



## **Article 6 (3) Appropriate Assessment Screening Report**

Butler McGee Park, Co.  
Dublin



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## APPENDICES

*Appendix 1: Proposed Site Layout*

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

MKO was commissioned by Nicholas De Jong Associates, Urban Design, on behalf of South Dublin County Council (SDCC), to undertake a Screening for Appropriate Assessment of the proposed upgrade of Butler McGee Park located in Tallaght, Co. Dublin. The project aims to optimise the overall layout of the park and reinvigorate the open space, with a renewed focus on meeting the wider needs of the communities that live and surround it. The existing facilities will be upgraded and expanded where necessary to provide a fuller range of recreational activities for all ages and abilities and to improve pedestrian and cycle permeability.

Screening for Appropriate Assessment is required under Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive). Where it cannot be excluded that a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, would be likely to have a significant effect on a European site then same shall be subject to an Appropriate Assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. The current project is not directly connected with, or necessary for, the management of any European site consequently the project has been subject to the Appropriate Assessment Screening process.

The assessment in this report is based on a desk study and field surveys of the proposed development site. It specifically assesses the potential for the proposed development to result in significant effects on European sites in the absence of any best practice, mitigation, or preventative measures.

This Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (AASR) has been prepared in accordance with the following guidance:

- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG, 2010)
- Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management. Office of the Planning Regulator, OPR (2021).
- European Commission's Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological Guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2021)
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2018)

The Proposed Development is referenced as follows:

- For the purpose of this report, the term 'park' or 'site' refers to the red line boundary, comprising the entire area shown in **Figure 2-1**.
- For the purpose of this report, the term 'Likely Zone of Impact' of the proposed development refers to the geographical area over which it could affect the receiving environment in a way that could have significant effects on the Qualifying Interests of a European site. This is established on a case-by-case basis using the Source-Pathway-Receptor framework.
- The proposed public park development, including all ancillary works, is referred to as 'the Proposed Development'.

1.2

## Screening for Appropriate Assessment

Screening is the process of determining whether an Appropriate Assessment is required for a plan or project. Screening for Appropriate Assessment is required under Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive). The Habitats Directive and the associated Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) are transposed into Irish legislation by the Planning and Development Act 2000 and the Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011<sup>1</sup>. The legislative provisions for appropriate assessment screening for planning applications are set out in Section 177U of the 2000 Act (as amended). Where it cannot be excluded that a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, would be likely to have a significant effect on a European site<sup>2</sup> then same shall be subject to an Appropriate Assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives.

Under Section 177U-(1) it states “A screening for appropriate assessment of a draft Land use plan or application for consent for proposed development shall be carried out by the competent authority to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if that Land use plan or proposed development, individually or in combination with another plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on the European site. The competent authority’s determination as to whether an Appropriate Assessment is required must be made on the basis of objective information and should be recorded. The competent authority may request information to be supplied to enable it to carry out screening. This AASR has been prepared in compliance with the provision of section 177U of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended).

Where it cannot be excluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt at the Screening stage, that a proposed plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, would be likely to have a significant effect on the conservation objectives of a European site, an Appropriate Assessment is required. Where an Appropriate Assessment is required, the competent authority will require the applicant to prepare a Natura Impact Statement.

The term Natura Impact Statement (NIS) is defined in legislation<sup>3</sup>. An NIS, where required, should present the data, information, and analysis necessary to reach a definitive determination as to 1) the implications of the plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, for a European site in view of its conservation objectives, and 2) whether there will be adverse effects on the integrity of a European site. The NIS should be underpinned by best scientific knowledge, objective information and by the precautionary principle.

1.3

## Statement of Authority

This report has been prepared by David Mesarcik and reviewed by Sara Fissolo. David has 2 years of experience in ecological consultancy and holds a B.Sc. in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and an Honours Degree in Terrestrial Ecology. Sara is a Project Ecologist at MKO with over 5 years of ecological consultancy experience and holds a B.Sc. in Ecology and Environmental Biology. This assessment was based on a baseline ecological survey conducted by David Mesarcik of MKO on the 7<sup>th</sup> October 2025.

<sup>1</sup> S.I. No 47/2011 – European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations

<sup>2</sup> Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA)

<sup>3</sup> As defined in Section 177T of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended, an NIS means a statement, for the purposes of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive of the implications of a proposed development, on its own and in combination with other plans and projects, for a European site in view of its conservation objectives. It is required to include a report of a scientific examination of evidence and data, carried out by competent persons to identify, and classify any implications for the European site in view of its conservation objectives.

## 2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

### 2.1 Site Location

Butler McGee Park is a large Local Park in West Tallaght, extending to 16.77 ha (41.43 acres) in size. Residential areas like Springfield and Fettercairn surround the park. Butler McGee Park is bounded by Drumcairn Parade and Drumcairn Avenue, with its fenced boundary extending toward Cookstown Road and ending at the junction with Fettercairn Road. The park is integrally linked to the wider green infrastructure and other high-quality open spaces in the South Dublin area. It is surrounded by residential estates, schools and local clubs. Jobstown Park and Tallaght Leisure Centre adjoin its southern edge. The park is accessible via public transport, with the Cookstown Luas stop about a 10-minute walk away, and 8 bus routes and nearby stops.

At present, a significant portion of the park is occupied by sports facilities. It features GAA and soccer pitches used by local clubs, walking paths, and community facilities. Recent upgrades have focused on improving drainage, installing perimeter fencing to reduce anti-social behaviour, and enhancing footpaths and planting. The park plays a key role in the local community as a recreational and sporting hub. The location of the Proposed Development site is provided in **Figure 2-1**. In this figure, the red line application boundary indicates the primary park area to be upgraded and extends beyond the park boundary to the road kerb line. This area measures approximately 15.87 ha. The remaining area of the park is outlined in blue and also extends beyond the park boundary to the road kerb line. The blue line area measures approximately 1.5 ha. Although areas outside the red line are not included in the main upgrade works, they may be examined to identify opportunities for better integration between the park and the adjacent residential neighbourhood.

### 2.2 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

#### 2.2.1 Description of the project

The Proposed Development will consist of the following:

- Four formal entry plazas at:
  - the Cheeverstown Road and Cookstown Road junction, linking with Jobstown Park.
  - the Cookstown Road and Maplewood Road Junction
  - the northeastern corner of the park, adjacent to the southern boundary of St. Mark's GAA club, leading out on to Cookstown Road.
  - the Drumcairn Avenue and Drumcairn Parade junction.
- Main spine routes, shared pedestrian/cycle with formal signature trees and park lights, along the eastern boundary, linking Butler McGee Park to Jobstown Park and the Luas stops, and east-west through the park connecting Drumcairn with the Fortunestown Shopping Centre.
- Controlled access gates to be installed at all entrances
- All existing sports pitches, except for Pitch 80, retained with some realignment and refurbished where necessary with drainage and re-levelling.
- Provision for active recreation – e.g. Teenspace, with facilities such as skate park (with floodlighting), basketball court and fitness area, and natural play area with large climbing feature wall.
- A Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) with floodlighting;
- A 35m long x 6m high ball wall, with hard paving to one side and floodlighting
- Activity circuit (Park Run) - with seats and play/fitness equipment.
- A dog park enclosed with post and rail fencing with wire mesh

- Relocation of a 220m length of the northeastern boundary to incorporate the grass verge to the road into the park, allowing for more room between the proposed path and the pitches;
- Biodiversity improvements – existing beech hedgerow to be replaced with a mix of native species and supplemented with meadowland management and planting of bulbs and formal and informal tree groups.
- Attenuation basins and possible swales associated with the pitch drainage, which will also contribute to enhanced biodiversity.
- All associated landscape works.
- All ancillary works.

