PROPOSED LARGE-SCALE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AT SOUTHGREEN, CO. KILDARE

Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

Pousterle Limited

Report no.: 001, Rev. 002
Date: 27/02/2026



Project name:	Proposed Large-Scale Residential Development at Southgreen, Co. Kildare	DNV Block 71, The Plaza Parkwest
Report title:	Appropriate Assessment Screening Report	Dublin
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Date of issue:	27/02/2026	
Project no.:	10612553	
Organisation unit:	Energy Systems	
Report no.:	001, Rev. 002	

Applicable contract(s) governing the provision of this Report:

Objective:

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Keywords

Rev. no.	Date	Reason for issue	Prepared by	Verified by	Approved by
001	2026.02.13	First issue	CBH	WMcC	SOD
002	2026.02.26	Rev01	CBH	-	-

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

DNV was commissioned by Brock Mc Clure to prepare an Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report for a Proposed Large-scale Residential Development, entitled 'Southgreen LRD' on lands at Southgreen, Co. Kildare, hereafter referred to as 'Proposed Development' or 'Site,' when referring to the application Site area. The Development forms Phase 2 of a larger masterplan for the Site. This report contains information to enable the Competent Authority to undertake Stage 1 AA screening in respect of the (stage 2) Proposed Development.

1.2 Quality Assurance and Competence

All surveying and reporting have been carried out by qualified and experienced ecologists and environmental consultants. CBH, Senior Ecologist with DNV authored this report, in addition to completing both the desktop and field studies that pertain to this report. CBH has a BSc. (Hons) in Wildlife Biology from Munster Technological University (formerly ITT). CBH has a wealth of experience in desktop research, literature review and reporting, as well as practical field and laboratory experience including experience in surveying habitats, plants, bats, birds, mammals, and invasive species. CBH is experienced in the production of PEA, EcIA, and Stage I/Stage II AA Reports, as-well as ornithology reports for renewable energy projects (wind and solar technology). Additionally, CBH has completed, and supported the preparations of several Biodiversity Chapters for Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (EIAR). CBH is also a Qualifying member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM).

1.3 Description of Proposed Development

1.3.1 Site Location

THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT SITE IS LOCATED ON LANDS AT SOUTHGREEN, CO. KILDARE. THE GENERAL SURROUNDINGS OF THE SITE ARE A MIXTURE OF RESIDENTIAL AND AGRICULTURAL IN NATURE, WITH THE RESIDENTIAL SURROUNDS ENCOMPASSING AREA TO THE WEST, SOUTH, AND EAST OF THE SITE, AND AGRICULTURAL AREAS EXTENDING NORTH OF THE SITE AND INTO THE WIDER AREA. THE SITE ITSELF IS BOUND BY SOUTHGREEN ROAD TO THE WEST, AND LOCAL ROAD L7016 (OLD ROAD) TO THE EAST AND SOUTH. THE LANDS, WHICH ARE CURRENTLY IN AGRICULTURAL USE, SLOPE GENERALLY FROM WEST TO EAST. THE SITE IS LOCATED LESS THAN 1KM FROM KILDARE TOWN CENTRE. KILDARE

Figure 1 below.

1.3.2 Proposed Development Description

Pousterle Limited intend to apply for permission for development of a Large - Scale Residential Development (LRD) on a site of approx. 6.13 ha at Southgreen Road, Kildare, Co. Kildare. The site is generally bounded to the north by agricultural fields; to the south by the recently constructed Southern Internal Link Road; to the west by Southgreen Road and an existing Electricity Station; and to the east by Old Road and existing residential properties. The proposed development will consist of:

- The construction of a new residential scheme of 146 no. residential units ranging in height from 1-3 storeys as follows:
    - 136 no. houses (7 no. 2 bed units; 102 no. 3 bed units; and 27 no. 4 bed units) in a mixture of bungalow, detached, semi-detached, and terrace style units ranging in height from 1 – 2 storeys.
    - 10 no. duplex apartment units (5 no. 1 beds, 3 no. 2 beds, and 2 no. 3 beds) in new Block A ranging in height from 2-3 storeys
- Each residential unit will be afforded with private open space in the form of a front/rear/side garden for houses or terrace / balconies for duplex apartment units.
- The provision of a new creche facility (approx. 161 sq m GFA) and associated areas of external open space (approx. 60 sq m) located at Block A.
- Public open space (approx. 6,992 sq m) is proposed in the form of 2 no. new large public open space areas within the site (approx. 3,046 sq m and 3,946 sq m respectively).
- Communal open space (approx. 82 sq m) is proposed adjacent to Block A.

- A total of 321 no. car parking spaces (305 no. for residential units and 16 no. for the creche facility) are provided. This provision includes 2 no. accessible spaces and 17 no. visitor spaces.
- A total of 527 no. cycle parking spaces (517 no. for residential units and 10 no. for the creche facility) are provided. This provision includes 75 no. visitor spaces. Resident cycle parking is proposed in the form of secure bicycle store enclosures to the front of terraced units; on curtilage spaces to the rear of units with side access; and a bicycle store for apartment units located within Block A. Visitor parking is proposed in the form of Sheffield stands.
- The development shall be served via 2 no. new vehicular access points from Southgreen Road. An additional private vehicular access point is proposed via Old Road to service 1 no. new bungalow (4 no. bed residential unit). Provision is also made for future vehicular access via Southgreen Road to serve the open space and amenity zoned lands to the north of the main development site.
- Pedestrian and Cyclist access is also proposed via Southgreen Road and via a new secondary access point from the Southern Internal Link Road to the south of the site and Old Road to the east of the site.
- Upgrades/widening to Southgreen Road including the provision of 2 no. directional single lane cycle tracks and pedestrian footpaths on either side of the Southgreen Road, together with amendments to the existing cycle tracks and footpaths on Southgreen Road north of Southern Internal Link Road are proposed.
- A new pedestrian/cycle link is also delivered to the north of the main development site connecting South Green Road to Old Road.
- The associated site and infrastructural works include provision for an ESB Sub Station; water services; foul and surface water drainage and connections; attenuation proposals; permeable paving; all landscaping works; boundary treatment; PV/Solar Panels; internal roads and footpaths; waste storage areas, all electrical services and all associated site development works.

See Figure 2 an

Figure 3 for Site Layout and Phase information.

1.3.2.1 Drainage & Water Supply

The following drainage and water supply information has been extracted from the Draft Engineering Assessment Report (Phase 2), document reference: 25-003r.001. Produced in February 2026 by Waterman Moylan Consulting Engineers Limited.

1.3.2.2 Water Supply

The surrounding area in Southgreen is serviced by Uisce Éireann with water supply infrastructure, the water supply network for which the site will connect into (located within Southgreen, west of the site).

A Pre-Connection Enquiry (PCE) form was submitted Waterman Moylan to Uisce Éireann in December of 2024 to establish the available capacity in the network to facilitate the proposed development's water demands. The relevant Uisce Éireann reference number for the submission is CDS24010462. A response in the form of a Confirmation of Feasibility (COF) Letter was received on the 7th of February 2025 stating the development's water supply connection is feasible without infrastructure upgrades required to the public network.

Given the requirement for planning submissions to include up-to-date COF's (within the past six months) from Uisce Éireann and that the schedule of accommodation at the time of submitting the original PCE was c. 150 No. units, an updated PCE including the quantum of currently proposed units (153 No.) has been submitted, and a response is currently awaited. It is expected that the updated COF will similarly state that the water supply connection is feasible.

1.3.2.3 Surface Water Drainage

The 5.75 ha subject site is entirely greenfield, with no civil services currently installed within its boundaries. The surface water management strategy for the proposed development has been prepared with reference to the Kildare Town Local Area Plan and related surface water addendum documents, the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GDSDS), and the Kildare County Council (KCC) Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Guidance Document.

The surface water management strategy has been carefully developed to incorporate nature-based Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) features throughout the site. It is proposed, similar to Phase 1 Southgreen, to discharge surface water from the subject site to the ground via. Infiltration. It is proposed to incorporate 3 No. attenuation systems, 1 No. system per sub-catchment. The attenuation systems will comprise of an above ground detention basin and below ground infiltration area, located within an open green space area adjacent to or within the corresponding sub-catchment.

By allowing surface water to naturally percolate into the soil as the main surface water attenuation strategy, this strategy not only mimics the pre-development hydrological cycle but also significantly reduces runoff volumes, lowers flood risk, and supports groundwater recharge. Given Kildare Town's geology and the increasing emphasis on sustainable development, prioritising infiltration to ground as the main surface water attenuation method offers a low-impact, long-term solution that enhances local resilience to climate change while promoting biodiversity and water quality improvements. This nature-based approach aligns with national SuDS guidance and Kildare's commitment to environmental stewardship.

