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Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

prepared for Evara Developments Ltd. and Kelland Homes Ltd.

on behalf of Armstrong Fenton Associates

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1 Introduction

1 This report, which contains information required for the competent authority (in this instance South Dublin County Council) to undertake a screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA), has been prepared by Scott Cawley Ltd. on behalf of the applicant. Scott Cawley Ltd. previously prepared an AA Screening Report[1] to inform a previous planning application for the proposed development (ABP Ref: SHD3ABP-313145-22). This report provides information on, and assesses the potential for, the proposed development to impact on the Natura 2000 network (hereafter referred to as European sites)[2]. The report is for a Large Scale Residential development consisting 611 no. dwellings, comprised of 306 no. 2, 3 & 4 bed, 2 & 3 storey, detached, semi-detached & terraced houses, 133 no. 1, 2 & 3 bed duplex units in 12 no. 2-3 storey blocks, and 172 no. 1, 2 & 3 bed apartments in 5 no. buildings ranging in height from 4-5 & 5 storeys. The proposed development also includes a 2-storey crèche (c.630m²).

2 Access to the development will by via one no. new vehicular access point from the Boherboy Road, along with vehicular, pedestrian and cyclist connections to adjoining developments at Corbally Heath and Corbally Glade to the east and Carrigmore Green to the north, and pedestrian/cyclist access into Carrigmore Park to the east.

3 The proposed development provides for (i) all associated site development works above and below ground, including surface water attenuation & an underground foul sewerage pumping station at the northern end of the site, (ii) public open spaces (c. 2.19Ha), (iii) communal open spaces (*c.* 4,337 sq.m), (iv) hard and soft landscaping and boundary treatments, (v) surface car parking, (vi) bicycle parking, (vii) bin & bicycle storage, (viii) public lighting, and (ix), plant (M&E), utility services & ESB sub-stations, all on an overall application site area of 18.7Ha. In accordance with the South Dublin County Development Plan (2022-2028), an area of c. 1.03Ha within the site is reserved as a future school site.

4 An AA is required if significant effects on European sites arising from a proposed development cannot be ruled out at the screening stage, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. It is the responsibility of the competent authority to make a decision as to whether or not the proposed development is likely to have significant effects on European sites, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects.

For the reasons set out in detail in this AA Screening Report, an **Appropriate Assessment of the proposed development is not required in this instance** as it can be concluded, on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not have a significant effect on any European sites.

[1] Scott Cawley Ltd. (2021). Appropriate Assessment Screening: Strategic Housing Development, Saggart, Dublin 24.

[2] The Natura 2000 network is a European network of important ecological sites, as defined under Article 3 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, which comprises both special areas of conservation and special protection areas. Special conservation areas are sites hosting the natural habitat types listed in Annex I, and habitats of the species listed in Annex II, of the Habitats Directive, and are established under the Habitats Directive itself. Special protection areas are established under Article 4 of the Birds Directive 2009/147/EC for the protection of endangered species of wild birds. The aim of the network is to aid the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats.

In Ireland these sites are designed as European sites - defined under the Planning Acts and/or the Birds and Habitats Regulations as (a) a candidate site of Community importance, (b) a site of Community importance, (c) a candidate special area of conservation, (d) a special area of conservation, (e) a candidate special protection area, or (f) a special protection area. They are commonly referred to in Ireland as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

2 Methodology

2.1 Guidance

5 This Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been prepared with regard to the following guidance documents, as relevant:

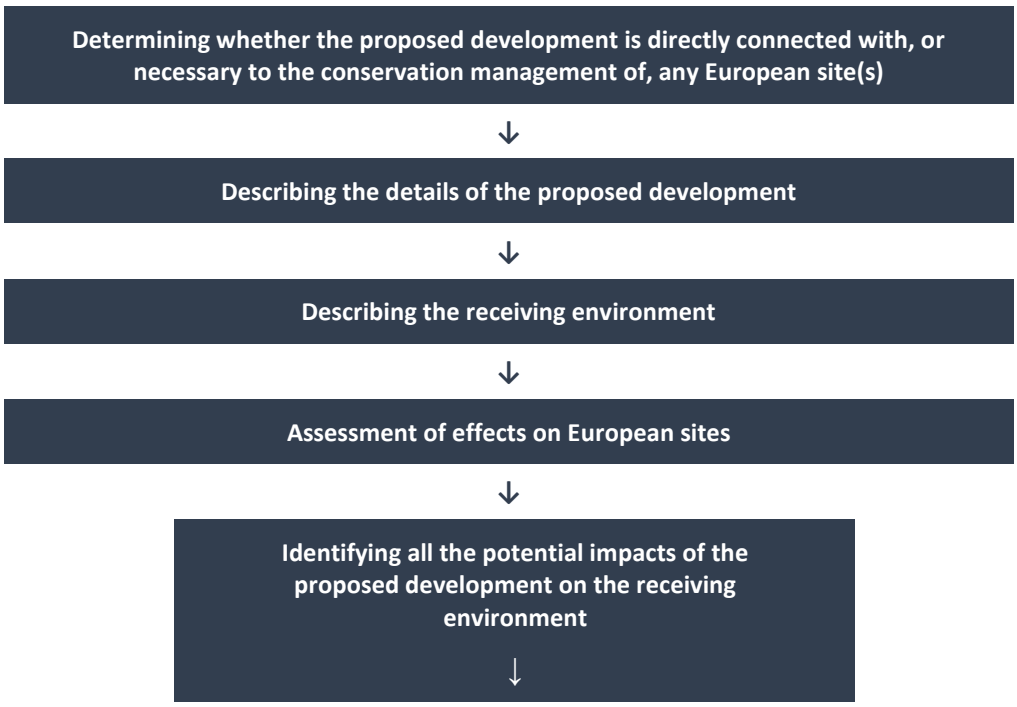
- *OPR Practice Note PN01. Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management* (Office of the Planning Regulator, 2021)
- *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities*. (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2010 revision)
- *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 in Relation to Natura 2000 sites: Methodological Guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC* (European Commission, 2021)
- *Communication from the Commission on the precautionary principle* (European Commission, 2000), and
- *Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC* (European Commission, 2019)

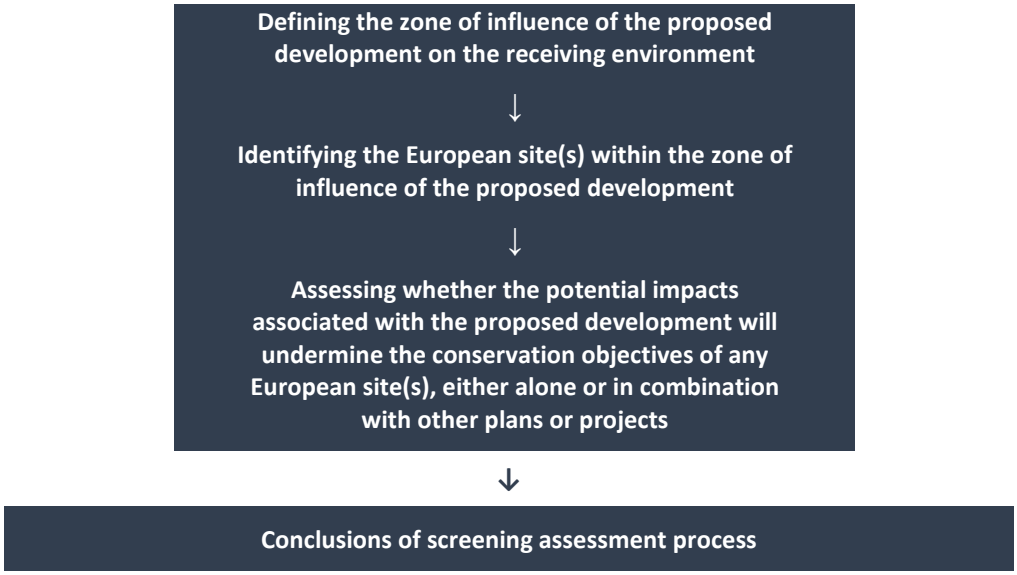
2.2 Assessment Methodology

6 The above referenced guidance 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).

7 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).

8 Screening for Appropriate Assessment involves the following steps:





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

10 In establishing which European sites are potentially at risk (in the absence of mitigation) from the proposed development, a source-pathway-receptor approach was applied. In order for an impact to occur, there must be a risk enabled by having a source (e.g. water abstraction or construction works), a receptor (e.g. a European site or its QI(s) or SCI(s)[3]), and a pathway between the source and the receptor (e.g. pathway by air for airborne pollution, or a pathway by a watercourse for mobilisation of pollution). For an impact to occur, all three elements must exist; the absence or removal of one of the elements means there is no possibility for the impact to occur.

11 The identification of source-pathway-receptor connection(s) between the proposed development and European sites essentially is the process of identifying which European sites are within the Zone of Influence (ZoI) of the proposed development, and therefore potentially at risk of significant effects. The ZoI is the area over which the proposed development could affect the receiving environment such that it could potentially have significant effects on the QI habitats or QI/SCI species of a European site, or on the achievement of their conservation objectives[4].

12 The identification of a source-pathway-receptor link does not automatically mean that significant effects will arise. The likelihood for significant effects will depend upon the characteristics of the source (e.g. extent and duration of construction works), the characteristics of the pathway (e.g. direction and strength of prevailing winds for airborne pollution) and the characteristics of the receptor (e.g. the sensitivities of the European site and its QIs/SCIs).

13 The 'likely significant effects' test is based on the precautionary principle[5]. The precautionary principle means that, based on the most reliable available information, where there is uncertainty or doubt as to

[3] The term qualifying interest is used when referring to the habitats or species for which an SAC is designated; the term special conservation interest is used when referring to the bird species (or wetland habitats) for which an SPA is designated.

[4] As defined in the *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland* (CIEEM, 2018)

[5] The precautionary principle is a guiding principle that derives from Article 191 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and has been developed in the case law of the European Court of Justice (e.g. ECJ case C-127/02 – Waddenzee, Netherlands).

The guidance document *Communication from the Commission on the Precautionary Principle* (European Commission, 2000) notes that the precautionary principle "*covers those specific circumstances where scientific evidence is insufficient,*

the absence of significant effects, the project cannot be screened out and an appropriate assessment must be carried out.

2.3 Desktop Data Review

14 The desktop data sources used to inform the assessment presented in this report are as follows (accessed November 2025):

- Online data available on European sites and protected habitats/species as held by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) from www.npws.ie[6], including conservation objectives documents
- Online data available on protected species as held by the National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) from www.biodiversityireland.ie
- Information on the surface water network and surface water quality in the area available from www.epa.ie
- Information on groundwater resources and groundwater quality in the area available from www.epa.ie and www.gsi.ie
- Ordnance Survey of Ireland mapping and aerial photography available from www.osi.ie
- Information on the location, nature and design of the proposed development supplied by the applicant's design team
- Large-Scale Residential Development on Lands at Boherboy, Saggart, Co. Dublin, Hydrological and Hydrogeological Risk Assessment Report (DNV, 2025)

2.4 Baseline Surveys

2.4.1 Habitats and Flora Survey

15 Initial habitat surveys for a previous planning application for the site were carried out on the 29th June 2020 by Síofra Quigley BSc (Hons) MSc MCIEEM and a follow-up habitat survey was completed by Síofra Quigley and Shane Brien BSc (Hons) MSc ACIEEM on the 1st March 2021. An updated habitat survey was undertaken of the proposed development site on the 4th April 2023 by Cathal O'Brien BSc (Hons) MSc ACIEEM. A subsequent habitat survey was undertaken of the proposed development site on the 7th April 2025 by Bea Jackson BA (Hons) MSc following the methodology described in *Best Practice Guidance for Habitat Survey and Mapping*[7]. A hedgerow appraisal was undertaken of the Boherboy townland boundary hedgerow, including the western, southern and central hedgerows, as part of the habitat survey on the 7th April 2025 following the methodology described in Hedgerow Appraisal System - Best Practice Guidance on Hedgerow Survey, Data Collation and Appraisal[8]. All habitat types were classified using the *Guide to*

inconclusive or uncertain and there are indications through preliminary objective scientific evaluation that there are reasonable grounds for concern that the potentially dangerous effects on the environment, human, animal or plant health may be inconsistent with the chosen level of protection"..

[6] The following SAC and SPA GIS boundary datasets are the most recently available at the time of writing: SAC_ITM_2024_12 and SPA_ITM_2024_01.

7 Smith, G.F., O'Donoghue, P., O'Hora, K. & Delaney, E. (2011) Best Practice Guidance for Habitat Survey and Mapping. The Heritage Council Church Lane, Kilkenny, Ireland.

[8] Foulkes, N., Fuller, J., Little, D., McCourt, S. and Murphy, P. (2013). Hedgerow Appraisal System - Best Practice Guidance on Hedgerow Survey, Data Collation and Appraisal. Woodlands of Ireland, Dublin.

Habitats in Ireland[9], recording the indicator species and abundance using the DAFOR scale[10] and recording any species of conservation interest. Vascular and bryophyte plant nomenclature generally follow that of *The National Vegetation Database*[11], having regard to more recent taxonomic changes to species names after the *New Flora of the British Isles*[12] and the British Bryological Society's *Mosses and Liverworts of Britain and Ireland: A Field Guide*[13].

16 More detailed botanical surveys were carried out to assess if there were any habitats on site corresponding with Annex I habitats of the EU habitats directive. Relevé data was collected at the site by Jared Bennet BSc MSc of Scott Cawley Ltd. in December 2024. Relevé size was determined by habitat, type with 2m x 2m relevés collected for grassland and marsh habitats. The outputs of relevé datasets were evaluated against the definitions of Annex I habitats in their Irish context as per the following publications:

- The definition of *Molinia* meadows [6410] habitat in the Irish context as per *The monitoring and assessment of three EU Habitats Directive Annex I grassland habitats*[14],
- The definition of hydrophilous tall herb swamp [6430] habitat in the Irish context as per *The Irish semi-natural grasslands survey 2007-2012*[15].

2.4.2 Fauna Surveys

2.4.2.1 Terrestrial Mammals

17 A terrestrial fauna survey was undertaken on the 4th April 2023 by Cathal O'Brien and 7th April 2025 by Bea Jackson, both of Scott Cawley Ltd.. Initial mammal surveys were conducted on 29th June 2020 by Síofra Quigley and again by Síofra Quigley and Shane Brien on the 1st March 2021 to support a previous planning application for a Strategic Housing Development (SHD) submitted to the South Dublin County Council (SDCC Ref: SHD3ABP-304828-19). The presence/absence of terrestrial fauna species were surveyed through the detection of field signs such as tracks, markings, feeding signs, and droppings, as well as by direct observation. The habitats on site were assessed for signs of usage by Annex II terrestrial fauna species (i.e. otter), and their potential to support these species. Checks were undertaken for the presence of otter holts within the study area, and to record any evidence of use, during the terrestrial fauna survey.

2.4.2.2 Breeding Birds

18 Two full seasons of breeding bird surveys were undertaken by Cathal O'Brien in 2023, and Cian O' Flaherty BSc (Hons) MSc and Simon O'Carroll BA MSc in 2024. Breeding bird surveys were also carried out on the

[9] Fossitt, J.A. (2000) *A Guide to Habitats in Ireland*. Heritage Council, Kilkenny.

[10] The DAFOR scale is an ordinal or semi-quantitative scale for recording the relative abundance of plant species. The name DAFOR is an acronym for the abundance levels recorded: Dominant, Abundant, Frequent, Occasional and Rare.

[11] Weekes, L.C. & FitzPatrick, Ú. (2010) The National Vegetation Database: Guidelines and Standards for the Collection and Storage of Vegetation Data in Ireland. Version 1.0. Irish Wildlife Manuals, No. 49. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin, Ireland.

[12] Stace, C. (2019) *New Flora of the British Isles*. *4th Edition*. C&M Floristics.

[13] Atherton, I., Bosanquet, S. & Lawley, M. (2010) *Mosses and Liverworts of Britain and Ireland: A Field Guide*. Latimer Trend & Co., Plymouth.

[14] Martin, J.R., O'Neill, F.H. & Daly, O.H. (2018). *The monitoring and assessment of three EU Habitats Directive Annex I grassland habitats. Irish Wildlife Manuals, No. 102*. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of the Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Dublin.

