

Report for the purposes of
Appropriate Assessment Screening

Canal Extension Clonburris
Residential Development

Prepared by: Moore Group – Environmental Services

30 March 2022



On behalf of
South Dublin County Council

Project Proponent	South Dublin County Council
Project	Canal Extension Clonburris
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Table of Contents

1. Introduction	1
1.1. General Introduction.....	1
1.2. Legislative Background - The Habitats and Birds Directives	1
2. Methodology.....	2
2.1. Guidance	3
2.2. Data Sources	4
2. Description of the Proposed Development.....	5
4. Description of the Existing Environment.....	6
5. Identification of Natura 2000 Sites	14
5.1. Description of Natura Sites Potentially Affected	14
4.2. Ecological Network Supporting Natura 2000 Sites.....	20
6. Identification of Potential Impacts & Assessment of Significance.....	20
6.1. Assessment of Likely Significant Effects.....	21
6.2. Assessment of Potential In-Combination Effects.....	23
7. Conclusion.....	28
8. References	29

Appendix A – Finding of No Significant Effects Report

Abbreviations

AA	Appropriate Assessment
EEC	European Economic Community
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EU	European Union
GIS	Geographical Information System
LAP	Local Area Plan
NHA	Natural Heritage Area
NIS	Natura Impact Statement
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
OSI	Ordnance Survey Ireland
pNHA	proposed Natural Heritage Area
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SPA	Special Protection Area
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage System
WFD	Water Framework Directive

1. Introduction

1.1. General Introduction

This report for the purposes of Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening has been prepared to support a Planning Application for the Proposed Development (described in Section 3 below). This report contains information required for the competent authority to undertake screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) in respect of the construction and operation of a residential development at Clonburris, South Dublin County, (hereafter referred to as the Proposed Development) to determine whether it is likely individually or in combination with other plans and projects to have a significant effect on any European sites, in light of best scientific knowledge.

Having regard to the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 – 2021 (the “Planning Acts”) (section 177U), the purpose of a screening exercise under section 177U of the PDA 2000 is to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if the Project, individually or in combination with another plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a European site.

If it cannot be *excluded* on the basis of objective information that the Project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site then it is necessary to carry out a Stage 2 appropriate assessment under section 177V of the Planning Acts.

When screening the project, there are two possible outcomes:

- the project poses no potential for a likely significant effect and as such requires no further assessment; and
- the project has potential to have likely significant effect (or this is uncertain) unless mitigation measures are applied, and therefore an AA of the project is necessary.

This report has been prepared by Moore Group - Environmental Services to enable South Dublin County Council to carry out AA screening in relation to the Project. The report was compiled by Ger O’Donohoe (B.Sc. Applied Aquatic Sciences (GMIT, 1993) & M.Sc. Environmental Sciences (TCD, 1999)) who has 27 years’ experience in environmental impact assessment and has completed numerous Appropriate Assessment Screening Reports and Natura Impact Statements on terrestrial and aquatic habitats for various development types.

1.2. Legislative Background - The Habitats and Birds Directives

Article 6 of the Habitats Directive is transposed into Irish Law inter alia by the Part XAB of the Planning Acts (section 177U and 177V) govern the requirement to carry out appropriate assessment screening and appropriate assessment, where required, per Section 1.1 above.

The Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora) is the main legislative instrument for the protection and conservation of biodiversity in the European Union (EU). Under the Habitats Directive, Member States are obliged to designate Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) which contain habitats or species considered important for protection and conservation in a EU context.

The Birds Directive (Council Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds), transposed into Irish law by the Bird and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011, as amended, is concerned with the long-term protection and management of all wild bird species and their habitats in the EU. Among other things, the Birds Directive requires that Special Protection Areas (SPAs) be established to protect migratory species and species which are rare, vulnerable, in danger of extinction, or otherwise require special attention.

SACs designated under the Habitats Directive and SPAs, designated under the Birds Directive, form a pan-European network of protected sites known as Natura 2000. The Habitats Directive sets out a unified system for the protection and management of SACs and SPAs. These sites are also referred to as European sites.

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the requirement for an assessment of proposed plans and projects likely to have a significant effect on Natura 2000 sites.

Article 6(3) establishes the requirement to screen all plans and projects and to carry out an appropriate assessment if required (Appropriate Assessment (AA)). Article 6(4) establishes requirements in cases of imperative reasons of overriding public interest:

Article 6(3): *“Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subjected to an appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.”*

2. Methodology

The Commission’s methodological guidance (EC, 2002, 2018, 2021 see Section 2.1 below) promotes a four-stage process to complete the AA and outlines the issues and tests at each stage. An important aspect of the process is that the outcome at each successive stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required.

Stages 1 and 2 deal with the main requirements for assessment under Article 6(3). Stage 3 may be part of Article 6(3) or may be a necessary precursor to Stage 4. Stage 4 is the main derogation step of Article 6(4).

Stage 1 Screening: This stage examines the likely effects of a project either alone or in combination with other projects upon a Natura 2000 site and considers whether it can be objectively concluded that these effects will not be significant. In order to screen out a project, it must be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the Project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment: In this stage, there is a consideration of the impact of the project with a view to ascertain whether there will be any adverse effect on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, with respect to the site's structure and function and its conservation objectives. Additionally, where there are predicted impacts, an assessment of the potential mitigation of those impacts is considered.

Stage 3 Assessment of Alternative Solutions: This stage examines alternative ways of implementing the project that, where possible, avoid any adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site.

Stage 4 Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain: Where imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) exist, an assessment to consider whether compensatory measures will or will not effectively offset the damage to the sites will be necessary.

To ensure that the Project complies fully with the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and all relevant Irish transposing legislation, Moore Group compiled this report to enable South Dublin County Council to carry out AA screening in relation to the Project to determine whether the Project, individually or in combination with another plan or project will have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site.

2.1. Guidance

This report has been compiled in accordance with guidance contained in the following documents:

- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities. (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2010 rev.).
- Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities. Circular NPWS 1/10 & PSSP 2/10.
- 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 (European Commission Environment Directorate-General, 2001); hereafter referred to as the EC Article 6 Guidance Document.
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC (EC Environment Directorate-General, 2000); hereafter referred to as MN2000.
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2018).
- Guidance document on the strict protection of animal species of Community interest under the Habitats Directive (EC, 2021).

- Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2021).
- Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) Practice Note PN01 Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management (OPR, 2021).

2.2. Data Sources

Sources of information that were used to collect data on the Natura 2000 network of sites, and the environment within which they are located, are listed below:

- The following mapping and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) data sources, as required:
 - National Parks & Wildlife (NPWS) protected site boundary data;
 - Ordnance Survey of Ireland (OSI) mapping and aerial photography;
 - OSI/Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rivers and streams, and catchments;
 - Open Street Maps;
 - Digital Elevation Model over Europe (EU-DEM);
 - Google Earth and Bing aerial photography 1995-2022;
- Online data available on Natura 2000 sites as held by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) from www.npws.ie including:
 - Natura 2000 - Standard Data Form;
 - Conservation Objectives;
 - Site Synopses;
- National Biodiversity Data Centre records;
 - Online database of rare, threatened and protected species;
 - Publicly accessible biodiversity datasets.
- Status of EU Protected Habitats in Ireland. (National Parks & Wildlife Service, 2019); and
- Relevant Development Plans;
 - South Dublin County Development Plan 2016-2022
 - Draft South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028

Balgaddy-Clonburris Strategic Development Zone SDZ – Draft Planning Scheme The assessment was carried out in three stages, firstly through desktop assessment to determine existing records in relation to habitats and species present in the potential Zone of Influence of the Proposed Development. The second phase of the assessment involved site visits to establish the existing environment in the footprint of the proposed development area.