The attenuation systems are sized to accommodate the extreme 1-in-100-year storm event with 30% climate change and 10% urban creep allowances included, as per KCC requirements. The final design of the infiltration systems will be informed by and reflect the findings of hydrogeological investigation undertaken for the subject lands.

It is proposed that the surface water runoff for the development will be intercepted, collected, slowed, and attenuated through the use of nature-based rainwater management and SuDS features. The SuDS features proposed for the subject site are summarised below:

- Permeable paving at private parking / driveways.
- Bio-retention tree pits used in strategic public areas within landscaping and adjacent to hardstanding areas such as the internal roads network.
- Swales located adjacent to footpaths or the internal roads network to collect rainfall runoff from same.

- Above ground attenuation basins for each sub-catchment to facilitate above ground rainfall storage.
- Below ground infiltration systems for each sub-catchment to facilitate infiltration to ground.
- These SuDS features will also add value to the biodiversity potential of the development.

1.3.2.4 Foul Water Drainage

The Dunmurry Rd Wastewater Pump Station (WWPS) is located southeast of the subject site. The WWPS was constructed to accommodate foul flows from future development within the LAP lands north and west of the WWPS (including the subject site).

Existing foul drainage infrastructure information, location of manholes, cover levels, and invert levels, have been sourced from available Uisce Éireann QGIS data, the Uisce Éireann COF Letter, and available as-built information from the approved Phase 1 Southgreen development.

As part of the currently under construction Southgreen Phase 1 development which is located directly south of the subject site, a 450mm diameter foul spine sewer will be installed to facilitate the foul connection for the Phase 2 (this proposal) subject site. Presently, an existing short segment of 450mm foul sewer is located below the road bisecting Phases 1 and 2, built to facilitate the foul connection between the phases. The short segment of foul sewer has an upstream manhole, located in Phase 2, with ref. no. F4-AS-BUILT, that has a cover level of 105.497 OD Malin and an invert level of 103.759 OD Malin, and a downstream manhole located in Phase 1 with a corresponding cover level of 107.421 OD Malin and an invert level of 103.621 OD Malin. Please refer to Figure 4 below for an indicative illustration of the existing 450mm spine foul sewer and proposed connection point from the subject development to the existing 450mm foul segment.

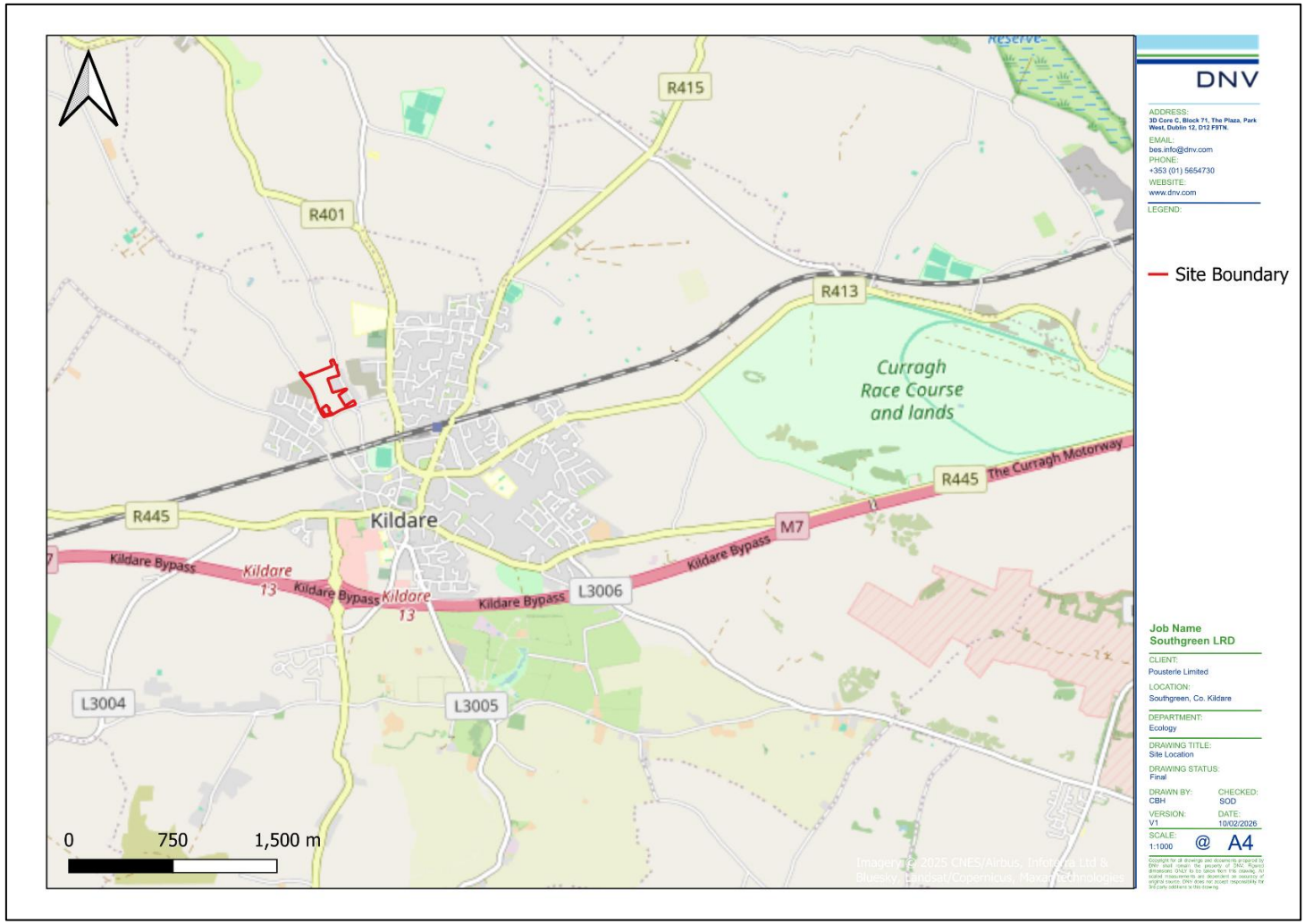


FIGURE 1. SITE LOCATION (QGIS, 2026).



FIGURE 2: SITE LAYOUT (MCORM ARCHITECTURE & URBAN DESIGN, 2026)

