

**Appropriate Assessment Screening Report**  
**for the**  
**Draft Biodiversity Action Plan for South Dublin County**  
*Connecting with Nature*

**July 2020**

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## 1. Introduction

The South Dublin County Biodiversity Action Plan ‘*Connecting with Nature*’ is a non-statutory plan prepared by South Dublin County Council. The draft Plan has been prepared within the framework of the South Dublin County Development Plan 2016-2022 and is a response to national obligations under the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017 -2021, and under European policy under the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030.

The draft Plan presents a background to the diversity of nature in South Dublin County and to the essential benefits that we receive from nature. The draft Plan also presents the challenges that face biodiversity and the County in a time of change.

In response to these challenges, the document outlines a series of objectives and actions that, over a 6-year period between 2020-2026, aim to achieve the protection and enhancement of the County’s biodiversity, while ensuring that the County’s residents, businesses and visitors continue to enjoy and benefit from the many services that nature provides.

This Screening for Appropriate Assessment report is relevant to the aims and objectives as outlined in the draft Biodiversity Action Plan ‘*Connecting with Nature*’, as on public display for comment between the period 3<sup>rd</sup> July-10<sup>th</sup> August 2020. It comprises a record of the reasoning and conclusions of the first stage of Appropriate Assessment, which considers whether the plan, alone or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have significant effects on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site.

### 1.1 Legislative Context

The Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, better known as “The Habitats Directive”, provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. Articles 3 to 9 provide the legislative means to protect habitats and species of Community interest through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of sites known as Natura 2000. These are Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (79/409/ECC).

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to affect Natura 2000 sites (Annex 1.1).

Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for Appropriate Assessment (AA):

*Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the [Natura 2000] site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subjected to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.*

Article 6(4) states:

*If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the [Natura 2000] site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature, Member States shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted.*

## **2. Screening Methodology**

Screening is the process that applies the first two tests of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive and addresses the following:

1. Whether a plan or project is directly connected to or necessary for the management of a Natura 2000 site, and
2. Whether a plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, is likely to have significant effects on any Natura 2000 site in view of its conservation objectives.

The steps in this AA screening process have been devised from the guidance documents listed below and are as follows:

- Description of the plan and plan area
- Identify Natura 2000 sites in the zone of influence of the plan and compilation of information on their qualifying interests and conservation objectives
- Identify pathways for interaction between the plan and sites within the zone of influence, considering the conditions required to support sites and species, site sensitivities and known threats or vulnerabilities
- Assessment of likely effects of the plan or project in view of the characteristics and specific environmental conditions of the Natura 2000 sites. The precautionary principle underpins the Habitats Directive and requires that where doubt exists about the risk of a significant effect, an AA must be carried out. (EC, 2006)
- Assessment of significance. An effect of a proposed plan or project is considered significant if it would likely undermine any of the site's conservation objectives including its structure and function.

### **2.1 Guidance documentation**

The Screening Statement took account of guidance contained in the following documents:

- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities. (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2010 revision).
- Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities. Circular NPW 1/10 & PSSP 2/10.
- Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological Guidance on the Provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (European Commission Environment Directorate-General, 2001); hereafter referred to as the EC Article 6 Guidance Document. The guidance within this document provides a non-mandatory methodology for carrying out assessments required under Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive.
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC (EC Environment Directorate-General, 2000); hereafter referred to as MN2000.

- Guidance Document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitats Directive' 92/43/EEC. Clarification of the Concepts of Alternative Solutions, Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest, Compensatory Measures, Overall Coherence. Opinion of the European Commission (European Commission, January 2007).
- Guidelines for Good Practice Appropriate Assessment of Plans Under Article 6(3) Habitats Directive (International Workshop on Assessment of Plans under the Habitats Directive, 2011)

## 2.2 Assessment Methodology

The guidance above sets out a staged process for carrying out Appropriate Assessment. To determine if an Appropriate Assessment is required, documented screening is required. Screening identifies the potential for effects on the conservation objectives of European sites, if any, which would arise from a proposed plan or project, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects (i.e. likely significant effects).

Significant effects on a European site are those that would undermine the conservation objectives supporting the favourable conservation condition of the Qualifying Interest (QI) habitats and/or the QI/Special Conservation Interest (SCI) species of a European site(s).

