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SEAN WALSH PARK PAVILION DEVELOPMENT

Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

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South Dublin County Council



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APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT

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Abstract: This document is to inform the Competent Authority in carrying out their statutory obligations relating to the Habitats Directive requirement for Appropriate Assessment for plans and projects seeking consent. Appropriate Assessment is required under Article 6 (3) of the Habitats Directive for any project or plan that may give rise to significant effects on a European (Natura 2000) site.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----------|
| 1. INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| 1.1 Legislative Context..... | 1 |
| 1.2 Methodology | 2 |
| 1.2.1 Guidance | 2 |
| 1.2.2 Process | 2 |
| 2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION | 5 |
| 2.1 Site Description..... | 5 |
| 2.2 Project Description | 5 |
| 2.3 Existing Environment..... | 5 |
| 3. SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT..... | 7 |
| 3.1 Introduction..... | 7 |
| 3.2 Identification of relevant European sites using Source-Pathway-Receptor model | 7 |
| 3.2.1 Study Area/ZoI..... | 7 |
| 3.3 Assessment of Likely Significant Effects | 15 |
| 3.4 Screening Conclusion..... | 17 |

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Statement of Authority

LIST OF TABLES

| | <u>Page</u> |
|---|-------------|
| Table 3-1: Source-Pathway-Receptor Assessment..... | 9 |
| Table 3-2: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects..... | 16 |

1. INTRODUCTION

Fehily Timoney and Company (FT)¹ was commissioned by South Dublin County Council to prepare an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (AASR) for Sean Walsh Park Pavilion Development. The proposed site is located in Sean Walsh Park, Tallaght, Dublin 24, south of the N81 Tallaght Bypass.

This report presents an examination of whether the proposed development is likely to have a significant effect on a European site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) and is based on best available scientific knowledge. This report has been prepared to inform the competent authority in completing their statutory obligations in relation to Appropriate Assessment, as required by Article 6(3) under Council Directive 92/43/EEC (Habitats Directive).

1.1 Legislative Context

Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (Habitats Directive) provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. The Directive requires that where a plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a European Site, while not directly connected with or necessary to the nature conservation management of the site, it will be subject to 'Appropriate Assessment' to identify any implications for the European site in view of the site's Conservation Objectives. Specifically, Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive states:

"6(3) Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site (Natura 2000 sites) but likely to have significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to Appropriate Assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In the 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."

The competent authority must carry out a screening for appropriate assessment to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if the proposed 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 proposed project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site, an appropriate assessment of its implications for the European Site(s) in view of the Site's conservation objectives is required to be carried out.

The provisions of Article 6(3) do not apply where the proposed plan or project is 'connected with or necessary to the management of the site'. In this case, the proposed project is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of any European site(s).

¹ Details on the contributors to this report are provided in Appendix 1.

1.2 Methodology

1.2.1 Guidance

The assessment was conducted in accordance with the following guidance:

- 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. Commission Notice (2021) Brussels, 28.9.2021 C(2021) 6913 final (European Commission, 2021)
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin (2009, updated 2010) (Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2010)
- Managing Natura 2000 sites. The provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. (European Commission, 2019)
- Interpretation Manual of European Union Habitats. Version EUR 28. (European COMmission, 2013)
- OPR Practice Note PN01 Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management, (Office of the Planning Regulator, 2021)

1.2.2 Process

The process of determining the likelihood of significant effects from a proposed project on European sites is an iterative process centred around a Source-Pathway-Receptor model. In order for an effect to be established, all three elements of this mechanism must be in place. The absence of one of the elements of the mechanism is sufficient to conclude that a potential effect cannot occur.

- Source(s) – e.g., pollutant run-off, noise, removal of vegetation, etc.;
- Pathway(s) – functional link, or ecological pathway e.g., groundwater connecting to nearby qualifying wetland habitats; and,
- Receptor(s) – the qualifying habitats and species of European sites and ecological resources supporting those habitats/species.

In the context of this report, a source is any identifiable element of the proposed project that is known to interact with the receiving environment. A receptor is the Qualifying Interests (QI)² for an SAC or Special Conservation Interests (SCI)³ for an SPA or an ecological feature that is known to be utilised by the QI/SCI. In practice, the term Qualifying Interests also applies to SCIs (and is used in this document for simplicity). A pathway is any connection or link between the source and the receptor.