[15] O'Neill, F.H., Martin, J.R., Devaney, F.M. & Perrin, P.M. (2013). *The Irish semi-natural grasslands survey 2007-2012. Irish Wildlife Manuals, No. 78*. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Dublin.

15th and 26th June 2020 by Brian Porter, an independent ornithologist, and on the 27th May and 18th June 2021 by Siofra Quigley to inform a previous planning application for a SHD in the agricultural lands, west of the Corbally Stream. The survey methodology was adapted from the *Bird Monitoring Methods - A Manual of Techniques for Key UK Species*[16] . The study area covered the lands within the red line boundary and a buffer of 50m from it. Lands within the study area were slowly walked in a manner allowing the surveyor to come within 50m of all habitat features. Birds were identified by sight and song, and general location and activity were recorded using the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) species and activity codes. Bird species nomenclature follows[17] .

2.4.2.3 Wintering Birds

19 Wintering bird surveys were undertaken from November 2023 to March 2024 as part of the updated baseline surveys. Wintering bird surveys were undertaken on the 10th November 2023, 14th December 2023, 16th January 2024, 14th February 2024 and 15th March 2024 by Jamie Dempsey BEng MSc and Cian O'Flaherty BSc MSc, both of Scott Cawley Ltd. Additional wintering bird surveys were undertaken on 29th September and 8th October 2025 by Simon O'Carroll BA MSc of Scott Cawley Ltd. Surveys were also completed for a previous planning application submitted to the South Dublin County Council (SHD3ABP-313145-22) on 25th February 2020, 19th and 23rd March 2020, 17th February and 18th March 2021 by Caroline Kelly BSc MSc and Shane Brien BSc MSc, both of Scott Cawley Ltd. As land use within the proposed development site remains unchanged for the current planning application, the data from these surveys has been incorporated to inform this Screening for Appropriate Assessment.

20 The study area covered the lands within the red line and were surveyed visually using binoculars/scope from two vantage points within the study area. Vantage Point 1 comprised the central field, and Vantage Point 2 was located in the western field. Vantage point surveys were followed by a walkover of each field to identify evidence of usage by wildfowl such as waders, swans or geese (e.g. droppings). Birds were identified by sight and general location and activity were recorded using the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) species and activity codes. Bird species nomenclature follows Collins Bird Guide.

[16] Gilbert, G., Gibbons, D.W., & Evans, J. (1998) *Bird Monitoring Methods: A Manual of Techniques for UK Key Species.*The Royal Society for the protection of Birds, Sandy, Bedfordshire, England.

[17] Svensson, L., Mullarney, K., Zetterstrom, D. (1999) *Collins Bird Guide. The Most Complete Field Guide to the Birds of Britain and Europe*. Harper Collins, London.

Figure 1 The proposed development site and surrounding lands

3 Description of the Proposed Development

21 Kelland Homes Ltd and Evara Developments Ltd. are applying to South Dublin County Council for permission for a Large-scale Residential Development (LRD) at a site at Boherboy, Saggart, County Dublin. The proposed application represents the development of the entire Boherboy Neighbourhood as identified within the Fortunestown Local Area Plan (2012).

22 The development will consist of 611 no. dwellings, comprised of 306 no. 2, 3 & 4 bed, 2 & 3 storey, detached, semi-detached & terraced houses, 133 no. 1, 2 & 3 bed duplex units in 12 no. 3 storey blocks, and 172 no. 1, 2 & 3 bed apartments in 5 no. buildings ranging in height from 4-5 & 5 storeys. The proposed development also includes a 2-storey crèche (*c.*630m²).

23 Access to the development will by via one no. new vehicular access point from the Boherboy Road, along with vehicular, pedestrian and cyclist connections to adjoining developments at Corbally Heath and Corbally Glade to the east and Carrigmore Green to the north, and pedestrian/cyclist access into Carrigmore Park to the east.

24 The proposed development provides for (i) all associated site development works above and below ground, including surface water attenuation & an underground foul sewerage pumping station at the northern end of the site, (ii) public open spaces (*c.* 2.19Ha), (iii) communal open spaces (*c.* 4,337sq.m), (iv) hard and soft landscaping and boundary treatments, (v) surface car, (vi) bicycle parking, (vii) bin & bicycle storage, (viii) public lighting, and (ix), plant (M&E), utility services & ESB sub-stations, all on an overall application site area of *c.*18.7Ha. In accordance with the South Dublin County Development Plan (2022-2028), an area of *c.* 1.03Ha within the site is reserved as a future school site.

25 The surface water drainage design has been carried out in accordance with the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice (GDSDS). The internal drainage system has been designed as a completely separate foul and surface water system. The site is to be drained following a SuDS treatment train philosophy and replicating a nature based solution in providing swales, tree-pits, bio-retention, use of open watercourse,

over grassland flow, open detention basins, rain garden planters and permeable paving. All runoff is to be slowed down and treated naturally throughout the SuDS process before been attenuated to the site Qbar greenfield rate and out falling the Corbally stream to the east & north and to the Coldwater watercourse to the west. The QBar for the main site west of the Corbally Steam was determined to be 54.9l/s, with a QBar of 1.3l/s for the smaller site to the east of the stream. The surface water drainage is divided into 9 no. separate catchment areas, each with its own SuDS interception, treatment, attenuation and storage. There is a potential *c.*1 ha future school site reserved on the lands that does not form part of this application but has been allowed for in the drainage calculations. The surface water drainage infrastructure for the development will collect and treat the rainfall on the site and convey the runoff via roadside swales, tree pits, bio-retention areas, rain garden planters, open course conveyance swales, pipes, manholes, catchpit manholes and direct the flows via 9 no. open detention basins and 1 no. below ground attenuation system towards vortex flow restricting devices (Hydrobrake or similar) and petrol interceptors before outfalling to the existing on site open watercourses.

26 For the foul drainage, it is proposed to service the subject lands by providing a new gravity foul sewer which is to be constructed to an existing manhole located in Verschoyle Green via the South Dublin County Council lands to the northeast of the site. c.25% of the site foul drainage will be pumped from a new pumping station in the northeast corner into the proposed new gravity sewer while the remaining 75% flows by gravity in the same main. The 10 no. units on the "east" Corbally site will drain foul by gravity into the existing sewer in Corbally Rise. Uisce Eireann have issued a Confirmation of Feasibility for this site noting the proposal was "feasible subject to upgrades". The minimum public sewer diameter is to be 225mm. The proposed foul pumping station is to be in accordance with the Irish Water Code of Practice for Wastewater Infrastructure 2017 – Part 5 – Pumping Stations[18]. This network will then carry the foul water to the Ringsend Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) prior to its discharge into the Liffey Estuary/Dublin Bay.

The duration of construction activities is expected to last *c.* 5 years, completed in three phases. There will be no piling or blasting of the site, and there is no contaminated land present on site.

4 Provision of Information for Screening for Appropriate Assessment

27 The following sections provide information to facilitate the Appropriate Assessment screening of the proposed development to be undertaken by the competent authority.

28 A description of the proposed development and the receiving environment is provided to identify the potential ecological impacts. The environmental baseline conditions are discussed, as relevant to the assessment of ecological impacts where they may highlight potential pathways for impacts associated with the proposed development to affect the receiving ecological environment (e.g. hydrogeological and hydrological data).

29 The potential impacts are examined in order to define the potential zone of influence of the proposed development on the receiving environment. This then informs the assessment of whether the proposed development will result in significant effects on any European sites; i.e. affect the conservation objectives supporting the favourable conservation condition of the European site's QIs or SCIs.

4.1 Overview of the Receiving Environment

European sites

30 There are seven SACs and five SPAs either within the vicinity of the proposed development or downstream in Dublin Bay. The proposed development does not overlap with any European sites. The nearest European

[18] Irish Water (2020). *Code of Practice for Wastewater Infrastructure. Connections and Developer Services. Design and Construction Requirements for Self-Lay Developments. Revision 2*. Available at: https://www.water.ie/sites/default/files/docs/connections/faqs/Wastewater-Code-of-Practice.pdf [Accessed November 2025]

site is Glenasmole Valley SAC, located *c.* 4.17km to the south-east of the proposed development site in the Dublin Mountains.

31 The Corbally Stream runs from south to north along part of the eastern boundary of the proposed development site, intersecting the eastern agricultural field to the west and a small area of disturbed ground in the southeast of the lands. It then flows along the northern boundary westwards where two drainage ditches within the site, the Cooldown and the Coldwater, flow into the Corbally. The Corbally then merges into the Camac River *c.* 2.5km downstream, before joining the River Liffey *c.* 9.6km northeast of the proposed development and discharging into the Dublin Bay, therefore hydrologically linking the proposed development to European sites therein and the northwest Irish Sea, including; South Dublin Bay SAC, North Dublin Bay SAC, Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC, South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA, North Bull Island SPA and the North West Irish Sea SPA.

32 All of the European sites present in the vicinity of the proposed development are shown on Figure 1 below. The QIs/SCIs of the European sites in the vicinity of the proposed development are provided in Appendix I. These sites are as follows:

- Glenasmole Valley SAC (001209) is located *c.* 4km south-east of the proposed development site. This SAC has been designated for the priority Annex I habitats Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (*important orchid sites), Petrifying springs with tufa formation (*Cratoneurion*), and for *Molinia* meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinion caeruleae*).
- Wicklow Mountains SAC (002122), which is *c.* 5.3km south-east of the proposed development site and designated for freshwater, upland and oak woodland habitats, and populations of otter *Lutra lutra*.
- Wicklow Mountains SPA (004040), which is *c.* 8.6km south-east of the proposed development site and designated for merlin *Falco columbarius* and peregrine *Falco peregrinus*.
- Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC (001398), which is *c.* 9.9km north-west of the proposed development site. This SAC has been designated for the priority Annex I habitat Petrifying springs with tufa formation (*Cratoneurion*), and populations of the Annex II narrow-mouthed whorl snail *Vertigo angustior* and Desmoulin's whorl snail *Vertigo moulinsiana*.
- Red Bog, Kildare SAC (000397), which is c. 10.7km south-west of the proposed development site and designated for transition mires and quaking bogs.
- Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA (004063), which is *c.* 11.0km south-west of the proposed development site and designated for greylag goose *Anser anser* and lesser black-backed gull *Larus fuscus*.
- South Dublin Bay SAC (000210), which is c. 15.4km north-east of the proposed development site and designated for dune and tidal habitats.
- South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (004024), which is *c.* 15.4km north-east of the proposed development site and designated for a range of wintering wetland bird species.
- North Bull Island SPA (004006), which is *c.* 18.6km north-east of the proposed development site and designated for a range of wintering wetland bird species.
- North Dublin Bay SAC (000206), which is *c.* 18.7km north-east of the proposed development site and designated for a range of coastal habitats, and populations of petalwort *Petalophyllum ralfsii*.
- North-west Irish Sea SPA (004236), which is *c.* 19.9km north-east of the proposed development site and designated for a range of breeding and wintering seabird bird species.
- Rockabill to Dalkey Islands SAC (003000), which is c. 22.3km east of the proposed development site and designated for reefs and harbour porpoise *Phocoena phocoena*.

Three additional SPA sites are considered relevant to the proposed development, due to their location relevant to the SPA sites located in Dublin Bay, and that these sites are also designated for many of the

species for which the SPAs in Dublin Bay are also designated. The SCI populations of these sites regularly move between the following SPA sites, and the SPA sites listed above which are located in Dublin Bay:

- Baldoyle Bay SPA (004016), *c.* 24km north-east of the proposed development
- Malahide Estuary SPA (004025), *c.* 25.7km north-east of the proposed development
- Rogerstown Estuary SPA (004015), *c.* 29.4km north-east of the proposed development

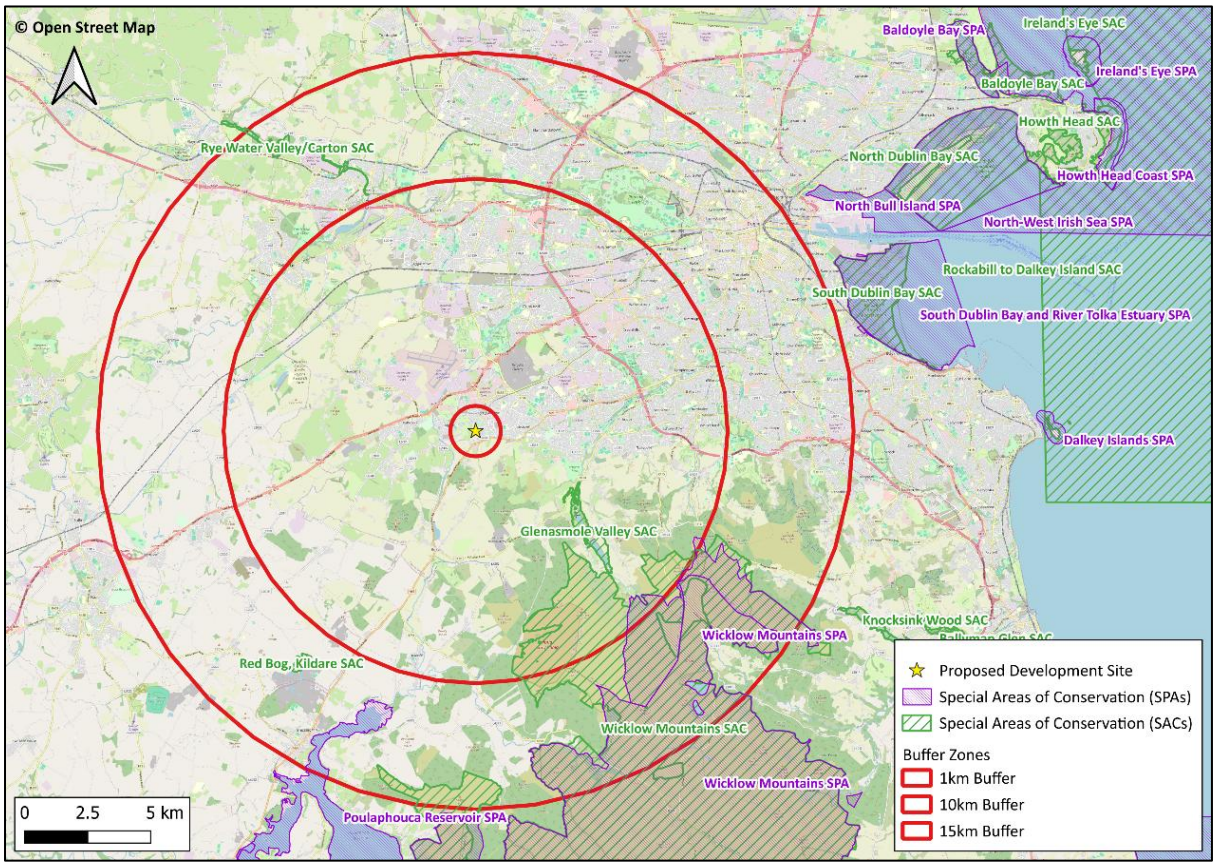


Figure 2 European sites in the vicinity of the proposed development

4.1.1 Habitats

33 The proposed development site is located in the 10km Grid Square O02 at O 04798 26372 to the west of Dublin City. The lands comprise of two agricultural grassland fields separated by hedgerows and a drainage ditch, with hedgerows and treelines surrounding the lands. Cattle graze regularly on these fields, with an open cow shed in the south of the site, adjacent to the entrance. The land is bound by the Boherboy Road (L2008) to the south, agricultural fields to the west, and residential areas to the north and east. The Corbally Stream runs along the eastern and southern boundary, the Coldwater flows along the western boundary, and the Cooldown is noted along the middle boundary in the site. The following habitat types (and mosaics of these), assigned using the Heritage Council Classification System[9], were identified within the proposed development site:

- Buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3)
- Recolonising bare ground (ED3)
- Depositing/lowland rivers (FW2)
- Drainage ditches (FW4)
- Improved agricultural grassland (GA1)
- Improved amenity grassland (GA2)

- Dry meadows and grassy verges (GS2)
- Wet grassland (GS4)
- Marsh (GM1)
- Scrub (WS1)
- Immature woodland (WS2)
- Hedgerows (WL1)
- Treelines (WL2)

34 No Annex I habitats were recorded within the proposed development site. The habitat types are described in greater detail in Chapter 5: *Biodiversity* of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) (Scott Cawley Ltd., 2025), and are illustrated below in Figure 3.

