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**STATEMENT OF SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT
OF A PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AT LIFFEY VALLEY MOTOR MALL,
TOYOTA LIFFEY VALLEY, DUBLIN 22**

**IN LINE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF ARTICLE 6(3) OF THE
EU HABITATS DIRECTIVE**



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Article 6 of the EU Habitat's Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) requires that all plans and projects be screened for potential impacts upon Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) or Special Protection Areas (SPAs). The aim of this screening process is to establish whether or not a full Appropriate Assessment of the proposed plan or project is necessary.

A comprehensive assessment of the potential significant effects on European designated sites of a proposed development at Liffey Valley Motor Mall, Liffey Valley, Dublin 22 was carried out in June 2021 by Noreen McLoughlin, MSc, MCIEEM of Whitehill Environmental. This report will allow the competent authority, in this case South Dublin County Council, to undertake an Appropriate Assessment of the proposed development, as required under Article 6 (3).

The location of the proposed development is within 15km of sites designated under European Law. As such and in accordance with Article 6(3) of the EU Habitat's Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) regarding Appropriate Assessment, this screening exercise for Appropriate Assessment was carried out in order to identify whether any significant impacts on designated sites are likely. This exercise will also determine the appropriateness of the proposed project, in the context of the conservation status of the designated sites.

1.2 REGULATORY CONTEXT

The Birds Directive (Council Directive 2009/147/EC) recognises that certain species of birds should be subject to special conservation measures concerning their habitats. The Directive requires that Member States take measures to classify the most suitable areas as Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for the conservation of bird species listed in Annex 1 of the Directive. SPAs are selected for bird species (listed in Annex I of the Birds Directive), that are regularly occurring populations of migratory bird species and the SPA areas are of international importance for these migratory birds.

The EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) requires that Member States designate and ensure that particular protection is given to sites (Special Areas of Conservation) which are made up of or support particular habitats and species listed in annexes to this Directive.

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of this Directive also call for the undertaking of an Appropriate Assessment for plans and projects not directly connected with or necessary to the

management of, but which are likely to have a significant effect on any European designated sites (i.e. SACs and SPAs).

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) (2000/60/EC), which came into force in December 2000, establishes a framework for community action in the field of water policy. The WFD was transposed into Irish law by the European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (S.I. 722 of 2003). The WFD rationalises and updates existing legislation and provides for water management on the basis of River Basin Districts (RBDs). RBDs are essentially administrative areas for coordinated water management and are comprised of multiple river basins (or catchments), with cross-border basins (i.e. those covering the territory of more than one Member State) assigned to an international RBD. The aim of the WFD is to ensure that waters achieve at least good status by 2021 and that status does not deteriorate in any waters.

Appropriate Assessment and the Habitats Directive

Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Fauna and Flora – the ‘Habitats Directive’ - provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. Article 2 of the Directive requires the maintenance or restoration of habitats and species of European Community interest, at a favourable conservation status. Articles 3 - 9 provide the legislative means to protect habitats and species of Community interest through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of sites known as *Natura 2000*. *Natura 2000* sites are Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (79/409/EEC).

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive sets out the decision-making tests for plans or projects affecting *Natura 2000* sites. Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for Appropriate Assessment:

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

Article 6(4) deals with the steps that should be taken when it is determined, as a result of appropriate assessment, that a plan/project will adversely affect a European site. Issues dealing with alternative solutions, imperative reasons of overriding public interest and compensatory measures need to be addressed in this case.

Article 6(4) states:

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

Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species, the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest."

The Appropriate Assessment Process

The aim of Appropriate Assessment is to assess the implications of a proposal in respect of a designated site's conservation objectives.

The 'Appropriate Assessment' itself is an assessment which must be carried out by the competent authority which confirms whether the plan or project in combination with other plans and projects will have an adverse impact on the integrity of a European site.