² SACs are areas designated under the Habitats Directive to conserve habitats listed in Annex I of the Directive and plant and animal species listed in Annex II. Collectively these are referred to as the 'Qualifying Interests' or 'QIs' of the SAC.

³ SPAs are sites classified under the Birds Directive to protect rare or vulnerable bird species listed in Annex I to the Directive as well as regularly occurring migratory species and wetlands. Wetland habitats that support internationally important populations of migratory birds may be coastal or inland. Collectively, these species and habitats are referred to as the 'Special Conservation Interests' of the SPA.

The assessment commences with a description of the project, along with a description of the receiving environment and the associated sources for impacts to the receiving environment. All elements of the project are presented including the project location and existing baseline environment. The type of impacts that are likely due to the project (Source) are identified having regard to the spatial and temporal scale of the project, resource requirements and likely emissions. These sources are then used to define the zone of influence (ZoI) of the project.

The guidance (European Commission, 2021)¹, states that in identifying European sites (Natural 2000 sites), which may be affected by the project, the following should be identified:

- Any European sites geographically overlapping with any of the actions or aspects of the plan or project in any of its phases, or adjacent to them;
- Any European sites within the likely zone of influence of the plan or project. European sites located in the surroundings of the plan or project (or at some distance) that could still be indirectly affected by aspects of the project, including as regards the use of natural resources (e.g., water) and various types of waste, discharge or emissions of substances or energy;
- European sites whose connectivity or ecological continuity can be affected by the plan or project.

The zone of influence of a proposed project is therefore the geographical area over which it could affect the receiving environment in a way that could have potential effects on the Qualifying Interests of a European site. The practice note (Office of the Planning Regulator, 2021) states that the Zone of Influence must be established on a case-by-case basis using the Source-Pathway-Receptor (S-P-R) framework and not by arbitrary distances (such as 15 km). This report sets out the detailed rationale for the identification of relevant European sites within the ZoI based on the sources of impacts arising from the proposed project. Subsequently, an assessment is undertaken with respect to potential connectivity (Pathways) to European Sites and their qualifying interests/special conservation interests are identified.

The potential for in-combination effects with other plans and projects is examined in Section 2, having regard to the identified impacts of the project along the ecological pathways identified to European sites.

The likelihood of significant effects of the European Sites within the ZoI is examined having regard to the sensitivity of the site with pathways for impacts associated with the project on its own and in combination with other plans and projects.

Having regard to the European Commission Communication on the Precautionary Principle (European Commission, 2021) the:

“absence of scientific evidence on the significant negative effect of an action cannot be used as justification for approval of this action. When applied to Article 6(3) procedure, the precautionary principle implies that the absence of a negative effect on Natura 2000 sites has to be demonstrated before a plan or project can be authorised. In other words, if there is a lack of certainty as to whether there will be any negative effects, then the plan or project cannot be approved.”

Where significant effects are determined to be likely, or where there is uncertainty regarding the likelihood of significant effects, the project will be required under law to be subjected to Appropriate Assessment.

This AA screening is based on best scientific knowledge and has utilised ecological expertise. In addition, a detailed online review of published scientific literature was conducted. This included a detailed review of the National Parks and Wildlife Website including mapping and available reports for relevant sites and in particular sensitive qualifying interests/special conservation interests described and their conservation objectives.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 Site Description

The overall site is 0.0201 hectare (ha) in extent and is located within the townland of Esker South, Lucan, County Dublin. The overall area consists of several playing pitches, an artificial athletics track, an artificial hockey pitch, a teenspace area, a boules court, walking and cycling routes, existing hedgerows and some planting.

The site is located within WFD Catchment Liffey and Dublin Bay and WFD Sub catchment Liffey_SC_090. The nearest waterbodies include the Laraghcon (522 m to the west) and the Griffeen (330 m to the east), which merge and drain into the Liffey.

2.2 Project Description

The proposed development will consist of the following:

- One single storey pavilion building consisting of two individual team changing rooms each with one WC area, one club storage area, and one plant room, all with individual access.
- 1 No. Storage facility for equipment with a Plant room.
- Ancillary landscaping works adjacent to the pavilion building
- All associated ancillary works in adjacent areas including but not limited to foul & surface water drainage and utility supplies
- Installation of CCTV for security

The proposed development forms part of the South Dublin County Council Pavilion Project, which aims for the replacement of existing container units used for changing/storage space at parklands in the area.