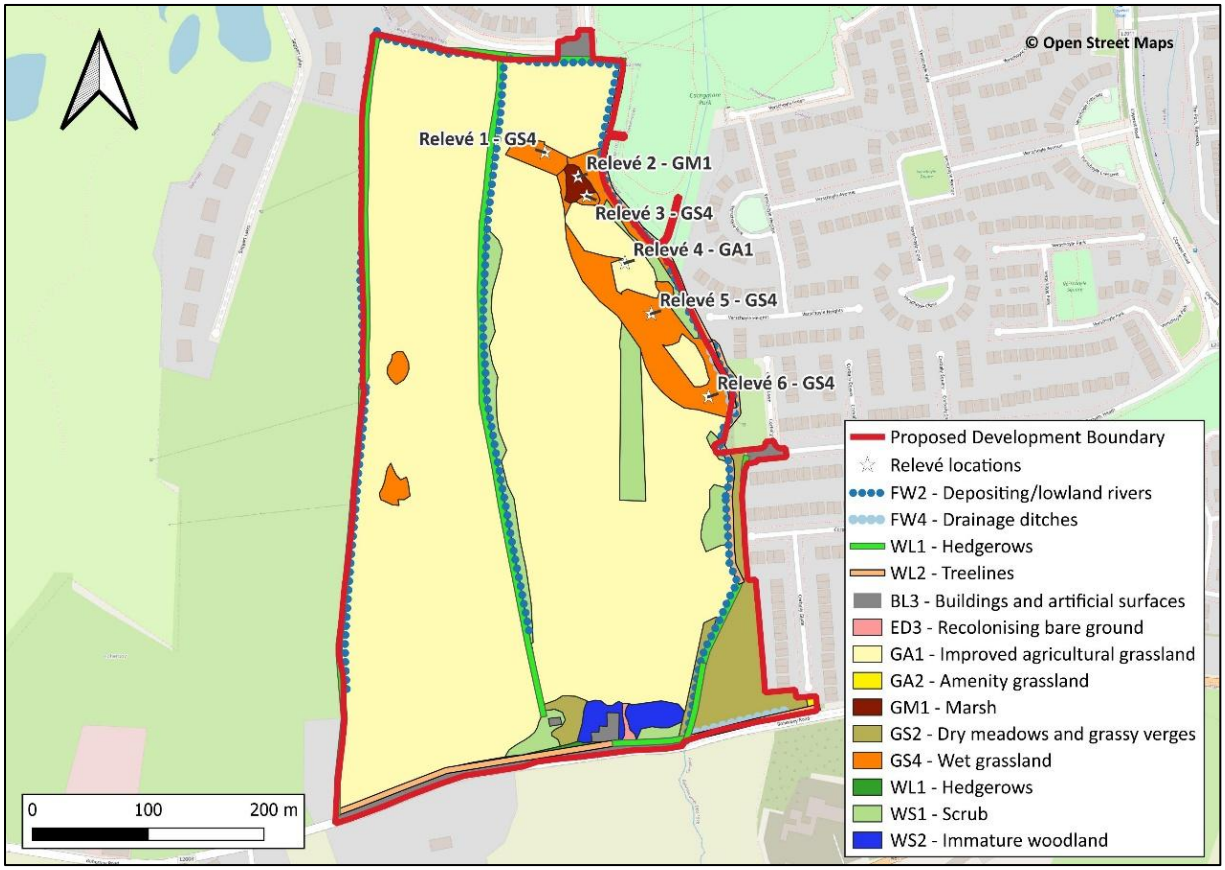


Figure 3: Habitats recorded within the proposed development boundary

4.1.2 Flora Species

35 Two species of non-native, invasive plant species listed on the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 were recorded within the proposed development site: Three cornered garlic *Allium triquetrum* (Plate 1) and Spanish bluebell *Hyacinthoides hispanica* (Plate 2). Both species were recorded within the small field located to the east of the Corbally stream as illustrated in Figure 4.

Plate 1: Three cornered garlic* Allium triquetrum *recorded along the eastern boundary of the site	***Plate 2: Spanish bluebell* Hyacinthoides hispanica *recorded within the easternmost section of the site***
	

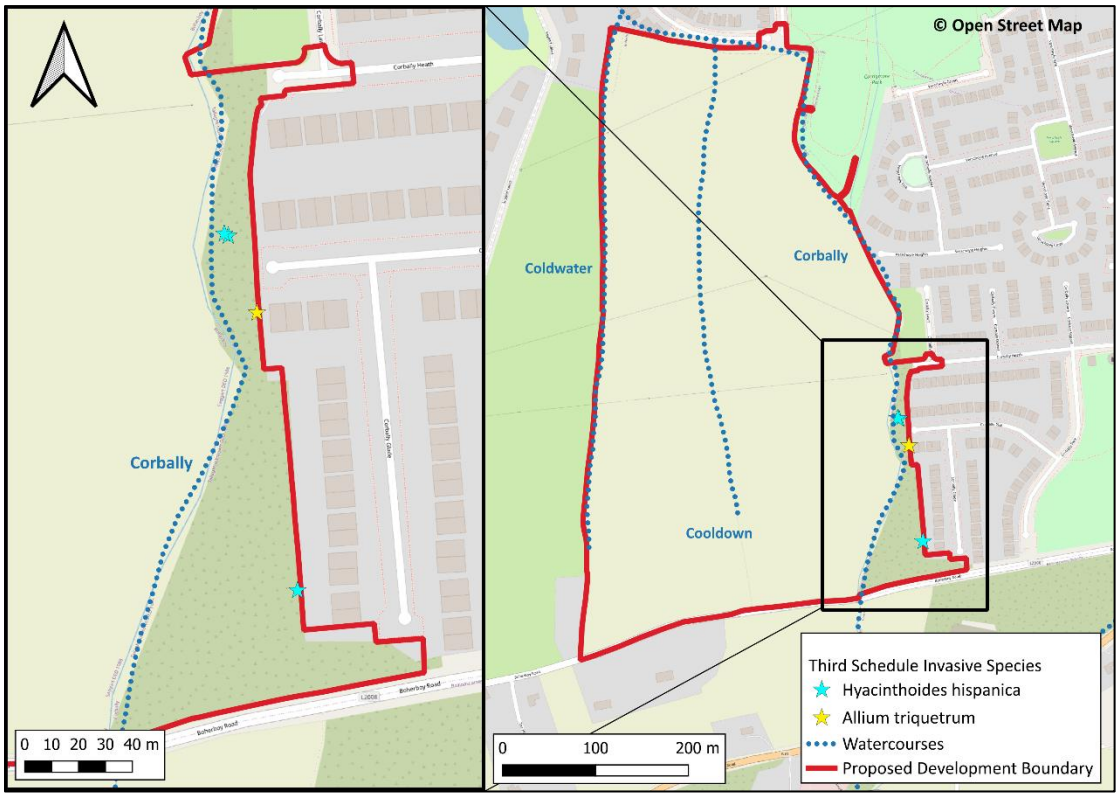


Figure 4 Third Schedule invasive species recorded within the proposed development boundary

36 One record of *Heracleum mantegazzianum* (2021) was recorded *c.* 1.4km north of the proposed development while *Reynoutria japonica* (2019) was identified *c.* 1.1km north of the proposed development site from a NBDC data search. A single record of fringed water-lily *Nymphoides peltata* was recorded *c.* 1.2km north of the proposed development site in 2016. A record of *Allium triquetrum* (2022) was found *c.* 1.8km west of the site along Fitzmaurice Road.

4.1.3 Fauna Species

Terrestrial Fauna

37 The desktop study found records for one QI species, otter *Lutra lutra*, within *c.* 2km of the proposed development for which European sites (i.e. Wicklow Mountains SAC) within *c.* 15km of the proposed development are designated. The most recent record for the species is from within the same grid square, O02, in which the proposed development site is located in, from 2014.

38 The surface water features on site (the Corbally Stream, the Cooldown Stream and the Coldwater Stream) were checked and no signs of otter were observed during the ecological walkover.

39 The Corbally Stream (which flows along part of the eastern and northern boundary), the Coldwater Stream (which begins and flows along the western site boundary), and the Cooldown Stream (which begins and flows along the central hedgerow, flowing into the Corbally in the north of the site), were all checked for otter usage and habitat suitability. The Cooldown and Coldwater Streams are highly modified streams and were partly dry during some of the field surveys. No holts, couches or spraints were identified along any of these streams or in any areas of the proposed development.

40 The Cooldown and Coldwater Streams display some of the ecological characteristics of drainage ditches (i.e. they have been highly canalised and modified), and are unsuitable for holt/couch creation due to being periodically dry. The Corbally Stream has potential to be suitable for usage by otter, however this stream is very shallow with no bank in some sections (southern section), and would only be suitable for commuting otters in these areas. Where the bank is higher above the stream (central section), tree roots are present which could be utilised as holt/couch sites by local otters. There are two culverts in which the Corbally Stream flows further downstream in the north of the site (**Plate 3**).

Plate 3: Culvert which the Corbally stream flows into directly north of the proposed development site.

41 Otter is a Qualifying Interest (QI) species of the Wicklow Mountains SAC, located c. 5.3km southeast of the proposed development site. Otter territories are typically within the range of approximately 7.5km for

females and can reach up to 21km for males via hydrological pathways[19]. This European site is located in a different subcatchment (Dodder_SC_010), and is not hydrologically connected to the proposed development. The hydrological pathway between the proposed development and Wicklow Mountains SAC would be via Dublin Bay, and therefore any otters potentially using the site would not form part of, or play a supporting role, to the QI population of the European site.

Birds

42 The only SCI or Annex I species present at the time of breeding bird and winter bird field surveys were little egret *Egretta garzetta*, herring gull *Larus argentatus*, Lesser black-backed gull *Larus fuscus*, black-headed gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus,* Great black-backed gull *Larus marinus,* Common gull *Larus canus* and mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*. The results of these surveys are presented below in Table 1 and Table 2. A flock of herring gull were briefly observed foraging in the western field during the breeding bird survey season in 2023. Mallard were encountered along the Corbally Stream, and in a flooded area in the northeast of the proposed development site both during the breeding bird and wintering bird surveys. Black-headed gull was also observed within the flooded section in the north of the site during the wintering bird surveys. Little egret was also recorded in this flooded area during the wintering bird surveys. Lesser black-backed gull, common gull and great black-backed gull were recorded flying over the site during breeding and/or wintering bird surveys, however they did not land within the site.

43 The results of the 2023/2024, and 2025 winter bird surveys are illustrated below in Figure 5, Figure 6, Figure 7 and Figure 8.

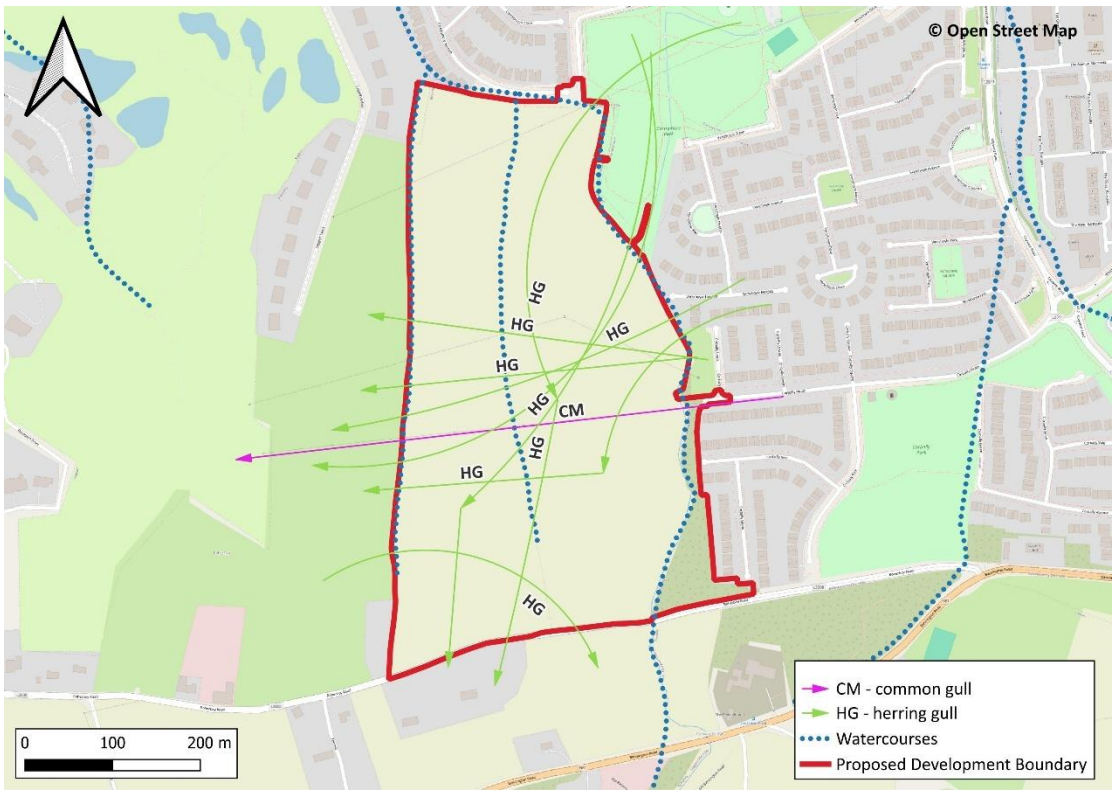


Figure 5. Records of flightlines of birds identified during wintering birds surveys within the site in September and October 2025.

[19] O'Neill, L., Veldhuizen, T., de Jongh, A., and Rochford, J. (2009) Ranging behaviour and socio-biology of Eurasian otters (Lutra lutra) on lowland mestrophic river systems. European Journal of Wildlife Research: 55: 363-370.

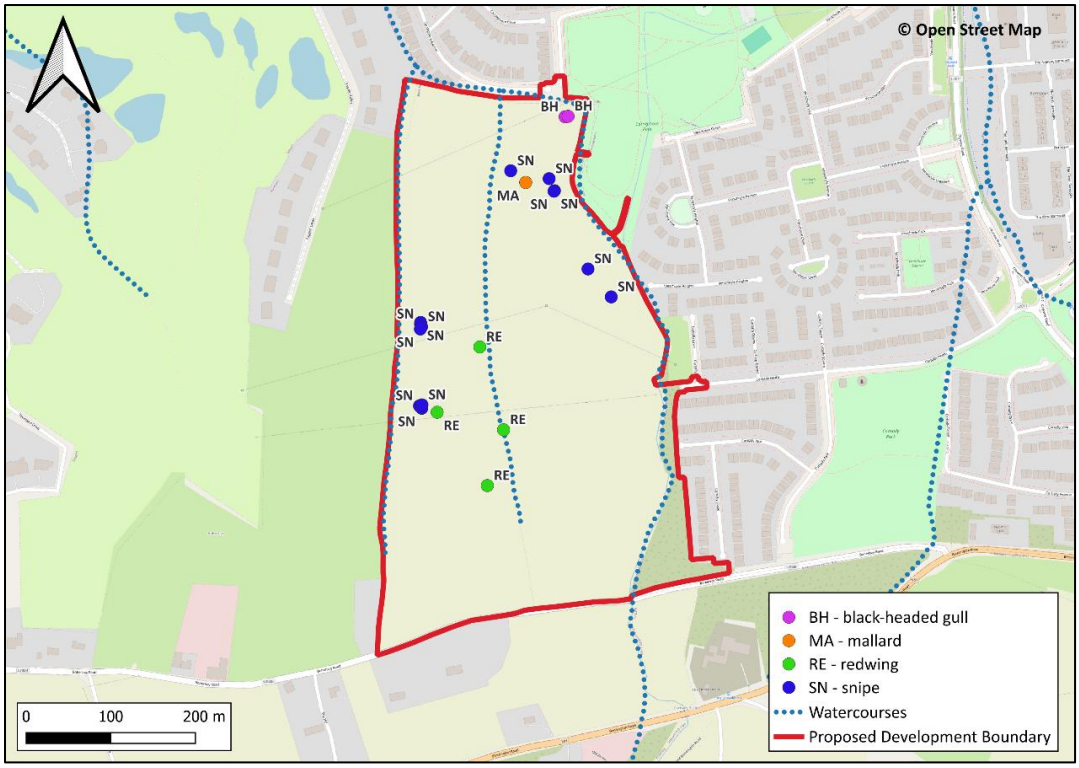


Figure 6: Records of birds identified during wintering birds surveys (excluding flightlines) within the site between November 2023 and March 2024. Snipe and redwing are not SCI or Annex I species and are not considered further in this report.

