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Screening Statement for the Purposes of Determining the need for Appropriate Assessment

Housing Development at Corkagh Grange

South Dublin County Council

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chartered town planning consultants

Limerick | Dublin | t: 061 435000 | f:061 405555 | e:info@hraplanning.ie | w:www.hraplanning.ie

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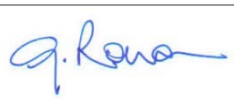
Project:	Social Housing PPP Bundle 1 Programme	
Prepared by:	Gary Rowan Senior Planner & Director	Approved by: Mary Hughes (Director)
Signed:		
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to the requirements set out under Part XAB *(Appropriate Assessment)* of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2011 and pursuant to the transposition of the requirements of Article 6 of Community Directive 92/43/EEC (*the Habitats Directive, Article 6*)[1] consideration is given to whether the development proposals are likely to have a significant effect on a European (Natura 2000) site.

The author of this section of the assessment holds a Masters Degree (MSc) in *Applied Science - Ecological Assessment*.

2.0 ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Purpose

The purpose is to determine whether the project is directly connected to or necessary for the management of a Natura 2000 *site* and to determine whether the project either alone or in combination with other projects or plans is likely to have significant effects on a site.

If upon completion of this assessment it is considered that the project alone or in combination with other plans or programmes would have potential for significant impact on a Natura 2000 site, then the subsequent stages of the Article 6 process must be undertaken including an Appropriate Assessment to identify and characterise any possible implications for the Natura 2000 site in view of its conservation objectives including any mitigation measures necessary to avoid, reduce or offset negative effects. Where the Screening assessment conclusions rule out significant impacts on the Natura 2000 network, then further assessment will not be required.

2.2 Approach

This appraisal is conducted in accordance with the methodological guidance set out within: *The European Commission (2001) Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC* and with the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government Guidance for Planning Authorities: Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland (2009).

3.0 SCREENING ASSESSMENT

3.1 Characteristics of the Project Site

The project site is situated in the defined settlement of South Dublin circa 1.5km from Clondalkin village centre. The eastern boundary of the site adjoins the existing residential developments of Kilcarberry and Cherrywood. The site comprises a number of fields that at one time would have been used for agricultural pasture but which show little recent agricultural management evident by overgrown grasses and scrub characteristics.

[1] *Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna*

The prominent habitat types of the project site (evaluated in accordance with the Fossitt[2] habitat classification of habitat types), is Dry meadows GS2 with Scrub WS1 and Hedgerow WL1. These habitat types are common and widespread in Ireland and are considered to be of negligible ecological importance. The site supports some threatened bird species and may be used by protected mammals such as stoats, hedgehogs, hares and pygmy shrews; but is considered to be of local ecological importance for these taxa. No field signs of other protected fauna were recorded, and the site is considered to have a low suitability for bats. No protected plants or problematic invasive species (e.g. Japanese knotweed) were recorded.[3]

3.2 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

The proposed development (hereon in referred to as the 'project') will consist of 109 residential units, including a range of 1-2 bed apartments and 3- 4 bed houses. Access will be from the Old Nangor Road to the north of the site, which will lead to paved internal roads and on-street parking spaces. Most properties will have a private garden, and there will be some landscaping along the roadsides.

Foul water will be discharged to existing local authority foul sewer near the southern boundary of the site.

It is proposed to manage surface water by way of two arrangements incorporating Sustainable Urban Drainage system (SuDS) in accordance with best practice and current requirements. Surface water runoff from the new road surfaces and the roofs of the new buildings will be collected by gullies and directed towards either (i) a new underground Stormtech attenuation system, or (ii) new attenuation ponds. In both cases the rate of discharge will be controlled using a hydrobrake and will be limited to a runoff rate of 2 l/s/Ha as agreed with South Dublin County Council. This will ensure that the rate of surface water discharge from the proposed site is not greater than that from the existing greenfield site.

The surface water runoff generated at the northern boundary of the site will be directed into a new Stormtech attenuation system prior to the controlled discharge to the existing surface water sewer located in the existing residential development at the eastern boundary of the site. It is proposed that the remainder of the surface water runoff generated on site is diverted to a number of specifically designed attenuation ponds to be located at the southern boundary of the site prior to the controlled rate discharge to the Camac River. These ponds will be designed with a permanent standing water depth of circa 300mm and increased capacity to accommodate storm water directed to it. In addition, a *Class I* bypass separator unit will be installed on the drainage pipework upstream of the attenuation ponds to improve the runoff water quality prior to entering the attenuation ponds.