The proposed site layout is presented in **Appendix 1**.

## *Surface Water Drainage*

Surface water from the proposed development will be managed through the implementation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) basins. These basins will discharge into the existing stormwater network located along Cookstown Road.



## Map Legend

- Red Line Boundary
- Blue Line Boundary

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## Site Location

Project Title: Butler McGee Park, Co. Dublin

Drawn By: DM      Checked By: SF  
Project No.: 250944      Drawing No.: Figure 2-1  
Scale: 1:60,000      Date: 24.10.2025

2.3

## Description of the Baseline Ecological Environment

2.3.1

### EPA Information and Water Quality

The proposed development is situated entirely within the WFD Catchment 09, Liffey and Dublin Bay, (<https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>). There are no EPA-mapped watercourses within or adjacent to the Proposed Development Site boundary. The site is located in the sub-catchments Dodder\_SC\_010.

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) Transitional Waterbody risk score for the section of Liffey and Dublin Bay closest to the development site known as Liffey Estuary Lower Estuary has been assessed as “Intermediate”.

The site is located within the Dublin area (IE\_EA\_G\_008) groundwater catchment. The Water Framework Directive (WFD) Groundwater Monitoring Programme (2019-2024) assigned the groundwater catchment as having ‘good’ status.

2.3.2

### Survey Methodology

Assessing the impacts of any project and associated activities requires an understanding of the ecological baseline conditions prior to and at the time of the project proceeding. Ecological Baseline conditions are those existing in the absence of proposed activities (CIEEM, 2018).

A multi-disciplinary ecological walkover survey of the entire site was undertaken by David Mesarcik of MKO on the 7<sup>th</sup> October 2025, in accordance with NRA Guidelines on Ecological Surveying Techniques for Protected Flora and Fauna on National Road Schemes (NRA, 2009b). This survey provided baseline data on the ecology of the study area. The walkover surveys were designed to detect the presence or suitable habitat for a range of protected faunal species that may occur in the vicinity of the proposed development.

Ad-hoc recordings were made of any bird species encountered during the walkover surveys.

Habitats were classified in accordance with the Heritage Council’s ‘*Guide to Habitats in Ireland*’ (Fossitt, 2000). Habitat mapping was undertaken with regard to guidance set out in ‘*Best Practice Guidance for Habitat Survey and Mapping*’ (Smith et al., 2011).

During the multidisciplinary surveys, a search for Invasive Alien Species (IAS), with a focus on those listed under the Third Schedule of the European Communities Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011), was also conducted.

2.3.2.1

#### Limitations

The information provided in this document accurately and comprehensively describes the baseline ecological environment and provides an accurate prediction of the likely impacts of the proposed development on any Designated Sites. Ecological surveys were undertaken at the site outside the optimal survey season for botanical assessments, however, this is not considered to have resulted in limitations to the assessment, due to the nature of the Site, which is a public park in Dublin City, and the scale of the proposed development, which is retaining the ecological function of the site. No significant limitations in the scope, scale or context of the assessment have been identified.

## 2.3.3 Survey Findings

### 2.3.4 Habitats within the Proposed Development Boundary

Habitats recorded during the multi-disciplinary ecological walkover survey are described below, and a habitat map is provided in **Figure 2-2**. Photographs taken of representative habitats across the proposed development are also included in the following section. No habitats considered to be of ecological significance and having the potential to correspond to those listed in *Annex I* of the *EU Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC* were identified during the walkover survey. No invasive species listed under the Third Schedule of the European Communities Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2015) or under the First Schedule of the European Union (Invasive Alien Species) Regulations 2024 (S.I. No 374 of 2024) were recorded within the Proposed Development site.

Habitat descriptions below are in the past tense to reflect their accuracy at a point in the recent past.

Table 2-1: Habitats within the site

Habitat Type	Fossitt Code
Improved amenity grassland	GA2
Buildings and artificial surfaces	BL3
Immature woodland	WS2
Treelines	WL2
Dry meadows and grassy verges	GS2
Scattered trees and parkland	WD5
Hedgerows	WL1

The majority of the Proposed Development site within Butler McGee Park comprised large fields of short-mown **Improved Amenity Grassland (GA2)** habitat, which were homogenous in appearance (**Plate 2-1 - 2-2**). The sward was dominated by perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*), common bent (*Agrostis capillaris*), Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), annual meadow-grass (*Poa annua*), and white clover (*Trifolium repens*), with frequent ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), greater plantain (*Plantago major*), and dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale* agg.), and occasional creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), common daisy (*Bellis perennis*), and creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*). The tarred walkways between the fields were classified as **Buildings and Artificial Surfaces (BL3)** (**Plate 2-3**).

A small patch of planted black alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) **Immature Woodland (WS2)** was recorded along the boundary fence to the west of the park. Here, the trees were approximately 2 m or less in height, and the ground flora was dominated by rough meadow-grass (*Poa trivialis*), cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), common yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), creeping buttercup, and nettle (*Urtica dioica*), with frequent cleavers (*Galium aparine*), creeping thistle, red clover (*Trifolium pratense*), white clover, dandelion, bindweed (*Calystegia sepium*), creeping cinquefoil (*Potentilla reptans*), broad-leaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*), and ribwort plantain (**Plate 2-4**).

There were two immature, planted **Treelines (WL2)** recorded on either side of the walkway at the northwestern corner of the park, comprised of silver birch (*Betula pendula*), sweet cherry (*Prunus avium*), black poplar (*Populus nigra*), and Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) (**Plate 2-5**). These same species had been planted near the walkway towards the centre of the site to create a small **Immature Woodland (WS2)** area (**Plate 2-6**). Another sparse, planted hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) **Treeline (WL2)** runs along Drumcairn Avenue, alongside the boundary fence (**Plate 2-7**). These trees were all immature, with trees less than 2 metres tall.

A small area of **Grassy Verges (GS2)** habitat was recorded along the verge of Drumcairn Avenue adjacent to the park fence. The sward was dominated by creeping buttercup, cock's-foot and false oat-grass

(*Arrhenatherum elatius*) with red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), rough meadow-grass, dandelion, ribwort plantain and frequent broad-leaved dock, creeping cinquefoil, common daisy, and common yarrow (**Plate 2-8**).

An area of semi-mature, scattered small-leaved lime trees (*Tilia cordata*) was recorded between pitches near the northern park boundary, adjacent to Drumcairn Parade. This habitat was classified as **Scattered Trees and Parkland (WD5) (Plate 2-9)**.

There was an unmown area of **Dry Meadows and Grassy Verges (GS2)** habitat recorded along the northernmost edge of the park. Here, the grassland comprised coarse, tussocky grass species and ruderal plants and was dominated by rough meadow-grass, cock's-foot, and broad-leaved dock, with dandelion, Yorkshire fog, bramble (*Rubus fruticosus agg.*), ribwort plantain, creeping buttercup, and creeping thistle (**Plate 2-10**).

Lastly, a low ornamental beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) **Hedgerow (WL1)** with occasional dog rose (*Rosa canina*) was recorded along the entirety of the eastern edge of the park, running adjacent to Cookstown Road. The hedgerow was approximately 1.5 m high with no prominent ground flora (**Plate 2-11**).



