FEHILY TIMONEY

DESIGNING AND DELIVERING
A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

UPGRADE AND EXTENSION TO BALLYROAN COMMUNITY & YOUTH CENTRE, RATHFARNHAM, DUBLIN 14

APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT

Prepared for:

South Dublin County Council

Comhairle Contae
Átha Cliath Theas
South Dublin County Council

Date: **June 2025**

Document No:

P25027-FT-EGN-XX-RP-EN-0002

Unit 3/4, Northwood House, Northwood Crescent,
Northwood, Dublin, D09 X899, Ireland

T: +353 1 658 3500 | E: info@ftco.ie

CORK | DUBLIN | CARLOW

www.fehilytimoney.ie

Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

REVISION CONTROL TABLE, CLIENT, KEYWORDS AND ABSTRACT

User is responsible for Checking the Revision Status of This Document

Rev. No.	Description of Changes	Prepared by:	Checked by:	Approved by:	Date:
1	Final	SND/KB	RD	RM	25/06/2025

Client: South Dublin County Council

Keywords: Appropriate Assessment (AA), AA Screening, Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, European (Natura 2000) sites, Community, Youth, Centre, Proposed Extension, Minor Alterations, Public Library

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

LIST OF APPENDICES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

1. INTRODUCTION

Fehily Timoney and Company (FT)was commissioned by South Dublin County Council (SDCC) to prepare an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report for a proposed development at the existing Ballyroan Community & Youth Centre at Marian Road, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14, in the curtilage of the Church of the Holy Spirit (Protected Structure), and minor works to the existing storage unit at Ballyroan Public Library, Orchardstown Villas, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14. A Part 8 application is being made by the Council for both development components (i.e. at the Ballyroan Community & Youth Centre and the Storage Unit at the Ballyroan Public Library).

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 development, 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 development, 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 development is 'connected with or necessary to the management of the site'. In this case, the proposed development is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of any European site(s).

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) (Environment Heritage and Local Government, 2009).
- Managing Natura 2000 sites. The provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. European Commission (2019). Brussels, (2019/C 33/01). OJ C 33, 25.1.2019.
- 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;
- Pathway(s) – functional link, or ecological pathway e.g., groundwater connecting to nearby wetland habitats, or loss of foraging habitat; 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)[1] for an SAC or Special Conservation Interests (SCI)[2] 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.

[1] 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.
[2] 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 as detailed in Section 3.2.

The European Commission Notice (2021) on the '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', 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 OPR (2021) practice note 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). Section 3.2 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 3.3, having regard to the identified impacts of the project along the ecological pathways identified to European sites.

In Section 3.2the 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. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

2.1 Overview

Due to a growing demand for community services and an increase in population in the Ballyroan area, the Ballyroan Community and Youth Centre requires upgrade works, with space needed for additional community meeting rooms, staff offices and childcare accommodation. The objective of the proposed development, therefore, is to extend, rearrange and upgrade the existing community centre to improve the functionality and potential of the centre for building users.

The proposed development is situated within Ballyroan Parish lands which cover an area of 0.77 hectares (ha). The existing Ballyroan Community & Youth Centre, including an external enclosed play area, covers an area of 0.08 ha. The proposed extension, including permeable paving and rain planters, covers an area of 0.01 ha.

The proposed development will comprise of the following components:

- Rearrangement/upgrade of the community centre interior
- New single-storey flat roof extension
- Accessibility enhancement works to the existing community centre entrance, and new accessible entrance to the rear of the centre (subject to landowner consent)
- Minor alterations to existing parish boiler house
- New external screened community centre bin store
- New solar panels to south facing pitched roof
- Refurbishment/upgrade of the existing concrete pavers to the south and west of the community centre building (subject to landowner consent and final details to be agreed with the relevant SDCC internal departments)
- All associated ancillary site works as may be required in adjacent lands but not limited to foul and surface water drainage and utility supplies.

