage would be retained and in fact additional passive surveillance would be provided on the ground floor which would aid to vibrancy of the street. The building is currently closed overnight as the two businesses do not operate 24hrs a day. In this regard, the proposed hostel use would introduce limited additional vibrancy and activity to Montague Street during nighttime hours due to the presence of guests accessing the hostel.
- 8.2.10. I consider the scale of the revised proposal is acceptable to minimise impacts to residential amenity, particularly if conditions are attached requiring an operational management plan to be agreed and retaining staff on site.
- 8.2.11. The last matter therefore to be discussed in terms of the scale of the development relates to supporting the urban village and providing a mix of uses to maintain vibrancy at both day and nighttime. I consider the proposed hostel use on first floor is insufficient to mitigate against the loss of the existing gym which provides a use serving the community. In my view, the prime position of the site on a corner location on the main street means the existing first and second floors should provide active daytime uses more in line with the current use which serve the needs of the local residential population. The proposed hostel is a permitted use, and one which I acknowledge cannot serve the residential population in the first instance and therefore a balance should be struck in the scale and mix of uses proposed.
- 8.2.12. Notwithstanding the overall increase in ground floor street frontage and the introduction of an evening/night time use, I consider the loss of active 'retail, commercial, cultural, social or community functions' on the first and second floors

would negatively impact the vibrancy and character of the urban village and would not comply with the zoning objective. It also would not comply with policy CEE 28 which seeks to consider applications for additional hotel, tourist hostel and aparthotel development having regard to *'the impact of additional visitor accommodation on the wider objective to provide a rich and vibrant range of uses in the city centre including residential, social, cultural and economic functions'* amongst other considerations.

8.2.13. I note the applicants point in the appeal that high street uses naturally change over time and there are adequate sport and recreational options in the area. However, I consider the matter is not specifically about the loss of a gym but the loss of a use serving the local community. In the case of the proposed development, I consider the scale of hostel and the associated loss of uses to serve the community would not comply with the CDP and permission should be refused accordingly.

8.3. **Built Heritage Impact**

8.3.1. The design submitted with the application proposed a vertical extension of 4 stories above the existing protected structure with a large window-less, albeit textured façade on the eastern elevation on Montague Street. The Planning Authority considered the design to be overbearing and that it would seriously injure the special architectural character, setting, significance, and legibility of the area and be incongruous with the established streetscape of Camden Street Lower. In this context it considered the design would not comply with the Height Strategy set out in appendix 3 of the CDP.

8.3.2. I agree with the Case Planner and Conservation Officer's assessments and conclusions drawn on that design and I consider the eastern elevation in particular would have significantly detracted from the visual amenity of Montague Street.

8.3.3. The applicant has submitted a revised proposal with the appeal which is an improvement in my view which reduces negative visual impacts as it proposes a lower scale of vertical extension. One entire floor has been removed and the proposed fourth floor has been scaled back at both the east and west. It is also proposed to retain the existing 19th century staircase in its current disused location which does not connect to the upper floors, and a revised shopfront design was also submitted in a contemporary style but referencing the original historic design.

- 8.3.4. The revised 5-storey over basement structure would reach a total height of 31m above ground level however when rooftop plant is added this reaches 31.8m. Screening is proposed for the rooftop plant. Building heights in the immediate surrounding area vary from one and two storeys immediately east on Montague Street and Lane, to three storey structures at the west, south and north on Camden Street and Montague Street with average ridge heights in the mid 20m range which I consider represents the prevailing building height. There is however a taller building of 28.5m on Montague St to the northeast of the site while the 9-storey Greenside building is situated 80m to the north and the relationship between these buildings and the site are presented the photomontages.
- 8.3.5. The CDP provides a height strategy in appendix 3 sets out a general presumption of 6 stories for city centre sites but proposals in sensitive locations must demonstrate that they do not have an adverse impact on these sensitive environments and that they make a positive contribution to the historic context. It also notes that many of the city's urban villages are underdeveloped with scope for greater intensification and consolidation but acknowledges the low prevailing height stating that '*any proposals for increased height and density will need to have regard to the existing pattern and grain of development to ensure sensitive and successful integration with the existing urban fabric*'. Section 6 provides specific guidance for built heritage and unambiguously states '*New development should not have an adverse impact on a protected structure or its curtilage or on a national monument in terms of scale, height, massing, alignment and materials*'.
- 8.3.6. The revised structure would comprise 5 stories above ground level and therefore does not strictly need to demonstrate compliance with the performance criteria set out in table 3 of appendix 3 as this is required for proposals over 6 stories only. The applicant however has prepared an assessment of the development against these criteria in the appeal. The reduced scale of the revised design notably reduces visibility of the vertical extensions when viewed from multiple locations on Camden Street and surrounding locations and in this regard, I consider the scale and massing to be acceptable. Views from the eastern end of Montague Street would change due to the presence of a new three storey vertical extension as the existing building is only two stories high at the eastern side of the site. The building currently has a relatively bland and blank façade finished with nap render which is stepped so the

