4. Proposed Order

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 This chapter describes the Proposed Order for which daa is applying pursuant to the Dublin Airport (Passenger Capacity) Act 2026. The Proposed Order comprises the proposed amendment of the existing passenger capacity conditions from 32 mppa to 40 mppa, with the amended passenger capacity applying to Dublin Airport as a whole.

4.1.2 This chapter also sets out the principal operational characteristics and assessment assumptions used to represent the operation of Dublin Airport associated with the Proposed Order for the purposes of this EIAR. These include passenger throughput, aircraft activity, runway operations, surface access demand and supporting airport operations. Together, they provide the common operational basis for the environmental assessments presented throughout the EIAR.

4.2 Description of the Proposed Order

4.2.1 The Proposed Order for which daa is applying pursuant to the Dublin Airport (Passenger Capacity) Act 2026 seeks to amend the existing passenger capacity conditions by increasing the passenger capacity limit from 32 million passengers per annum (mppa) to 40 mppa.

4.2.2 The Proposed Order comprises amendments to Condition No. 3 of ABP Ref. No. PL06F.220670 (F06A/1248) and Condition No. 2 of ABP Ref. No. PL06F.223469 (F06A/1843). These conditions currently restrict the combined passenger throughput of Terminal 1 and Terminal 2 to 32 mppa.

4.2.3 Condition No. 3 of ABP Ref. No. PL06F.220670 (F06A/1248) states:

"The combined capacity of Terminal 2 as permitted together with Terminal 1 shall not exceed 32 million passengers per annum unless otherwise authorised by further grant of planning permission. Reason: Having regard to the policies and objectives of the Dublin Airport Local Area Plan and capacity constraints (transportation) at the eastern campus."

4.2.4 Condition No. 2 of ABP Ref. No. PL06F.223469 (F06A/1843) states:

"The combined capacity of Terminal 1 (including the extension authorised by this grant of permission) and Terminal 2 granted permission under planning register reference number F06A/1248 (An Bord Pleanála appeal reference number PL06F.220670) shall not exceed 32 million passengers per annum unless otherwise authorised by further grant of planning permission. Reason: Having regard to the policies and objectives of the Dublin Airport Local Area Plan and capacity constraints (transportation) at the eastern campus."

4.2.5 The Proposed Order would amend the existing passenger capacity conditions to increase the passenger capacity limit from 32 mppa to 40 mppa and clarify that the amended passenger capacity applies to Dublin Airport as a whole, rather than only to Terminal 1 and Terminal 2. For the purposes of this EIAR, the 'Dublin Airport Site' represents the spatial extent of Dublin Airport considered for the environmental assessment. The assessment has therefore been undertaken having regard to the operation of Dublin Airport as an integrated airport system, including the airfield, terminal facilities, surface access network and supporting airport operations.

4.2.6 For the purposes of the Proposed Order, passenger throughput is enumerated in accordance with the "All Passengers on Board" definition in the Eurostat Reference Manual on Air Transport Statistics, consistent with the basis on which daa reports passenger numbers to the Central Statistics Office. Further detail on the passenger-counting methodology is provided in Chapter 1: Introduction.

4.2.7 The proposed amendment to 40 mppa is derived from current passenger growth trends, existing passenger throughput (approximately 36.4 mppa in 2025), likely evolution of permitted runway operations, published planning policy forecasts contained within the Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029 and

Dublin Airport Local Area Plan 2020, and the demonstrated capability of the existing airport infrastructure to accommodate activity at that level, as set out in the Dublin Airport Annual Capacity Report (2026) [1].

4.2.8 The Proposed Order does not relate to or authorise any physical development, airport infrastructure works, changes to the airport layout or aircraft-noise operating restrictions. Any increase in airport activity associated with the Proposed Order would be accommodated using existing airport infrastructure.

4.2.9 The airport operations associated with the Proposed Order have been defined through a series of operational assumptions relating to passenger throughput, aircraft activity, runway operations, surface access and supporting airport operations. These operational assumptions are described in Section 4.3.

4.3 Operational Characteristics and Assessment Assumptions

4.3.1 This section describes the principal operational characteristics associated with the Proposed Order and the assessment assumptions used to represent those characteristics for the purposes of the EIAR. These comprise passenger throughput, aircraft activity, runway operations, surface access demand and supporting airport operations. These characteristics have been identified because they collectively define the scale, intensity and distribution of airport activity associated with the Proposed Order and provide the principal operational pathways through which environmental effects may arise.