2.2 Construction Phase

An overview of the construction works relating to the proposed extension and upgrade works to the existing community centre building is provided below:

- Installation of temporary construction site area.
- Breaking of hard-standing areas, as required.
- Minor excavation to formation levels.
- Laying of building foundations
- Backfilling of excavated material and any imported fill required will take place.
- Construction/modification of buildings and structures, as per the development description.
- Installation/modification of site services, as set out below:
    - The construction of a wastewater connection to the existing wastewater sewer.
    - An existing rainwater harvesting system will be relocated, and new rain planters and permeable paving will be developed as part of the proposed development.

- Electrical power for the new extension will be sourced from the electricity system in the existing building.

- Construction of new hardstand areas, as necessary.
- Solar panels will be installed on-site.
- Building furnishings will be completed.
- Site clean-up and commissioning will be carried out.

The sequencing of the project programme will be planned and managed by the appointed Contractor at the tender stage. The construction phase is expected to occur over a 9- to 12-month period, commencing in Q4 of 2025. Construction works will occur between the following hours:

- 07.00 to 19.00 on Monday to Friday;
- 08.00 to 16.30 on Saturdays.

2.3 Operational Phase

The proposed development relates to the upgrade and extension works to the existing Ballyroan Community & Youth Centre and will form part of the overall community infrastructure at Ballyroan for community activities and services. The proposed works will connect into and extend the existing utilities at the centre.

Wastewater generated by the proposed upgrade and extension will be discharged to the existing wastewater system serving the area.

Surface water runoff generated by the proposed extension (roof and hardstanding areas) will be suitably attenuated in accordance with Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) principles. Greenfield runoff rates will be maintained at the site. The rainwater collected on the right side of the proposed flat roof extension will connect into the existing repositioned rainwater harvesting tank, while the left side will drain into the new rain planter. The overflow from the rain planter and the permeable paving will connect into the outlet of the rainwater harvesting tank, which will in turn connect with the existing surface water systems.

The water supply for the building will be provided by the existing mains water connection.

Domestic Hot water for the existing building is fed from the existing solar thermal collectors (on south facing pitched roof of community hall), with supplementary heating provided to the hot water calorifiers by an LPHW circuit. It is SDCC's intention to extend this provision to the new extension.

Heating at the Ballyroan Community and Youth Centre is currently provided by a natural gas heating system. The existing building is an airtight structure with a mechanical ventilation heat recovery system. Heating at the extension will be provided by either a natural gas heating system or an electrical heat pump (to be confirmed at detailed design stage).

The existing community centre building has an A3 BER rating. The proposed extension will be designed to meet Nearly Zero Energy Building (NZEB standards). The BER rating for the overall, extended building will either be A2 or A3. Solar panels will be installed at the south facing pitched roof of the existing community centre building as part of the proposed development and will provide renewable electricity to the overall building.

2.4 Existing Environment

A desk study was carried out to collate available information on the existing environment at the proposed project location. This comprised a review of the following publications, data and datasets:

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (on-line map-viewer including the Appropriate Assessment Tool)[3];
- Department of Housing, Planning, and Local Government- EIA Portal;
- National Parks and Wildlife Service – online European site network information, including site conservation objectives[4];
- National Parks and Wildlife Service – Information on the status of EU protected habitats and species in Ireland (including Article 17 and Article 12 Reports);

The nearest European sites to the development site are the Wicklow Mountains SPA and Wicklow Mountains SAC, which are both located ca. 5.7 km to the south.

The site is located within the Water Framework Directive (WFD) Catchment Liffey and Dublin Bay and Subcatchment Dodder_SC_010. There are no watercourses in close proximity to the site. The nearest surface water bodies to the site are the Owendoher River (IE_EA_09O011700), located ca. 600 m to the south of site, and the River Dodder (IE_EA_09D010620) located ca. 680 m to the north of the site.

According to EPA maps, the subsoils in this area are 'Made', which indicate materials modified by human activity.

