SDCC Rathcoole Housing Development

Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR)
Non-Technical Summary (NTS)

South Dublin County Council (SDCC)

October 2026

Quality information

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1 Introduction and Methodology

This Non-Technical Summary (NTS) summarises the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) prepared by AECOM Ireland Limited on behalf of South Dublin County Council (SDCC) for the proposed Rathcoole Housing Development (referred to as the 'Proposed Development' herein) on land to the south and south-east of Rathcoole Village, County Dublin.

The Proposed Development principally comprises 130 new homes, including social and affordable purchase housing, age-friendly accommodation and traveller-specific accommodation. It also includes two full-size adult Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) grass pitches, one junior GAA grass pitch, a park pavilion and associated facilities, new access and active travel infrastructure, car and bicycle parking, landscaping, green infrastructure, drainage, utilities and associated works. The application site extends to approximately 11.4 hectares, within a wider planning application boundary of approximately 17.78 hectares which also includes the separately permitted primary school lands.

The main vehicular access to the Proposed Development will be from Greenogue Drive. The existing Mullally's Lane vehicular arm will be repurposed as an active travel route, whilst pedestrian and cycle access will also be provided from Coolamber Road and Coolamber Drive.

The EIAR accompanies an application by SDCC to An Coimisiún Pleanála (ACP) for approval of the Proposed Development under Section 175 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. The purpose of the EIAR is to provide ACP with the environmental information needed to assess the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development on the environment and to inform statutory consultees, interested parties and the public.

Consultation of the scope of the EIA to be reported in the EIAR was undertaken in April and May 2026. Seven responses were received from public bodies and other organisations. The matters raised included water and wastewater infrastructure, traffic and transport, walking and cycling facilities, biodiversity and habitats, protection of watercourses and archaeological heritage. These matters were taken into account by the relevant specialists when preparing the EIAR.

The EIAR considers the construction and operation of the Proposed Development and assesses potential effects on population and human health, biodiversity, land, soils and geology, water, air quality, climate, noise and vibration, landscape and visual amenity, archaeology and cultural heritage, traffic, utilities, and major accidents and disasters. Waste was scoped out of the detailed environmental assessment; however, information on the management of construction and operational waste is included in the EIAR and supporting waste management plans.

For each environmental topic included in the EIAR, the assessment describes the existing environment, identifies the changes that could result from the Proposed Development, assesses the significance of potential effects and identifies measures to avoid, prevent or reduce adverse effects where required. The effects remaining after mitigation are also identified.

The EIAR considers whether effects from the Proposed Development could combine with those from other existing or approved developments. A permitted primary school development (SDCC Ref. SD23A/0336 / ACP Ref. 321696) is located within the wider planning application boundary but does not form part of the Proposed Development. It is treated as a separate project and is considered in the EIAR cumulative assessment where relevant. Where parts of the permitted school are already constructed, they are considered as part of the existing environment.

The EIAR has been prepared in accordance with the relevant Irish and European environmental assessment legislation and guidance, including the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) 2022 Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports. It has been prepared by suitably qualified and experienced specialists from AECOM Ireland Limited and MacCabe Durney Barnes.

The Proposed Development is intended to be permanent and thus the EIAR does not consider potential decommissioning effects.

2 Description of Development

The Proposed Development will occupy an area of approximately 11.4 ha of largely undeveloped greenfield land to the south and south-east of Rathcoole Village, County Dublin. The site contains grassland, scrub, hedgerows and woodland, with Rathcoole Park and existing residential areas to the north and agricultural lands to the south and south-west. The Coolmine Stream, the Crockshane (Slade) Stream and the River Camac lie within or close to the site.

The Proposed Development will provide 130 new homes, comprising 60 apartments, 20 duplex units and 50 houses, within buildings ranging from one to five storeys. The scheme includes 64 social homes and 66 affordable purchase homes, as well as age-friendly accommodation, Traveller Accommodation Units and homes designed to Universal Design and Universal Design Plus standards.

The Proposed Development includes community sports facilities comprising two full-size GAA grass pitches and one junior pitch, with a pavilion, car parking and bicycle spaces. It also delivers approximately 11,763 square metres (m²) of public open space and 1,040 m² of communal open space, with landscaping, play and recreation areas, and measures to enhance existing woodland, hedgerows and watercourse corridors – refer to



Plate 2-1.

