



CABRA PBSA

Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

R & D Developments Limited (in Receivership) Grant Thornton

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

DNV was commissioned by R & D Developments Limited (in receivership) Grant Thornton to prepare an Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report for a Proposed Large-scale Residential Development (student residence), entitled 'Cabra PBSA, hereafter referred to as 'Proposed Development' or 'Site', when referring to the application Site area. This report contains information to enable the Competent Authority to undertake Stage 1 AA screening in respect of the Proposed Development.

1.2 Quality Assurance and Competence

DNV is a multi-disciplinary consultancy specialising in the areas of the Environment, Waste Management and Planning. All DNV consultants carry scientific or engineering qualifications and have a wealth of experience working within the Environmental Consultancy sectors, having undergone extensive training and continued professional development.

DNV as a company remains fully briefed in European and Irish environmental policy and legislation. DNV staff members are highly qualified in their field. Professional memberships include the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management (CIWM), the Irish Environmental Law Association and Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM).

All surveying and reporting have been carried out by qualified and experienced ecologists and environmental consultants. EK, Ecologist with DNV supported the field surveys for this report. CRK, Ecologist with DNV authored this report and undertook the desktop research for this report. The bat surveys were undertaken by KM, graduate ecologist with DNV, CR, CM, And AD, ecologist interns with DNV also assisted with the bat surveys.

EK has a BSc in Psychology from the University of Maryland, USA and an MSc in Biodiversity and Conservation from Trinity College Dublin. His experience includes desktop research, literature-scoping review, and report writing as well as vegetation surveys, rare species surveys, and habitat mapping. EK has contributed to the preparation of several AA Screenings, Ecological Impact Assessments (EclA) and EIAR Biodiversity Chapters, as well as Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Reports.

CRK is an Ecologist with a M.Sc. in Biodiversity and Conservation from Trinity College Dublin. CRK's experience as an ecologist is broad both variety of ecological reports and literature, and field surveys conducted. CRK has experience in surveying habitats, birds, plants, bats, mammals and invasive species, with some experience in assessing welfare conditions of animals using behavioural repertoires as indicators. CRK's experience in ecological report writing extends from Research associated reporting to AA screening reports and Natura 200 Impact (NIS) reports.

KM is a Graduate Ecologist with DNV and has a B.Sc (Hons) in Environmental Biology from University College Dublin. KM has a range of fieldwork experience including mammal, bird, and amphibian surveys in addition to freshwater ecology research. KM has extensive experience in data collection and ecological report writing, including but not limited to appropriate assessment screening reports.

CR is a final year B.Sc. undergraduate in Sustainability and Environmental Science at University College Dublin, gaining skills in report writing, desktop research and literature review, alongside extensive laboratory and environmental and biological data analysis experience. Under the supervision of senior ecologists, CR has contributed to the preparation of Ecological Impact Assessments (EclAs) and AA Screening Reports, supporting the delivery of high-quality ecological reporting.

CM is an Intern Ecologist with DNV and has a B.Sc (Hons) in Zoology from University College Dublin. CM has experience in data collection, ecological modelling, report writing, animal handling, and field surveying, including invasive species sampling, animal behaviour monitoring, species identification, and habitat sampling. CM has partaken in projects across marine, freshwater and terrestrial systems, focusing on ecological impacts and invasive species, and has contributed to relevant reports and academic research.

AD is an Intern Ecologist with a B.Sc. (Hons) in Geoscience from Trinity College Dublin, and a MSc in Applied Environmental Science from University College Dublin. AD's experience includes both geological and ecological field and laboratory work, molecular biomarker analysis and ecological report preparation. AD is also a student member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM).

1.3 Description of Proposed Development

1.3.1 Site Location

The Site of the Proposed Development is situated on the Site of the former Matt's of Cabra public housing at 2A Fassagh Avenue, Dublin 7, D07 TH77, Co. Dublin. Cabra is an inner-city suburb located on the Northside of Dublin, approximately 2 km northwest of the city centre. The Proposed Development comprises of the redevelopment of the vacant site located along Faussagh Avenue, oriented longitudinally from south to north. It is bounded to the east by a residential area and to the west by a railway line. On the southern end of the site lies a derelict structure, formerly a local pub Matts of Cabra, now in a state of ruin. The southern boundary consists of the derelict building, access gates, and site hoarding. The western boundary along the Irish Rail line is defined by a tall palisade fence, which is supplemented by hoarding in certain areas. The northern boundary is marked by a light timber fence, while the eastern boundary, adjoining to residential properties, is primarily defined by a 2 m high blockwork wall or the backs of buildings. The Royal Canal flows 240 meters (m) north of the Site, flowing in a south-eastward direction in relation to the Proposed Development (see Figure 1.)

1.3.2 Proposed Development Description

The Proposed Development provides for a Large-Scale Residential Development (see Figure 2), which shall consist of:

- a) Demolition of the former 'Matt's of Cabra' public house and associated structures.
- b) Construction of a purpose-built student accommodation scheme consisting of 249 no. student bedspaces arranged in 32 no. clusters of 4, 7, 8, 9 and 10-bedroom units (including 13 no. accessible units and 10 no. studio units) each with associated shared kitchen/living/dining areas in 2 no. blocks ranging in height from 4-6 storeys;
- c) Internal amenity spaces (approx. 347.1 sqm) including a student lounge area, laundry room, postal room and a reception / office / kitchen / tearoom across the ground floor and first floor levels;
- d) External amenity areas (approx. 2,971.4 sqm) including 1 no. outdoor terrace at fourth floor level of Block A (193.1 sqm);
- e) Approx. 405.5 sqm of public open space in the form of a public plaza fronting Fassagh Avenue;
- f) Switch room, ESB substation, sprinkler room and bin storage all in a single storey services building along the eastern site boundary;
- g) A total of 308 no. bicycle parking spaces at surface level (258 no. long term, covered bicycle parking spaces including 12 no. cargo bicycle parking spaces and 50 no. visitor bicycle parking spaces);
- h) Vehicular access to be provided from Fassagh Avenue;
- i) 1 no. accessible car parking space proposed within the site;
- j) It is proposed that the development will be used for short term tourist or visitor accommodation outside of academic term times, in accordance with the definition of student accommodation.

The development will also provide for all associated service connections, public lighting, cold water storage and thermal store room, hard and soft landscaping, planting, formal activity equipment, removable bollards, tactile paving, boundary treatments, nature-based SuDS features, green and blue roofs, and all associated site clearance, excavation and development works above and below ground.

1.3.2.1 Surface water

The following information is extracted from the Engineering Service Report for the Proposed Development (Lohan & Donnelly, 2025).

Existing Surface Water Drainage

A review of the Irish Water drainage record map showed no existing surface water sewer in the vicinity of the Site. However, after consultation with DCC, they have confirmed the existence of a surface water sewer with sufficient capacity for the proposed development to connect into.

Proposed Surface Water Drainage

The proposed surface water drainage infrastructure for the Proposed Development has been designed and is to be constructed in accordance with "Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GDSDS) Regional Drainage Policies Technical Document – Volume 2, New Developments, 2005, "Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice Works" and the Building Regulation requirements.

