



Ecological Impact Assessment

Butler McGee Park, Co.
Dublin



DOCUMENT DETAILS

Client:

South Dublin County Council

Project Title:

Butler McGee Park, Co. Dublin

Project Number:

250944

Document Title:

Ecological Impact Assessment

Document File Name:

250944 - EclA F - 31.10.2025

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Rev	Status	Date	Author(s)	Approved By
01	Draft	29.10.2025	DM	SF, CK
02	Final	31.10.2025	DM	SF, CK

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Proposed Layout Plan

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

MKO was commissioned by Nicholas De Jong Associates, Urban Design, on behalf of South Dublin County Council (SDCC), to undertake an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) of the proposed upgrade of Butler McGee Park located in Tallaght, Co. Dublin. The project aims to optimise the overall layout of the park and reinvigorate the open space, with a renewed focus on meeting the wider needs of the communities that live and surround it. The existing facilities will be upgraded and expanded where necessary to provide a fuller range of recreational activities for all ages and abilities and to improve pedestrian and cycle permeability.

The EcIA includes an accurate description of all aspects of the Proposed Development. It then provides a description of the baseline ecological environment, which is based on an appropriate level of survey work that was carried out in accordance with the most appropriate guidelines and methodologies. The EcIA then completes a thorough assessment of the impacts of the Proposed Development on biodiversity. Where likely ecologically significant effects are identified, measures are prescribed to avoid, minimise or compensate for such effects.

The Proposed Development is referenced as follows:

- For the purpose of this report, the term 'Park' or 'Site' refers to the red line boundary, comprising the entire area shown in **Figure 2-1**.
- The proposed public park development, including all ancillary works, is referred to as 'the Proposed Development'.

1.2 Statement of Authority

1.3 This report has been prepared by David Mesarcik, reviewed by Sara Fissolo and approved by Caroline Kelly. David has 2 years of experience in ecological consultancy and holds a B.Sc. in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and an Honours Degree in Terrestrial Ecology. Sara is a Project Ecologist at MKO with over 5 years of ecological consultancy experience and holds a B.Sc. in Ecology and Environmental Biology. Caroline is a Senior Ecologist at MKO and holds a B.Sc. in Environmental Biology, an M.Sc. in Applied Ecological Assessment and an Advanced Postgraduate Diploma in Planning and Environmental Law. She is also a Full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and has over 9 years' professional consultancy experience. This assessment was based on a baseline ecological survey conducted by David Mesarcik of MKO on the 7th October 2025.

1.4 Relevant Guidance and Documents

The guidelines/documents listed below were consulted in the preparation of this report to provide the scope, structure and content of the assessment:

- *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland. Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine (CIEEM, 2018).*
- *Guidelines for assessment of Ecological Impacts of National Road Schemes, (NRA, 2009a).*
- *Ecological Surveying Techniques for Protected Flora and Fauna during the Planning of National Road Schemes (NRA, 2009b).*

2. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Site Location

Butler McGee Park is a large Local Park in West Tallaght, extending to 16.77 ha (41.43 acres) in size. Residential areas like Springfield and Fettercairn surround the park. Butler McGee Park is bounded by Drumcairn Parade and Drumcairn Avenue, with its fenced boundary extending toward Cookstown Road and ending at the junction with Fettercairn Road. The park is integrally linked to the wider green infrastructure and other high-quality open spaces in the South Dublin area. It is surrounded by residential estates, schools and local clubs. Jobstown Park and Tallaght Leisure Centre adjoin its southern edge. The park is accessible via public transport, with the Cookstown Luas stop approximately a 10-minute walk away, and 8 bus routes and nearby stops.

At present, a significant portion of the park is occupied by sports facilities. It features GAA and soccer pitches used by local clubs, walking paths, and community facilities. Recent upgrades have focused on improving drainage, installing perimeter fencing to reduce anti-social behaviour, and enhancing footpaths and planting. The park plays a key role in the local community as a recreational and sporting hub. The location of the Proposed Development site is provided in **Figure 2-1**. In this figure, the red line application boundary indicates the primary park area to be upgraded and extends beyond the park boundary to the road kerb line. This area measures approximately 15.87 ha. The remaining area of the park is outlined in blue and also extends beyond the park boundary to the road kerb line. The blue line area measures approximately 1.5 ha. Although areas outside the red line are not included in the main upgrade works, they may be examined to identify opportunities for better integration between the park and the adjacent residential neighbourhood.

2.2 Proposed development

The Proposed Development design and landscaping is presented in the Proposed Layout Plan within **Appendix 1**. The Proposed Development will consist of the following:

- Four formal entry plazas at:
 - the Cheeverstown Road and Cookstown Road junction, linking with Jobstown Park.
 - the Cookstown Road and Maplewood Road Junction
 - the northeastern corner of the park, adjacent to the southern boundary of St. Mark's GAA club, leading out on to Cookstown Road.
 - the Drumcairn Avenue and Drumcairn Parade junction.
- Main spine routes, shared pedestrian/cycle with formal signature trees and park lights, along the eastern boundary, linking Butler McGee Park to Jobstown Park and the Luas stops, and east-west through the park connecting Drumcairn with the Fortunestown Shopping Centre.
- Controlled access gates to be installed at all entrances
- All existing sports pitches, except for Pitch 80, retained with some realignment and refurbished where necessary with drainage and re-levelling.
- Provision for active recreation – e.g. Teenspace, with facilities such as skate park (with floodlighting), basketball court and fitness area, and natural play area with large climbing feature wall.
- A Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) with floodlighting;
- A 35m long x 6m high ball wall, with hard paving to one side and floodlighting
- Activity circuit (Park Run) - with seats and play/fitness equipment.
- A dog park enclosed with post and rail fencing with wire mesh
- Relocation of a 220m length of the northeastern boundary to incorporate the grass verge to the road into the park, allowing for more room between the proposed path and the pitches;

- Biodiversity improvements - existing beech hedgerow to be replaced with a mix of native species and supplemented with meadowland management and planting of bulbs and formal and informal tree groups.
- Attenuation basins and possible swales associated with the pitch drainage which will also contribute to enhanced biodiversity.
- All associated landscape works.
- All ancillary works.

Surface Water Drainage

Surface water from the proposed development will be managed through the implementation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) basins. These basins will discharge into the existing stormwater network located along Cookstown Road.



Map Legend

- Red Line Boundary
- Blue Line Boundary

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Site Location

Project Title	
Butler McGee Park, Co. Dublin	
Drawn By	Checked By
DM	SF
Project No.	Drawing No.
250944	Figure 2-1
Scale	Date
1:60,000	24.10.2025

3. METHODOLOGY

The following sections describe the methodologies followed to establish the baseline ecological condition of the Proposed Development site and surrounding area. Assessing the impacts of any project and associated activities requires an understanding of the ecological baseline conditions prior to and at the time of the project proceeding. Ecological Baseline conditions are those existing in the absence of proposed activities (CIEEM, 2018).

3.1 Desk Study

A desk study was undertaken to inform this ecological impact assessment. This study includes a thorough review of available information that is relevant to the ecology of the site of the Proposed Development. This information provides valuable existing data and also helped assessing the requirement for additional ecological surveys.

The following list describes the sources of data consulted:

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Water Framework Directive (WFD) Mapping.¹
- Review of NPWS Article 17 metadata and GIS database files.²
- Designated site data from the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS).³
- National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) online mapper.⁴
- Review of the Bat Conservation Ireland (BCI) Private Database

3.1.1 Designated Sites

3.1.1.1 ***Identification of the Designated Sites within the Likely Zone of Influence (ZOI) of the Proposed Development***

The potential for the Proposed Development to impact on sites that are designated for nature conservation was considered in this EcIA.

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas for Birds (SPAs) are designated under the EU Habitats Directive and EU Birds Directive, respectively and are collectively known as 'European Sites'. The potential for significant effects and/or adverse impacts on the integrity of European Sites is fully assessed in the AA Screening Report that accompanies this application.

Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) are designated under Section 18 the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000 and their management and protection is provided for by this legislation and planning policy.

Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) were designated on a non-statutory basis in 1995 but have not since been statutorily proposed or designated. However, the potential for effects on these designated sites is fully considered in this assessment.

The following methodology was used to establish which sites that are designated for nature conservation have the potential to be impacted by the Proposed Development:

¹ <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>

² <https://www.npws.ie/maps-and-data/habitat-and-species-data/article-17>

³ <https://www.npws.ie/maps-and-data/designated-site-data>

⁴ <https://maps.biodiversityireland.ie/Map>

- > All designated sites within the vicinity of the Proposed development site were identified. In addition, the potential for connectivity with European or Nationally designated sites at greater distances from the Proposed development site was also considered in this initial assessment.
- > The designation features of these sites, as per the NPWS website (www.npws.ie), were consulted and reviewed at the time of preparing this report.
- > Where a potential source-pathway-receptor chain for Significant Effect is identified, the site is included within the Likely Zone of Influence (ZoI) and further assessment is required.

3.2 Field Surveys

3.2.1 Multi-disciplinary ecological walkover surveys

A multi-disciplinary ecological walkover survey of the entire site was undertaken by David Mesarcik of MKO on the 7th October 2025, in accordance with NRA Guidelines on Ecological Surveying Techniques for Protected Flora and Fauna on National Road Schemes (NRA, 2009b). This survey provided baseline data on the ecology of the study area. Walkover surveys are designed to detect the presence or suitable habitat for a range of protected faunal species that may occur in the vicinity of the Proposed Development.

Ad-hoc recordings were made of any bird species encountered during the walkover surveys.

Habitats were classified in accordance with the Heritage Council's '*Guide to Habitats in Ireland*' (Fossitt, 2000). Habitat mapping was undertaken with regard to guidance set out in '*Best Practice Guidance for Habitat Survey and Mapping*' (Smith et al., 2011).

During the multidisciplinary surveys, a search for Invasive Alien Species (IAS), with a focus on those listed under the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2015) or under the First Schedule of the European Union (Invasive Alien Species) Regulations 2024 (S.I. No 374 of 2024), was also conducted.

The study area was also assessed for its suitability to support roosting, foraging, and/or commuting bats during the walkover survey. Connectivity with the wider landscape was also considered. Suitability was assessed according to the protocol set out in *BCT Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (4th ed.) (Collins, 2023). The survey aimed to identify if the study area provided suitable habitat for bats and to guide further survey efforts. The grading protocol, subdivided into *None*, *Negligible*, *Low*, *Moderate*, and *High*, is described fully in **Table 3-1** below.

Preliminary Bat Roost Assessments were carried out to assess the bat roost potential of trees on site. Trees were visually assessed from ground level, for natural features of high value to roosting bats, including knot holes, trunk hollows, splits/cracks in branches and areas of flaking bark and also for signs indicating possible bat use including droppings, staining and scratching of bark and any other potential roost features (PRFs) identified by Andrews (2018). Suitability for roosting was assessed according to Collins (2023) as outlined below.

PRFs in trees were either categorised as PRF-Is; those features that are only suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats either due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats; or PRF-Ms; features that could support multiple bats and may therefore be used as maternity colonies.

Table 3-1 Protocol for assessing the suitability of habitats within the Proposed Development site for bats (abridged, Collins, 2023).