central four storey element is set back from the adjoining single storey casino building. The works would essentially infill this set back to create a five-storey structure (over basement) immediately adjacent to this one storey building.

- 8.3.7. In my view the proposed anodized aluminium panel cladding finished in a bronze colour, the fenestration strategy and overall architectural detailing providing texture and visual interest combine to provide a vertical extension which is distinct from the protected structure and therefore provides legibility but also serves to break up the massing of the overall structure. The eastern elevation would be entirely finished with the same cladding but a series of slight recesses, not dissimilar to fake and blind windows in Georgian terraces, would provide an element of depth and visual interest.
- 8.3.8. I note the original application sought to relocate a 19th century staircase which currently does not connect to the upper floors. Its revised location would be a position of prominence and ultimately restore its function to connect to the first floor. The AHIA submitted with the application does not characterise the impact of this item of proposed works however the Conservation Officer's report set out concerns and did not consider it appropriate. The revised proposal removes this item from the permission sought and proposes to retain it in its current location and setting.
- 8.3.9. Having regard to the degree of internal alterations which have already occurred internally on the ground floor which are significant and reflective of its use as a shop, bank and subsequent shop use again over the preceding decades, I consider relocation of the stairwell to another location within the same building and ultimately returning it into active use is acceptable, subject to detailed methodology for its dismantling, refurbishment and reconstruction. Its relocation to active use in a prominent location is a positive intervention in my view than its current layout.
- 8.3.10. A revised shopfront is now also proposed in order to address concerns set out in the Conservation Officer's report. It is a contemporary reinterpretation of the original design, based on available drawings of the earlier 1920s shopfront. I consider the revised proposal is acceptable.
- 8.3.11. When assessing impacts to the protected structure and conservation area I note comments in the addendum AHIA which suggests the 9-storey Greenside building situated 80m north of the site has a much greater visual presence on Camden Street

than the proposed development and that the development is not overbearing, as per the Conservation Officer's considerations.

8.3.12. In my opinion the revised proposal with its lower scale and increased setbacks retains the primacy of the protected structure and would maintain sufficient protection of the conservation area particularly when viewed from any location on Camden Street. With regard to impacts from Montague Street, I also consider the revised proposal would not be overbearing and am of the view that it represents an acceptable scale of intervention, successfully achieving a higher density in a city centre location without detracting from the protected structure or conservation area, their settings or character. The proposed works would be notably new representing a departure from the design, scale and massing of the protected structure however I consider the impact of those works would be mitigated by the proposed architectural detailing, materials, finishes and fenestration and would contribute positively to the character and distinctiveness of the conservation area. In my view, the proposed works would comply with policies BHA 2 and BHA 9 of the CDP which seek to protect protected structures and conservation areas.

8.4. **Other Issues**

- 8.4.1. Third party submissions raise concerns regarding property devaluation and I note the applicant's response regarding a lack of evidence to demonstrate same. In my view property devaluation would likely occur only as a result of an area becoming less attractive to live and work due to matters such as anti-social behaviour. While I consider the mix of uses are insufficient to support the local residential community and meet the zoning objective, I do not consider it would be of a scale which would likely affect property values.
- 8.4.2. Operational matters are raised such as waste management, access and servicing, late night access and noise all of which could be satisfactorily addressed in an operational management plan in my view. I do note requests to remove the terrace/balcony on the western elevation facing Montague Street and I consider potential for noise in this location is similar to potential for noise at street level, all of which can be managed by full time staff being present on the site and I therefore do not agree with the request to remove the balcony/terrace entirely.

