Our Case Number: ACP-324637-26

An Coimisiún Pleanála

Minister for Transport
Leeson Lane
Dublin 2
D02 TR60

Date: 21 October 2026

Re: Minister for Transport EIAR scoping request in relation to the Dublin Airport passenger cap, Swords, County Dublin

Dear Sir,

In response to your request dated 11th September 2026, and in accordance with s.12 of the Dublin Airport (Passenger Capacity) Act 2026, please now be advised that the following constitutes the Commission's written opinion on the information to be contained in the environmental impact assessment to be prepared in respect of the above-mentioned proposed development.

General Requirements

1.1. Section 13(2) of the Dublin Airport (Passenger Cap) Act 2026 sets out the information required to be contained within an EIAR.

1.2. The EIAR must contain the information specified in section 13(2) to the extent that the information is relevant to the nature of the proposal in question and to the environmental features likely to be affected.

1.3. In terms of the requirements of 13(2), and to assist assessment and increase clarity, the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) should be systematically organised to provide sections describing the following:

- The Proposal - to include information on the site, and other relevant features of the proposed Order.
- The description of the project. In the case of the subject proposal, the description of the proposed Order should include its context with regard to extant permissions and any permissions currently under consideration by Fingal County Council and An Coimisiún Pleanála, the applicant should also provide details of any permitted and under consideration of Relevant Action considered or determined by ANCA.
- The need for the proposed Order should be clearly and robustly articulated, and this should have regard to planning/environmental policies.

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- The Existing Environment - The existing/baseline environment should be clearly outlined including details of existing noise mitigation measures carried out to date and those proposed with an up-to-date noise contour map which clearly includes an overlay of any changes proposed.
- The impacts of the Order are explained by reference to its possible impact on the following environmental factors: -
    - Population, and Human Health,
    - Biodiversity with particular attention to species and habitats protected under the Habitats and Birds Directive,
    - Land, Soil, Water, Air and Climate,
    - Material Assets, Cultural Heritage and the landscape,
    - The interaction between the above factors.
- For consistency across disciplines, applicants are encouraged to apply the EPA classification of effects (Table 3.4, EPA EIAR Guidelines (2022)) across environmental factor chapters within the EIAR, unless topic-specific guidance clearly justifies an alternative approach. This judgement should be informed by the criteria set out in Annex III of the EIA Directive and applied using proportionate professional judgement, consistent with the EPA EIAR Guidelines (2022).
- The receiving environment: the EIAR shall include all areas that would be impacted upon, directly or indirectly, by the proposed Order. The information contained in the EIAR should therefore be based on comprehensive up-to-date surveys of the area and have regard to updated data bases which may exist in terms of assisting the consideration of factors such as biodiversity, having particular regard to ornithology. The EIAR should accurately describe the receiving environment in terms of hydrology and any impacts that additional loadings from increases in passenger numbers would have on receiving waters, paying particular regard to the requirements of the Water Framework Directive. You are referred to the response received from both Uisce Éireann and the EPA in this regard.
- The Likely Significant Effects of the Proposed Order - Impacts should address direct, indirect, secondary, cumulative, short, medium and long-term, permanent, temporary, positive and negative effects as well as impact interactions. None of the topics outlined above (Population and Human Health etc.) should be omitted, although their level of detail may differ depending on the likelihood of impacts.

1.4. The EIAR should also contain a list of experts who contributed to the development of the report, identifying for each expert, the part of the EIAR for which he / she is responsible, his / her experience or expertise and any additional information considered relevant to demonstrate the persons competence in the preparation of the EIAR.

1.5. An assessment of the impact of the proposal is required, with an assessment of the cumulative impact of existing and permitted developments in the vicinity. The assessment of cumulative impacts in the EIAR should also have regard, as far as is practicable, to the likely effects arising from other projects proposed within the wider area of Dublin Airport, with particular regard had to noise, air, water quality and traffic impacts.

1.6. The Measures to Mitigate Impacts - The EIAR shall give a description of the features of the proposal and measures envisaged to avoid, prevent, reduce and, if possible, offset likely significant adverse effects on the environment. Where adverse impacts are likely to result, appropriate mitigation measures shall be identified where necessary – and shall clearly indicate where and with whom responsibility for the implementation of the mitigation measures lies. The EIAR shall also provide

information relating to the monitoring of the impacts of the proposal on the environment with particular regard to noise, air, traffic and water quality. A separate compendium of mitigation measures shall be included within the EIAR.