Suitability	Roosting Habitats	Commuting and Foraging Habitats
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year. (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/ suitable shelter at all ground/ underground levels).	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year (i.e. no habitats that provide continuous lines of shade/ protection for flight-lines, or generate/ shelter insect populations available to foraging bats).
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used as flight-paths or by foraging bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-standard bat behaviour.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats, i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site but could be used by individual hibernating bats.	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats as flight-paths such as a gappy hedgerow or un-vegetated stream, but isolated, i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat. Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation - the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for flight paths such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
High	A structure with one or potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions, and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status which is established after presence is confirmed.	Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by bats for flight paths such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge. High quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.

3.3

Methodology for Assessment of Impacts and Effects

3.3.1

Determining Importance of Ecological Receptors

The importance of the ecological features identified within the study area was determined with reference to a defined geographical context. This was undertaken following a methodology that is set out in Chapter 3 of the 'Guidelines for Assessment of Ecological Impacts of National Roads Schemes' (NRA, 2009b). These guidelines set out the context for the determination of value on a geographic basis with a hierarchy assigned in relation to the importance of any particular receptor. The guidelines provide a basis for determination of whether any particular receptor is of importance on the following scales:

- International
- National
- County
- Local Importance (Higher Value)
- Local Importance (Lower Value)

The Guidelines clearly set out the criteria by which each geographic level of importance can be assigned. Locally Important (lower value) receptors contain habitats and species that are widespread and of low ecological significance and of any importance only in the local area. Internationally Important sites are either designated for conservation as part of the Natura 2000 Network (SAC or SPA) or provide the best examples of habitats or internationally important populations of protected flora and fauna. Specific criteria for assigning each of the other levels of importance are set out in the guidelines and have been followed in this assessment. Where appropriate, the geographic frame of reference set out above was adapted to suit local circumstances. In addition, and where appropriate, the conservation status of habitats and species is considered when determining the significance of ecological receptors.

Any ecological receptors that are determined to be of Local Importance (Higher Value), County, National or International importance following the criteria set out in NRA (2009a) are considered to be Key Ecological Receptors (KERs) for the purposes of ecological impact assessment if there is a pathway for effects thereon. Any receptors that are determined to be of Local Importance (Lower Value) are not considered to be KERs.

3.3.2

Characterisation of Impacts and Effects

The Proposed development will result in a number of impacts. The ecological effects of these impacts are characterised as per the CIEEM 'Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland (2018). The headings under which the impacts are characterised follow those listed in the guidance document and are applied where relevant. A summary of the impact characteristics considered in the assessment is provided below:

- **Positive or Negative.** Assessment of whether the Proposed development site result in a positive or negative effect on the ecological receptor.
- **Extent.** Description of the spatial area over which the effect has the potential to occur.
- **Magnitude** to size, amount, intensity and volume. It should be quantified if possible and expressed in absolute or relative terms e.g. the amount of habitat lost, percentage change to habitat area, percentage decline in a species population.
- **Duration** is defined in relation to ecological characteristics (such as the lifecycle of a species) as well as human timeframes. For example, five years, which might seem short-term in the human context or that of other long-lived species, would span at least five generations of some invertebrate species.

- > **Frequency and Timing.** This relates to the number of times that an impact occurs and its frequency. A small-scale impact can have a significant effect if it is repeated on numerous occasions over a long period.
- > **Reversibility.** This is a consideration of whether an effect is reversible within a ‘reasonable’ timescale. What is considered to be a reasonable timescale can vary between receptors and is justified where appropriate in the impact assessment section of this report.

3.3.3 Determining the Significance of Effects

The ecological significance of the effects of the Proposed development are determined following the precautionary principle and in accordance with the methodology set out in Section 5 of CIEEM (2018). The NRA *Guidelines for assessment of Ecological Impacts of National Road Schemes*, (NRA, 2009a) were also considered when determining significance and the assessment is in accordance with those guidelines.

For the purpose of EcIA, ‘significant effect’ is an effect that either supports or undermines biodiversity conservation objectives for ‘important ecological features’ or for biodiversity in general. Conservation objectives may be specific (e.g. for a designated site) or broad (e.g. national/local nature conservation policy) or more wide-ranging (enhancement of biodiversity). Effects can be considered significant at a wide range of scales from international to local (CIEEM, 2018).

When determining significance, consideration is given to whether:

- > Any processes or key characteristics of key ecological receptors will be removed or changed.
- > There will be an effect on the nature, extent, structure, and function of important ecological features.
- > There is an effect on the average population size and viability of ecologically important species.
- > There is an effect on the conservation status of important ecological habitats and species.

3.4 Limitations

The information provided in this document accurately and comprehensively describes the baseline ecological environment; provides an accurate prediction of the likely ecological effects of the proposed development; prescribes mitigation as necessary; and describes the residual ecological impacts. Ecological surveys were undertaken at the site outside the optimal survey season for botanical assessments; however, this is not considered to have resulted in limitations to the assessment, due to the nature of the Site, which is a public park in Dublin City, and the scale of the proposed development, which is retaining the ecological function of the site. No significant limitations in the scope, scale or context of the assessment have been identified.

4. DESK STUDY

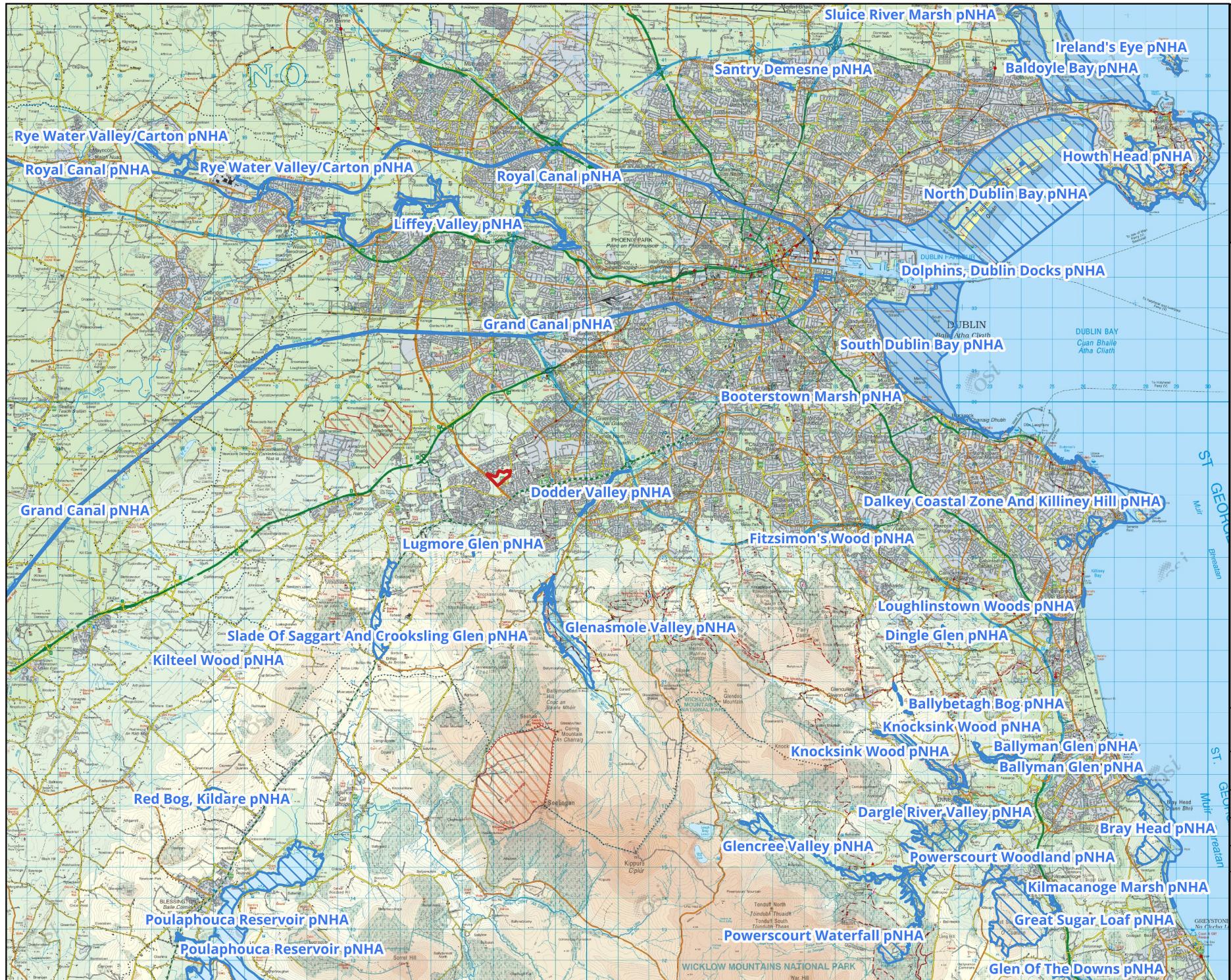
4.1 Designated Sites

The location of the site of the Proposed Development in relation to European Sites is provided in **Figure 4-1**. The location of the site of the Proposed Development in relation to National Sites is provided in **Figure 4-2**.

The following methodology was used to establish which sites that are designated for nature conservation have the potential to be impacted by the Proposed Development:

- Initially the most up to date GIS spatial datasets for Nationally designated sites and water catchments were downloaded from the NPWS website (www.npws.ie) and the EPA website (www.epa.ie). The datasets were utilized to identify Designated Sites which could feasibly be affected by the Proposed Development.
- All Nationally Sites that could potentially be affected were identified using a source-pathway - receptor model.
- Catchment mapping was used to establish or discount potential hydrological connectivity between the site of the Proposed Development and any Designated Sites.
- **Table 4-1** provides details of all relevant Nationally Designated Sites as identified in the preceding steps and assesses which are within the likely Zone of Influence.
- The site synopses and main reasons for designation of these sites, as per the NPWS website (www.npws.ie) were consulted where available.

All European Designated Sites are fully described and assessed in the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (AASR) accompanying the planning application for the Proposed Development. No potential for Likely Significant Effects (LSEs) on any European site were identified as a result of the Proposed Development, as concluded in the accompanying AASR.