2.5 Potential Interactions of the Proposed Project on the Receiving Environment

As per CIEEM guidelines (2018)[5], consideration must be given 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. Having regard to the European Commission (2021) guidance document and the OPR (2021) practice note, the proposed development is assessed for the potential to give rise to the following environmental interactions (in Table 2.1) :

- Habitat destruction/fragmentation/deterioration;
- Surface water run-off carrying suspended silt and contaminants, into local watercourses;
- Changes to groundwater quality, yield and/or flow paths associated with the proposed project;
- Project related activities (noise, vibration, lighting, human presence, structures, etc);
- Air pollution due to dust and other airborne emissions; and
- Disturbance and potential spread of invasive species during the proposed works.

3 https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/ Accessed 13/03/2025.
4 www.npws.ie Accessed 13/03/2025.
[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

In making this assessment the following publications are considered:

- Impacts on habitats (including spread of invasive species) - the potential for biophysical change by disturbance/damage/degradation is taken as the footprint of the works (including site clearance) plus 10m beyond (based on Ryan Hanley, 2014)[6].
- For groundwater dependant terrestrial ecosystems additional consideration is given to potential for hydrological impacts and as such a potential for biophysical change is considered 250m beyond works areas as per SEPA guidelines[7].
- The potential disturbance zone for birds beyond the footprint of the proposed development was considered having regard to Cutts et al (2013)[8] and was defined as 500m;
- The potential disturbance zone for otter is taken as 150m beyond the footprint of the proposed development having regard to the NRA (2008) Guidelines for the Treatment of Otters prior to the Construction of National Road Schemes.
- The potential zone for dust deposition is taken as 50m from the construction area having regard to Holman et al (2014). IAQM Guidance on the assessment of dust from demolition and construction, Institute of Air Quality Management, London.

These elements are further examined in defining the Zone of Influence (ZoI) of the project to identify likely significant effects through the Source-Pathway-Receptor assessment (Section 3.2).

[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] 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.

[8] 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.

Table 2-1: Identification of sources for impacts arising from the proposed project that have potential for interactions with the receiving environment

Criteria	Potential sources of impact
Habitat destruction / fragmentation / deterioration	*Construction Phase* The development is on lands that have been developed and are actively used. The soils at the subject site are concreted over and do not support any sensitive or ecologically significant habitats. There will be no habitat loss from the proposed development. *Operational Phase* No works that could cause habitat destruction, fragmentation or deterioration will take place during this phase.
Surface water run-off carrying suspended silt and contaminants, into local watercourses.	*Construction Phase* The site is located within the Water Framework Directive (WFD) Catchment Liffey and Dublin Bay and Subcatchment Dodder_SC_010. There are no watercourses close to the site. The nearest surface water bodies to the site are the Owendoher River (IE_EA_09O011700), located ca. 600 m to the south of site, and the River Dodder (IE_EA_09D010620) located ca. 680 m to the north of the site. There will be no direct connection between the development site and any watercourse. *Operational Phase* Operational surface water runoff from the site will constitute stormwater. Given the small footprint of the proposed development, runoff volumes will be minor in comparison to the catchment. As such, it will not affect the receiving hydrology or water quality.
Changes to groundwater quality, yield and/or flow paths associated with the proposed project.	*Construction Phase* During the construction phase, project works will not involve activities that will lead to changes in groundwater quality, yield and/or flow paths. Earthworks carried out will be minor in scale and no interaction with groundwater will take place, as groundwater vulnerability in the area has been recorded to be low (defined as 10m depth of low permeability till (boulder clay)). There are no groundwater dependent terrestrial ecosystems located within the zone of influence of the proposed development.