3.3 The Natura 2000 Network in the vicinity of the project

The Natura 2000 network relates to areas designated as 'Special Protection Area' (SPA) and 'Special Areas of Conservation' (SAC/cSAC) as designed under the previous mentioned EU Habitats Directive. An assessment distance of 15km has been reviewed to determine the potential for effects on the Natura 2000 network. The extent of this spatial relationship between the site and the Natura 2000 network is illustrated in Figure 1. Consideration of the network has been given on a site by site basis in Table 1.

[2] Fossitt, J.A. (2000) A Guide to Habitats in Ireland. The Heritage Council, Kilkenny. Habitats Directive Annex I habitats
[3] Ecological Impact Assessment Report. NM Ecology (December 2016) as lodged with the planning application.

Natura 2000 site	Site Code	Distance	Natura 2000 Site features	Appraisal
Rye Water Valley / Carton SAC	001398	6.8km (northwest)	A river valley site that includes a large area of estate woodland and an artificial lake comprising a Petrifying spring habitat of conservation interest and species rich marsh and which supports the presence of a number of rare flora and fauna species including the Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail and Desmoulin's Whorl Snail both of which are also features of conservation interest	Not included as there is no connection between this site and the project
Glenamole Valley SAC	001209	7.044km (southeast)	A heavily wooded valley comprising of various habitats including deciduous and coniferous species and native woodland, as well as dry calcareous pasture grassland with associated wet grassland and places of fen and marsh vegetation supporting several protected and rare flora features (for County Dublin) and 4 species of bats. Designated for its semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates, Molinia meadows and Petrifying springs.	Not included as there is no connection between this site and the project
Wicklow Mountains SAC	002122	9.004km (southeast)	the largest complex of upland habitats in eastern Ireland predominantly above 300m, with much ground over 600m and where dominant habitats include blanket bog, wet heath and dry heath and upland grassland comprising several habitat types of conservation interest and providing breeding habitat and supporting significant populations of birds	Not included as there is no connection between this site and the project
Wicklow Mountains SPA	004040	11.513km southeast	Overlapping designation with the Wicklow Mountains SAC where the site supports good examples of both upland and woodland bird communities supporting breeding Merlin and Peregrine - the two species for which the site is designated	Not included as there is no connection between this site and the project
South Dublin Bay & River Tolka Estuary SPA	004024	13.297km (east)	Extensive area of intertidal flats and virtually all of the intertidal area in the south bay, as well as much of the Tolka Estuary to the north of the River Liffey and a portion of the shallow bay waters supporting internationally important populations and national important numbers of avian species including Light-bellied Brent Goose, Oystercatcher, Plover, Knot, Sanderling, Dunlin, Bar-tailed Godwit, Redshank, Black-headed Gull, Tern, Wetland and Waterbirds	The potential for downstream hydrological connection by way of adjacent water course and thus has been examined in this assessment.

South Dublin Bay SAC	000210	13.532km (east)	comprising extensive example of intertidal flats comprising Marine Littoral habitats and associated vegetation of conservation interest for which the site has been designated, and, which supports avian species of international and national interest	The potential for downstream hydrological connection by way of adjacent water course and thus has been examined in this assessment.

Table 1 Consideration of Natura 2000 Sites within 15km of the project

3.4 Relationship between the project and Natura 2000 network

The project is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the Natura 2000 sites identified above.

4.0 Assessment of Likely Significant Effects

4.1 Evaluation and Impact Assessment

The project site it not located within or adjacent to the Natura 2000 Network. The project site contains none of the habitats or species of special interest which have been designated for the purpose of protection and management under the Habitats Directive. The proposed development does not therefore involve the direct loss, reduction, disturbance or fragmentation of any of the habitats, species or habitats of species that are of conservation interest under the Natura 2000 network. Therefore, with the absence of any direct relationship with the project site and the Natura 2000 site, the potential for significant direct effects on features of qualifying interest can be ruled out and no further assessment of them considered necessary.

With regard to the potential for secondary effects, the nearest Natura 2000 site occurs at a distance of 6.8km to the northwest (Rye Water Valley/Carton (site code: 001398) and then 7km to the south of the project site (Site code 001209 Glenamole Valley SAC). There is no hydrological connection between the project and Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC site, whilst the Glenamole site is situated up-gradient from the project site. Downstream, the Natura 2000 network is located circa 13km from the project site. Connection with either the (downstream) South Dublin Bay & River Tolka Estuary SPA (site code 004024) or the South Dublin Bay SAC (site code 000210) would require a hydrological interaction with a water course that feeds the Natura 2000 site and an uncontrolled discharge of material at such significant concentrations that would alter the biological and/or chemical composition of the Natura site downstream.