4.3.2 Dublin Airport operates as an integrated system comprising runways, aircraft operational areas, terminal buildings, baggage handling systems, landside transport infrastructure and supporting operational facilities. Passenger throughput is accommodated through the combined operation of these systems rather than any individual infrastructure element.

4.3.3 Where appropriate, reasonable worst-case assumptions have been adopted to ensure that the likely significant environmental effects of the Proposed Order are not underestimated. The basis, derivation and, where relevant, justification for treating those assumptions as reasonable worst-case assumptions are described in the following sections. Their application within the Principal Assessment and Supporting Assessments is described in Chapter 5: Methodology.

Passenger Throughput

4.3.4 Passenger throughput figures used in this chapter are expressed on an Aviation Count basis, as defined in Chapter 1: Introduction. Passenger throughput is the principal operational parameter associated with the Proposed Order and provides the basis for the airport operations assessed within this EIAR. The operational assumptions have been developed to represent the forecast operation of the Dublin Airport Site at a passenger throughput of 40 mppa.

4.3.5 Passenger throughput forecasts have been prepared using the latest available forecast information at the time of assessment having regard to forecast airport demand, the operational characteristics of Dublin Airport and the findings of the Dublin Airport Annual Capacity Report (Ricondo, 2026). These forecasts have informed the assumptions relating to aircraft activity, runway operations, surface access demand and supporting airport operations.

4.3.6 The operational assumptions have been developed for four airport operational conditions representing the permitted, current and forecast operation of Dublin Airport. These four airport operational conditions (with associated passenger throughput) are summarised in Table 4-1.

Table 4-1: Airport Operational Conditions Adopted for the Environmental Assessment

Airport Operational Condition	Assessment Year	Passenger Throughput (mppa)	Description
Baseline Operation	2023	32.0	Represents the permitted 32 mppa operational condition, using the 2023 operational schedule as a representative basis for airport activity.
Current Operation	2025	36.4	Represents the current operation of Dublin Airport based on 2025 passenger throughput.

[1] Dublin Aiport Annual Capacity Assessment, Ricondo. July 2026.

Permitted Operation	2029	32.0	Represents the forecast operation of Dublin Airport in 2029 assuming the existing passenger capacity conditions remain unchanged.
Proposed Operation	2029	40.0	Represents the forecast operation of Dublin Airport in 2029 associated with the Proposed Order.

4.3.7 The term '2023 Baseline Operation' is used solely to describe the operational scenario representing the permitted 32 mppa position in 2023. It does not define the environmental baseline used for the assessment, which is described in Chapter 5: Methodology.

4.3.8 The passenger throughput operational conditions for the Permitted Operation (2029) and Proposed Operation (2029), described in Table 4-1, define the forecast levels of passenger activity adopted for the Principal Assessment in this EIAR. These passenger throughput assumptions provide the basis for the remaining operational assumptions described in the following sections.

4.3.9 The passenger throughput operational conditions for the baseline operation and current operation, described in Table 4-1, define the levels of passenger activity used to characterise airport operations at those points in time. These operational conditions also provide the basis for the relevant Supporting Assessments described in Chapter 5: Methodology, and for the associated operational assumptions set out in the following sections.

Aircraft Activity

4.3.10 Aircraft activity has been derived from the passenger throughput operational assumptions described above. Forecast aircraft activity represents a key operational assumption associated with the Proposed Order and provides the basis for the runway operational assumptions, surface access demand and supporting airport operations described in the following sections.

4.3.11 Forecast aircraft activity has been developed using the latest available passenger demand forecasts and the operating scenarios set out in the Dublin Airport Operating Scenarios: Current State and Forecast Operating Schedules, prepared by Mott MacDonald for daa in July 2026[2] and included as EIAR Appendix 4-1. The forecast aircraft movements are not derived by applying a simple proportional increase to passenger throughput. Rather, they have been developed using a forecasting methodology that takes account of a range of operational characteristics, including passenger load factors, aircraft fleet mix, aircraft size (gauge), airline operating practices and the expected distribution of aircraft movements throughout the day, evening and night-time periods. These assumptions recognise that changes in passenger throughput may be accommodated through a combination of changes in aircraft movements, passenger load factors and aircraft gauge, rather than solely through an increase in aircraft numbers.

4.3.12 The Proposed Order does not seek to amend or alter aircraft flight paths, airspace arrangements, Standard Instrument Departures (SIDs), Standard Arrival Routes (STARs), or other air traffic management procedures. Responsibility for the management of aircraft flight paths within Irish controlled airspace, including air traffic control, route management and the design of instrument flight procedures, rests with AirNav Ireland and is subject to separate statutory and regulatory processes. Accordingly, the aircraft activity assumptions adopted within this EIAR relate solely to the forecast number, timing and operational characteristics of aircraft movements associated with the passenger throughput assumptions and do not assume any changes to flight path design or airspace management.