It is proposed to provide 225mm diameter surface water pipes to service the Site. Surface water collected from within the site boundary will flow into the last manhole on site "SW01". From the last manhole on site "SW01" the surface water will flow out into the existing water sewer adjacent to the southern boundary of the Site.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

The Proposed Development will incorporate the design principles of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). The SuDS elements which were found applicable to the proposed scheme design and layout include the following:

- **Extensive Green-Blue Roof** – It is proposed to provide a green-blue roof system that covers approximately 1662m² of the roof area of the Proposed Development. The blue roof will act as a roof level attenuation tank which removes the need for an in-ground attenuation tank with the green roof typically installed above the blue roof. Rainwater on the green-blue roof will be absorbed by the vegetation layer. For heavier storm events, when the vegetation layer is no longer capable of retaining any more water, it will then be deposited into a 100mm deep "Bauder attenuation cell 100" and used by the vegetation layer once it has recovered. In heavy 1 in a 100-year storm event, when the water can no longer be held within the vegetation layer or attenuation cells it will discharge into the surface water sewer located at ground level at a controlled rate via flow restrictors.
- **Permeable Paving** – It is proposed to incorporate a permeable paving system into the paved areas within the Proposed Development, with the aim of reducing run-off from the site in times of precipitation and improving the quality of run-off generally. The quality of run-off from the Site shall also be improved due to the filtering process of the paving, which retains silts and degrades hydrocarbons. In a 1 in 100-year storm event, with 20% increase in storage volume to allow for climate change and total permeable paving area of 1790m², the total required attenuation volume equates to 52.329m³. The total provided attenuation by the permeable paving is 161.09m³.
- **Hydrobrake (Site Run-off Control)** control will be used to avoid over capacitating the existing surface water sewer. This will be installed adjacent to the 'SW01' manhole on Site, where it will control the flow rate of water.

The aforementioned SuDS will also undergo maintenance during the extent of the Operational Phase of the Proposed Development to ensure they continue to function in an optimal and efficient state.

1.3.2.2 Foul Drainage

The following information is extracted from the Engineering Service Report for the Proposed Development (Lohan & Donnelly, 2025).

Existing Foul Drainage

There is an existing 225mm diameter concrete sewer located in close vicinity to the Proposed Development along Faussagh Avenue. The sewer originates a small distance South of the site boundary, before travelling South-East down Faussagh Avenue.

Proposed Foul Drainage

Foul water from the Proposed Development will discharge into a 225mm diameter foul water pipe, commencing from a location along the Easterly boundary of the site, before extending to the last foul water manhole of the site 'FW01' located just South of the site beside Faussagh Avenue, before discharging all the foul water generated from the proposed development into an existing foul water manhole located further South-East down Faussagh Avenue. All foul water from this network will be treated at Ringsend Wastewater Treatment Plant (WwTP).



FIGURE 1. SITE LOCATION.



FIGURE 2. PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT (REDDY, 2025).

2 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Legislative Background

The Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) seeks to conserve natural habitats and wild fauna and flora by the designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) seeks to protect birds of special importance by the designation of Special Protection Areas (SPAs). The Habitats Directive has been transposed into Irish law through the EC (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI 477 of 2011).

It is the responsibility of each Member State to designate SPAs and SACs, both of which will form part of the Natura 2000 Network, a network of protected sites throughout the European Community. These designated sites are referred to as “Natura 2000 sites” or “European sites”. SACs are selected for the conservation of Annex I habitats (including priority types which are in danger of disappearance) and Annex II species (other than birds). SPAs are selected for the conservation of Annex I birds and other regularly occurring migratory birds and their habitats. The annexed habitats and species for which each site is selected correspond to the Qualifying Interests (QIs) and Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of the sites; from these the conservation objectives of the site are derived.

An AA is a required assessment to determine the likelihood of significant effects, based on best scientific knowledge, of any plans or projects on European sites. A screening for AA determines whether a plan or project, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, is likely to have significant effects on a European site, in view of its conservation objectives.

This AA Screening has been undertaken to determine the potential for significant effects on relevant European sites. The purpose of this assessment is to determine, the appropriateness, or otherwise, of the Proposed Development in the context of the conservation objectives of such sites.

2.1.1 Legislative Context

The obligations in relation to AA have been implemented in Ireland under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), and the Planning and Development Act 2024. While the 2024 Act has been signed into law, the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) will continue to apply until repealed and the new provisions commenced by way of Ministerial Order. The phased commencement of the new Planning and Development Act is expected to take place up to early 2026.

The obligations in relation to AA covered within both Acts are summarised below:

- The competent authority must carry out screening for AA for all relevant plans and projects, to determine whether the plan or project, in view of best scientific knowledge, is likely to have a significant effect on any European site;
- Where potential for likely significant effects cannot be ruled out, either as a result of the plan or project alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, or where uncertainty exists, the competent authority must determine that an AA is required. In this case, a more detailed examination of the relevant European sites shall be carried out, and a Natura Impact Statement must be prepared.

For further details on both the 2000 Act (as amended) and the 2024 Act, please refer to irishstatutebook.ie

2.1.2 Relevant Case Law

According to the ruling delivered in open court in Luxembourg on 15th June 2023 regarding the interpretation of Article 6(3) of Directive 92/43, the Article must be interpreted as meaning that:

“In order to determine whether it is necessary to carry out an appropriate assessment of the implications of a plan or project for a site, account may be taken of the features of that plan or project which involve the removal of contaminants and which therefore may have the effect of reducing the harmful effects of the plan or project on that site, where those features have been incorporated into that plan or project as standard features, inherent in such a plan or project, irrespective of any effect on the site”.

As such, standardised embedded mitigation (such as the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in large-scale residential developments), that are incorporated into the design of a proposal or project and which may result in a reduction of effects impacting European sites, but where the primary reason of the embedded mitigation is not to protect a European site, are permitted for consideration during the undertaking of AA.

2.2 Policy Context

2.2.1 Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028

While the Development Plan in its entirety is relevant to the Proposed Development and can be referred to separately, policies, principles and objectives of the Dublin City Development Plan 2022 – 2028 that are of relevance to this Screening Report are outlined below:

- 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 1976–2021, the Fisheries Acts 1959-2006 and the Flora (Protection) Order 2015 S.I No. 356 of 2015), 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.”
- GI14: “To maintain and strengthen the integrity of the city’s ecological corridors and stepping stones which enable species to move through the city, by increasing their connectivity [to be shown in the proposed Green Infrastructure Strategy] under Article 10 of the EU Habitats Directive. Development proposals should not compromise their ecological functions and should realise opportunities to contribute to enhancing the nature conservation value of them by landscaping that provides complementary habitats. An Ecological Impact Assessment will be required for any proposed development likely to have a significant impact on habitats and species of interest on or adjacent an ecological corridor.”
- GI15: “To protect inland and sea fisheries and take full account of Inland Fisheries Ireland Guidelines ‘Planning for Watercourses in the Urban Environment’ 2020, when undertaking, approving or authorising development or works which may impact on rivers streams, watercourses, estuaries, shorelines and their associated habitats. To protect sea angling sites designated by Inland Fisheries Ireland at the North and South Bull Walls and at Dollymount and Sandymount Strands.”
- GI16: “That new development should provide opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements through urban greening and the use of nature based infrastructural solutions that are of particular relevance and benefit in an urban context. Opportunities should be taken as part of new development to provide a net gain in biodiversity.”
- GI17: “To increase the percentage of restored and naturalised areas on public land in the city. That new development on private and public lands should provide opportunities for restoration of degraded habitats and soils where feasible and provide for their long-term maintenance to limit degradation.”
- GI18: “To minimise the environmental impact of external lighting and noise at sensitive locations to achieve a sustainable balance between the needs of an area, the safety of walking and cycling routes and the protection of sensitive species such as bats.”
- GI29: “To protect, maintain, and enhance the watercourses and their river corridors in the city and to ensure that development does not cover or encroach upon rivers and their banks. To maintain natural riverbanks and restore them as part of any new development. The creation and/or enhancement of river corridors will be required and river restoration opportunities where possible will be supported to help improve water quality, and ecology, provide natural flood relief as well as providing amenity and leisure benefits.”
- 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.”

- GI34: “To ensure that new development, in terms of siting and design, responds to the character, importance and setting of the city’s rivers where the context allows, and to require public open space which is to be provided as part of new development, to supplement riparian buffer zones so as to support the attainment of ‘good ecological status’ or higher for water bodies, flood management, the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem functions.”
- GI40: “To require appropriate and long-term tree and native hedgerow planting in the planning of new development, urban spaces, streets, roads and infrastructure projects. New development should seek to provide for additional tree planting using a diversity of species including native species as appropriate to the location of the development in the interests of natural heritage, amenity, environmental quality and climate resilience.”
- GI41: “To protect existing trees as part of new development, particularly those that are of visual, biodiversity or amenity quality and significance. There will be a presumption in favour of retaining and safeguarding trees that make a valuable contribution to the environment.”
- GI43: “To protect and enhance the City’s hedgerow network, in particular, hedgerows that form townland, parish and barony boundaries. It is Council policy to increase hedgerow coverage and promote the planting of hedgerows in new developments using native species.”