Plate 2-1 Example of short-mown **Improved Amenity Grassland (GA2)** fields recorded throughout the park.



Plate 2-2: Example of homogeneous **Improved Amenity Grassland (GA2)** fields recorded toward the west of the park with football goalposts.



Plate 2-3: Tarred walkways between the fields classified as **Buildings and Artificial Surfaces (BL3)**.



Plate 2-4: Planted black alder **Immature Woodland (WS2)** recorded along the boundary fence to the west of the park.



Plate 2-5: **Treelines (WL2)** recorded on either side of the walkway at the northwestern corner of the park.



Plate 2-6: A small patch of **Immature Woodland (WS2)** habitat planted with a mix of tree species, including silver birch, sweet cherry, black poplar, and Scots pine.



Plate 2-7: A **Treeline (WL2)** planted with immature hornbeam trees recorded along the park boundary on Drumcain Avenue.



Plate 2-8: A small area of **Grassy Verges (GS2)** habitat was recorded on the Drumcairn Avenue verge along to the park boundary fence.



Plate 2-9: Semi-mature small-leaved lime trees recorded between pitches near the northern park boundary classified as **Scattered Trees and Parkland (WD5)**.



Plate 2-10: **Dry Meadows and Grassy Verges (GS2)** habitat recorded along the northernmost edge of the park.



Plate 2-11: Low, ornamental beech **Hedgerow (WL1)** recorded running along the park boundary on Cookstown Road.



Map Legend

Red Line Boundary

Blue Line Boundary

**Habitat Mapping**

Buildings and artificial surfaces

Amenity grassland (improved)

Dry meadows and grassy verges

Scattered trees and parkland

Immature woodland

Hedgerows

Treelines

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Drawing Title

**Habitat Map**

Project Title

Butler McGee Park, Co. Dublin

Drawn By      Checked By

DM

SF

Project No.      Drawing No.

250944

Figure 2-2

Scale      Date

1:3,000

24.10.2025

### 2.3.4.1 Birds

Bird species recorded within or immediately adjacent to the Proposed Development Site during the ecological walkover survey by MKO comprised a variety of common bird assemblages. Species recorded are provided in **Table 2-2** below. All the bird species recorded during the survey are common and widespread in the wider area.

Table 2-2: Bird species recorded during the site visit.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Conservation Status (BoCCI)
Wood pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Green Listed
Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	Green Listed
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	Green Listed
Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>	Green Listed
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	Green Listed
Black-headed gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	Red Listed
Herring gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	Red Listed

## 3. IDENTIFICATION OF RELEVANT EUROPEAN SITES

### 3.1 Data Sources Informing the Assessment

In preparation of the report, the below sources were consulted on the 13.10.2025 to inform the assessment.

- Review of NPWS Site Synopses, Conservation Objectives for the European Sites
- Review of 2019, 2013 and 2007 EU Habitats Directive (Article 17) Reports.
- Review of online web-mappers: National Parks and Wildlife Service<sup>4</sup>(NPWS), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)<sup>5</sup>, Environmental Sensitivity Mapping tool<sup>6</sup> and National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC)<sup>7</sup>.
- Review of other plans and projects within the area.

### 3.2 Identification of the European Sites within the Likely Zone of Influence

The following methodology was used to establish any European Sites upon which there is a potential for a likely significant effect to occur either individually or in combination with other plans and projects as a result of the Proposed Development:

- Initially the most up to date GIS spatial datasets for European designated sites and water catchments were downloaded from the NPWS website ([www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie)) and the EPA website ([www.epa.ie](http://www.epa.ie)).
- All European sites that could potentially be affected were identified using a source-pathway - receptor model. To provide context for the assessment, European sites within the proximity of the Proposed Development site are shown in **Figure 3-1**. Information on these sites according to the site-specific conservation objectives is provided in **Table 3-1**. Sites that were further away from the Proposed Development were also considered and no complete source-pathway-receptor chain for significant effect was identified for any other European Site.
- In relation to Special Protection Areas, in the absence of any specific European or Irish guidance in relation to such sites, the Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) Guidance, '*Assessing Connectivity with Special Protection Areas (SPA)*' (2016) was consulted. This document provides guidance in relation to the identification of connectivity between Proposed Development and Special Protection Areas. The guidance takes into consideration the distances species may travel beyond the boundary of their SPAs and provides information on dispersal and foraging ranges of bird species which are frequently encountered when considering plans and projects. **Table 3-1** provides details of all relevant European Sites as identified in the preceding steps and assesses the potential for likely significant effects on each.
- The assessment considers any likely direct or indirect impacts of the Proposed Development, both alone and in combination with other plans and projects, on European Sites by virtue of criteria including the following: size and scale, land-take, distance from the European Site or key features of the site, resource requirements, emissions, excavation requirements, transportation requirements and duration of construction, operation and decommissioning were considered in this assessment.

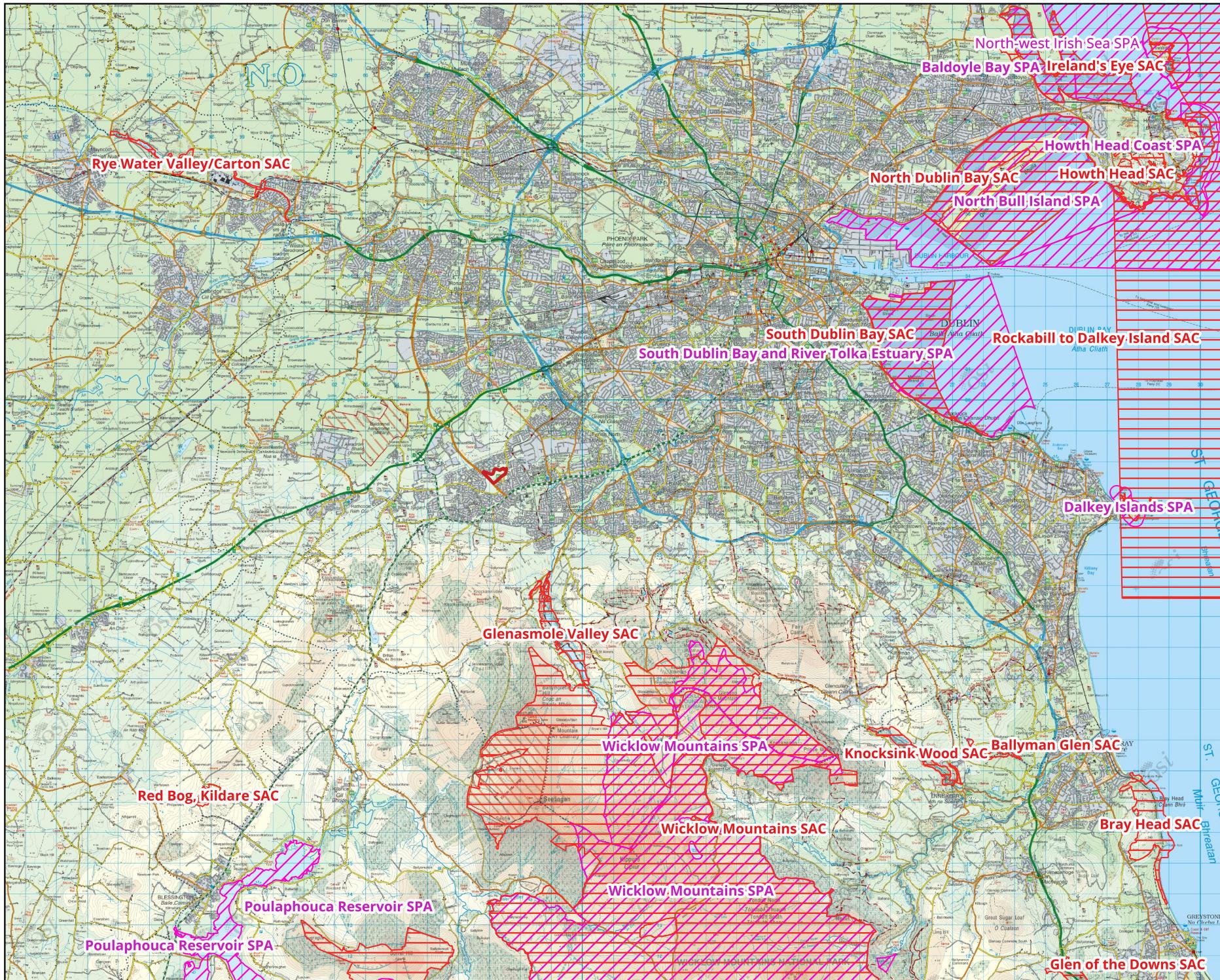
<sup>4</sup> <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/edf34d92e28040fd87d3d14f55d8d95f>