- 8.4.3. Construction related impacts such as noise, vibration, traffic and access etc are ultimately all temporary. I note the applicant submitted a Construction Management Plan addressing many of these concerns including dust monitoring and a noise liaison officer. I also note that the Transport Department had a list of additional matters to be addressed. Notwithstanding the recommendation to refuse permission, if the Coimisiún decide to grant permission then I consider a condition should be attached requiring a revised CMP or CEMP to be agreed with the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development.
- 8.4.4. Third party concerns raised the topic of the structural integrity of the proposed basement however this is a matter for building regulations and outside the scope of a planning appeal. A grant of planning permission does not confer a right to undertake works to any property without the landowner's consent. I do note however that a Basement Impact Assessment was submitted with the application and I accept the conclusions drawn that construction of the basement, which would essentially comprise excavation of and extending the existing basement, would result in negligible to very slight impacts to adjoining property. No groundwater impacts are predicted.
- 8.4.5. Concerns were raised regarding the capacity of the public water and wastewater network to accommodate the proposed development however the application was referred to Uisce Éireann who did not comment. The capacity registers published by Uisce Éireann indicate there is capacity available.
- 8.4.6. The observations suggest there is insufficient car and bicycle parking proposed. The application documents suggest no car parking is proposed while a secure bike parking room with 16no. spaces will be provided in the basement. I acknowledge the Transport Department report which suggests additional cycle parking should be provided however having regard to the city centre location of the site which is well served by public transport, as well as the nature of the proposed use by tourists I consider the parking strategy is acceptable.
- 8.4.7. Overshadowing to dwellings on Montague St is raised and I note the applicant's revised Daylight and Sunlight report. The report was carried out in line with BRE standards (Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight) as well as a number of British and Irish standards which is acceptable in my view. In terms of daylight it

concludes that of 180no. windows assessed for impacts, the majority would meet BRE standards if the development was constructed to the revised design, however major impacts are predicted for no. 6 Montague Street and moderate impacts for nos. 4 and 5 Montague Street and no. 5 Camden Lower. These buildings represent a mix of residential and commercial properties including a casino and funeral home. The report suggests that this loss of daylight is to be expected in city centre locations on constrained sites and that given the urban development objective for compact growth, *'the impact would be considered consistent with the change expected in an urban environment over time'*.

- 8.4.8. All windows assessed for sunlight were predicted to have negligible to minor impacts. One private garden was assessed for impacts to amenity space and it met the BRE standards and was classified therefore with a negligible impact.
- 8.4.9. I agree with the conclusions drawn and consider the negative impacts as predicted are acceptable when regard is had to compact growth objectives and improved efficiency for city centre sites, particularly in this location which is well served by public transport.
- 8.4.10. The third parties suggest overtourism will result in depopulation of the receiving area. I again note that the development itself is not a tourist attraction but facilitates tourism and I have set out my concerns earlier in this report regarding the scale of the proposed tourist hostel versus the loss of uses to support the community.
- 8.4.11. Questions are raised regarding the duration of stay and the quality of accommodation proposed, including that the level and quality of communal amenity space provided in the basement is inappropriate. The application and development description specifically state that permission is sought for a tourist hostel which in my view relates to short term stays only and precludes long term habitation or provision of beds for Local Authority use such as for homeless services. In this context, I consider the basement communal space is acceptable and I have no concerns regarding residential amenity in the layout and design proposed.

9.0 **AA Screening**

9.1. **Finding of no likely significant effects**

9.2. In accordance with Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and on the basis of the information considered in this AA screening, I conclude that the proposed development individually or in combination with other plans or projects would not be likely to give rise to significant effects on any European Site(s) in view of the conservation objectives of these sites and is therefore excluded from further consideration. Appropriate Assessment is not required.

9.3. This determination is based on:

- The urban nature of the works with connections to existing public water services.
- The 3.4km separation distance from nearest European site and lack of connections.

10.0 Water Framework Directive

10.1. An assessment of the proposed development has been carried out in accordance with Article 4 of the Water Framework Directive and relevant EPA guidance, including best practice in sustainable drainage design.