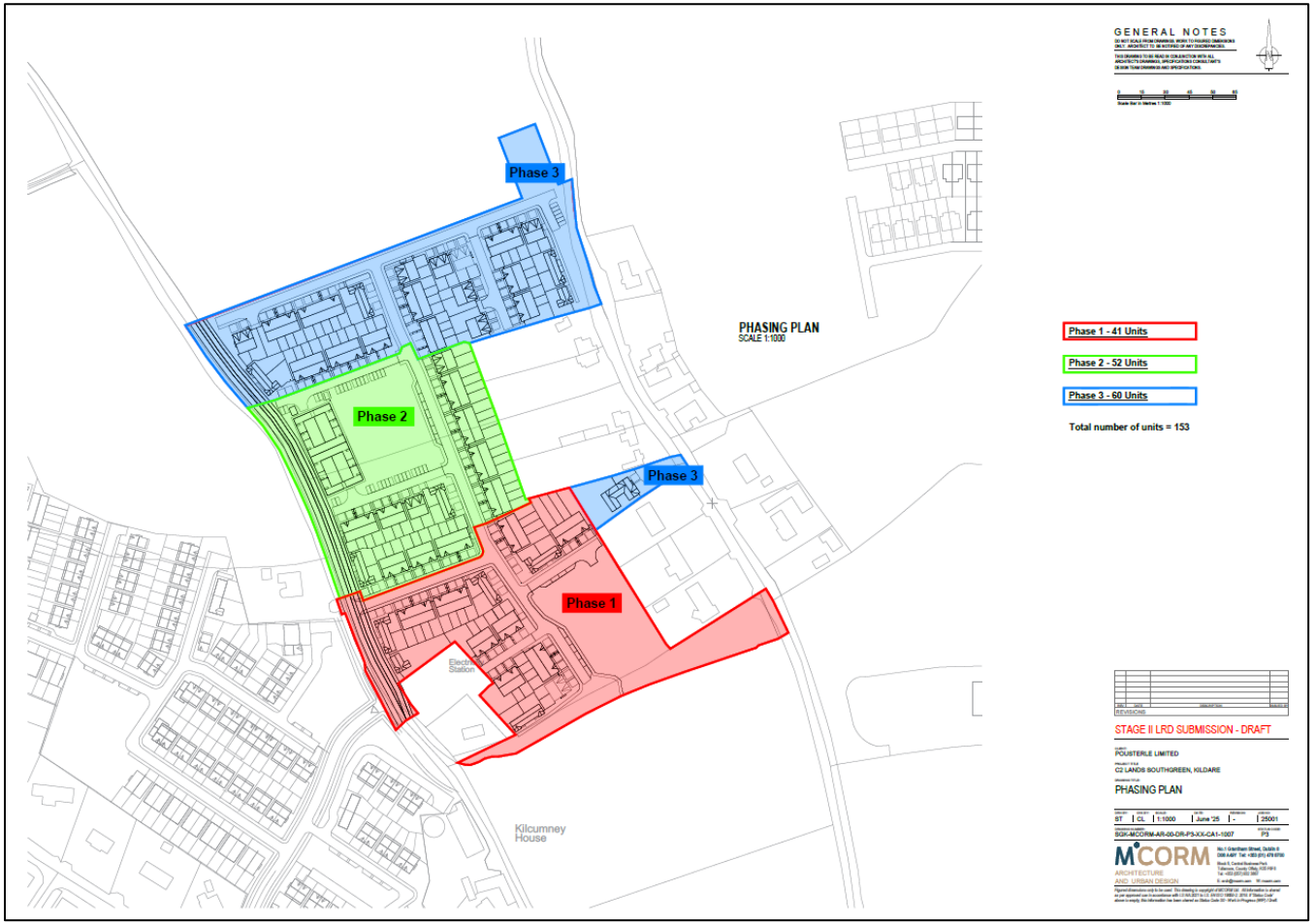


FIGURE 3: SITE PHASES (MCORM ARCHITECTURE & URBAN DESIGN, 2026).

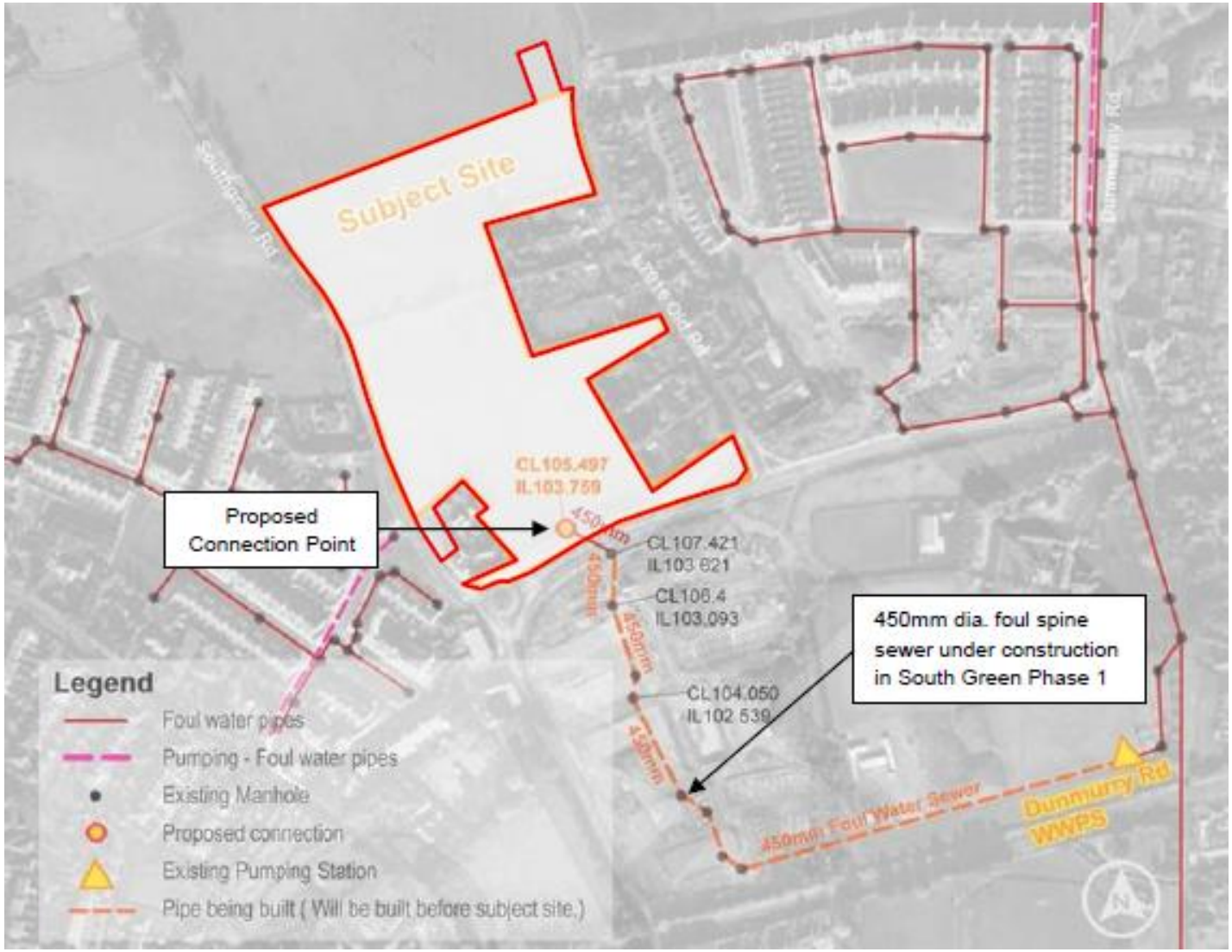


FIGURE 4. EXISTING FOUL WATER NETWORK (WATERMAN MOYLAN CONSULTING ENGINEERS LIMITED, 2026).

2 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Legislative Background & Policy Context

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 Consideration of Embedded Mitigation

With regard to the consideration of embedded mitigation in the Appropriate Assessment process the following is noted. In Case C 721/21 Eco Advocacy, the Court of Justice of the European Union held that, regarding the interpretation of Article 6(3) of Directive 92/43 (as amended), 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 SuDS in large-scale residential developments), that are incorporated into the design of a proposal or project and which may result in the elimination of likely significant effects on European sites, but where the primary reason of the embedded mitigation is not to protect a European site, are permitted for consideration when screening for AA. This is consistent with the policy of Dublin City Council (SI122) to *"To require the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in all new developments, where appropriate, as set out in the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study …".*

2.2 Policy Context

2.2.1 Kildare County Development Plan

While the County Development Plan in its entirety is relevant to this Development and can be referred to separately, policies, principles and objectives of the Kildare County Development Plan (CCDP) 2023 – 2029 that are of particular relevance to this Report are outlined in this section. The Kildare County Development Plan 2023 - 2029 addresses the protection of European sites through policies and objectives in the following chapters;

TABLE 1 RELEVANT POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES TO AA/AA SCREENING IN KCDP 2023-2029

Aim / Target	Policies and Objectives
Chapter 6: Infrastructure Environmental Services	
Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure	All biodiversity policies (see appendix 7.1)
Pollution Control – Water, Air, Noise and Light	IN P7, IN P8, IN O57, IN O59, IN O64
Chapter 12: Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure	
Designated sites for nature conservation	BI P2, BI O9, BI O10, BI O11
Protected habitats and species outside designated areas	BI P4, BI O15, BI O16, BI O17, BI O20, BI O22
Management of invasive species and noxious weeds	BI P9, BI O58
Chapter 15: Development Management Standards	
15.16.4 Natural Heritage, Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity	Detailed in Appendix 7.1 below
15.16.4.1 Riparian Corridors	Detailed in Appendix 7.1 below

In addition, Chapter 15 - Development Management Standards of the KCDP 2023-2029 (as a whole) contains detailed guidance on relevant legislation standards to Appropriate Assessment and screening. Further details of these policies and objectives are given in Appendix 7.1 (Kildare Coco, 2025a).

2.2.2 National Biodiversity Action Plan

The National Biodiversity Plan (NBAP) 2025-2030, 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. This assessment has had regard to the objectives of the NBAP and how they relate to AA and the protection of designated sites, including Objective 2: *Meet Urgent Conservation and Restoration Needs*, and target outcome 2A: *The protection of existing designated areas and protected species is strengthened and conservation and restoration within the existing protected area network are enhanced.*

2.2.3 Kildare Biodiversity Action Plan 2009-2014

Kildare Biodiversity Action Plan is set out to protect and improve biodiversity through the following objectives (Kildare Coco, 2026b):

- To facilitate the collection and dissemination of heritage information.
- To raise public awareness, understanding and appreciation of County Kildare's heritage.
- To promote best practice in heritage conservation and management.
- To inform policy and provide advice to Kildare local authorities.