Screening for Appropriate Assessment involves the following steps:

1. Determining whether the proposed plan or development is directly connected with, or necessary to the conservation management of, any European site(s)
2. Description of the plan and plan area.
3. Identifying Natura 2000 sites in the zone of influence of the plan and compilation of information on their qualifying interests and conservation objectives.
4. Identifying pathways for interaction between the plan and sites within the zone of influence, considering the conditions required to support sites and species, site sensitivities and known threats or vulnerabilities.
5. Assessment of likely effects of the plan or project in view of the characteristics and specific environmental conditions of the Natura 2000 sites. The precautionary principle underpins the Habitats Directive and requires that where doubt exists about the risk of a significant effect, an AA must be carried out. (EC, 2006)
6. Assessment of significance. An effect of a proposed plan or project is considered significant if it would likely undermine any of the sites conservation objectives including its structure and function.

If the conclusion at the end of screening is that there is no likelihood of significant effects occurring on any European site, as a result of the plan or project, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, then there is no requirement to undertake Appropriate Assessment.

These findings must be clearly documented in order to provide transparency of decision-making, and to ensure the application of the 'precautionary principle'.

## 2.3 Data Sources

Sources of information that were used to collect data on the Natura 2000 network of sites relied upon are listed below:

- Ordnance Survey of Ireland mapping and aerial photography available from [www.osi.ie](http://www.osi.ie) and Google Earth

- Ecological datasets on Natura 2000 sites, habitats and species as held by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and available online from [www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie) including:
- Information on water quality in the area available from [www.epa.ie](http://www.epa.ie)
- Information on the River Basin Districts from [www.wfdireland.ie](http://www.wfdireland.ie)
- Information on soils, geology and hydrogeology in the area available from [www.gsi.ie](http://www.gsi.ie)
- Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland (Article 17 reports). NPWS, 2019.
- South Dublin County Development Plan 2016-2022 and associated documents including Natura Impact Report and Environmental Statement [www.sdcc.ie](http://www.sdcc.ie)

### **3. Provision of Information for Screening for Appropriate Information**

The following sections provide information to facilitate the Appropriate Assessment screening of the draft Biodiversity Action Plan.

A description of the proposed draft Plan is provided, with a presentation of its targets and proposed actions. The zone of influence of the draft Plan is determined and a list of European sites identified that occur within that zone of influence.

The potential impacts arising from the draft Plan's proposed actions are examined, informing the assessment of whether the proposed draft Biodiversity Action Plan for South Dublin County will result in likely significant effects on any European sites, *i.e.* affect the conservation objectives supporting the favourable conservation condition of the identified European site's Qualifying Interests (Qis) or Special Conservation Interests (SCIs).

#### **3.1 Description of the draft Biodiversity Action Plan**

The draft Plan is not directly connected with, or necessary to the conservation management of any European site. The overall aim of the draft Biodiversity Action Plan is to achieve protection and enhancement of biodiversity in South Dublin County by developing initiatives and projects that promote awareness, appreciation, and enjoyment of the natural heritage in the County. Placing biodiversity to the forefront of the decision-making process is a central means of achieving these aims.

The draft Biodiversity Action Plan outlines a series of objectives and actions that aim to achieve this, while working to ensure that the County's residents, businesses and visitors alike continue to enjoy and benefit from the many services that nature provides.

The subsequent adopted Biodiversity Action Plan is to operate for a 6-year period between 2020 and 2026.

The draft Biodiversity Action Plan presents the context of the Plan in terms of national and European policy and objectives for the protection, enhancement, and restoration of biodiversity in the County.

The draft Plan presents a summary of the biodiversity resource currently existing in South Dublin County. It highlights the range of habitats and species that occur across the County, identifying areas that are protected under legislation while raising the profile of key habitats and species that occur outside of such protected areas.

The draft Plan also profiles the threats to biodiversity in the County and beyond, presenting a roadmap for how these threats and challenges can be addressed within South Dublin County. To achieve this, the draft Plan presents three key targets for biodiversity:

1. Getting to know what we have - surveying and mapping habitats and species in the county, identifying high nature value areas and local biodiversity spots, mapping the County's Green Infrastructure, locating and managing non-native invasive species
2. Telling the story - connecting with nature around us, encouraging awareness and community involvement in biodiversity projects, celebrating, and promoting the County's biodiversity, communicating our objectives and our achievements, undertaking biodiversity research studies.
3. Leading the way - good governance, addressing the threats to biodiversity in the County by striving for better implementation of local, national, and international biodiversity policy and action for climate change.