Map Legend

- Site Boundary
- Natural Heritage Area (NHA)
- Proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA)

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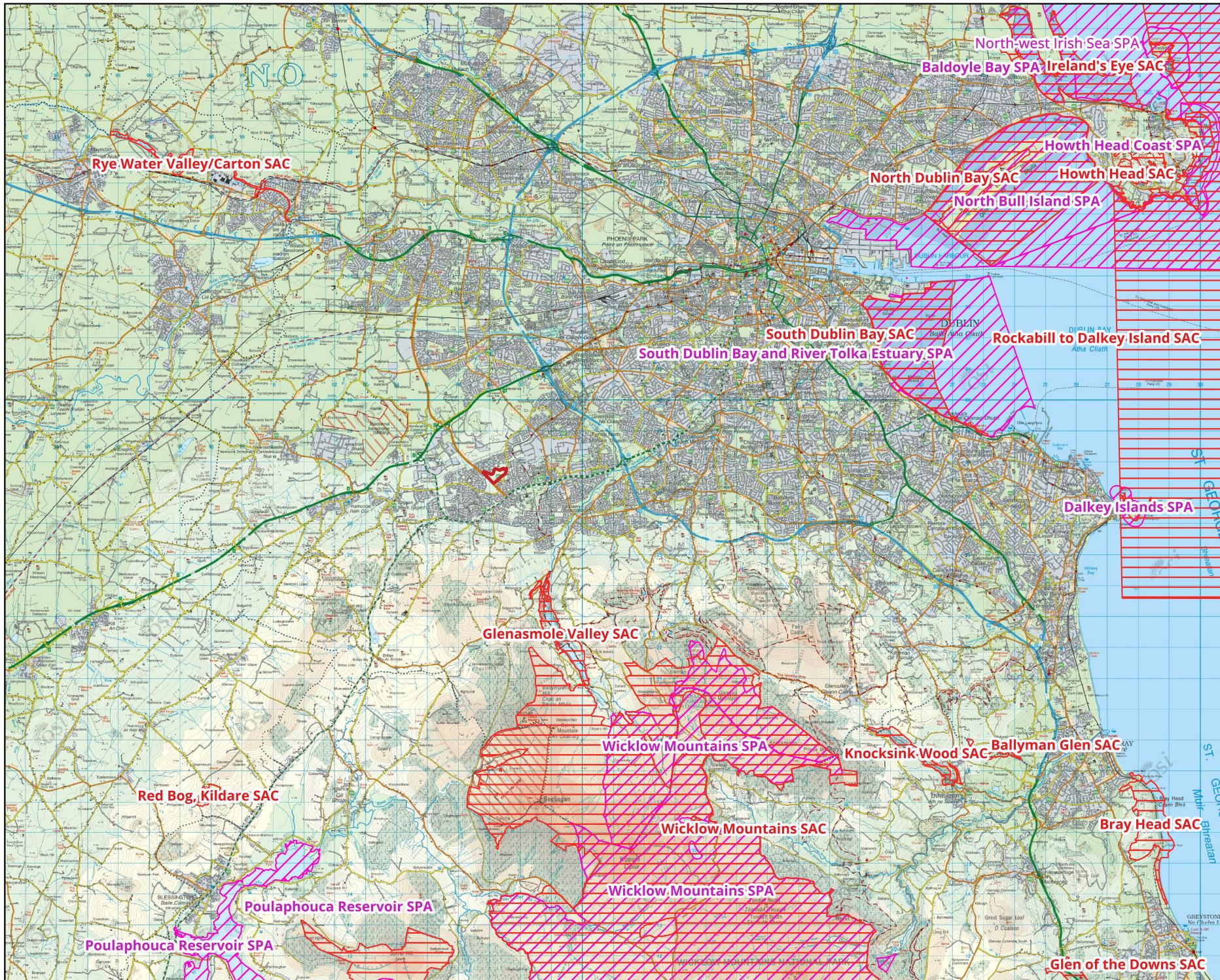


Drawing Title
Nationally Designated Sites
within the Vicinity of the site

Project Title
Butler McGee Park

Drawn By	Checked By
DM	SF
Project No.	Drawing No.
250944	Figure 4-1
Scale	Date
1:160,000	14.10.2025

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Map Legend

- Site Boundary
- Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Special Protection Area (SPA)

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Drawing Title
European Designated Sites
within the Vicinity of the site

Project Title
Butler McGee Park

Drawn By	Checked By
DM	SF
Project No.	Drawing No.
250944	Figure 4-2
Scale	Date
1:160,000	14.10.2025

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Table 4.4-1 Identification of Nationally Designated sites within the Likely Zone of Influence

Designated Sites and distance from Proposed Development	Likely Zone of Impact Determination
Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA)	
<p>Lugmore Glen pNHA [001212]</p> <p>Approx. distance: 1.78 km</p>	<p>The Proposed Development is located outside the boundary of this pNHA and as such there is no potential for direct effect.</p> <p>Due to the intervening distance and the nature and scale of the proposed works, there is no potential for indirect effects on this pNHA. No surface water connectivity exists from the site of the Proposed Development to the pNHA. The pNHA is located within the same groundwater catchment as the site, however, due to the nature and scale of the proposed works, no impacts on groundwater quality are anticipated. Therefore, no pathway for potential significant indirect effects on the pNHA has been identified.</p> <p>No source-pathway-receptor chain for impact was identified between the site of the Proposed Development and this designated site. As such, potential for direct or indirect impact on this Nationally Designated Site can be excluded.</p> <p>Therefore, this Nationally Designated Site is not within the likely zone of impact, and no further assessment is required.</p>
<p>Dodder Valley pNHA [000991]</p> <p>Approx. distance: 2.52 km</p>	<p>The Proposed Development is located outside the boundary of this pNHA and as such there is no potential for direct effect.</p> <p>Due to the intervening distance and the nature and scale of the proposed works, there is no potential for indirect effects on this pNHA. No surface water connectivity exists from the site of the Proposed Development to the pNHA. The pNHA is located within the same groundwater catchment as the site, however, due to the nature and scale of the proposed works, no impacts on groundwater quality are anticipated. Therefore, no pathway for potential significant indirect effects on the pNHA has been identified.</p> <p>No source-pathway-receptor chain for impact was identified between the site of the Proposed Development and this designated site. As such, potential for direct or indirect impact on this Nationally Designated Site can be excluded.</p> <p>Therefore, this Nationally Designated Site is not within the likely zone of impact, and no further assessment is required.</p>
<p>Glenasmole Valley pNHA [001209]</p> <p>Approx. distance: 3.44 km</p>	<p>The Proposed Development is located outside the boundary of this pNHA and as such there is no potential for direct effect.</p> <p>Due to the intervening distance and the nature and scale of the proposed works, there is no potential for indirect effects on this pNHA. No surface water connectivity exists from the site of the Proposed Development to the pNHA. The pNHA is located within the same groundwater catchment as the site, however, due to the nature and scale of the proposed works, no impacts on groundwater quality are anticipated. Therefore, no pathway for potential significant indirect effects on the pNHA has been identified.</p>

Designated Sites and distance from Proposed Development	Likely Zone of Impact Determination
	<p>No source-pathway-receptor chain for impact was identified between the site of the Proposed Development and this designated site. As such, potential for direct or indirect impact on this Nationally Designated Site can be excluded.</p> <p>Therefore, this Nationally Designated Site is not within the likely zone of impact, and no further assessment is required.</p>
<p>Slade of Saggart and Crookslig Glen pNHA [000211]</p> <p>Approx. distance: 4.07 km</p>	<p>The Proposed Development is located outside the boundary of this pNHA and as such there is no potential for direct effect.</p> <p>Due to the intervening distance and the nature and scale of the proposed works, there is no potential for indirect effects on this pNHA. No surface water connectivity exists from the site of the Proposed Development to the pNHA. The pNHA is located within the same groundwater catchment as the site, however, due to the nature and scale of the proposed works, no impacts on groundwater quality are anticipated. Therefore, no pathway for potential significant indirect effects on the pNHA has been identified.</p> <p>No source-pathway-receptor chain for impact was identified between the site of the Proposed Development and this designated site. As such, potential for direct or indirect impact on this Nationally Designated Site can be excluded.</p> <p>Therefore, this Nationally Designated Site is not within the likely zone of impact, and no further assessment is required.</p>
<p>Grand Canal pNHA [002104]</p> <p>Approx. distance: 4.31 km</p>	<p>The Proposed Development is located outside the boundary of this pNHA and as such there is no potential for direct effect.</p> <p>Due to the intervening distance and the nature and scale of the proposed works, there is no potential for indirect effects on this pNHA. No surface water connectivity exists from the site of the Proposed Development to the pNHA. The pNHA is located within the same groundwater catchment as the site, however, due to the nature and scale of the proposed works, no impacts on groundwater quality are anticipated. Therefore, no pathway for potential significant indirect effects on the pNHA has been identified.</p> <p>No source-pathway-receptor chain for impact was identified between the site of the Proposed Development and this designated site. As such, potential for direct or indirect impact on this Nationally Designated Site can be excluded.</p> <p>Therefore, this Nationally Designated Site is not within the likely zone of impact, and no further assessment is required.</p>
<p>Liffey Valley pNHA [000128]</p> <p>Approx. distance: 7.29 km</p>	<p>The Proposed Development is located outside the boundary of this pNHA and as such there is no potential for direct effect.</p>

Designated Sites and distance from Proposed Development	Likely Zone of Impact Determination
	<p>Due to the intervening distance and the nature and scale of the proposed works, there is no potential for indirect effects on this pNHA. No surface water connectivity exists from the site of the Proposed Development to the pNHA. The pNHA is located within the same groundwater catchment as the site, however, due to the nature and scale of the proposed works, no impacts on groundwater quality are anticipated. Therefore, no pathway for potential significant indirect effects on the pNHA has been identified.</p> <p>No source-pathway-receptor chain for impact was identified between the site of the Proposed Development and this designated site. As such, potential for direct or indirect impact on this Nationally Designated Site can be excluded.</p> <p>Therefore, this Nationally Designated Site is not within the likely zone of impact, and no further assessment is required.</p>
<p>Royal Canal pNHA [002103]</p> <p>Approx. distance: 9.78 km</p>	<p>The Proposed Development is located outside the boundary of this pNHA and as such there is no potential for direct effect.</p> <p>Due to the intervening distance and the nature and scale of the proposed works, there is no potential for indirect effects on this pNHA. No hydrological connectivity exists from the site of the Proposed Development to the pNHA, as they are located in different groundwater catchments. Therefore, no pathway for potential significant indirect effects on the pNHA has been identified.</p> <p>No source-pathway-receptor chain for impact was identified between the site of the Proposed Development and this designated site. As such, potential for direct or indirect impact on this Nationally Designated Site can be excluded.</p> <p>Therefore, this Nationally Designated Site is not within the likely zone of impact, and no further assessment is required.</p>
<p>Rye Water Valley/Carton pNHA [001398]</p> <p>Approx. distance: 10.21 km</p>	<p>The Proposed Development is located outside the boundary of this pNHA and as such there is no potential for direct effect.</p> <p>Due to the intervening distance and the nature and scale of the proposed works, there is no potential for indirect effects on this pNHA. No hydrological connectivity exists from the site of the Proposed Development to the pNHA, as they are located in different groundwater catchments. Therefore, no pathway for potential significant indirect effects on the pNHA has been identified.</p> <p>No source-pathway-receptor chain for impact was identified between the site of the Proposed Development and this designated site. As such, potential for direct or indirect impact on this Nationally Designated Site can be excluded.</p>

Designated Sites and distance from Proposed Development	Likely Zone of Impact Determination
	<p>Therefore, this Nationally Designated Site is not within the likely zone of impact, and no further assessment is required.</p>
<p>Kilteel Wood pNHA [001394]</p> <p>Approx. distance: 10.33 km</p>	<p>The Proposed Development is located outside the boundary of this pNHA and as such there is no potential for direct effect.</p> <p>The Proposed Development area is located approx. 10.33 km southwest of this pNHA. No source-pathway-receptor chain for impact was identified between the site of the Proposed Development and this designated site. As such, potential for direct or indirect impact on this Nationally Designated Site can be excluded.</p> <p>Therefore, this Nationally Designated Site is not within the likely zone of impact, and no further assessment is required.</p>
<p>Fitzsimon's woods pNHA [001753]</p> <p>Approx. distance: 10.4 km</p>	<p>The Proposed Development is located outside the boundary of this pNHA and as such there is no potential for direct effect.</p> <p>The Proposed Development area is located approx. 10.4 km southeast of this pNHA. No source-pathway-receptor chain for impact was identified between the site of the Proposed Development and this designated site. As such, potential for direct or indirect impact on this Nationally Designated Site can be excluded.</p> <p>Therefore, this Nationally Designated Site is not within the likely zone of impact, and no further assessment is required.</p>
<p>South Dublin Bay pNHA [000210]</p> <p>Approx. distance: 12.56 km</p>	<p>The Proposed Development is located outside the boundary of this pNHA and as such there is no potential for direct effect.</p> <p>Due to the intervening distance and the nature and scale of the proposed works, there is no potential for indirect effects on this pNHA. No surface water connectivity exists from the site of the Proposed Development to the pNHA. The groundwater flow path from the site's catchment discharges into the coast, however, due to the nature and scale of the proposed works, no impacts on groundwater quality are anticipated.</p> <p>No source-pathway-receptor chain for impact was identified between the site of the Proposed Development and this designated site. As such, potential for direct or indirect impact on this Nationally Designated Site can be excluded.</p> <p>Therefore, this Nationally Designated Site is not within the likely zone of impact, and no further assessment is required.</p>

4.2

New Flora Atlas

A search was made in the New Atlas of the British & Irish Flora (Preston et al., 2002) to investigate whether any rare or unusual plant species listed as Annex II of the Habitats Directive which are listed as rare on the Red Data List (Curtis and McGough, 1988) or protected under the Flora (Protection) Order, 1999 had been recorded in the relevant 10km squares in which the study site is situated (O03) during the 1987-1999 atlas survey. Table 4-2 lists the rare and protected species records obtained from the New Flora Atlas during this study. None of these species were recorded within the site.