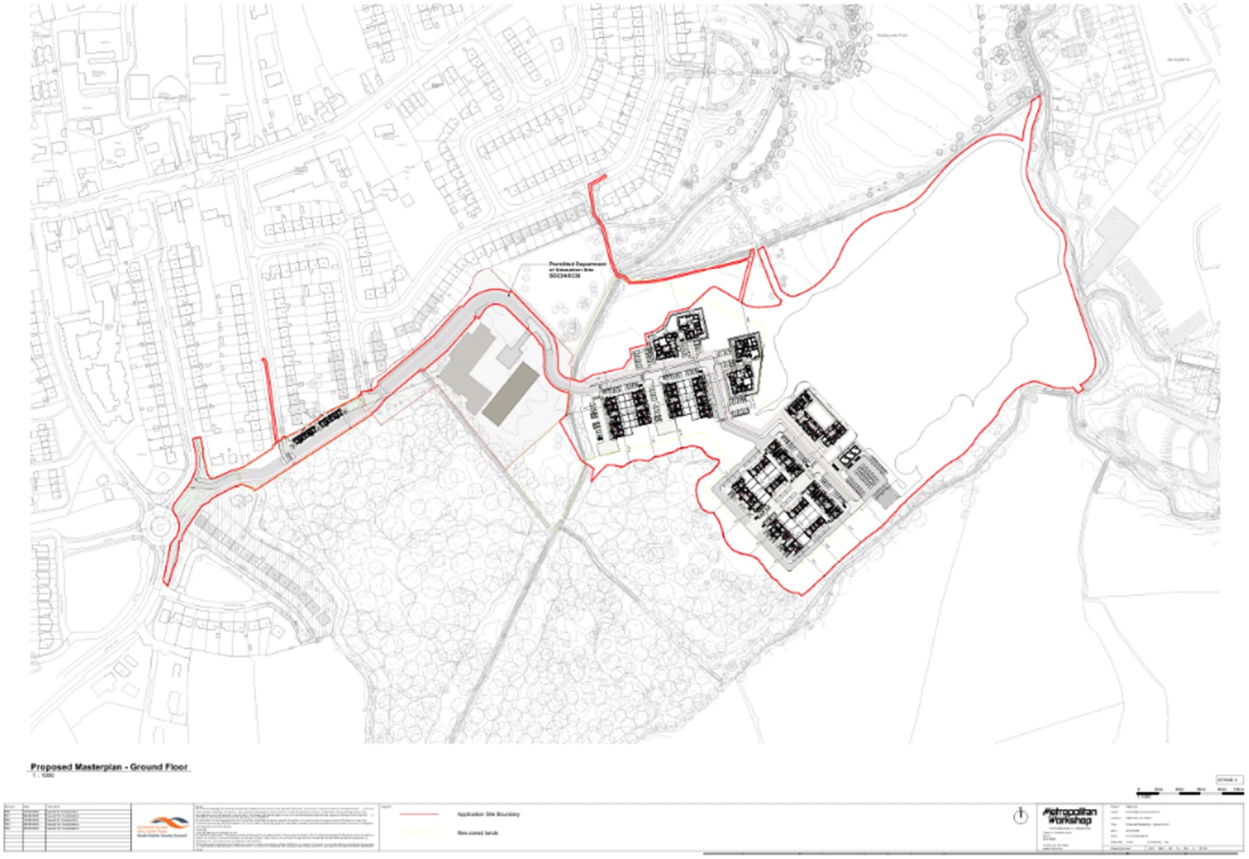


Plate 2-1: Site Layout (Source: Metropolitan Workshop)

Access arrangements will prioritise safe movement for all users. The main vehicular entrance will be from Greenogue Drive via a new T-junction, whilst the existing Mullally's Lane vehicular arm will be repurposed as a walking and cycling route. A new access road will cross the Coolmine Stream via a single-span precast concrete portal structure. Well-connected pedestrian and cycle routes will link the Proposed Development with Rathcoole Village, Rathcoole Park, surrounding residential areas and adjoining school lands, including pedestrian and cycle connections from Coolamber Road and Coolamber Drive.

The Proposed Development design manages rainwater using sustainable drainage features such as rain gardens, shallow channels (swales), permeable paving and attenuation basins that hold back and treat runoff before controlled discharge. Foul wastewater and water supply will connect to existing public networks.

Proposed Development construction will last for approximately two years and will entail site clearance, earthworks, building and road construction, installation of drainage and utilities, landscaping and delivery of the GAA pitches. An Outline Construction and Environmental Management Plan (oCEMP) and Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (oCTMP) accompany the planning application. These documents will inform the detailed plans to be prepared by the appointed Contractor before construction begins and will ensure that the mitigation measures identified in the EIAR are implemented during the works.

3 Need for Development

There is a significant need for additional housing in Ireland, driven by continued population growth, changing household needs and an existing shortage of housing. National planning policy seeks to increase housing delivery, particularly on suitable lands within or adjoining existing settlements where existing and planned infrastructure and services can be used efficiently.

Rathcoole is identified as a Self-Sustaining Growth Town within the Dublin Metropolitan Area and is expected to accommodate further population and housing growth. The Proposed Development site adjoins existing settlement and forms part of lands identified for future development. The Proposed Development will contribute to housing supply through the delivery of 130 homes, comprising social and affordable purchase housing and including age-friendly accommodation and Traveller Accommodation Units.

The need for the Proposed Development also extends beyond housing. National, regional and local planning policy supports the creation of sustainable communities where new housing is accompanied by appropriate community and recreational facilities, open space and opportunities for walking and cycling. The Proposed Development includes two full-size GAA pitches, one junior pitch and an associated pavilion, together with public open space and active travel connections.

4 Alternatives

The EIAR considers reasonable alternatives to the Proposed Development, including the Do-Nothing scenario (e.g. where the Proposed Development is not built), alternative uses and locations, alternative layouts and designs, and alternative access arrangements. The alternatives considered reflect the evolution of proposals for the Rathcoole lands and were informed by environmental constraints, planning policy, technical studies and consultation.

Under the Do-Nothing scenario, the Proposed Development would not proceed. This would avoid the construction effects associated with the Proposed Development and retain the existing habitats and landscape in the short term. However, the proposed housing, GAA facilities, public open space, active travel connections and biodiversity enhancement measures would not be delivered.

Earlier development options included a 2019 Masterplan, which proposed approximately 250 homes and a substantially larger development footprint. While this option would have delivered more housing and community infrastructure, its greater extent would have resulted in increased land take and greater loss and fragmentation of habitats.

A 2021 Land Use Concept reduced the development footprint and responded more directly to ecological and flood-risk constraints. However, residential development was proposed on both sides of the Coolmine Stream and extended further into sensitive woodland areas. Further design development was therefore undertaken to reduce interaction with sensitive habitats and provide larger, more coherent areas for ecological protection and enhancement.