2.3 Existing Environment

Ecological surveys were undertaken at the site by Shane Somers in August 2024.

The surrounding area was described as a mixture of Amenity Grassland (GA2) in the north, low diversity 'Dry Meadows and grassy verges' (GS2) in the central section, an artificially surfaced soccer pitch (BL3) in the west and broadleaved woodlands (WD1) in the east, which features a mixture of native and non-native trees. The GS2 section was likely previously an Amenity Grassland which has become a 'No-Mow' Area with relatively low plant diversity. The GS2 habitat contains the following species: Cocks-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*).

The WD1 section to the east of the proposed pavilion was recorded to contain the following species: Horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), Large leaved lime (*Tilia platyphyllos*), Ivy (*Hedera helix*), brambles (*Rubus fruticosus*). WD5 (Scattered trees and parkland) farther east contains Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*), and London plane (*Platanus occidentalis x orientalis*).

The mixed woodland contains a mixture of native and non-native trees, including horse chestnut, beech and lime trees. The woodland is quite disturbed as it contains many paths and trails throughout. The treeline (WL2) to the southwest contains many native species native species and flowering plants, including elder, brambles and silver birch, which support pollinators.

Watercourses are present on site and are located 175 m to the east and 200 m to the southeast of the proposed development site. There is 60 m of Mixed Broadleaved Woodland (WD1) between the proposed development site and the watercourses which will act as a natural swale for run-off from construction as well as a footpath with over-the-edge draining. As informed by a desktop assessment a dedicated otter survey⁴ was carried out to determine the suitability of the area for otters which revealed a historic record of otter (2014). During the ecological walkover survey, no evidence of otter was found within the surrounding area of the proposed development site.

There are existing records of the following protected species (and their year of recording) in the surrounding area of the proposed development:

- Common Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) and Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*) were recorded in Q1 of 2023. As watercourses are present within 500 m of the proposed development, the bird species may incur some disturbance during the construction phase of the development. However, the territory of the kingfisher and little egret are within an extended surrounding radius of the proposed development (10 km) allowing space for refuge in nearby areas. Additionally, due to the short duration and small scale of the proposed development, disturbance to the species is unlikely.

⁴ Chanin P (2003) Monitoring the Otter *Lutra lutra*. Conserving Natura 2000 Rivers Monitoring Series No 10. English Nature, Peterborough.

3. SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

3.1 Introduction

Consideration is given to whether the proposed development is likely to have a significant effect upon any European sites, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. The approach to identifying European sites which have potential for significant effects due to the proposed development follows the approach set out in the AA screening practice note (Office of the Planning Regulator, 2021).

3.2 Identification of relevant European sites using Source-Pathway-Receptor model

The practice note (Office of the Planning Regulator, 2021) states that the Zone of Influence (ZoI) must be established on a case-by-case basis using the Source-Pathway-Receptor model. In this regard, consideration is given to the nature and extent of the proposed development and the characteristics of the immediate environment along with the consideration of potential pathways for connectivity to European sites, which are assessed having regard to available Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping and ecological site walkover.

3.2.1 Study Area/ZoI

As per CIEEM guidelines (2018)⁵, the study area for the proposed development has been defined having regard to the spatial and temporal scale of potential biophysical changes in the environment which might occur as a result of the development and throughout its lifetime. As such the study area extends beyond the footprint of the works and considers potential direct and indirect links to sensitive receptors of European sites. In particular, the following was considered:

- Impacts on habitats - the potential for biophysical change by disturbance/damage/ degradation is taken as the footprint of the works (including any site clearance) plus 10m beyond (based on Ryan Hanley, 2014)⁶.
- The IAQM Guidance⁷ prescribes a potential dust ZoI for dust impacts from construction and demolition works as 50m from site boundaries and 250m from site entrance.
- For groundwater dependant terrestrial ecosystems additional consideration is given to potential for hydrological/hydrogeological impacts and as such a potential for biophysical change is considered 250m beyond works areas as per SEPA guidelines⁸.