Table 4-2: Records of species listed under the Flora Protection Order 2015 or the Irish Red Data Book for Vascular Plants

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Red Hemp Nettle	<i>Galeopsis angustifolia</i>	Vulnerable (VU)
Meadow Barley	<i>Hordeum secalinum</i>	Vulnerable (VU)
Hairy St. John's-wort	<i>Hypericum hirsutum</i>	Vulnerable (VU)
Hairy Violet	<i>Viola hirta</i>	Vulnerable (VU)
Betony	<i>Stachys officinalis</i>	Near Threatened (NT)
Wildflower Thyme	<i>Clinopodium acinos</i>	Near Threatened (NT)
Opposite-leaved Pondweed	<i>Groenlandia densa</i>	Near Threatened (NT)

Red List of Irish Flowering Plants (Wyse Jackson et al., 2016), RE - Regionally Extinct, VU – Vulnerable, NT – Near Threatened, FPO – Floral Protection Order

4.3

National Biodiversity Data Centre Records

The National Biodiversity Data centre database was accessed on the 13th October 2025 and the following information was obtained. Table 4-4 lists the protected faunal species (excluding birds) recorded within the hectad O03 which pertains to the current study area. The database was also searched for records of First or Third Schedule non-native invasive species within the hectad. Table 4-5 lists the non-native invasive species recorded within the hectad. Table 4-6 lists all the protected bird species recorded within the hectad which pertains to the current study area.

Table 4-3: NBDC records for protected fauna records (excl. birds).

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Bats		
Daubenton's Bat	<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>	Annex IV, WA
Natterer's Bat	<i>Myotis nattereri</i>	Annex IV, WA
Lesser Noctule	<i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>	Annex IV, WA
Soprano Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	Annex IV, WA
Brown Long-eared Bat	<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	Annex IV, WA
Nathusius's Pipistrelle Bat	<i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>	Annex IV, WA
Pipistrelle Bat	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus sensu lato</i>	Annex IV, WA
Whiskered Bat	<i>Myotis mystacinus</i>	Annex IV, WA
Non-volant Mammals		
European Otter	<i>Lutra lutra</i>	Annex II, IV, WA
Pine Marten	<i>Martes martes</i>	Annex V, WA
Eurasian Badger	<i>Meles meles</i>	WA
Hedgehog	<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>	WA
Red Squirrel	<i>Sciurus vulgaris</i>	WA
Pygmy Shrew	<i>Sorex minutus</i>	WA
Red Deer	<i>Dama dama</i>	WA
Amphibians		
Smooth Newt	<i>Lissotriton vulgaris</i>	WA
Common Frog	<i>Rana temporaria</i>	Annex V, WA
Invertebrates		

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Freshwater White-clawed Crayfish	<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>	WA, Annex II & V
Desmoulin's Whorl Snail	<i>Vertigo moubensiana</i>	WA, Annex II

Annex II, Annex IV, Annex V – Of EU Habitats Directive, WA – Irish Wildlife Acts (1976-2017).

Table 4-4: NBDC records for Invasive species.

Common Name	Scientific Name
Wireweed	<i>Sargassum muticum</i>
Canadian Waterweed	<i>Elodea canadensis</i>
Japanese Knotweed	<i>Fallopia japonica</i>
Rhododendron	<i>Rhododendron ponticum</i>
Giant Hogweed	<i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>
Indian Balsam	<i>Impatiens glandulifera</i>
Spanish Bluebell	<i>Hyacinthoides hispanica</i>
Roach	<i>Rutilus rutilus</i>
American Mink	<i>Mustela vison</i>
Fallow Deer	<i>Dama dama</i>
Brown Rat	<i>Rattus norvegicus</i>
Douglas Fir	<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>
Freshwater Shrimp	<i>Gammarus pulex</i>
Water Fern	<i>Azolla filiculoides</i>
New Zealand flatworm	<i>Arthurdendyus triangulatus</i>
Australian flatworm	<i>Australoplana sanguinea</i>
Black Currant	<i>Ribes nigrum</i>
Butterfly-bush	<i>Buddleja davidii</i>
Canadian Fleabane	<i>Conyza canadensis</i>
Cherry Laurel	<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>
Common Broomrape	<i>Orobanche minor</i>
False-acacia	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>
Himalayan Honeysuckle	<i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>
Japanese Rose	<i>Rosa rugosa</i>
Least Duckweed	<i>Lemna minuta</i>
Nuttall's Waterweed	<i>Elodea nuttallii</i>
Russian-vine	<i>Fallopia baldschuanica</i>
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>
Three-cornered Garlic	<i>Allium triquetrum</i>

Traveller's-joy	<i>Clematis vitalba</i>
Harlequin Ladybird	<i>Harmonia axyridis</i>
Budapest Slug	<i>Tandonia budapestensis</i>
Common Garden Snail	<i>Cornu aspersum</i>
Jenkins' Spire Snail	<i>Potamopyrgus antipodarum</i>
Keeled Slug	<i>Tandonia sowerbyi</i>
Wrinkled Snail	<i>Candidula intersecta</i>
Red-eared Terrapin	<i>Trachemys scripta</i>
Eastern Grey Squirrel	<i>Sciurus carolinensis</i>
House Mouse	<i>Mus musculus</i>
Siberian Chipmunk	<i>Tamias sibiricus</i>
Sika Deer	<i>Cervus nippon</i>

4.4

Bird Records

A number of sources were assessed to determine the likely usage of the site by both breeding and wintering bird species, including Bird Atlases, National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC), BirdWatch Ireland and Conservation Objectives Supporting Documents from the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) for nearby Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

The Bird Atlas 2007-11: The breeding and wintering birds of Britain and Ireland (Balmer et al., 2013) provides the most up-to-date information regarding the distribution and relative abundance of bird species in Britain and Ireland, based on surveys carried out between 2007 and 2011. The atlases show data for breeding and wintering birds respectively in individual 10 km x 10 km squares (hectads). Table 4-7 shows any species found in the relevant hectad (O03) which are recorded as breeding in the most recent atlas. It also provided species that have been recorded within the relevant tetrads (G63W & G73B) on National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) datasets as well as any listed in Annex I of the EU Birds Directive recorded on the BoCCI Red List. Birds listed under Annex I are offered special protection by the EU Birds Directive. Those listed on the Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (BoCCI) Red List meet one or more of the following criteria:

- IUCN: Global conservation status (Critically Endangered (CE), Endangered (E) or Vulnerable (V), but not Near Threatened. These species are recognised as the highest priorities for action at a global scale and are thus priorities at an all-Ireland level.
- European conservation status. The conservation status of all European species was assessed most recently by Birdlife International (2004), one of the main changes in the revision being to include the IUCN criteria. These species are those of global conservation concern (including those classified as Near Threatened) and are Red-listed.
- The Irish breeding population has undergone significant historical decline since 1800.
- The Irish non-breeding population has undergone a significant decline of 50% in the last 25 years.
- The Irish breeding range has undergone a decline of 70% or more in the last 25 years.

No species listed under Annex I of the EU Birds Directive have been recorded within the relevant hectad (O03). No red-listed birds of conservation concern have been recorded breeding within the relevant tetrads with 7 amber listed species being recorded.

Table 4-5: NBDC Bird data and Bird Atlas data (Hectad O03)

Common Name	Scientific name	Bird Atlas		Designation
		Breeding 2008-2011	Wintering 2007-2011	
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Confirmed	Breeding	Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Annex II, III Birds of Conservation Concern -Red & Amber List
Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	Confirmed	Breeding	
Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	Present	Winter	
Brent Goose	<i>Branta bernicula</i>	Present	Winter	
Common Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	Present	Winter	
Common Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella naevia</i>	Possible	Breeding	
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	Present	Winter	
Common Linnet	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>	Confirmed	Breeding	
Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	Present	Winter	
Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	Present	Winter	
Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Confirmed	Breeding	
Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	Confirmed	Breeding	
Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Confirmed	Breeding	
Corn Crake	<i>Crex crex</i>	Probable	Breeding	
Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	Present	Winter	
Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	Present	Winter	
Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	Present	Breeding	
Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Anas Penelope</i>	Present	Winter	
Eurasian Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	Present	Winter	

Common Name	Scientific name	Bird Atlas		Designation
		Breeding 2008-2011	Wintering 2007-2011	
Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	Present	Winter	
Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>	Present	Winter	
Great Black-billed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>	Present	Winter	
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	Present	Winter	
Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	Present	Winter	
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	Present	Winter	
House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	Confirmed	Breeding	
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Confirmed	Breeding	
Lesser Black-billed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	Present	Winter	
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	Present	Winter	
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	Present	Winter	
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Confirmed	Breeding	
Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	Confirmed	Breeding	
Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	Present	Winter	
Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	Present	Winter	
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	Possible	Breeding	
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	Confirmed	Breeding	
Sky Lark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	Confirmed	Breeding	
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	Confirmed	Breeding	
Whooper Swan	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	Present	Winter	

4.5

Bat Records

A review of the National Biodiversity Data Centre results was made on the 13th October 2025, to search for records of bats within 10km of the proposed site (hectad O03). There were no records for any bat species within the Proposed Development Site. Details of the results are provided in Table 4-8 below.

Table 4-6: Bat Records within 10km of Proposed Development (hectad O03).

Common Name	Scientific Name	Protection Status
Daubenton's Bat	<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>	Annex IV, WA
Natterer's Bat	<i>Myotis nattereri</i>	Annex IV, WA
Lesser Noctule	<i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>	Annex IV, WA
Soprano Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	Annex IV, WA
Brown Long-eared Bat	<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	Annex IV, WA
Nathusius's Pipistrelle Bat	<i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>	Annex IV, WA
Pipistrelle Bat	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus sensu lato</i>	Annex IV, WA
Whiskered Bat	<i>Myotis mystacinus</i>	Annex IV, WA

4.6

Water Quality

The Proposed Development is situated entirely within the WFD Catchment 09, Liffey and Dublin Bay, (<https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>). There are no EPA-mapped watercourses within or adjacent to the Proposed Development Site boundary. The site is located in the sub-catchments Dodder_SC_010.

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) Transitional Waterbody risk score for the section of Liffey and Dublin Bay closest to the development site known as Liffey Estuary Lower Estuary has been assessed as "Intermediate".