It should be noted that the Kildare Biodiversity Action Plan (2026-2031[1]) is currently under draft review. However, within the draft document fiver overarching strategic objectives have been identified, these are (Kildare Coco, 2026c):

1. Landscapes for nature
2. Engagement, raising awareness, and understanding
3. Recording, monitoring, and data management
4. Embed action across Kildare County Council
5. Support community-led biodiversity initiatives

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: *Derogation from Article 6(3) under certain circumstances***. If the outcome of Stage 2 is negative i.e., adverse impacts to the sites cannot be scientifically ruled out, despite mitigation, the plan or project should proceed to Stage 3 or be abandoned. Stage 3 requires:
    - Examination of alternative solutions, and, where no alternative solution exists;
    - 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.
    - Implementation of compensatory measures to maintain the coherence of the Natura 2000 network.

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

[1] County Kildare Draft Biodiversity Action Plan 2026 - 2031 | Kildare County Council

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 AA 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 European 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 European sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC Brussels, 28.9.2021 C (European Commission, 2021);*
- *Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management, OPR Practice Note PN01, Office of the Planning Regulator March 2021; and*
- *Amendments to section 42 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended and associated Planning and Development Regulations 2001. Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. (2021). Circular Letter: EUIPR 01/2021..*

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 February 2026 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, qualifying interests 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 site synopses available at *www.npws.ie;*
- Information on species records and distributions, obtained from the National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) at *www.maps.biodiversityireland.ie*;
- Information on waterbodies, catchment areas and hydrological connections obtained from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at *www.gis.epa.ie;*
- Information on surface water, storm water and sewage infrastructure within and surround the site provided by the applicant and their design team.
- 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 National Planning Application Database (DHLGH, 2026a) and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage's (DHLGH) EIAR Online Portal (DHLGH, 2026b).

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

3.4 Field Surveys

Field surveys completed at the Site to date are summarised in Table 2. For full details on the methods and results of the fields surveys listed, please refer to the Preliminary Ecological Assessment Report (PEA) accompanying this application under separate cover. All surveys were carried out at the appropriate time of year by suitably qualified ecologists. No limitations to field surveys were encountered which would prevent robust conclusions being drawn as to the potential impacts of the Proposed Development. 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 Ecological Assessment; includes surveys for habitats, invasive and rare/protected flora, fauna, mammals, bats, amphibians, reptiles, invertebrates, and aquatic species	DNV (CBH)	30th May 2025

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 of the Proposed Development is within the Barrow Water Framework Directive (WFD) catchment (catchment ID 14) and the Barrow_SC_060 sub catchment (EPA, 2026). There are no waterbodies located within the Site. The nearest waterbody to the Site is the 1st order freshwater waterbody of Tully Steam (ID: IE_SE_14T020200) which lies 2.5km south of the Site and flows in a south-westerly direction. Following this, the next nearest waterbody to the Site is the Cloncumber Stream. The Cloncumber Stream (ID: IE_SE_14C170200), a 1st order Stream is located approximately 5km northeast of the Site, at Pollardstown Fen, and flows north-westerly before meeting the 3rd order Slate River (ID: IE_SE_14S010210) which continues west/southwest, eventually flowing into the 5th order River Barrow. The Tully Stream, however, continues southwest where it also meets the 5th order River Barrow, before travelling southwards and eventually discharging into the Barrow, Suir, Nore Estuary (EU Code: IE_SE_100_0100) located some 100km south of the Site at its nearest point (EPA, 2026).

The Tully Stream has been assessed as 'Poor' status and is considered 'At Risk' of not meeting its Water Framework Directives (WFD, 2019-2024), while the Cloncumber Steam has been assessed as 'Moderate' status while its risk is currently 'At Risk' (EPA, 2026). The Tully Stream forms one of two waterbodies located within the Barrow_SC_60 sub-catchment which were assessed as being 'At Risk'. The WFD Cycle 2 Sub catchment assessment Report provides the following information for this sub-catchment:

"Similar to subcatchment 14_16, this subcatchment has wastewater treatment plants and several large areas of urbanisation on the outskirts of the greater Dublin area, including Kildare, Kildangan and Monasterevin. Agricultural land (both pastures and arable) is common throughout, with areas of peat bog also present, particularly at the lower end of the Tully Stream, but these practices were not identified by local authorities as significant pressures. There have been some wastewater treatment plant upgrades carried out in recent years, and more upgrades are ongoing or are planned in the near future. These upgrades have resulted in marked improvements to date in both chemistry and biology and similar improvements are expected following further proposed upgrades." (Catchments.ie, 2019)

The EPA water quality monitoring data for the stations on the aforementioned streams located closest to the Site are summarised in Table 4.

TABLE 3. EPA MONITORING STATIONS AND ASSIGNED Q VALUES

EPA Monitoring Station name	Station Code	Location from Site	Distance from Site	Assigned Q value (2019-2024)
Tully Stream (Bridge near Tully House)	RS14T020100	South	2.5km	3 "Poor"
Cloncumber Stream (Bridge at Whelans Crossroads)	RS14C170100	Northeast	5km	3-4 "Moderate"

The Site of the Proposed Development is situated on the Curragh Gravels West (IE_SE_G_133) groundwater body (GWB) which was assigned a status of Good and not at risk, for the 2019-2024 survey period (EPA,2025). The aquifer type in the area is Locally Important Aquifer – Bedrock which is Moderately Productive only in Local Zones (GSI, 2025). The groundwater rock units underlying the Site are classified as Dinantian Lower impure Limestones. The level of vulnerability to groundwater contamination from human activities is Moderate throughout the Site (GSI, 2026). The subsoil is comprised of Limestone sands and gravels (Carboniferous) (GLs). The bedrock beneath the Site is mapped as Argillaceous dark grey bioclastic limestone, and subsidiary shale (GSI, 2026).

The Waterbody Status for river, groundwater, transitional and coastal water bodies relevant to the Site as recorded by the EPA (2022) in accordance with European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (SI no. 722/2003) are provided in Table 4

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 (2019-2024)	WFD 3rd cycle Risk Status	Hydraulic Connection to the Site
Surface Water Bodies						
Tully Stream	IE_SE_14T020200	2.5km	South	Poor	At Risk	Weak connection via underlying GWB
Cloncumber Stream	IE_SE_14C170200	5km	Northeast	Moderate	At Risk	Weak connection via underlying GWB
Transitional Water Bodies						
Barrow, Suir, Nore Estuary	IE_SE_100_0100	100km	South	Moderate	At Risk	Downstream of the Tully Stream
Groundwater Bodies						
Curragh Gravels West	IE_SE_G_133	N/A	N/A	Good	Not at Risk	Underlying groundwater-body

4.2.2 Relevant Field Survey results

4.2.2.1 Habitats & Flora

There are no buildings on Site. The Site is made up of two fields which consist primarily of improved agricultural grassland (GA1) habitat. The upper field (for which only part is included in the Proposed Development footprint) comprises agricultural grassland habitat grown for silage, while the lower field comprises agricultural grassland used for grazing cattle. The perimeters of the fields are enclosed within existing mature hedgerows, treelines and scattered trees, with areas of scrub intersecting or occurring in the understory. These linear habitats are bound to the west, south and east by existing road networks, as outlined in Section 1.3.1 above, which lie outside of the red line boundary. There are no hydrological features present on Site, including ponds, pools of standing water, drainage ditches, streams/rivers or trenches. No invasive species were present on Site. The hedgerows and trees that bound the Site were largely comprised of hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), oak (*Quercus spp*.), and elder (*Sambucus nigra*). Areas of scrub were dominated by bramble (*Rubus fructicosus*) and ivy (*Hedera hibernica*) species, with a lot of common nettle (*Urtica dioica*) running adjacent to these linear habitats, on the ground floor, and along the field margins. No invasive plant species were recorded within or adjacent to the Proposed Development Site.

Nearby and Adjacent habitats

A small, well-sealed, stone wall (BL1) occurs to the northeastern section of the upper field, outside of the red line boundary, as-well as a small section of spoil and bare ground (ED2) habitat, once again occurring outside of the red line boundary for the Site. To the southwest, an immature treeline occurs outside of the red line boundary, bordering the existing Kildare ESB substation fence line. It is noted that the existing treelines recorded during the May 2025 survey, comprised immature tree species which were planted outside of the red line boundary, within neighbouring lands, including contiguous to the Southgreen road to the west, the ESB substation to the southwest, and neighbouring residences to the east.