In defining the potential zone of influence for the proposed development of species, the following guidelines were referred to:

⁵ CIEEM (2018) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine version 1.2. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester

⁶ Ryan Hanley (2014b) Stage 1: Appropriate Assessment Screening Methodology for the Maintenance of Arterial Drainage Schemes. Prepared by Ryan Hanley Consulting Engineers on behalf of the Office of Public Works

⁷ IAQM Guidance on the assessment of dust from demolition and construction (Institute of Air Quality Management, January 2024 (Version 2.2)

⁸ Scottish Environment Protection Agency (2014) Land Use Planning System SEPA Guidance Note 31. Guidance on Assessing the Impacts of Development Proposals on Groundwater Abstractions and groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems.

- The potential disturbance zone for birds beyond the footprint of the proposed development was considered having regard to Cutts et al (2013)⁹ and was defined as 500m;
- The NRA (2008) Guidelines for the Treatment of Otters prior to the Construction of National Road Schemes notes a 150m potential disturbance zone for otter. As such the study area included the proposed development site plus a 150m buffer.

The Proposed Development will result in the permanent loss of approximately 0.0201 hectares of Amenity Grassland (GA2) habitat. The habitats within and adjacent to the proposed development which are within the Zol for dust effects and/or habitat damage or degradation are not Annex I type habitats and are not part of any European site. Additionally, there are no GWDEs within 250m Zol of the proposed development.

The proposed development site is located wholly outside of any European site. The closest Natura 2000 sites to the development are Glenasmole Valley SAC (4.69 km), Wicklow Mountains SAC (10.39 km), Wicklow Mountains SPA (10.17 km), South Dublin Bay SAC (13.06 km), South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (13.17 km), Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC (13.45 km), Knocksink Wood SAC (14.12 km), and Red Bog, Kildare SAC (14.65 km).

While the proposed development is outside of European Sites, consideration is given to the potential for lands within disturbance and impact Zols (as described above) to support the qualifying interests / special conservation interests of these nearby European sites (see Table 3-1: Source-Pathway-Receptor Assessment). In this regard, an assessment is made as to whether there could be landscape¹⁰ or ecological connectivity¹¹ to any European site. Consideration was given to existing records for qualifying features in the locality of the proposed development and an assessment of the potential for mobile qualifying features of European sites to use the lands within the disturbance and impact Zols.

Additionally, in determining potential for SPA birds to be within the disturbance zone of the proposed development the 'Scottish Natural Heritage (2016) Guidance on Assessing Connectivity with Special Protection Areas (SPAs)' was referred to for the core foraging ranges of SPA birds and a 15km range was adopted for consideration.

Table 3-1 displays the European sites which may be included in the Zol and their potential pathways for connectivity.

⁹ Cutts N, Hemingway K and Spencer J (2013). The Waterbird Disturbance Mitigation Toolkit Informing Estuarine Planning and Construction Projects. Produced by the Institute of Estuarine and Coastal Studies (IECS). Version 3.2.

¹⁰ Landscape connectivity is a combined product of structural and functional connectivity, i.e. the effect of physical landscape structure and the actual species use of the landscape (Kettunen et al. 2007)

¹¹ Connectivity is defined as a measure of the functional availability of the habitats needed for a particular species to move through a given area. Examples include the flight lines used by bats to travel between roosts and foraging areas, or the corridors of appropriate habitat needed by some slow colonising species if they are to spread (CIEEM, 2018).

Table 3-1: Source-Pathway-Receptor Assessment

| European Site (code) | List of Qualifying Interest/Special Conservation Interest | Distance from development (km) | Source - Pathway - Receptor Assessment | Considered further in screening Y/N |
|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Glenasmole Valley SAC (001209) | Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (* important orchid sites) [6210], <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410], Petrifying springs with tufa formation (<i>Cratoneurion</i>) [7220] | 2.86 | The proposed development is located at a distance of 2.86 km from this European site. Due to the small scale of the proposed development, the downstream location of the proposed development, and the distance from this SAC, there is no pathway for effects on the QI. | N |
| Wicklow Mountains SPA (004040) | Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>) [A098], Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>) [A103] | 10.17 | The potential disturbance zone of birds beyond the footprint of the proposed development is defined as 500 m. As per SNH, 2016 Merlin have a core foraging range of 5 km and Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>) 2km. As such, no pathway for effects exists. | N |
| Wicklow Mountains SAC (002122) | Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorellatalia uniflora</i>) [3110], Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160], Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010], European dry heaths [4030], Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060], Calaminarian grasslands of the <i>Violetalia calaminariae</i> [6130], Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe) [6230], Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130], Siliceous scree of the montane to | 10.39 | Due to the small scale of the proposed development and the significant distance of this SAC beyond the ZOI for habitats from the proposed development, there is no pathway for effects on the QI. The potential disturbance zone of Otter is 150 m. As the development site is | N |