The site is located in the groundwater catchment: the Dublin area (IE_EA_G_008). The Water Framework Directive (WFD) Groundwater Monitoring Programme (2019-2024) assigned the groundwater catchment as having 'good' status.

5. FIELD STUDY

5.1 Baseline Habitats

Habitats recorded during the multi-disciplinary ecological walkover survey are described below, and a habitat map is provided in **Figure 5-1**. Photographs taken of representative habitats across the Proposed Development are also included in the following section. No habitats considered to be of ecological significance and having the potential to correspond to those listed in *Annex I* of the *EU Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC* were identified during the walkover survey. No watercourses were recorded within or in proximity to the Proposed Development site. Habitat descriptions below are in the past tense to reflect their accuracy at a point in the recent past.

Table 5-1: Habitats within the site

Habitat Type	Fossitt Code
Improved amenity grassland	GA2
Buildings and artificial surfaces	BL3
Immature woodland	WS2
Treelines	WL2
Dry meadows and grassy verges	GS2
Scattered trees and parkland	WD5
Hedgerows	WL1

The majority of the Proposed Development site within Butler McGee Park comprised large fields of short-mown **Improved Amenity Grassland (GA2)** habitat, which were homogenous in appearance (**Plate 5-1 - 5-2**). The sward was dominated by perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*), common bent (*Agrostis capillaris*), Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), annual meadow-grass (*Poa annua*), and white clover (*Trifolium repens*), with frequent ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), greater plantain (*Plantago major*), and dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale agg.*), and occasional creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), common daisy (*Bellis perennis*), and creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*). The tarred walkways between the fields were classified as **Buildings and Artificial Surfaces (BL3)** (**Plate 5-3**).

A small patch of planted black alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) **Immature Woodland (WS2)** was recorded along the boundary fence to the west of the Park. Here, the trees were approximately 2m or less in height, and the ground flora was dominated by rough meadow-grass (*Poa trivialis*), cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), common yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), creeping buttercup, and nettle (*Urtica dioica*), with frequent cleavers (*Galium aparine*), creeping thistle, red clover (*Trifolium pratense*), white clover, dandelion, bindweed (*Calystegia sepium*), creeping cinquefoil (*Potentilla reptans*), broad-leaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*), and ribwort plantain (**Plate 5-4**).

There were two immature, planted **Treelines (WL2)** recorded on either side of the walkway at the northwestern corner of the park, comprised of silver birch (*Betula pendula*), sweet cherry (*Prunus avium*), black poplar (*Populus nigra*), and Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) (**Plate 5-5**). These same species had been planted near the walkway towards the centre of the site to create a small **Immature Woodland (WS2)** area (**Plate 5-6**). Another sparse, planted hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) **Treeline (WL2)** runs along Drumcairn Avenue, alongside the boundary fence (**Plate 5-7**). These trees were all immature, with trees less than 2m tall.

A small area of **Dry Meadows and Grassy Verges (GS2)** habitat was recorded along the verge of Drumcairn Avenue adjacent to the park fence. The sward was dominated by creeping buttercup, cock's-foot and false oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*) with red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), rough meadow-

grass, dandelion, ribwort plantain and frequent broad-leaved dock, creeping cinquefoil, common daisy, and common yarrow (**Plate 5-8**).

An area of semi-mature, scattered small-leaved lime trees (*Tilia cordata*) was recorded between pitches near the northern Park boundary, adjacent to Drumcairn Parade. This habitat was classified as **Scattered Trees and Parkland (WD5)** (**Plate 5-9**).

There was an unmown area of **Dry Meadows and Grassy Verges (GS2)** habitat recorded along the northernmost edge of the Park. Here, the grassland comprised coarse, tussocky grass species and ruderal plants and was dominated by rough meadow-grass, cock's-foot, and broad-leaved dock, with dandelion, Yorkshire fog, bramble (*Rubus fruticosus agg.*), ribwort plantain, creeping buttercup, and creeping thistle (**Plate 5-10**).

Lastly, a low ornamental beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) **Hedgerow (WL1)** with occasional dog rose (*Rosa canina*) was recorded along the entirety of the eastern edge of the Park, running adjacent to Cookstown Road. The hedgerow was approximately 1.5 m high with no prominent ground flora (**Plate 5-11**).



*Plate 5-1 Example of short-mown **Improved Amenity Grassland (GA2)** fields recorded throughout the Park.*



Plate 5-2: Example of homogeneous **Improved Amenity Grassland (GA2)** fields recorded toward the west of the Park with football goalposts.



Plate 5-3: Tarred walkways between the fields classified as **Buildings and Artificial Surfaces (BL3)**.



Plate 5-4: Planted black alder **Immature Woodland (WS2)** recorded along the boundary fence to the west of the Park.



Plate 5-5: **Treelines (WL2)** recorded on either side of the walkway at the northwestern corner of the Park.



Plate 5-6: A small patch of **Immature Woodland (WS2)** habitat planted with a mix of tree species, including silver birch, sweet cherry, black poplar, and Scots pine.



Plate 5-7: A **Treeline (WL2)** planted with immature hornbeam trees recorded along the park boundary on Drumcain Avenue.



Plate 5.8: A small area of **Grassy Verges (GS2)** habitat was recorded on the Drumcairn Avenue verge along to the park boundary fence.



Plate 5.9: Semi-mature small-leaved lime trees recorded between pitches near the northern Park boundary classified as **Scattered Trees and Parkland (WD5)**.



Plate 5-10: **Dry Meadows and Grassy Verges (GS2)** habitat recorded along the northernmost edge of the Park.



Plate 5-11: **Low, ornamental beech Hedgerow (WL1)** recorded running along the Park boundary on Cookstown Road.



Map Legend

Red Line Boundary

Blue Line Boundary

Habitat Mapping

Buildings and artificial surfaces

Amenity grassland (improved)

Dry meadows and grassy verges

Scattered trees and parkland

Immature woodland

Hedgerows

Treelines

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Drawing Title

Habitat Map

Project Title

Butler McGee Park, Co. Dublin

Drawn By Checked By

DM

SF

Project No. Drawing No.

250944

Figure 5-1

Scale Date

1:3,000

24.10.2025

5.2 Invasive Species

No invasive species listed under the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2015) or under the First Schedule of the European Union (Invasive Alien Species) Regulations 2024 (S.I. No 374 of 2024) were recorded within the Proposed Development site.

5.3 Fauna

5.3.1 Non-volant Mammals

The Proposed Development Site was surveyed for evidence of mammal signs. No evidence of use by mammals identified in the desktop study was identified.

The Park is situated in an urban locality and is not well-connected to more suitable breeding/foraging grounds, and the site's urban location, human disturbance, and fragmented tree cover limit its overall suitability for supporting a resident badger, red squirrel, shrew or pine marten population.

There are NBDC records of otter within the same hectad as the Proposed Development Site, however, the habitats on site were not suitable for otter, as no watercourses are located within or in proximity to the site, and there was no evidence of otter recorded during the walkover survey.

There are NBDC records of hedgehog within the same hectad as the Proposed Development Site. The Proposed Development Site provides moderate suitability for hedgehog, particularly within areas of **Dry Meadows and Grassy Verges (GS2)**, **Immature Woodland (WS2)**, and **Hedgerows (WL1)**, which offer suitable foraging habitat, shelter, and potential connectivity. These habitats support invertebrate prey and contain ground cover that may be used for nesting or temporary refuge. However, the extensive areas of **Improved Amenity Grassland (GA2)** offer limited value due to regular mowing and reduced structural diversity. No signs of use by hedgehog were recorded.

5.3.2 Bats

During the walkover survey on the 7th of October 2025, features and habitats within the Proposed Development site were assessed for their suitability to support bats. Habitats recorded during the walkover survey are listed below, together with their assessment regarding foraging and commuting bats.

With regard to foraging and commuting bats, areas of **Improved Amenity Grassland (GA2)**, **Dry Meadows and Grassy verges (GS2)**, and low **Hedgerow (WL1)** were considered to have **Negligible** suitability for commuting and foraging bats. **Immature Woodland (WS2)** and **Treeline (WL2)** habitats were considered to have **Low** suitability, i.e., habitat that could be used by small numbers of commuting or foraging bats.

Overall, the Proposed Development site was assessed as having **Low** suitability for commuting bats, primarily due to the relative lack of linear habitats that provide connectivity within the landscape. Overall, the site was also assigned **Low** suitability for foraging bats as it primarily consisted of extensively managed, homogenous habitats.

In terms of roosting habitat suitability, no PRFs were observed within any of the trees on the site; therefore, the Proposed Development site was regarded as having **Negligible** bat roosting suitability. All trees on site will be retained during development.

5.3.3 Birds

The habitats within the Proposed Development Site provide suitable conditions for common species typically found in urban environments. While the short-mown grassland supports limited biodiversity, the unmown verges and trees offer foraging opportunities for birds, as well as some nesting habitat.

The following birds were recorded during the walkover survey: hooded crow (*Corvus cornix*), rook (*Corvus frugilegus*), jackdaw (*Corvus monedula*), magpie (*Pica pica*), herring gull (*Larus argentatus*), black-headed gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*), and wood pigeon (*Columba palumbus*). No significant numbers of birds were recorded.

5.4 Identification of Key Ecological Receptors

Table 5-1 lists all identified Key Ecological Receptors (KERs) and assigns them an ecological importance in accordance with the Guidelines for Assessment of Ecological Impacts on National Road Schemes (NRA, 2009a). This table also provides the rationale for this determination.

Table 5-2: Importance of Ecological Receptors

Ecological Receptor	Rationale	KER (Y/N)
Designated Sites		
European Designated Sites	<p>No potential pathway for significant effects has been identified (see also the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report that accompanies the application).</p> <p>No potential for significant effects on European Sites has been identified, and these sites will therefore not be considered further within this EcIA.</p>	No
Nationally Designated Sites	<p>No potential for significant effects on Nationally Designated Sites has been identified, and these sites will therefore not be considered further within this EcIA.</p>	No
Habitats, Flora and Fauna		
Habitats of Local Importance (Higher value) Immature Woodland (WS2)	<p>This habitat is assessed as being of Local Importance (Higher value) given its capacity to provide for nesting, foraging and refuge for local fauna. However, due to the relatively small area of this habitat, and as the Proposed Development will not result in a loss of this habitat, this habitat has not been identified as a KER.</p>	No
Habitats of Local Importance (Higher value) Scattered Trees and Parkland (WD5)	<p>This habitat is assessed as being of Local Importance (Higher value) given its capacity to provide for nesting, foraging and refuge for local fauna. However, due to the relatively small area of this habitat, and as the Proposed Development will not result in a loss of this habitat, this habitat has not been identified as a KER.</p>	No