4.3.13 Aircraft activity assumptions have been developed for each of the four airport operational conditions described in Table 4-1. Together, these assumptions define the forecast aircraft activity associated with the permitted, current and future operation of Dublin Airport and provide a representation of aircraft operations that is consistent with the passenger throughput assumptions and operational conditions adopted throughout the EIAR.

4.3.14 The forecast aircraft activity assumptions presented in Table 4-2 include annual aircraft movements and their distribution across the daytime, evening-time and night-time periods. These assumptions provide the

[2]Mott MacDonald (2026), Dublin Airport Operating Scenarios: Current State and Forecast Operating Schedules: developed in support of the Dublin Airport (Passenger Capacity) Act 2026.

basis for the runway operational assumptions and reflect the temporal distribution of aircraft activity used in the environmental assessments.

Table 4-2: Aircraft Activity Operational Assumptions

Operational Assumption	Forecast Aircraft Movements (per annum)	Daytime ATMs (07:00–18:59)	Evening-time ATMs (19:00–22:59)	Night-time ATMs (23:00–06:59	Principal Operational Characteristics
2023 Baseline Operation	239,800	156,735	50,168	32,890	Represents the aircraft activity associated with the permitted 32 mppa operational condition, using the 2023 operational schedule as a representative basis for airport activity.
2025 Current Operation	255,600	181,924	41,399	31,859	Represents the aircraft activity associated with the current operation of Dublin Airport.
2029 Permitted Operation	239,800	156,735	50,168	32,890	Represents the forecast aircraft activity assuming the passenger throughput planning conditions are not amended.
2029 Proposed Operation	279,000	186,739	54,808	37,444	Represents the forecast aircraft activity associated with the Proposed Order.

Note: Daytime, evening-time and night-time ATM figures may not sum precisely to the annual aircraft movement totals due to rounding.

4.3.15 For the 2029 Permitted Operation, annual aircraft movements have been assumed to remain at the 2023 Baseline Operation level of 239,800 movements, reflecting the common passenger throughput assumption of 32 mppa. This carries the permitted 32 mppa operational position represented in 2023 forward into the 2029 assessment year and provides a consistent basis for comparison with the 2029 Proposed Operation.

Runway Operations

4.3.16 The runway operational assumptions adopted for this EIAR define how forecast aircraft activity is distributed across the runway system and establish the principal operational controls applicable to runway operations at Dublin Airport. These assumptions provide the basis for representing runway operations associated with the Proposed Order in the environmental assessments.

4.3.17 Aircraft operations are principally determined by prevailing meteorological conditions, with aircraft generally operating into the wind for reasons of safety and operational efficiency. The parallel runways (Runways 10R/28L and 10L/28R) accommodate the majority of aircraft movements, whilst the Crosswind Runway (Runway 16/34) is used only where wind conditions or operational requirements make this necessary.

4.3.18 The operation of the runway system is governed by the conditions attached to the North Runway planning permission, including the runway mode of operation established under Planning Condition 3 (Option 7B). This establishes the preferred use of the parallel runways for arrivals and departures under prevailing easterly and westerly wind conditions. The allocation of aircraft to individual runways at any given time remains the responsibility of AirNav Ireland, taking account of prevailing weather conditions, safety requirements and applicable operational procedures.

4.3.19 The North Runway Relevant Action (NRRA) concerns operating restrictions applicable to the North Runway and remains subject to an ongoing regulatory process. For the 2029 assessment scenarios, the runway operational assumptions reflect the operating parameters arising from the NRRA process, including North Runway operating hours of 06:00–23:59 and operation of the Noise Quota Scheme (NQS) with an annual quota of 16,260 QC points.

4.3.20 The July 2025 ACP decision on the NRRA also included an annual night-time movement limit of 35,672 movements. Having regard to the European Commission Decision dated 10 February 2026, this movement limit has not been incorporated into the 2029 assessment assumptions. Accordingly, the future assessment scenarios assume operation of the NQS without an annual night-time movement limit.

4.3.21 These assumptions are considered to provide a realistic and reasonable worst-case basis for the environmental assessment. They permit aircraft movements during the shoulder periods falling within the night-time assessment period and, through application of the NQS without an annual movement limit, provide greater flexibility to accommodate aircraft movements than a scenario in which both the NQS and a movement limit apply.