An alternative access route based on the former Southern Relief Road was considered. This would have provided access from the south-west but would have required a new road through largely undeveloped lands south of Rathcoole, resulting in additional land take and potential fragmentation of agricultural land and natural habitats. The road objective was subsequently removed from later County Development Plans.

The Proposed Development preferred option is described in Chapter 2 of the EIAR. The Proposed Development design has evolved through the consideration of these alternatives and the environmental constraints of the site. The final layout seeks to balance the delivery of 130 homes, recreational facilities and active travel infrastructure with the retention and enhancement of woodland, riparian corridors and areas of ecological importance.

The preferred option was selected as providing an appropriate balance between housing and recreational provision and environmental protection compared with the reasonable alternatives considered.

5 Summary of Environmental Effects

5.1 Population and Human Health

The population and human health assessment considers how the Proposed Development could affect people living, working and using services and amenities in Rathcoole and the surrounding area. It considers the local population, employment and economic activity, community facilities and recreational amenities. It also draws on the findings of other assessments in the EIAR, including traffic, air quality, noise, water and other environmental topics that could affect people's health and wellbeing.

Rathcoole has experienced substantial population growth in recent years. The population of Rathcoole Town increased by approximately 33% between 2016 and 2022, compared with approximately 8% across South Dublin County. Rathcoole also has a relatively young population, with a higher proportion of children than the South Dublin average. The area is served by a range of childcare, education, healthcare, community, retail, sports and recreational facilities, including Rathcoole Park and Rathcoole Woodlands. Significant employment areas, including Greenogue, Baldonnell and Citywest, are also located nearby.

During construction, nearby residents and other users of the area may experience temporary disturbance from construction traffic, noise, vibration, dust and general construction activity. Construction will also provide temporary employment and support economic activity through spending on labour, materials and services. Measures identified throughout the EIAR will be implemented to minimise construction-related disturbance, including environmental and traffic management measures – such measures will be included in the Contractor's CEMP and CTMP, respectively. Following mitigation, no significant adverse effects on population and human health are expected during Proposed Development construction.

Once completed, the Proposed Development will provide 130 new homes, including social and affordable purchase housing, age-friendly accommodation and Traveller Accommodation Units. It will also provide two full-size GAA pitches, one junior pitch and a pavilion, public open space, recreational areas and improved walking and cycling connections. These facilities will provide opportunities for recreation and outdoor activity and will serve both future residents and the wider community. The population and human health assessment also considers the availability of local childcare, education, healthcare and other community services. The baseline assessment specifically reviews these types of social infrastructure within the surrounding area.

During operation, potential effects on human health associated with matters such as traffic, air quality, noise and water have been assessed in the relevant chapters of the EIAR. These assessments found that no significant adverse effects on human health are expected during operation.

The assessment considered the Proposed Development together with other existing and approved developments in Rathcoole and the surrounding area. Population growth associated with these developments will increase demand for housing, services and community facilities, while also supporting local businesses, employment and investment in the area.

Following implementation of the mitigation measures, **no significant adverse residual effects on population and human health are anticipated**. Overall, the Proposed Development is expected to have a **Moderate, Positive and Long-term effect** on population and human health, principally through the provision of housing and recreational and community infrastructure.

5.2 Biodiversity

The biodiversity assessment considered the habitats and wildlife present within and around the site and how they could be impacted by the Proposed Development. The assessment was informed by desk-based research and ecological surveys, including surveys of habitats, bats, badgers, otters and birds.

The site contains a mixture of grassland, woodland, scrub, hedgerows, trees and watercourses. Of particular ecological importance are areas of Lowland Meadow and Alluvial Woodland, which are European Union (EU) Habitats Directive Annex I habitats. Within the site, Lowland Meadow covers an area of 1.49 ha and Alluvial Woodland covers an area of 0.35 ha. The Camac River runs along the eastern boundary of the site, while the Coolmine Stream and Crockshane Stream are also located within or close to the site. Surveys recorded five species of bats, badger activity in the surrounding area and a range of bird species. Japanese

knotweed and several other invasive plant species were also recorded. The Site contains two habitats of particular ecological importance that are listed under Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive, together with watercourses and other habitats that support a range of wildlife.

The main ecological effect of the Proposed Development will be the permanent loss of some existing habitat during construction. In particular, the loss of parts of the Lowland Meadow (1.13ha) and Alluvial Woodland (0.35ha) could result in significant effects before mitigation. Construction could also temporarily disturb bats, birds, badgers and other wildlife through vegetation clearance, noise, lighting and increased activity. There is also a risk of spreading invasive plants, particularly Japanese knotweed.

The Proposed Development design has sought to avoid and retain important habitats where possible. Retained areas of Lowland Meadow, Alluvial Woodland, hedgerows and other valuable vegetation will be protected during construction. New meadow, hedgerow, tree and other habitat planting will also be provided as part of the Proposed Development's landscape design.

Additional mitigation measures will include pre-construction wildlife surveys, ecological supervision during construction, controls of construction lighting, protection of badger setts and nesting birds, and preparation of an Invasive Species Management Plan. Where practicable, sections of Lowland Meadow vegetation will be transferred to new meadow areas. Six bat boxes will also be installed on mature trees or suitable buildings in dark areas of the site.

Ecological monitoring will continue following construction. This will include monitoring of important meadow and woodland habitats, invasive species and the bat boxes, allowing management measures to be adapted where necessary.

Following mitigation, some permanent habitat loss will remain, including the loss of parts of the Alluvial Woodland and Lowland Meadow. However, the remaining effects are assessed as **Negligible or significant at Local level only and are therefore Not Significant in the context of the EIA**. The biodiversity assessment also found that the Proposed Development, together with other existing, approved and planned developments, would not result in significant cumulative effects on biodiversity.