Habitats were surveyed on the 15 September 2021 and 20 October 2021 by conducting a study area walkover covering the main ecological areas identified in the desktop assessment. The September survey date is toward the end of the optimal botanical survey period. However, it is adequate given the suburban/semi-rural nature

of the site with predominantly improved grassland present on site. A photographic record was made of features of interest.

Signs of mammals such as badgers and otters were searched for while surveying the study area noting any sights, signs or any activity in the vicinity especially along adjacent boundaries. The towpath of the Grand Canal for a distance of 150m either side of the proposed development area was surveyed for signs of otters.

A Song Meter SM-Mini-BAT (Wildlife Acoustics, Inc; Massachusetts, USA) 16-bit full spectrum time-expansion recording bat detector was placed within the study area; (Grid Ref. 706024 732130) on the 29 September to the 19 October 2021. This static detector was installed according to the guidelines as set out in Bat Conservation Ireland's 'Bat Survey Guidelines'.

Birds were surveyed using standard transect methodology and signs were recorded where encountered during the field walkover surveys. The site is essentially an open field and the walk over during habitat surveys was adequate to assess the value of the site to breeding birds. A desk study was carried out to identify any potential suitable inland feeding and / or roosting sites for winter birds located within or directly adjacent to the proposed development areas.

Field surveys carried out in the urban and suburban areas of the proposed development deemed the lands to be unsuitable feeding and/or roosting sites for wintering birds, due to habitat conditions being dominated by amenity grassland and subject to high levels of disturbance. As such it was not deemed necessary to carry out detailed wintering bird surveys in these areas. The results of the desk-based study have informed the assessment of potential impacts on wintering bird species arising from the proposed development.

2. Description of the Proposed Development

The Proposed Development consists of the construction of a residential development at Clonburris, South Dublin County, to consist of 118 dwelling units, to include apartments, duplexes and dwelling houses and associated works.

The proposal consists of the following works:

118 No. Units in a mix of houses, duplexes, simplexes, and 1 No. Apartment building, comprising:

- 11 No. 2 storey - three-bed semi-detached and terraced houses
- 11 No. 3 storey - four-bed semi-detached and terraced houses

- 25 No. 3 storey buildings each comprising: a single storey 2-bedroom apartment at the ground level with a three-bed duplex above
- 5 No. 3 storey - stacked simplex units (Triplex): comprising a 1-bedroom apartment with study at ground level and 2 No. 1-bedroom apartments at the first and second floor levels
- 4 No. 3 storey - stacked simplex units (Triplex): comprising a 2-bed apartment at ground level and 2 No. 1-bedroom apartments with study at the first and second floor levels
- 1 No. 4 storey Apartment building (c.440 sq.m.) Accommodating 19 No. Apartments, comprising; 15 No. 1 bed and 4 No. of 2 bed units. The proposed apartments are provided with private balconies or terraces.
- Site development and landscape works include the provision of 112 No. Parking spaces, 24 No. Visitor cycle parking, ESB substation, high quality amenity spaces, landscape works, roundabout at the entrance to the development from Bawnogue Road, SuDS measures and all associated ancillary site development works.

Surface water will be directed to a SuDS Area at the northern portion of the site. Wastewater from the proposed development will be directed to Ringsend WWTP which will have the capacity to assimilate the additional load. There is therefore indirect connectivity to Dublin Bay via the Ringsend Wastewater Treatment Plant.

There will be no development within the boundary of the Grand Canal pNHA and given it is a closed system there will be no surface water discharge to the Grand Canal.

Figure 1 shows the Proposed Development location and Figure 2 shows a detailed view of the Proposed Development boundary on recent aerial photography. Figure 3 shows the layout of the Proposed Development.

4. Description of the Existing Environment

The existing habitats in the site location (see Figure 2 for a recent aerial view) comprise an area of grassland that has been historically managed by SDCC as a mixture of amenity grassland and more recently with unmown areas reverting to semi-natural grassland with a meadow type habitat developing. The area is bounded by the green corridor of the Grand Canal to the north and by the existing Ashwood Estates to the south. The proposed development would be an extension of this residential area. There is an area of mown amenity grassland to the east adjacent to the R113 and the managed grassland continues to the west adjacent to the Lindisfarne Estates.

The habitat of greatest Ecological Value in the area is the Grand Canal which is designated as a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA). The section of canal adjacent stretches from the 10th to 11th Locks for a distance of just under 300m.

Site development and landscape works will initially include site fencing, earthworks, movement and storage of mounded spoil which will be followed by the establishment of set down and working areas.

This will be followed by standard residential housing development construction activity and end with mechanical and electrical fit out, street lighting and landscaping works.

The site in question consists of a mosaic of Amenity Grassland (GA2) and managed areas of Dry meadows and grassy verges (GS2) located to the north of the existing residential areas of Clonburris and to the immediate south of the Grand Canal between Locks 10 and 11.

There are no Annexed Habitats or Species present within the boundary of the Proposed Development site. The area of highest ecological value is the Grand Canal pNHA. There are no hydrological links between the subject site and the Grand Canal.

Amenity grassland & semi-natural meadow (GA2/GS2)

The proposed development site comprises an area of grassland c. 3.9 Ha which is managed with mown verges and pathways and with central sections left for biodiversity promotion. A large portion of the grassland to the southeast adjacent to the R113 is more regularly mown with a tightly cropped sward.

Species present include Cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*) along with Bent grasses (*Agrostis* spp.) and False-oat grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*) which is common in unmown sections. Dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*), Common sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*) are occasional with frequent Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), Field speedwell (*Veronica chamaedrys*), Ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), Selfheal (*Prunella vulgaris*), Clovers (*Trifolium* spp.), Creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repans*) all present with frequent Cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*) and occasional Hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*) along with Thistles (*Cirsium vulgare* and *C. arvense*), occasional Silverweed (*Potentilla anserina*) and Hoary Ragwort (*Senecio erucifolius*).

There are patches of Meadow vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*) and Curled Dock (*Rumex crispus*) is frequent. Slightly damper patches have clusters of Hard rush (*Juncus inflexus*). Dandelions (*Taraxacum* spp.) are frequent with patches of Clover and Knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*). There are also patches of Rape (*Brassica napus*) and buttercup where ground has been disturbed.

Red Bartsia (*Odontites vernus*) is more common on the northern side of the field closer to the Grand Canal and may be associated with some ground disturbance and recolonisation in that area. Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) and Nettle (*Urtica dioica*) are common along the field edge particularly to the southern and eastern boundaries.

Hedgerow (WL1)

This habitat refers to the Hedgerow of the southern towpath of the Grand Canal which has a scrubby appearance and comprises typical rural hedgerow species such as Elder and Hawthorn with an understorey including Nettle, Cleavers (*Gallium aparine*), Hogweed, Spear thistle, Rape (*Brassica napus*) and Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) with Ivy (*Hedera helix*).

There is also a short meandering line of trees that is neither treeline or hedgerow at the southern boundary of the site separating the existing residential area and road from the grassland area. Species include Beech, Sycamore, Ash and Eucalyptus. Similar understorey species described above are present along with Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), Rosebay willowherb (*Chamerion angustifolium*), Nettle and Cleavers and Ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*). Large Bindweed (*Calystegia sylvatica*) is occasional here along with Lesser burdock (*Arctium minus*).