10.2. The development incorporates appropriate surface water management measures, including Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), designed to replicate greenfield runoff rates and provide treatment of surface water prior to discharge.

10.3. These measures ensure that there will be no increase in pollutant loading, no alteration of the receiving waterbody's hydrological regime, and no risk of deterioration in water quality or ecological status. Any residual risks identified during the assessment are capable of being addressed through standard mitigation measures and best practice construction management, including the implementation of an appropriate Construction Environmental Management Plan.

10.4. The proposed development will not impact on the achievement of environmental objectives for any water body and is therefore considered compliant with the requirements of Article 4.

11.0 Recommendation

11.1. I recommend that planning permission is refused for the following reason:

1. The existing gym use on the first and second floors complies with the principles of the Z4 urban village zoning by functioning to serve the needs of the surrounding catchment by providing a range of retail, commercial, cultural, social and community uses. Having regard to the size and scale of the hostel within the range of uses proposed on the site, it is considered that the proposed change of uses on this prime main street site in the urban village would not accord with the principles of the Z4 urban village zoning as it would represent a loss of active retail, commercial, cultural, social or community functions on the first and second floors which would negatively impact the vibrancy, vitality and character of the urban village. The development therefore would also not comply with policy CEE 28 of the Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028 which seeks to consider applications for additional hotel, tourist hostel and aparthotel development having regard to *'the impact of additional visitor accommodation on the wider objective to provide a rich and vibrant range of uses in the city centre including residential, social, cultural and economic functions'* amongst other considerations. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the core principles of the Z4 zoning objective and policy CEE 28 of the 2022-2028 Dublin City Development Plan and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of 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 me, directly or indirectly, following my professional assessment and recommendation set out in my report in an improper or inappropriate way.

Sarah O'Mahony
Planning Inspector

29th April 2026

Appendix 1: Form 1 EIA Pre-Screening

Case Reference	PL-500649-DS-26
Proposed Development Summary	Change of use of the building from retail and gym to a 463 no. bedspace tourist hostel with ancillary communal space, retail space, a cafe and all associated site development and excavation works above and below ground including 1-4 storey extension.
Development Address	1-4 Camden Street Lower, Dublin 2, D02PX82
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 Q.2.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No, No further action required.
(For the purposes of the Directive, "Project" means: - The execution of construction works or of other installations or schemes, - Other interventions in the natural surroundings and landscape including those involving the extraction of mineral resources)	
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. EIA is mandatory. No Screening required. EIAR to be requested. Discuss with ADP.	State the Class here

<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 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.	EIA is Mandatory. No Screening Required
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class but is sub-threshold.	Preliminary examination required. (Form 2) State the Class and state the relevant threshold Class 10 (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.
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)

Form 2 - EIA Preliminary Examination

This preliminary examination should be read with, and in the light of, the rest of the Inspector's Report attached herewith.

<p>Characteristics of proposed development</p> <p>(In particular, the size, design, cumulation with existing/ proposed development, nature of demolition works, use of natural resources, production of waste, pollution and nuisance, risk of accidents/disasters and to human health).</p>	<p>The development has a modest footprint, comes forward as a standalone project, does not require demolition works, does not require the use of substantial natural resources, or give rise to significant risk of pollution or nuisance. The development, by virtue of its type, does not pose a risk of major accident and/or disaster, or is vulnerable to climate change. It presents no risks to human health.</p> <p>The urban site is serviced and its size is not exceptional in the context of the prevailing plot size in the area.</p>
<p>Location of development</p> <p>(The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the development in particular existing and approved land use, abundance/capacity of natural resources, absorption capacity of natural environment e.g. wetland, coastal zones, nature reserves, European sites, densely populated areas, landscapes, sites of historic, cultural or archaeological significance).</p>	<p>The development is situated in an urban area on a site facing two streets and situated adjacent to existing residential and commercial properties which is not exceptional in the context of surrounding development. It is not likely to have any cumulative impacts or significant cumulative impacts with other existing or permitted projects.</p> <p>The development is removed from sensitive natural habitats, designated sites and landscapes of identified significance in the County Development Plan.</p> <p>Impacts on the built heritage of the area were identified in the submissions and Planning Authority's decision. Built heritage impacts are considered in the Applicant's Impact Assessment as well as in the assessment</p>