In addition, the DCDP 2022-2028 provides a suite of objectives to support plans aimed at enhancing and protecting biodiversity at a local and national level, such as the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021 and the Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021 – 2025. The biodiversity objectives also outline a number of measures to protect the City’s biodiversity, through helping the management of the North Bull Island Nature Reserve, supporting measures to prevent invasive species introduction and spread, recognising and protecting important County Geological Sites and encouraging the use of the Dublin City Habitat Map Database (2020, and updates) to inform planning decisions.

2.2.2 Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2025

The main function of the Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2025 is to provide a framework and series of actions to conserve, enhance and raise awareness of Dublin City’s rich biodiversity and to maximise the contribution that it makes to social, economic and environmental well-being of the city, taking into account local, national, and international, including European priorities. The Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan sets forth the principal functions of a biodiversity action plan as being:

- To translate national and international policies and legislation into action on the ground.
- To conserve biodiversity of national and local importance.
- To provide a framework for the conservation of biodiversity and to coordinate existing and new initiatives.
- To assist sustainable planning and development.
- To raise public awareness of and involvement in the conservation of biodiversity.
- To collect and collate information on the biodiversity of an area.
- To provide a basis for monitoring the success of conservation of biodiversity at a local, regional, and national level.

The Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan is set out to protect and improve biodiversity through the above objectives aimed at protecting biodiversity, and the AA Screening of the plan concluded that *“there is no potential for significant effects by the implementation of the Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2025, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, on any Natura 2000 site.”*

2.2.3 National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030

The National Biodiversity Plan (NBAP) 2023-2030, the fourth such plan for Ireland, captures the objectives, targets and actions for biodiversity that will be undertaken by a wide range of government, civil society and private sectors. Actions required to achieve the strategic objectives as well as the lead and key partners responsible for their implementation are set out for each of the objectives and their outcomes.

TABLE 1: OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS OF THE NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN 2023-2030.

Objective	Outcome
1: Adopt a Whole-of-Government, Whole-of-Society Approach to Biodiversity	1A: Governance structures and reporting outputs have improved.
	1B: Organisational capacity and resources for biodiversity have increased at all levels of Government.
	1C: Responsibility for biodiversity is shared across the whole of government.
	1D: Biodiversity initiatives are supported across the whole of society.
	1E: The legislative framework for biodiversity conservation is robust, clear and enforceable.
2: Meet Urgent Conservation and Restoration Needs	2A: The protection of existing designated areas and protected species is strengthened and conservation and restoration within the existing protected area network are enhanced.
	2B: Biodiversity and ecosystem services in the wider countryside are conserved and restored – agriculture & forestry.
	2C: Biodiversity and ecosystem services in the wider countryside are conserved and restored – peatlands & climate action.
	2D: Biodiversity and ecosystem services in the marine and freshwater environment are conserved and restored.
	2E: Genetic diversity of wild and domesticated species is safeguarded.
	2F: A National Restoration Plan is in place to contribute to the ambition of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030 and global restoration targets.
	2H: Invasive alien species (IAS) are controlled and managed on an all-island basis to reduce the harmful impact they have on biodiversity and measures are undertaken to tackle the introduction and spread of new IAS to the environment.
3. Secure Nature's Contribution to People	3A: Ireland's natural heritage and biocultural diversity is recognised, valued, enhanced and promoted in policy and practice.
	3B: The role of biodiversity in supporting wellbeing, livelihoods, enterprise and employment is recognised and enhanced.
	3C: Planning and development will facilitate and secure biodiversity's contributions to people.
4. Enhance the Evidence Base for Action on Biodiversity	4A: Research funding bodies will have an improved understanding of the research and skills required to address biodiversity research gaps.
	4B: Data relevant to biodiversity and ecosystems, including conservation needs, is widely accessible and standardised.

Objective	Outcome
5. Strengthen Ireland's Contribution to International Biodiversity Initiatives	4C: Long-term monitoring programmes are in place to guide conservation and restoration goals.
	4D: Ireland has prepared national assessments of ecosystem services.
	5A: Science, policy and action on biodiversity conservation and restoration is effectively coordinated in an all-island approach.
	5B: Ireland takes action internationally to cooperate with other countries, sectors, disciplines and communities to address the biodiversity crisis.
	5C: Ireland enhances its contributions to the international biodiversity data drive.

2.3 Stages of Appropriate Assessment

This AA Screening Report (the 'Screening Report') has been prepared by DNV. It considers whether the Proposed Development is likely to have a significant effect on a European site and whether a Stage 2 AA is required.

The AA process is a four-stage process. Each stage requires different considerations, assessments and tests to ultimately arrive at the relevant conclusion for each stage. An important aspect of the process is that the outcome at each successive stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required.

The four stages of an AA, can be summarised as follows:

- **Stage 1: Screening.** The Screening for AA considers whether a plan or project is directly connected to or necessary for the management of a European site, or whether a plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, is likely to have significant effects on a European site in view of its conservation objectives.
- **Stage 2: NIS.** Where Stage 1 determines that significant effects are likely, uncertain or unknown, the preparation of a NIS is required. The NIS must include a scientific examination of evidence and data to classify potential impacts on any European site(s) in view of their conservation objectives in the absence of mitigation. The NIS will identify appropriate mitigation to remove the potential for likely significant adverse effects on any European site(s). If the competent authority determines that the plan or project would have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European site(s) despite mitigation, it can only grant consent after proceeding through stages 3 and 4.
- **Stage 3: Assessment of alternative solutions.** If the outcome of Stage 2 is negative i.e., adverse effects to the sites cannot be scientifically ruled out, despite mitigation, the plan or project should proceed to Stage 3 or be abandoned. This stage examines alternative solutions to the proposal.
- **Stage 4: Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain.** The final stage is the main derogation process examining whether there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) for allowing a plan or project to adversely affect a European site, where no less damaging solution exists.

The Habitats Directive promotes a hierarchy of avoidance, mitigation, and compensatory measures. First the project should aim to avoid any negative effects on European sites by identifying possible effects early in the planning stage and designing the project to avoid such effects. Second, mitigation measures should be applied, if necessary, during the AA process to the point where no adverse effects on the site(s) remain. If the project is still likely to result in adverse effects, and no further practicable mitigation is possible, a refusal for planning permission may be recommended. In this case, the project will generally only be considered where no alternative solutions are identified and the project is required for IROPI, or, in the case of priority habitats, considerations of health or safety, or beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or to other IROPI. Then compensation measures are required for any remaining adverse effects.

3 AA Screening Methodology

3.1 Guidance

This Screening Report has been undertaken in accordance with the following guidance:

- *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;
- *Communication from the Commission on the precautionary principle* (European Commission, 2000);
- *Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC* (European Commission, 2019);
- *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* Brussels, 28.9.2021 C (European Commission, 2021); and
- *Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management, OPR Practice Note PN01, Office of the Planning Regulator March 2021*.

3.2 Screening Steps

Screening for AA involves the following steps:

- Establish whether the plan or project is directly connected with or necessary for the management of a European site;
- Description of the baseline existing environment at the Site of the Proposed Development;
- Identification of relevant European site(s) potentially affected;
- Identification and description of potential effects on the relevant European site(s);
- Assessment of the likely significance of the effects identified on the relevant European site(s);
- Description and characterisation of other projects or plans that in combination with the Proposed Development have the potential for having significant effects on the European site; and
- Exclusion of sites where it can be objectively concluded that there will be no significant effects.

It should be noted that any targeted ecological mitigation measures and/or measures intended or included for the purposes of avoiding adverse effects arising as a result of the Proposed Development on any European site **have not been considered** as part of this Screening Report.