Screening for Appropriate Assessment shall be carried out by the competent authority as set out in Section 177U(1) and (2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) as follows:

'(1) A screening for appropriate assessment of a draft Land use plan or application for consent for proposed development shall be carried out by the competent authority to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if that Land use plan or proposed development, individually or in combination with another plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on the European site.

(2) A competent authority shall carry out a screening for appropriate assessment under subsection (1) before—

(a) a Land use plan is made including, where appropriate, before a decision on appeal in relation to a draft strategic development zone is made, or

(b) consent for a proposed development is given.'

The competent authority shall determine that an Appropriate Assessment is not required if it can be excluded, that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or project will have a significant effect on a European site.

Where the competent authority cannot exclude the potential for a significant effect on a European site, an Appropriate Assessment shall be deemed required.

Where an Appropriate Assessment is required, the conclusions of the Appropriate Assessment Report (Natura Impact Statement (NIS)) should enable the competent authority to ascertain whether the plan or proposed development would adversely affect the integrity of the European site. If adverse impacts on the integrity of a European site cannot be avoided, then mitigation measures should be applied during the appropriate assessment process to the point where no adverse impacts on the site remain. Under the terms of the Habitats Directive consent can only be granted for a project if, as a result of the appropriate assessment either (a) it is concluded that the integrity of any European sites will not be adversely affected, or (b) after mitigation, where adverse impacts cannot be excluded, there is shown to be an absence of alternative solutions, and there exists imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the project should go ahead.

Section 177(V) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) outlines that the competent authority shall carry out the Appropriate Assessment, taking into account the Natura Impact Statement (amongst any other additional or supplemental information). A determination shall then be made by the competent authority in line with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive as to whether the plan or proposed development would adversely affect the integrity of a European site, prior to consent being given.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

This Statement of Screening for Appropriate Assessment (Stage 1) has been prepared with reference to the following:

- European Commission (2018). Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC.
- European Commission (2002). Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological Guidance on the Provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC.
- European Commission (2006). Nature and Biodiversity Cases: Ruling of the European Court of Justice.
- European Commission (2007). Clarification of the Concepts of: Alternative Solution, Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest, Compensatory Measures, Overall Coherence, Opinion of the Commission.
- Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2009). Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities.

The EC Guidance sets out a number of principles as to how to approach decision making during the process. The primary one is 'the precautionary principle' which requires that the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 should prevail where there is uncertainty.

When considering the precautionary principle, the emphasis for assessment should be on objectively demonstrating with supporting evidence that:

- There will be no significant effects on a Natura 2000 site;
- There will be no adverse effects on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site;
- There is an absence of alternatives to the project or plan that is likely to have an adverse effect to the integrity of a Natura 2000 site; and
- There are compensation measures that maintain or enhance the overall coherence of Natura 2000.

This translates into a four stage process to assess the impacts, on a designated site or species, of a policy or proposal.

The EC Guidance states that "each stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required". Consequently, the Council may not need to proceed through all four stages in undertaking the Appropriate Assessment.

The four-stage process is:

Stage 1: Screening – The process which identifies the likely impacts upon a Natura 2000 site of a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, and considers whether or not these impacts are likely to be significant;

Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment – The consideration of the impact on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site of the project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, with respect to the site's structure and function and its conservation objectives. Additionally, where there are adverse impacts, an assessment of the potential mitigation of those impacts;

Stage 3: Assessment of Alternative Solutions – The process which examines alternative ways of achieving objectives of the project or plan that avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site;

Stage 4: Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain – An assessment of the compensatory measures where, in the light of an assessment of imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI), it is deemed that the project or plan should proceed.

In complying with the obligations set out in Articles 6(3) and following the guidelines described above, this screening statement has been structured as a stage by stage approach as follows:

- Description of the proposed project;
- Identification of the Natura 2000 sites close to the proposed development;
- Identification and description of any individual and cumulative impacts on the Natura 2000 sites likely to result from the project;
- Assessment of the significance of the impacts identified above on site integrity. Exclusion of sites where it can be objectively concluded that there will be no significant effects.