No invasive alien plant species were recorded within or adjacent to the Proposed Development Site. No Qualifying Interest (QI) flora or habitats associated with European sites were recorded during the PEA survey.



Figure 5. HABITAT MAP (QGIS, 2025).

4.2.2.2 Fauna

The results of the faunal aspect of the PEA survey are summarised below.

Mammal activity recorded on Site during the May 2025 visit was very low. There was some evidence of mammal trails along the perimeter of the Site but mostly moving between fields through the existing hedgerows and scrub habitat. Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) scat was recorded along the eastern section of the Site. However, fox is not a protected species in Ireland.

No suitable habitat for amphibians, otter, or any aquatic species, was recorded during the May 2025 survey. No evidence of reptiles was found during the May 2025 survey. The stone wall which occurs outside the red line boundary to the north-west of the upper field did not provide suitable habitat for reptiles as it was well sealed and contained little in the way cracks or crevices for refuge. The grassland habitat could be used by reptiles such as the common lizard (*Zootica vivipara*) (Ireland's only native reptile species) in commuting or foraging.

Regarding birds; during the Site walkover on the 30th of May 2025, eight species of birds were recorded (Table 5) at the Site. Of these, only three species are amber listed, and none are red listed, while the remaining species are green listed (Gilbert et al. 2021).

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

TABLE 5. BIRD SPECIES RECORDED DURING WALKOVER SURVEY ON THE 30TH OF MAY 2025.

Species	BoCCI Status
Blackbird (*Turdus merula*)	Green
Coal Tit (*Periparus ater*)	Green
Common Gull (*Larus canus*)	Amber
Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*)	Green
Jackdaw *(Coloeus monedula)*	Green
Magpie (*Pica pica*)	Green
Rook (*Corvus frugilegus*)	Green
Swallow *(Hirundo rustica)*	Amber
Tree Sparrow *(Passer montanus)*	Amber
Woodpigeon (*Columba palumbus*)	Green
Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*)	Green

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: **~ 18 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;
- Consideration of potential indirect pathways, e.g., impacts to flight paths, *ex-situ* habitats, etc.
- 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.

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 Site is located within 2km of the Tully Stream. This stream forms part of Pollardstown Fen SAC (000396) which eventually drains into the River Barrow and Nore SAC (002162) which is located >10km away at its closest point. However, there are no drains or watercourses present within or in proximity to the site of the Proposed Development. Therefore, there is a distinct lack of a hydrological pathway between the Site and these European sites. Additionally, foul water arising from the Proposed Development will be connected to the existing foul sewer network. The ultimate outfall of the LAP lands foul sewer is the Kildare Town Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) located south of the subject site. The WWTP was upgraded in 2013 to facilitate capacity expansion from 10,000 PE (population equivalent) to 28,000 PE. Following the WWTP upgrades for the town of Kildare the following works were undertaken.

- Upgrading and integrating the existing foul / combined sewers.
- Constructing 3 no. new pumping stations, one of which incorporates storage.
- Installing approximately 3.2km of new sewers and rising mains.

According to the Central Statistics Office (CSO) Census, the town of Kildare had a population of 10,302 in the year 2022. According to the Kildare Town LAP, and based on the 2022 CSO data, the population and housing targets for the Plan (2023-2029) offers a population target of 11,682 persons estimated to the end of 2029. The WWTP offers a total capacity of 28,000 PE, which corresponds to an approximate available surplus capacity 16,318 PE (53% surplus capacity) above the estimated total population of 11,682 in 2029. There is theoretically more than adequate capacity in the public foul water network to accommodate the subject development. Thus, the hydrological pathways via the Tully stream / foul network to the aforementioned European sites are deemed to be insignificant.

A 2024 annual Environmental Report has been prepared for D0178-01, Kildare, in Kildare in accordance with the requirements of the wastewater discharge licence for the agglomeration. Current compliance with emission limit values (ELVs) are recorded as compliant.

No other European sites are linked to the Site via hydrological means.

Hydrogeological Pathways

During groundworks and other construction activities, the ground will be exposed and any potential direct or accidental discharges to ground could potentially migrate vertically downward to the underlying bedrock aquifer and laterally within the aquifer to the downgradient *Pollardstown Fen SAC (000396), and Mouds Bog SAC (002331)* which lie 4.5km and 7.2km northeast of the Site, respectively. However, owing to the scale and nature of the Development, the significant distance between the Site and the above-mentioned EU sites, and the incorporation of best practice procedures during construction phase activities, the potential for significant impact on the aforementioned European sites is considered unlikely to occur.

Similarly, during the operation phase, groundwater discharges could have the capacity to migrate vertically downward to the underlying bedrock aquifer and laterally within the aquifer to the downgradient *Pollardstown Fen SAC (000396), and Mouds Bog SAC (002331).*

However, the surface water management strategy has been carefully developed to incorporate nature-based Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) features throughout the site. These elements are integrated into the overall drainage network to facilitate natural attenuation, promote infiltration, and support water quality improvements. Features such as swales, permeable paving, bio-retention tree pits, above ground detention basins and below ground infiltration attenuation areas have been strategically located across the development to manage

runoff at source, reduce flow rates, and mimic the site's natural hydrological processes. This approach not only addresses surface water quantity and quality but also enhances local biodiversity and contributes positively to the site's visual and ecological character.

It is proposed, similar to Phase 1 South Green, to discharge surface water from the subject site to the ground via. Infiltration. It is proposed to incorporate 3 No. attenuation systems, 1 No. system per sub-catchment. The attenuation systems will comprise of an above ground detention basin and below ground infiltration area, located within an open green space area adjacent to or within the corresponding sub-catchment.

By allowing surface water to naturally percolate into the soil as the main surface water attenuation strategy, this strategy not only mimics the pre-development hydrological cycle but also significantly reduces runoff volumes, lowers flood risk, and supports groundwater recharge. Given Kildare Town's geology and the increasing emphasis on sustainable development, prioritising infiltration to ground as the main surface water attenuation method offers a low-impact, long-term solution that enhances local resilience to climate change while promoting biodiversity and water quality improvements.

Accounting for the above, it is considered that the potential hydrogeological pathway between the Site and nearby EU sites is insignificant. As all other European sites lie >7km distance from the Site, it is considered that no other hydrogeological pathways exist between the Proposed Development and other European sites.

Air and Land Pathways

The Construction Phase of the Proposed Development could introduce dust and noise disturbance impacts transferable via air and land pathways, as well as increased lighting and human activity at the Site and in the vicinity of the Site during the Construction and Operational Phases.

As discussed in the following sections in more detail, the likely ZOI via air and land pathways is considered to be limited to surrounding areas within a maximum of approx. 400m from the Site boundary for any noise and dust sources, depending on prevailing weather conditions. Additionally, light spill and disturbance from human activity are considered to be limited to areas within the Site and habitats immediately adjacent to the Site's boundaries.

According to Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) *Guidance on the Assessment of Mineral Dust Impacts for Planning.* (IAQM, 2016), experience of the Working Group together with published studies and anecdotal evidence on the change in both airborne concentrations and the rate of deposition with distance, suggests that dust impacts will occur mainly within 400m of the operation, even at the dustiest of mineral sites. Adverse dust impacts from sand and gravel sites are uncommon beyond 250m and beyond 400m from hard rock quarries measured from the nearest dust generating activities. IAQM (2016) note that is commonly accepted that the greatest impacts will be within 100m of a source, and this can include both large (>30 µm) and small dust particles. The greatest potential for high rates of dust deposition and elevated particulate matter (PM10) concentrations occurs within this 100m distance.

IAQM note that their 2016 guidance applies to the operational phases of minerals developments e.g., quarries. Whilst these share some common features with construction activities, minerals sites can be on a significantly larger scale. The IAQM's 2014 *Guidance on the assessment of dust from Demolition and Construction* (Holman *et al.*, 2014) deals with construction dust assessment specifically and does not provide specific dust impact distances as such but assesses sensitivity to dust impacts at <20m and <50m ranges for ecological features; impact zones far smaller than that of mineral sites detailed in IAQM (2016).

The Construction Phase of the Proposed Development could introduce dust, and noise impacts transferable via air and land pathways, as well as increased lighting and human activity at the Site and in the vicinity of the Site during the Construction and Operational Phases. However, accounting for the above, and the fact that the Proposed Development is located >4.5km southwest of the nearest EU Site (Pollardstown Fen SAC 000396) and the disturbance effects associated with construction activities at the Site would not be expected to extend beyond a distance of ca.300m, as noise levels associated with general construction activities would attenuate to close to background levels at that distance (Cutts et al., 2009). Accounting for the intervening distance between the Site and any European sites, as well as the visual screening that intervenes, it is highly unlikely that environmental nuisances (dust, noise, vibrations, vehicular/personnel movement) emitted from the Proposed Development Site will result in significant impact on QI/SCI habitats and species.