3.3 Desk Study

A desktop study was carried out in August 2025 to collate and review available information, datasets and documentation sources relevant for the completion of this Screening Report. The desktop study relied on the following sources:

- Information on the network of European Sites, boundaries, QIs and conservation objectives, obtained from the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) at www.npws.ie;
- Text summaries of the relevant European sites taken from the respective Standard Data Forms (available at <https://natura2000.eea.europa.eu/>) and Site Synopses (available at www.npws.ie);
- Information on waterbodies, catchment areas and hydrological connections obtained from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at www.gis.epa.ie;
- Information on bedrock, groundwater, aquifers and their statuses, obtained from Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) at www.gsi.ie;

- Satellite imagery and mapping obtained from various sources and dates including Google, Digital Globe, Bing and Ordnance Survey Ireland; and
- Information on the existence of permitted developments, or developments awaiting decision, in the vicinity of the Proposed Development from the Dublin City Council online planning database (<https://www.dublincity.ie>) and the National Planning Database (DHLGH, 2023).

For a complete list of the documents consulted as part of this assessment, see *Section 6. References*.

3.4 Field Surveys

A range of ecological field surveys have been carried out at the Site to date. For full details on the methods and results of the fields surveys listed, please refer to the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report (PEA) accompanying this application under separate cover (DNV, 2025). Results relevant to this Screening Report have been summarised in section 4.2.2.

TABLE 2. FIELD SURVEYS UNDERTAKEN AT THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT SITE.

Survey	Surveyor	Dates
Preliminary Habitat and Flora Survey (incl. invasive species)	DNV (EK)	17 th June 2025
General Mammal Survey		
Bird Scoping Survey		

3.5 Identification of Relevant European sites

The Zone of Influence (ZOI) for a project is the area over which ecological features may be affected by changes as a result of a development and associated activities. This is likely to extend beyond the development site, for example where there are ecological or hydrological links beyond the site boundaries (CIEEM, 2018). Furthermore, ZOI in relation to European sites is described as follows in the 'OPR Practice Note PN01 - Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management' (OPR, 2021):

"The zone of influence of a proposed development is the geographical area over which it could affect the receiving environment in a way that could have significant effects on the Qualifying Interests of a European site. This should be established on a case-by-case basis using the Source-Pathway-Receptor framework and not by arbitrary distances (such as 15 km)."

Thus, to identify the European sites that potentially lie within the ZOI of the Proposed Development, a Source-Path-Receptor (S-P-R) method was adopted, as described in OPR PN01 (OPR 2021). This note was published to provide guidance on screening for AA during the planning process, and although it focuses on the approach a planning authority should take in screening for AA, the methodology is also readily applied in the preparation of Screening Reports such as this.

The relevant European sites were identified based on the following:

- Identification of potential sources of effects based on the Proposed Development description and details, including changes to potentially suitable ex-situ habitats at the Site (i.e., habitats utilised by SCI bird species outside of their designated SPAs);
- Use of up-to-date GIS spatial datasets for European designated sites and water catchments – downloaded from the NPWS website (www.npws.ie) and the EPA website (www.epa.ie) to identify European sites which could potentially be affected by the Proposed Development; and
- Identification of potential pathways between the Site of the Proposed Development and any European sites within the ZOI of any of the identified sources of effects.
 - The catchment data were used to establish or discount potential hydrological connectivity between the Proposed Development and any European sites.

- Groundwater, soils, and bedrock information used to establish or discount potential hydrogeological connectivity between the Proposed Development and any European sites.
- Air and land connectivity assessed based on Proposed Development details and proximity to European sites.
- Consideration of potential indirect pathways, e.g., impacts to flight paths, *ex-situ* habitats, etc.
- Defining the likely ZOI based on the identified sources of effects and potential pathways between the Proposed Development and any European sites.

3.6 Assessment of Significant Effects

The conservation objectives of the European sites identified to lie within the ZOI were reviewed and assessed in order to establish whether the construction and operation of the Proposed Development has the potential to result in likely significant effects (LSEs) on any of the QIs and/or conservation objectives listed for the site.

The assessment framework is taken from the best practice guidelines issued by the European Commission, i.e., “*Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites – Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*”.

The potential for LSEs that may arise from the Proposed Development was considered through the use of key indicators:

- Habitat loss or alteration.
- Habitat/species fragmentation.
- Disturbance and/or displacement of species.
- Changes in population density.
- Changes in water quality and resource.

In addition, information pertaining to the conservation objectives of the European sites, the ecology of the designated habitats and species and known or perceived sensitivities of the habitats and species were considered.

3.7 Limitations

No limitations were encountered which would prevent robust conclusions from being drawn as to the potential impacts of the Proposed Development and therefore the likely significant effects on the European Site, in view of the Site’s conservation objectives.

4 STAGE 1 SCREENING ASSESSMENT

4.1 Management of European Sites

The Proposed Development is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of European sites.

4.2 Existing Environment

4.2.1 Desk Study Results

4.2.1.1 Hydrology, Geology and Hydrogeology

The Site is located in the *Liffey and Dublin Bay Catchment* (I.D.: 09) and in the *Tolka_SC_020* sub-catchment (I.D.: 09_4).

The *Royal Canal Main Line (Liffey and Dublin Bay)* canal (IE_09_AWB_RCMLE) is the closest waterbody to the Site of the Proposed Development, located 250m north of the Site boundary. This canal ultimately flows into the *Irish Sea* via the *Liffey Estuary Lower* transitional waterbody (IE_EA_090_0300) at a distance of approximately 4.5 kilometres (km) from the Proposed Development, and the *Dublin Bay* coastal waterbody (IE_EA_090_0000) at a distance of approximately 8km. The closest river/stream to the Proposed Development is the *Tolka_060* river (IE_EA_09T011150) located approximately 900m north of the Site boundary.

The Site is situated on the *Dublin* groundwater body (IE_EA_G_008), and the vulnerability to contamination of said groundwater from human activities is currently under the 'review' process (GSI, 2025). The aquifer type in the surrounding area is 'Locally Important Aquifer - Bedrock which is Moderately Productive only in Local Zones' (LI) (GSI, 2025).

The soil underneath the Site of the Proposed Development is classified as 'Urban – soil concerted over', and the sub-soil underneath the Site is 'Limestone till (Carboniferous)' (TLs) for the predominant area, with a small section along the southeast section of the Site classified as 'Man made'. The underlying quaternary sediments are predominantly 'Tills derived from limestone' (TLs) (GSI, 2025). The waterbody status from the waterbodies relevant to the Site as recorded by EPA (EPA, 2025) in accordance with European Communities Regulations 2003 (SI no. 722/2003) are provided in Table 3 below.

TABLE 3. EPA MONITORING STATIONS AND ASSIGNED Q VALUES

EPA Monitoring Station name	Station Code	Location from Site	Distance from Site	Assigned value	Q
TOLKA-Cardiff'd Br	RS09T011050	North upstream	1.13km	3 "Poor"	
Violet Hill Drive Finglas	RS09T011100	Northeast upstream	0.9km	3 "Poor"	

TABLE 4. WFD RISK AND WATER BODY STATUS

Waterbody Name	Water body; EU code	Location from Site	Distance from Site (km)	WFD water body status (2016-2021)	WFD 3 rd cycle Risk Status	Hydraulic Connection to the Site
Surface Water Bodies						
Royal Canal Main Line (Liffey and Dublin Bay)	IE_09_AWB_RCMLE	North	0.25	Good	Review	In the vicinity of the Site
Tolka_060	IE_EA_09T011150	North	0.90	Poor	At Risk	None
Transitional Water Bodies						
Liffey Estuary Lower	IE_EA_090_0300	Southeast	4.5	Moderate	At risk	Downstream of Royal Canal Main Line Canal
Coastal Water Bodies						
Dublin Bay	IE_EA_090_0000	Southeast	8	Good	Not at Risk	Downstream of Royal Canal Main Line Canal and connected to Liffey Estuary Lower
Groundwater Bodies						
Dublin	IE_EA_G_008	N/A	N/A	Good	Review	Underlying groundwater-body

4.2.2 Relevant Field Survey results

4.2.2.1 Habitats & Flora

The habitats present within the Site, as recorded during the field survey on 17th June 2025 are described in this section and summarised below (also see Figure 3).