<sup>5</sup> <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://enviromap.ie/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://biodiversityireland.ie/>

- The site synopses and conservation objectives of these sites, as per the NPWS website ([www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie)), were consulted and reviewed at the time of preparing this report.
- The potential for the Proposed Development to result in cumulative impacts on any European Sites in combination with other plans and projects was considered in the assessment that is presented in **Section 3.3**.



## Map Legend

- Site Boundary
- Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Special Protection Area (SPA)

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Drawing Title	
European Designated Sites within the Vicinity of the site	
Project Title	
Butler McGee Park	
Drawn By	Checked By
DM	SF
Project No.	Drawing No.
250944	Figure 3-1
Scale	Date
1:160,000	14.10.2025

Table 3-1: Identification of Designated Sites within the Likely Zone of Influence

European Sites and distance from proposed development	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, <a href="http://www.npws.ie">www.npws.ie</a> .)	Conservation Objectives	Identification of Source-Pathway-Receptor chain and potential for Likely Significant Effects (LSE's).
<b>Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)</b>			
<p>Glenasmole Valley SAC [001209]</p> <p><b>Distance:</b> 3.43 km</p> <p><b>Hydrological Distance:</b> No hydrological connectivity.</p>	<p><b>Habitats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (* important orchid sites) [6210]</li> <li>➢ Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410]</li> <li>➢ Petrifying springs with tufa formation (<i>Cratoneurion</i>) [7220]</li> </ul>	<p>Detailed conservation objectives for this site (Version 1, December, 2021<sup>8</sup>) were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at: <a href="http://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO001209.pdf">www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO001209.pdf</a></p>	<p>There will be no direct impact on the SAC or its QIs as it is located entirely outside of the footprint of the Proposed Development Site.</p> <p>Due to the intervening distance and the nature and scale of the proposed works, there is no potential for indirect effects on the terrestrial QI habitats for which the SAC has been designated.</p> <p>No surface water connectivity exists from the site of the Proposed Development to the SAC. The SAC is located within the same groundwater catchment as the site, however, due to the nature and scale of the proposed works, no impacts on groundwater quality are anticipated. Therefore, no pathway for potential significant indirect effects on the aquatic QI habitat of the SAC has been identified.</p> <p><b>No pathway for likely significant effect on this European Site was identified, when considered in the absence of any mitigation, individually or cumulatively with other plans or projects. This site is not within the Likely Zone of Influence of the Proposed Development. Therefore, it is not considered further in this assessment.</b></p>

<sup>8</sup> NPWS (2021) Conservation Objectives: Glenasmole Valley SAC 001209. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

European Sites and distance from proposed development	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, <a href="http://www.npws.ie">www.npws.ie</a> .)	Conservation Objectives	Identification of Source-Pathway-Receptor chain and potential for Likely Significant Effects (LSE's).
<p>Wicklow Mountains SAC [002122]</p> <p><b>5.45 km</b></p> <p><b>Hydrological Distance:</b> No hydrological connectivity.</p>	<p><b>Habitats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110]</li> <li>➢ Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160]</li> <li>➢ Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010]</li> <li>➢ European dry heaths [4030]</li> <li>➢ Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060]</li> <li>➢ Calaminarian grasslands of the <i>Violetalia calaminariae</i> [6130]</li> <li>➢ Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe) [6230]</li> <li>➢ Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]</li> <li>➢ Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladani</i>) [8110]</li> <li>➢ Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210]</li> <li>➢ Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220]</li> </ul>	<p>Detailed conservation objectives for this site (Version 1, July 2017<sup>9</sup>) were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at:</p> <p><a href="http://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002122.pdf">www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002122.pdf</a></p>	<p>There will be no direct impact on the SAC or its QIs as it is located entirely outside of the footprint of the Proposed Development Site.</p> <p>Due to the intervening distance and the nature and scale of the proposed works, there is no potential for indirect effects on the QI habitats or species for which the SAC has been designated.</p> <p>No surface water connectivity exists from the site of the Proposed Development to the SAC. The SAC is located within the same groundwater catchment as the site, however, due to the nature and scale of the proposed works, no impacts on groundwater quality are anticipated. Therefore, no pathway for potential significant indirect effects on the aquatic QI habitats and species of the SAC has been identified.</p> <p><b>No pathway for likely significant effect on this European Site was identified, when considered in the absence of any mitigation, individually or cumulatively with other plans or projects. This site is not within the Likely Zone of Influence of the Proposed Development. Therefore, it is not considered further in this assessment.</b></p>

<sup>9</sup> NPWS (2017) Conservation Objectives: Wicklow Mountains SAC 002122. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

European Sites and distance from proposed development	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, <a href="http://www.npws.ie">www.npws.ie</a> ).	Conservation Objectives	Identification of Source-Pathway-Receptor chain and potential for Likely Significant Effects (LSE's).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0]</li>   <b>Species</b> <li>➢ Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355]</li> </ul>		
<p>Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC [001398]</p> <p><b>Distance:</b> 10.23 km</p> <p><b>Hydrological Distance:</b> No hydrological connectivity.</p>	<p><b>Habitats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220]</li>   <b>Species</b> <li>➢ Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo angustior</i>) [1014]</li> <li>➢ Desmoulin's Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>) [1016]</li> </ul>	<p>Detailed conservation objectives for this site (Version 1, December, 2021<sup>10</sup>) were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at:</p> <p><a href="http://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO001398.pdf">www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO001398.pdf</a></p>	<p>There will be no direct impact on the SAC or its QIs as it is located entirely outside of the footprint of the Proposed Development Site.</p> <p>The Proposed Development Site does not provide suitable supporting habitat for the two SCI species for which the SAC has been designated. Therefore, there is no potential for indirect effects on the species for which the SAC has been designated.</p> <p>No hydrological connectivity exists from the site of the Proposed Development to the SAC, as they are located in different groundwater catchments. Therefore, no pathway for potential significant indirect effects on the aquatic QI habitat of the SAC has been identified.</p> <p><b>No pathway for likely significant effect on this European Site was identified, when considered in the absence of any</b></p>