No European sites are linked to the Site via air or land pathways due to the relatively small scale of the Proposed Development and the distance between the Site and the next nearest European site (Mouds Bog SAC 002331, approx. 7.2km northeast of the Site).

4.3.2.2 Indirect Pathways

No indirect pathways (e.g., disruptions to migratory routes) were identified. The Site was assessed for its potential to support wintering birds, and following completion of the desk study and field surveys, the habitats present do not provide suitable conditions for most wintering waterbird species. This is primarily due to the absence of wetland features such as pools, ponds, or lakes, which are essential for wintering waterbird foraging and roosting.

While agricultural grassland can occasionally attract small numbers of generalist species (including gulls) during specific agricultural operations, such as ploughing, mowing, slurry spreading or harvesting, no such activity-related concentrations were recorded during surveys, and any such use would be brief, opportunistic, and not unique to the Site. Additionally, the wider landscape north of Kildare town contains extensive areas of similar or higher-value agricultural grassland that provide abundant alternative and more predictable foraging opportunities.

Given this context, the agricultural grassland on Site is not considered to constitute a significant or reliable foraging resource for gulls or other wintering birds. Overall, the Site is assessed as having low to negligible value for wintering waterbirds, and no wintering bird–related pathways for impact are anticipated.

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 are shown in **FIGURE** 6 below for information purposes.

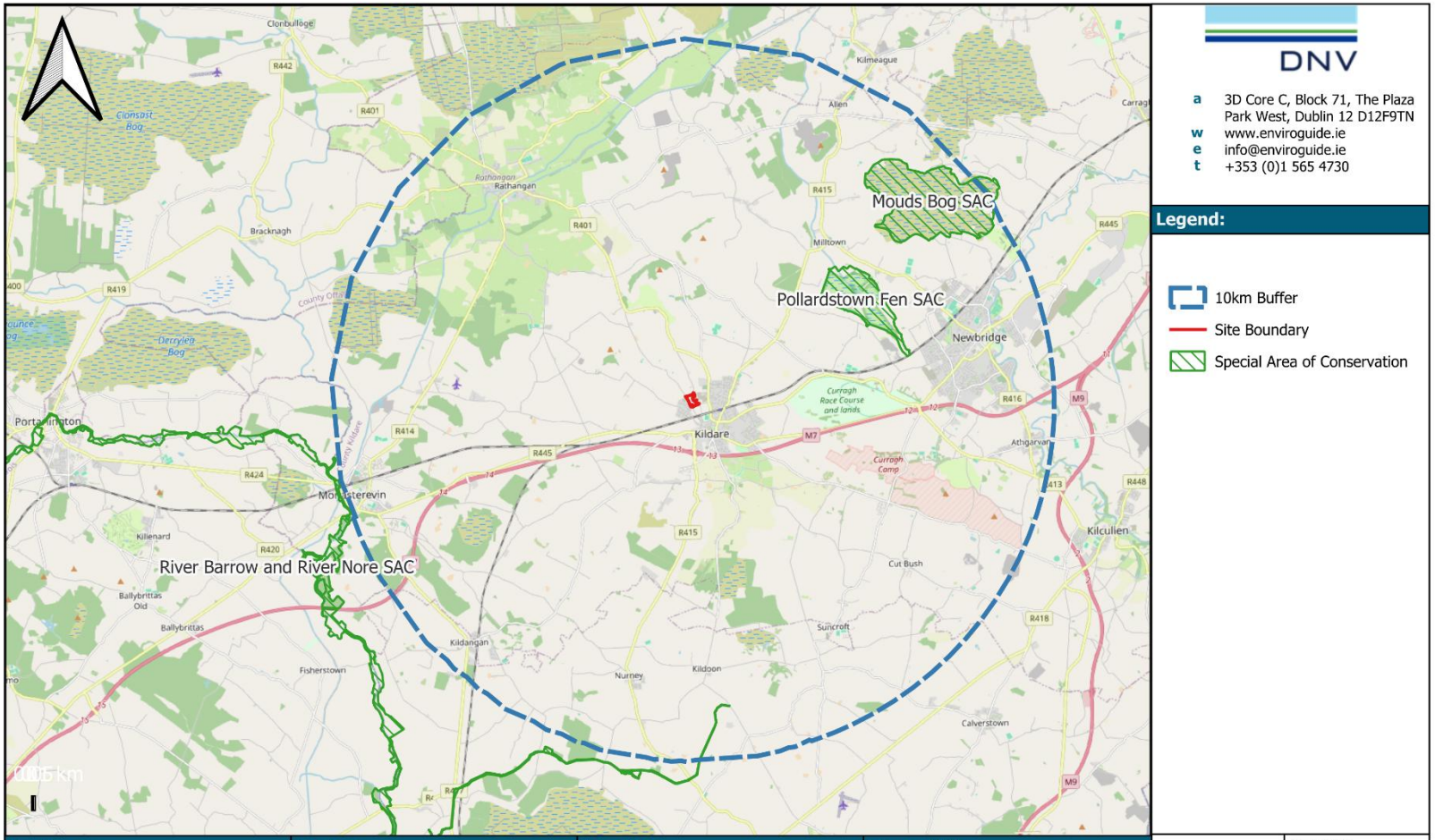


FIGURE 6 LOCATION OF EUROPEAN SITES RELATIVE TO THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSED IN THE CONTEXT OF HYDROLOGICAL, HYDROGEOLOGICAL, AND LAND/AIR PATHWAYS.

European sites relative to the Proposed Development discussed in the context of potential S-P-R connections above are shown in Table 6 below 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).

Site Name & Site Code	Qualifying Interests (*= priority habitats)	Potential Pathways
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)		
Pollardstown Fen SAC (000396) Linear Distance to Proposed Development: Approx. 4.5km northeast	**Habitats** Calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the *Caricion davallianae* [7210] Petrifying springs with tufa formation (*Cratoneurion*) [7220] Alkaline fens [7230] **Species** *Vertigo geyeri* (Geyer's Whorl Snail) [1013] *Vertigo angustior* (Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail) [1014] *Vertigo moulinsiana* (Desmoulin's Whorl Snail) [1016]	**None** - No potential pathways identified per reasons outlined in Section 4.3.2 above.
Mouds Bog SAC (002331) Linear Distance to Proposed Development: Approx. 7.2km northeast	**Habitats** 7110 Active raised bogs 7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration 7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the *Rhynchosporion*	**None** - No potential pathways identified per reasons outlined in Section 4.3.2 above.
River Barrow and River Nore SAC (002162) Linear Distance to Proposed Development: Approx. 10.4km west	**Habitats** Estuaries [1130] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Reefs [1170] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (*Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae*) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi) [1410] Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation [3260] European dry heaths [4030] Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels [6430] Petrifying springs with tufa formation (*Cratoneurion*) [7220] Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0] Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae*) [91E0] **Species** *Vertigo moulinsiana* (Desmoulin's Whorl Snail) [1016] *Margaritifera margaritifera* (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] *Austropotamobius pallipes* (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092] *Petromyzon marinus* (Sea Lamprey) [1095] *Lampetra planeri* (Brook Lamprey) [1096] *Lampetra fluviatilis* (River Lamprey) [1099] *Alosa fallax fallax* (Twaite Shad) [1103] *Salmo salar* (Salmon) [1106]	**None** - No potential pathways identified per reasons outlined in Section 4.3.2 above.