Habitats of Local Importance (Lower value) Improved Amenity Grassland (GA2)	This habitat is assessed as being of Local Importance (Lower value) as it is highly modified and widespread in the wider landscape. It has not been identified as a KER. The Proposed Development will see the temporary, partial removal of this habitat and subsequent reinstatement, with minimal loss as a result of proposed hardstands footprint.	No
Habitats of Local Importance (Lower value) Dry meadows and Grassy Verges (GS2)	This habitat is assessed as being of Local Importance (Lower value) as it is a semi-natural habitat and is widespread in the wider landscape. It has not been identified as a KER.	No
Habitats of Local Importance (Lower value) Treelines of Immature trees (WL2) and low diversity Hedgerow (WL1)	These habitats are assessed as being of Local Importance (Lower value) as they are of poor ecological value due to their minimal connectivity function. They were not identified as KERs. No immature trees will be affected by the development. The 220m of existing beech hedgerow to be replaced with a mix of native species during the construction phase. The Proposed Development will result in a temporary, minimal loss of this habitat.	No
Habitats of Local Importance (Lower value) Buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3)	These habitats are assessed as being of Local Importance (Lower value) as this habitat is highly modified as well as being common and widespread in the local and wider landscape. For these reasons, this habitat has not been identified as a KER.	No
Bats – Local Importance (Higher value)	<p>Overall, the Proposed Development site was regarded as having <i>Low</i> suitability for commuting bats, primarily due to the relative lack of linear habitats that provide connectivity within the landscape.</p> <p>No PRFs were observed within any of the trees during the ecological walkover of the Proposed Development Site. Therefore, the Proposed Development site was regarded as having <i>Negligible</i> bat roosting suitability.</p> <p>Based on the results of the desktop study, it is likely that one or more bat species – such as soprano pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>), common pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i> sensu lato), and lesser noctule (<i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>) – which are common in urban areas, are utilising the site for foraging and commuting. As such, bat species have been identified as of Local Importance (Higher Value).</p> <p>Although there will be no significant removal of trees associated with the Proposed Development, a potential for disturbance as a result of the proposed external lighting during construction and operation of the Proposed Development site has been identified.</p> <p>Therefore, on a precautionary basis, bats are included as a KER due to the potential for disturbance from increased lighting within the Proposed Development.</p>	Yes
Birds – Local Importance (Higher value)	Based on the information identified within the desk study, and the assessment of the habitats during the	Yes

	<p>multidisciplinary walkover survey, bird species have been identified as of Local Importance (Higher Value).</p> <p>The immature woodland and treeline/hedgerow habitat within the site provides some suitable nesting habitat for birds.</p> <p>The Proposed Development will result in the temporary loss of amenity grassland habitats that provide some foraging resource for local birds. There will be minimal loss of habitats associated with the removal of 220m of existing hedgerow which will be replanted during the construction phase. The Proposed Development has the potential to result in indirect effects on the receptor, as a result of temporary habitat loss or displacement due to visual and noise disturbance during construction. Birds are therefore included as a KER for further assessment.</p>	
Other Fauna	<p>No breeding or resting sites for protected mammal species were identified within the Proposed Development site, and no evidence of use by protected mammals was found. No impacts to these species are predicted as a result of the Proposed Development, as such, they are not included as KERs.</p>	No

6. ECOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 Do Nothing Impact

The site of the Proposed Development consists of *Improved amenity grassland (GA2)*, *Dry meadows and grassy verges (GS2)*, *Hedgerows (WL1)*, *Treelines (WL2)*, *Immature woodland (WS2)*, *Scattered trees and parkland (WD5)*, and *Buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3)*. If the Proposed Development were not to proceed, it is likely that the site would remain in a very similar condition, maintained as a managed urban green space, the immature woodland habitat would continue to establish, and the ecological value of the site would remain much unchanged.

6.2 Likely Significant Effects During Construction Phase

6.2.1 Effects on Habitats during Construction

The proposed works will take place within areas of the site that comprise existing fields of *Improved amenity grassland (GA2)* with areas of *Dry meadows and grassy verges (GS2)*, *Hedgerows (WL1)*, and *Treelines (WL2)* also present. None of the habitats within the works areas correspond to habitats listed on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive.

All existing trees on the Proposed Development site are to be retained and enhanced via tree planting during the construction phase of the project. There will be a temporary loss of amenity grassland habitat, during the construction phase to facilitate the creation of the new pitches and SuDS features. The existing hedgerow on the east boundary of the site will be removed and replaced with a similar hedgerow comprising a more diverse assemblage of native Irish hedge species. This will result in a temporary loss of this habitat during construction.

No significant effects on the habitats located within the site are anticipated. Overall, there will be neutral effects on all the habitats identified, as minimal losses are anticipated, with the potential for positive effects on treelines and hedgerows, as planting or bolstering of linear habitats along pedestrian tracks is proposed.

6.2.2 Effects on Fauna during Construction

The effects of habitat loss and disturbance to faunal KER species during the construction phase of the development is considered in this section. The following faunal species have been identified as KERs for further assessment in the following subsections:

- Bats
- Birds

6.2.2.1 Assessments of Potential Impacts on Bats

Commuting and foraging

No trees will be removed during the construction of the Proposed Development. Although the low hedgerow will be removed and replaced, it was assessed as having *Negligible* suitability for commuting and foraging bats. The immature woodland and treelines within the development collectively provide limited foraging and commuting corridors for bats and connectivity to the wider landscape. No significant effects on commuting and foraging bats are expected during the construction phase of the

Proposed Development. The proposed landscape plan is expected to increase the availability of suitable habitats such as treelines, potentially resulting in positive effects on bats overtime by increasing prey availability, habitat diversity, and commuting features. No mitigations are proposed.

Disturbance

Disturbance from lighting and noise during the construction of the Proposed Development has the potential to impact commuting, and foraging bats utilising the area. Considering the urban location of the Proposed Development site, its low suitability of the site for bats, and limited overlap of night-time working hours during the bat activity season, the proposed works are not expected to result in significant effects on bats. No mitigations are proposed.

6.2.2.2 Assessments of Potential Impacts on Birds

The construction of the Proposed Development will result in the temporary loss of amenity grassland habitats that provide some foraging resource for local birds, as well as a temporary loss of 220 m of hedgerow habitat. These habitats are common and widespread in the land surrounding the site and the temporary loss of nesting and foraging habitat is not considered significant at any geographic scale as it is likely that birds currently utilising the Proposed Development site would simply be displaced to available suitable habitat in the wider area for the duration of construction. However, if vegetation clearance coincided with the bird nesting season (March – September), there is potential for direct mortality to nesting birds which would be significant at a local geographic scale.

6.2.2.2.1 Mitigation

To avoid mortality and/or disturbance impacts to nesting birds, vegetation clearance will be undertaken outside the bird nesting season which runs from the 1st of March to the 31st of August. Any cutting/ pruning or clearance of woody or scrubby vegetation that may be required outside the season described above will be preceded by a pre-commencement survey by a suitably qualified ecologist to ensure that no bird nests are present. Should nesting birds be encountered, the trees/vegetation will be left until nesting activity has ceased.

With the implementation of mitigation measures outlined above no significant residual effects are anticipated on local bird populations as a result of the construction of the Proposed Development.

6.3 Likely Significant Effects During Operational Phase

6.3.1 Effects on Habitats during Operation

There will be no additional habitat loss associated with the operational phase of the Proposed Development. No direct or indirect impacts on adjacent habitats are considered likely as a result of the operational phase of the Proposed Development. The operation of the proposal therefore will not have a significant impact at any geographic scale.

The proposed site layout will include for areas of meadow grassland to be established via grassland management, which will reduce mowing to once or twice a year, these are expected to result in positive effects on dry meadows habitats.

6.3.2 Effects on Fauna during Operation

The effects of disturbance to faunal KER species during the operational phase of the development is considered in this section. The following faunal species have been identified as KERs for further assessment in the following subsections:

➤ Bats

6.3.2.1 Assessment of Potential Impacts on Bats

Disturbance

The site does not provide high quality foraging/ commuting habitat as it is located within an urban location which already presents artificial lighting. The Proposed Development includes for the provision of localised flood lighting along amenity areas, as well as the retention of lighting along pedestrian paths.

There is a potential for lighting disturbance during operation of the Proposed Development to affect bats for foraging and commuting. The effects are not considered significant due to the limited suitability of the site for bats, however, as the proposed landscape improvements are expected to eventually increase suitable habitat for bats within the site, mitigations are proposed to reduce negative impacts on the local bat populations as a result of disturbance.

Mitigation

Disturbance

The lighting for the operational phase of the Proposed Development, subject to detail design, will be designed with consideration of the following guidelines: *Bat Conservation Ireland guidelines*; *Bat Conservation Ireland (Bats and Lighting: Guidance Notes for Planners, Engineers, Architects and Developers, BCI, 2010)* and the *Bat Conservation Trust (Guidance Note 08/23 Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night, BCT, 2023)*), to minimise lighting impacts on retained and newly established areas of planting that could be utilised by local bat populations and other wildlife. In particular, directional lighting fixtures will be utilised to limit light spill on suitable bat commuting habitats or upward spill, and warm light temperatures (2700K or less) will be used to reduce disturbance. The proposed location for floodlights within the Proposed Development can be found in **Appendix 1**. The floodlighting for the ball wall, MUGA and skatepark will be controlled, and is proposed to be set to turn on at dusk and turn off at 10 pm, thus limiting their potential to disturb bats.

6.4 Impacts on Designated Sites

6.4.1 European Designated Sites

The Proposed Development site is located completely outside of the boundary of any European site.

In relation to European sites, an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been prepared to provide the competent authorities with the information necessary to complete an Appropriate Assessment for the Proposed Development site in compliance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.

The AASR concluded as follows: *'Following an examination, analysis and evaluation of the relevant data and information set out within this Screening Report, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt, in view of best scientific knowledge, on the basis of objective information and in light*

of the conservation objectives of the relevant European sites, that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have any significant effect on any European Designated Sites'.

Given that no potential pathway for significant effects on European Sites has been identified, there is no requirement for Appropriate Assessment or the preparation of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS).

6.4.2 **Impacts on Nationally Designated Sites**

Impacts on nationally designated sites including NHAs and pNHAs are considered in this section of the report. Where such sites are also designated as SACs or SPAs (European Sites) they have been assessed and considered under that designation.

There are no NHAs within the Proposed Development potential zone of influence. There is no potential for direct or indirect effects on pNHA as no pathways for effect were identified as a result of the Proposed Development. Significant effects on Nationally Designated Sites are not anticipated.

7. CUMULATIVE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Proposed development site was considered in combination with other plans and projects in the area that could result in cumulative impacts on the KERs identified in Section 5.4 of this report, including European Designated Sites and Nationally designated sites. This included a review of online Planning Registers and served to identify past, present and future plans and projects, their activities and their predicted environmental effects.

7.1 Assessment of Plans

The following development plans have been reviewed and taken into consideration as part of this assessment:

- South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2022-2028
- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019 - 2031
- 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2027

The review focused on policies and objectives that relate to designated sites for nature conservation, biodiversity and protected species. An overview of the search results with regard to plans is provided in **Table 7-1**.

Potential for in-combination effects in relation to European Sites are considered within the AA Screening Report that accompanies this application.