2.2 STATEMENT OF COMPETENCY

This AA screening report was carried out by Noreen McLoughlin, BA, MSc, MCIEEM. Noreen has an honours degree in Zoology and an MSc in Freshwater Ecology from Trinity College, Dublin and she has been a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management for over fifteen years. Noreen has over 16 years' experience as a professional ecologist in Ireland.

2.3 DESK STUDIES & CONSULTATION

Information on the site and the area of the proposed development was studied prior to the completion of this statement. The following data sources were accessed in order to complete a thorough examination of potential impacts:

- National Parks and Wildlife Service - Aerial photographs and maps of designated sites, information on habitats and species within these sites and information on protected plant or animal species, conservation objectives, site synopses and standard data forms for relevant designated sites.
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)- Information pertaining to water quality, geology and licensed facilities within the area;
- Myplan.ie – Mapped based information;
- National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) – Information pertaining to protected plant and animal species within the study area;
- Bing maps & Google Street View – High quality aerials and street images;
- Node Architecture / Tom Philips and Associates Planning – Information regarding the proposed development including site plans and specifications.
- South Dublin County Council – Information on planning history in the area.

2.4 FIELD BASED STUDIES

A visit to the site of the proposed application at Liffey Valley was conducted on June 3rd 2021 when the habitats within the proposed development site were noted.

ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

The proposed development was assessed to identify its potential ecological impacts and from this, the Zone of Influence (Zoi) of the proposed development was defined. Based on the potential impacts and their Zoi, the Natura 2000 sites potentially at risk from direct, indirect or in-combination impacts were identified. The assessment considered all potential impact sources and pathways connecting the proposed development to Natura 2000 sites,

in view of the conservation objectives supporting the favourable conservation condition of the site's Qualifying Interests (QIs) or Special Conservation Interests (SCIs).

The conservation objectives relating to each Natura 2000 site and its QIs/SCIs are cited generally for SACs as "to maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected", and for SPAs "to maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA".

As defined in the Habitat's Directive, the favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- Its natural range and area it covers within that range is stable or increasing;
- The specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future;

The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

- The population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats;
- The natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future;
- There is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

Where site-specific conservation objectives (SSCOs) have been prepared for a European site, these include a series of specific attributes and targets against which effects on conservation condition, or integrity, can be measured. Where potential significant effects are identified, then these SSCO's should be considered in detail.

3 SCREENING

3.1 DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION

Tom Staunton has indicated his intention to shortly apply to South Dublin County Council for an extension to the existing Toyota Motor Sales Outlet at the Liffey Valley Motor Mall, Toyota Liffey Valley, Dublin 22. Planning will be sought on this 1.4ha site for the construction of:

- A single storey (double height) extension (c.568m²) to the existing Motor Sales Outlet with a servicing area which will comprise a car body shop and valet area;
- A single storey remote sales office (c.20m²);
- A covered bike shelter; ancillary petrol fill area; alterations to vehicle storage area; alterations and relocation of the existing vehicle display provision (resulting in total of 79 no. defined display spaces (59 no. additional) together with indicative display areas with capacity for c. 72 no. vehicles); a reduction in service spaces (resulting in total of 23 no. service spaces (3 no. less)) and relocation and additions to the existing staff car parking provision (resulting in total of 25 no. staff spaces (5 no. additional); and provision of a new pedestrian site entrance.

The development will also consist of signage (3 no. signs (4.45 sq m; 2.71 sq m; 0.58 sq m)); alterations and additions to the soft and hard landscaping, including the removal of existing fence, new boundary treatment and internal vehicle access gate, pedestrian paths and access, paving, tarmac and planting; relocation of vehicle sliding gate; an additional vehicle display podium; additional electric charging bays; new lighting; elevational changes to the existing building to facilitate the extension; an additional attenuation tank; all piped infrastructure and ducting; plant; and all associated site development and excavation works above and below ground. An extract from the planning drawings is provided in Figure 1.