Surface Access Demand

4.3.22 Surface access operational assumptions have been developed using the passenger throughput and aircraft activity assumptions described above. They define the forecast demand for travel to and from the Dublin Airport Site associated with the airport operational conditions adopted within this EIAR.

4.3.23 Surface access demand has been derived using the latest available passenger demand forecasts and transport forecasting information prepared to support the Proposed Order (refer to Chapter 6: Traffic and Transport). The operational assumptions take account of passenger travel demand, airport employee travel, meeters and greeters, public transport mode share, vehicle occupancy and other travel characteristics that influence journeys to and from the Dublin Airport Site.

4.3.24 The surface access operational assumptions recognise that changes in passenger throughput do not translate directly into proportional changes in road traffic. Forecast travel demand reflects the combined influence of passenger travel behaviour, employee travel, mode share, vehicle occupancy and other operational characteristics, providing the basis for the forecast surface access demand associated with the Proposed Order.

4.3.25 These assumptions provide the basis for the forecast transport demand adopted in the EIAR. The detailed forecasting methodology and transport modelling used to apply these assumptions are described in Chapter 6: Traffic and Transport.

Supporting Airport Operations

4.3.26 Supporting airport operations include activities such as aircraft ground handling, airside vehicle movements, aircraft servicing, cargo and catering operations, airport maintenance, utilities, waste management and other operational support functions. These activities are expected to vary in response to the forecast level of airport operations associated with each airport operational condition and, where appropriate, topic-specific assumptions have been adopted within the relevant environmental assessments.

4.3.27 The supporting airport operations described above do not represent separate operational assumptions. Rather, they are consequential activities arising from the forecast airport operation defined by the passenger throughput, aircraft activity, runway operational and surface access assumptions presented in this chapter. Together, these operational assumptions define the forecast operation of the Dublin Airport Site used throughout the environmental assessments.

4.3.28 The application of these operational assumptions within the relevant environmental topic assessments is described in the corresponding technical chapters.

4.4 Additional Voluntary Noise Insulation Measures

4.4.1 In addition to the Proposed Order, daa has committed to funding and implementing a voluntary Residential Sound Insulation Grant Scheme (MO SIGS) should the Proposed Order be made. The scheme is intended to provide additional benefits to eligible residents through improvements to sound insulation within their homes. The proposed scheme is based on the terms of the Draft Insulation Grant Scheme set out in the Aircraft Noise Competent Authority's (ANCA) May 2026 Draft Regulatory Decision, incorporating refinements proposed by daa in September 2026. It would provide grants of up to €40,000 per eligible dwelling for sound insulation works, subject to qualifying criteria including aircraft noise exposure of at least 60 dB Lden.

4.4.2 The MO SIGS does not form part of the Proposed Order and is not required to mitigate any significant environmental effects identified in this EIAR. The conclusions of the aircraft noise assessment are therefore reached independently of the scheme. Rather, the MO SIGS represents an additional voluntary measure offered by daa to provide further protection and improvements to the residential acoustic environment for eligible properties. Implementation would commence as soon as reasonably practicable following the making of the Proposed Order, with the scheme operating on an interim basis pending the outcome of the separate aircraft noise regulatory process overseen by ANCA. Further details of the proposed scheme and its relationship to the assessment of aircraft noise effects are provided in Chapter 9: Aircraft Noise.

4.5 Summary and Conclusion

4.5.1 This chapter has described the Proposed Order to amend the existing passenger capacity conditions to 40 million passengers per annum (mppa) at the Dublin Airport Site. The Proposed Order does not involve any new physical development or additional airport infrastructure.

4.5.2 The Dublin Airport Annual Capacity Report (Ricondo, 2026) concludes that the estimated capacity of the existing facilities, infrastructure, operational processes and current demand profile of Dublin Airport in 2026 is 40.5 mppa. This demonstrates that the airport has sufficient existing capacity to accommodate the 40 mppa operational scenario associated with the Proposed Order.

4.5.3 The chapter has described the operational assumptions adopted to define airport operations associated with the Proposed Order, including passenger throughput, aircraft activity, runway operations, surface access and supporting airport operations. These assumptions have been developed for four airport operational conditions representing the permitted, current and forecast operation of Dublin Airport.

4.5.4 This chapter has also described the voluntary Residential Sound Insulation Grant Scheme proposed by daa as an additional measure to provide benefits to eligible residents, separately from the Proposed Order.

4.5.5 The application of these operational assumptions within the relevant environmental topic assessments is described in the corresponding technical chapters. The overarching assessment methodology, including the application of the Principal Assessment and Supporting Assessments to these operational assumptions, is described in Chapter 5: Methodology.