Table 7-1: Assessment of Development Plans

Plans	Key Policies and Objectives directly related to European Sites and Biodiversity in the Zone of Influence	Assessment of Potential Impact on Ecological Receptors and Designated Sites
South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2022 - 2028	<p>Policy COS2: Social/Community Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> COS2 Objective 3: To protect and enhance existing community facilities, and to support the development and expansion of new and existing facilities and services, in proximity to the populations they serve, where their need is identified. COS2 Objective 4: To support the clustering of community facilities such as community centres, sports and leisure facilities, schools, childcare facilities and open spaces to create multi-purpose community hubs. <p>Policy COS5: Parks and Public Open Space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> COS5 Objective 1: To support a hierarchy of multi-functional, accessible parks and public open spaces across the County in line with Table 8.1, based on existing populations and planned growth in accordance with the overall standard of 2.4ha per 1,000 population. COS5 Objective 2: To support the implementation of South Dublin County Parks and Open Space Strategy and to ensure that the provision, upgrade, design, and maintenance of public open space is in accordance with the Strategy. COS5 Objective 3: To support the implementation and expansion of the Council's <i>TeenSpace Programme</i> (2021) and the implementation of the <i>Sports Pitch Strategy</i> (2020) or (any superseding documents). COS5 Objective 8: To ensure the design of parks and public open space areas is of high quality; to provide a pleasant setting, accommodate use by people of all ages and abilities, to support life-long activity and good health and well-being by the provision of a balanced mix of active and passive recreation and access to, or view of, nature, ensuring that the design considers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provision of an appropriate mix of hard and soft surfaced areas; - enhancement of biodiversity and existing trees and hedgerows; - incorporation of water courses, other natural features and existing built heritage into the design of parks and open spaces as appropriate; - provision of new planting, landscape features and appropriate site furniture including a variety of accessible, well located and designed seating. <p>Policy NCBH2: Biodiversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCBH2 Objective 1: To support the implementation of the National Biodiversity Action Plan (2017- 2021) and the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan (2021-2025) and to support the adoption and implementation of the South Dublin County Biodiversity Action Plan (2020-2026) and Pollinator Action Plan (2021-2025) and any superseding plans. 	<p>The development plan was reviewed, with particular reference to Policies and Objectives that relate to biodiversity, protected species and designated sites.</p> <p>All relevant biodiversity legislation is being adhered to, and there will be no impact on biodiversity as a result of the Proposed Development. A comprehensive Screening for Appropriate Assessment has been submitted along with this application in which cumulative impacts with regard to European Sites is assessed.</p> <p>No potential for cumulative impacts when considered in conjunction with the Proposed Development were identified.</p> <p>No potential for significant in-combination effects on European site was identified, when considered in the absence of any mitigation, individually or cumulatively with other plans or projects.</p>

Plans	Key Policies and Objectives directly related to European Sites and Biodiversity in the Zone of Influence	Assessment of Potential Impact on Ecological Receptors and Designated Sites
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCBH2 Objective 2: To ensure the protection of designated sites in compliance with relevant EU Directives and applicable national legislation. NCBH2 Objective 3: To protect and conserve the natural heritage of the County, and to conserve and manage EU and nationally designated sites and non-designated locally important areas which act as 'stepping stones' for the purposes of green infrastructure and Article 10 of the Habitats Directive. NCBH2 Objective 4: To protect our rivers and in particular to avoid overdevelopment which could have an adverse effect on the biodiversity and ecosystems of the river. <p>Policy NCBH3: Natura 2000 Sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCBH3 Objective 1: To prevent development and activities that would adversely affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 site located within or adjacent to the County and promote the favourable conservation status of the habitats and species integral to these sites. NCBH3 Objective 2: To ensure that plans, including land use plans, will only be adopted, if they either individually or in combination with existing and / or proposed plans or projects, will not have a significant adverse effect on a European Site, or where such a plan is likely or might have such a significant adverse effect (either alone or in combination), South Dublin County Council will, as required by law, carry out an appropriate assessment as per requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive 92 / 43 / EEC of the 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, as transposed into Irish legislation. Only after having ascertained that the plan will not adversely affect the integrity of any European site, will South Dublin County Council adopt the plan, incorporating any necessary mitigation measures. A plan which could adversely affect the integrity of a European site may only be adopted in exceptional circumstances, as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive as transposed into Irish legislation. NCBH3 Objective 3: To ensure that planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that, either individually or in combination with existing and / or proposed plans or projects, will not have a significant adverse effect on a European Site, or where such a development proposal is likely or might have such a significant adverse effect (either alone or in combination), the planning authority will, as required by law, carry out an appropriate assessment as per requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive 92 / 43 / EEC of the 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, as transposed into Irish legislation. Only after having ascertained that the development proposal will not adversely affect the integrity of any European site, will the planning authority agree to the development and impose appropriate mitigation measures in the form of planning conditions. A development proposal which could adversely affect the integrity of a European 	

Plans	Key Policies and Objectives directly related to European Sites and Biodiversity in the Zone of Influence	Assessment of Potential Impact on Ecological Receptors and Designated Sites
	<p>site may only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive as transposed into Irish legislation.</p> <p>Policy NCBH4: Proposed Natural Heritage Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCBH4 Objective 1: To ensure that any proposal for development within or adjacent to a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) is designed and sited to minimise its impact on the biodiversity, ecological, geological and landscape value of the pNHA particularly plant and animal species listed under the Wildlife Acts and the Habitats and Birds Directive including their habitats. NCBH4 Objective 2: To restrict development within or adjacent to a proposed Natural Heritage Area to development that is directly related to the area's amenity potential subject to the protection and enhancement of natural heritage and visual amenities including biodiversity and landscapes. Such developments will be required to submit an Ecological Impact Assessment prepared by a suitably qualified professional. NCBH4 SL01: To promote opportunities to improve the habitat relating to the Lugmore Glen pNHA and to ensure that any proposals for development have full regard to the sensitivities of the area within the pNHA and along the Tallaght Stream. <p>Policy NCBH5: Protection of Habitats and Species Outside of Designated Areas</p> <p>Protect and promote the conservation of biodiversity outside of designated areas and ensure that species and habitats that are protected under the Wildlife Acts 1976 to 2018, the Birds Directive 1979 and the Habitats Directive 1992, the Flora (Protection) Order 2015, and wildlife corridors are adequately protected.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCBH5 Objective 1: To ensure that development does not have a significant adverse impact on biodiversity, including known rare and threatened species, and that biodiversity enhancement measures are included in all development proposals. NCBH5 Objective 2: To ensure that an Ecological Impact Assessment is undertaken for developments proposed in areas that support, or have the potential to support, protected species or features of biodiversity importance, and that appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures are incorporated into all development proposals. <p>Policy NCBH10: Invasive Species</p> <p>Protect against and prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species within the County and require landowners and developers to adhere to best practice guidance in relation to the control of invasive species.</p>	

Plans	Key Policies and Objectives directly related to European Sites and Biodiversity in the Zone of Influence	Assessment of Potential Impact on Ecological Receptors and Designated Sites
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCBH10 Objective 1: To ensure that development proposals do not lead to the spread or introduction of invasive species. If developments are proposed on sites where invasive species are or were previously present, applicants should submit a control and management programme with measures to prevent, control and/or eradicate the particular invasive species as part of the planning process and to comply with the provisions of the European Communities Birds and Habitats Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 / 2011). NCBH10 Objective 2: To ensure that the Council promptly and appropriately treats invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed, including where notified by members of the public that such species, located on public lands, pose a potential threat to property. <p>Policy NCBH11: Tree Preservation Orders and Other Tree / Hedgerow Protections</p> <p>Review Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) within the County and maintain the conservation value of trees and groups of trees that are the subject of a Tree Preservation Order while also recognising the value of and protecting trees and hedgerows which are not subject to a TPO.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCBH11 Objective 1: To review Tree Preservation Orders within the County and maintain the conservation value of trees and groups of trees that are the subject of any Tree Preservation Order. NCBH11 Objective 2: To regularly evaluate and identify trees of amenity value within the County with a view to making them the subject of Tree Preservation Orders or otherwise protecting them and to furnish information to the public in this regard. NCBH11 Objective 3: To protect and retain existing trees, hedgerows, and woodlands which are of amenity and / or biodiversity and / or carbon sequestration value and / or contribute to landscape character and ensure that proper provision is made for their protection and management taking into account Living with Trees: South Dublin County Council's Tree Management Policy (2015-2020) or any superseding document and to ensure that where retention is not possible that a high value biodiversity provision is secured as part of the phasing of any development to protect the amenity of the area. NCBH11 Objective 4: To protect the hedgerows of the County, acknowledging their role as wildlife habitats, biodiversity corridors, links within the County's green infrastructure network, their visual amenity and landscape character value and their significance as demarcations of historic field patterns and townland boundaries. (Refer also to Chapter 4: Green Infrastructure). NCBH11 Objective 5: To ensure that intact hedgerows / trees will be maintained above the 120m contour line within the County ensuring that the strong rural character will not be diluted and that important heritage features and potential wildlife corridors are protected. 	

Plans	Key Policies and Objectives directly related to European Sites and Biodiversity in the Zone of Influence	Assessment of Potential Impact on Ecological Receptors and Designated Sites
Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019 - 2031	<p>Biodiversity and Natural Heritage</p> <p>RPO 7.16: Support the implementation of the Habitats Directives in achieving an improvement in the conservation status of protected species and habitats in the Region and to ensure alignment between the core objectives of the EU Birds and Habitats Directives and local authority development plans.</p> <p>RPO 7.17: Facilitate cross boundary co-ordination between local authorities and the relevant agencies in the Region to provide clear governance arrangements and coordination mechanisms to support the development of ecological networks and enhanced connectivity between protected sites whilst also addressing the need for management of alien invasive species and the conservation of native species.</p> <p>RPO 7.18: Work with local authorities and state agencies to promote the development of all aspects of park management in the Wicklow National Park and the Slieve Bloom Mountains.</p> <p>RPO 7.19: Support the consideration of designating a National Park for the peatlands area in the Midlands.</p> <p>RPO 7.20: Promote the development of improved visitor experiences, nature conservation and sustainable development activities within the Dublin Bay Biosphere in cooperation with the Dublin Bay UNESCO Biosphere Partnership.</p> <p>RPO 7.22: Local authority development plan and local area plans, shall identify, protect, enhance, provide and manage Green Infrastructure in an integrated and coherent manner and should also have regard to the required targets in relation to the conservation of European sites, other nature conservation sites, ecological networks, and protected species.</p>	<p>The development plan was reviewed, with particular reference to Policies and Objectives that relate to the biodiversity, protected species and designated sites.</p> <p>All relevant biodiversity legislation is being adhered to, and there will be no impact on biodiversity as a result of the Proposed Development. A comprehensive Screening for Appropriate Assessment has been submitted along with this application in which cumulative impacts with regard to European Sites is assessed.</p> <p>No potential for cumulative impacts when considered in conjunction with the Proposed Development were identified.</p> <p>No potential for significant in-combination effects on European site was identified, when considered in the absence of any mitigation, individually or cumulatively with other plans or projects.</p>
4th National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2027	<p>Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030 (Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, 2024) (the "NBAP"). The NBAP strives for a "whole of government, whole of society" approach to the governance and conservation of biodiversity. It demonstrates Ireland's continuing commitment to meeting and acting on its obligations to protect Ireland's biodiversity for the benefit of future generations and will implement this through a number of key targets, actions and objectives. The Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2023 introduced a new public sector duty on biodiversity. The legislation provides that every public body, as listed in the Act, is obliged to have regard to the objectives and targets in the NBAP. The NBAP sets out five key objectives as follows.</p>	<p>The objectives set out in the NBAP aim to protect and enhance and promote biodiversity, nature restoration on the Island of Ireland and also contribute to International biodiversity initiative.</p>