1.7. The Consideration of Reasonable Alternatives: The consideration of alternatives should also be addressed in the EIAR and should comprise a description of the reasonable alternatives relevant to the passenger cap which were studied and the reason for the option chosen having regard to the effects on the environment. In undertaking this assessment of reasonable alternatives, the following should be borne in mind:

- Alternatives should be relevant to the nature of the proposal.
- The assessment of alternatives should include a description of the current state of the environment without implementing the proposal, i.e. the Do-Nothing scenario. This assessment should be the starting point for the consideration of impacts in the EIAR.
- In the assessment of alternatives, the level of detail provided should be reasonable and commensurate with the project.

1.8. A Non-Technical Summary - The EIAR must contain a non-technical summary of the detailed information contained within the EIAR. The language of this summary shall be non-technical in nature and should provide clear details of the environmental effects the proposal will have, as well as all significant effects and mitigation measures proposed. The description of the proposal in this summary should clearly explain and describe all aspects of the proposal such that the EIAR is accessible in terms of public understanding of the process and to facilitate full public participation and consultation in the process.

Environmental Factors

1.9. In terms of specific environmental topics, the proposal is likely to impact upon, the EIAR should, in particular, address the following matters:

- Population, and Human Health,
- Biodiversity (in particular impact to ornithology),
- Land (it is noted that there is no land take associated with the proposal), Soil (it is noted there is no physical development with this proposal), Water (water quality), Air and Climate (incl. greenhouse gas emissions, impacts relevant to adaptation),
- Material Assets, Cultural Heritage, and Landscape (impacts arising from additional passengers, as there is no development associated with the project),
- Major Accidents and/or Disasters,
- Interactions between the above factors.

1.10. The following provides an outline of specific matters considered relevant to a number of the factors to be addressed in the EIAR:

Population, and Human Health

- Given the nature of the existing site and nature of proposal, the EIAR should specifically address the likely effects on the health, economic activity, tourism activity and safety of surrounding populations. Baseline datasets used to underpin assessments should be collected in accordance

with recognised standards and guidance, where available and relevant. Efforts should be made to agree baseline datasets with relevant consultation bodies. Robust justification should be provided if alternative datasets are relied on for the purposes of the assessment.

- A robust assessment of the impacts to health and population as a result of changes to the following should be detailed within the EIAR:
  - Land and aviation noise, in particular the impacts on nighttime noise on human health,
  - Economic activity,
  - Water quality,
  - Air quality and light pollution,
  - Traffic.
- The applicant should review all prescribed body submissions in relation to human health and population.

Biodiversity – Terrestrial, European and Designated sites

- The EIAR should address the potential for the proposal to impact biodiversity within and surrounding the Airport site with particular regard given to ornithology in terms of bird strikes, disturbance and displacement and habitat impacts.
- Ecological data should be recent and valid as per CIEEM (2019) advice note. Efforts should be made to agree baseline datasets with relevant consultation bodies.
- The EIAR should also clearly identify any impacts in relation to increased air emissions and water quality on sensitive habitats and European sites.
- The EIAR should also consider effects on European and other designated sites.

Land, Soil, Water

Land and Soil

- The assessment of Land and Soil in the EIAR should include the impacts on same in the context of air quality.
- The assessment of likely significant effects of the proposal should take account of existing land and soil conditions. It is noted that PFOA/PFOSI contamination at a site in Dublin Airport has been included in the 'Report from Ireland on the monitoring of the implementation of Regulation (EU) 2019/1021 on persistent organic pollutants (POPS Regulation).
- There are two EPA licenced installations within the boundary of Dublin Airport (Figure 1 in scoping document provided): these are Dublin Aerospace Limited, Register No. P0480-02 and Eirtech Aviation Limited, Register No. P0921-01. These sites should be included in the cumulative assessment of factors.

Water

- The applicant should have particular regard to the submissions from EPA and Uisce Éireann in relation to the assessment of Water.

- Effects on water should be assessed with reference to Water Framework Directive (WFD) objectives and the relevant standards. Regard should be made to the Water Action Plan: A River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022—2027, including the relevant programme of Measures.
- The assessment should consider relevant pressures and protected areas, where applicable, together with the potential effects on relevant WFD quality elements.