| European Site (code) | List of Qualifying Interest/Special Conservation Interest | Distance from development (km) | Source - Pathway - Receptor Assessment | Considered further in screening Y/N |
|-------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| | snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladani</i>) [8110], Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210], Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220], Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0], <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355] | | located 10.39 km away from this SAC, no pathway for direct effects exists. There is otter activity in the area, however, the watercourses at the proposed development site are not hydrologically connected in any way to the SAC and as such would not be a commuting or foraging corridor for otters associated with the SAC. The otter population in the locality of the proposed development is a distinct population separate to the SAC population.. | |
| South Dublin Bay SAC (000210) | Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140], Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210], <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310], Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] | 13.06 | <p>The proposed works are located 175 m away from the watercourse and intervening habitat comprises of meadows and woodland.</p> <p>The paths located between works and watercourse, have over the edge drainage (i.e. no gullies which could act as a pathway to the watercourse). Given the distance of the works from the watercourse combined with the fact that the intervening vegetation would act as a natural</p> | N |

| European Site (code) | List of Qualifying Interest/Special Conservation Interest | Distance from development (km) | Source - Pathway - Receptor Assessment | Considered further in screening Y/N |
|---|--|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| | | | <p>swale to any site run off, there is no potential pathway between the works and the watercourse.</p> <p>Due to the small scale of the proposed development and the significant distance of this SAC beyond the Zol of the proposed development, there is no pathway for effects on the QI.</p> | |
| South Dublin Bay and River Tolka SPA (004024) | <p>Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046], Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130], Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137], Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141], Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143], Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144], Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149], Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157], Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162], Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179], Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) [A192], Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193], Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194], Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</p> | 13.17 | <p>The SPA is outside of the Zol of the proposed development and as such there is no potential for direct impacts on the SPA. However, consideration is given to potential for landscape/ecological connectivity as described in Section 3.2.1.</p> <p>The bird species present within this European site are coastal bird species. With the exception of Light-bellied Brent Goose, the birds of the SPA have short foraging ranges, e.g. Dunlin and Plover species have core ranges of 500 m and 3 km, respectively (source: Scottish Natural Heritage, 2016). As such these</p> | N |

| European Site (code) | List of Qualifying Interest/Special Conservation Interest | Distance from development (km) | Source - Pathway - Receptor Assessment | Considered further in screening Y/N |
|----------------------|---|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| | | | <p>species would be unlikely to forage the 13.17 km towards the proposed development lands. Additionally, the lands surrounding the proposed development (which are within the 500m disturbance zone for birds) are not suitable foraging or roosting habitats for these birds, which use coastal areas foraging on mudflat and intertidal habitats.</p> <p>Light-bellied Brent Goose has a larger foraging range (assumed as up to 15 km, having regard to foraging ranges of other geese as prescribed in SNH, 2016) and as such its foraging range could theoretically overlap with the disturbance zone of the proposed development.</p> <p>However, as per the SPA Conservation Objectives supporting Document (NPWS, 2014, Version1) the foraging preference of Light-bellied Brent Goose is intertidal areas with Eelgrass (<i>Zostera</i> sp.), algae, and saltmarsh plant species. The lands within the disturbance ZOI for birds does not provide suitable foraging habitat.</p> | |