The majority of the actions listed under each of these objectives involve the collection, collation, digitisation, publication, promotion, and the raising of awareness in relation to a broad range of biodiversity-related issues. The aim is to put biodiversity issues to the forefront of the decision-making process, both within South Dublin County Council and throughout partnership projects with communities and businesses.

The objectives listed in the draft Plan are generally broad, allowing for various activities to be undertaken under each objective during the 6-yr period of operation of the Plan.

### **3.2 Relationship to other Plans and Projects**

The draft Biodiversity Action Plan has been prepared within the framework of the South Dublin County Development Plan 2016-2022 and the South Dublin County Heritage Plan. It is also South Dublin County Council's response to national and international obligations for biodiversity under the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017 -2021 and under European policy under the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030.

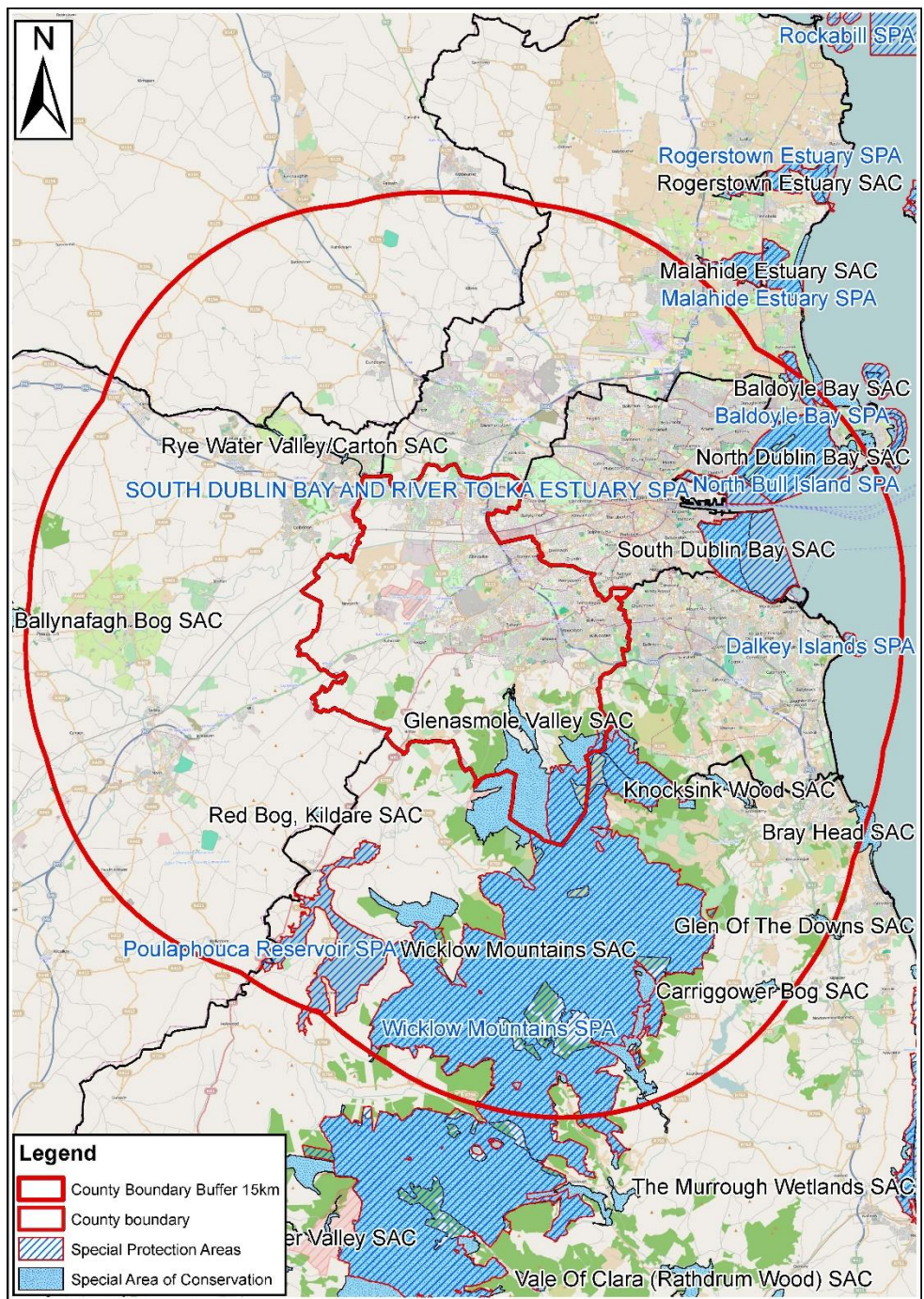
### **3.3 Assessment of Likely Significant Effects on European Sites**