Noise

Aviation Noise

- The EIAR should clearly outline and describe all assumptions, modelling, approximations and uncertainties. All mitigation and control measures proposed should be implementable, monitorable and supported by corrective protocols where appropriate.
- Consideration should be given to the Environmental Noise Directive and associated national regulations, relevant noise maps and action plans. The applicant should clearly outline the baseline conditions and clearly reference its position in relation to the current Noise Abatement Objective and Regulatory Decision, or whether and how it would take account of the draft amended objective and draft Regulatory Decision.
- The EIAR should consider the WHO Environmental Noise Guidelines and CNOSSOS-EU: common European calculation methodology.
- The EIAR should also consider impacts arising from vibrations, clearly outline current baseline conditions and provide robust reasoned assumptions for future scenarios which account for aircraft movements, runway operations and fleet mix.

Land Noise

- The EIAR should consider changes in aircraft ground operations, ground-support activities, surface-access traffic and other airport operational activities arising from the proposed increase in passenger throughput, insofar as those changes have the potential to result in likely significant effects at noise-sensitive receptors

Traffic

- The EIAR should provide a robust assessment of the traffic impacts arising from the proposed increase in passenger numbers which includes a detailed and thorough analysis and assessment of the existing (2023 and 2025) and future traffic and transport environment (2029 and 2040).
- The applicant shall ensure that the most up-to-date information is included to establish the current baseline environment in accordance with recognised standards and guidance, where available and relevant.
- The assessment should be carried out with direct consultation with TII, the NTA and the HSA, with regards to establishing the correct baseline, future development (and traffic) pressure surrounding the airport, transport modal shift, and in agreeing the appropriate modelling framework for future scenarios.
- Future scenarios should include both an operational Metrolink and the period prior to its opening.

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Air and Climate

- In relation to climate the description of the baseline for GHG emissions should refer to current emissions and trends, drawing on latest EPA greenhouse gas inventories as baseline (Ireland's Final Greenhouse Gas Emissions 1990-2024) and on EPA greenhouse gas projections (Ireland's Greenhouse Gas emissions Projections 2025-2030).
- The expected future impact on domestic aviation emissions (IPCC category I.A.3.a.i) should be reported against the 1990—2024 baseline in Table 3.2 of Annex 3.1 of Ireland's National Inventory Document to the United National Framework Convention on Climate Change: Ireland's National Inventory Submissions 2026.
- The expected impact on international aviation emissions (IPCC category I.A.3.a.ii) should be reported against Table 3.1.2 of Annex 3.1 of Ireland's National Inventory Document. The applicant is referred to the submission made to the scoping by the EPA in this regard.
- Information should be set out in the context of relevant international, national and sectoral emissions targets as given in relevant agreements, policies and objectives such as those in the EU Emissions Trading Scheme, EU Effort Sharing Regulation, National Climate Change Policies and the National Climate Action plan.
- Air quality assessment should consider both current and emerging regulatory requirements, including the existing ambient air quality limit values and objectives, as well as the stricter limit values established under the revised EU Ambient Air Quality Directive (2024/2881/EU), which comes into force on 11th December 2026, with limits to be attained by 2030.
- The assessment should also have regard to the objectives of Ireland's Clean Air Strategy and Other relevant National and European air quality policies.
- The air quality baseline should be described in terms of compliance with ambient air quality standards and guideline values. The effects of the proposal on air quality should be assessed in terms of the predicted changes in the concentrations of air pollutants.
- The assessment methodology will typically involve air dispersion modelling. The assessment should include nitrogen dioxide (NOIL particulate matter (PMI0 and PM2.5), and any other pollutants considered relevant.

Material Assets, Cultural Heritage, Landscape and Visual

- Consideration should be given to any likely significant effects of the proposal on water and wastewater infrastructure, e.g. due to any increase in demand.
- Consideration should be given to cultural heritage assets and their settings in the context of noise and air quality impacts.
- Landscape and visual assessment should assess any increases in flights, traffic, aviation machinery etc on protected views and the wider landscape.

Major Accidents and Disasters

- The EIAR should consider the vulnerability of the proposal to major accidents and disasters and should ensure an appropriate response plan is detailed and amended if required to cater for the additional passenger numbers.

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Interactions between factors

- The EIAR should include detailed consideration between all of the environmental factors where considered relevant.

The following shall also be provided:

- Compendium of Mitigation and Monitoring Measures

  A distinct chapter in the document should set out all of the mitigation and monitoring measures.

- Compendium of Significant Effects

  A distinct chapter in the document should set out all of the significant effects in summary fashion within a table.

Attached for your information is a copy of the Inspector's report, along with a copy of the six submissions received on this case.

Yours faithfully,

MGowen

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Executive Officer
Direct Line: 01-8049323

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