Site Name & Site Code	Qualifying Interests (*= priority habitats)	Potential Pathways
	Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355] *Vandenboschia speciosa* (Killarney Fern) [6985]	

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 Kildare County Council Planning Applications online map. A 300m radius was deemed sufficient given the scale and nature of the Proposal. 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 larger developments within the vicinity of the Site of the Proposed Development are applications granted for residential developments, while several small scale applications for retention/modification to existing buildings were also observed. Applications within the past five years are shown in the below table (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
201601	**Kildare County Council**	**Withdrawn**	**Green Road & Southgreen Road (also known as Hill Road), South Green, Kildare Town, Co. Kildare**
Development Description A housing development to be known as Walker's Gate is already approved on the site under 17/764. It is noted that roads works permitted under 17/764 to serve the development have already been constructed including the Link Road between Southgreen Road and Dunmurray Road including road/junction upgrade works at Southgreen Road, Old Road and Dunmurray Road. This proposal consists only of changes to House Type F (2 bed terrace dwellings) approved under Planning Reference 17/764. In total 12 no. Type F Houses are proposed to be revised at house no. 15-26 'The Close'. Changes include modifications to elevations and internal layout, reduction in overall height of dwellings by 0.626 metres & removal of windows from end gable walls. There is no increase in the permitted floor area or total number of dwellings (187). 2 no new bin stores are proposed in the open space to serve house nos. 12 & 13 'The Close' with associated changes to the footpath. **Potential for In-combination effects** There is no potential for in-combination effects as the development was deemed withdrawn			
22369	**Kildare County Council**	**Permission**	**Troytown, Greyabbey Road, Southgreen, Kildare. Co. Kildare.**
Development Description An alteration to previously granted permission Ref. 19/1332. The development will consist of change from pitched roof to flat roof to Phase 1 single storey intern accommodation building (143sqm.) containing 6 no. bedrooms, ancillary and communal facilities and all associated site works, landscaping and sewerage treatment system. **Potential for In-combination effects**			

Planning Reference	Planning Authority	Status	Location
The Planner's Report dated 11/05/2022 stated that there was no potential for significant effect to arise owing to the Development and an AA was not required. Therefore, the potential for in-combination effects is not foreseen.			
23810	**Kildare County Council**	**Permission**	**Townlands of Crockanure Glede, Southgreen, Kidlare, Bishopsland Cloghgarret Glebe, Crockanure, Blackmillerhill, Dunmurry West, Curragh (Ed Kildare), Rathbride, Friarstown, Newtown (Ed Pollarrdstown), Milltown, Scarletstown, Rosberry between, Kildare ESB Substation & Newbridge ESB Substation**
Development Description A new 38kV electricity circuit between the existing Kildare ESB substation and the existing Newbridge ESB substation County Kildare. The circuit will be c. 8.5km in length and will consist of c. 7km of overhead line (OHL) and c. 1.5km of underground cable (UGC). The OHL structures (48 No.) will consist of single and double wood polesets, with a height above ground level ranging from c. 9.7m to c. 18m and will require below ground foundations and staywires at specific locations. The UGC will primarily run along public roads and will consist of electrical cables laid in underground ducts buried in a trench (with varying dimensions between c.0.6m and c. 0.9m width and a depth of c.1.2m). Permission is sought for all associated works including temporary works such as the creation of access ways and ancillary temporary and permanent works. Revised by Significant further information which consists of Natura Impact Statement (NIS) **Potential for In-combination effects** The Planner's Report dated 11/09/2023 requested that an NIS be carried out to ensure no significant impact arises from the Development, the NIS was later submitted which found no potential for significant effect, alone or in-combination and permission was subsequently granted, as such the potential for in-combination effects to arise are not foreseen.			
2560645	**Kildare County Council**	**Permission**	**Southgreen Rd, Crockanure Glebe, Co. Kildare.**
Development Description For: 1. Retention for change of use and renovation of original equine hospital to small animal hospital including alterations to the original building incorporating extension to side, boarding area for small animals, new reception area, installation of new roof and alterations to elevations including new windows and doors. 2. Retention for construction of detached single storey storeroom to rear of main hospital building. 3. Retention for change of use and refurbishment of original equine stable block to small animal building used ancillary to main hospital/boarding building, and; 4. And all associated and ancillary works **Potential for In-combination effects** Owing to the small scale and short duration of works, the potential for in-combination effects is not foreseen.			
2560453	**Kildare County Council**	**Permission**	**Ard na Pairce Theas, Southgreen, Kildare, Co. Kildare**
Development Description To modify a permitted Large-scale Residential Development (LRD) permission (PA Ref 23416 ABP-318401-23) by way of a planning application for an LRD at Ard na Pairce Theas, Southgreen, Kildare. The development will consist of amendments to the two-storey crèche building granted under ABP-318401-23. The changes involve amendments to the floor plans, including the addition of a second stairs for fire safety purposes, and elevational changes associated with these floor layout amendments. The proposed amendments to the crèche do not affect any other parts or aspects of the permitted LRD. The housing elements of the LRD are currently under construction. **Potential for In-combination effects** The Planner's Report dated 09/06/2025 stated that the screening found that significant effects are not likely to arise, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects to the Natura 2000 network. The potential for in-combination effects is not foreseen.			

Planning Reference	Planning Authority	Status	Location
2560729	**Kildare County Council**	**Retention (pending FI/decision)**	**Southgreen Rd, Crockanure Glebe, Co. Kildare**
Proposed Development Description for 1. Retention for change of use and renovation of original equine hospital to small animal hospital including alterations to the original building incorporating extension to side, boarding area for small animals, new reception area, installation of new roof and alterations to elevations including new windows and doors 2. Retention for construction of detached single storey store-room to rear of main hospital building 3. Retention for change of use and refurbishment of original equine stable block to small animal building used ancillary to main hospital/boarding building 4. And all associated and ancillary works. **Potential for In-combination Effects** Owing to the small scale and short duration of works, the potential for in-combination effects is not foreseen.			
2561082	**Kildare County Council**	**Incomplete Application**	**Old Road, Southgreen, Kildare, Co. Kildare, R51EV21**
Proposed Development Description The development will consist of subdivision of existing site and six-bedroom dwelling into two separate dwellings, consisting of 1no single storey three-bedroom bungalow to include conversion of garage to a bedroom & 1no two-bedroom 2storey dwelling with internal alterations, and associated site works including removal of existing septic tank and installation of 2no new waste water treatment systems. Both dwellings to be accessed via existing entrance from local road L7016. **Potential for In-combination Effects** Incomplete application – application void.			
2561208	**Kildare County Council**	**Permission**	**Old Road, Southgreen, Kildare, Co. Kildare**
Proposed Development Description subdivision of existing site and six-bedroom dwelling into two separate dwellings, consisting of 1no single storey three-bedroom bungalow to include conversion of garage to a bedroom & 1no two-bedroom 2storey dwelling with internal alterations, and associated site works including removal of existing septic tank and installation of 2no new waste water treatment systems. Both dwellings to be accessed via existing entrance from local road L7016 **Potential for In-combination Effects** Owing to the small scale and short duration of works, the potential for in-combination effects is not foreseen.			

4.4.1.2 Relevant Policies and Plans

The local policies and plans detailed in Section 2.1.2 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 Kildare County 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 Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 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 or Species Fragmentation	Disturbance and/or Displacement of Species	Changes in Population Density	Changes in Water Quality and/or Resource	In-combination effects	Stage 2 AA Required
SAC							
Pollardstown Fen SAC (000396)	No	No	No	None	None	None	NO
Mouds Bog SAC ((002331)	No	No	No	None	None	None	NO
River Nore and River Barrow SAC (002162)	No	No	No	None	None	None	NO

5 APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING CONCLUSION

The Proposed Development on lands at Southgreen, Co. Kildare 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:

- Pollardstown Fen SAC (000396)
- Mouds Bog SAC (002331)
- River Nore and River Barrow SAC (002162)

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.

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7 APPENDIX

7.1 Appendix I Policies and Objectives

Policies and objectives of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029 that are of relevance to this Screening Report are outlined below.

Policy/Objective	Policy/Objective description
Chapter 6: Pollution Control – Water, Air, Noise and Light	
IN P7	Support the implementation of the Water Framework Directive, the River Basin Management Plan, and the Local Authority Waters Programme in achieving and maintaining at least good environmental status for all water bodies in the county.
IN P8	Implement the provisions of EU and National legislation on air, noise, and light pollution and other relevant legislative requirements, as appropriate.
IN 057	Support the use of air quality monitors at schools throughout Kildare.
IN 059	Implement the relevant spatial planning recommendations and actions of the Kildare Noise Action Plan 2019-2023 (and any subsequent update).
IN 064	Require the design of external lighting schemes to minimise the incidence of light spillage or pollution into the surrounding environment having regard to the residential amenity of surrounding areas and the need to mitigate adverse impacts on biodiversity, particularly on river corridors
Chapter 12: Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure – overall	
BI P1	Integrate in the development management process the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and landscape features by applying the mitigation hierarchy to potential adverse impacts on important ecological features (whether designated or not), i.e. avoiding impacts where possible, minimising adverse impacts, and if significant effects are unavoidable by including mitigation and/or compensation measures, as appropriate. Opportunities for biodiversity net gain are encouraged.
BI O1	Require, as part of the Development Management Process, the preparation of Ecological Impact Assessments that adequately assess the biodiversity resource within proposed development sites, to avoid habitat loss and fragmentation and to integrate this biodiversity resource into the design and layout of new development and to increase biodiversity within the proposed development. Such assessments shall be carried out in line with the CIEEM (2018) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine.
BI O2	Require, wherever possible, the retention and creation of green corridors within and between built up urban areas and industrial scale developments to protect wildlife habitat value including areas that are not subject to public access.
BI O3	Actively support the implementation of national biodiversity initiatives such as the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2026.
BI O5	Move towards no net loss of biodiversity through strategies, plan, mitigation measures, appropriate offsetting and/or investment in Blue-Green infrastructure.
BI O6	Apply the precautionary principle in relation to proposed developments in environmentally sensitive areas to ensure that all potential adverse impacts on a designated NHA or Natura 2000 Site arising from any proposed development or land use activity are avoided, remedied, or mitigated.
BI O7	Pursue insofar as possible and practical, a policy of biodiversity net gain through strategies, plans, developments, mitigation measures, appropriate offsetting and/or investment in Blue-Green infrastructure.
Designated sites for Nature Conservation	
BI P2	Seek to contribute to maintaining or restoring the conservation status of all sites designated for nature conservation or proposed for designation in