Invasive Species

There were no records of Third Schedule invasive species on the Proposed Development site.

Fauna

Otters

There are no records for otters in the section of the Grand Canal adjacent to the proposed development area at Clonburris. There were no signs of otters during the surveys carried out. There are historical records from the Grand Canal in the 'Circular Line' toward the city and further east toward Grangecastle West and it is possible that otters pass along the canal at night.

Badgers

There are no badger setts in the study area and no potential for badgers on the site. The field boundaries were surveyed and no setts were recorded.

Bats

The NBDC database was consulted for details on bat records held for the site and the surroundings. The database was consulted on the 09/03/2022 for details on historical records from a polygon extending for up to 100m from the site boundary. Four species have been recorded in the study area; Daubenton's Bat (*Myotis daubentonii*), Lesser Noctule (*Nyctalus leisleri*), Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus sensu lato*) and Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*).

The results of the static detector surveys showed that over the course of 20 nights a total of 321 registrations were recorded. This equates to 1.2 bat passes per minute which is considered very low. It should be noted that

a single bat continuously circling a site or along a hedgerow will produce numerous recordings, thus the amount of registrations cannot quantify abundance, rather activity.

The most common species (activity) recorded was Soprano Pipistrelle at 209 (65.1%). Common Pipistrelle was the next most common with 58 (18.1%) followed by Leisler's bat (13.7%) with 44 registrations over the survey period followed by 2 passes of Daubenton's bat (0.6%) and 2 passes of a 'Myotis' bat (0.6%).

Birds

No Winter birds of conservation concern were noted on the site during surveys. The site is located over 13km from Dublin Bay and experiences high levels of walkers and dog walking activity and is not suitable for foraging geese or other Winter birds of conservation concern.

The most common species recorded on the Grand Canal was Mallard duck. However, Moorhen and Mute swan have been observed on the canal in the wider area by the author.

Invertebrates

While the Grand Canal is acknowledged to have no hydrological connectivity with the proposed Canal Extension development area, the presence of White-clawed Crayfish (a species listed on Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive) has been noted in all the main freshwater habitats within the Clonburris SDZ¹.

White-clawed Crayfish are long-lived (up to ten years) and has a "Keystone" ecological role to play in suitable freshwater ecosystems. It is a generalist feeder, converting detritus, plant matter, etc. into a form readily available to large vertebrate predators such as Trout (*Salmo trutta*) and Otter (*Lutra lutra*). This species, therefore, plays an important role in the well-being of freshwater systems and contributes significantly to the flow of energy and cycling of nutrients.

There are no Annexed habitats on or adjacent to the proposed development site. There were no rare or protected species recorded on the site and there were no invasive species recorded. There are no rare or protected habitats recorded within the study area.

The habitat of highest conservation value adjacent to the proposed development area is the Grand Canal. The proposed Natural Heritage Area of the Grand Canal encompasses the hedgerows to the north, the water course of the canal itself and the hedgerow to the south of the southern towpath which forms the northern boundary of the overall site area, see Figure 6 above.

The proposed development redline boundary touches the boundary of the Grand Canal pNHA at the line of the proposed SuDS Area. However, it does not encroach on the hedgerow of the canal.

¹ Clonburris SDZ Draft Planning Scheme Chief Executive's Report Appendix E: Ecological Surveys

There is no hydrological connectivity between the proposed development site and the Grand Canal or to any European sites.

The habitats under the footprint of the proposed development are of low to moderate local ecological value with the southern towpath Hedgerow of the Grand Canal to the north of the site being of National Importance.



Figure 2. Showing the Proposed Development boundary on recent aerial photography.



Figure 3. Layout of the Proposed Development.

5. Identification of Natura 2000 Sites

5.1. Description of Natura Sites Potentially Affected

The Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (previously DoEHLG)'s Guidance on Appropriate Assessment (2009) recommends an assessment of European sites within a Zone of Influence (ZoI) of 15km. However, this distance is a guidance only and a zone of influence of a Project is 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. In accordance with the OPR Practice Note, PN01, the ZoI should be established on a case-by-case basis using the Source- Pathway-Receptor framework and not by arbitrary distances (such as 15km).

The Zone of Influence may be determined by considering the Project's potential connectivity with European sites, in terms of:

- Nature, scale, timing and duration of works and possible impacts, nature and size of excavations, storage of materials, flat/sloping sites;
- Distance and nature of pathways (dilution and dispersion; intervening 'buffer' lands, roads etc.); and
- Sensitivity and location of ecological features.

The potential for source pathway receptor connectivity is firstly identified through GIS interrogation and detailed information is then provided on sites with connectivity. European sites that are located within a potential Zone of Influence of the Project are presented in Figure 4, below. Spatial boundary data on the Natura 2000 network was extracted from the NPWS website (www.npws.ie) on 16 March 2022. This data was interrogated using GIS analysis to provide mapping, distances, locations and pathways to all sites of conservation concern including pNHAs, NHA and European sites.

This analysis found that the Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC [001398] at c.6.46km northwest and the Glenasmole Valley SAC [001209] at c. 8.07km south are the closest European sites. However, there are no pathways or connectivity to either of these two sites and they are excluded at this preliminary screening stage.

Table 1 European Sites located within the potential Zone of Influence² of the Proposed Development.

Site Code	Site name	Distance (km) ³
000206	North Dublin Bay SAC	15.36
000210	South Dublin Bay SAC	12.85
004006	North Bull Island SPA	15.35
004024	South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA	12.27

² All European sites potentially connected irrespective of the nature or scale of the Proposed Development.

³ Distances indicated are the closest geographical distance between the Proposed Development and the European site boundary, as made available by the NPWS.

Surface water will be directed to a SuDS Area at the northern portion of the site. Wastewater from the proposed development will be directed to Ringsend WWTP which will have the capacity to assimilate the additional load. There is therefore indirect connectivity to Dublin Bay via the Ringsend Wastewater Treatment Plant.

The European sites within the potential zone of influence of the Proposed Development are associated with Dublin Bay and include South Dublin Bay SAC, and South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA, 12.85km and 12.27km from the site, respectively.

The Qualifying Interests (QIs) and Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of the European sites in the vicinity of the Proposed Development are provided in Table 2 below.