The foul arrangement by way of discharge to public mains provides no hydrological connection from the site other than by way of public mains. This will not therefore provide for interaction with the Natura 2000 network and thus the potential for significant effects to same can be ruled out. This conclusion can equally be applied to the surface water management arrangements for the northern portion of the site where surface water is collected and discharged to public mains. The capacity of that public infrastructure has been clarified and is sufficient to accommodate the generated loadings from the project. The surface water arrangements for the southern portion of the site, as reported in previous sections, will discharge through a petrol interceptor before entering 3 constructed settlement ponds prior to final discharge to the River Camac.

The ponds in conjunction with the fitted *Class I* bypass separator will facilitate settlement of sediment fines that might occur in storm water discharge from the southern part of the project site and improved

water quality prior to discharge to the Camac river. The depth of the attenuation ponds will increase during storm events as surface water runoff is diverted to the ponds. The attenuation ponds are designed to have a permanent standing water depth of circa 300mm and sufficient storage to provide for the required volume of attenuation storage for a 1 in 100 year storm event (629 m^3 of storage and maximum increase in depth of the ponds of 405mm). The attenuation ponds will discharge at a controlled rate to the Camac River to the greenfield runoff rate of 2 l/s/Ha.

Engineering design and flood risk management details lodged with the scheme of development confirm that the height of the embankments of the settlement pond have been designed to exceed the maximum predicted flood levels in the immediate area. This design feature would prevent a breach of the settlement ponds by fluvial flood waters from the River Camac during flood events thus inhibiting the opportunity of contamination of the River Camac from receding flood waters leaving the attenuation ponds. Furthermore, the surface water settlement pond system is fitted with 2 no. non-return valves, one placed prior to surface water flow into the settlement pond system, the other prior to final discharge to the River Camac to prevent flood waters entering and flushing the surface water system. Furthermore, engineering assessment has confirmed that the construction and function of the new surface water pond arrangement are not hydrological linked to the existing adjacent ponds and would not affect the integrity of those ponds to perform their surface water retention function. Therefore, having regard to the project design, it is considered that the potential for significant secondary effects on the Natura 2000 network is unlikely.

Despite these design measures, it is unlikely that in the event of the surface water entering the River Camac directly, the project would give rise to indirect effects on the integrity of the downstream Natura 2000 sites having regard to the distance between the project and those (Natura 2000) sites, and the ability of the transitional waters to provide sufficient dispersion and dilution. It is considered that the proposed surface water pond arrangement with design standing water will provide habitat characteristics that can support terrestrial and aquatic life and would contribute to local biodiversity.

4.2 Cumulative effects

The statutory spatial plan for the area has provided spatial development and non-development objectives and these have already been subject to a Plan level Habitats Directive Assessment (appropriate assessment) as part of that statutory Plan making process. This project is consistent with those Plan level spatial objectives. There are no other known plans or projects occurring that when taken together with this project, are likely to alter the conclusion of this assessment. No cumulative effects are therefore considered to occur.