The majority of the Site consists of recolonising bare ground (ED3) habitat that are areas of ground where pioneer plant species can be found. This habitat transitions into the scrub (WS1) habitat where woody and often large floral species that have established themselves to the soil are found. Amongst the aforementioned habitats, two sections of the dry meadows and grassy verges (GS2) habitat have been identified, which consist of herb dominated plant species. There is a mound within the eastern extent of this habitat. The buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3) habitat is found in the southern section of the Site where there is limited vegetation in the form of invasive flora such as butterfly-bush (*Buddleja davidii*) and other rudimentary floral species typically found in the BL3 habitat. Additionally, there is a directly structure, formerly a local pub 'Matts of Cabra', which is in a state of ruin. Along the eastern boundary of the Site, the stone wall and other stonework (BL1) habitat is located, which is the adjoining wall to the adjacent residential properties, and areas of 2m high blockwork walls of the eastern boundary of the Site.

No signs of any rare flora were observed on Site during the survey.

Invasive Plant Species

No 'High Impact' invasive plant species or Third Schedule listed species were recorded on Site during the field surveys. One 'Medium Impact' species was recorded at several locations of the Site. Strands of butterfly bush (*Buddleja davidii*) were observed on the Buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3) habitat of the Site, along the southern boundary. Additionally, scattered populations of butterfly bush were also recorded along the eastern and western boundaries of the Site, where large individuals of butterfly bush were observed. Butterfly bush is classified as a 'Medium' impact invasive species (Kelly et al. 2013). It is a very fast-growing shrub that can reach 2m in its first year of growth, producing flowers and setting seeds prolifically.

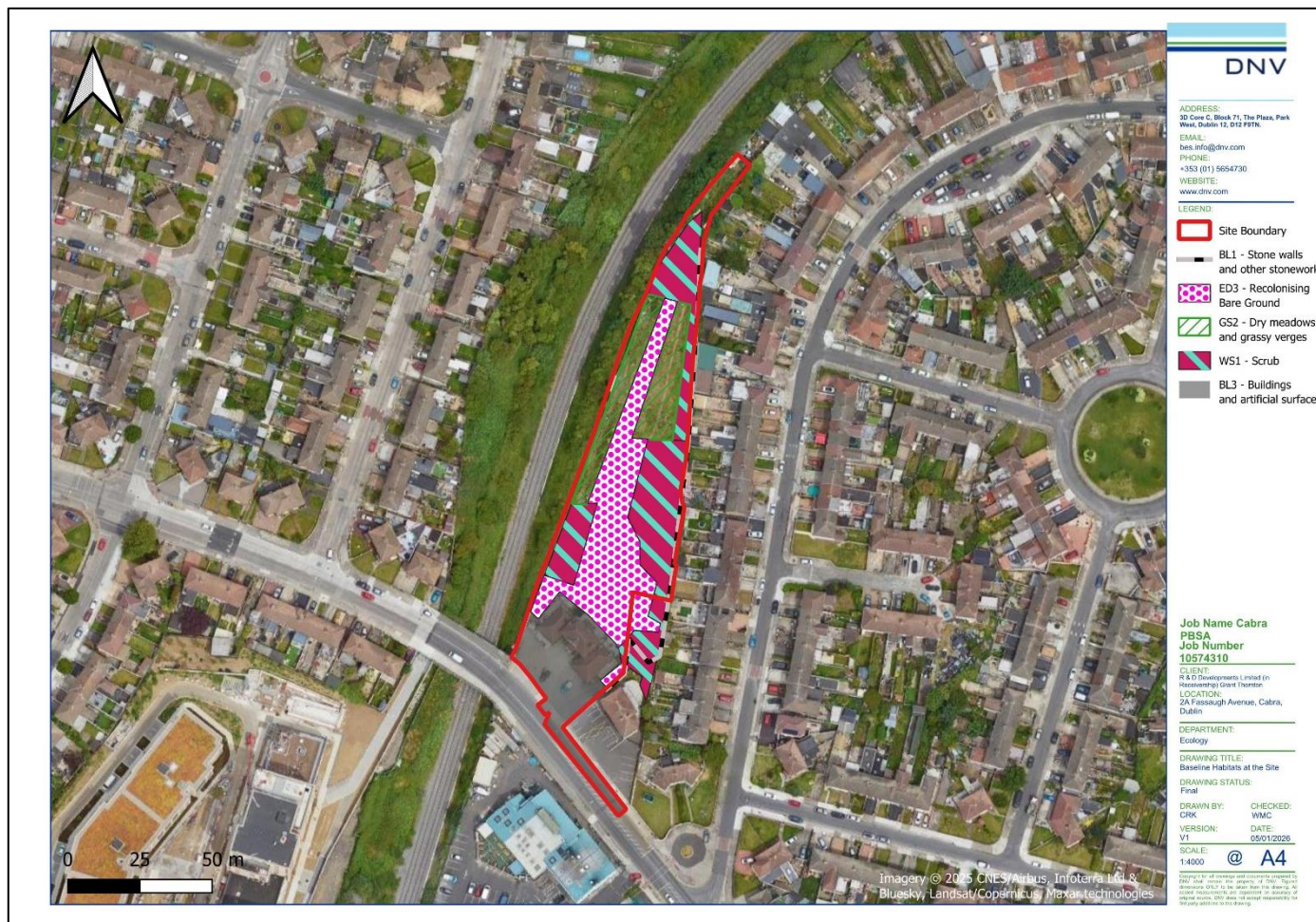


FIGURE 3. BASELINE HABITATS AT THE SITE OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT BASED ON 2025 SURVEY

4.2.2.2 Fauna

Mammals

No rare or protected mammals were observed during the field survey conducted for the Site. The overall Site has very low habitat suitability for terrestrial mammals, where the scrub (WS1) and dry meadows and grassy verges (GS2) habitats may offer some cover for small mammals such as European hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) and pygmy shrew (*Sorex minutus*) should they be present. However, given the Site's urban nature, the limited extent of green corridors connecting the habitats on Site to larger areas of green cover in the greater area, and the fact that these species were not recorded on Site during the field survey, it is considered that the habitats on Site do not have the potential to act as suitable habitats for these terrestrial mammals. As no water courses or aquatic habitats are found within and in the immediate vicinity of the Site, no suitable habitats for Otters were recorded. No Badger setts were recorded at the Site and the Site is unlikely to support Badgers (*Meles meles*) due to its isolated urban nature and lack of mature natural habitats.

Bird Species

While the habitats on Site do not have the potential to support terrestrial mammals, bird species may utilise the scrub (WS1), and dry meadows and grassy verges (GS2) habitats for breeding and/or nesting behaviours. During the Site visit on 17th June 2025, 14 bird species were recorded (see Table 5 below) at the Site. Of these, only 3 species are amber listed on the most recent 'Birds of Conservation Concern Ireland' (BoCCI) (Gilbert et al. 2021). The remaining bird species are green listed bird species.

TABLE 5. BIRD SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE WALKOVER SURVEY ON 17TH JUNE 2025

Species	BoCCI Status
Rock Dove (<i>Columba livia</i>)	Green
Robin (<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>)	Green
House Sparrow (<i>Passer domesticus</i>)	Amber
Blue Tit (<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>)	Green
Wren (<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>)	Green
Blackcap (<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>)	Green
Blackbird (<i>Turdus merula</i>)	Green
Jackdaw (<i>Corvus monedula</i>)	Green
Linnet (<i>Linaria cannabina</i>)	Amber
Greater Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus marinus</i>)	Green
Goldfinch (<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>)	Green
Magpie (<i>Pica pica</i>)	Green
House Martin (<i>Delichon urbicum</i>)	Amber
Dunnock (<i>Prunella modularis</i>)	Green

In summation, the results of the field survey did not find any Qualifying Interest (QI) habitats, QI species or Special Conservation Interest (SCI) species associated with any European sites within, or adjacent to, the Permitted Development.