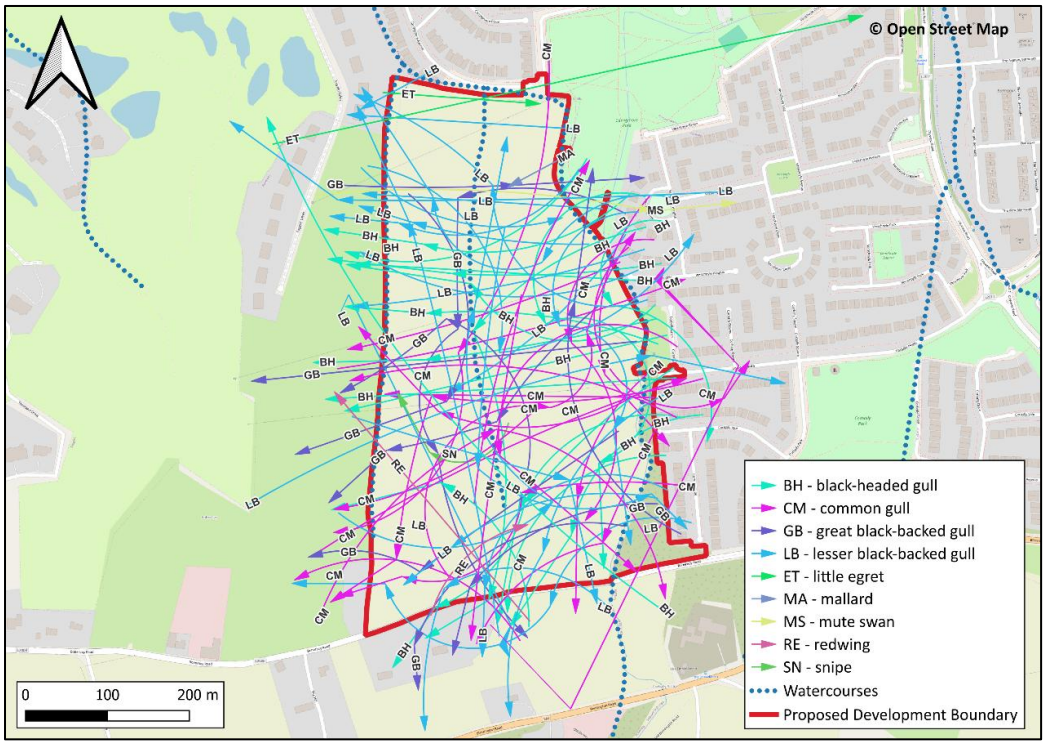


Figure 7: Records of bird flightlines identified during wintering birds surveys (excluding herring gull) within the site between November 2023 and March 2024. Snipe, mute swan and redwing are not SCI or Annex I species and are not considered further in this report.

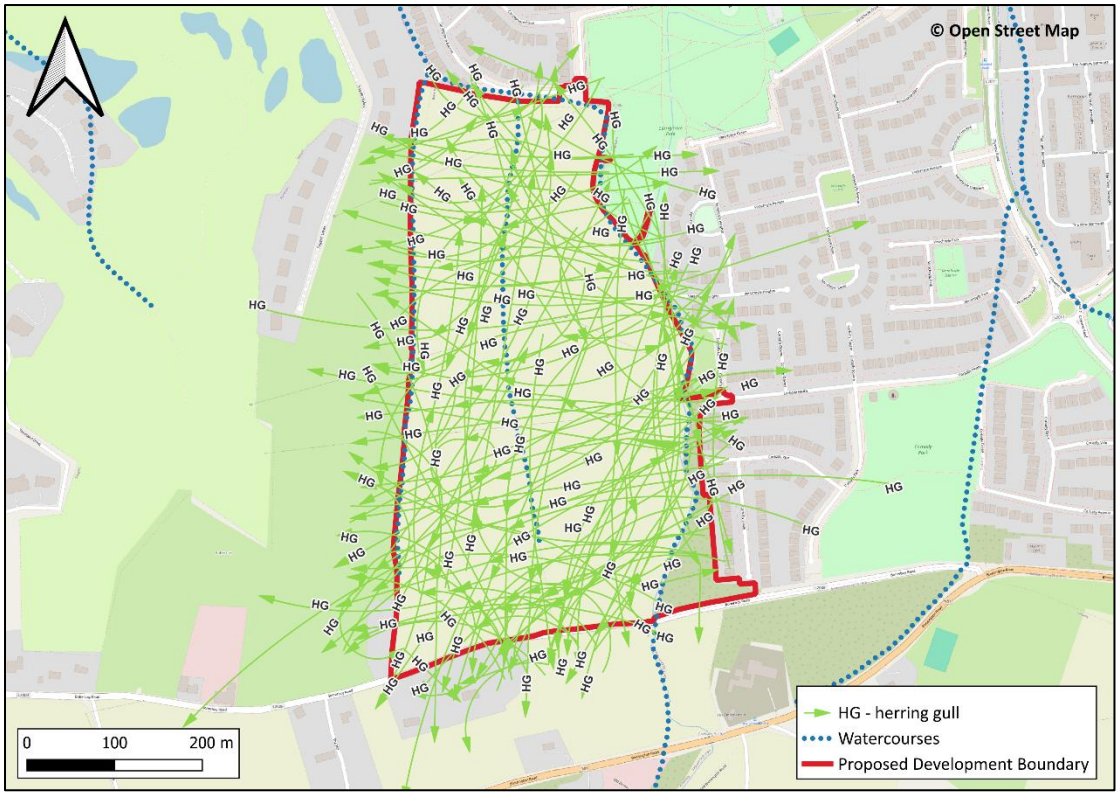


Figure 8 : Records of herring gull identified during wintering birds surveys within the site between November 2023 and March 2024.

44 Herring gull is an SCI species (breeding and wintering) of North-West Irish Sea SPA located *c.* 19.9km east of the proposed development. Herring gull were recorded 121 times during the wintering and breeding bird surveys during the 2023-2024 season, with all of these records being of birds in flight, and only on one occasion did a bird land on the proposed development site. Based on the low numbers of birds using the site, and the distance between the site and this SPA, these birds cannot form part of, or play a supporting role to, the SCI population of this SPA. As this is the nearest SPA for which herring gull is an SCI species, this conclusion is therefore relevant to all other SPAs for which herring gull are an SCI species.

45 Black headed gull is an SCI species (wintering) of South Dublin Bay and River Tolka SPA located *c.* 15.4km east of the proposed development. Black headed gulls are known to forage within a mean distance of 7km[20]. Due to the distance between the proposed development site and this European site (i.e., over 15km), it is unlikely that the black-headed gull SCI population use the proposed development site as foraging grounds, particularly given the low numbers observed on one occasion.

46 Mallard is an SCI species (wintering) of Dundalk Bay SPA, *c.* 65.7km northeast of the proposed development. Due to the distance between the proposed development site and this European site (i.e., over 65km), and the foraging range of Mallard (0.5-1.3km)[21], there is no risk that records of mallard using the site form part of, or play a supporting role to, the SCI population of Dundalk Bay SPA

47 While little egret is an Annex I species, there are no European sites in Ireland for which it is an SCI species. Therefore, it has not been considered further in this report.

[20] Woodward et al. (2019) *Desk-based revision of seabird foraging ranges used for HRA screening. BTO Research Report No. 724*. The British Trust for Ornithology, The Nunnery, Thetford, Norfolk, IP24 2PU

[21] Johnson, W. P., P. M. Schmidt, and D. P. Taylor. (2014) Foraging flight distances of wintering ducks and geese: a review. *Avian Conservation and Ecology, 9(2), 2*.

48 Lesser black-backed gull, common gull and great black-backed gull were recorded flying over the site during breeding and/or wintering bird surveys, however they did not land within the site, and therefore were not recorded using the site.

Table 1: Summary of Breeding Bird Survey results of SCI and Annex I Bird species recorded on and adjacent to the Proposed Development site

Common name / Latin name / BTO	Activity in the Proposed Development Boundary	Conservation Importance	
		Annex I	SCI
Black-headed gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus* (BH)	Observed once in 2023 flying over the site	No	Yes
Herring gull *Larus argentatus* (HG)	Six records of a total of 16 individuals flying over or foraging on the site in 2023. Not observed in 2024.	No	Yes
Lesser black-backed gull *Larus fuscus* (LB)	Five records of a total of five individuals flying over the proposed development site in 2023. Four records of a total of four individuals flying over the proposed development site in 2024.	No	Yes
Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* (MA)	Two pairs were observed in 2023, and one pair observed in 2024 in the marsh, wet grassland mosaic and near the Corbally stream.	No	Yes – but not of any SPAs in the immediate vicinity of the proposed Project

Table 2: Summary of Wintering Bird Survey results of SCI and Annex I Bird species recorded on and adjacent to the Proposed Development site

Common name/Latin name/BTO Code	Distribution in the study area	Conservation Importance	
		Annex I	SCI
Black-headed gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus* (BH)	Observed flying over multiple areas of the site during three visits, landed during two survey visits. No black-headed gull recorded in the 2020 or 2021 surveys. 1 bird observed in a flooded area in the north of the lands in December 2023 and January 2024.	No	Yes
Herring gull *Larus argentatus* (HG)	Observed flying over multiple areas of the site during all survey visit, did not land. 4 birds observed flying over the centre of the lands in March 2021 and a peak of 2 birds in the 2020 surveys. 8 birds observed flying over the south of the site in February 2024. Observed flying north-south and east-west over the proposed development site , with a total of 8 birds observed between September and October 2025	No	Yes

Common name/Latin name/BTO Code	Distribution in the study area	Conservation Importance	
		Annex I	SCI
Little egret *Egretta garzetta* (ET)	Observed flying over the site during one visit, landed on the site during one visit. No little egret recorded in the 2020 or 2021 surveys. 2 birds observed a flooded area in the north of the lands in December 2023 and flying over the north of the site in February 2024.	Yes	No
Lesser black-backed gull *Larus fuscus* (LB)	Observed flying over multiple areas of the site during four visits, did not land. A peak of 1 bird flying over in the 2020 and 2021 surveys. 3 birds observed flying over in November 2023.	No	Yes
Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* (MA)	Observed in a flooded area in the north of the site during two visits. A pair recorded in the eastern field in March 2021. 2 birds observed flying over during March 2024 visit.	No	Yes – but not of any SPAs in the immediate vicinity of the proposed Project
Common gull *Larus canus* (CM)	Observed flying over multiple areas of the site during four visits, did not land. 1 bird observed flying in the south of the lands in February 2020. 3 birds observed flying over during March 2024 visit. 1 bird observed flying east-west over the proposed development site in September 2025	No	Yes
Great black-backed gull *Larus marinus* (GB)	Observed flying over multiple areas of the site during four visits. 2 birds observed flying over during February 2020 and in the March 2024 visits.	No	Yes

49 The NBDC holds records for four SCI bird species, greylag goose *Anser anser*, lesser black-backed gull *Larus fuscus*, merlin *Falco columbarius* and peregrine *Peregrinus falco* within *c.* 2km of the proposed development for which European sites within *c.* 15km are designated. Both greylag goose (wintering) and lesser black-backed gull (wintering) are species for which Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA is designated for. There are six records for greylag goose. The most recent record for the species is from *c.* 700m to the east of the proposed development, recorded for the Bird Atlas in 2007-2011. Greylag goose has a core foraging range of 15-20km during the winter season[22]. However, greylag goose was not recorded during breeding or wintering bird surveys carried out in 2020/2021 and 2023/2024.

50 There are 11 records for lesser black-backed gull from the desk study. The most recent record for the species is from *c.* 650m to the east of the proposed development, recorded for the Bird Atlas in 2007-2011. Lesser black-backed gull was recorded flying over the proposed development site during the bird surveys carried out as described above, but did not land on the proposed development site.

51 There are three records for merlin and peregrine and the most recent records are from the same grid square, O02, in which the proposed development site is located in, recorded for the Bird Atlas in 2007-2011. Merlin and peregrine can be occasionally found foraging and nesting in urban and semi-urban habitats. The closest SPA for which merlin and peregrine are designated is Wicklow Mountains SPA, which

[22] Scottish Natural Heritage (2016) *Assessing Connectivity with Special Protection Areas (SPAs)*

is located *c.* 8.6km south-east of the proposed development site. During the breeding season, merlin have a core foraging range of 5km, and peregrine have a core foraging range of 2km[22]. Merlin and peregrine were not identified during breeding or wintering bird surveys carried out in 2020, 2021 and 2023/2024.

52 A summary of bird species returned from the NBDC desktop study is found below.

Table 3. SCI and Annex I bird species returned from the desktop study of the NBDC database

Common name ***Latin name***	**Nearest SPA for which this species is designated**	**Conservation Importance**	
		Annex I	**SCI**
Black-headed gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*	South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA	No	Yes
Common gull *Larus canus*	North-west Irish Sea SPA	No	Yes
Coot *Fulica atra*	Lough Ennell SPA	No	Yes – but not of any SPAs in the immediate vicinity of the proposed Project
Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*	North-west Irish Sea SPA	No	Yes
Curlew *Numenius arquata*	North Bull Island SPA	No	Yes. This SPA has hydrological connectivity to the proposed development site, but the intervening distance lies outside the core range for curlew.**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*	Malahide Estuary SPA	No	Yes – but not of any SPAs in the immediate vicinity of the proposed Project
Great crested grebe *Podiceps cristatus*	Malahide Estuary SPA	No	Yes – but not of any SPAs in the immediate vicinity of the proposed Project
Grey heron *Ardea cinerea*	Wexford harbour and slobs SPA	No	Yes – but not of any SPAs in the immediate vicinity of the proposed Project
Greylag goose *Anser anser*	Poulaphouca reservoir SPA	No	Yes
Herring gull *Larus argentatus*	North-west Irish Sea SPA	No	Yes
Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*	River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA	Yes	Yes – but not of any SPAs in the immediate vicinity of the proposed Project
Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*	Boyne Estuary SPA	No	Yes – but not of any SPAs in the immediate vicinity of the proposed Project
Lesser black-backed gull *Larus fuscus*	Poulaphouca reservoir SPA	No	Yes

Common name *Latin name*	Nearest SPA for which this species is designated	Conservation Importance	
		Annex I	SCI
Little egret *Egretta garzetta*	There are no SPAs designated for this species	Yes	No
Little grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*	Wexford harbour and slobs SPA	No	Yes – but not of any SPAs in the immediate vicinity of the proposed Project
Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*	Dundalk Bay SPA	No	Yes – but not of any SPAs in the immediate vicinity of the proposed Project
Merlin *Falco columbarius*	Wicklow Mountains SPA	Yes	Yes
Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*	Wicklow Mountains SPA	Yes	Yes
Ruff *Calidris pugnax*	There are no SPAs designated for this species	Yes	No
Teal *Anas crecca*	North Bull Island SPA	No	Yes. This SPA has hydrological connectivity to the proposed development site, but the intervening distance lies outside the core range for duck species, which is typically small[Error! Bookmark not defined.].
Tufted duck *Aythya fuligula*	Lough Ennell SPA	No	Yes – but not of any SPAs in the immediate vicinity of the proposed Project
Whooper swan *Cygnus cygnus*	Lough Derravaragh SPA	No	Yes – but not of any SPAs in the immediate vicinity of the proposed Project

53 Light-bellied Brent goose *Branta bernicla hrota,* greylag goose and/or other SCI wintering bird species (such as waders) were not recorded onsite during the breeding or wintering bird surveys at the proposed development site. Light-bellied Brent geese and wintering waders regularly use Dublin's amenity parks and sports grounds for foraging. The nearest known light-bellied Brent goose site is *c.* 6.1km north-east the proposed development site at Tymon Park[23]. Greylag goose is a SCI species of the Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA located *c.* 11.3km south west of the proposed development, and was not identified within the proposed development site during wintering bird surveys.

Non-Native Invasive Fauna

54 With regards to non-native invasive species, the NBDC database search returned records for grey squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis* and sika deer *Cervus nippon* which are listed on the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011. Grey squirrel was recorded adjacent to St.

[23] Scott Cawley (2017). Natura Impact Statement- Information for Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment. Proposed Residential Development, St. Paul's College, Sybil Hill Road, Raheny, Dublin 5.