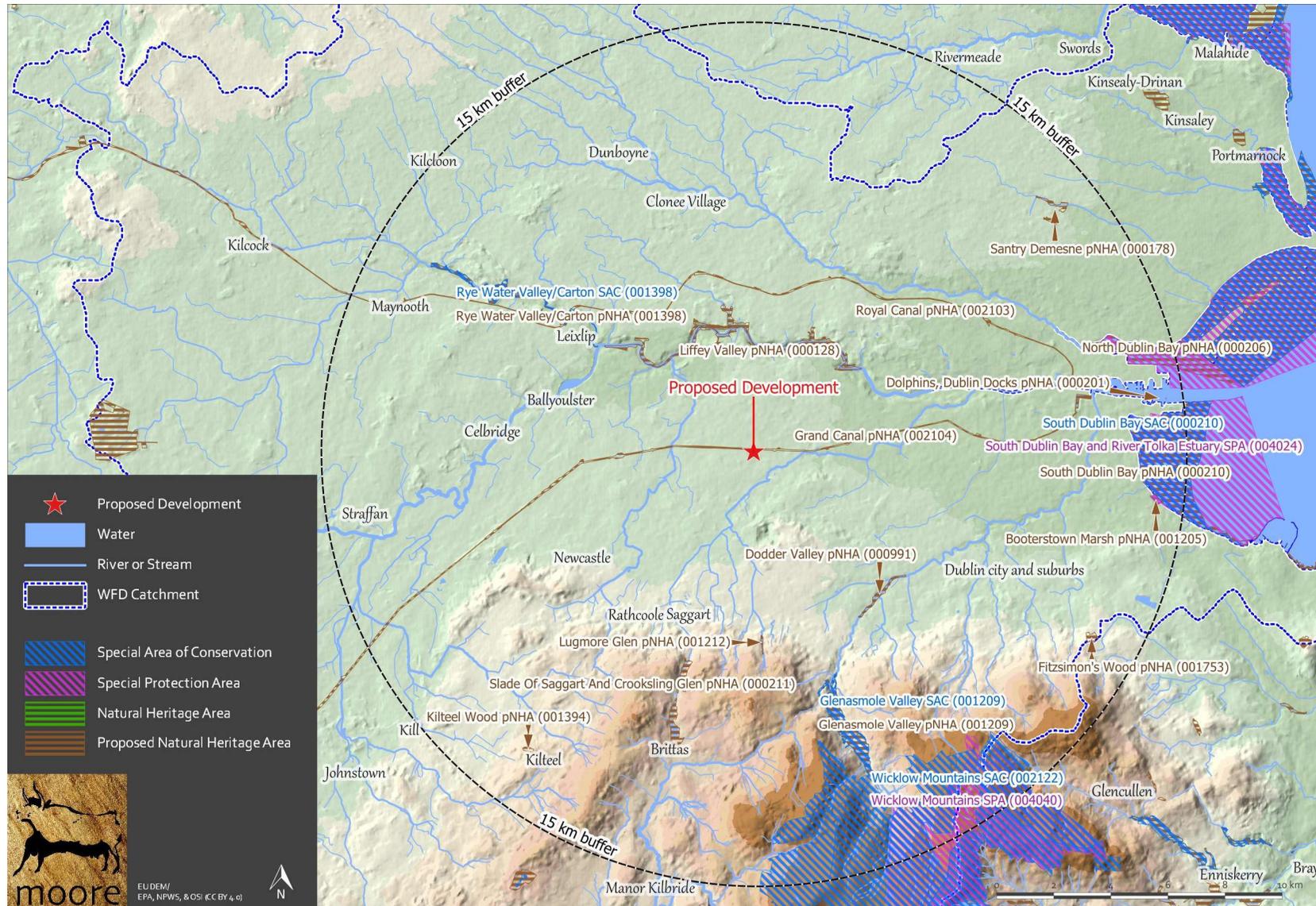


Figure 4. Showing European sites and NHAs/pNHAs within the wider Potential Zone of Influence of the Proposed Development.

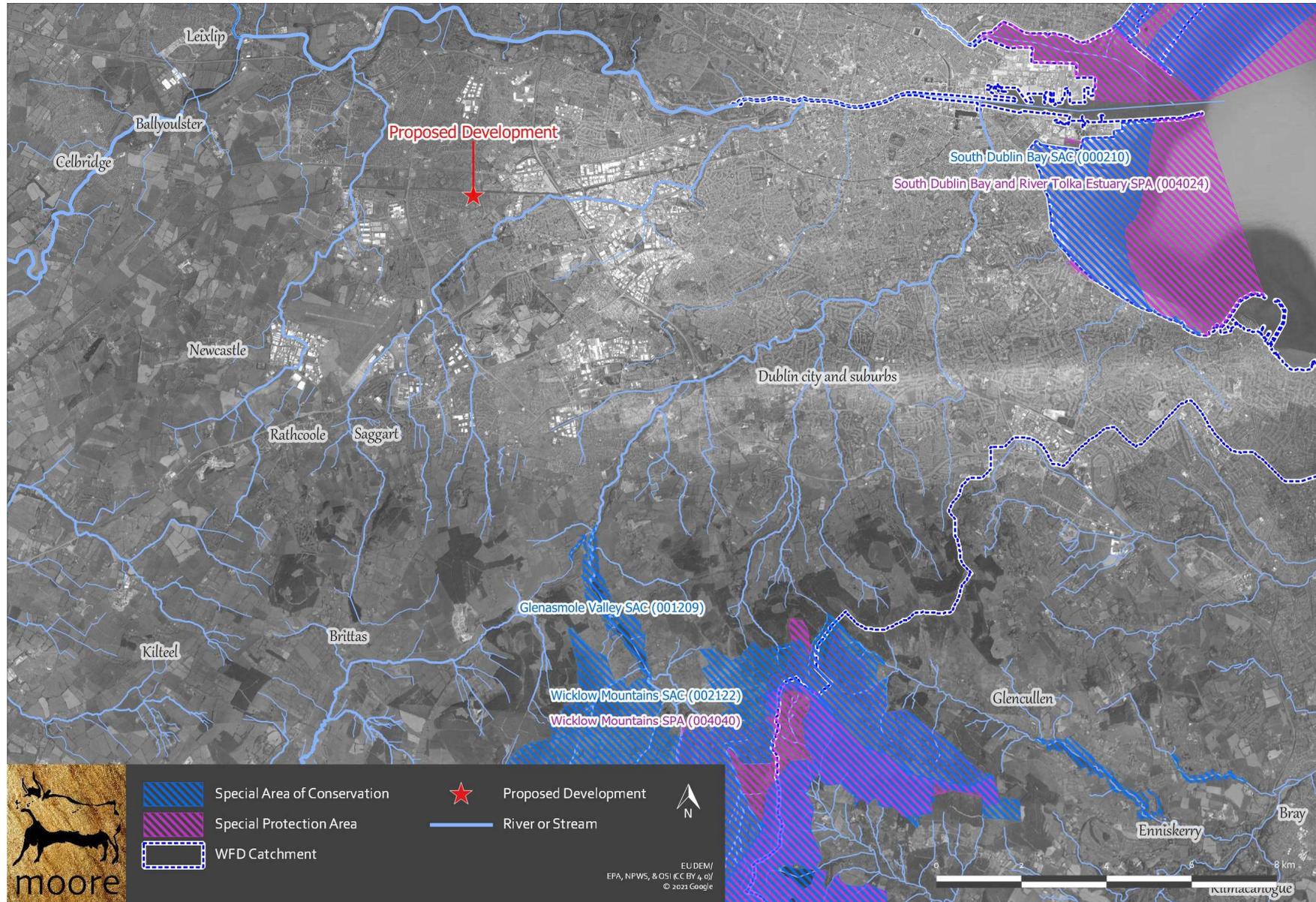


Figure 5. Detailed view of European sites in the nearer Potential Zone of Influence of the Proposed Development.

Table 2 Identification of relevant European sites using Source-Pathway-Receptor model and compilation of information QIs and conservation objectives.