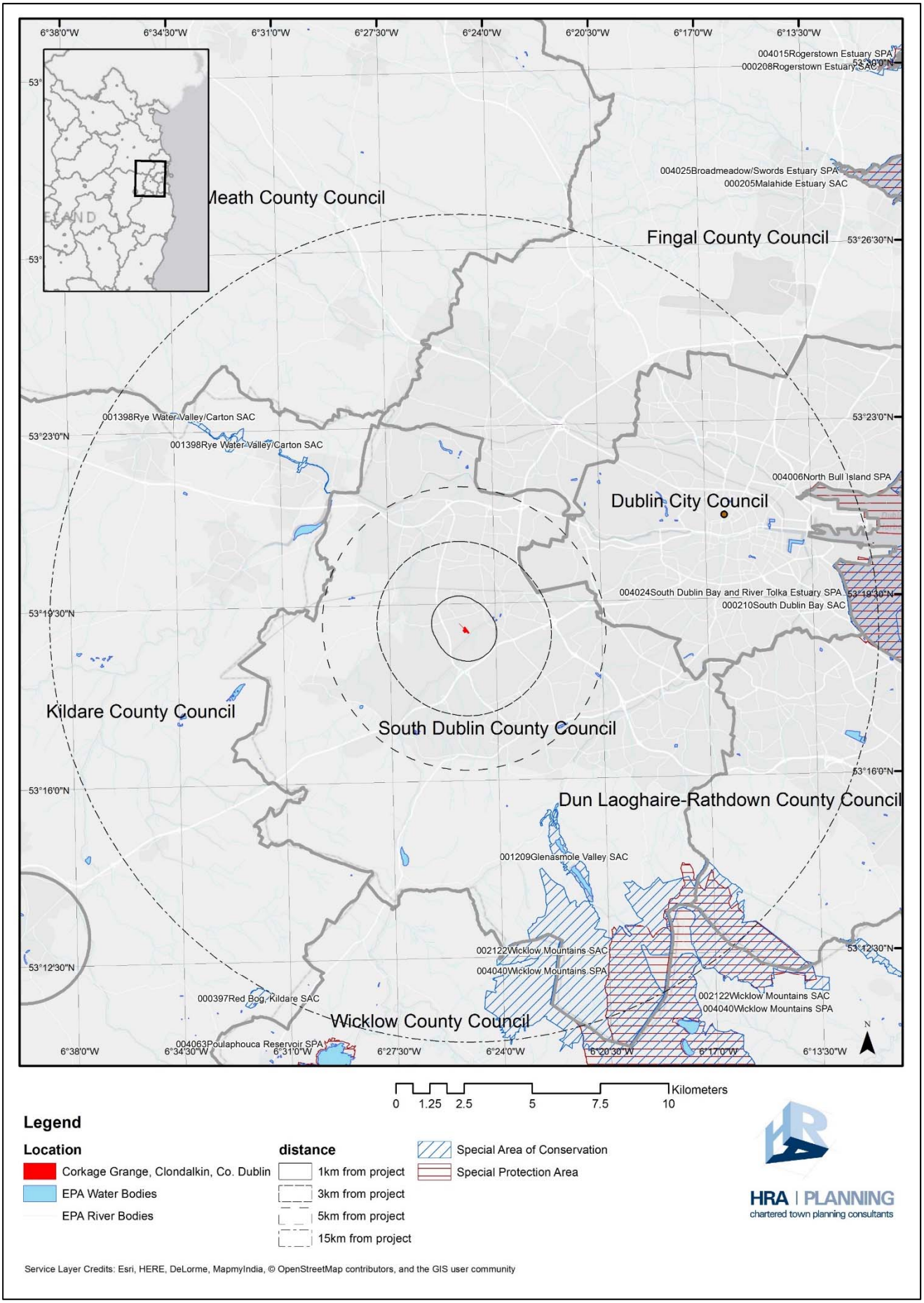
4.3 Best Practice Design Measures

With adherence to best practice site construction measures, no mitigation measures are considered necessary for the purpose of preserving the integrity and conservation features of the Natura 2000 designated sites. In the interests of preserving local biodiversity, it is recommended that site clearance works are carried out in accordance with the recommendations contained in the Ecological Impact Assessment. Such measures can be incorporated within the existing project works programme and do not require any fundamental review of project design. These measures are considered common design practice for urban development scenarios and should not be construed as ‘mitigation’ necessary for the purpose of Appropriate Assessment.

5.0 CONCLUSION

This assessment has confirmed that the project will not result in direct or indirect impacts on the Natura 2000 network either alone or in combination with other plans or projects by way of loss, fragmentation, disruption, disturbance to habitats, species, or habitats of species that are of conservation interest. The evaluation therefore concludes that it is unlikely that there will be any significant indirect effects on the Natura 2000 network.

As the project will have no adverse effect on the integrity on any of the Natura 2000 sites, this report returns a conclusion that there is no potential for significant effects on the Natura 2000 sites and no further (stage 2) assessment is considered necessary.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004015Rogerstown Estuary SPA
000208Rogerstown Estuary SAC
004025Broadmeadow/Swords Estuary SPA
000205Malahide Estuary SAC
Meath County Council
Fingal County Council
001398Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC
004006North Bull Island SPA
Dublin City Council
004024South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA
000210South Dublin Bay SAC
Kildare County Council
South Dublin County Council
Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council
001209Glenasmole Valley SAC
002122Wicklow Mountains SAC
004040Wicklow Mountains SPA
000397Red Bog, Kildare SAC
Wicklow County Council
004063Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA
N
0 1.25 2.5 5 7.5 10 Kilometers
Legend
Location
Corkage Grange, Clondalkin, Co. Dublin
EPA Water Bodies
EPA River Bodies
distance
1km from project
3km from project
5km from project
15km from project
Special Area of Conservation
Special Protection Area
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