Criteria	Potential sources of impact
	Operational Phase During the operational phase, there will be no activities that lead to changes in groundwater quality, yield and/or flow paths.
Project related activities (noise, vibration, lighting, human presence, structures, etc.).	*Construction Phase* There will be a temporary increase in activity at the proposed development site during construction which will result in a slight increase in noise, lighting and human presence. The surrounding lands are urban in nature with limited ecological potential. *Operational Phase* The proposed development site is well-established and well-used due to its commercial and community-oriented nature. No significant increase in human presence and associated noise or lighting levels will occur.
Air pollution due to dust and other airborne emissions.	*Construction Phase* Project works will involve breaking of hard-stand areas and minor excavation. These works have the potential to emit minor levels of dust The surrounding lands within the zone of influence for dust deposition are urban in nature with low ecological potential. *Operational Phase* No activities will be carried out during the operational phase of this project that could cause air pollution.
Disturbance and potential spread of invasive species during the proposed works.	*Construction Phase* The development will take place on lands that have been developed. There are no invasive species present on-site. The construction works will not encounter or interact with any invasive species. *Operational Phase* During this phase, no activities that could spread invasive species will take place.

3. SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

3.1 Introduction

This section of the report examines whether the proposed project is likely to have a significant effect upon European Sites, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

NOTE: It is of note that the SuDS features that are proposed to be constructed as part of the proposed development are not included within the design to avoid or reduce any potential harmful effects to any European sites, rather are included for alignment with the County Development Plan policies. This screening for appropriate assessment does not take SuDS into consideration in determining whether the proposed development could result in likely significant effects on European sites.

3.2 Identification of European Sites within the Zone of Influence of the Proposed Project

The proposed development is located wholly outside of any European site. The nearest European sites to the development are the Wicklow Mountains SPA and Wicklow Mountains SAC, which are both located ca. 5.7 km to the south.

The proposed development will result in the permanent loss of 0.01 ha of existing hardstanding area. There will be no habitat loss / loss of habitat that could support qualifying features/special conservation interests of any European site due to the proposed development. Having regard to Section 2.5 of this report, there are no European sites designated for the protection of habitats within the zone of influence of the proposed development.

During construction, the proposed development will result in increased disturbance through noise, lighting and increased activity. While the development lands themselves do not support habitats and features of European sites, consideration is given to the potential for the surrounding lands with the disturbance zone to support the qualifying interests / special conservation interests of European sites. Having regard to Section 2.5 of this report, a potential disturbance zone from the development for birds is determined as 500m while for otter a 150m disturbance zone is determined. An assessment is therefore made as to whether there could be landscape[9] or ecological connectivity[10] to any European sites protected for otter or birds.

For otter, ecological connectivity (e.g. linear riparian habitats / watercourses) is taken into consideration. There are no watercourses within the 150m disturbance zone of the proposed development, and no suitable breeding or resting places for otter within this zone. There is no pathway for effect on any European site designated for otter.

For birds, '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.

[9] 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)