5.3 Land, Soils and Geology

The land, soils and geology assessment considers the existing ground conditions at the site and the potential effects of construction and operation of the Proposed Development. Potential effects on groundwater are principally considered in the water assessment (refer to Section 5.4).

The site is largely undeveloped and has historically been used for agricultural purposes. The ground comprises predominantly poorly drained glacial soils over bedrock of the Pollaphuca Formation. There are no designated geological heritage sites within 1 kilometre (km) of the site and there is no evidence of potentially contaminating current or former land uses within the site. Overall, the land, soils and geology at the site are considered to be of Low sensitivity.

Construction will require excavation and movement of soil to facilitate buildings, roads and services. Approximately 65,971 m^3 of excavated material, excluding topsoil, is currently estimated to be generated, while approximately 10,602 m^3 of topsoil will be stripped and retained for reuse. Construction will also require imported aggregates and other materials. Potential impacts include disturbance and loss of soil, erosion and compaction of stockpiled material, accidental spills and leaks, and the possibility of encountering previously unidentified contamination.

Measures will be implemented during Proposed Development construction via the Contractor's CEMP to manage these risks. Excavated soils and topsoil will be appropriately stored, tested and reused where suitable, with surplus material managed in accordance with the Contractor's RWMP. Imported fill will be obtained from suitable sources and checked to ensure that it does not introduce contamination to the site. Stockpiles will be managed to prevent erosion and runoff, and appropriate pollution prevention measures will be implemented for fuels, oils, chemicals and concrete.

The Proposed Development will permanently change the use of approximately 11.4 ha of land to residential and recreational uses. However, the affected land and soils are common in the surrounding area, and the effect of this change is assessed as Imperceptible and Not Significant. The use of natural construction materials is also assessed as being Negligible and Not Significant in the context of national resource availability.

During Proposed Development operation, potential effects on land, soils and geology will be limited. The drainage design and other incorporated pollution controls will reduce the risk of accidental spills affecting the ground.

Following implementation of the proposed mitigation measures, **no significant residual effects on land, soils and geology are predicted**. The assessment also concluded that the Proposed Development, together with other existing, approved and planned developments, would not result in significant cumulative effects on land, soils and geology.

5.4 Water and Hydrology

The water environment assessment considers potential effects on surface water, groundwater, hydromorphology and flood risk during construction and operation of the Proposed Development.

The site and surrounding area contain a number of water features, including the River Camac, Coolmine Stream and Crockshane (Slade) Stream. A further watercourse, identified as a branch of the Coolmine Stream/Fitzmaurice Stream, is also present within the site. Groundwater is present beneath the site and may contribute to nearby streams and water-dependent habitats, including the Rathcoole Wet Woodland.

During Proposed Development construction, earthworks, excavation and works close to watercourses could result in sediment entering surface waters or accidental releases of fuels, oils, chemicals, concrete or other construction materials. Excavation and any temporary groundwater control or dewatering could also result in temporary localised changes in groundwater levels and flows. Works associated with the proposed bridge crossing of the Coolmine Stream could affect the watercourse and flood conditions if not appropriately designed and managed. These matters are addressed through the mitigation measures as identified in the EIAR.

Construction mitigation will include sediment and pollution controls, appropriate storage and handling of fuels and chemicals, controlled concrete works and management of construction runoff via the Contractor's CEMP. Pre-construction monitoring of surface water quality and groundwater levels is also proposed, with monitoring continuing during construction as appropriate.

During Proposed Development operation, surface water runoff will be managed through the drainage strategy and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), including measures such as rain gardens, vegetated swales and permeable paving. These measures will manage runoff, protect water quality and reduce flood risk.

One water crossing is proposed to be constructed across a branch of Coolmine Stream that flows through the site to provide vehicular access. The magnitude of impact on hydromorphology is predicted to be low with **Moderate** significance, given the watercourse supports county importance level wetlands. Two outfalls are proposed to be installed along a branch of Coolmine Stream, the magnitude of impact is predicted to be medium with **Significant** effect. The magnitude of impact from flooding is predicted to be medium, with **Significant** effect.

The magnitude of impact associated with temporary groundwater abstraction/dewatering is considered temporary and localised and low on the water environment. The significance of effect is predicted to be **Moderate** on underlying water bodies, **Slight** on Coolmine Stream and **Not Significant** for the rest of the relevant water receptors.

Subject to implementation of the mitigation measures identified in the EIAR, **no significant residual effects on the water environment are predicted during Proposed Development construction or operation**.

Cumulative effects with nearby developments, including the permitted primary school, were also considered in the EIAR. With the implementation of the respective drainage, construction management and environmental protection measures, cumulative effects on the water environment are predicted to be **Not Significant**.

5.5 Air Quality

The air quality assessment considers how the Proposed Development could affect local air quality during construction and operation. Existing air quality in the area is generally good, with concentrations of the main pollutants associated with road traffic being below the relevant air quality limits.

During Proposed Development construction, earthworks, building activities and the movement of construction vehicles have the potential to generate dust. The risk of dust affecting nearby properties varies depending on the type of construction activity, with the greatest potential arising during the main construction works. The potential risk to human health from construction dust is assessed as being low, reflecting the good existing air quality in the area.

Measures will be implemented during the construction phase via the Contractor's CEMP to prevent and control dust. This will include a Dust Management Plan, regular inspections, appropriate management of stockpiles and exposed ground, dust suppression where required, covering vehicles carrying dusty materials, wheel washing and cleaning of affected roads. Following implementation of construction dust-control measures, residual construction effects are expected to be **Negligible and Not Significant**.

