



**Roinn Cumarsáide, Gníomhaithe
ar son na hAeráide & Comhshaoil**
Department of Communications,
Climate Action & Environment



Geological Survey
Suirbhéireacht Gheolaíochta
Ireland | Éireann

An Bord Pleanála
64 Malborough Street,
Dublin 1,
D01 V902

30 April, 2019.

Re: Direct Application to An Bord Pleanála – Opera Site Redevelopment, Patrick Street and Surrounding Area, Limerick City.

Your Ref: ABP-304028-19
Our Ref: 19/62

A chara,

With reference to the letter received on 08 April, 2019, concerning the proposed redevelopment of the Opera Site in Patrick Street, Limerick City, Geological Survey Ireland (a division of Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment) would like to make the following comments.

We acknowledge and appreciate that AECOM have referenced our data in Section 7 Land, Soil & Geology and Groundwater in the EIAR. Geological Survey Ireland provides information on all aspects of the geology of Ireland on our Map Viewer available on the GSI website www.gsi.ie. There are multiple layers of data available including Geology, Groundwater, Quaternary, Landslides, and Geological Heritage. Our newest map is the Physiographic Units map and this is especially designed to give information on land use. We would encourage the use of our [Map Viewer](#) when undergoing the planning process.

Geoheritage

Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) is in partnership with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs) to identify and select important geological and geomorphological sites throughout the country for designation as geological NHAs (Natural Heritage Areas). This is addressed by the Irish Geoheritage Programme (IGH) of GSI, under 16 different geological themes, in which the minimum number of scientifically significant sites that best represent the theme are rigorously selected by a panel of theme experts.

County Geological Sites (CGS), as adopted under the National Heritage Plan, include additional sites that may also be of national importance but which were not selected as the very best examples for NHA designation. All geological heritage sites identified by GSI are categorised as CGS pending any further NHA designation by NPWS. CGS are now routinely included in County Development Plans and in the GIS of planning departments, to ensure the recognition and appropriate protection of geological heritage within the planning system.

County Geological Sites in audited and unaudited counties can now be viewed online under the Geological Heritage tab on the Geological Survey Public Data Online Viewer at: [Geological Survey's Online Viewer](#) or via a direct link at: [Geoheritage Online Viewer](#).

There are no CGSs located within the vicinity of the site. The County Audit for Limerick has not yet been completed and all data provided should be considered preliminary. With the current plans, there is no envisaged impact on the integrity of County Geological Sites by the proposed developments. However, if the proposed development plan is altered, please contact Siobhán Power at Siobhan.Power@gsi.ie for further information and possible mitigation measures if applicable.

Recommendations

Should development go ahead, all other factors considered, Geological Survey Ireland would much appreciate a copy of reports detailing any site investigations carried out. Should any significant bedrock cuttings be created, we would ask that they will be designed to remain visible as rock exposure rather than covered with soil and



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vegetated, in accordance with safety guidelines and engineering constraints. In areas where natural exposures are few, or deeply weathered, this measure would permit on-going improvement of geological knowledge of the subsurface and could be included as additional sites of the geoheritage dataset, if appropriate. Alternatively, we ask that a digital photographic record of significant new excavations could be provided. Potential visits from Geological Survey Ireland to personally document exposures could also be arranged.

The data would be added to GSI's national database of site investigation boreholes, implemented to provide a better service to the civil engineering sector. Data can be sent to Beatriz Mozo, Land Mapping Unit, at Beatriz.Mozo@gsi.ie, 01-678 2795.

Other Comments

Geological Survey Ireland is the national earth science agency and has datasets on Bedrock Geology, Quaternary Geology, Geological Heritage Sites, Mineral deposits, Groundwater Resources and the Irish Seabed. These comprise maps, reports and extensive databases that include mineral occurrences, bedrock/mineral exploration groundwater/site investigation boreholes, karst features, wells and springs. Please see our [website](#) for data availability.

I hope that these comments are of assistance, and if we can be of any further help, please do not hesitate to contact me, or one of my colleagues in the Geoheritage Programme (Sarah Gatley at Sarah.Gatley@gsi.ie or Siobhán Power at Siobhan.Power@gsi.ie).

Le meas,

Dylan Potter
Contract Geologist
Geoheritage Programme
Geological Survey Ireland