| European Site (code) | List of Qualifying Interest/Special Conservation Interest | Distance from development (km) | Source - Pathway - Receptor Assessment | Considered further in screening Y/N |
|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| | | | <p>Additionally, the SPA population of Light-bellied Brent Goose roosts on Bull Island. As the proposed development is not a suitable destination for foraging or roosting, there is no pathway for effect.</p> | |
| Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA (00463) | Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>) [A043], Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>) [A183] | 14.42 | <p>The SPA is outside of the Zol of the proposed development and as such there is no potential for direct impacts on the SPA. However, consideration is given to potential for landscape/ecological connectivity as described in Section 3.2.1.</p> <p>The Lesser Black-backed Gull is a coastal bird species, which has a very limited foraging range. Additionally, the lands surrounding the proposed development (which are within the 500m disturbance zone for birds) are not suitable foraging or roosting habitats for these birds, which use coastal areas foraging on mudflat and intertidal habitats.</p> <p>The Greylag Goose has a larger foraging range. (assumed as up to 15 km, having regard to</p> | N |

| European Site (code) | List of Qualifying Interest/Special Conservation Interest | Distance from development (km) | Source - Pathway - Receptor Assessment | Considered further in screening Y/N |
|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| | | | <p>foraging ranges of other geese as prescribed in SNH, 2016) and as such its foraging range could theoretically overlap with the disturbance zone of the proposed development. However, the Greylag Goose favours estuaries, where they feed on the roots of rushes and sedges, and on arable farmland with cereal stubble and grasslands in their wintering area. The lands within the disturbance ZOI for birds will not provide suitable foraging habitat for the species. As such, no suitable pathway for effect has been identified.</p> | |
| Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC (001398) | Petrifying springs with tufa formation (<i>Cratoneurion</i>) [7220], <i>Vertigo angustior</i> (Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail) [1014], <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> (Desmoulin's Whorl Snail) [1016] | 13.45 | The qualifying features of this SAC are located a considerable distance outside of the ZOI of the proposed development (as described in Section 3.2.1) and, as per Irish Wildlife Manual 55, the species for which the SAC is designated have specific micro-habitats to which they are confined, and which do not correlate with any of the habitats within the ZOI of the proposed development. As such, | N |

| European Site (code) | List of Qualifying Interest/Special Conservation Interest | Distance from development (km) | Source - Pathway - Receptor Assessment | Considered further in screening Y/N |
|------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| | | | there are no pathways for effect. | |
| Knocksink Wood SAC (000725) | Petrifying springs with tufa formation (<i>Cratoneurion</i>) [7220], Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0], Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0] | 14.12 | The qualifying features of this SAC are located a considerable distance outside of the Zol of the proposed development (as described in Section 3.2.1), and shares no direct waterbodies with the site. As such, there are no pathways for effects. | N |
| Red Kildare Bog, SAC (00397) | Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140] | 14.65 | The qualifying features of this SAC are located a considerable distance outside of the Zol of the proposed development (as described in Section 3.2.1), and shares no direct watercourses with the site. As such, there are no pathways for effects. | N |

3.3 Assessment of Likely Significant Effects

The guidance (European Commission, 2021) notes that the significance of the effects will vary depending on factors such as the magnitude of impact, the type, extent, duration, intensity, timing, probability, in-combination effects and the vulnerability of the habitats and species concerned. European site(s) identified are now examined for the potential for likely significant effects.

Table 3-2: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>(a) Identify all potential direct and indirect impacts that may have an effect on the conservation objectives of a European site, taking into account the size and scale of the project under the following headings:</p> | |
| Impacts: | Possible Significance of Impacts: (duration/magnitude etc.) |
| Construction phase | There will be minor loss of Amenity Grassland (GA2) habitat as a result of the construction phase of development. There may be some disturbance to scattered trees and parkland (WD5) as this is near the proposed development and the site will be accessed through the North entrance. The surrounding habitats will remain as they are. There will be a localised increase in noise and dust for the duration of the works |
| Operational phase | There will be no impact to the surrounding area during the operational phase as the development is replacing an already present structure used for the same purpose. |
| <p>In-combination/Other</p> <p>Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires that:</p> <p>“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 subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives”.</p> <p>It is therefore required that the likely significant effects of the proposed project are considered in-combination with any other plans or projects within the zone of influence.</p> <p>The consideration of in-combination effects with other plans or projects focused on the sources of impacts identified for the proposed development and ecological pathways identified in Table 3-1.</p> <p>As there are no meaningful pathways for effects identified with respect to European sites - given the nature of the habitats on the site and the distance from relevant SPA locations for SCI species. There are no further considerations required as the S-P-R model has been completed with no potential effects that could arise from the proposed project.</p> | |
| <p>(b) Describe any likely changes to the European sites:</p> | |
| | There are no European sites affected by the construction or operational phases of the proposed development. |

(c) Are 'mitigation' measures necessary to reach a conclusion that likely significant effects can be ruled out at screening?