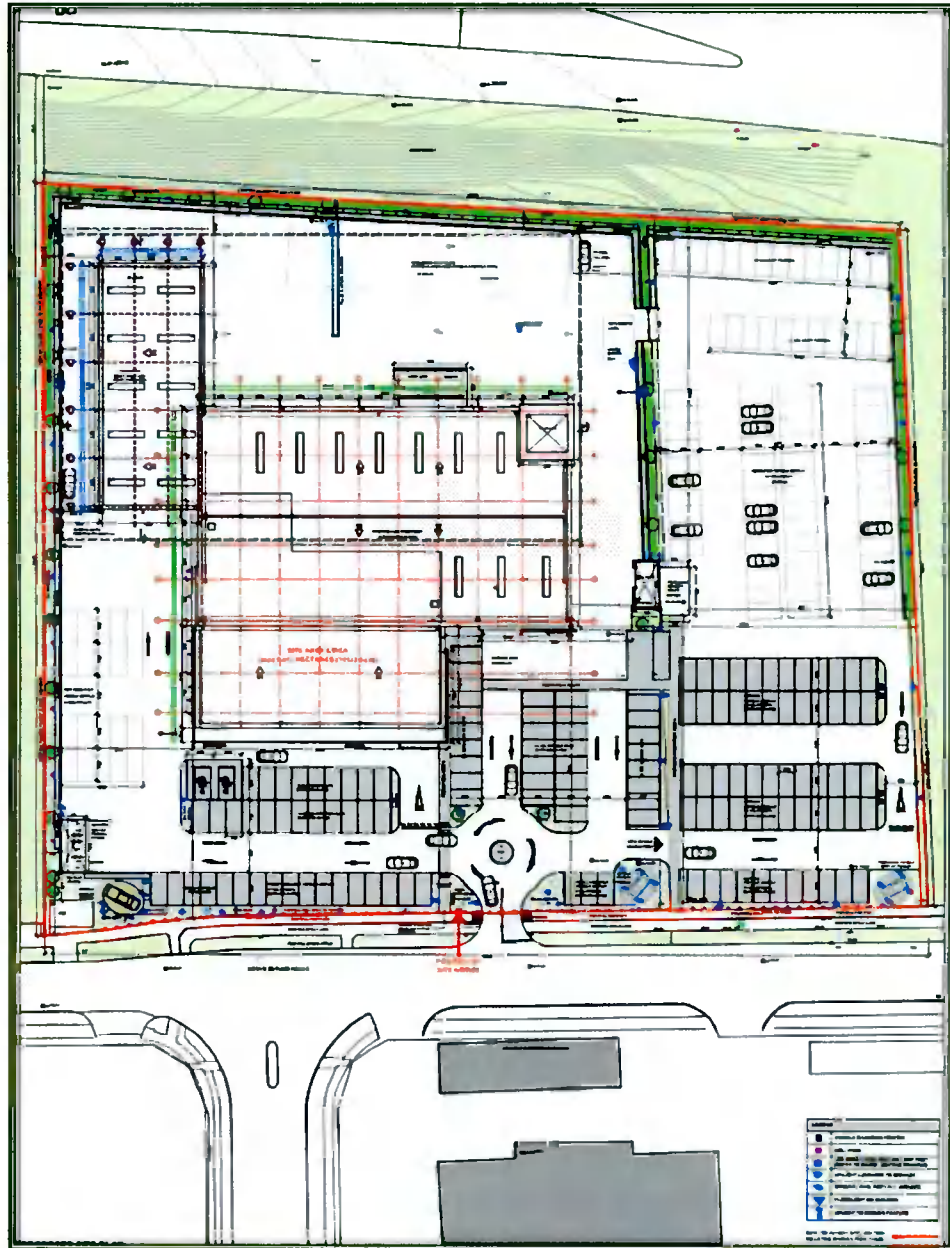


Figure 1 – Site Plan by Node Architecture

SURFACE WATER

Details for the management of foul water have been outlined in the Engineering Services Report prepared by OCSC. It is proposed to provide a surface water network to serve the development in accordance with the South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2016-2022, the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GSDSDS) and the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works.