European site name & Site code	Location Relative to the Proposed Development Site	Connectivity – Source-Pathway-Receptor	Considered further in Screening – Y/N
<p>North Dublin Bay SAC (000206)</p> <p>1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide</p> <p>1210 Annual vegetation of drift lines</p> <p>1310 <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand</p> <p>1330 Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>)</p> <p>1395 Petalwort <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i></p> <p>1410 Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>)</p> <p>2110 Embryonic shifting dunes</p> <p>2120 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes)</p> <p>2130 Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)</p> <p>2190 Humid dune slacks</p> <p>NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: North Dublin Bay SAC 000206. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.</p>	<p>15.36km to the east of the Proposed Development</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Surface water will be directed to a SuDS Area on site. In terms of the operational phase, wastewater from the proposed scheme will be directed to municipal sewer. Wastewater from the proposed development will be directed to Ringsend WWTP which will have the capacity to assimilate the additional load.</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>South Dublin Bay SAC (000210)</p> <p>1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide</p> <p>NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: South Dublin Bay SAC 000210. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.</p>	<p>12.85km to the east of the Proposed Development</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Surface water will be directed to a SuDS Area on site. In terms of the operational phase, wastewater from the proposed scheme will be directed to municipal sewer. Wastewater from the proposed development will be directed to Ringsend WWTP which will have the capacity to assimilate the additional load.</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>North Bull Island SPA (004006)</p> <p>A046 Light-Bellied Brent Goose <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i></p> <p>A048 Shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i></p>	<p>15.35km to the east of the Proposed Development</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Surface water will be directed to a SuDS Area on site. In terms of the operational phase, wastewater from the proposed scheme will be</p>	<p>N</p>

European site name & Site code	Location Relative to the Proposed Development Site	Connectivity – Source-Pathway-Receptor	Considered further in Screening – Y/N
<p>A052 Teal <i>Anas crecca</i></p> <p>A054 Pintail <i>Anas acuta</i></p> <p>A056 Shoveler <i>Anas clypeata</i></p> <p>A130 Oystercatcher <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i></p> <p>A140 Golden Plover <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i></p> <p>A141 Grey Plover <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i></p> <p>A143 Knot <i>Calidris canutus</i></p> <p>A144 Sanderling <i>Calidris alba</i></p> <p>A149 Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina alpina</i></p> <p>A156 Black-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa limosa</i></p> <p>A157 Bar-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i></p> <p>A160 Curlew <i>Numenius arquata</i></p> <p>A162 Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i></p> <p>A169 Turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i></p> <p>A179 Black-headed Gull <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i></p> <p>A999 Wetlands</p> <p>NPWS (2015) Conservation Objectives: North Bull Island SPA 004006. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.</p>		<p>directed to municipal sewer. Wastewater from the proposed development will be directed to Ringsend WWTP which will have the capacity to assimilate the additional load.</p> <p>No</p> <p>Due to distance and the lack of any relevant ex-situ factors of significance to these species or habitat.</p>	
<p>South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (004024)</p> <p>A046 Light-Bellied Brent Goose <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i></p> <p>A130 Oystercatcher <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i></p> <p>A137 Ringed Plover <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i></p> <p>A141 Grey Plover <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i></p> <p>A143 Knot <i>Calidris canutus</i></p> <p>A144 Sanderling <i>Calidris alba</i></p> <p>A149 Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina alpina</i></p> <p>A157 Bar-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i></p>	<p>12.27km to the east of the Proposed Development</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Surface water will be directed to a SuDS Area on site. In terms of the operational phase, wastewater from the proposed scheme will be directed to municipal sewer. Wastewater from the proposed development will be directed to Ringsend WWTP which will have the capacity to assimilate the additional load.</p> <p>No</p>	<p>N</p>

European site name & Site code	Location Relative to the Proposed Development Site	Connectivity – Source-Pathway-Receptor	Considered further in Screening – Y/N
A162 Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i> A179 Black-headed Gull <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i> A192 Roseate Tern <i>Sterna dougallii</i> A193 Common Tern <i>Sterna hirundo</i> A194 Arctic Tern <i>Sterna paradisaea</i> A999 Wetlands 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.		Due to distance and the lack of any relevant ex-situ factors of significance to these species or habitat.	

4.2. Ecological Network Supporting Natura 2000 Sites

Concurrent GIS analysis of the proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA) and designated Natural Heritage Areas (NHA) in terms of their role in supporting the species using Natura 2000 sites was undertaken. It was assumed that these supporting roles mainly related to mobile fauna such as mammals and birds which may use pNHAs and NHAs as “stepping stones” between Natura 2000 sites.

Article 10 of the Habitats Directive and the Habitats Regulations 2011 place a high degree of importance on such non-Natura 2000 areas as features that connect the Natura 2000 network. Features such as ponds, woodlands and important hedgerows were taken into account during the preparation of this AA Screening report.

There are no other areas of conservation concern that would be affected by the Proposed Development.

The NHAs and pNHAs identified in Figure 4 are located outside the Zone of Influence. There are no areas of supporting habitat that will be affected by the Proposed Development.

There will be no development within the boundary of the Grand Canal pNHA and given it is a closed system there will be no surface water discharge to the Grand Canal. There will be no direct or indirect effects on the Grand Canal pNHA.

6. Identification of Potential Impacts & Assessment of Significance

The Proposed Development is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the sites considered in the assessment and therefore potential impacts must be identified and considered.

6.1. Assessment of Likely Significant Effects

Surface water will be directed to a SuDS Area at the northern portion of the site. Wastewater from the proposed development will be directed to Ringsend WWTP which will have the capacity to assimilate the additional load.

The consideration of all potential direct and indirect impacts that may result in significant effects on the conservation objectives of a European site, taking into account the size and scale of the Proposed Development are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Assessment of Likely Significant Effects.

Identification of all potential direct and indirect impacts that may result in significant effects on the conservation objectives of a European site, taking into account the size and scale of the project.	
Impacts:	Significance of Impacts:
<p>Construction phase e.g.</p> <p>Vegetation clearance</p> <p>Demolition</p> <p>Surface water runoff from soil excavation/infill/landscaping (including borrow pits)</p> <p>Dust, noise, vibration</p> <p>Lighting disturbance</p> <p>Impact on groundwater/dewatering</p> <p>Storage of excavated/construction materials</p> <p>Access to site</p> <p>Pests</p>	<p>None</p> <p>The Proposed Development site is located within the boundary of a field of improved grassland.</p> <p>The facility is located at a distance of removal such that there will be no disturbance to qualifying interest species in any European sites.</p>
<p>Operational phase e.g.</p> <p>Direct emission to air and water</p> <p>Surface water runoff containing contaminant or sediment</p> <p>Lighting disturbance</p> <p>Noise/vibration</p>	<p>All foul and surface water runoff, once the facility is operational, will be contained on site and discharged to urban drainage systems. A SuDS Area will be constructed to manage surface runoff.</p> <p>There is no real likelihood of any significant effects on European Sites in the wider catchment area.</p> <p>The facility is located at a distance of removal such that there will be no disturbance to qualifying interest species in any European sites.</p>

Changes to water/groundwater due to drainage or abstraction	
Presence of people, vehicles and activities	
Physical presence of structures (e.g. collision risks)	
Potential for accidents or incidents	
Describe any likely changes to the European site:	
Examples of the type of changes to give consideration to include:	None
Reduction or fragmentation of habitat area	The Proposed Development site is not located adjacent or within a European site, therefore there is no risk of habitat loss or fragmentation or any effects on QI habitats or species directly or ex-situ.
Disturbance to QI species	
Habitat or species fragmentation	
Reduction or fragmentation in species density	
Changes in key indicators of conservation status value (water quality etc.)	
Changes to areas of sensitivity or threats to QI	
Interference with the key relationships that define the structure or ecological function of the site	
Climate change	
Are 'mitigation' measures necessary to reach a conclusion that likely significant effects can be ruled out at screening?	
No	N/A

On the basis of the information supplied, which is considered adequate to undertake a screening determination and having regard to:

- the nature and scale of the proposed development,
- the intervening land uses and distance from European sites,
- the lack of direct connections with regard to the Source-Pathway-Receptor model,

It may be concluded that the proposed development, individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, would not be likely to have a significant effect on the above listed European sites or any other European site, in view of the said sites' conservation objectives.