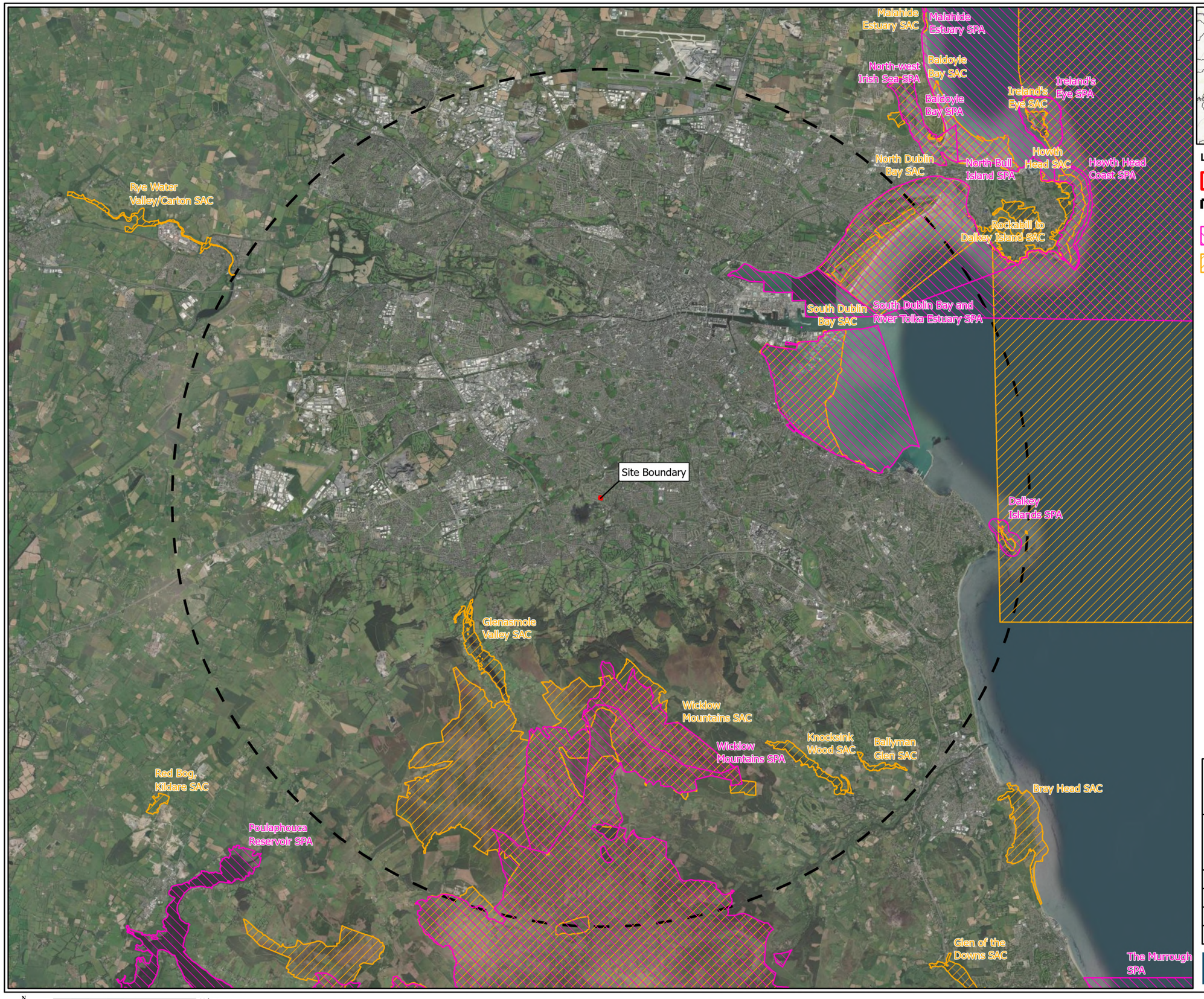
[10] Connectivity is defined as a measure of the functional availability of the habitats needed for a particular species to move through a given area. Examples include the flight lines used by bats to travel between roosts and foraging areas or the corridors of appropriate habitat needed by some slow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

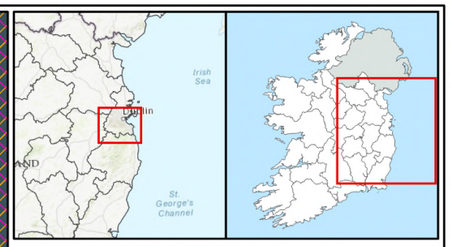
The findings of the ZoI assessment are presented in Table 3.1.

A map showing the European sites in the context of the site is presented in Figure 3-1 overleaf.

Please refer to Appendix 1 for further information on the basis of the identified ZoI for the proposed development.

Path: R:\Map Production\2025\P25-027\Workspaces\P25_027_Figures\P25_027_Figures.aprx





Legend

- Site Boundary
- 15km
- Special Protection Areas
- Special Area of Conservation

N W E S

0 1.25 2.5 5 Kilometers

TITLE:	European Sites (SPA's & SAC's) Surrounding the Site		
PROJECT:	Upgrade and Extension to Ballyroan Community & Youth Centre, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14		
FIGURE NO:	3.1		
CLIENT:	South Dublin County Council		
SCALE:	1:130,000	**REVISION:**	0
DATE:	17/04/2025	**PAGE SIZE:**	A3

FEHILY TIMONEY
Cork | Dublin | Carlow
www.fehilytimoney.ie

Table 3-1: Identification of European Sites within the Zone of Influence of the Proposed Development

Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature	Potential for Likely Significant Effects	Considered further in screening [Y/N]
004040	Wicklow Mountains SPA	5.7	Peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) [A103], Merlin (*Falco columbarius*) [A098]	The proposed development site lies outside the Zone of Influence for direct effects on the qualifying features at this European site. No suitable nesting or foraging habitat for the qualify feature is located at or surrounding the proposed development site. There are therefore no pathways that allow for the transmission of likely significant effects on the qualifying interests of this European Site.	N
002122	Wicklow Mountains SAC	5.7	Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220], Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060], Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0], European dry heaths [4030], Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (*Androsacetalia alpina*e and *Galeopsietalia ladani*) [8110], Blanket bogs * if active bog [7130], Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160], Otter (*Lutra lutra*) [1355], Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix* [4010], Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210], Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains *(Littorelletalia uniflorae)* [3110], Calaminarian grasslands of the *Violetalia calaminariae* [6130], Species-rich Nardus grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas - and submountain areas in Continental Europe [6230]	Terrestrial-based habitats, for which the SAC is designated for, lie outside the Zone of Influence from the proposed development site. There are therefore no pathways that allow for the transmission of likely significant effects on this European Site. Terrestrial based habitats for which the SAC is designated for lie outside the Zone of Influence from the proposed development site. The GWDTE (tufa springs) associated with the SAC are located beyond the 250 m ZoI for groundwater effects. There are therefore no pathways that allow for the transmission of likely significant effects on this European Site.	N

Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature	Potential for Likely Significant Effects	Considered further in screening [Y/N]
001209	Glenasmole Valley SAC	5.8	Petrifying springs with tufa formation (*Cratoneurion*) [7220], Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinion caeruleae*) [6410], Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (*Festuco-Brometalia*) * important orchid sites [6210]		N
0004024	South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA	6.93	Sanderling (*Calidris alba*) [A144], Common tern (*Sterna hirundo*) [A193], Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) [A149], Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) [A157], Arctic tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) [A194], Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) [A179], Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*) [A130], Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*) [A192], Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) [A046], Redshank (*Tringa totanus*) [A162], Wetland and Waterbirds [A999], Knot (*Calidris canutus*) [A143], Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*) [A137], Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) [A141]	The proposed development site lies outside the Zone of Influence for direct effects on the on the qualifying feature at this European site. No suitable nesting or foraging habitat for these qualify features is located at or surrounding the proposed development site. There is therefore no likelihood of significant effects on this European Site.	N
000210	South Dublin Bay SAC	6.94	Embryonic shifting dunes [2110], Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310], Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210], Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]	The proposed development site lies outside the Zone of Influence for direct effects on the on the qualifying feature at this European site. There is therefore no likelihood of significant effects on this European Site.	N

Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature	Potential for Likely Significant Effects	Considered further in screening [Y/N]
004006	North Bull Island SPA	9.26	Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*) [A048], Teal (*Anas crecca*) [A052], Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) [A149], Knot (*Calidris canutus*) [A143], Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) [A157], Wetland and Waterbirds [A999], Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*) [A156], Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*) [A130], Pintail (*Anas acuta*) [A054], Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) [A140], Redshank (*Tringa totanus*) [A162], Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) [A046], Curlew (*Numenius arquata*) [A160], Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*) [A056], Sanderling (*Calidris alba*) [A144], Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) [A179], Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) [A141], Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*) [A169]	The proposed development site lies outside the Zone of Influence for direct effects on the on the qualifying feature at this European site. No suitable nesting or foraging habitat for these qualify features is located at or surrounding the proposed development site. There is therefore no likelihood of significant effects on this European Site.	N
000725	Knocksink Wood SAC	10.51	Petrifying springs with tufa formation (*Cratoneurion*) [7220] Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0] Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae*) [91E0]	Terrestrial based habitats for which the SAC is designated for lie outside the Zone of Influence from the proposed development site. The GWDTE (tufa springs) associated with the SAC are located beyond the 250 m ZoI (See Appendix 1 for further details on the ZoI) for groundwater effects. There are therefore no pathways that allow for the transmission of likely significant effects on this European Site.	N
000206	North Dublin Bay SAC	11.08	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]	The proposed development site lies outside the Zone of Influence for direct effects on the on the qualifying feature at this European site.	N

Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature	Potential for Likely Significant Effects	Considered further in screening [Y/N]
			Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (*Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae*) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (*Juncetalia maritimi*) [1410] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] Humid dune slacks [2190] *Petalophyllum ralfsii* (Petalwort) [1395]	There is therefore no likelihood of significant effects on this European Site.	
000713	Ballyman Glen SAC	12.65	Petrifying springs with tufa formation (*Cratoneurion*) [7220] Alkaline fens [7230]	Terrestrial based habitats for which the SAC is designated for lie outside the Zone of Influence from the proposed development site. The GWDTE (tufa springs) associated with the SAC are located beyond the 250 m ZoI (See Appendix 1 for further details on the ZoI) for groundwater effects. There are therefore no pathways that allow for the transmission of likely significant effects on this European Site.	N

Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature	Potential for Likely Significant Effects	Considered further in screening [Y/N]
004172	Dalkey Islands SPA	13.7	Common tern (*Sterna hirundo*) [A193], Roseate tern (*Sterna dougallii*) [A192], Arctic tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) [A194]	The proposed development site lies outside the Zone of Influence for direct effects on the on the qualifying feature at this European site. No suitable nesting or foraging habitat for these qualify features is located at or surrounding the proposed development site. There is therefore no likelihood of significant effects on this European Site.	N
003000	Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC	13.96	Reefs [1170] *Phocoena phocoena* (Harbour Porpoise) [1351]	The proposed development site is located beyond the zone of influence from this European Site. There are therefore no pathways that allow for the transmission of likely significant effects on this European Site.	N
004016	Baldoyle Bay SPA	16.72	Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) [A046] Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*) [A048] Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*) [A137] Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) [A140] Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) [A141] Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lappo*nica) [A157] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	The proposed development site lies outside the Zone of Influence for direct effects on the on the qualifying feature at this European site. No suitable nesting or foraging habitat for these qualify features is located at or surrounding the proposed development site. There is therefore no likelihood of significant effects on this European Site.	N
004063	Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA	17.5	Greylag Goose (*Anser anser)* [A043] Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*) [A183]	The proposed development site lies outside the Zone of Influence for direct effects on the qualifying feature at this European site. No suitable nesting or foraging habitat for the qualify feature is located at or surrounding the proposed development site.	N

Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature	Potential for Likely Significant Effects	Considered further in screening [Y/N]
				There are therefore no pathways that allow for the transmission of likely significant effects on the qualifying interests of this European Site.	
004025	Malahide Estuary SPA	20.62	Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus)* [A005] Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) [A046] Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*) [A048] Pintail (*Anas acuta*) [A054] Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*) [A067] Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*) [A069] Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*) [A130] Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) [A140] Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) [A141] Knot (*Calidris canutus*) [A143] Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) [A149] Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*) [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) [A157] Redshank (*Tringa totanus*) [A162] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	The proposed development site lies outside the Zone of Influence for direct effects on the qualifying feature at this European site. No suitable nesting or foraging habitat for these qualify features is located at or surrounding the proposed development site. There is therefore no likelihood of significant effects on this European Site.	N
004186	The Murrough SPA	23.98	Red-throated Diver (*Gavia stellata*) [A001] Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*) [A043] Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) [A046] Wigeon (*Anas penelope*) [A050]	The proposed development site lies outside the Zone of Influence for direct effects on the qualifying feature at this European site. No suitable nesting or foraging habitat for these qualify features is located at or surrounding the proposed development site.	N

Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying Feature	Potential for Likely Significant Effects	Considered further in screening [Y/N]
			Teal (*Anas crecca*) [A052] Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) [A179] Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*) [A184] Little Tern (*Sterna albifrons*) [A195] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	There is therefore no likelihood of significant effects on this European Site.	