During Proposed Development operation, the main potential effect on air quality will arise from changes in road traffic. The assessment considered concentrations of nitrogen dioxide (NO_2) and fine particles (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$) at nearby homes and other sensitive locations. Predicted concentrations remain below relevant air quality limits, whilst the changes resulting from traffic associated with the Proposed Development are very small. Operational air quality effects are therefore assessed as **Neutral and Not Significant**, and no additional operational mitigation is required.

The air quality assessment also considered the Proposed Development together with other nearby developments. The permitted primary school was considered in the assessment, noting that its construction programme is not expected to overlap with construction of the Proposed Development. No significant cumulative air quality effects are predicted during Proposed Development construction or operation.

5.6 Climate

The climate assessment considers the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with the Proposed Development, the potential effects of future climate change on the development, and whether climate change could increase environmental effects on the surrounding environment.

GHG emissions will arise during Proposed Development construction and operation, including from construction materials and activities, energy use, maintenance and travel by future residents. The assessment considers these emissions in the context of Ireland's carbon budgets and transition towards net-zero emissions. Construction and operational GHG emissions are assessed as being **Minor Adverse and Not Significant**.

The assessment also considers how future changes in temperature, rainfall, flooding and storm events could affect the Proposed Development. A total of 16 climate-related risks were identified, comprising seven construction risks and nine operational risks. These include risks associated with extreme temperatures, flooding and storms. No significant risks were identified under the moderate climate-change scenario. Under the more extreme climate-change scenario, one significant initial risk associated with storm events was identified towards the end of the century.

Measures incorporated into the Proposed Development design will help respond to future climate conditions. These include SuDS, measures to manage flood risk, appropriate building design and landscaping measures. Additional adaptation measures are identified in the EIAR to manage climate risks during construction and operation, including measures relating to extreme weather, flooding, heat and storms. Following implementation of the identified adaptation measures, the significant initial risk associated with future storm events is reduced to **Not Significant**. No significant residual climate-change risks are therefore predicted.

The assessment also considers whether future climate change could combine with the Proposed Development to increase effects on environmental receptors, including water, soils, air quality, cultural heritage and infrastructure. No significant in-combination climate change effects were identified.

GHG emissions are inherently cumulative because emissions contribute to atmospheric GHG concentrations irrespective of where they are generated. The Proposed Development's emissions were therefore considered in the context of Ireland's national carbon budgets rather than by combining emissions from individual nearby developments.

5.7 Noise and Vibration

The noise and vibration assessment considers potential effects from Proposed Development construction activities and construction traffic, as well as operational noise from road traffic, the electricity substation

and use of the GAA pitches. It also considers whether the site is suitable for residential development from a noise perspective.

Existing noise levels were measured at locations around the site. The nearest noise-sensitive receptors include residential properties at Beechwood Lawns, Coolamber Drive and Millrace Park. Most nearby noise-sensitive receptors are residential and are therefore treated as being highly sensitive in the assessment.

During Proposed Development construction, noise and vibration will arise from activities such as site clearance, earthworks, drainage and utility works, bridge and road construction and construction of the residential and recreational elements. As detailed construction methods and plant are not yet available, the assessment is qualitative and identifies measures to control noise and vibration during the works via the Contractor's CEMP. Construction noise and vibration will be managed through measures including the use and maintenance of appropriate construction plant, selection of quieter equipment where practicable, careful handling of materials and positioning of noisy equipment away from sensitive receptors where possible. With these measures in place, general construction noise and vibration effects are predicted to be **Adverse, Not Significant and Short-Term**. The appointed Contractor will review the detailed noise and vibration requirements once the construction methodology is confirmed, and any additional mitigation measures indicated to be required included within the CEMP. Proportionate noise and vibration monitoring will be undertaken where required.

During Proposed Development operation, noise from the electricity substation and activities associated with the GAA pitches is predicted to be **Adverse, Not Significant and Permanent**. Operational road traffic is predicted to result in Slight adverse effects on the road links assessed, although this assessment will require confirmation following incorporation of the final access arrangement.

Noise modelling indicates that the site is suitable for residential development. The assessment indicates that acceptable internal noise levels can be achieved using standard building construction, glazing and ventilation, while external amenity areas are also predicted to meet the relevant noise criterion.

5.8 Landscape and Visual

The landscape and visual assessment considers how the Proposed Development will change the character of the landscape and the views experienced by people living in, travelling through and using the surrounding area.

The site lies at the southern edge of Rathcoole, in a transition between the existing suburban area and the more rural landscape towards the foothills of the Dublin Mountains. It contains areas of grassland, woodland, hedgerows and watercourses and is located beside Rathcoole Park. The Proposed Development is mainly within the Foothills Landscape Character Type and entirely within the Athgoe and Saggart Hills Landscape Character Area, both of which are considered to have Medium to High sensitivity.

During Proposed Development construction, vegetation removal, earthworks, construction traffic, machinery, scaffolding, cranes and other construction activity will temporarily change the landscape and views around the site. The greatest impacts will occur within and immediately around the site, including the removal of sections of emerging woodland and changes within Rathcoole Park associated with the provision of the sports pitches. Direct construction effects on the Foothills landscape and Athgoe and Saggart Hills Landscape Character Area are assessed as **Very Significant and Adverse**.

Construction will also affect views from nearby residential areas and Rathcoole Park. The closest residents with open views towards the site are predicted to experience **Very Significant and Adverse** visual effects, while open views from Rathcoole Park are predicted to experience **Significant to Very Significant and Adverse effects.** Effects generally reduce with distance and where existing vegetation and buildings provide screening.