4.3 Identification of Relevant European Sites

4.3.1 Potential Sources of Impacts

The Proposed Development is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of European sites. However, the following elements of the Proposed Development were identified and assessed for their potential to cause likely significant effects on European sites.

Construction Phase (Estimated duration: **24-36 months**)

- Uncontrolled releases of dust, sediments and/or other pollutants to air due to earthworks;
- Surface water run-off containing silt, sediments and/or other pollutants into nearby waterbodies or surface water network;
- Surface water run-off containing silt, sediments and/or other pollutants into the local groundwater;
- Waste generation during the Construction Phase comprising soils and construction wastes;
- Increased noise, dust and/or vibrations as a result of construction activity;
- Increased dust and air emissions from construction traffic;
- Increased lighting in the vicinity as a result of construction activity; and
- Increased human presence and activity as a result of construction activity.

Operational Phase (Estimated duration: *Indefinite*)

- Surface water drainage from the Site of the Proposed Development;
- Foul water from the Proposed Development;
- Increased lighting at the Site and in the vicinity emitted from the Proposed Development; and
- Increased human presence and activity at the Site and in the vicinity as a result of the Proposed Development.
- Increased collision risk as a result of new buildings.

4.3.2 Potential Pathways to European Sites

For the above listed potential sources of effects to have the potential to cause likely significant effects on any European site, a pathway between the source of potential effects (i.e., the Site of the Proposed Development) and the receptor is required. Potential impact pathways are discussed in the following sections in the context of the identified impact sources as identified in section 4.3.1.

4.3.2.1 Direct Pathways

Hydrological pathways

The Royal Canal Main Line (Liffey and Dublin Bay) canal passes approximately 0.25km north of the Site and the Tolka_060 river passes approximately 0.9km north of the Site which drain into Liffey Estuary Lower and Tolka Estuary transitional waterbodies respectively, subsequently flowing into Dublin Bay coastal waterbody and the Irish Sea thereafter. Given the urban nature of the area between these watercourses and the Site, the presence of a railway line to the northeast and luas line to the north, and the SuDS proposed that will collect and discharge all surface water from the water into the existing water drainage network, hydrological pathway via surface water runoff to these watercourses and their downstream European sites are not envisaged. Furthermore, European sites downstream of the Royal Canal Main Line such as, *North Dublin Bay SAC (000206)*, *South Dublin Bay SAC (000210)*, *North Bull Island SPA (004006)*, *South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (004024)* and *North-West Irish Sea SPA (004236)* are located at a distance of approximately 4km downstream of the Proposed Development. As such, the assimilative capacity from the large intervening waterbody distance of Royal Canal Main Line and Tolka_060 river will not result in significant impacts via hydrological pathways on the aforementioned European sites and any European site situated further downstream from the Site.

Foul water from the Operational Phase of the Proposed Development will be treated at Ringsend Wastewater Treatment Plant (WwTP), which discharges into Dublin Bay at Ringsend (south of the Tolka depositing point). The closest European sites within the depositing point of the Ringsend WwTP are, *North Dublin Bay SAC (000206)*, *South Dublin Bay SAC (000210)*, *North Bull Island SPA (004006)*, *South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (004024)* and *North-West Irish Sea SPA (004236)*. Given the dilution effect and the tidal nature of marine waters from the WwTP to the aforementioned European sites, the treatment of all foul water at the WwTP prior to discharge in Dublin Bay, and the capacity of Ringsend WwTP (given that the Permitted Development will not cause the WwTP to exceed its capacity and release any untreated foul water), it can be considered that a hydrological pathway via foul water between the Permitted Development and these European sites is insignificant, and can be ruled out.

In conclusion, it can be considered that there are no direct hydrological pathways between the Proposed Development and any downstream European sites.

Hydrogeological pathways

The Site of the Proposed Development is located within the Dublin groundwater body, which drains in an eastward direction towards the Irish Sea. The closest European site, and one that shares the same groundwater body to the Site are, *North Dublin Bay SAC (000206)*, *North Bull Island SPA (004006)*, *Baldoyle Bay SAC (000199)*, *Baldoyle Bay SPA (004016)* and *North-West Irish Sea SPA (004236)*, which are located approximately 4km east of the Proposed Development. The vulnerability of the Site and these European sites to groundwater vulnerability is classified as 'Low'. Given the large distance and lack of 'High' vulnerability to groundwater disturbance via human activity in the areas between the Site and the aforementioned European sites, it can be considered that there are no hydrogeological pathways between the Proposed Development and any European sites.

Air and Land pathways

There are no European sites in proximity of the Site of the Proposed Development. The closest European site is the *South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (004024)*, which at its closest point is located approximately 4km from the Site of the Proposed Development. As such, it is concluded that there are no air or land pathways between the Proposed Development and any European Site.

4.3.2.2 Indirect Pathways

No indirect pathways (e.g., disruptions to migratory paths) were identified. Furthermore, given the location of the Proposed Development relative to the existing urban vicinity of the site that is subject to high level of disturbance, it is highly unlikely for the Site to be an ex-situ site for SCI species associated with the nearby SPAs. Therefore, the Site does not provide any significant suitable ex-situ habitat for any SCI species of European sites within the ZOI.

4.3.3 Relevant European sites

A European site will only be at risk from likely significant effects where a S-P-R link exists between the Proposed Development Site and the European site. The preceding steps did not identify any S-P-R links of note, and therefore no further assessment is required. European sites within a 10 km radius of the Proposed Masterplan is shown in Figure 4 for information purposes.

TABLE 6. EUROPEAN SITES CONSIDERED WITH THE SOURCE-PATHWAY-RECEPTOR (S-P-R) METHOD TO ESTABLISH NOTABLE LINKS BETWEEN THE SOURCES OF EFFECTS ARISING FROM THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT, AND ANY RELEVANT EUROPEAN SITES. THOSE SITES WITH NOTABLE S-P-R LINKS ARE HIGHLIGHTED IN GREEN (IF ANY). QUALIFYING INTERESTS (QIs) TAKEN FROM THE RELEVANT CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES DOCUMENTS (AS REFERENCED) AND/OR THE STANDARD DATA FORMS (EEA, 2023)¹.

Site Name & Site Code	Qualifying Interests (*= priority habitats)	Potential Pathways
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)		
North Dublin Bay SAC (000206) Linear Distance to Proposed Development: approx. 7.1 km E	As per NPWS (2013a) Habitats • Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] • Annual Vegetation of drift lines [1210] • <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] • Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330] • Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritima</i>) [1410] • Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] • Shifting funes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120] • Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] • Humid dune slacks [2190] Species • <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (Petalwort) [1395]	None – No potential pathways identified per reasons outlines in Section 4.3.2 above
South Dublin Bay SAC (000210) Linear Distance to Proposed Development: approx. 6.1 km E	As per NPWS (2013b) Habitats • Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] • Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] • <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] • Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]	None – No potential pathways identified per reasons outlines in Section 4.3.2 above

¹ Where applicable, the full species list included in this table is as per the latest updated information as indicated, so either the Conservation Objectives (CO) document for the site, or the latest Standard Data Form (SDF) (EEA, 2023). For SDF updates, CO are not yet available for the newly added species but are assumed, for the purposes of assessment, to follow the same format as for other feature species.

