

Cork City Council

Cork Docklands North and South Quays Maritime Usage Licence Application

Attachment 4.9 Consistency of the proposed Maritime Usage with achieving the National Climate Objective, as defined in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Act of 2015, as amended

Brendan Dickerson, Aidan Long

AQUAFACT REF: P20039

2026

COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE



AQUAFACT
APEM Group

Client: Cork City Council
Address: City Hall, 1-2 Anglesea Street, Cork T21T997
Reference no: P20039
Date of issue: 30/07/2026
Version Number: Final

AQUAFACT contact: Dr. Aidan Long
Position: Principal Consultant
E-mail: a.long@aquafact.ie
Telephone: +353 (0) 91 756812
Website: www.aquafact.ie

Address: AQUAFACT – APEM Group,
9A Liosban Business Park,
Tuam Road,
Galway, Ireland,
H91 K120

Registered in Ireland: No. 493496
Tax Reference Number: 9773384O
Tax Clearance Number: 559674

Report Approval Sheet

Client	Cork City Council
Report Title	Cork Docklands North and South Quays Maritime Usage Licence Application
Job Number	P20039
Report Status	Final
Issue Date	30/07/2026
Report Type	Attachment 4.9 Compliance with the National Climate Objectives

Rev	Status	Issue Date	File Name	Author(s)	Approved By
1	Draft	27/07/2026	Attachment 4.9 Compliance with the National Climate Objective_CDSNQ_v1	BD	AL
2	Final	30/07/2026	Attachment 4.9 Compliance with the National Climate Objective_CDSNQ_final	BD	AL

Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Consistency of the Proposed Maritime Usage with the objectives of the NCO	1

List of Acronyms/ Glossary

CDSQ	Cork Docklands South Quays
MSFD	Marine Strategy Framework Directive
MUL	Maritime Usage Licence
NCO	National Climate Objectives
NMPF	National Marine Planning Framework
WFD	Water Framework Directive

1. Introduction

The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, as amended by the 2021 Act, establishes the National Climate Objective (NCO): to pursue and achieve by no later than 2050 a climate-resilient, biodiversity-rich, environmentally sustainable and climate-neutral economy. It sets a national goal of a 51% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and net zero by 2050. To support this, local authorities and public bodies must prepare Climate Action Plans and long-term strategies, and ensure their decisions align with these objectives.

2. Consistency of the Proposed Maritime Usage with the objectives of the NCO

The structural, archaeological and environmental surveys proposed at the Cork Docklands South Quays, together with the structural surveys proposed at the Cork Docklands North Quays (as outlined in Attachment 3.1 Description of the Proposed Maritime Usage), are consistent with achieving the National Climate Objective.

Climate Resilience

The proposed surveys at the Cork Docklands North and South Quays directly support the National Climate Objective's climate resilience sub-objective by generating baseline data on the status of the existing quay walls, jetties and associated infrastructure, informing the need to repair, replace or otherwise manage existing structures and flood defences. The North Quays structural surveys will identify existing defects, deterioration, damage, scour, undermining and any risks to structural stability. This informs robust infrastructure upgrades that will enhance Cork City's resilience to flooding and other risks arising from climate change, as identified in the city's Climate Change Risk Assessment and aligned with national adaptation priorities.

Biodiversity Richness

The surveys and site investigations being undertaken at the North and South Quays are low-impact and biodiversity neutral, using standard vessel safety and waste management protocols to prevent contaminants from entering the river (as outlined in Attachment 4.5 Consistency of the Proposed Maritime Usage with the Objectives of the Water Framework Directive). Data provided from the combined surveys will ensure compliance with the National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF), Water Framework Directive (WFD), and Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) (Attachments 4.1, 4.5 and 4.6). As demonstrated in these assessments, there will be no significant negative impacts on habitats, species, or ecosystem functions, enabling the future design and implementation of quay repairs, flood defences, and associated infrastructure that will safeguard marine biodiversity in the River Lee.

Environmentally Sustainable

The surveys at the North and South Quays align with environmental sustainability under the NCO, with their spatially minimal and temporary footprint producing no measurable pressures on water quality, habitats or contaminants, as assessed in the NMPF, WFD and MSFD assessments (Attachments 4.1, 4.5 and 4.6). This data-driven approach ensures that the surveys will have no significant negative ecological effects on the marine environment while providing the information required to inform appropriate and proportionate management of quay infrastructure along the Cork Docklands North and South Quays.

Climate-Neutral Economy

By informing the CDSQ project's transformation of the South Docks into accessible urban spaces with enhanced pedestrian and cyclist routes, river frontage access for businesses and outdoor dining, the surveys indirectly enable a shift from private vehicle use to carbon-neutral travel modes within this part of Cork City. The North Quays surveys will also inform the proposed transformation of the North Docks quayside from a traffic-dominated area into a high-quality, accessible and connected public amenity space with dedicated cycling and pedestrian movement corridors. This supports Cork City's Climate Action Plan goals for reduced dependency on cars and working towards net zero emissions, fostering a climate-neutral economy.

The site investigation surveys are proportionate, temporary, and local in scale, relying on a RIB or small solid hull vessel. The proposed surveys represent the least intrusive, and most efficient means of establishing robust baseline data required to inform the project which aims to transform the Docks into an accessible urban space, providing improved connections to the wider Cork City area. Targeted investigations for the purpose of this Maritime Usage Licence application will ensure that emissions are kept to a minimum.