Once completed, the Proposed Development will permanently change part of the site from a largely undeveloped landscape to a residential and recreational area. At Year 1, direct landscape effects within the Foothills Landscape Character Type and Athgoe and Saggart Hills Landscape Character Area are assessed as **Significant and Adverse**. Effects on the wider landscape character are assessed as **Not Significant**.

Landscape and visual mitigation is incorporated into the Proposed Development design and includes retention and protection of existing vegetation where practicable, new tree and hedgerow planting, enhancement of woodland and the riparian corridor, new grassland and meadow planting, open spaces and green links. The lighting design will also seek to minimise unnecessary light spill, glare and sky glow.

As planting establishes and matures, it will provide additional screening and help integrate the Proposed Development into its surroundings.

By approximately Year 15 after opening, the site will remain permanently changed, but established planting will reduce the prominence of the Proposed Development. Residual landscape effects within the site and its immediate surroundings are assessed as **Moderate and Adverse**, while effects on the wider landscape character are **Not Significant**. Residual visual effects for the closest residents and users of Rathcoole Park range from **Slight to Moderate and Adverse**, with effects generally reducing with distance.

The assessment considered cumulative landscape and visual effects with other nearby developments. The greatest cumulative effects relate to the permitted primary school adjoining the site and nearby residential development, which will increase the extent of built development and activity in this part of Rathcoole. Cumulative effects range from **Slight to Very Significant and Adverse during construction and from Slight to Significant and Adverse during operation**.

5.9 Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

The archaeology and cultural heritage assessment considers archaeological remains, historic buildings and structures, and other heritage features within and around the site. The assessment was informed by a review of archaeological and architectural heritage records, historic maps and aerial photography, previous archaeological investigations and a site inspection.

There are no recorded archaeological monuments or Protected Structures within the Proposed Development site. However, Rathcoole has a long history of settlement and a number of archaeological and architectural heritage assets are located in the surrounding area. These include the historic settlement of Rathcoole and associated archaeological remains and Protected Structures, as well as the Former Paper Mill, Mill Pond and Mill Race associated with the industrial heritage of the area.

A possible circular cropmark, referred to as CH1, has been identified from aerial photography within the site. The site also contains areas of undeveloped ground which have the potential to contain previously unknown archaeological remains.

During Proposed Development construction, excavation and other groundworks could damage or remove archaeological remains, including CH1 if it is confirmed to be archaeological in nature, as well as any previously unknown remains. Without mitigation, these effects are assessed as **Significant and Adverse**.

Archaeological testing will therefore be undertaken before construction in areas where ground disturbance is proposed, with particular attention given to the location of CH1. If archaeological remains are identified, they will be evaluated and appropriate measures agreed in consultation with the National Monuments Service. These measures may include preservation in situ or, where this is not feasible, archaeological excavation and recording before construction proceeds. Following this mitigation, residual effects on CH1 and other previously unknown archaeological remains are assessed as **Slight, Negative and Permanent and Not Significant**.

The assessment also identified a potential effect on the setting of the Former Paper Mill and associated Mill Pond and Mill Race due to the visibility of the taller elements of the Proposed Development. These heritage assets are largely screened by vegetation within Rathcoole Woodland and their surroundings have already been influenced by development and landscaping. However, the Proposed Development will result in a permanent change to their setting. This effect is assessed as **Moderate, Negative and Permanent and therefore Significant and Adverse**. No additional mitigation is proposed and the effect will remain a **Significant Adverse residual effect**.

The assessment considered the Proposed Development together with other approved or proposed developments in the surrounding area. Although overlapping construction could temporarily affect the setting of heritage assets through increased construction activity, the likelihood and extent of these effects are considered limited. No significant cumulative effects on archaeology or cultural heritage are predicted.

5.10Material Assets (Traffic)

The traffic and transport assessment considers how traffic generated by the Proposed Development could affect the surrounding transport network during construction and operation. The assessment was informed by traffic surveys undertaken in October 2025 and considers the local road network, road safety, walking and cycling infrastructure and public transport.

The Proposed Development site is located on the edge of Rathcoole and is well connected to the surrounding road network, including the N7. Pedestrian routes are available through the surrounding residential areas and Rathcoole Park, while existing dedicated cycling infrastructure in the immediate area is limited. Bus services provide connections between Rathcoole, Dublin City Centre and other destinations. Traffic surveys identified the busiest periods on the local road network as between 07:45 and 08:45 in the morning and 16:45 and 17:45 in the evening.

The principal vehicular access to the Proposed Development site will be provided by a new T-junction from Greenogue Drive. The existing Mullally's Lane vehicular arm at the Peyton Roundabout will be removed and repurposed as an active travel route. The access arrangements also take account of the separately permitted primary school development.

During Proposed Development construction, additional traffic will be generated by construction workers and deliveries of materials and equipment. At the anticipated peak of construction activity, approximately 100 two-way vehicle trips per day are forecast, of which approximately 10 trips are expected during each of the morning and evening peak periods. The assessment found that this additional traffic would have a **Not Significant and Short-term effect** on the surrounding transport network.

An oCTMP has been prepared to manage construction traffic and minimise disruption which includes measures relating to construction access and routing, parking, deliveries, road cleanliness and the safe movement of pedestrians. The appointed Contractor will prepare a detailed CTMP in consultation with South Dublin County Council before construction begins.