Site Name & Site Code	Qualifying Interests (*= priority habitats)	Potential Pathways
Baldoyle Bay SAC (000199) Linear Distance to Proposed Development: approx. 10.6 km NE	As per NPWS (2012) Habitats • Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] • <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] • Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330] • Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]	None – No potential pathways identified per reasons outlines in Section 4.3.2 above
Special Protection Areas (SPA)		
South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (004024) Linear Distance to Proposed Development: approx. 4 km E	SCIs as per NPWS (2015a) • Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] • Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] • Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] • Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] • Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143] • Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144] • Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] • Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] • Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] • Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] • Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) [A192] • Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] • Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194] • Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	None – No potential pathways identified per reasons outlines in Section 4.3.2 above.
North Bull Island SPA (004006) Linear Distance to Proposed Development: approx. 7.1 km E	SCIs as per NPWS (2015b) • Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] • Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] • Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052] • Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054] • Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056]	None – No potential pathways identified per reasons outlines in Section 4.3.2 above

Site Name & Site Code	Qualifying Interests (*= priority habitats)	Potential Pathways
	- Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] - Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] - Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] - Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143] - Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144] - Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] - Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] - Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] - Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160] - Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] - Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) [A169] - Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] - Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	
North-west Irish Sea SPA (004236) Linear Distance to Proposed Development: approx. 9.6 km E	SCIs as per NPWS (2023a) - Red-throated Diver (<i>Gavia stellata</i>) [A001] - Great Northern Diver (<i>Gavia immer</i>) [A003] - Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) [A009] - Manx Shearwater (<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>) [A013] - Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017] - Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) [A018] - Common Scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>) [A065] - Little Gull (<i>Larus minutus</i>) [A177] - Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] - Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182] - Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>) [A183] - Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184] - Great Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus marinus</i>) [A187] - Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188] - Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) [A192] - Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] - Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194] - Little Tern (<i>Sterna albifrons</i>) [A195]	None – No potential pathways identified per reasons outlines in Section 4.3.2 above

Site Name & Site Code	Qualifying Interests (*= priority habitats)	Potential Pathways
	• Guillemot (<i>Uria aalge</i>) [A199] • Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>) [A200] • Puffin (<i>Fratercula arctica</i>) [A204]	
Baldoyle Bay SPA (004016) Linear Distance to Proposed Development: approx. 3.8 km NE	SCIs as per NPWS (2023) • Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] • Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] • Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] • Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] • Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] • Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] • Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	None – No potential pathways identified per reasons outlines in Section 4.3.2 above

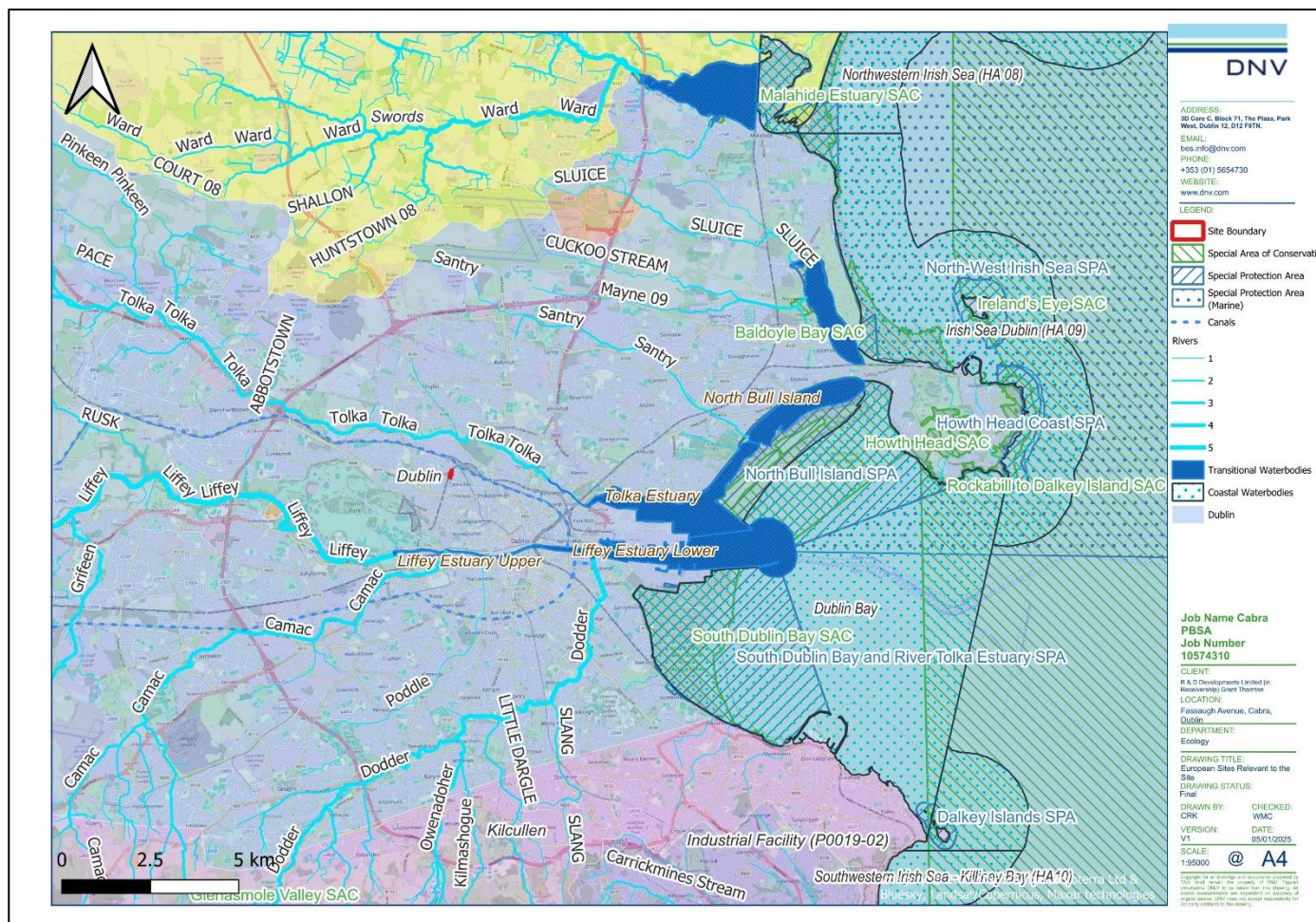


FIGURE 4. LOCATION OF EUROPEAN SITES RELATIVE TO THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT.

4.4 Assessment of Likely Significant Effects

As stated in the preceding section, no S-P-R links of note between the Proposed Development and any European sites were identified, and therefore no further assessment is required to assess the potential for significant impacts from the Proposed Development alone.

4.4.1 Potential for In-combination Effects

Although the Proposed Development is not considered to have the capacity to cause significant effects on any European sites alone, it is important to consider the potential for cumulative effects with other plans and/or projects. The following sections outline existing granted or pending planning permissions in the vicinity of the Proposed Development and assess the potential for adverse in-combination effects on any European sites.

4.4.1.1 Existing Planning Permissions

A search of planning applications located within a 300m radius of the Site of the Proposed Development was conducted using online planning resources such as the National Planning Application Database (NPAD) (MyPlan.ie) and Dublin City Council Planning Applications online map. Any planning applications listed as granted or decision pending from within the last five years were assessed for their potential to act in-combination with the Proposed Development and cause likely significant effects on the relevant European sites. Long-term developments granted outside of this time period were also considered where applicable.

It is noted that the majority of the few developments within the vicinity of the Site of the Proposed Development are applications granted for residential developments and minor extensions to existing residential developments. The larger developments in the vicinity of the Proposed Development are outlined in Table 7:

TABLE 7. GRANTED AND PENDING DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS WITHIN 300 M OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT. LOCATION AND DISTANCE GIVEN IS RELATIVE TO THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT.