The objectives and actions outlined in the South Dublin County draft Biodiversity Action Plan will apply to the administrative area of South Dublin County. The Appropriate Assessment guidance for Planning Authorities advises that for plans, a zone of influence of 15km from the boundary of the plan area is also to be considered, particularly where ecological links (source-pathway-receptors) exist between the area of the Plan and other European sites.

Figure 1 depicts the European sites within the 15km zone of influence of the area of the draft Biodiversity Action Plan.



**Figure 1** European sites in the zone of influence of the draft South Dublin County Biodiversity Action Plan



There are three European sites within the administrative boundary of South Dublin County, all of which are located within the area of the Dublin Mountains

- the Glenasmole Valley Special Area of Conservation (Site Code 001209)
- a portion of the Wicklow Mountains Special Area of Conservation (Site Code 002122) that extends into South Dublin County from County Wicklow
- a portion of the Wicklow Mountains Special Protection Area for Birds (Site Code 004040)



These three sites are home to a range of specialised and highly sensitive upland habitats that include bogland, heath, upland grassland, mountain streams, freshwater springs, fens, and woodlands. A variety of mammal, bird and plant species of conservation interest also occur. Being located in the uplands, these three sites form the foundation of the highly scenic landscapes of the Dublin Mountains, drawing visitors and locals alike to enjoy the views and engage in outdoor activities

Table 1 (Appendix 1) lists the Qualifying Interests and the Special Conservation Interests of all the European sites deemed to be in the zone of influence of the draft South Dublin County Biodiversity Action Plan.

Each of the actions as listed in the draft Biodiversity Action Plan were examined and screened to determine if any of the proposed draft actions, either individually or in combination with other known plans and projects, presented a potential threat to the conservation objectives of the European sites determined to be within the zone of influence of the draft Plan. The output of this examination is presented in Table 2 (Appendix 2).

The draft Biodiversity Action Plan does not contain any objective proposing land zoning, development, or major land use plans. It does not propose nor envisage any project that may result in any impact on a European site by virtue of land take, by proximity to any such site, by virtue of excavation, transport requirements or by emissions to land, air or water in such a site, by reduction, disturbance or interference with habitat area or species composition of any such site, or changes in key indicators of conservation value of these sites.

Instead, the draft Biodiversity action Plan for South Dublin County offers a framework which seeks to promote positive management and enjoyment of the County's natural heritage. This framework promotes a partnership approach with a wide range of communities, individuals, agencies, and government bodies, all of whom have the protection and enjoyment of natural heritage as a priority objective. The draft Plan aims to place biodiversity protection and promotion to the forefront of the decision-making process within South Dublin County Council and across all partnership projects with other agencies.

#### **4 Conclusions of Screening Assessment Process**

Following an examination, analysis and evaluation of the relevant information, including in particular, the nature and intent of the actions as listed in the draft South Dublin County Biodiversity Action Plan *Connecting with Nature*, and its potential relationship with European sites and their conservation objectives, as well as considering other plans and projects, and applying the precautionary principle, there is no potential for likely significant effects on any European sites, for the reasons set out in Section 3.3 above.

Therefore, the draft Biodiversity Action Plan will not require an Appropriate Assessment or the preparation of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS).

## Appendix 1

**Table 1** The Qualifying Interests (QIs) and Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of the European sites in the zone of influence of the draft Biodiversity Action Plan 'Connecting with Nature' (see Figure 1).