Thomas' National School, Jobstown, Tallaght, Dublin 24, *c.* 1.2km north-east of the proposed development in 2007. Two sika deer were identified within the proposed development site during a breeding bird survey in June 2020, grey squirrel were not identified within the proposed development site during surveys. Due to the location of the proposed development site and its distance to nearby SACs, any non-native invasive fauna using the site will not have an effect on any nearby European sites.

4.1.4 Hydrology

55 The Proposed Development site lies within the Liffey and Dublin Bay Catchment (Hydrometric Area 09) and River Liffey sub-catchment (WFD name: Liffey_SC_090, ID 09_15) (EPA, 2025). The site has been mapped by the EPA (EPA, 2025) to be within the Camac_020 WFD River Sub Basin (IE_EA_09C020250). The site has 3 surface water features within the site: The Corbally Stream (also known as the Brownsbarn Stream) (WFD Name: Camac_020; River Waterbody Code: IE_EA_09C020250), the Cooldown Stream (WFD Name: Camac_020; River Waterbody Code: IE_EA_09C020250) and the Coldwater Stream (WFD Name: Camac_020; River Waterbody Code: IE_EA_09C020250). This is illustrated in Figure 9**.**

The Corbally Stream flows in a northerly direction along part of the eastern boundary of the proposed development site, intersecting the eastern agricultural field to the west and a small area of grassland in the southeast of the lands. The Corbally Stream then flows along the northern boundary westwards where the Cooldown and Coldwater Streams flow into the Corbally. Surveys on site indicate that while the Cooldown and Coldwater Streams are EPA named watercourses, they are highly canalised and have been excavated to enhance the drainage of the site, and are seasonally dry. Therefore while they are classified as depositing lowland rivers (FW2), they have some ecological characteristics of drainage ditches as defined by the Fossitt habitat classification[9]. All of these watercourses have a 'Good' WFD status and are listed as 'At risk' waterbody by the EPA. The results of the Small Stream Risk Survey of the Corbally Stream confirmed the watercourse within the site were also assessed as 'at risk'. The nearest water quality monitoring station downstream of the proposed development site is located along the Camac River. The most recent Q-value status for the Camac river is 'Moderate'.

56 The Corbally Stream merges into the Camac River north of the site, *c.* 2.1km downstream. The Camac River then continues northeast and discharges into the Liffey Estuary Upper transitional waterbody (TWB) (WFD Name: Liffey; Transitional Waterbody Code: IE_EA_090_0400) approximately 11.7km northeast of the site. It then flows into the Liffey Estuary Lower (WFD Name: Liffey; Transitional Waterbody Code: IE_EA_090_0300) approximately 13.7km northeast of the site, and ultimately discharges into the Dublin Bay coastal waterbody (Coastal Waterbody Code: IE_EA_090_0000). The Liffey Estuary Upper TWB is of 'Moderate' WFD status, with its risk classification currently under 'Review'. The Liffey Estuary Lower TWB is also of 'Moderate' WFD status, but is considered 'At risk' of not meeting its WFD water quality objectives by the EPA. The Dublin Bay coastal waterbody is considered to be '*Unpolluted*' with a '*Good*' WFD status and belongs to the '*Not at risk*' category.

Figure 9: Waterbodies within the proposed development site.

4.1.5 Hydrogeology

57 Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) data indicates that the majority of the site is underlain by a Poor Aquifer (Pl), bedrock aquifer within the Poulaphouca Formation which is generally unproductive except for local zones. The bedrock aquifer within the northern portion of the site within the Lucan Formation is classified as a 'Locally Important Aquifer (Ll), which is moderately productive only in local zones'[24]. The GSI has assigned a 'Moderate' permeability rating and a groundwater vulnerability rating of 'Moderate' (M) for the bedrock aquifer beneath the southern part of the site. While a 'Low' permeability rating and 'Low' (L) groundwater vulnerability has been assigned to the bedrock aquifer beneath the northern part of the site.

58 The Groundwater Body (GWB) underlying most of the site is the Kilcullen GWB, which is currently classified by the EPA as having 'Good' WFD status and being 'At risk' of not meeting its WFD obligations. The Kilcullen GWB overlaps only one European site with groundwater dependent terrestrial habitats, Glenasmole Valley SAC, located *c.* 4.2km to the southeast of the proposed development site. Typical groundwater flow paths within the Kilcullen GWB are anticipated to be in the order of a couple of hundred metres, with discharge occurring to the closest surface water feature (i.e., overlying streams and rivers as baseflow). Groundwater flow is considered to recharge and discharge on a local scale. Groundwater discharges to the numerous small streams crossing the aquifer, to springs and seeps. Regional groundwater flow paths are not considered to develop, as the rocks do not have sufficient transmissivity to transport water over long distances.

59 A portion of the north of the site is located in the Dublin GWB, which is also currently classified as having 'Good' WFD status, with its risk status under 'Review'. The Dublin GWB overlaps with one European site with groundwater dependent terrestrial habitats, the Rye water Valley/Carton SAC, located *c.* 10.3km north

[24] Geological Survey of Ireland Groundwater Data. Available at: https://www.gsi.ie/en-ie/data-and-maps/Pages/Groundwater.aspx [accessed November 2025]

west of the proposed development. The general groundwater flow direction in the Dublin GWB is towards the coast and also towards the River Liffey and Dublin City. This aquifer is not expected to maintain regional groundwater flow paths. Groundwater circulation from recharge to discharge points will more commonly take place over a distance of less than a one kilometre.

4.2 Assessment of Effects on European Sites

60 This section identifies all the potential impacts associated with the proposed development, examines whether there are any European sites within the ZoI of effects from the proposed development, and assesses whether there is any risk of the proposed development resulting in a significant effect on any European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

In assessing the potential for the proposed development to result in a significant effect on any European sites, any measures intended to avoid or reduce the harmful effects of the project on European sites are not taken into account.

4.2.1 Habitat loss and fragmentation

61 The proposed development does not overlap with the boundary of any European site. Therefore, there are no European sites at risk of direct habitat loss impacts.

62 As the proposed development does not traverse any European sites there is no potential for habitat fragmentation to occur.

63 The proposed development site does not support populations of any fauna species that form part of or support the QI/SCI populations of any European site(s).

64 As the proposed development will not result in habitat loss or habitat fragmentation within any European site, or at any ex-situ[25] sites for QI/SCI species, there is no potential for any in combination effects to occur in that regard.

4.2.2 Habitat degradation as a result of hydrological impacts

65 There are no known public drainage services on the subject lands, and therefore the proposed surface water outfall will be into the existing open watercourses of the site, following SuDS interception, treatment, attenuation and storage.

66 There is no foul water sewer located on the subject lands. Therefore is it proposed to service the subject lands by providing a new gravity foul sewer across the SDCC park to the south east of the site connecting into the existing SDCC/IW foul infrastructure in Verschoyle Green. Foul waters from the proposed development will then be discharged to Ringsend WWTP for treatment, prior to discharge into the Liffey Estuary/Dublin Bay. Therefore, the Zone of Influence (ZoI) of potential effects on water quality from the proposed development could extend to Dublin Bay.

Surface Water

67 Surface water run-off and discharges from the proposed development will enter the downstream receiving environment via a new surface water outfall into the existing Corbally Stream bounding the site.

[25] *Ex-situ* sites are habitat areas outside of an SPA, which are used by SCI bird species, and where they support SCI populations and the SPA's conservation objectives. These habitat areas can comprise alternative roosting sites, foraging areas, staging grounds or migration routes and can, but not necessarily exclusively, be situated within the immediate hinterland of the SPA, or in areas ecologically connected to it.

68 A hydrological and hydrogeological risk assessment report was prepared for the proposed development by DNV[26]. The risk assessment was carried out using a conceptual site model (CSM), or Source-Pathway-Receptor (SPR) model. A risk assessment is undertaken to provide an understanding of the risk associated with the presence of any potentially contaminating materials and/or activities on a Site. This is informed by the assessment of potential for viable pollutant linkage(s) to be present. A pollutant linkage is established when there is a viable or potentially viable Source, a Pathway and a Receptor. Potential sources of impacts during construction and operation are considered in the CSM and all potential sources of contamination are considered without taking account of any measures intended to avoid or reduce harmful effects of the proposed development (mitigation measures) i.e. a worst-case scenario.

69 Results of the CSM carried out by DNV and which inform this AA screening report, indicate that surface run-off from the proposed development (including from discharge of entrained contaminants in surface runoff (e.g. sediment, fuel spills), instream and/or near stream works) during both construction and operational phases respectively, will not result in any perceptible impact on water quality in downstream receiving waters in Dublin Bay (and thus in the European sites therein). This is due to the distance downstream and the significant dilution and attenuation which occurs due to tidal fluxes, it is concluded that there is no perceived impact on any downstream Natura 2000 sites. The CSM also considered in-combination effects and concluded that there would be no perceptible impact on water quality as a result of the proposed development in-combination with surface water arisings from other plans or projects.

70 Although good construction practices are referenced in the CSM, the assessment presented therein was undertaken in the absence of consideration of any of these measures i.e. the CSM was based on a worst-case scenario, in the absence of any mitigation measures. The drainage design elements are included as a requirement of the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study and the South Dublin County Development Plan, and not with the intent to avoid or reduce any harmful effects on European sites.

71 Therefore, the CSM concluded that there is no possibility of the proposed development undermining the conservation objectives of any of the qualifying interests or special conservation interests of the European sites in, or associated with, Dublin Bay as a result of surface water run-off or discharges.

72 Considering the conclusions of the CSM; the scale and location of the proposed development relative to the receiving surface water network; the relatively low volume of any surface water run-off or discharge events from the proposed development site relative to the receiving surface water and marine environments; and the level of mixing, dilution and dispersion of any surface water run-off/discharges from the proposed development site in the receiving watercourses, Dublin Bay and the Irish Sea, it can be concluded that the proposed development will not have any measurable effects on water quality in Dublin Bay or the Irish Sea.

Foul Water

73 Foul water, comprising sewage and industrial effluent (and some surface water run-off), from the Dublin area has historically been, and will continue to be, treated at Ringsend WwTP prior to discharge to Dublin Bay. The most recent information from Irish Water indicates that the plant is operating above its capacity of 2.1 million P.E. (Irish Water, 2023)[27], with a current operational loading of c.2.36 million P.E. Ringsend WwTP operates under a discharge licence from the EPA (D0034-01) and must comply with the licence conditions. Upgrade works are currently underway which will raise the treatment capacity of Ringsend WwTP to 2.4m PE. These works are scheduled for completion by the end of 2025[28].

26 DNV (2025) Large-scale Residential Development on Lands at Boherboy, Saggart, Co. Dublin, Hydrological & Hydrogeological Risk Assessment

27 Annual Environmental Report, Ringsend D0034-01 (Irish Water, 2023)

28 Uisce Éireann (2024). Ringsend Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade Project: Ringsend Wastewater Plant Upgrade Project | Uisce Éireann

74 Despite the capacity issues associated with the Ringsend WwTP, Dublin Bay is currently classified by the EPA as being of "Unpolluted" water quality status[29]. The Liffey Estuary Lower is currently classified by the EPA as being of "Moderate" water quality status and the Tolka Estuary as "Eutrophic". The pollutant content of future foul water discharges to Dublin Bay is considered likely to decrease in the long-term for the following reasons:

- Uisce Éireann are currently undertaking a major upgrade of the Ringsend WwTP to increase the plant's wastewater treatment capacity to a population equivalent of 2.4 million, which is programmed for completion by the end of 2025[30], and
- There is a commitment in the National Development Plan 2021-2030[31] to invest in and progress the Greater Dublin Drainage Project which includes the development of a new regional waste water treatment facility and associated infrastructure to serve Dublin and parts of the surrounding counties of Kildare and Meath. The project will involve the provision of a new regional wastewater treatment plant at a site in the northern part of the Greater Dublin Area and the provision of a new Orbital Drainage Sewer linking the new plant to the existing regional sewer network, which will enable future connections for identified areas of development within the catchment area. The provision of the Greater Dublin Drainage Project will augment the waste water treatment capacity currently provided by Ringsend WwTP across the Greater Dublin Area and alleviate pressure within the existing wider waste water network and help to ensure that the waste water generated is treated safely, in compliance with the EU and national waste water treatment regulations.

75 It is also an objective of the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study, and all development plans within the catchment of Ringsend WwTP, to include Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) within new developments. The relevant development plans also have protective policies/objectives in place to protect water quality in the receiving freshwater and marine environments, and to implement the Water Framework Directive in achieving good water quality status for Dublin Bay.

76 The foul water drainage system is to outfall by gravity into the existing Uisce Éireann infrastructure located to the east of the subject site at Verschoyle Green. The "east" site with 10 no. houses is proposed to be connected into the existing foul sewer in Corbally Rise. The lower level north end of the site (25% of the site) incorporates a pumping station to drain the apartments, houses and the possible future school site via a rising main into the outfalling gravity pipe. The proposed foul pumping station is to be in accordance with the Uisce Éireann Code of Practice for Wastewater Infrastructure 2020 – Part 5 – Pumping Stations. The minimum public sewer diameter is to be 225mm and the foul drains/sewer are to be in accordance with the Uisce Éireann Code of Practice for Wastewater Infrastructure 2017. The wastewater drainage system's pipework is designed for a design flow of 9.45l/s for residential, 3.66l/s for commercial (Creche and Possible School Site) following UE's Code of Practice for Wastewater Infrastructure (IW-CDS-5030-03) and standard details.

77 The sewage discharge will be licensed by Uisce Éireann, collected in the public sewer and treated at Uisce Éireann's WWTP at Ringsend prior to discharge to Dublin Bay. This WwTP is required to operate under an EPA licence (D0034-01) and to meet environmental legislative requirements. The plant has received planning (2019) and will be upgraded with increased treatment capacity which is programmed for completion by the end of 2025.

78 Considering the above, particularly the current unpolluted status of Dublin Bay, it is concluded that the proposed development will not impact on the overall water quality status of Dublin Bay.

29 Transitional and Coastal Surface Water Quality data (2018-2020) accessed from the EPA Envision Mapviewer www.gis.epa.ie/Envision (accessed June 2023)

30 https://www.water.ie/projects/local-projects/ringsend/ (accessed May 2025)

31 Government of Ireland (2021) Project Ireland 2040, National Development Plan 2021-2030.

79 Therefore, there is no possibility of the proposed development undermining the conservation objectives of any of the qualifying interests or special conservation interests of the European sites in, or associated with, Dublin Bay as a result of foul water discharges.

In Combination

80 There is no potential for "*in-combination*" effects on water quality in Dublin Bay from any other projects carried out within the functional areas of the *Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028* (Dublin City Council, 2022), the *Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028* (Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, 2022), *Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028* (Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, 2016), the *Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023* (Fingal County Council, 2022), *South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2022-2028* (South Dublin County Council, 2022), or any other land use plans which could influence conditions in Dublin Bay via rivers and other surface water features.

81 The Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly, Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy 2019-2031[32] (Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly, 2019) includes a range of policy objectives relevant to the protection of European sites and the protection of water quality in Dublin Bay, to which the relevant planning authorities must have regard to in the preparation and adoption of their development plans (included in Appendix II).

82 The planning authority for the proposed development is South Dublin County Council (SDCC). Plans and developments within South Dublin County must comply with the policy objectives of the South Dublin County Development Plan 2022 – 2028 which relevant to the protection of European sites and the protection of water quality in Dublin Bay.

83 Plans and developments within the other local authority areas which could influence conditions in Dublin Bay via rivers and other surface water features, also must comply with the policies and objectives relevant to the protection of European sites and water quality. These include the *Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028*, the *Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023*, the *Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029* (Kildare County Council, 2022) and the *Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028* (Wicklow County Council, 2022). The relevant policies and objectives in those plans for the protection of European sites and water quality are included in Appendix II.

84 The *Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022* include the policy objectives relevant to the protection of European sites and the protection of water quality in Dublin Bay, to which the relevant planning authorities must have regard to in the preparation and adoption of their development plans, which are listed in Appendix II.

85 The planning authority for the proposed development is South Dublin County Council (SDCC). Plans and developments within South Dublin County must comply with the policy objectives of the South Dublin County Development Plan 2022 – 2028 relevant to the protection of European sites and the protection of water quality within the County and in Dublin Bay, which are listed in Appendix II.

86 In conclusion, there are a number of projects referred to above which will upgrade the capacity of Ringsend WwTP which will, over time, address the capacity issues at Ringsend WwTP referred to above.

