

**Uimhir Thagarta Uathúil:** SD-C195-270

**Údar:** alistair mullan

**Stádas:** Submitted

**Submission:** Preserve Rathcoole Woodlands

**Comhairliúchán:**

Draft South Dublin County Development Plan 2022 - 2028

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## Chapter 2: Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy

**Caibidil:** Volume 1: Written Statement» Chapter 2: Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy

I believe that the Council must do more to protect and preserve Rathcoole Woodlands, including all the area subject to CS10 SLO1.

A number of recent ecological surveys have demonstrated the unique importance of Rathcoole Woodlands both as a rich source of biodiversity and as a well placed source of healthy amenity space to the local populations of Rathcoole and Saggart.

South Dublin County Council need to recognise the presence of three EU annex habitats within Core Strategy Policy 10 Rathcoole Specific Local Objective 1 (CS10 SLO1) which includes Rathcoole Woodlands :-

- Extensive 91EO Annex 1 Priority Alluvial Woodland
- Springs with an Affinity to Annex 1 Priority 7220 Petrifying Springs
- Extensive 6510 Annex 1 Lowland Hay Meadow

These annex habitats are required to be protected by law under the EU Habitats Directive.

I am asking the Council to:

1. preserve the entire area of CS10 SLO1 and designate it a High Amenity Area with overarching policies and objectives for protection and preservation (see 4 and 5 below).
2. At the very least, Amend CS10 Rathcoole SLO 1 as outlined in red below: *To investigate the potential for alternative land uses for the lands currently zoned RES-N (To provide for new residential communities in accordance with approved area plans) and OS (To preserve and provide for open space and recreational amenities) as identified by the SLO on the CDP land use zoning map, having regard to protecting existing annex habitats of Alluvial Woodland, Lowland Hay Meadow, Petrifying Springs and biodiversity rich non-annex habitats of orchid rich and species rich grasslands, and heritage hedgerows, Biodiversity and the Rathcoole Woodlands, GI7 Objective 3 and 4, the need for social and affordable housing, community infrastructure and access. Following this assessment, and where alternative land use arrangements are identified in line with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, to bring forward proposals for re-zoning including the establishment of a new land use zoning High Amenity-Camac Valley/Rathcoole Woodlands, 'HA - RW' if*

**deemed appropriate within the lifetime of this plan.**

3. Should it prove that none or only a small area can be developed in CS10 SLO 1 that a new zoning objective is established; Zoning Objective High Amenity-Camac Valley/Rathcoole Woodlands and environs, 'HA -CV/ RW' for the undeveloped area. And the following is put in place to protect and preserve Rathcoole Woodland and for present and future generations as part of the new zoning objective:
  - its designation as a Nature Reserve
  - obtaining a Special Amenity Area Order
  - and if appropriate to nominate it as a candidate Special Area of Conservation by bringing it to the attention of NPWS
  - or as a Natural Heritage Area
4. proposes the setting of a Natural, Cultural and Built Heritage (NCBH) policy for Rathcoole Woodlands and its environs: to protect and enhance the outstanding natural character and amenity of Rathcoole Woodlands and its environs, including its landscape, visual, recreational, ecological, educational and historical heritage value, as a key element of the County's Green Infrastructure network.
5. To designate Rathcoole Woodlands and its environs as a space for Nature and Biodiversity under the Green Infrastructure and Parks and Open Space
6. To incorporate all of Rathcoole Woodlands and its environs as is (CS10 SLO1 area), into the Green Infrastructure Strategy as a pivotal GI Core with Rathcoole Park along the Camac Valley GI Corridor linking to Slade Valley and Crooksling Glen pNHA, Lugg Woods and the Rural Fringe Corridor.
7. To extend the public owned lands containing Rathcoole Woodlands, either by direct purchase or land swap to incorporate the Woodland in adjacent land, the historical 170 year old double hedged passage to the west, and transitional zone from Woodland to managed park land to the east.
8. To incorporate all of Rathcoole Woodlands as is, into the Green Infrastructure Strategy as part of a wider nature/walking trail from Saggart to Lugg Woods and a significant core area
9. To incorporate all of Rathcoole Woodlands as is, with minimal management into Rathcoole Park
10. To recognise Rathcoole Woodland as being the first Native Woodland resulting from re-wilded agriculture land. One of a kind.

I would like the above included in the next County Development Plan 2022-2028.

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**Documents Attached:** Níl