3.3 Consideration of in-combination effects with other Plans or Projects

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires that:

> *"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".*

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. The consideration of in-combination effects with other plans or projects, focuses on any sources of impacts identified for the proposed project in section 2.3 and any ecological pathways identified in section 3.2.

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 QI or 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.

3.4 Screening Conclusion

No Likely Significant Effects

The results of the S-P-R assessment identified that - given the scale and nature of the potential sources identified in Table 2.1 - there are no likely significant effects identified to any European sites.

The AA screening 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.

4. REFERENCES

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

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.

Environment Heritage and Local Government. (2009). Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland Guidance for Planning Authorities.

European Commission. (2019). Managing Natura 2000 sites. The provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC.

European Commission. (2021). Commission notice- Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (Issue 2021/C 437/01).

European Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (Habitats Directive).

Hanley, Ryan (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

Holman et al (2014). IAQM Guidance on the assessment of dust from demolition and construction, Institute of Air Quality Management, London.

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

Scottish Natural Heritage. (2016). Assessing Connectivity with Special Protection Areas (SPAs) Guidance.

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.

FEHILY TIMONEY

DESIGNING AND DELIVERING
A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

APPENDIX 1

Considerations in Defining the Potential Zone of Influence for the Proposed Project

Release of pollutants and sedimentation to watercourses with hydrological connectivity to European sites;

As a precautionary approach in defining the ecological receptors that may be affected, all European sites hydrologically connected (i.e. whereby there is potential for surface water from the project site to runoff directly into a watercourse or drain which flows into a European Site) to the Proposed Development were examined using Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping.

Potential effects to groundwater / hydrogeology

In accordance with the 'Guidance on Assessing the Impacts of Development Proposals on Groundwater Abstractions and Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems, Land Use Planning System SEPA Guidance Note 31' (2017) a 250 m potential zone of influence from the proposed development was considered in assessing the potential for interaction with Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWDTE). There are no GWDTE or European Sites within 250m of the Site.

Potential effect to mobile SCI's from surrounding SPAs

The assessment has considered the potential pathways for effects on bird species based on the following principles: Generally, the core foraging range for SCI birds species is less than 15 km. However, SNH (2016)[11] core foraging range for some geese species can be larger. Namely:

- Greylag goose Core range of 15-20km* Greylag Geese feed mostly on cereal stubble and grassland in their wintering areas.
- Barnacle goose Core range of 15km, with maximum recorded distance of up to 25 km.

Therefore, as a precautionary approach in defining the ecological receptors that may be affected, all SPA's within 15 km and SPA's within 25km designed for Greylag and Barnacle Geese were examined using Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping. The conservation objectives of these European sites were assessed to identify potential physical or ecological connectivity to the Proposed Development having regard to the habitats within the subject lands and the surrounding area.

European sites geographically overlapping or adjacent to any of the actions or aspects of the proposed project (noise, lighting and dust)

There are no European sites geographically overlapping or adjacent to the proposed development. The closest European sites is Wicklow Mountains SPA, located c. 5.7 km away (direct distance).

[11] Scottish Natural Heritage (2016) Assessing Connectivity with Special Protection Areas (SPAs) Guidance: https://www.nature.scot/sites/default/files/2022-12/Assessing%20connectivity%20with%20special%20protection%20areas.pdf (Accessed 13/03/2025)

The Institute of Air Quality Management 'Guidance on the Assessment of dust from demolition and construction' (Holman et al, 2024)[12] states that for sensitive ecological receptors, sensitivity to dust is 'High' up to 20m from the source and reduces to 'Medium' over 50m from the source. Holman et al, 2024 also stipulates that trackout[13] may occur from roads up to 500 m from large sites, 200 m from medium sites and 50 m from small sites.

[12] Holman et al (2014). IAQM Guidance on the assessment of dust from demolition and construction, Institute of Air Quality Management, London.

[13] The movement of dust and dirt from a construction/demolition site onto the public road network.

FEHILY TIMONEY

DESIGNING AND DELIVERING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

www.fehilytimoney.ie

Cork Dublin Carlow