



1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Outline Details

This *Environmental Impact Assessment Report* (EIAR) relates to a Planning Application by IRES Residential Properties Ltd. (referred to as the Applicant throughout) for the proposed development of a residential scheme at lands known as “RB Central”, Rockbrook, Carmanhall Road, Sandyford Business District, Sandyford, Dublin 18.

The description of the proposed development, as per the Statutory Notices is as follows;

“IRES Residential Properties Ltd. intend to apply to An Bord Pleanála (the Board) for permission for a strategic housing development with an application site area of c. 2.02 ha (excluding basements), including the extent of Carmanhall Road required for proposed flood mitigation works, on lands forming part of a development generally known as Rockbrook, located at the junction of Blackthorn Drive and Carmanhall Road, Sandyford Business District, Dublin 18, principally bounded by existing mixed use and residential development to the north (Grande Central and South Central); Carmanhall Road to the south; undeveloped lands to the east (known as the Tivway site) and an existing part-constructed office development to the west (The Sentinel).

The development, which is known as RB Central with a total gross floor area of c. 41,347 sq m (excluding basements) will consist of 428 no. apartments comprising two blocks arranged around two courtyards ranging in height from five to fourteen storeys (including ground floor mezzanine, all over three existing part-constructed basement levels) comprising 32 no. studio apartments; 122 no. 1 bedroom apartments; 251 no. 2 bedroom apartments and 23 no. 3 bedroom apartments. The development will also include a crèche (486 sq m) with ancillary outdoor play areas; 4 no. ground floor local/neighbourhood retail units (862 sq m); communal community residents’ facilities (934 sq m in total) including a multi-purpose space (184 sq m), laundry and community co-working area (97 sq m) at ground floor level, and residents’ exercise area, break-out/meeting areas, book and media sharing areas, reading/seating areas, play area and TV/games area located at various levels throughout the proposed development (653 sq m); entrance halls; private, communal and public open space provision including balconies, winter gardens and terraces to be provided on all elevations at all levels as required; roof gardens; courtyards; boulevards; urban plaza; amenity lawn and play areas; basement car parking (508 no. spaces in total); 3 no. surface crèche drop-off parking spaces; car club spaces; 593 no. cycle parking spaces (long and short stay spaces including secure stands); motorcycle parking; storage areas; internal roads and pathways; pedestrian access points; hard and soft landscaping, street furniture and boundary treatments; changes in level; services provision and related pipework including diversions; plant (including rooftop plant); electric vehicle charging points; ESB substations and switchrooms; waste management areas; green roofs; attenuation tank; flood mitigation measures to Carmanhall Road including footpath upgrade and flood wall; car park ventilation areas; set-down areas; signage; completion and re-configuration of the existing basement levels including site clearance works and removal of services;



public lighting and all site development and excavation works above and below ground. Vehicular access to the site will be from Blackthorn Drive and Carmanhall Road with dedicated bicycle access from Blackthorn Drive.

The application contains a statement setting out how the proposal will be consistent with the objectives of the Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2016-2022. An Environmental Impact Assessment Report has been prepared in respect of the proposed development. The application, together with the Environmental Impact Assessment Report may be inspected, or purchased at a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy, during public opening hours at the offices of An Bord Pleanála and Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council. The application may also be inspected online at the following website set up by the applicant: www.rbcentralplanning.ie.”

The proposed development constitutes “the Project” for the purposes of EIA, and is set out in more detail in Chapter 3.0 below.

A Non-Technical Summary of the EIAR has also been submitted with this application.

1.2 EIA Process

EIA requirements are governed by Directive 2014/52/EU, which amends the previous EIA Directive (Directive 2011/92/EU). The primary objective of the EIA Directive is to ensure that projects that are likely to have significant effects on the environment are subjected to an assessment of their likely impacts.

EIA forms part of the planning consent process and is carried out by the Competent Authority. An EIAR is prepared by / on behalf of a Developer in respect of a project seeking planning consent. The EIAR thus becomes an integral informing element in the Competent Authority’s EIA. The 2014 Directive has introduced strict new requirements in respect of the competency of experts responsible for the preparation of the EIAR (see Section 1.5.9 below for details on the experts involved in the preparation of this document).

The EIA process may be summarised as follows:

1. Screening – Is EIA Required?
2. Scoping – If EIA is Required, what aspects of the Environment should be considered?
3. Preparation of EIAR
4. EIAR informs EIA (as part of the consent process)

1.3 Need for EIAR

The transposition of the EIA Directive into Irish Planning Codes has not yet been completed and is being expedited at the time of writing. Notwithstanding this, the subject EIAR is made in accordance with the 2014 Directive.



The project has been screened for EIA, with the following findings:

The subject development is not of a type or size that would require mandatory EIA under Annex I.

With respect to Annex II, the subject proposal would not constitute an “*infrastructure project*” under Class 10. Given that it does not propose 500 or more dwelling units, it does not require EIA under Class 10(b)(i). However, it would require EIA under 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.”

Given that the subject site comprises some 2.02 hectares and is located within a business district, it would fall within this class.

1.4 Purpose of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report

As noted, the 2014 Directive has redefined EIA as a process, whereby an Environmental Impact Assessment Report is a key informing element (this replaces the previous Environmental Impact Statement – EIS).