Once the Proposed Development is operational, traffic will be generated principally by the 130 homes, with additional trips associated with the GAA facilities occurring mainly outside the road network peak periods. Detailed assessment was undertaken for the new site access and the nearby roundabout where the predicted increase in traffic exceeded the relevant assessment threshold. The modelling found that these junctions would continue to operate within capacity. Operational traffic effects are therefore assessed as **Imperceptible and Long-term**, and no additional traffic mitigation is required.

A Mobility Management Plan (MMP) has also been prepared to encourage residents to use sustainable modes of travel, including walking, cycling and public transport. The MMP will be implemented and monitored during Proposed Development operation and updated as appropriate.

Following implementation of the construction traffic management measures, residual construction traffic effects are assessed as **Imperceptible and Short-term and Not Significant**. Residual operational effects are assessed as **Imperceptible and Long-term and Not Significant**.

The assessment considered traffic associated with other committed developments in the surrounding area, including the permitted primary school. These developments were incorporated into the traffic assessment where relevant. The resulting cumulative traffic effects are assessed as **Imperceptible and Long-term and Not Significant**.

5.11Major Accidents and Disasters

The major accidents and disasters assessment considers whether the Proposed Development could be affected by a major accident or disaster or could itself increase the risk of such an event. Potential hazards considered included construction-related accidents, fires and explosions, accidental releases of hazardous substances, flooding, extreme weather and other natural or human-related events. The assessment also considered nearby industrial facilities, including two establishments regulated under the Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) Regulations. The Proposed Development itself will not be a COMAH establishment.

During Proposed Development construction, materials including concrete, diesel fuel and small quantities of compressed gases may be present on the site. Potential incidents associated with these materials, together with construction activities such as excavation and vehicle movements, were assessed. The quantities involved and the proposed construction controls mean that no credible construction-related major accident scenario was identified.

Construction risks will be managed through the Contractor's CEMP, CTMP, method statements and risk assessments. Measures will include appropriate storage and handling of fuels and chemicals, pollution prevention and spill-response procedures, safe management of construction traffic and regular inspection and maintenance of construction plant and equipment.

During Proposed Development operation, the residential development, GAA pitches and associated facilities will not involve the storage or use of hazardous substances in quantities capable of giving rise to a credible major accident scenario. The assessment also considered the Proposed Development's vulnerability to external and natural hazards. One credible external scenario was taken forward for further assessment. This relates to the potential for an industrial accident at the nearby Dachser Ireland Upper Tier COMAH facility to affect the Proposed Development through a 'domino effect'. COMAH establishments are subject to specific legal requirements and safety controls intended to prevent and manage major accidents. Taking these controls into account, the residual risk to the Proposed Development from this scenario is considered low.

Following implementation of the design, construction and management measures identified in the EIAR, **no significant residual effects associated with major accidents and disasters are predicted during construction or operation**. The assessment concluded that the identified risks would be reduced to a manageable level and that no additional mitigation is required.

The assessment also considered the Proposed Development together with other developments and infrastructure in the surrounding area, including nearby COMAH establishments. No additional credible major accident or disaster scenarios were identified as a result of cumulative development, and **no significant cumulative effects are predicted during either construction or operation**.

5.12Material Assets (Utilities)

The material assets (utilities) assessment considers the potential effects of the Proposed Development on existing utility infrastructure, including electricity, gas, potable water, wastewater, surface water drainage and telecommunications.

Existing utility infrastructure is located within and around the site. This includes water infrastructure within the site and electricity, gas, drainage, wastewater and telecommunications networks serving Rathcoole and Saggart. The exact location of existing services will be verified through site investigations and consultation with the relevant utility providers before construction begins.

During Proposed Development construction, there is potential for temporary disruption or accidental damage to existing services, particularly where works are undertaken close to existing infrastructure. Construction itself is not expected to require substantial quantities of water or energy.

Measures will be implemented to protect existing utilities during construction. Existing services will be identified and marked before works take place, and any required diversions or new connections will be undertaken in consultation with the relevant utility providers. Appropriate safe working practices will be used around underground and overhead services, and procedures will be put in place to respond to any accidental damage or service disruption. These measures will be incorporated into the Contractor's CEMP.

During operation, the Proposed Development will connect to existing electricity, water, wastewater and telecommunications infrastructure and will increase demand on these networks. Surface water will be managed through the drainage strategy. No additional operational mitigation is proposed beyond the utility infrastructure and design measures incorporated into the Proposed Development and normal maintenance requirements.

Uisce Éireann has confirmed that a water connection for the Proposed Development is feasible without infrastructure upgrades to the public water network. A wastewater connection is also feasible, subject to specified network upgrades and conditions, including an approximately 200 m extension to connect to the existing sewer on Mill Road. The detailed water and wastewater infrastructure will be developed in accordance with Uisce Éireann requirements.

Following implementation of the proposed construction measures, residual effects on existing utility infrastructure during construction are expected to be temporary and localised, with no significant residual effects predicted. Operational effects on utilities are also assessed as **Not Significant**, taking account of the utility infrastructure and network upgrades required to serve the Proposed Development.

The assessment also considered cumulative effects with other development in the surrounding area. Construction-related cumulative effects are expected to be brief to **temporary and Not Significant** with appropriate coordination and mitigation. During operation, increased demand on utility infrastructure will occur as development in the area progresses; however, no significant cumulative effects on utilities are predicted.

5.13Waste

Waste was scoped out of EIA as the Proposed Development is not expected to generate waste at a level that could result in significant environmental effects. However, waste generated during Proposed Development construction and operation will still need to be appropriately managed. A RWMP has therefore been prepared for the construction phase, together with an Operational Waste Management Plan (OWMP) for the completed development.