	section of the above report. Significant impacts are not considered likely.
Types and characteristics of potential impacts (Likely significant effects on environmental parameters, magnitude and spatial extent, nature of impact, transboundary, intensity and complexity, duration, cumulative effects and opportunities for mitigation).	Having regard to the nature of the proposed development, its location removed from sensitive habitats/features, likely limited magnitude and spatial extent of effects, and absence of in combination effects, there is no potential for significant effects on the environmental factors listed in section 171A of the Act.
Conclusion	
Likelihood of Significant Effects	Conclusion in respect of EIA
There is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.	EIA is not required. The proposed development has been subject to preliminary examination for environmental impact assessment (refer to Form 1 and Form 2 in Appendices of this report). Having regard to the characteristics and location of the proposed development and the types and characteristics of potential impacts, it is considered that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. The proposed development, therefore, does not trigger a requirement for environmental impact assessment screening and an EIAR is not required.

Inspector: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix 2: Screening for Appropriate Assessment

Test for likely significant effects

Case Reference Number: PL-500649-DS-26				
Step 1: Description of the project and local site characteristics				
Brief description of project		Change of use of the building from retail and gym to a 463 no. bedspace tourist hostel with ancillary communal space, retail space, a cafe and all associated site development and excavation works above and below ground including 1-4 storey extension.		
Brief description of development site characteristics and potential impact mechanisms		The 0.09ha site comprises an urban city centre site entirely covered with built structures. No demolition is proposed and the existing footprint will not be extended. Vertical extensions are however proposed. The site is situated 3.4km west of South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Special Protection Area, South Dublin Bay Special Area of Conservation. All wastewater and surface water will drain to public networks.		
Screening report		Yes		
Natura Impact Statement		No		
Relevant submissions		No		
Step 2. Identification of relevant European sites using the Source-pathway-receptor model				
European Site (code)	Qualifying interests¹ Link to conservation objectives (NPWS, date)	Distance from proposed development (km)	Ecological connections²	Consider further in screening³ Y/N

<p>South Dublin Bay and River Tolka SPA 004024</p>	<p>Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046]</p> <p>Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130]</p> <p>Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137]</p> <p>Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141]</p> <p>Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143]</p> <p>Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144]</p> <p>Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149]</p> <p>Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157]</p> <p>Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162]</p> <p>Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179]</p> <p>Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) [A192]</p>	<p>3.4km</p>	<p>Indirect hydrological connection via Ringsend wastewater treatment plant</p>	<p>No – any biological or chemical pollutants and any sedimentation would have diluted and dispersed significantly prior to reaching designated waters.</p>
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	<p>Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193]</p> <p>Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194]</p> <p>Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</p> <p>Conservation Objectives dated March 2015.</p>			
<p>South Dublin Bay SAC 000210</p>	<p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]</p> <p>Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]</p> <p>Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]</p> <p>Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]</p> <p>Conservation Objectives dated August 2013.</p>	3.4km	<p>Indirect hydrological connection via Ringsend wastewater treatment plant</p>	<p>No – any biological or chemical pollutants and any sedimentation would have diluted and dispersed significantly prior to reaching designated waters.</p>

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

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
Site 1: Name (code) N/A	Direct: Indirect:	

Likelihood of significant effects from proposed development (alone): N/A

If No, is there likelihood of significant effects occurring in combination with other plans or projects? N/A

Step 4: Conclude if the proposed development could result in likely significant effects on a European site

I conclude that the proposed development (alone) would not result in likely significant effects on any European site(s). The proposed development would have no likely significant effect in combination with other plans and projects on any European site(s). No further assessment is required for the project.

No mitigation measures are required to come to these conclusions.

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 considered in this AA screening, I conclude that the proposed development individually or in combination with other plans or projects would not be likely to give rise to significant effects on any European Site(s) in view of the

conservation objectives of these sites and is therefore excluded from further consideration. Appropriate Assessment is not required.

This determination is based on:

- The urban nature of the works with connections to existing public water services.
- The 3.4km separation distance from nearest European site and lack of connections.

Inspector: _____ **Date:** _____