<sup>10</sup> NPWS (2021) Conservation Objectives: Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC 001398. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

European Sites and distance from proposed development	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, <a href="http://www.npws.ie">www.npws.ie</a> ).	Conservation Objectives	Identification of Source-Pathway-Receptor chain and potential for Likely Significant Effects (LSE's).
			mitigation, individually or cumulatively with other plans or projects. This site is not within the Likely Zone of Influence of the Proposed Development. Therefore, it is not considered further in this assessment.
<b>Special Protection Areas (SPA)</b>			
Wicklow Mountains SPA [004040]  <b>Distance to site:</b> 8.06 km  <b>Hydrological Distance:</b> No hydrological connectivity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>) [A098]</li> <li>➤ Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>) [A103]</li> </ul>	First order site-specific conservation objectives for this site (October 2022 <sup>11</sup> ) were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at: <a href="http://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected_sites/conservation_objectives/CO004040.pdf">www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected_sites/conservation_objectives/CO004040.pdf</a>	<p>There will be no direct effects on the SPA as it is located entirely outside of the footprint of the proposed development.</p> <p>The site did not provide suitable supporting habitat for the SCI species for which the SPA is designated.</p> <p>Due to the intervening distance of over 8 km from the SPA, and the nature and scale of the project, there is no potential for indirect effects on SCI species.</p> <p><b>No pathway for likely significant effect on this European Site was identified, when considered in the absence of any mitigation, individually or cumulatively with other plans or projects. This site is not within the Likely Zone of Influence of the Proposed Development. Therefore, it is not considered further in this assessment.</b></p>

<sup>11</sup> NPWS (2022) Conservation objectives for Wicklow Mountains SPA 004040. First Order Site-specific Conservation Objectives Version 1.0. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

European Sites and distance from proposed development	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, <a href="http://www.npws.ie">www.npws.ie</a> ).	Conservation Objectives	Identification of Source-Pathway-Receptor chain and potential for Likely Significant Effects (LSE's).
<p>South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA</p> <p><b>Distance to Site:</b> 12.57 km</p> <p><b>Hydrological Distance:</b> No hydrological connectivity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046]</li> <li>➢ Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130]</li> <li>➢ Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137]</li> <li>➢ Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141]</li> <li>➢ Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143]</li> <li>➢ Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144]</li> <li>➢ Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149]</li> <li>➢ Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157]</li> <li>➢ Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162]</li> <li>➢ Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179]</li> <li>➢ Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) [A192]</li> <li>➢ Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193]</li> <li>➢ Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194]</li> <li>➢ Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</li> </ul>	<p>Detailed conservation objectives for this site (March 2015<sup>12</sup>) were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at:</p> <p><a href="http://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO004024.pdf">www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO004024.pdf</a></p>	<p>There will be no direct effects on the SPA as it is located entirely outside of the footprint of the proposed development.</p> <p>The site does not provide breeding habitat for the SCI species for which the SAC is designated, however it provides suitable supporting habitat for terrestrial foragers (i.e. gulls). Black-headed gull was recorded utilising the site during the ecological surveys.</p> <p>There will be no loss of any supporting habitat as the proposed development will retain the function of the existing baseline. The potential for ex-situ disturbance to SCI species in the area was considered, and no potential for significant indirect effects on SCI species was identified due to the intervening distance from the SPA, the nature of the development within highly modified habitats, the existing anthropogenic activity levels at the site and the scale of the development.</p> <p>No surface water connectivity exists from the site of the Proposed Development to the SPA. The groundwater flow path from the site's catchment discharges into the coast, however, due to the nature and scale of the proposed works, no impacts on groundwater quality are anticipated. Therefore, no pathway for potential significant indirect effects</p>

<sup>12</sup> : NPWS (2015) Conservation Objectives: South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA 004024. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

European Sites and distance from proposed development	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, <a href="http://www.npws.ie">www.npws.ie</a> .)	Conservation Objectives	Identification of Source-Pathway-Receptor chain and potential for Likely Significant Effects (LSE's).
			<p>on the aquatic QI habitats and species of the SAC has been identified.</p> <p>No pathway for likely significant effect on this European Site was identified, when considered in the absence of any mitigation, individually or cumulatively with other plans or projects. This site is not within the Likely Zone of Influence of the Proposed Development. Therefore, it is not considered further in this assessment.</p>

## 3.3 In-combination Effects

To take account of cumulative in-combination effects, plans, and projects that are completed, approved but uncompleted, or proposed (but not yet approved) should be considered in this context (European Commission, 2021).

A search and review concerning plans and projects that may have the potential to result in cumulative effects on European sites was conducted. This included a review of online Planning Registers, development plans and other available information and served to identify past and future plans and projects, their activities and their predicted effects.

### 3.3.1 Plans

The following development plans have been reviewed and taken into consideration as part of this assessment:

- South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2022-2028
- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019 - 2031
- 4<sup>th</sup> National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2027

The review detailed in **Table 3-2** below focused on policies and objectives that relate to European sites and natural heritage. Policies and objectives relating to sustainable land use were also reviewed.

Table 3-2: Assessment of Development Plans

Plans	Key Policies and Objectives directly related to European Sites and Biodiversity in the Zone of Influence	Assessment of Potential Impact on Ecological Receptors and Designated Sites
South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2022 - 2028	<p><b>Policy COS2: Social/Community Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>COS2 Objective 3:</b> To protect and enhance existing community facilities, and to support the development and expansion of new and existing facilities and services, in proximity to the populations they serve, where their need is identified.</li> <li><b>COS2 Objective 4:</b> To support the clustering of community facilities such as community centres, sports and leisure facilities, schools, childcare facilities and open spaces to create multi-purpose community hubs.</li> </ul> <p><b>Policy COS5: Parks and Public Open Space</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>COS5 Objective 1:</b> To support a hierarchy of multi-functional, accessible parks and public open spaces across the County in line with Table 8.1, based on existing populations and planned growth in accordance with the overall standard of 2.4ha per 1,000 population.</li> <li><b>COS5 Objective 2:</b> To support the implementation of South Dublin County Parks and Open Space Strategy and to ensure that the provision, upgrade, design, and maintenance of public open space is in accordance with the Strategy.</li> <li><b>COS5 Objective 3:</b> To support the implementation and expansion of the Council's <i>TeenSpace Programme</i> (2021) and the implementation of the <i>Sports Pitch Strategy</i> (2020) or (any superseding documents).</li> <li><b>COS5 Objective 8:</b> To ensure the design of parks and public open space areas is of high quality; to provide a pleasant setting, accommodate use by people of all ages and abilities, to support life-long activity and good health and well-being by the provision of a balanced mix of active and passive recreation and access to, or view of, nature, ensuring that the design considers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- provision of an appropriate mix of hard and soft surfaced areas;</li> <li>- enhancement of biodiversity and existing trees and hedgerows;</li> <li>- incorporation of water courses, other natural features and existing built heritage into the design of parks and open spaces as appropriate;</li> <li>- provision of new planting, landscape features and appropriate site furniture including a variety of accessible, well located and designed seating.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Policy NCBH2: Biodiversity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>NCBH2 Objective 1:</b> To support the implementation of the National Biodiversity Action Plan (2017- 2021) and the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan (2021-2025) and to support the adoption and implementation of the South Dublin County Biodiversity Action Plan (2020-2026) and Pollinator Action Plan (2021-2025) and any superseding plans.</li> </ul>	<p>The development plan was reviewed, with particular reference to Policies and Objectives that relate to the biodiversity, protected species and designated sites.</p> <p>No potential for LSEs on any European site as a result of the proposed development was identified and no potential for significant in-combination impacts on European Sites when considered in conjunction with this Plan.</p> <p><b>No potential for significant in-combination effects on European site was identified, when considered in the absence of any mitigation, individually or cumulatively with other plans or projects.</b></p>