Planning Reference	Planning Authority	Status	Location
300492	Dublin City Council	Granted and Implemented	Southwest of the Proposed Development. (67m away)
Development Description Seven Cabra Real Estate Limited intend to apply to An Bord Pleanála for permission for a strategic housing development at former CIE Lands, 2-4 Carnlough Road, Cabra, Dublin 7. The site is located to the south of Faussagh Avenue, to the north of Cabra Road, to the west of a rail line and to the east of Carnlough Road. The development also includes works to the road junction at Carnlough Road and Cabra Road. The proposed development will consist of: Construction of 485 no. residential units (484 no. apartments and 1 no. house) comprising of 33 no. studios, 137 no. 1 bed, 271 no. 2 bed and 44 no. 3 bed units and a neighbourhood centre. The proposed development will comprise of 9 no. Blocks (A-I) ranging in height from part single / part 2 no. storeys to 8 no. storeys. - Block A will comprise of 89 no. apartment units, consisting of 22 no. 1 bed and 67 no. 2 bed units and a neighbourhood centre comprising of 4 no. units, comprising of Unit 1, retail/café/restaurant use (120.6sq.m.), Unit 2 a convenience supermarket with ancillary off licence (1627sq.m.), and Unit 3 retail/café/restaurant use (230sq.m.), and 1 no. gym unit (617.9sq.m.), - Block B will comprise of 24 no. apartment units, consisting of 24 no. 2 beds and the provision of residential amenity space and a creche facility (351.9sq.m.) at ground floor level, - Block C will comprise of 24 no. apartment units, comprising of 1 no. 1 bed, 15 no. 2 bed and 8 no. 3 beds. - Block D will comprise of 120 no. apartment units, comprising of 17 no. studios, 44 no. 1 beds, 53 no. 2 beds and 6 no. 3 beds and the provision of resident lounges and communal terraces at roof level.			

- Block E will comprise of 24 no. apartment units, comprising of 5 no. 1 bed, 11 no. 2 beds and 8 no. 3 beds.
- Block F will comprise of 123 no. apartment units, comprising of 16 no. studios, 49 no. 1 beds, 52 no. 2 beds and 6 no. 3 beds and the provision of resident lounges and communal terraces at roof level.
- Block G will comprise of 80 no. apartments, comprising of 16 no. 1 beds, 49 no. 2 beds and 15 no. 3 beds.
- Block H will comprise of resident amenity space including meeting rooms, postal storage, reception, co working space and cinema room (382.2sq.m),
- Block I will comprise of 1 no. 3 bed two storey house at No. 2 Carnlough Road.

The proposed development will also include 403 no. car parking spaces (375 no. at basement level (305 no. to serve the residential units and 70 no. to serve the retail units) and 28 no. at surface level (20 no. to serve the residential units and 8 no. to serve the retail units) and 488 no. bicycle parking spaces (368 no. at basement level and 120 no. at surface level), public and communal open space, private open space associated with each residential unit, landscaping, children's play area, fascia signage associated with each retail unit, resident amenities including gym, meeting rooms, postal storage centre, and reception, co working spaces, resident lounges and roof top terraces, a service/loading bay located to the rear of Block A along the western boundary of the site, 3 no. substations and switch rooms, pump room, access gates to the north access point off Faussagh Avenue, upgrades to the road junction at Carnlough Road and Cabra Road, provision of PV Panels at roof level of all blocks and all associated ancillary site development works necessary to facilitate the development. The proposed development will amend and supersede the development currently being undertaken on site, pursuant to and in accordance with Strategic Housing Planning Permission Ref: ABP-300492-17. The site is zoned Z1 - Sustainable Residential Development and Z3 - Neighbourhood Centre in the Dublin City Development Plan 2016- 2022 under which the proposed uses are permitted in principle. The application contains a statement setting out how the proposal is consistent with the objectives of the Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022. The application contains a statement indicating why permission should be granted for the proposed development, having regard to a consideration specified in section 37(2)(b) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, notwithstanding that the proposed development materially contravenes a relevant development plan or local area plan other than in relation to the zoning of the land.

Potential for In-combination effects

This development has been implemented at the time of this report. An Appropriate Assessment report dated October 2019 concluded that this development and any associated project activities would not have significant impacts on the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites for the following reasons – proximity to the nearest European site, urbanised area of this development, and lack of significant impact pathways from the development to any European site. As such, potential for in-combination effects to arise are not foreseen.

4295/23	Dublin City Council	Granted	Northwest of the Proposed Development. (215m away)
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Development Description

Permission for the installation of solar photovoltaic array to the existing roofs of a tram depot (Luas Broombridge - Hamilton Depot) and sanding shed, located within a solar safeguarding zone (SSZ), that will measure greater than 300 sqm in area and include all ancillary works and services.

Potential for In-combination effects

An Appropriate Assessment report dated 02/08/2022 concluded that this development and any associated project activities would not have significant impacts on the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites for the following reasons – Lack of significant impact pathways from the development to any European site, and urbanised area of this development.

316119-23	Dublin City Council South Dublin City Council Kildare County Council	Granted	West of the Proposed Development (7m away)
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Development Description

The DART+ South West Project will require modernisation and modifications to the existing railway line. There is a range of general linear works required along the full length of the proposed Project to enable the electrification of the line and the upgrade of the existing network.

Potential for In-combination effects

An Appropriate Assessment report dated February 2023 concluded that this development and any associated project activities would have a significant impact on a number of European sites and was therefore brought forward to Stage 2 and a NIS was prepared. The NIS report dated February 2023 concluded that this development and any associated project activities would not have a significant impact on any European sites provided that mitigation measures are fully implemented during the duration of the works.

4.4.1.2 Relevant Policies and Plans

The local policies and plans detailed in section 2.2 above were reviewed and considered for possible in-combination effects with the Proposed Development. Each of these plans has undergone AA, and where potential for likely significant effects has been identified (e.g., in the case of the Dublin City Development Plan), an NIS has been prepared which identifies appropriate mitigation. As such, it is considered that the plans and policies listed will not result in in-combination effects with the Proposed Development. The Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028 has directly addressed the protection of European sites and biodiversity through specific objectives. The above listed plans are not being relied upon to rule out potential significant effects on European sites.

TABLE 8. SUMMARY OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT ON EUROPEAN SITES AS A RESULT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT.

Site	Habitat Loss / Alteration	Habitat Species Fragmentation or	Disturbance and/or Displacement of Species	Changes in Population Density	Changes in Water Quality and/or Resource	In-combination effects	Stage 2 AA Required
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)							
North Dublin Bay SAC (000206)	No	No	No	None	None	None	NO
South Dublin Bay SAC (000210)	No	No	No	None	None	None	NO
Baldoyle Bay SAC (000199)	No	No	No	None	None	None	NO
Special Protection Areas (SPA)							
South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (004024)	No	No	No	None	None	None	NO
North Bull Island SPA (004006)	No	No	No	None	None	None	NO
North-west Irish Sea SPA (004236)	No	No	No	None	None	None	NO
North-west Irish Sea SPA (004236)	No	No	No	None	None	None	NO

5 APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING CONCLUSION

The Proposed Development at former Matt's of Cabra public housing at 2A Fassagh Avenue, Dublin 7, D07 TH77, Co. Dublin has been assessed taking into account:

- The nature, size and location of the proposed works and possible impacts arising from the construction works.
- The QIs and conservation objectives of the European sites
- The potential for in-combination effects arising from other plans and projects.

In conclusion, upon the examination, analysis and evaluation of the relevant information and applying the precautionary principle, it is concluded by the authors of this report that the possibility **may be excluded** that the Proposed Development will have a significant effect on any of the European sites listed below:

- North Dublin Bay SAC (000206)
- South Dublin Bay SAC (000210)
- Baldoyle Bay SAC (000199)
- South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (004024)
- North Bull Island SPA (004006)
- North-west Irish Sea SPA (004236)
- Baldoyle Bay SPA (004016)

In carrying out this AA screening, any targeted ecological mitigation measures and/or measures intended or included for the purposes of avoiding adverse effects arising as a result of the Proposed Development on any European site have not been taken into account.

On the basis of the screening exercise carried out above, it can be concluded, on the basis of the best scientific knowledge available and objective information, that the possibility of any significant effects on the above listed European sites, whether arising from the project itself or in combination with other plans and projects, can be excluded in light of the above listed European sites' conservation objectives. Thus, there is no requirement to proceed to Stage 2 of the Appropriate Assessment process; and the preparation of a NIS is not required.

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