European Site Name [Code] and its Qualifying interest(s) / Special Conservation Interest(s) (*Priority Annex I Habitats)	Location
<b>Special Area of Conservation (SAC)</b>	
<p><b>Glenasmole Valley SAC [001209]</b></p> <p>[6210] Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (* important orchid sites)            [6410] Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>)            [7220] Petrifying springs with tufa formation (<i>Cratoneurion</i>)</p> <p>NPWS (2018) <i>Conservation objectives for Glenasmole Valley SAC [001209]</i>. Generic Version 6.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.</p>	South Dublin County
<p><b>Wicklow Mountains SAC [002122]</b></p> <p>[3110] Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>)            [3160] Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds            [4010] Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i>            [4030] European dry heaths            [4060] Alpine and Boreal heaths            [6130] <i>Calaminarian</i> grasslands of the <i>Violetalia calaminariae</i>            [6230] Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe)            [7130] Blanket bogs (* if active bog)            [8110] Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladani</i>)            [8210] Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation            [8220] Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation            [91A0] Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles            [1355] Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i></p> <p>NPWS (2017) <i>Conservation Objectives: Wicklow Mountains SAC 002122</i>. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs</p>	South Dublin County/County Wicklow
<p><b>Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC [001398]</b></p> <p>[7220] Petrifying springs with tufa formation (<i>Cratoneurion</i>)            [1014] Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail <i>Vertigo angustior</i>            [1016] Desmoulin's Whorl Snail <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>            NPWS (2018) <i>Conservation objectives for Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC [001398]</i>. Generic Version 6.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.</p>	Co. Kildare

<p><b>South Dublin Bay SAC [000210]</b></p> <p>[1140] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide  [1210] Annual vegetation of drift lines  [1310] <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand  [2110] Embryonic shifting dunes</p> <p>NPWS (2013) <i>Conservation Objectives: South Dublin Bay SAC 000210</i>. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.</p>	Dublin Bay
<p><b>Knocksink Wood SAC [000725]</b></p> <p>[7220] Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion)*  [91A0] Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles  [91E0] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae)*</p> <p>NPWS (2020) Conservation objectives for Knocksink Wood SAC [000725]. Generic Version 7.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.</p>	Co. Wicklow
<p><b>Red Bog SAC [000397]</b></p> <p>[7140] Transition mires and quaking bogs  NPWS (2019) <i>Conservation Objectives: Red Bog, Kildare SAC 000397</i>. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.</p>	Co. Kildare
<p><b>North Dublin Bay SAC [000206]</b></p> <p>[1140] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide  [1210] Annual vegetation of drift lines  [1310] <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand  [1330] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>)  [1410] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>)  [2110] Embryonic shifting dunes  [2120] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes)  [2130] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)  [2190] Humid dune slacks  [1395] Petalwort <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i></p> <p>NPWS (2013) <i>Conservation Objectives: North Dublin Bay SAC 000206</i>. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.</p>	Dublin Bay
<p><b>Special Protection Area (SPA)</b></p>	
<p><b>Wicklow Mountains SPA [004040]</b></p> <p>[A098] Merlin <i>Falco columbarius</i>  [A103] Peregrine <i>Falco peregrinus</i></p> <p>NPWS (2018) <i>Conservation objectives for Wicklow Mountains SPA [004040]</i>. Generic Version 6.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.</p>	South Dublin County/County Wicklow
<p><b>South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA [004024]</b></p> <p>[A046] Light-bellied Brent Goose <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>  [A130] Oystercatcher <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>  [A137] Ringed Plover <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i></p>	

<p>[A141] Grey Plover <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>  [A143] Knot <i>Calidris canutus</i>  [A144] Sanderling <i>Calidris alba</i>  [A149] Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina</i>  [A157] Bar-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i>  [A162] Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>  [A179] Black-headed Gull <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>  [A192] Roseate Tern <i>Sterna dougallii</i>  [A193] Common Tern <i>Sterna hirundo</i>  [A194] Arctic Tern <i>Sterna paradisaea</i>  [A999] Wetland and Waterbirds</p> <p>NPWS (2015) <i>Conservation Objectives: South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA 004024</i>. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.</p>	
<p><b>Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA [004063]</b></p> <p>[A043] Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>)  [A183] Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>)</p> <p>NPWS (2018) <i>Conservation objectives for Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA [004063]</i>. Generic Version 6.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.</p>	
<p><b>North Bull Island SPA [004006]</b></p> <p>[A046] Light-bellied Brent Goose <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>  [A048] Shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>  [A052] Teal <i>Anas crecca</i>  [A054] Pintail <i>Anas acuta</i>  [A056] Shoveler <i>Anas clypeata</i>  [A130] Oystercatcher <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>  [A140] Golden Plover <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>  [A141] Grey Plover <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>  [A143] Knot <i>Calidris canutus</i>  [A144] Sanderling <i>Calidris alba</i>  [A149] Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina</i>  [A156] Black-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa limosa</i>  [A157] Bar-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i>  [A160] Curlew <i>Numenius arquata</i>  [A162] Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>  [A169] Turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i>  [A179] Black-headed Gull <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>  [A999] Wetlands &amp; Waterbirds</p> <p>NPWS (2015) <i>Conservation Objectives: North Bull Island SPA 004006</i>. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.</p>	