Plans	Key Policies and Objectives directly related to European Sites and Biodiversity in the Zone of Influence	Assessment of Potential Impact on Ecological Receptors and Designated Sites
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>NCBH2 Objective 2:</b> To ensure the protection of designated sites in compliance with relevant EU Directives and applicable national legislation.</li> <li><b>NCBH2 Objective 3:</b> To protect and conserve the natural heritage of the County, and to conserve and manage EU and nationally designated sites and non-designated locally important areas which act as 'stepping stones' for the purposes of green infrastructure and Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.</li> <li><b>NCBH2 Objective 4:</b> To protect our rivers and in particular to avoid overdevelopment which could have an adverse effect on the biodiversity and ecosystems of the river.</li> </ul> <p><b>Policy NCBH3: Natura 2000 Sites</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>NCBH3 Objective 1:</b> To prevent development and activities that would adversely affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 site located within or adjacent to the County and promote the favourable conservation status of the habitats and species integral to these sites.</li> <li><b>NCBH3 Objective 2:</b> To ensure that plans, including land use plans, will only be adopted, if they either individually or in combination with existing and / or proposed plans or projects, will not have a significant adverse effect on a European Site, or where such a plan is likely or might have such a significant adverse effect (either alone or in combination), South Dublin County Council will, as required by law, carry out an appropriate assessment as per requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive 92 / 43 / EEC of the 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, as transposed into Irish legislation. Only after having ascertained that the plan will not adversely affect the integrity of any European site, will South Dublin County Council adopt the plan, incorporating any necessary mitigation measures. A plan which could adversely affect the integrity of a European site may only be adopted in exceptional circumstances, as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive as transposed into Irish legislation.</li> <li><b>NCBH3 Objective 3:</b> To ensure that planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that, either individually or in combination with existing and / or proposed plans or projects, will not have a significant adverse effect on a European Site, or where such a development proposal is likely or might have such a significant adverse effect (either alone or in combination), the planning authority will, as required by law, carry out an appropriate assessment as per requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive 92 / 43 / EEC of the 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, as transposed into Irish legislation. Only after having ascertained that the development proposal will not adversely affect the integrity of any European site, will the planning authority agree to the development and impose appropriate mitigation measures in the form of planning conditions. A development proposal which could adversely affect the integrity of a European</li> </ul>	

Plans	Key Policies and Objectives directly related to European Sites and Biodiversity in the Zone of Influence	Assessment of Potential Impact on Ecological Receptors and Designated Sites
	<p>site may only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive as transposed into Irish legislation.</p> <p><b>Policy NCBH4: Proposed Natural Heritage Areas</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>NCBH4 Objective 1:</b> To ensure that any proposal for development within or adjacent to a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) is designed and sited to minimise its impact on the biodiversity, ecological, geological and landscape value of the pNHA particularly plant and animal species listed under the Wildlife Acts and the Habitats and Birds Directive including their habitats.</li> <li><b>NCBH4 Objective 2:</b> To restrict development within or adjacent to a proposed Natural Heritage Area to development that is directly related to the area's amenity potential subject to the protection and enhancement of natural heritage and visual amenities including biodiversity and landscapes. Such developments will be required to submit an Ecological Impact Assessment prepared by a suitably qualified professional.</li> <li><b>NCBH4 SL01:</b> To promote opportunities to improve the habitat relating to the Lugmore Glen pNHA and to ensure that any proposals for development have full regard to the sensitivities of the area within the pNHA and along the Tallaght Stream.</li> </ul> <p><b>Policy NCBH5: Protection of Habitats and Species Outside of Designated Areas</b></p> <p>Protect and promote the conservation of biodiversity outside of designated areas and ensure that species and habitats that are protected under the Wildlife Acts 1976 to 2018, the Birds Directive 1979 and the Habitats Directive 1992, the Flora (Protection) Order 2015, and wildlife corridors are adequately protected.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>NCBH5 Objective 1:</b> To ensure that development does not have a significant adverse impact on biodiversity, including known rare and threatened species, and that biodiversity enhancement measures are included in all development proposals.</li> <li><b>NCBH5 Objective 2:</b> To ensure that an Ecological Impact Assessment is undertaken for developments proposed in areas that support, or have the potential to support, protected species or features of biodiversity importance, and that appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures are incorporated into all development proposals.</li> </ul> <p><b>Policy NCBH10: Invasive Species</b></p> <p>Protect against and prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species within the County and require landowners and developers to adhere to best practice guidance in relation to the control of invasive species.</p>	

Plans	Key Policies and Objectives directly related to European Sites and Biodiversity in the Zone of Influence	Assessment of Potential Impact on Ecological Receptors and Designated Sites
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>NCBH10 Objective 1:</b> To ensure that development proposals do not lead to the spread or introduction of invasive species. If developments are proposed on sites where invasive species are or were previously present, applicants should submit a control and management programme with measures to prevent, control and/or eradicate the particular invasive species as part of the planning process and to comply with the provisions of the European Communities Birds and Habitats Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 / 2011).</li> <li><b>NCBH10 Objective 2:</b> To ensure that the Council promptly and appropriately treats invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed, including where notified by members of the public that such species, located on public lands, pose a potential threat to property.</li> </ul> <p><b>Policy NCBH11: Tree Preservation Orders and Other Tree / Hedgerow Protections</b></p> <p>Review Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) within the County and maintain the conservation value of trees and groups of trees that are the subject of a Tree Preservation Order while also recognising the value of and protecting trees and hedgerows which are not subject to a TPO.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>NCBH11 Objective 1:</b> To review Tree Preservation Orders within the County and maintain the conservation value of trees and groups of trees that are the subject of any Tree Preservation Order.</li> <li><b>NCBH11 Objective 2:</b> To regularly evaluate and identify trees of amenity value within the County with a view to making them the subject of Tree Preservation Orders or otherwise protecting them and to furnish information to the public in this regard.</li> <li><b>NCBH11 Objective 3:</b> To protect and retain existing trees, hedgerows, and woodlands which are of amenity and / or biodiversity and / or carbon sequestration value and / or contribute to landscape character and ensure that proper provision is made for their protection and management taking into account Living with Trees: South Dublin County Council's Tree Management Policy (2015-2020) or any superseding document and to ensure that where retention is not possible that a high value biodiversity provision is secured as part of the phasing of any development to protect the amenity of the area.</li> <li><b>NCBH11 Objective 4:</b> To protect the hedgerows of the County, acknowledging their role as wildlife habitats, biodiversity corridors, links within the County's green infrastructure network, their visual amenity and landscape character value and their significance as demarcations of historic field patterns and townland boundaries. (Refer also to Chapter 4: Green Infrastructure).</li> <li><b>NCBH11 Objective 5:</b> To ensure that intact hedgerows / trees will be maintained above the 120m contour line within the County ensuring that the strong rural character will not be diluted and that important heritage features and potential wildlife corridors are protected.</li> </ul>	