87 As noted under the surface water and foul water sections above, Dublin Bay is currently unpolluted and the proposed development will not result in any measurable effect on water quality in Dublin Bay. There are also protective policies and objectives in place at a strategic planning level to protect water quality in Dublin Bay.

88 Therefore, and having regard to the policies and objectives referred to under the relevant development plans, it is concluded that the possibility of any other plans or projects acting in combination with the

[32] Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly (2019) *Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy 2019-2030*

proposed development to give rise to significant effects on any European site in, or associated with, Dublin Bay can be excluded.

4.2.3 Habitat degradation as a result of hydrogeological impacts

89 An accidental pollution event during construction has the potential to affect groundwater quality locally. Whilst this is a possibility, this would be very localised and would not result in the degradation of existing groundwater conditions. Furthermore, there are no groundwater dependent habitats or species associated with the European sites in Dublin Bay.

90 Glenasmole Valley SAC, located *c.* 4.2km northwest of the proposed development, supports groundwater dependent terrestrial habitats and species, which is located in the same GWB as the proposed development site (Dublin GWB) . Based on information published by Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) on the Kilcullen GWB[33], 'The majority of groundwater flow in this aquifer will take place in the upper 3m of the rocks. This will be lateral flow towards discharge point such rivers and streams. Regional groundwater flow paths are not considered to develop, as the rocks do not have sufficient transmissivity to transport water over long distances. Typical groundwater flow paths will be in the order of a couple of hundred metres, with discharge occurring to the closest surface water feature'. The Kilcullen GWB beneath the proposed development site is considered to have short groundwater flow paths (in the order of a couple of hundred metres), with groundwater discharging to the closest surface water feature (i.e., the Corbally Stream, the Cooldown Stream and the Coldwater Stream). As the proposed development site lies downgradient, *c.* 4.2km of the Glenasmole Valley SAC, with a number of surface waterbodies located between the proposed development site and the SAC, it cannot influence groundwater conditions in the European site. Therefore, there is no pathway from groundwater beneath the site to the identified Natura 2000 sites.

91 The next nearest European site with groundwater dependent terrestrial habitats is Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC, *c.* 10.3km north-west of the proposed development, which lies within the Dublin GWB at a significant distance from the proposed development site. Based on information published by Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) on the Dublin GWB[34], 'The general groundwater flow direction in this aquifer is towards the coast and also towards the River Liffey and Dublin City'. The Dublin GWB beneath the proposed development site is considered to have short groundwater flow paths (in the order of a couple of hundred metres), with groundwater discharging to the closest surface water feature (i.e., the Corbally Stream, the Cooldown Stream and the Coldwater Stream). Therefore, there is no pathway from groundwater beneath the site to the identified Natura 2000 site and the proposed development cannot influence groundwater conditions in the European site.

92 Therefore, there is no possibility of the proposed development undermining the conservation objectives of any of the qualifying interests or special conservation interests of any European sites, either alone or in combination with any other pans or projects, as a result of hydrogeological effects.

4.2.4 Habitat degradation as a result of introducing/spreading non-native invasive species

93 There are two species listed on the Third Schedule of the *European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011* on the proposed development site: Three cornered garlic *Allium triquetrum* and Spanish bluebell *Hyacinthoides hispanica*.

[33] https://secure.dccae.gov.ie/GSI_DOWNLOAD/Groundwater/Reports/GWB/KilcullenGWB.pdf

[34] https://secure.dccae.gov.ie/GSI_DOWNLOAD/Groundwater/Reports/GWB/DublinGWB.pdf

94 *Allium triquetrum* is known to invade a range of habitats include hedgerows, parks, footpaths, roadsides, waste areas, disturbed/cultivated sites, orchards, open woodlands, forests, moist pastures and riparian areas and can rapidly colonise and dominate waste ground outcompeting native vegetation[35].

95 *H. hispanica* is an invasive species of woodland and hedgerow habitats, and it poses a threat to the native bluebell population *Hyacinthoides nonscripta,* through extensive hybridisation, threatening the genetic integrity of, and possibly causing introgression (hybridisation out of existence) of the native plant[36].

96 The proposed development site is hydrologically connected European sites in Dublin Bay. These sites are designated for a range of coastal and intertidal QI habitats. However, due to ecology, mechanism of impact and habitat requirements(these species would be unable to propagate and survive in an estuarine environment) of the Third Schedule non-native invasive species recorded within the proposed development site, as well as the QI habitats within North Dublin Bay SAC and South Dublin Bay SAC, there is no risk of non-native invasive species spreading from the proposed development site and affecting the conservation objectives supporting the QI habitats of any European site.

4.2.5 Disturbance and displacement impacts

97 Construction-related disturbance and displacement of fauna species could potentially occur within the vicinity of the proposed development. For mammal species such as otter, disturbance effects would not be expected to extend beyond 150m[37]. For birds, disturbance effects would not be expected to extend beyond a distance of *c.* 300m, as noise levels associated with general construction activities would attenuate to close to background levels at that distance.[38] There are no European sites within the disturbance ZoI; the next nearest European site to the proposed development is *c.* 4.17km away.

98 The surrounding environment within the potential disturbance ZoI of the proposed development consists of urban areas to the east and north, and agricultural land of a similar nature to the proposed development site to the west and south. As set out in Section 4.1.3, given the SCI listed bird species present locally were either too far from the nearest SPA site to form part of support SPA populations, or were recorded in very low numbers or frequency, local populations that might be subject to some level of short-term disturbance during construction do not form part of or support populations of qualifying/special conservation interest species of any European site[39]. As the proposed development will not result in the disturbance/displacement of the qualifying/special conservation interest species of any European site, there is no potential for any in combination effects to occur in that regard. Therefore, as the proposed development will not result in the disturbance/displacement of the qualifying/special conservation interest species of any European site, there is no potential for any in combination effects to occur in that regard.

[35] O'Rourke, E. and O'Flynn, C. (2014) *Risk Assessment of Allium triquetrum.* Inland Fisheries Ireland and National Biodiversity Data Centre.

[36] O'Rourke, E. and Lysaght, L. (2014) *Risk Assessment of Hyacinthoides hispanica, including H. non-scripta x H. hispanica.* Inland Fisheries Ireland and National Biodiversity Data Centre.

[37] This is consistent with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) guidance (Guidelines for the Treatment of Otters prior to the Construction of National Road Schemes and Guidelines for the Treatment of Badgers prior to the Construction of National Road Schemes) documents. This is a precautionary distance, and likely to be moderated by the screening effect provided by surrounding vegetation and buildings, with the actual ZoI of construction related disturbance likely to be much less in reality.

[39] There is a need to consider use of habitat areas outside of an SPA by SCI bird species where they support the SCI populations and the site's conservation objectives. These habitat areas can comprise alternative roosting sites, foraging areas, staging grounds or migration routes and can, but not necessarily exclusively, be situated within the immediate hinterland of the SPA, or in areas ecologically connected to it.

4.2.6 Collision Risk

99 The presence of new multi-storey structures within the Proposed Development site could potentially result in direct mortality of bird species that utilise the site for commuting, due to collisions. Bird collisions with man-made structures are common and well documented[40] with migratory passerine species the most prevalent collision victims[41]. Bird collision with buildings is generally associated with reflective material such as windows or large surfaces of glass which create a mirror and appear to show the continuation of the sky or surrounding landscape, an effect that can be exacerbated by lighting[42]. Whilst the design of the facades of the Proposed Development do include windows, no large surfaces of glass are proposed. The use of different materials and design in the facades and elevations will minimise the effect of glazing, making the building more detectable to birds and therefore reduce the potential for collisions to occur.

100 While the site is not adjacent to any European sites, Birds are mobile species and can travel up to 20km from designated sites[43]. However, the number of SCI species commuting over and using the proposed development site is relatively low. Flightline data collected during winter bird surveys recorded over 190 individual flight events across six species of interest, followed by their corresponding 1% international thresholds*[44]: black-headed gull (31,000*), herring gull (9,300*), lesser black-backed gull (4,900*), common gull (16,400*), great black-backed gull (2,700*), and mallard (53,000*). The following analysis of recorded bird flights shows the total number of flights recorded per species, and the proportion of these which were below 20m in altitude (indicating a potential risk of in-flight collision with tall buildings)::

- Black-headed gull: 18 total flightlines; 10 (56%) within the 0–20 m;
- Herring gull: 115 total flightlines; 44 (38%) within 0–20 m;
- Lesser black-backed gull: 25 flightlines; 9 (36%) within 0–20 m;
- Common gull: 22 flightlines; 13 (59%) within 0–20 m;
- Great black-backed gull: 11 flightlines; 3 (27%) within 0–20 m;
- Mallard: 1 flightline, within the 0–20 m band.

101 The majority of observed flightlines occurred at heights above 20 m, suggesting that the vertical overlap between bird movement and building height is limited.

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[40] Banks, R.C (1979). *Human related mortality of birds in the United States*. U.S. Fish Wildl. Serv. Spec. Sci. Rep. Wildl. 215. 16 pp.

Jenkins, A., Smallie, J.J. and Diamond, M. (2010). Avian collisions with power lines: A global review of causes and mitigation with a South African perspective. *Bird Conservation International*, 20(03), 263 – 278.

Klem, D. (1990). Collisions between birds and windows: mortality and prevention. *Journal of Field Ornithology*, 61, 120–128.

Erickson, W.P., Johnson, G.D. and Young, P.D. (2005). *A Summary and Comparison of Bird Mortality from Anthropogenic Causes with an Emphasis on Collisions*. USDA Forest Service Gen. Tech. Rep. PSW-GTR-191. 2005.

Erickson, W. P., G. D. Johnson, M. D. Strickland, D. P. Young, Jr., K. J. Sernka, and R. E. Good. (2001). *Avian collisions with wind turbines: A summary of existing studies and comparisons to other sources of avian collision mortality in the United States*. National Wind Coordinating Committee, c/o RESOLVE, Inc., Washington, D.C.

[41] Bing G.-C., Choi C.-Y., Nam H.-Y., Park J.-G., Hong G.-P., Sung J.-K., Chae H.-Y & Choi Y.-B. (2012). Causes of mortality in birds at stopover islands. *Korean J. Ornithol*., 19, 23–31.

Longcore, T. Rich, C., Mineau, P., MacDonald, B., Bert, D.G., Sullivan, L.M., Mutrie, E., et al. (2013). Avian mortality at communication towers in the United States and Canada: which species, how many, and where? *Biological Conservation,* 158, 410-419.

[42] Sheppard, C. & Phillips, G. (2015). *Bird-Friendly Building Design*, 2nd Ed. The Plains, VA: American Bird Conservancy, 2015.

[43] Scottish Natural Heritage (2016) *Guidance: Assessing connectivity with Special Protection Areas (SPAs).* Version 3.

[44] Fitzgerald, N., Burke, B. & Lewis, L.J. (2021) Irish Wetland Bird Survey: Results of waterbird monitoring in Ireland in 2016/17 and 2017/18. BirdWatch Ireland, Wicklow. Accessed April 2025.

102 SCI species for SPAs within the ZoI of the Proposed Development regularly navigate the urban environment and travel over built structures. For context on their avoidance capabilities, in a different setting and for use in collision risk modelling for onshore wind turbines, an avoidance rate of 99.5% is applied for large gull species and an avoidance rate of 99.2% is applied for small gull species[45], which means that 99.5% and 99.2% of gull flights, respectively, will avoid collision with a moving turbine. For curlew the avoidance rate applied is 98%[46]. The risk of collision is even lower with a static, detectable building. While the presence of the Proposed Development might alter flight patterns of bird species to avoid the proposed building structures the risk of collision is extremely low.

103 Considering the low collision risk associated with the species in question, in combination with the building location, design and materials used, the potential for mortality due to building collisions is low. Due to the avoidance capabilities (agile and capable of forward vision during flight) of the species in question, this impact would not result in any population level effect or change in distribution of any species, including any SCI species for SPAs within the ZoI of the Proposed Development. Therefore there is no potential for impacts on European sites.

4.2.7 Summary

104 The potential impacts associated with the proposed development do not have the potential to affect the receiving environment in any European sites and, consequently, do not have the potential to affect the conservation objectives supporting the qualifying interest/special conservation interests of any European sites. Therefore, the proposed development is not likely to have significant effects on any European sites.

105 As the proposed development itself will not have any effects on the QIs/SCIs or conservation objectives of any European sites, and taking into account the policies and objectives of the statutory plans referred to above, it is concluded that there is no potential for any other plan or project to act in combination with it to result in significant effects on any European sites.

106 The potential impacts of the proposed development on the receiving environment, their ZoI, and the European sites at risk of significant effects are summarised in Table 4 below. In assessing the potential for the proposed development to result in a significant effect on any European sites, any measures intended to avoid or reduce the harmful effects of the project on European sites are not taken into account.

Table 4 Summary of Analysis of Likely Significant Effects on European sites

Potential Direct, Indirect In Combination Effects and the ZoI of the Potential Effects	**Are there any European sites within the ZoI of the proposed development?**
Habitat loss Habitat loss will be confined to the lands within the proposed development boundary.	No There are no European sites, or ex-situ sites which support QI/SCI habitats or species of nearby European sites, within the proposed development boundary
Habitat degradation as a result of hydrological impacts Habitats and species downstream of the proposed development site and the associated surface water drainage discharge points, and downstream of offsite wastewater treatment plants.	No There are no European sites at risk of hydrological effects associated with the proposed development

[45] Furness, R.W. (2019) Avoidance rates of herring gull, great black-backed gull and common gull for use in the assessment of terrestrial wind farms in Scotland. Scottish Natural Heritage Research Report No. 1019.

[46] Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH). (2018) Avoidance Rates for the onshore SNH Wind Farm Collision Risk Model. September 2018 v2.

Potential Direct, Indirect In Combination Effects and the ZoI of the Potential Effects	Are there any European sites within the ZoI of the proposed development?
Habitat degradation as a result of hydrogeological impacts Groundwater-dependant habitats, and the species those habitats support, in the local area that lie downgradient of the proposed development site.	No There are no European sites at risk of hydrogeological effects associated with the proposed development
Habitat degradation as a result of introducing/spreading non-native invasive species Habitat areas within, adjacent to, and potentially downstream of the proposed development site.	No No pathway exists between the proposed development site and downstream European sites
Disturbance and displacement impacts Potentially up to several hundred metres from the proposed development boundary, dependent upon the predicted levels of noise, vibration and visual disturbance associated with the proposed development, taking into account the sensitivity of the qualifying interest species to disturbance effects	No There are no European sites, or ex-situ sites which support QI/SCI habitats or species of nearby European sites, within the potential zone of influence of disturbance effects associated with the construction or operation of the proposed development
Collision Risk Impacts Special conservation interest species flying across the proposed development.	No There are no European sites at risk of mortality risk impacts associated with the proposed development

5 Conclusions of Screening Assessment Process

107 Following an examination, analysis and evaluation of the best available information, and applying the precautionary principle, it can be concluded that the possibility of any significant effects on any European sites, whether arising from the project alone or in combination with other plans and projects, can be excluded, for the reasons set out in Section 3.3 above. In reaching this conclusion, the nature of the project and its potential relationship with all European sites within the zone of influence, and their conservation objectives, have been fully considered.

108 Therefore, it is the professional opinion of the authors of this report that the application for consent for the proposed development does not require an Appropriate Assessment or the preparation of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS).