Plans	Key Policies and Objectives directly related to European Sites and Biodiversity in the Zone of Influence	Assessment of Potential Impact on Ecological Receptors and Designated Sites
	<p>Objective 1: Adopt a Whole-of Government, Whole of Society Approach to Biodiversity. Proposed actions include capacity and resource reviews across Government; determining responsibilities for the expanding biodiversity agenda providing support for communities, citizen scientists and business; and mechanisms for the governance and review of this National Biodiversity Action Plan.</p> <p>Objective 2: Meet Urgent Conservation and Restoration Needs. Supporting actions will build on existing conservation measures. Efforts to tackle Invasive Alien Species will be elevated. The protected area network will be expanded to include the Marine Protected Areas. The ambition of the EU Biodiversity Strategy will be considered as part of an evolving work programme across Government</p> <p>Objective 3: Secure Nature's Contribution to People. Actions highlight the relationship between nature and people in Ireland. These include recognising the tangible and intangible values of biodiversity, promoting nature's importance to our culture and heritage and recognising how biodiversity supports our society and our economy.</p> <p>Objective 4: Enhance the Evidence Base for Action on Biodiversity. This objective focuses on biodiversity research needs, as well as the development and strengthening of long-term monitoring programmes that will underpin and strengthen future decision-making. Action will also focus on collaboration to advance ecosystem accounting that will contribute towards natural capital accounts.</p> <p>Objective DS 10 – Impacts of Developments on Protected Sites Have regard to any impacts of development on or near existing and proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation, Nature Reserves, Ramsar Sites, Wildfowl Sanctuaries, Salmonoid Waters, Refuges for Flora and Fauna, Conamara National Park, shellfish waters, freshwater pearl mussel catchments and any other designated sites including future designations.</p> <p>Objective 5: Strengthen Ireland's Contribution to International Biodiversity Initiatives. Collaboration with other countries and across the island of Ireland will play a key role in the realisation of this Objective. Ireland will strengthen its contribution to international biodiversity initiatives and international governance processes, such as the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity.</p>	<p>No potential for cumulative impacts were identified upon review of the Plan in conjunction with the Proposed development.</p> <p>No potential for significant in-combination effects on European site was identified, when considered in the absence of any mitigation, individually or cumulatively with other plans or projects.</p>

7.2

Assessment of Projects

A search of relevant online Planning Registers, reviews of relevant documents, planning application details and planning drawings was undertaken and served to identify past and future projects, their activities, and their environmental impacts. All relevant projects were considered in relation to the potential for cumulative effects. All relevant data was reviewed (e.g., individual EISs/EIARs, lay outs, drawings etc.) for all relevant projects where available. The projects considered include extensions to houses, retention permission, change of use, small alterations and the following:

- **Planning Ref: SD238/0002** – Upgrade of Jobstown Park, consisting of: Upgrade of existing boundaries and access points including provision of focal entrances. A shared pedestrian/cycle route with lighting columns linking Butler McGee Park to Whitestown Stream Park, via Dromcarra Estate. Upgrading existing footpaths where required, install new secondary footpath linkages and realignment of other footpaths. Retention of existing sports pitches (northern pitch re-orientated) - refurbished where necessary with drainage and re-leveelling. Four new pedestrian entrances to provide access into the Leisure Centre, in the southeast, southwest and the northeast of the site. Retaining existing kissing gates and upgrade where required. An activity circuit 900m long - with seats and play/exercise equipment A provision for teenspace area, fitness/workout area, natural play areas, pump track and natural play mounds. The provision of on-street parking and associated hard and soft landscaping on Fortunestown Way. Retention and replanting of existing hedgerows. Attenuation swales for enhanced biodiversity. Planting of trees, shrubs, hedgerows, and bulbs. All associated landscape works. All ancillary works. Part 8 approved by Council 12/6/2023. The EcIA for this development was consulted and it was determined that the Proposed Development combined with this project would not have the potential to result in any significant cumulative effects on biodiversity. Approx. distance from site: <100m.
- **Planning Ref: SD23A/0119** – Permission for the installation of a roof mounted telecommunications apparatus comprised of antenna, transmission dishes, radio equipment cabinets and all associated site works. Permission granted 31/10/2023. The relevant documentation for this project was consulted, and it was determined that the Proposed Development combined with this project would not have the potential to result in any significant cumulative effects on biodiversity. Approx. distance from site: <100m.
- **Planning Ref: SD23A/0013** – Material alteration to a single school wing consisting of the installation of an external insulation with rendered finish to the junior school wing and the installation of an external biomass boiler unit to the north elevation/creche wing as part of the pathfinder 2022 energy upgrade programme. Permission granted 21/04/2023. The relevant documentation for this project was consulted, and it was determined that the Proposed Development combined with this project would not have the potential to result in any significant cumulative effects on biodiversity. Approx. distance from site: <100m.
- **Planning Ref: SD25A/0131** – Permission for the development at Croughs Pub, Cookstown Road, Tallaght, Dublin 24. The Development will consist of increasing the floor area of the existing staff accommodation & plant room by 218 Sq.m on the 2nd floor, provision of 2 additional floors to provide 9 Apartments, 6no. 1 Bed units & 3 no. 2 Bed units, resulting in a 5 storey building over basement, new lift and lobby area to the rear to service all 5 floors, new pedestrian entrance to the eastern boundary, provision of 11 no. bicycle parking spaces & bin store, all ancillary works necessary to facilitate the development. Further Information requested 30/07/2025. The relevant documentation for this project was consulted, and it was determined that the Proposed Development combined with this project would not have the potential to result in any significant cumulative effects on biodiversity. Approx. distance from site: <100m.
- **Planning Ref: SD23A/0237** – Permission for (i) the construction of a residential development comprising a total of 84 no. apartments (40 no. one-bedroom units, 36 no. two-bedroom units and 8 no. three bedroom units) in a building ranging in height from 4 to 7 storeys (Part 4, part 5, part 7 storey building). Each apartment is provided with private amenity space in the form of a terrace or balcony space and has access to internal communal amenity space at ground floor level (265.54 sq.m); and external amenity space in the form of a designated communal open space area to the east

of the proposed building, a central public plaza between the proposed building and the adjacent under-construction residential scheme at the Cookstown Gateway site to the north (ABP Ref. ABP-303803-19); and an external communal roof terrace at fifth floor level. A total of 190 no. bicycle parking spaces are provided at ground floor level to serve the development, including 2 no. resident bicycle stores comprising a total of 138 no. cycle spaces and 4 no. visitor bicycle parking areas at surface level comprising a total of 50 no. cycle spaces. The Proposed Development also includes: (ii) the provision of 1 no. commercial/retail unit (214.85 sq.m) at ground floor level with 2 no. staff cycle spaces provided internally; and (iii) associated site and infrastructural works which include; foul and surface water drainage; the provision of solar panels at the upper roof level; lighting; landscaping; boundary treatments; plant rooms; signage; footpaths and internal hard and soft landscaping; bin storage; and all associated site development works. (b) Retention permission is also sought for; (i) the demolition of the previously existing, pitched roof, derelict structure on site known as Cookstown House (88.4 sq.m). Permission granted 1/7/2024. The relevant documentation for this development was consulted and it was determined that the Proposed Development combined with this project would not have the potential to result in any significant cumulative effects on biodiversity. Approx. distance from site: 1 km.

- **Planning Ref: SD24A/0174** – Permission for the installation of 1,611 msq solar photovoltaic Panels to various rooftops of the existing building at Blenders, Whitestown Road, Tallaght, Dublin 24, D24VY75. Permission granted 03/09/2024. The relevant documentation for this project was consulted, and it was determined that the Proposed Development combined with this project would not have the potential to result in any significant cumulative effects on biodiversity.. Approx. distance from site: 1 km.
- **Planning Ref: SD21A/0207** – Permission for the demolition of the existing single-storey c. 2,605sq.m. Junior School building; demolition of the existing single-storey c. 211sq.m. Junior School ancillary structures; construction of a new part three/part two-storey c. 4,998sq.m - Junior School building, located to the west of the existing Senior School building. The new school will accommodate 27 classrooms, a 3-class base Special Education Needs facility and all ancillary accommodation (the Senior School does not form part of planning application); 2 single-storey temporary accommodation units, c. 400sq.m, located to the south of the site, to facilitate the construction of the new school building; renewable energy design measures, PV Panels and/or heat pumps located at roof level; new school signage comprising wall-mounted lettering on the front elevation of the new building; external hard play area and 2 Multi-Use Games Areas; all located to the south of the site; redevelopment of the existing staff car parking and set-down facilities within the school site comprising: provision of 40 Junior school staff car parking spaces and 6 car set-down spaces, resurfacing of 22 existing Senior school car parking spaces, 106 bicycle parking spaces, new access road, new footpaths, landscaping and all ancillary site works; boundary treatment comprising of repair works to the existing low-level blockwork wall and new metal railings to an overall height of 2.4m along Fortunestown Road; replacement of the existing palisade fencing with new 2.4m high railings along Kiltalown Park Rd to the south; replacement of the existing pedestrian and vehicular entrance gates; works in the public road outside the school site: including 5 set-down spaces along Fortunestown Road, and services connection required to facilitate the development. Permission granted 14/09/2021. The relevant documentation for this project was consulted, and it was determined that the Proposed Development combined with this project would not have the potential to result in any significant cumulative effects on biodiversity. Approx. distance from site: 2 km.
- **Planning Ref: SD21A/0207** – Permission for the development of public realm works totalling approximately 1.2ha at Belgard Square North and on South Dublin County Council lands to the south and north of Belgard Square North, Tallaght including: Proposed new public space at Innovation Square; Proposed works to include a new advertising totem in Innovation Square extending to a maximum height of 2.4m x 1.5m; Proposed new Belgard Square North/Airton East West pedestrian link street; Pedestrian crossings at Belgard Square North and Belgard Cookstown Link Street; Redevelopment of County Hall Pedestrian Link; Redevelopment and reprofiling of levels within Chamber Square; Proposed works to include the reconfiguration of existing County Council carpark including widening of County Hall Pedestrian Link with additional planting, seating and relocation of wheelchair accessible parking spaces, a new pedestrian crossing and associated amendments to the carpark. All ancillary site development and landscaping works, including public lighting, play equipment, furniture and sports equipment, cycle parking, seating, pathways, planting,

surface water drainage and boundaries. Part 8 approved by Council 12/10/2020. The relevant documentation for this project was consulted, and it was determined that the Proposed Development combined with this project would not have the potential to result in any significant cumulative effects on biodiversity. Approx. distance from site: 2 km.

7.3

Conclusion of in-combination effects

Following the detailed assessment provided in the preceding sections, it is concluded that, the Proposed Development will not result in any residual adverse effects on biodiversity or protected sites, their integrity or their conservation objectives when considered on its own. There is therefore no potential for the Proposed Development to contribute to any cumulative adverse effects when considered in combination with other plans and projects.

In the review of the projects that was undertaken, no connection that could potentially result in additional or cumulative impacts was identified. Neither was any potential for different (new) impacts resulting from the combination of the various projects and plans in association with the Proposed Development.

Taking into consideration the reported residual impacts from other plans and projects in the area and the predicted impacts with the current proposal, no residual cumulative impacts have been identified with regard to Biodiversity.

8. CONCLUSION

Taking the above information and detailed assessment set out in the preceding sections of this chapter into consideration, and having regard to the precautionary principle, it is considered that the Proposed Development will not result in the loss of habitats or species of high ecological significance and will not have any significant effects on the ecology of the Proposed Development site or the wider area.

The potential residual impacts on ecological receptors will not be significant and no potential for the Proposed Development to contribute to any cumulative impacts on biodiversity when considered in-combination with other plans and projects was identified.

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APPENDIX 1

PROPOSED LAYOUT PLAN