Plans	Key Policies and Objectives directly related to European Sites and Biodiversity in the Zone of Influence	Assessment of Potential Impact on Ecological Receptors and Designated Sites
<b>Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019 - 2031</b>	<p><b>Biodiversity and Natural Heritage</b></p> <p><b>RPO 7.16:</b> Support the implementation of the Habitats Directives in achieving an improvement in the conservation status of protected species and habitats in the Region and to ensure alignment between the core objectives of the EU Birds and Habitats Directives and local authority development plans.</p> <p><b>RPO 7.17:</b> Facilitate cross boundary co-ordination between local authorities and the relevant agencies in the Region to provide clear governance arrangements and coordination mechanisms to support the development of ecological networks and enhanced connectivity between protected sites whilst also addressing the need for management of alien invasive species and the conservation of native species.</p> <p><b>RPO 7.18:</b> Work with local authorities and state agencies to promote the development of all aspects of park management in the Wicklow National Park and the Slieve Bloom Mountains.</p> <p><b>RPO 7.19:</b> Support the consideration of designating a National Park for the peatlands area in the Midlands.</p> <p><b>RPO 7.20:</b> Promote the development of improved visitor experiences, nature conservation and sustainable development activities within the Dublin Bay Biosphere in cooperation with the Dublin Bay UNESCO Biosphere Partnership.</p> <p><b>RPO 7.22:</b> Local authority development plan and local area plans, shall identify, protect, enhance, provide and manage Green Infrastructure in an integrated and coherent manner and should also have regard to the required targets in relation to the conservation of European sites, other nature conservation sites, ecological networks, and protected species.</p>	<p>The development plan was reviewed, with particular reference to Policies and Objectives that relate to the biodiversity, protected species and designated sites.</p> <p>No potential for LSEs on any European site as a result of the proposed development was identified and no potential for significant in-combination impacts on European Sites when considered in conjunction with this Plan.</p> <p><b>No potential for significant in-combination effects on European site was identified, when considered in the absence of any mitigation, individually or cumulatively with other plans or projects.</b></p>
<b>4<sup>th</sup> National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2027</b>	<p>Ireland's 4<sup>th</sup> National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030 (Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, 2024) (the "NBAP"). The NBAP strives for a "whole of government, whole of society" approach to the governance and conservation of biodiversity. It demonstrates Ireland's continuing commitment to meeting and acting on its obligations to protect Ireland's biodiversity for the benefit of future generations and will implement this through a number of key targets, actions and objectives. The Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2023 introduced a new public sector duty on biodiversity. The legislation provides that every public body, as listed in the Act, is obliged to have regard to the objectives and targets in the NBAP. The NBAP sets out five key objectives as follows.</p>	<p>The objectives set out in the NBAP aim to protect and enhance and promote biodiversity, nature restoration on the Island of Ireland and also contribute to International biodiversity initiative.</p>

Plans	Key Policies and Objectives directly related to European Sites and Biodiversity in the Zone of Influence	Assessment of Potential Impact on Ecological Receptors and Designated Sites
	<p><b>Objective 1:</b> Adopt a Whole-of Government, Whole of Society Approach to Biodiversity. Proposed actions include capacity and resource reviews across Government; determining responsibilities for the expanding biodiversity agenda providing support for communities, citizen scientists and business; and mechanisms for the governance and review of this National Biodiversity Action Plan.</p> <p><b>Objective 2:</b> Meet Urgent Conservation and Restoration Needs. Supporting actions will build on existing conservation measures. Efforts to tackle Invasive Alien Species will be elevated. The protected area network will be expanded to include the Marine Protected Areas. The ambition of the EU Biodiversity Strategy will be considered as part of an evolving work programme across Government</p> <p><b>Objective 3:</b> Secure Nature's Contribution to People. Actions highlight the relationship between nature and people in Ireland. These include recognising the tangible and intangible values of biodiversity, promoting nature's importance to our culture and heritage and recognising how biodiversity supports our society and our economy.</p> <p><b>Objective 4:</b> Enhance the Evidence Base for Action on Biodiversity. This objective focuses on biodiversity research needs, as well as the development and strengthening of long-term monitoring programmes that will underpin and strengthen future decision-making. Action will also focus on collaboration to advance ecosystem accounting that will contribute towards natural capital accounts.</p> <p><b>Objective DS 10 – Impacts of Developments on Protected Sites</b>        Have regard to any impacts of development on or near existing and proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation, Nature Reserves, Ramsar Sites, Wildfowl Sanctuaries, Salmonoid Waters, Refuges for Flora and Fauna, Conamara National Park, shellfish waters, freshwater pearl mussel catchments and any other designated sites including future designations.</p> <p><b>Objective 5:</b> Strengthen Ireland's Contribution to International Biodiversity Initiatives. Collaboration with other countries and across the island of Ireland will play a key role in the realisation of this Objective. Ireland will strengthen its contribution to international biodiversity initiatives and international governance processes, such as the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity.</p>	<p>No potential for cumulative impacts were identified upon review of the Plan in conjunction with the Proposed development.</p> <p><b>No potential for significant in-combination effects on European site was identified, when considered in the absence of any mitigation, individually or cumulatively with other plans or projects.</b></p>

### 3.3.2 Projects

A search of relevant online Planning Registers, reviews of relevant documents, planning application details and planning drawings, and served to identify past and future projects, their activities, and their environmental impacts. All relevant projects were considered in relation to the potential for cumulative effects. All relevant data was reviewed (e.g., individual EISs/EIARs, layouts, drawings etc.) for all relevant projects where available. The projects considered include extensions to houses, retention permission, change of use, small alterations and the following:

- **Planning Ref: SD238/0002** – Upgrade of Jobstown Park. The upgrade of the Jobstown Park will consist of: Upgrade of existing boundaries and access points including provision of focal entrances. A shared pedestrian/cycle route with lighting columns linking Butler McGee Park to Whitestown Stream Park, via Dromcarra Estate. Upgrading existing footpaths where required, install new secondary footpath linkages and realignment of other footpaths. Retention of existing sports pitches (northern pitch re-orientated) - refurbished where necessary with drainage and re-leveelling. Four new pedestrian entrances to provide access into the Leisure Centre, in the southeast, southwest and the northeast of the site. Retaining existing kissing gates and upgrade where required. An activity circuit 900m long - with seats and play/exercise equipment. A provision for teenspace area, fitness/workout area, natural play areas, pump track and natural play mounds. The provision of on-street parking and associated hard and soft landscaping on Fortunestown Way. Retention and replanting of existing hedgerows. Attenuation swales for enhanced biodiversity. Planting of trees, shrubs, hedgerows, and bulbs. All associated landscape works. All ancillary works. Part 8 approved by Council 12/6/2023. The AASR for this development was consulted and it was determined that the Proposed Development combined with this project would not have the potential to result in any significant in-combination effects on any European site. Approx. distance from site: <100m.
- **Planning Ref: SD23A/0119** – Permission for the installation of a roof mounted telecommunications apparatus comprised of antenna, transmission dishes, radio equipment cabinets and all associated site works. Permission granted 31/10/2023. The relevant documentation for this project was consulted, and it was determined that the Proposed Development combined with this project would not have the potential to result in any significant in-combination effects on any European site. Approx. distance from site: <100m.
- **Planning Ref: SD23A/0013** – Material alteration to a single school wing consisting of the installation of an external insulation with rendered finish to the junior school wing and the installation of an external biomass boiler unit to the north elevation/creche wing as part of the pathfinder 2022 energy upgrade programme. Permission granted 21/04/2023. The relevant documentation for this project was consulted, and it was determined that the Proposed Development combined with this project would not have the potential to result in any significant in-combination effects on any European site. Approx. distance from site: <100m.
- **Planning Ref: SD25A/0131** – Permission for the development at Croughs Pub, Cookstown Road, Tallaght, Dublin 24. The Development will consist of increasing the floor area of the existing staff accommodation & plant room by 218 Sq.m on the 2nd floor, provision of 2 additional floors to provide 9 Apartments, 6 no. 1 Bed units & 3 no. 2 Bed units, resulting in a 5 storey building over basement, new lift and lobby area to the rear to service all 5 floors, new pedestrian entrance to the eastern boundary, provision of 11 no. bicycle parking spaces & bin store, all ancillary works necessary to facilitate the development. Further Information requested 30/07/2025. The relevant documentation for this project was consulted, and it was determined that the Proposed Development combined with this project would not have the potential to result in any significant in-combination effects on any European site. Approx. distance from site: <100m.
- **Planning Ref: SD23A/0237** – Permission for (i) the construction of a residential development comprising a total of 84 no. apartments (40 no. one-bedroom units, 36 no. two-bedroom units and 8 no. three bedroom units) in a building ranging in height from 4 to 7 storeys (Part 4, part 5, part 7 storey building). Each apartment is provided with private amenity space in the form of a terrace or balcony space and has access to internal communal amenity space at ground floor level (265.54