An EIAR’s purpose is to predict and assess likely significant effects (direct and indirect) on the environment arising from the proposed development. It is used during the consent process to inform EIA.

Per Article 5(1) of the amended Directive, an EIAR should provide the following information:

- Description of Project;
- Description of Baseline Scenario;
- Description of Likely Significant Effects;
- Description of Avoidance / Mitigation Measures;
- Description of Reasonable Alternatives (and rationale for chosen option) and
- A Non-Technical Summary.

Annex IV of the Directive sets out a more detailed outline of the information required in an EIAR. The subject EIAR has been prepared in full accordance with these stated requirements of Annex IV.

The preparation of the *Environmental Impact Assessment Report* has been co-ordinated by Tom Phillips + Associates, Town Planning Consultants,¹ in association with other members of the Project Team as identified in Section 1.5 below. Details in respect of the competence of the various experts is set out at Appendix 1.1.

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1.5 EIAR Methodology and Format

Environmental Impact Assessment Reports require the assimilation, co-ordination and presentation of a wide range of relevant information in order to allow for the overall assessment of a proposed development. To allow for ease of presentation, and consistency when considering the various environmental factors considered, a systematic structure is used for the main body of the Report.

The structure of the EIAR is outlined below.

1.5.1 *Receiving Environment (Baseline Situation)*

A description of the current state of the environment related to the subject site, and a description of its likely evolution in the event that the Project is not implemented.

1.5.2 *Characteristics of the Proposed Development*

A description of the location, nature and extent of the project along with its construction and operational characteristics. The description includes estimates of any residues, emissions, or waste produced during the construction and operational stages.

1.5.3 *Environmental Factors Affected*

A list of the environmental factors impacted by the Project.

1.5.4 *Likely Impact of the Proposed Development and Remedial and Mitigation Measures*

This section allows for a description of the direct and indirect impacts that the proposed development is likely to have on aspects of the environment affected. This is done with reference to both the *Receiving Environment* and *Characteristics of the Proposed Development* sections, while also referring to the magnitude, duration, consequences (including use of natural resources) and significance of any impact.

1.5.5 *Assessment of Alternatives*

This part of the EIAR describes the reasonable alternatives considered and provides a rationale for the chosen Option.

1.5.6 *Avoidance, Mitigation or Compensation Measures*

This section provides a description of the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and (where possible) offset any significant adverse effects on the environment that are practicable or reasonable, having regard to the potential impacts.



1.5.7 Monitoring

This section outlines monitoring measures (for both construction and operational stages), where appropriate, in cases where significant adverse impacts have been identified.

1.5.8 Non-Technical Summary

Per the requirements of the Directive, the Non-Technical Summary (NTS) comprises an easily accessible summary of the EIAR, using non-technical language. It is formulated to be understandable to those without a prior background to the project or particular Environmental expertise.

1.5.9 EIAR Study Team and Guarantee of Competency and Independence

The *Environmental Impact Assessment* Report was completed by a project team led by Tom Phillips + Associates, who also prepared a number of the chapters.

The members of the team and their respective inputs are outlined below in Table 1.1.

The NTS is provided as a separate document.

In accordance with EIA Directive 2014/52/EU, we confirm that experts involved in the preparation of this EIAR are fully qualified and competent in their respective fields. Each has extensive proven expertise in the relevant field concerned, thus ensuring that the information provided herein is complete and of high quality.

1.6 The Developer

We can confirm that our Client, IRES Residential Properties Ltd., is the Applicant and owner of the lands in respect of this development. Where relevant, letters of consent are enclosed from the other landowners to enable this proposal to proceed.



Table 1.1: EIAR Chapter Headings and Contributors		
CHAPTER	ASPECT OF THE ENVIRONMENT ASSESSED	CONTRIBUTOR
Chapter 1	Introduction	Tom Phillips + Associates (TPA)
Chapter 2	Site Location and Context	TPA
Chapter 3	Description of the Proposed Development	TPA
Chapter 4	Examination of Alternatives	TPA
Chapter 5	Archaeology, Architectural and Cultural Heritage	Irish Archaeological Consultancy Ltd.
Chapter 6	Population and Human Health	TPA
Chapter 7	Biodiversity	Scott Cawley Ltd.
Chapter 8	Land, Soils and Geology	Punch Consulting
Chapter 9	Landscape and Visual Impact	Murray & Associates in association with ARC Architectural Consultants and Arborist Associates Ltd.
Chapter 10	Daylight and Sunlight	ARC Architectural Consultants
Chapter 11	Hydrology and Hydrogeology	Punch Consulting
Chapter 12	Air Quality and Climate	AWN Consulting
Chapter 13	Wind	RWDI
Chapter 14	Roads, Traffic and Transportation	CST Group
Chapter 15	Noise and Vibration	AWN Consulting
Chapter 16	Material Assets – Waste Management	AWN Consulting
Chapter 17	Material Assets- Site Services- Drainage and Water Supply	Punch Consulting
Chapter 18	Material Assets- Communications, Electricity and Gas	McElroy and Associates
Chapter 19	Interactions	TPA
Chapter 20	Mitigation Measures	TPA
Chapter 21	Difficulties Encountered	TPA