6.2. Assessment of Potential In-Combination Effects

In-combination effects are changes in the environment that result from numerous human-induced, small-scale alterations. In-combination effects can be thought of as occurring through two main pathways: first, through persistent additions or losses of the same materials or resource, and second, through the compounding effects as a result of the coming together of two or more effects.

As part of the Screening for an Appropriate Assessment, in addition to the Proposed Development, other relevant plans and projects in the area must also be considered at this stage. This step aims to identify at this early stage any possible significant in-combination effects of the Proposed Development with other such plans and projects on European sites.

Consideration of Plans

This assessment was prepared with consideration of the following policies and objectives of the **South Dublin County Development Plan (2022-2028)**:

IE2 Objective 9: To protect water bodies and watercourses, including rivers, streams, associated undeveloped riparian strips, wetlands and natural floodplains, within the County from inappropriate development. This will include protection buffers in riverine and wetland areas as appropriate (see also Objective G3 Objective 2 – Biodiversity Protection Zone).

G1 Objective 1: To establish a coherent, integrated and evolving Green Infrastructure network across South Dublin County with parks, open spaces, hedgerows, grasslands, protected areas, and rivers and streams forming the strategic links and to integrate the objectives of the Green Infrastructure Strategy throughout all relevant Council plans, such as Local Area Plans and other approved plans.

G2 Objective 2: To protect and enhance the biodiversity value and ecological function of the Green Infrastructure network.

G2 Objective 8: To provide for the incorporation of Eco-ducts and/or Green Bridges at ecologically sensitive locations on the County's road and rail corridors that will facilitate the free movement of people and species through the urban and rural environment.

G2 Objective 9: To preserve, protect and augment trees, groups of trees, woodlands and hedgerows within the County by increasing tree canopy coverage using locally native species and by incorporating them within design proposals and supporting their integration into the Green Infrastructure network.

G2 Objective 11: To incorporate appropriate elements of Green Infrastructure e.g. new tree planting, grass verges, planters etc. into existing areas of hard infrastructure wherever possible, thereby integrating these areas of existing urban environment into the overall Green Infrastructure network.

G2 Objective 12: To seek to control and manage non-native invasive species and to develop strategies with relevant stakeholders to assist in the control of these species throughout the County.

G3 Objective 2: To maintain a biodiversity protection zone of not less than 10 metres from the top of the bank of all watercourses in the County, with the full extent of the protection zone to be determined on a case by case basis by the Planning Authority, based on site specific characteristics and sensitivities. Strategic Green Routes and Trails identified in the South Dublin Tourism Strategy, 2015; the Greater Dublin Area Strategic Cycle Network; and other government plans or programmes will be open for consideration within the biodiversity protection zone, subject to appropriate safeguards and assessments, as these routes increase the accessibility of the Green Infrastructure network.

G3 Objective 5: To restrict the encroachment of development on watercourses, and provide for protection measures to watercourses and their banks, including but not limited to: the prevention of pollution of the watercourse, the protection of the river bank from erosion, the retention and/or provision of wildlife corridors and the protection from light spill in sensitive locations, including during construction of permitted development.

G4 Objective 4: To minimise the environmental impact of external lighting at sensitive locations within the Green Infrastructure network to achieve a sustainable balance between the recreational needs of an area, the safety of walking and cycling routes and the protection of light sensitive species such as bats.

G4 Objective 5: To promote the planting of woodlands, forestry, community gardens, allotments and parkland meadows within the County's open spaces and parks.

G4 Objective 7: To avoid the cumulative fragmentation and loss of ecologically sensitive areas of the Green Infrastructure network to artificial surfaces and to position recreational facilities that incorporate artificial surfaces at appropriate community-based locations.

G6 Objective 1: To protect and enhance existing ecological features including tree stands, woodlands, hedgerows and watercourses in all new developments as an essential part of the design process.

G6 Objective 2: To require new development to provide links into the wider Green Infrastructure network, in particular where similar features exist on adjoining sites.

HCL11 Objective 5: To ensure that development along and adjacent to the Grand Canal protects and incorporates high value natural heritage features including watercourses, wetlands, grasslands, woodlands, mature trees, hedgerows and ditches and includes for an appropriate set-back distance or buffer area from the pNHA boundary to facilitate protected species, biodiversity, and a fully functioning Green Infrastructure network.

HCL12 Objective 1: To prevent development that would adversely affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 site located within and immediately adjacent to the County and promote favourable conservation status of habitats and protected species including those listed under the Birds Directive, the Wildlife Acts and the Habitats Directive.

HCL12 Objective 2: To ensure that projects that give rise to significant direct, indirect or secondary impacts on Natura 2000 sites, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not be permitted unless the following is robustly demonstrated in accordance with Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive and S.177AA of the Planning and Development Act (2000 – 2010) or any superseding legislation:

1. There are no less damaging alternative solutions available; and
2. There are imperative reasons of overriding public interest (as defined in the Habitats Directive) requiring the project to proceed; and
3. Adequate compensatory measures have been identified that can be put in place.

HCL13 Objective 1: 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.

HCL15 Objective 1: To ensure that development does not have a significant adverse impact on rare and threatened species, including those protected under the Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2000, the Birds Directive 1979 and the Habitats Directive 1992.

HCL15 Objective 2: To ensure that, where evidence of species that are protected under the Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2000, the Birds Directive 1979 and the Habitats Directive 1992 exists, appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures are incorporated into development proposals as part of any ecological impact assessment.

HCL15 Objective 3: To protect existing trees, hedgerows, and woodlands which are of amenity or biodiversity value and/ or contribute to landscape character and ensure that proper provision is made for their protection and management in accordance with Living with Trees: South Dublin County Council's Tree Management Policy 2015-2020.

This assessment was also prepared with consideration of the policies and objectives of the **Clonburris Strategic Development Zone (SDZ)** Planning Scheme.

The consideration of Biodiversity and Natural Heritage is set out in Section 2.11 of the Planning Scheme Framework and includes several Key Principles:

- To seek to protect and enhance natural, built and cultural heritage features, where appropriate, such as the Grand Canal, streams, Protected Structures and barony and townland boundary hedgerows;
- To improve the quality, character and continuity of the Grand Canal (pNHA);
- To avoid or minimise the impact on protected species and their habitats;
- To promote local heritage, the naming of any new residential development should reflect the local and historical context of its siting, and may include the use of the Irish language; and
- Incorporate biodiversity and heritage into new developments.

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was prepared (SDCC, 2017) for the Clonburris Strategic Development Zone (SDZ) – Draft Planning Scheme.

The Environmental Report documents the SEA process and is the key consultation document in the SEA process and facilitates interested parties to comment on the environmental issues associated with the plan. It includes Key Principles following a review of International, National, Regional and Local Plans, Policies and Programmes as follows:

- Conserve and enhance biodiversity at all levels,
- Avoid and minimise effects on nationally and internationally rare and threatened species and habitats through sensitive design and consultation, recognising ecological connectivity where possible,
- Facilitate species and habitat adaption to climate change,
- Avoid and minimise habitat fragmentation and seek opportunities to improve habitat connectivity,
- Ensure careful consideration of non-native invasive and alien species issues particularly as they relate to waterbodies such as the Grand Canal and Griffeen River.