Policy/Objective	Policy/Objective description
	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 O9	Avoid development that would adversely affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 site and promote favourable conservation status of habitats and protected species including those listed under the Birds Directive, the Wildlife Acts and the Habitats Directive, to support the conservation and enhancement of Natura 2000 Sites including any additional sites that may be proposed for designation during the period of this Plan and protect the Natura 2000 network from any plans and projects that are likely to have a significant effect on the coherence or integrity of a Natura 2000 Site.
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 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 O12	Require the preparation of an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) by a suitably qualified professional for proposals for development within or adjacent to a Natural Heritage Area (NHA)/proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA), to ensure the development 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. Such assessments shall be carried out in line with the CIEEM (2018) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine.
BI O14	Conserve, preserve and protect the integrity of and maintain the favourable conservation value/status within or adjacent to Ramsar Sites, Statutory Nature Reserves, Biogenetic Reserves, Wildfowl Sanctuaries, all existing and proposed NHAs. They should be designed and sited so as to minimise their impact on the ecological and landscape values of these sites under National and European legislation and International Agreements.
Protected Habitats and Species Outside Designated Areas	
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 O16	Ensure appropriate species and habitat avoidance and mitigation measures are incorporated into all new development proposals.
BI O17	Require a derogation licence, where necessary, issued by the DHLGH, in the event of a proposed development impacting on a site known to be a

Policy/Objective	Policy/Objective description
	breeding or resting site of species listed in the Habitats Directive (Annex IV species).
BI O18	Require all applications for new developments to identify, protect and sensitively enhance the most important ecological features and habitats, and incorporate these into the overall open space network, keeping free from development and to provide links to the wider Green Infrastructure network as an essential part of the design process and by making provision for local biodiversity (e.g. through provision of swift boxes or towers, bat roost sites, hedgehog highways2, green roofs, etc.).
BI O19	Require that all biodiversity data gathered in the preparation of planning applications will be made available to the National Biodiversity Data Centre (NDBC).
BI O21	Work with bodies such as the NPWS and National Biodiversity Data Centre to ensure that species for which Kildare is a national stronghold such as Green-Flowered Helleborine Orchid, Yellowhammer and Linnet, which are nationally rare or declining, are supported to flourish and seek to ensure the habitat conditions favourable to such species are retained in the county.
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.
County Biodiversity Sites	
BI P5	Identify and conserve locally important biodiversity sites in the county which contribute to the overall ecological network of County Kildare.
BI O23	Protect, in co-operation with the relevant statutory agencies and other relevant groups, sites of local biodiversity importance (County Biodiversity Sites), not otherwise protected by legislation.
Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows	
BI P6	Recognise the important contribution trees and hedgerows make to the county biodiversity resource climate mitigation, resilience and adaptation.
BI O26	Prevent, in the first instance, the removal of hedgerows to facilitate development. Where their removal is unavoidable, same must be clearly and satisfactorily demonstrated to the Planning Authority. In any event, removal shall be kept to an absolute minimum and there shall be a requirement for mitigation planting comprising a hedge of similar length and species composition to the original, established as close as is practicable to the original and where possible linking to existing adjacent hedges. Ideally, native plants of a local provenance and origin should be used for any such planting. Removal of hedgerows and trees prior to submitting a planning application will be viewed negatively by the planning authority and may result in an outright refusal.
BI O27	Require the retention and appropriate management of hedgerows and to require infill or suitably sized transplanted planting where possible in order to ensure an uninterrupted green infrastructure network.
BI O28	Promote the integration of boundary hedges within and along development sites into development design so as to avoid “trapped hedges” located to the boundary of houses within the development layout. Encourage the planting of woodlands, trees and hedgerows as part of new developments and as part of the Council’s own landscaping works ideally using native plants of local provenance and origin.
BI O29	Require the undertaking of a comprehensive tree survey carried out by a suitably qualified arborist where development proposals require felling of mature trees; the tree survey shall assess the condition, ecological and amenity value of the tree stock proposed for removal as well as mitigation

Policy/Objective	Policy/Objective description
	planting and a management scheme. It should be noted that rotting and decaying trees are an integral part of a woodland ecosystem and can host a range of fungi and invertebrates, important for biodiversity. While single or avenue trees that are decaying may be removed, others that are part of group or cluster may be subject to retention.
BI O30	Ensure a Tree Management Plan is provided to ensure that trees are adequately protected during development and incorporated into the design of new developments.
BI O31	Restrict the cutting of hedges during the bird-nesting season (1st March until 31st August), except in certain legally defined circumstances, in accordance with the provisions of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000.
BI O32	Protect trees which are the subject of Tree Preservation Orders (see Table 12.3) and the 57 Champion and Heritage Trees in Kildare, which are identified on the Tree Register of Ireland.
BI O34	Manage, maintain, enhance, preserve, promote, encourage, and facilitate, as far as practicable, the preservation, proper provision, and retention of the existing network of native ancient woodlands and semi- natural woodlands of amenity value especially broadleaf species.
BI O35	Protect existing woodlands and trees and substantial areas of deciduous forest which are of amenity value and/or contribute to and interact with their landscape character and ensure that proper provision is made for their protection and management.
Chapter 15: Development, Management, and Standards	
15.16.4 Natural Heritage, Green Infrastructure, and Biodiversity	
	• The overall policies and objectives relating to natural heritage are set out in Chapter 12 of this Plan and all planning applications will be assessed having regard to same. • Any proposals impacting on a known site, or likely, to be a breeding or resting site of species listed in Habitats Regulations will require a derogation license, as per Article 16 of the Habitats Directive issued by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), which is part of the Heritage Division of the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. • Developers/Applicants should be advised of this possibility at pre-planning stage and are advised to consult with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), Licensing and Development Applications Unit, prior to making a planning application. It is preferable for a derogation license to have been applied for and/or obtained prior to submission of any planning application. • In order to comply with European and National legislation on nature conservation, and to ensure that areas of biodiversity value are adequately protected, an Ecological Impact Assessment will be required, as well as the provision of mitigation measures to address the proposals that have the potential to impact on environmentally sensitive sites. • An Appropriate Assessment should accompany development proposals relating to 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. • Such an Appropriate Assessment should be carried out by a person with ecological expertise and should be in accordance with Article 6(3) and Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive and the

Policy/Objective	Policy/Objective description
	'Guidance for Local Authorities Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland' (DEHLG) (2009). • All development proposals will be required to address the presence or absence of invasive alien species and where such species exist to submit an Invasive Species Management Plan, in order to comply with the provisions of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011-2015.
7.1.1.1 Riparian Corridors	
	• The riparian corridors of the county include rivers, streams and other watercourses and are important green infrastructure and biodiversity links. • Development within or affecting riparian corridors will have regard to the provisions of Section 12.10.1 of this Plan, the 'Requirements for the Protection of Fisheries Habitat during Construction and Development Works at River Sites' (IFI, 2004) and the 'Planning for Watercourses in the Urban Environment' (IFI, 2020). • All development proposals that are within or may affect riparian corridors should be accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment, including bat and otter surveys. • Expert advice should be sought from a suitably qualified bat expert, in developing lighting proposals along river and stream corridors. • The Council will also have regard to the observations and recommendations of Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) in relation to any development (greenfield development or redevelopment of brownfield sites) that could potentially impact on the aquatic ecosystems and associated riparian habitats. • A multi-disciplinary team including an ecologist and flood risk expert shall review all riverine sites to determine the appropriate zonation and permissible uses.

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