Appendix I

The Qualifying Interests (QIs) and Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of the European sites in the vicinity of the proposed development site (see Figure 1)

European Site Name [Code] and its Qualifying interest(s) / Special Conservation Interest(s) (*Priority Annex I Habitats)	**Location Relative to the Proposed Development Site**	**Location Relative to Ringsend WWTP outfall location**
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)		
Glenasmole Valley SAC [001209] 6210 Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (*Festuco-Brometalia*) (* important orchid sites) 6410 *Molinia* meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinion caeruleae*) 7220 Petrifying springs with tufa formation (*Cratoneurion*)* *S.I. No. 345/2021 - European Union Habitats (Glenasmole Valley Special Area of Conservation 001209) Regulations 2021* NPWS (2021*) Conservation Objectives: Glenasmole Valley SAC [001209.]* Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.	Located *c*. 4.0km south east of the proposed development.	N/A
Wicklow Mountains SAC [002122] 3110 Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (*Littorelletalia uniflorae*) 3160 Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds 4010 Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix* 4030 European dry heaths 4060 Alpine and Boreal heaths 6130 *Calaminarian* grasslands of the *Violetalia calaminariae* 6230 Species-rich *Nardus* 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 (*Androsacetalia alpinae* and *Galeopsietalia ladani*) 8210 Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation 8220 Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation 91A0 Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and Blechnum in the British Isles 1355 *Lutra lutra* (Otter) *S.I. No. 465/2023 - European Union Habitats (Wicklow Mountains Special Area of Conservation 002122) Regulations 2023* NPWS (2017) Conservation Objectives: Wicklow Mountains SAC 002122. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.	Located *c*. 5.3km south east of the proposed development.	N/A

European Site Name [Code] and its Qualifying interest(s) / Special Conservation Interest(s) (*Priority Annex I Habitats)	Location Relative to the Proposed Development Site	Location Relative to Ringsend WWTP outfall location
Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC [001398] 7220 Petrifying springs with tufa formation (*Cratoneurion*) 1014 Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail *Vertigo angustior* 1016 Desmoulin's Whorl Snail *Vertigo moulinsiana* *S.I. No. 494/2018 - European Union Habitats (Rye Water Valley/Carton Special Area of Conservation 001398) Regulations 2018* NPWS (2021) *Conservation Objectives: Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC 001398.* Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.	Located *c*. 9.9km north west of the proposed development	N/A
Red Bog, Kildare SAC [000397] 7140 Transition mires and quaking bogs *S.I. No. 76/2018 - European Union Habitats (Red Bog, Kildare Special Area of Conservation 000397) Regulations 2018* *NPWS (2019) Conservation Objectives: Red Bog, Kildare SAC 000397.* Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.	Located *c*. 10.7km south west of the proposed development	N/A
South Dublin Bay SAC [000210] 1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide 1210 Annual vegetation of drift lines 1310 *Salicornia* and other annuals colonising mud and sand 2110 Embryonic shifting dunes *S.I. No. 525/2019 - European Union Habitats (South Dublin Bay Special Area of Conservation 000210) Regulations 2019* NPWS (2013) *Conservation Objectives: South Dublin Bay SAC 000210.* Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.	Located *c*. 15.4km north east of the proposed development	*c*. 537m south of the outfall
North Dublin Bay SAC [000206] 1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide 1210 Annual vegetation of drift lines 1310 *Salicornia* and other annuals colonising mud and sand 1330 Atlantic salt meadows (*Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae*) 1395 Petalwort *Petalophyllum ralfsii* 1410 Mediterranean salt meadows (*Juncetalia maritimi*) 2110 Embryonic shifting dunes 2120 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* (white dunes) 2130 Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) 2190 Humid dune slacks	Located *c*. 18.7km north east of the proposed development.	*c*. 2.3km north east of the outfall

European Site Name [Code] and its Qualifying interest(s) / Special Conservation Interest(s) (*Priority Annex I Habitats)	Location Relative to the Proposed Development Site	Location Relative to Ringsend WWTP outfall location
S.I. No. 524/2019 - European Union Habitats (North Dublin Bay Special Area of Conservation 000206) Regulations 2019 NPWS (2013) *Conservation Objectives: North Dublin Bay SAC 000206.* Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.		
Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC [003000] 1170 Reefs 1351 Harbour porpoise *Phocoena phocoena* *S.I. No. 94/2019 - European Union Habitats (Rockabill To Dalkey Island Special Area Of Conservation 003000) Regulations 2019* NPWS (2013) *Conservation Objectives: Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC 003000. Version 1.* National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.	Located *c.* 22.3km north east of the proposed development.	c. 6km east of the outfall
Special Protection Area (SPA)		
Wicklow Mountains SPA [004040] A098 Merlin *Falco columbarius* A103 Peregrine *Falco peregrinus* *S.I. No. 586/2012 - European Communities (Conservation of Wild Birds (Wicklow Mountains Special Protection Area 004040)) Regulations 2012.* NPWS (2024). Conservation Objectives: Wicklow Mountains SPA 004040. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.	Located *c.* 8.6km south east of the proposed development.	N/A
Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA [004063] A043 Greylag Goose *Anser anser* A183 Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus* *S.I. No. 73/2010 - European Communities (Conservation of Wild Birds (Poulaphouca Reservoir Special Protection Area 004063)) Regulations 2010.* NPWS (2024). Conservation Objectives: Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA 004063. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.	Located *c.* 11.0km south west of the proposed development	N/A
South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA [004024] A046 Light-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla hrota* A130 Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus* A137 Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* A141 Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola* A143 Knot *Calidris canutus* A144 Sanderling *Calidris alba* A149 Dunlin *Calidris alpina* A157 Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica* A162 Redshank *Tringa totanus*	Located *c.* 15.4km north east of the proposed development	*c.* 450m north of the outfall

European Site Name [Code] and its Qualifying interest(s) / Special Conservation Interest(s) (*Priority Annex I Habitats)	Location Relative to the Proposed Development Site	Location Relative to Ringsend WWTP outfall location
A179 Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus* A192 Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii* A193 Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* A194 Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea* A999 Wetland and Waterbirds *S.I. No. 212/2010 - European Communities (Conservation of Wild Birds (South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary Special Protection Area 004024)) Regulations 2010.* NPWS (2015) *Conservation Objectives: South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA 004024*. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.		
North Bull Island SPA [004006] A046 Light-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla hrota* A048 Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* A052 Teal *Anas crecca* A054 Pintail *Anas acuta* A056 Shoveler *Anas clypeata* A130 Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus* A140 Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria* A141 Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola* A143 Knot *Calidris canutus* A144 Sanderling *Calidris alba* A149 Dunlin *Calidris alpina* A156 Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa* A157 Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica* A160 Curlew *Numenius arquata* A162 Redshank *Tringa totanus* A169 Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* A179 Black-headed Gull *Croicocephalus ridibundus* A999 Wetlands & Waterbirds *S.I. No. 211/2010 - European Communities (Conservation of Wild Birds (North Bull Island Special Protection Area 004006)) Regulations 2010.* NPWS (2015) *Conservation Objectives: North Bull Island SPA 004006.* Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.	Located *c.* 18.6km north west of the proposed development.	*c.* 469m north of the outfall
North-West Irish Sea SPA [004236] A065 Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra* A001 Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata* A003 Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*	Located *c.* 19.9km north east of the proposed development.	*c.* 3.3km west of the outfall

European Site Name [Code] and its Qualifying interest(s) / Special Conservation Interest(s) (*Priority Annex I Habitats)	Location Relative to the Proposed Development Site	Location Relative to Ringsend WWTP outfall location
A009 Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis* A013 Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus* A018 Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* A017 Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* A177 Little Gull *Larus minutus* A188 Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla* A179 Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus* A182 Common Gull *Larus canus* A183 Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus* A184 Herring Gull *Larus argentatus* A187 Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus* A195 Little Tern *Sterna albifrons* A192 Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii* A193 Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* A194 Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea* A204 Puffin *Fratercula arctica* A200 Razorbill *Alca torda* A199 Guillemot *Uria aalge* *There is no S.I. published for this SPA at the time of writing* NPWS (2023). Conservation Objectives: North-west Irish Sea SPA 004236. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.		

Appendix II

Planning polices/objectives relating to the protection of European sites and water quality

Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly, Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy 2019-2031
Regional Policy Objective 3.4 Ensure that all plans, projects and activities requiring consent arising from the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy are subject to the relevant environmental assessment requirements including SEA, EIA and AA as appropriate. In addition the future strategic development of settlements throughout the Region will have full cognisance of the legal requirements pertaining to sites of International Nature Conservation Interest. **Regional Policy Objective 7.2** To achieve and maintain 'Good Environmental Status' for marine waters and to ensure the sustainable use of shared marine resources in the Region, and to promote the development of a cross-boundary and cross-border strategic management and stakeholder engagement framework to protect the marine environment. **Regional Policy Objective 7.10** Support the implementation of the Water Framework Directive in achieving and maintaining at least good environmental status for all water bodies in the Region and to ensure alignment between the core objectives of the Water Framework Directive and other relevant Directives, River Basin Management plans and local authority land use plans. **Regional Policy Objective 7.11** For water bodies with 'high ecological status' objectives in the Region, local authorities shall incorporate measures for both their continued protection and to restore those water bodies that have fallen below high ecological status and areas 'At Risk' into the development of local planning policy and decision making any measures for the continued protection of areas with high ecological status in the Region and for mitigation of threats to waterbodies identified as 'At Risk' as part of a catchment based approach in consultation with the relevant agencies. This shall include recognition of the need to deliver efficient wastewater facilities with sufficient capacity and thus contribute to improved water quality in the Region. **Regional Policy Objective 7.12** Future statutory land use plans shall include Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and seek to avoid inappropriate land use zonings and development in areas at risk of flooding and to integrate sustainable water management solutions (such as SuDS, nonporous surfacing and green roofs) to create safe places in accordance with the Planning System and Flood Risk Assessment Guidelines for Local Authorities. **Regional Policy Objective 7.15** Local authorities shall take opportunities to enhance biodiversity and amenities and to ensure the protection of environmentally sensitive sites and habitats, including where flood risk management measures are planned. **Regional Policy Objective 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. **Regional Policy Objective 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. **Regional Policy Objective 10.6** Delivery and phasing of services shall be subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes and shall avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 network. **Regional Policy Objective 10.7** Local authority core strategies shall demonstrate compliance with DHPLG Water Services Guidelines for local authorities and demonstrate phased infrastructure – led growth that is commensurate with the carrying

capacity of water services and prevent adverse impacts on the integrity of water dependent habitats and species within the Natura 2000 network.

Regional Policy Objective 10.10

Support Irish Water and the relevant local authorities in the Region to eliminate untreated discharges from settlements in the short term, while planning strategically for long term growth in tandem with Project Ireland 2040 and in increasing compliance with the requirements of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive from 39% today to 90% by the end of 2021, to 99% by 2027 and to 100% by 2040.

Regional Policy Objective 10.11

EMRA supports the delivery of the waste water infrastructure set out in Table 10.2, subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process.[47]

Regional Policy Objective 10.12

Development plans shall support strategic wastewater treatment infrastructure investment and provide for the separation of foul and surface water networks to accommodate the future growth of the Region.

Regional Policy Objective 10.15

Support the relevant local authorities (and Irish Water where relevant) in the Region to improve storm water infrastructure to improve sustainable drainage and reduce the risk of flooding in the urban environment and in the development and provision at a local level of Sustainable Urban Drainage solutions.

Regional Policy Objective 10.16

Implement policies contained in the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GDSDS), including SuDS.

Regional Policy Objective 10.18

Local authorities shall ensure adequate surface water drainage systems are in place which meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and the associated River Basin Management Plans.

Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028

SI1: To support and facilitate Irish Water in the provision of high quality drinking water, water conservation and drainage infrastructure, and to promote the ongoing upgrade and expansion of water supply and wastewater services to meet the future needs of the City and the Region.

SI2: To ensure that development is permitted in tandem with available water supply and wastewater treatment and to manage development, so that new schemes are permitted only where adequate capacity or resources exist or will become available within the life of a planning permission.

SI3: To require all new development to provide separate foul and surface water drainage systems.

SI4: To require new private development sewers which are intended to connect to the public drainage system to comply with the requirements of the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works and/ or Irish Water foul sewer specification (where applicable).

SI7: To promote and maintain the achievement of at least good status in all water bodies in the City.

SI8: To promote the progressive reduction of pollution of groundwater and prevent its further pollution.

SI10: To require development proposals that are within or adjacent to river corridors in the City (excluding the Camac River) to provide for a minimum setback distance of 10-15m from the top of the river bank in order to create an appropriate riparian zone. The Council will support riparian zones greater than 10 metres depending on site-specific characteristics and where such zones can integrate with public/communal open space.

SI23: To require all new developments with roof areas in excess of 100 sq. metres to provide for a green blue roof designed in accordance with the requirements of Dublin City Council's Green & Blue Roof Guide (2021) which is summarised in Appendix 11.

SI24: To require that all surface water run-off from new/ extended domestic driveways, repaired/ replacement driveways, and vehicular entrances (where such development is not exempted from the

[47] The Greater Dublin Drainage Project, the Ringsend Wastewater Treatment Plant Project, the Athlone Main Drainage Project and the Upper Liffey Valley Sewerage Scheme

requirement to obtain planning permission), is managed through the use of SuDS, ensuring no increase in surface water discharges to the public drainage network (for further guidance, please refer to Appendices 5 and 12).

SI18: To require the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems in all new developments, where appropriate, as set out in the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works. The following measures will apply:

- The infiltration into the ground through the development of porous pavement such as permeable paving, swales, and detention basins
- The holding of water in storage areas through the construction of green roofs, rainwater harvesting, detention basins, ponds, and wetlands
- The slow-down of the movement of water.

GI9: To conserve, manage, protect and restore the favourable conservation condition of all qualifying interest/special conservation interests of all European sites designated, or proposed to be designated, under the EU Birds and Habitats Directives, as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) (European / Natura 2000 sites).

GI10: To adequately protect flora and fauna (under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives), the Wildlife Acts 1976 (as amended), the Fisheries Acts 1959 (as amended) and the Flora (Protection) Order 2022 S.I No. 235 of 2022, wherever they occur within Dublin City, or have been identified as supporting the favourable conservation condition of any European sites.

GI11: To protect and enhance the ecological functions and connectivity of habitats and species of proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) to be designated by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS).

GI12: To protect sites for nature conservation as designated under the Ramsar Treaty for wetland sites, National Special Amenity Areas, National Nature Reserves, Important Bird Areas and Flora Protection Order Sites.

GI13: To ensure the protection, conservation and enhancement of all areas of ecological importance for protected species, and especially those listed in the EU Birds and Habitats Directives, including those identified as supporting the favourable conservation condition of any European sites, in accordance with development standards set out in this plan.

GI30: To conserve, maintain and restore freshwater and estuarine habitats which are of importance for species listed in the annexes of the EU Birds and Habitats Directives and to ensure connectivity of these in accordance with Article 10 of the EU Habitats Directive.

South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2022-2028

Policy NCBH3 Natura 2000 Sites

Conserve and protect Natura 2000 sites and achieve and maintain favourable conservation status for habitats and species that are considered to be at risk through the protection of the Natura 2000 network from any plans or projects that are likely to have a significant effect on their coherence or integrity

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 site may only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive as transposed into Irish legislation.

GI1 Objective 3

To facilitate the development and enhancement of sensitive access to and connectivity between areas of interest for residents, wildlife and biodiversity, and other distinctive landscapes as focal features for linkages between natural, semi natural and formalised green spaces where feasible and ensuring that there is no adverse impact (directly, indirectly or cumulatively) on the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites and protected habitats outside of Natura 2000 sites

IE2 Objective 1

To work in conjunction with Irish Water to protect existing water and drainage infrastructure and to promote the ongoing upgrade and expansion of water supply and wastewater services to meet the future needs of the County and the Region.

Policy IE3 Surface Water and Groundwater

Manage surface water and protect and enhance ground and surface water quality to meet the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive.

IE3 Objective 1

To maintain, improve and enhance the environmental and ecological quality of our surface waters and groundwater by implementing the relevant programme of measures set out in the River Basin Management Plans.

IE3 Objective 2

To maintain and enhance existing surface water drainage systems in the County and to require Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in new development in accordance with objectives set out in section 4.2.2 of this Plan including, where feasible, integrated constructed wetlands, at a local, district and County level, to control surface water outfall and protect water quality.

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028

Policy Objective GIB18: Protection of Natural Heritage and the Environment

It is a Policy Objective to protect and conserve the environment including, in particular, the natural heritage of the County and to conserve and manage Nationally and Internationally important and EU designated sites - such as Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservations (SACs), proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) and Ramsar sites (wetlands) - as well as non-designated areas of high nature conservation value known as locally important areas which also serve as 'Stepping Stones' for the purposes of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive

Policy Objective GIB19: Habitats Directive

It is a Policy Objective to ensure the protection of natural heritage and biodiversity, including European Sites that form part of the Natura 2000 network, in accordance with relevant EU Environmental Directives and applicable National Legislation, Policies, Plans and Guidelines.

Policy Objective GIB21: Designated Sites

It is a Policy Objective to protect and preserve areas designated as proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, and Special Protection Areas. It is Council policy to promote the maintenance and as appropriate, delivery of 'favourable' conservation status of habitats and species within these areas.