An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report was prepared (SDCC, 2017) in line with Article 6(3) of the EC Habitats Directive for the Balgaddy-Clonburris Strategic Development Zone (SDZ) – Draft Planning Scheme to be read in conjunction with the SEA Environmental Report.

The professional opinion of the authors of that report is that the draft Planning Scheme for Clonburris SDZ does not require a full Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment.

Notwithstanding this conclusion, which is based on the assessment of the Draft Scheme in its own right, it is important to acknowledge the “protective” policies and objectives contained within the South Dublin County Development Plan (2016-2022). They are regarded as strategic policies and objectives for the County and the draft Planning Scheme is consistent with these policies and objectives. The draft Planning Scheme sets out principles to protect ecological networks and resources, to help to prevent any adverse effects on European sites (and their supporting networks) which may arise as a result of implementing the Clonburris SDZ.

An Bord Pleanála decided under the provisions of section 169 (7) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, to APPROVE the making of the Balgaddy-Clonburris SDZ Planning Scheme.

Consideration of Projects

A review of the National Planning Application Database was undertaken. The first stage of this review confirmed that there were no data gaps in the area where the Proposed Development is located. The database was then queried for developments granted planning permission within 500m of the Proposed Development within the last three years. Three years is the generally acknowledged time frame in Ecological Assessment (also by CIEEM) in which ecological changes occur and can be measured. Outside three years the consideration of response to an environmental pressure needs to be reassessed. Granted applications are considered in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Planning applications granted permission in the vicinity of the Proposed Development.

Planning Ref.	Description of development	Comments
SD19A/0108	Retention of 12 metre high rooftop telecommunications structure, antennas, dishes and associate equipment and cabinets.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
SD19A/0376	Sub-division of existing site for the construction of a two storey detached house; connection to foul sewer and surface water; shared use of existing vehicular entrance and driveway and all associated site works.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
SD19B/0091	Construction of a single storey extension to side of dwelling with internal modification and associated site works.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
SD19B/0207	First floor extension to side over converted garage, with projecting bay window to rear; ground floor extension to front incorporating porch and extended living and play rooms; attic conversion to utility/storage incorporating 'Velux' type rooflights to all aspects with solar panels to rear; external insulation to all elevations; demolition of garden shed replacing with new shed; all associated site works and drainage.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
SD19B/0360	Two storey extension to side of existing dwelling incorporating garage & utility at ground floor and ensuite, walk in wardrobe to first floor; pitched roof to match existing; alterations to existing vehicular entrance including new brick pillar and rendered front wall; gate to side of rear garden. Also, retention permission is sought for construction of single storey shed, with pitched roof, to rear garden used as playroom and store and all associated site works.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
SD20A/0062	Revision of previously approved planning SD09A/0313 including increase the number of children attending the playschool to 16 (maximum) in any one session; change opening hours to 9am - 12pm (morning session) and 12:30pm - 3:30pm (afternoon session), Monday to Friday; minor internal changes to the playschool; all associated site works.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
SD20A/0164	Internal separation of house and associated granny flat to provide for 2 permanent houses.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
SD20B/0010	Retention of a single storey extension to rear and existing storey garage to front side and rear; erect a first floor extension to front side and rear above existing garage and all ancillary site works.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
SD20B/0420	Single storey extension at side.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
SD21B/0365	Conversion of attic to storage including changing existing hipped end roof to a gable end roof; dormer window to the rear and a window to the new side gable wall, all at roof level.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
SD21B/0491	Attic conversion to incorporate a storeroom with full dormer window to rear of existing dwelling; all ancillary site works.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.

In addition, SDCC has a land holding within the SDZ which has the potential to deliver approx. 2,600 homes and each phase of development will be assessed as they are brought forward.

Planning permission has been granted for the Southern Link Road within the SDZ which would be located within 500m of the Proposed Development; Planning reference: SDZ20A/0021. The application was accompanied by a Report for AA Screening which concluded that the possibility of any significant effects on any European sites, whether arising from the project alone or in combination with other plans and projects, can be excluded.

There is a current live planning application within the SDZ in subsector S3 Clonburris South West (CSW-S3) for 569 dwellings, creche, open space and innovation hub and that at the time of this report the application is still under consideration with a request for further information requested by the planning authority.

The South Dublin County Development Plan in complying with the requirements of the Habitats Directive requires that all Projects and Plans that could affect the Natura 2000 sites in the same potential Zone of Influence of the Proposed Development site would be initially screened for Appropriate Assessment and if requiring Stage 2 AA, that appropriate employable mitigation measures would be put in place to avoid, reduce or ameliorate negative impacts. In this way any, in-combination impacts with Plans or Projects for the proposed development area and surrounding townlands in which the proposed development site is located, would be avoided.

The listed developments have been granted permission in most cases with conditions relating to sustainable development by the consenting authority in compliance with the relevant Local Authority Development Plan and in compliance with the Local Authority requirement for regard to the Habitats Directive. The development cannot have received planning permission without having met the consenting authority requirement in this regard. There are no predicted in-combination effects given that it is predicted that the Proposed Development will have no effect on any European site.

There are no predicted in-combination effects given that the Proposed Development is unlikely to have any adverse effects on the Dublin Bay European sites.

Any new applications for the Proposed Development area will be assessed on a case by case basis *initially* by South Dublin County Council which will determine the requirement for AA Screening as per the requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.

7. Conclusion

There are no predicted effects on any European sites given:

- The distance between the Proposed Development and any European Sites;

- The lack of direct connectivity between the Proposed Development and any hydrological pathways; there are no watercourses within the Proposed Development boundary and there is only indirect connectivity between the Proposed Development site and Dublin Bay via the Ringsend WwTP.
- There are no predicted emissions to air, water or the environment during the construction or operational phases that would result in significant effects.

It has been objectively concluded by Moore Group Environmental Services that:

1. The Proposed Development is not directly connected with, or necessary to the conservation management of the European sites considered in this assessment.
2. The Proposed Development is unlikely to either directly or indirectly significantly affect the Qualifying interests or Conservation Objectives of the European sites considered in this assessment.
3. The Proposed Development, alone or in combination with other projects, is not likely to have significant effects on the European sites considered in this assessment in view of their conservation objectives.
4. It is possible to conclude that significant effects can be excluded at the screening stage.

It can be *excluded*, on the basis of objective information, that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

An appropriate assessment is not, therefore, required.

A finding of no significant effects report is presented in Appendix A in accordance with the EU Commission's methodological guidance (European Commission, 2002).

8. References

Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2010) Guidance on Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland (as amended February 2010).

European Commission (2000) Managing Natura 2000 sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC.

European Commission Environment DG (2002) 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. European Commission, Brussels.

European Commission (2007) Guidance document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitats Directive '92/43/EEC: Clarification of the concepts of: alternative solutions, imperative reasons of overriding public interests, compensatory measures, overall coherence and opinion of the Commission. European Commission, Brussels.

European Commission (2018) Managing Natura 2000 sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC.

European Commission (2021) Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, Brussels 28.9.21.

European Commission (2021) Guidance document on the strict protection of animal species of Community interest under the Habitats Directive, Brussels 12.10.21.

