



NATIONAL WATERSPORTS CAMPUS, DUN LAOGHAIRE HARBOUR

Maritime Area Usage Licence Application for Site Investigation Works on behalf of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Co. Council

Response to question 4.1 NMPF Objectives

1) National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF, 2021)

The NMPF is the States marine spatial plan. It explicitly supports marine tourism, recreation and leisure, along with public access to the marine area where compatible with safety and environmental objectives. A watersports campus—slipways, pontoons, training and access infrastructure—sits squarely within those policy aims

2) Embracing Irelands Outdoors; National Outdoor Recreation Strategy (2023–2027)

Government strategy to grow outdoor participation and develop recreation infrastructure sustainability (including water-based activities and blueways). The campus increases safe access, skills pathways and participation—directly advancing the Strategy's goals

3) National Sports Policy (2018–2027) & Sports Action Plan (2024–2027)

Government policy commits to increasing sports participation and supporting facilities; the Action Plan operationalises this with funded actions through Sport Ireland. A national watersports hub supports participation targets, talent pathways and safe coaching environments for aquatic sport

4) National Planning Framework / Project Ireland 2040 & National Development Plan (NDP 2021–2030) The NPF promotes recreation assets including greenways/blueways and tourism infrastructure; the NDP underpins capital investment in sport and recreation facilities. A watersports campus complements these national objectives by activating marine recreation and local tourism

Response to question 4.6 Marine Strategy Framework Directive

The MSFD promotes an ecosystem-based approach to marine management and requires that activities in the marine environment do not compromise the achievement or maintenance of GES. The proposed site investigation aligns with these objectives as follows:

2.1 Limited and Temporary Nature of the Activity

- The site investigation comprises **short-term, non-extractive survey activities** undertaken solely to collect baseline data.
- Activities will be time-limited and confined to a defined area, ensuring that any environmental interaction is **localised and reversible**.

2.2 Protection of Marine Biodiversity and Seafloor Integrity

- Survey methodologies will be selected to **avoid or minimise disturbance** to benthic habitats and marine species.
- Where intrusive techniques are required (e.g. shallow sampling), impacts will be minor, temporary, and restricted in spatial extent.
- No permanent structures will be installed and no long-term alteration of seabed or water column conditions will occur.

2.3 Prevention of Pollution

- The proposed activity will not involve discharges, dumping, or the release of contaminants to the marine environment.
- All vessels and equipment will be operated in accordance with applicable environmental protection standards to prevent pollution, marine litter, or accidental releases.

Consistency with Ireland's Marine Strategy

Ireland's Marine Strategy sets out national measures to manage human activities in a manner compatible with achieving GES. The proposed site investigation is consistent with this strategy in the following ways:

3.1 Support for Evidence-Based Marine Management

- Site investigation activities contribute to the collection of **baseline environmental and geophysical data**, supporting informed decision-making and sustainable marine development.
- The data obtained may assist in assessing potential future activities in a manner that avoids or mitigates environmental impacts.

3.2 No Adverse Effect on Good Environmental Status

- Due to the short duration, limited footprint, and controlled nature of the activity, the proposed investigation will not compromise Ireland's achievement or maintenance of GES across relevant MSFD descriptors.
- Any potential pressures will be transient and well below thresholds of environmental concern.

3.3 Alignment with Marine Spatial Planning Principles

- The activity represents a low-intensity use of marine space and will be undertaken with due regard to other marine users.

The investigation supports Ireland's marine planning framework by enabling early-stage assessment while avoiding unnecessary or premature environmental impacts.