Yes No

3.4 Screening Conclusion

The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report concludes that, given the scale and nature of the potential sources, there are no likely significant effects identified to any European sites. This process has considered potential effects which may arise during all phases of the proposed project. Through an assessment of the pathways for effects and an evaluation of the sources for impacts, taking account of the processes involved and the distance of separation from European sites, it has been evaluated that there are no likely significant effects on the qualifying interests, special conservation interest or the conservation objectives of any designated European site.

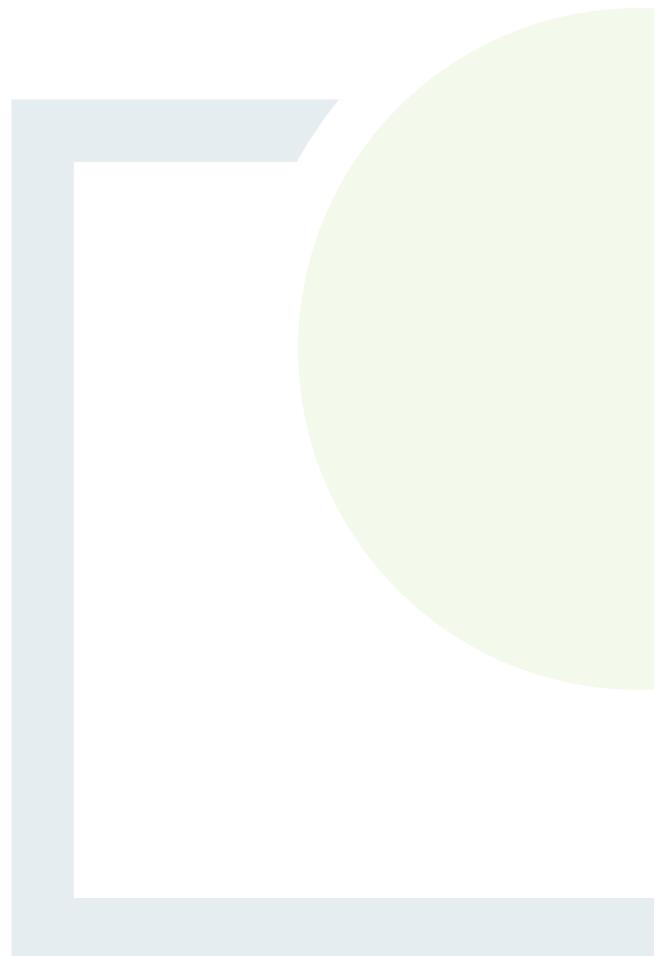


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APPENDIX 1

Statement of Authority



| Name | Role | Biography |
|----------------|-----------------|--|
| Shannon Burke | Report Author | <p>Shannon is a Project Ecologist with 5 years' experience in coastal ecology and the environmental sector. She has undertaken a number of field surveys including habitat, vegetation, and freshwater invertebrate surveys.</p> <p>Shannon graduated from University College Dublin with a first-class honor in Plant Biology (BSc Hons.). She has also been awarded a PhD in Environmental Science studying the carbon stock and sequestration rates in Ireland's saltmarshes and is pending graduation.</p> |
| Rita Mansfield | Report Reviewer | <p>Rita is a Principal Ecologist and Project Manager with 20 years' previous experience as a technical lead within the environmental and planning services sector. She specialises in statutory consent and environmental assessment for large scale public infrastructure projects in the energy, water (including flood relief schemes) and transport sectors. She is a qualified ecologist with experience in environmental impact assessment, planning applications (conventional and strategic infrastructure development), climate adaptation, Appropriate Assessment, foreshore licensing, Water Framework Directive, integrated catchment management, and stakeholder engagement.</p> <p>Rita has held numerous licences under the Wildlife Act and Habitats Directive for disturbance to species which included mitigation (e.g. construction of artificial otter holt, bat exclusion). Rita has provided advice on ecological / environmental design to various private and public sector clients, which included the development of contract requirements for Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) for contracts tendered using both the PPP and D&B.</p> |



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