NPWS (2019) The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin.

NPWS (2022) National Parks and Wildlife Service Metadata available online at <https://www.npws.ie/maps-and-data>

Office-of-the-Planning-Regulator (2021) Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management OPR Practice Note PN01. March 2021

Appendix A

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS REPORT

Finding no significant effects report matrix

Name of project or plan

Canal Extension Clonburris Residential Development

Name and location of the Natura 2000 site(s)

The European sites within the potential zone of influence of the Proposed Development are associated with Dublin Bay and include South Dublin Bay SAC, and South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA, 12.85km and 12.27km to the east of the site, respectively.

Surface water will be directed to a SuDS Area at the northern portion of the site. Wastewater from the proposed development will be directed to Ringsend WWTP which will have the capacity to assimilate the additional load. There is therefore indirect connectivity to Dublin Bay via the Ringsend Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Description of the project or plan

The Proposed Development consists of the construction of a residential development at Clonburris, South Dublin County, to consist of 118 dwelling units, to include apartments, duplexes and dwelling houses and associated works.

Is the project or plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site(s)

No

Are there other projects or plans that together with the projects or plan being assessed could affect the site

As part of the Screening for an Appropriate Assessment, in addition to the Proposed Development, other relevant plans and projects in the area must also be considered at this stage. This step aims to identify at this early stage any possible significant in-combination effects of the Proposed Development with other such plans and projects on European sites.

Consideration of Plans

This assessment was prepared with consideration of the following policies and objectives of the **South Dublin County Development Plan (2022-2028)**

This assessment was prepared with consideration of the policies and objectives of the **Clonburris Strategic Development Zone (SDZ) Planning Scheme**.

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was prepared (SDCC, 2017) for the Clonburris Strategic Development Zone (SDZ) –Planning Scheme.

An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report was prepared (SDCC, 2017) for the Balgaddy-Clonburris Strategic Development Zone (SDZ) –Planning Scheme.

The professional opinion of the authors of that report is that the draft Planning Scheme for Clonburris SDZ does not require a full Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment.

Notwithstanding this conclusion, which is based on the assessment of the Scheme in its own right, it is important to acknowledge the “protective” policies and objectives contained within the South Dublin County Development Plan (2016-2022). They are regarded as strategic policies and objectives for the County and the draft Planning Scheme is consistent with these policies and objectives. The Planning Scheme sets out principles to protect

ecological networks and resources, to help to prevent any adverse effects on European sites (and their supporting networks) which may arise as a result of implementing the Clonburris SDZ.

Consideration of Projects

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SD19B/0091	Construction of a single storey extension to side of dwelling with internal modification and associated site works.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
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SD20A/0164	Internal separation of house and associated granny flat to provide for 2 permanent houses.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
SD20B/0010	Retention of a single storey extension to rear and existing storey garage to front side and rear; erect a first floor extension to front side and rear above existing garage and all ancillary site works.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
SD20B/0420	Single storey extension at side.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
SD21B/0365	Conversion of attic to storage including changing existing hipped end roof to a gable end roof; dormer window to the	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.

Planning Ref.	Description of development	Comments
	rear and a window to the new side gable wall, all at roof level.	
SD21B/0491	Attic conversion to incorporate a storeroom with full dormer window to rear of existing dwelling; all ancillary site works.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.

In addition, SDCC has a land holding within the SDZ which has the potential to deliver approx. 2,600 homes and each phase of development will be assessed as they are brought forward.

Planning permission has been granted for the Southern Link Road within the SDZ which would be located within 500m of the Proposed Development; Planning reference: SDZ20A/0021. The application was accompanied by a Report for AA Screening which concluded that the possibility of any significant effects on any European sites, whether arising from the project alone or in combination with other plans and projects, can be excluded.

There is a current live planning application within the SDZ in subsector S3 Clonburris South West (CSW-S3) for 569 dwellings, creche, open space and innovation hub and that at the time of this report the application is still under consideration with a request for further information requested by the planning authority.

The South Dublin County Development Plan in complying with the requirements of the Habitats Directive requires that all Projects and Plans that could affect the Natura 2000 sites in the same potential Zone of Influence of the Proposed Development site would be initially screened for Appropriate Assessment and if requiring Stage 2 AA, that appropriate employable mitigation measures would be put in place to avoid, reduce or ameliorate negative impacts. In this way any, in-combination impacts with Plans or Projects for the proposed development area and surrounding townlands in which the proposed development site is located, would be avoided.

The listed developments have been granted permission in most cases with conditions relating to sustainable development by the consenting authority in compliance with the relevant Local Authority Development Plan and in compliance with the Local Authority requirement for regard to the Habitats Directive. The development cannot have received planning permission without having met the consenting authority requirement in this regard. There are no predicted in-combination effects given that it is predicted that the Proposed Development will have no effect on any European site.

There are no predicted in-combination effects given that the Proposed Development is unlikely to have any adverse effects on the Dublin Bay European sites.

Any new applications for the Proposed Development area will be assessed on a case by case basis *initially* by South Dublin County Council which will determine the requirement for AA Screening as per the requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.

THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS

Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site.

Surface water will be directed to a SuDS Area at the northern portion of the site. Wastewater from the proposed development will be directed to Ringsend WWTP which will have the capacity to assimilate the additional load.

Explain why these effects are not considered significant.

There are no predicted effects on any European sites given:

- The distance between the Proposed Development and any European Sites;
- The lack of direct connectivity between the Proposed Development and any hydrological pathways; there are no watercourses within the Proposed Development boundary and there is only indirect connectivity between the Proposed Development site and Dublin Bay via the Ringsend WwTP;

- The Proposed Development is to be connected to the existing public sewer network for the treatment of wastewater;
- There are no predicted emissions to air, water or the environment during the construction or operational phases that would result in significant effects.

List of agencies consulted: provide contact name and telephone or e-mail address

The requirement for Appropriate Assessment Screening was determined during pre-planning discussion with South Dublin County Council.

Response to consultation

N/A.

DATA COLLECTED TO CARRY OUT THE ASSESSMENT

Who carried out the assessment

Moore Group Environmental Services.

Sources of data

NPWS database of designated sites at www.npws.ie

National Biodiversity Data Centre database <http://maps.biodiversityireland.ie>

Level of assessment completed

Desktop Assessment. Fieldwork was carried out as part of the EclA.

Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed

South Dublin County Council Planning web portal.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

There are no predicted effects on any European sites given:

- The distance between the Proposed Development and any European Sites.
- The lack of direct connectivity between the Proposed Development and any hydrological pathways; there are no watercourses within the Proposed Development boundary and there is only indirect connectivity between the Proposed Development site and Dublin Bay via the Ringsend WWTP.
- There are no predicted emissions to air, water or the environment during the construction or operational phases that would result in significant effects.

It has been objectively concluded by Moore Group Environmental Services that:

1. The Proposed Development is not directly connected with, or necessary to the conservation management of the European sites considered in this assessment.
2. The Proposed Development is unlikely to either directly or indirectly significantly affect the Qualifying interests or Conservation Objectives of the European sites considered in this assessment.
3. The Proposed Development, alone or in combination with other projects, is not likely to have significant effects on the European sites considered in this assessment in view of their conservation objectives.
4. It is possible to conclude that significant effects can be excluded at the screening stage.

It can be *excluded*, on the basis of objective information, that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

An appropriate assessment is not, therefore, required.