Policy Objective GIB22: Non-Designated Areas of Biodiversity Importance

It is a Policy Objective to protect and promote the conservation of biodiversity in areas of natural heritage importance outside Designated Areas and to ensure that notable sites, habitats and features of biodiversity importance - including species protected under the Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2000, the Birds Directive 1979, the Habitats Directive 1992, Flora (Protection) Order, 2015, Annex I habitats, local important areas, wildlife corridors and rare species - are adequately protected. Ecological assessments will be carried out for all developments in areas that support, or have potential to support, features of biodiversity importance or rare and protected species and appropriate mitigation/ avoidance measures will be implemented. In implementing this policy, regard shall be had to the Ecological Network, including the forthcoming DLR Wildlife Corridor Plan, and the recommendations and objectives of the Green City Guidelines (2008) and 'Ecological Guidance Notes for Local Authorities and Developers' (Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Version 2014)

Policy Objective GIB23: County-Wide Ecological Network

It is a Policy Objective to protect the Ecological Network which will be integrated into the updated Green Infrastructure Strategy and will align with the DLR County Biodiversity Action Plan. Creating this network throughout the County will also improve the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network in accordance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive. The network will also include non-designated sites.

Policy Objective EI7: Water Supply and Wastewater treatment and Appropriate Assessment

It is a Policy Objective to require that all developments relating to water supply and wastewater treatment are subject to screening for Appropriate Assessment to ensure there are no likely significant effects on the integrity, defined by the structure and function, of any European sites and that the requirements of Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive are met. (Consistent with RPO 10.7 of the RSES).

Policy Objective EI8: Groundwater Protection and Appropriate Assessment

It is a Policy Objective to ensure the protection of the groundwater resources in and around the County and associated habitats and species in accordance with the Groundwater Directive 2006/118/EC and the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations, 2010. In this regard, the Council will support the implementation of Irish Water's Water Safety Plans to protect sources of public water supply and their contributing catchment.

Policy Objective EI2: Irish Water Enabling Policies Irish Water's Plans and Programmes

It is a Policy Objective - in conjunction with the Eastern and Midland Regional Authority, where appropriate - to work with and support Irish Water in the delivery of the strategic objectives and strategic water and wastewater projects and infrastructure as set out in the 'Water Services Strategic Plan' (2015), any subsequent plan, Irish Water's Capital Investment Plan 2020 – 2024, any subsequent Capital Investment Plans and the forthcoming National Water Resources Plan, so as to ensure provision of infrastructure to service settlements in accordance with the Core Strategy of this Plan, and the settlement strategy of the RSES. (Consistent with RPO 10.2, 10.3, 10.11, 10.16 of the RSES).

Policy Objective EI5: River Basin Management Plans (RMBPs)

It is a Policy Objective: To ensure the delivery of the relevant policies and objectives of the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018 – 2021 and any subsequent plan, including those relating to protection of water status, improvement of water status, prevention of deterioration and meeting objectives for designated protected sites. To support Irish Water in its implementation of Water Quality Management Plans for ground, surface, coastal and estuarine waters as part of the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive. To support Irish Water in the development of Drinking Water Protection Plans.

Policy Objective EI6: Sustainable Drainage Systems

It is a Policy Objective to ensure that all development proposals incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).

Policy Objective EI17: Water Pollution

It is a Policy Objective to implement the provisions of water pollution abatement measures in accordance with national and EU Directives and other legislative requirements in conjunction with other agencies as appropriate.

Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029

Objective GINHO3 – Biodiversity in Open Space

Make provision for biodiversity within public open space and include water sensitive design and management measures (including SuDS) as part of a sustainable approach to open space design and management.

Policy GINHP12 – Protected Sites

Protect areas designated or proposed to be designated as Natura 2000 sites (i.e. Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs), Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), Statutory Nature Reserves, and Refuges for Fauna

Objective GINHO27 – National Parks and Wildlife Service

Support the National Parks and Wildlife Service, in the maintenance and achievement of favourable conservation status for the habitats and species in Fingal by taking full account of the requirements of the Habitats and Birds Directives, in the performance of its functions.

Objective GINHO28 – Protection of Natural Heritage Areas

Ensure that development does not have a significant adverse impact on proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs), Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), Statutory Nature Reserves, Refuges for Fauna, Habitat Directive Annex I sites and Annex II species contained therein, and on rare and threatened species including those protected by law and their habitats.

Policy GINHP17 – Protection of European and National Sites

Strictly protect areas designated or proposed to be designated as Natura 2000 sites (i.e. Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs); also known as European sites) including any areas that may be proposed for designation or designated during the lifetime of this Plan.

Objective GINHO33 – Annex I and Annex II

Ensure that development does not have a significant adverse impact on proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs), Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), Statutory Nature Reserves, Refuges for Fauna, Habitat Directive Annex I sites and Annex II species contained therein, and on rare and threatened species including those protected by law and their habitats.

Objective GINHO35 – Appropriate Assessment

In accordance with Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland, Guidance for Planning Authorities 2010, any plans or projects that are likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, are subject to a screening for Appropriate Assessment unless they are directly connected with or necessary to the management of a Natura 2000 site.

Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029

BI P2

Seek to contribute to maintaining or restoring the conservation status of all sites designated for nature conservation or proposed for designation in accordance with European and national legislation and agreements. These include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), Ramsar Sites and Statutory Nature Reserves.

BI O8

Support the implementation of the National Raised Bog Special Areas of Conservation Management Plan 2017-2022

BI O10

Ensure an Appropriate Assessment Screening, in accordance with Article 6(3) and Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, Section 177A of the Planning and Development Act (2001-2022) or any superseding legislation and with DEHLG guidance (2009), is carried out in respect of any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a Natura 2000 site to determine the likelihood of the plan or project having a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects and to ensure that projects which may give rise to significant cumulative, direct, indirect or secondary impacts on Natura 2000 sites will not be permitted (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) unless for reasons of overriding public interest.

BI O11

Support the establishment of conservation measures and the preparation and implementation of management plans for the conservation of Natura 2000 sites by NPWS, as required by Article 6(1) of the Habitats Directive.

BI P3

Ensure that any proposal for development within or adjacent to a Natural Heritage Area (NHA), Ramsar Sites and Nature Reserves is designed and sited to minimise its impact on the biodiversity, ecological, geological and landscape value of the site, particularly plant and animal species listed under the Wildlife Acts and the Habitats and Birds Directive including their habitats.

BI P4

Ensure that any new development proposal does not have a significant adverse impact, incapable of satisfactory mitigation on plant, animal or bird species which are protected by law.

BI O15

Ensure that any new development proposal does not have a significant adverse impact on rare and threatened species, including those protected under the Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2012, the Birds Directive 1979 the Habitats Directive 1992 and the Flora Protection Order species and any species listed under the national red lists or that could be listed on a national red list.

BI O20

Conserve and protect habitats and species listed in the Annexes of the EU Habitats Directive (92143/EEC) (as amended), the Birds Directive (20091147/EC), Directive Annex 2, the Wildlife Acts 1976 to 2000, The Wildlife Acts 1976 (as amended) and the Flora Protection Order No 94 of 1999.

BI O22

Identify and protect areas of high nature conservation value (including but not limited to SAC/SPA/pNHA) and support the landscape features which act as ecological corridors/networks and stepping-stones, such as river corridors, hedgerows, and road verges so as to minimise the loss of habitats and features of the wider countryside which are of major importance for wild fauna and flora in accordance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive

IN P2

Ensure the protection and enhancement of water quality throughout Kildare in accordance with the EU WFD and facilitate the implementation of the associated programme of measures in the River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021 (and subsequent updates)

IN O13

Ensure that adequate wastewater services will be available to service development prior to the granting of planning permission and to require developers to provide evidence of consultation with Irish Water regarding capacity in the network prior to applying for planning permission

IN P4

Ensure adequate surface water drainage systems are in place which meet the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive and the River Basin Management Plan in order to promote the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems.

IN O21

Facilitate the development of nature based Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, including the retrofitting of SuDS in established urban areas. Culverting entire drains and streams will generally be prohibited; interference with natural drainage systems is to be minimised and the Council will explore opportunities to remove culverted drainage systems in favour of open, natural drainage systems.

IN O22

Require the implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) and other nature-based surface water drainage as an integral part of all new development proposals.

Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028

CPO13.1

To ensure and support the implementation of the EU Groundwater Directive and the EU Water Framework Directive and associated River Basin and Sub-Basin Management Plans and Blue Dot Catchment Programme,

to ensure the protection, improvement and sustainable use of all waters in the County, including rivers, lakes, ground water, coastal and estuarine waters, and to restrict development likely to lead to a deterioration in water quality. The Council will also have cognisance of, where relevant, the EU's Common Implementation Strategy Guidance Document No. 20 and 36 which provide guidance on exemptions to the environmental objectives of the Water Framework Directive.

CPO13.1

To ensure and support the implementation of the EU Groundwater Directive and the EU Water Framework Directive and associated River Basin and Sub-Basin Management Plans and Blue Dot Catchment Programme, to ensure the protection, improvement and sustainable use of all waters in the County, including rivers, lakes, ground water, coastal and estuarine waters, and to restrict development likely to lead to a deterioration in water quality. The Council will also have cognisance of, where relevant, the EU's Common Implementation Strategy Guidance Document No. 20 and 36 which provide guidance on exemptions to the environmental objectives of the Water Framework Directive.

CPO 13.5

To ensure compliance with and to implement the provisions of the Nitrates Directive in so far as it falls within the remit of the Council to do so.

CPO 13.6

To encourage and promote the use of catchment-sensitive farming practices, in order to meet Water Framework Directive targets and comply with the River Basin Management Plan.

CPO 13.6

To encourage and promote the use of catchment-sensitive farming practices, in order to meet Water Framework Directive targets and comply with the River Basin Management Plan.

CPO 13.16

Permission will be considered for private wastewater treatment plants for single rural houses where:

- the specific ground conditions have been shown to be suitable for the construction of a treatment plant and any associated percolation area;
- the system will not give rise to unacceptable adverse impacts on ground waters / aquifers and the type of treatment proposed has been drawn up in accordance with the appropriate groundwater protection response set out in the Wicklow Groundwater Protection Scheme (2003);
- the proposed method of treatment and disposal complies with Wicklow County Council's Policy for Wastewater Treatment & Disposal Systems for Single Houses (PE ≤ 10) and the Environmental Protection Agency "Waste Water Treatment Manuals"; and
- in all cases the protection of ground and surface water quality shall remain the overriding priority and proposals must definitively demonstrate that the proposed development will not have an adverse impact on water quality standards and requirements set out in EU and national legislation and guidance documents

CPO 13.21

Ensure the implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) in accordance with the Wicklow County Council SuDS Policy to ensure surface water runoff is managed for maximum benefit. In particular to require proposed developments to meet the design criteria of each of the four pillars of SuDS design; Water Quality, Water Quantity, Amenity and Biodiversity.

CPO 13.21

Ensure the implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) in accordance with the Wicklow County Council SuDS Policy to ensure surface water runoff is managed for maximum benefit. In particular to require proposed developments to meet the design criteria of each of the four pillars of SuDS design; Water Quality, Water Quantity, Amenity and Biodiversity.

CPO 17.4

To contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection of designated ecological sites including Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs); Wildlife Sites (including proposed Natural Heritage Areas); Salmonid Waters; Flora Protection Order sites; Wildfowl Sanctuaries (see S.I. 192 of 1979); Freshwater Pearl Mussel catchments; and Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). To contribute towards

compliance with relevant EU Environmental Directives and applicable National Legislation, Policies, Plans and Guidelines, including but not limited to the following and any updated/superseding documents: 333 Chapter 17 | Natural Heritage & Biodiversity Draft Wicklow County Development Plan 2021-2027

- EU Directives, including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended) , the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)7 , the Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC)8 , the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (2011/92/EU, as amended), the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), EU Groundwater Directive (2006/118/EC) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC); EU 'Guidance on integrating ecosystems and their services into decision-making' (European Commission 2019)
- National legislation, including the Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2010 (as amended)9 , European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018, the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended), the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 477 of 2011), the European Communities (Environmental Liability) Regulations 2008 (as amended)10 and the Flora Protection order 2015.
- National policy guidelines (including any clarifying circulars or superseding versions of same), including 'Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment' (2018), 'Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-Threshold Development' (2003), 'Tree Preservation Guidelines', 'Landscape and Landscape Assessment' (draft 2000), 'Appropriate Assessment Guidance' (2010);
- Catchment and water resource management plans, including the National River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021 (including any superseding versions of same),
- Biodiversity plans and guidelines, including National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021 (including any superseding versions of same) and the County Wicklow Biodiversity Action Plan;
- Ireland's Environment – An Integrated Assessment 2020 (EPA), including any superseding versions of same), and to make provision where appropriate to address the report's goals and challenges

CPO 17.5

Projects giving rise to adverse effects on the integrity of European sites (cumulatively, directly or indirectly) arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall not be permitted on the basis of this plan

CPO 17.6

Ensure that development proposals, contribute as appropriate towards the protection and where possible enhancement of the ecological coherence of the European Site network and encourage the retention and management of landscape features that are of major importance for wild fauna and flora as per Article 10 of the EU Habitats directive. All projects and plans arising from this Plan will be screened for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

CPO 17.7

To maintain the conservation value of all proposed and future Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and to protect other designated ecological sites in Wicklow.

CPO 17.8

Ensure ecological impact assessment is carried out for any proposed development likely to have a significant impact on proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs), Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), Statutory Nature Reserves, Refuges for Fauna, Annex I habitats, or rare and threatened species including those species protected by law and their habitats. Ensure appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures are incorporated into development proposals as part of any ecological impact assessment.

CPO 17.24

To ensure and support the implementation of the EU Groundwater Directive and the EU Water Framework Directive and associated River Basin and Sub-Basin Management Plans and Blue Dot Catchment Programme, to ensure the protection, improvement and sustainable use of all waters in the County, including rivers, lakes, ground water, coastal and estuarine waters, and to restrict development likely to lead to a deterioration in water quality. The Council will also have cognisance of, where relevant,

the EU's Common Implementation Strategy Guidance Document No. 20 and 36 which provide guidance on exemptions to the environmental objectives of the Water Framework Directive.

Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022

Strategic Policy GIP2: To protect and conserve the natural environment, including in particular nationally important and EU designated sites such as Special Protection Areas, Candidate Special Areas of Conservation and proposed Natural Heritage Areas, protected habitats and species, and habitats and species of local biodiversity value. This policy also includes new or extended ecological sites that are notified or designated in the lifetime of the RPGs. Appropriate measures to protect Natura 2000 sites should be identified at the initial stages of all planning processes and included as a material consideration in order to inform future development.

Strategic Recommendation SR6: Plans and projects associated with zoned expansions needed to meet Economic Development and satisfy the Settlement Strategy that have the potential to negatively impact on Natura 2000 sites will be subject to HDA according to Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and in accordance with best practice and guidance.

Strategic Recommendation PIR15: Seek continued investment in Waste Water Treatment facilities and networks to meet the needs of the River Basin Management Plans and to achieve the targets for good water status for river, coastal and transitional waters in the Water Framework Directive.

Strategic Recommendation PIR16: Ensure that future capacity is provided in growth towns through expansion and upgrading of facilities where necessary and/or exploration of alternatives such as connecting to adjoining drainage systems or changes to catchments to enable growth towns to provide for the population growth envisaged in the settlement strategy and thus enable a more sustainable settlement pattern to be supported.

Strategic Recommendation PIR17: Identification and development of a suitable site for the Greater Dublin Regional Drainage Project - Regional Waste Water Treatment, Marine Outfall and Orbital Drainage System in the north coast of the GDA to enable the continued population and economic growth and the physical consolidation of the metropolitan area, by reducing the catchment size for Ringsend and providing new treatment capacity through network connections.

Strategic Recommendation PIR18: The management of land use and policies of Development Plans, Local Area Plans and Development Management decisions shall ensure that the scale of development is managed to achieve compliance with the waste water discharge licences of waste water treatment facilities. Breach of compliance is now a criminal offence under the EU Directives 2006/11/EC and 2000/60/EC given effect in the Waste Water Discharge Regulations 2007.

Strategic Recommendation PIR19: Plans and projects associated with all waste water and/or surface water treatments that have the potential to negatively impact on Natura 2000 sites will be subject to a Habitats Directive Assessment (HDA) according to Article 6 of the habitats directive and in accordance with best practice and guidance.