During Proposed Development construction, waste will include excavated materials and typical construction wastes such as surplus materials, packaging and material off-cuts. The precise quantities and types of construction waste will be confirmed as the design and construction methodology are developed. Waste will be managed in accordance with the waste hierarchy, prioritising prevention and reuse, followed by recycling and recovery, with disposal used only where necessary.

Before construction begins, the appointed Contractor will prepare and implement a detailed RWMP, based on the outline RWMP prepared for the planning application. This will set out how construction materials and waste will be recorded, stored, reused, recycled, recovered or disposed of.

During Proposed Development operation, waste will principally comprise household waste from the 130 homes. The OWMP sets out arrangements for the segregation, storage and collection of recyclable materials, residual waste and food waste.

Waste will be managed through the RWMP and OWMP and in accordance with relevant waste legislation and good practice such that there will be no significant residual environmental effects.

6 Cumulative Impacts and Interactions

The EIAR considers both interactions between environmental effects from the Proposed Development and cumulative effects arising from the Proposed Development in combination with other existing, permitted or proposed developments in the surrounding area.

Interactions may occur where different environmental effects from the Proposed Development affect the same receptor at the same time. During construction, these may include combinations of noise, dust, traffic, drainage works, vegetation removal and landscape and visual change. During operation, potential interactions include those associated with traffic, noise, air quality, drainage, landscape, biodiversity and climate. The assessment found that these interactions would not result in additional significant effects beyond those identified in the individual environmental assessments.

Cumulative effects were assessed by considering the Proposed Development together with other relevant developments in the surrounding area. The adjacent permitted primary school is particularly relevant because of its proximity to the Proposed Development.

During construction, the combined and intervisible construction activities associated with the Proposed Development and the permitted primary school are predicted to result in a Very Significant Adverse cumulative Landscape and Visual effect on nearby residents and users of Rathcoole Park. This effect will be temporary and short-term. The permitted residential development at Mill Road, Saggart would also give rise to **Significant/Adverse**, Temporary or Short-Term cumulative effects during construction due to its proximity and intervisibility. Other cumulative construction effects are assessed as Not Significant.

During operation, the Proposed Development together with the permitted primary school and other development in the area will result in a Significant Adverse cumulative Landscape and Visual effect due to the increased built form and activity within the local area. A Moderate, Long-term and Positive cumulative effect on Population and Human Health, which is considered beneficial, is also identified as a result of the combined provision of housing, recreational facilities, open space and supporting infrastructure within Rathcoole.

Other cumulative operational effects are assessed as Not Significant.

7 Summary of Mitigation and Monitoring

The EIAR identifies measures to avoid, reduce and manage potential environmental effects associated with the Proposed Development. These include measures incorporated into the design of the Proposed Development, together with additional mitigation and monitoring measures identified through the environmental assessments. The measures apply, as appropriate, during the pre-construction, construction and operational phases.

Before construction begins, a number of plans, surveys and procedures will be completed. These include the Contractor's CEMP, CTMP and RWMP, together with measures relating to ecological protection, archaeological testing, groundwater and surface water monitoring, pollution prevention, construction noise, health and safety and the protection of existing utilities.

During Proposed Development construction, environmental controls will be implemented through the Contractor's CEMP and associated plans and procedures. These include measures to manage construction traffic, noise and vibration, dust, excavation and stockpiling, waste, surface water and groundwater, fuels and chemicals, biodiversity, landscape and vegetation, archaeology and existing utilities. Environmental monitoring and inspections will also be undertaken where required.

During Proposed Development operation, mitigation and monitoring will include the management and maintenance of drainage and SuDS infrastructure, habitat and woodland management, ecological monitoring, sustainable travel measures and other topic-specific measures identified in the EIAR.

A complete Schedule of Environmental Commitments is provided in Chapter 19 of the EIAR, comprising separate tables for the pre-construction, construction and operational phases. These tables bring together the mitigation and monitoring commitments identified throughout the environmental topic EIAR chapters and should be referred to for the full details of the measures to be implemented.

8 Conclusion

The EIAR has assessed the likely significant environmental effects of the Proposed Development during construction and operation. The assessment has considered effects on population and human health, biodiversity, land, soils and geology, water, air quality, climate, noise and vibration, landscape and visual amenity, archaeology and cultural heritage, traffic, utilities, and major accidents and disasters. Waste management has also been considered through the relevant construction and operational waste management plans.

A range of environmental measures have been incorporated into the design of the Proposed Development, with additional mitigation and monitoring measures identified through the EIAR. Following implementation of these measures, most residual environmental effects are assessed as being **Not Significant**. A Schedule of Environmental Commitments is provided in Chapter 19 of the EIAR.

Some significant effects remain after implementation of recommended mitigation measures. These principally relate to landscape and visual effects associated with the change from a largely undeveloped landscape to a residential and recreational development, including significant cumulative effects with the adjacent permitted primary school. A Significant Adverse permanent effect is also identified on the setting of the former Paper Mill and associated Mill Pond and Mill Race. The EIAR also identifies positive effects, including a Moderate, Positive and Long-term effect on population and human health associated principally with the provision of housing and recreational and community infrastructure.

The EIAR considers interactions between environmental effects and cumulative effects with other developments in the surrounding area. No additional significant interaction effects are identified beyond those reported in the individual environmental assessments. Significant cumulative landscape and visual effects are identified during construction and operation, together with a significant beneficial cumulative effect on population and human health during operation.

This NTS provides a summary of the main findings of the EIAR. The full EIAR should be referred to for the detailed assessments, mitigation and monitoring measures, and supporting technical information.

9 References

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