sq.m); and external amenity space in the form of a designated communal open space area to the east of the proposed building, a central public plaza between the proposed building and the adjacent under-construction residential scheme at the Cookstown Gateway site to the north (ABP Ref. ABP-303803-19); and an external communal roof terrace at fifth floor level. A total of 190 no. bicycle parking spaces are provided at ground floor level to serve the development, including 2 no. resident bicycle stores comprising a total of 138 no. cycle spaces and 4 no. visitor bicycle parking areas at surface level comprising a total of 50 no. cycle spaces. The proposed development also includes: (ii) the provision of 1 no. commercial/retail unit (214.85 sq.m) at ground floor level with 2 no. staff cycle spaces provided internally; and (iii) associated site and infrastructural works which include; foul and surface water drainage; the provision of solar panels at the upper roof level; lighting; landscaping; boundary treatments; plant rooms; signage; footpaths and internal hard and soft landscaping; bin storage; and all associated site development works. (b) Retention permission is also sought for; (i) the demolition of the previously existing, pitched roof, derelict structure on site known as Cookstown House (88.4 sq.m). Permission granted 1/7/2024. The AASR for this development was consulted and it was determined that the Proposed Development combined with this project would not have the potential to result in any significant in-combination effects on any European site. Approx. distance from site: 1 km.

- **Planning Ref: SD24A/0174** – Permission for the installation of 1,611 msq solar photovoltaic Panels to various rooftops of the existing building at Blenders, Whitestown Road, Tallaght, Dublin 24, D24VY75. Permission granted 03/09/2024. The relevant documentation for this project was consulted, and it was determined that the Proposed Development combined with this project would not have the potential to result in any significant in-combination effects on any European site. Approx. distance from site: 1 km.
- **Planning Ref: SD21A/0207** – Permission for the demolition of the existing single-storey c. 2,605sq.m. Junior School building; demolition of the existing single-storey c. 211sq.m. Junior School ancillary structures; construction of a new part three/part two-storey c. 4,998sq.m - Junior School building, located to the west of the existing Senior School building. The new school will accommodate 27 classrooms, a 3-class base Special Education Needs facility and all ancillary accommodation (the Senior School does not form part of planning application); 2 single-storey temporary accommodation units, c. 400sq.m, located to the south of the site, to facilitate the construction of the new school building; renewable energy design measures, PV Panels and/or heat pumps located at roof level; new school signage comprising wall-mounted lettering on the front elevation of the new building; external hard play area and 2 Multi-Use Games Areas; all located to the south of the site; redevelopment of the existing staff car parking and set-down facilities within the school site comprising: provision of 40 Junior school staff car parking spaces and 6 car set-down spaces, resurfacing of 22 existing Senior school car parking spaces, 106 bicycle parking spaces, new access road, new footpaths, landscaping and all ancillary site works; boundary treatment comprising of repair works to the existing low-level blockwork wall and new metal railings to an overall height of 2.4m along Fortunestown Road; replacement of the existing palisade fencing with new 2.4m high railings along Kiltalown Park Rd to the south; replacement of the existing pedestrian and vehicular entrance gates; works in the public road outside the school site: including 5 set-down spaces along Fortunestown Road, and services connection required to facilitate the development. Permission granted 14/09/2021. The relevant documentation for this project was consulted, and it was determined that the Proposed Development combined with this project would not have the potential to result in any significant in-combination effects on any European site. Approx. distance from site: 2 km.
- **Planning Ref: SD21A/0207** – Permission for the development of public realm works totalling approximately 1.2ha at Belgard Square North and on South Dublin County Council lands to the south and north of Belgard Square North, Tallaght including: Proposed new public space at Innovation Square; Proposed works to include a new advertising totem in Innovation Square extending to a maximum height of 2.4m x 1.5m; Proposed new Belgard Square North/Airton East West pedestrian link street; Pedestrian crossings at Belgard Square North and Belgard Cookstown Link Street; Redevelopment of County Hall Pedestrian Link; Redevelopment and reprofiling of levels within Chamber Square; Proposed works to include the reconfiguration of existing County Council carpark including widening of County Hall Pedestrian Link with additional planting, seating and relocation of wheelchair accessible parking spaces, a new pedestrian crossing and associated amendments to the carpark. All ancillary site development and landscaping works, including public

lighting, play equipment, furniture and sports equipment, cycle parking, seating, pathways, planting, surface water drainage and boundaries. Part 8 approved by Council 12/10/2020. The AASR for this development was consulted and it was determined that the Proposed Development combined with this project would not have the potential to result in any significant in-combination effects on any European site. Approx. distance from site: 2 km.

### 3.3.3 Conclusion of in-combination effects

In light of the information provided in sections 3.3.1 and 3.3.3 above it is concluded that there is no potential for in-combination effects to undermine the integrity of any European sites from the Proposed Development with other plans and/or projects. The potential for in-combination effects to undermine the integrity of any European site acting in-combination with other plans or projects can be excluded.

## 4. ARTICLE 6(3) APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING STATEMENT AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this Screening Assessment are presented following the European Commission's Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological Guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2021) and Managing Natura 2000 Sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2018) as well as the Department of the Environment's Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG, 2010).

### 4.1 Concluding Statement

The Proposed Development is not connected with, or necessary to, the management of any European site(s). This Appropriate Assessment Screening Report presents the objective scientific information required to inform a robust and complete examination of the potential impacts of the Proposed Development on relevant European sites in the absence of mitigation. The Screening concludes that there is no potential for Likely Significant Effects, alone or in combination, on the conservation objectives of any European site, therefore Appropriate Assessment of the Proposed Development is not required.

5.

## REFERENCES

Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (Habitats Directive) and Directive 2009/147/EC (codified version of Directive 79/409/EEC as amended) (Birds Directive) – transposed into Irish law as European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI 477/2011).

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## **APPENDIX 1**

***PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT***