## Appendix 2

**Table 2 Assessment of likely effects - Screening of draft Plan Actions for potential impacts on European sites.**

<b>Target</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Potential Impact</b>	<b>Consideration</b>
<b>1. GETTING TO KNOW WHAT WE HAVE - Spatial Projects</b>	Collate ecological data and survey and map the County, to provide an evidence base for informed biodiversity decision-making and to form the basis for a Green Infrastructure network.	This action is intended to protect biodiversity through providing information to decision makers at the earliest possible stage in projects. Potential impact could arise from disruptive or destructive survey and mapping techniques e.g. trampling, use of drones in sensitive areas etc.	No Negative Impact. All survey and mapping projects will be screened for potential impacts on Natura 2000 sites and on biodiversity in general, ensuring best practice is observed and that no negative impacts arise.
<b>2. TELLING THE STORY – Engagement, Education, and Research</b>	Develop a Biodiversity Communications Strategy, to celebrate and promote the enjoyment and protection of nature in South Dublin County, promoting engagement with national initiatives and events such as Biodiversity Week, Tree Week, Heritage Week, Pure Mile etc.	This action is intended to promote and encourage enjoyment and participation in biodiversity-related events. Potential impact could arise from inappropriately located or inappropriately designed events.	No Negative Impact. No events will be held within Natura 2000 sites without approval from NPWS and without necessary screening for potential impacts.
	Support rural and urban communities to undertake local biodiversity projects, training, and citizen science, encouraging appropriate initiatives that protect biodiversity while benefiting local economies.	Potential for impacts on habitats or species from communities undertaking practical projects in or near protected sites. This may include disturbance to key species or changes in habitat conditions at the site.	No Negative Impact. All projects supported under this B.A.P. will be screened for inadvertent impacts on protected sites and biodiversity in general, requiring appropriate supervision or guidance from qualified persons.
	Quantify and promote the economic benefits (the natural capital) provided by the County’s ecological landscapes (ecosystem services).	No impact.	No Negative Impacts. Positive impacts expected in raising awareness of biodiversity values.

<b>3. LEADING THE WAY - Policy, Good Governance and Climate Action</b>	Devise and implement good governance strategies to ensure the smooth integration of national and EU biodiversity legislation and policy requirements into all Council plans, projects, and services.	This action is intended to protect protected sites and biodiversity in general by placing biodiversity issues to the forefront of decision making across all Council led and Council supported projects.	No Negative Impacts. Positive impacts expected as biodiversity will be considered at the earliest point in projects.
	Develop and implement best practice biodiversity protection guidelines and maintenance plans for the County's habitats and species, for use on Council lands and as guidance to assist local communities, developers, businesses, farming community, schools, etc.	This action is intended to assist with achieving high standards of biodiversity protection and enhancement for biodiversity projects undertaken by Council and communities.	No Negative Impacts. Positive impacts for biodiversity expected.
	In the preparation process for the SDCC Development Plan, innovative approaches to promote strategic biodiversity policies and objectives will be developed.	This action intends to develop positive overarching objectives for biodiversity in the County Development Plan, a plan which sets the framework for development within the County.	No Negative Impacts. Positive impacts for biodiversity are expected to result.
Coordinate with the Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2019-2024 to identify impacts on biodiversity arising from climate change, targeting and implementing necessary measures to assist biodiversity adapt to changing conditions.	This action intends to highlight the additional impacts of climate change on an already existing crisis for biodiversity. Potential impacts on biodiversity could arise from climate adaptation projects that do not encompass nature-based solutions.	No Negative Impacts. All climate adaptation projects will be screened for their potential impacts on biodiversity and protected sites, with a focus on developing and availing of nature-based solutions that protect biodiversity while addressing climate impacts.	