New developments must also ensure that a comprehensive Sustainable Drainage System, SuDS, is incorporated into the development. SuDS requires that post-development run-off rates be maintained at equivalent, or lower, levels than pre-development levels. Thus, the development must be able to retain, within its boundaries, surface water volumes from extreme rainfall events up to a 1 in 100-year rainfall event, more commonly expressed as a 1.0% AEP (Annual Exceedance Probability), while also allowing for an additional climate change factor of 10% increase in rainfall intensity. Any new development must also have the physical capacity to retain surface water volumes as directed under the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Strategy (GSDSDS) and, if necessary, release these attenuated surface water volumes to an outfall at a controlled flow rate.

A further component of the SuDS protocol is to increase the overall water quality of surface water runoff before it enters a natural watercourse or a public sewer, which ultimately discharges to a water body. This is to ensure the highest possible standard of surface water quality.

It is proposed to reduce and restrict the rainfall runoff discharging from the proposed development to the greenfield equivalent (OBAR_{rural}). This is to be achieved with the provision of a flow restrictor (Hydro-Brake Optimum by Hydro-International, or similar approved) prior to discharging to the existing surface water network at the north-eastern corner of the site, with the appropriate measures of attenuation provided. Sub-catchment flow-control devices and associated attenuation are also to be strategically provided, in order to maximise SuDS benefits and avail of the central open space for preliminary attenuation.

The overall surface water drainage system, serving the proposed development, is to consist of a gravity sewer network that will convey runoff from the roofs and paved areas to the outfall manhole, which will discharge a controlled flow rate to the existing surface water sewer at the northern-eastern boundary of the site.

Temporary underground storage is to be provided towards the northern end of the vehicle storage area in order to restrict the run-off to the greenfield equivalent rate, this storage has

been designed to temporarily store run-off from events up to an including the 1% AEP event with an increase of 10% in rainfall intensity.

Initial interim attenuation is provided in the base course of the proposed pervious paving in car parking areas to reduce the flow rate & improve water quality prior to entering the main surface water network. The pervious paving has been designed to temporary store and treat runoff for the developments roads as well as the car parking itself. This will aid in increasing the quality of the water entering the developments surface water network. Perforated pipes are to be provided within the pervious paving base course, which will connect to the main surface water drainage network. A total of 66m³ temporary storage is provided within the base course of the pervious paving.

The proposed development is to contain the following measures of Sustainable Drainage Systems:

Limiting discharge.

The design outflow from the overall development (c.o.40-ha development catchment) is to be restricted to a maximum total outflow rate of 2.0 l/s (5.0 l/s/ha), which is the equivalent Greenfield runoff.

Pervious Paving

Will be provided within the car parking spaces towards the south of the vehicle storage area. Pervious paving will have 300mm drainage stone below the surface finish. Perforated pipes will be provided within the layer of drainage stone in order to allow excess surface water to enter the main network. A geotextile is to be provided below the stone of all pervious paving in order to allow for interception below, reducing the volume of water entering the main surface water network. This will attenuate rainfall runoff from the road and parking area prior to entering the main surface water drainage network, while also providing at source treatment of rainfall. 66m³ temporary storage is to be provided within the base course of the pervious paving.

Interception Storage

Will be provided below the developments primary attenuation. This is to be provided to temporarily store and treat the first 5mm rainfall on the development. This interception storage is to be allowed to drain naturally, reducing the volume of water contributing to the main surface water network with the development. A total of 20m³ interception storage is to be provided in open graded crushed rock below the developments primary attenuation.

The interception storage volume requirement was calculated based on the hardstanding area of the proposed development, using 4000m² hard standing area and is designed to intercept the first 5mm rainfall on the proposed development.

Attenuation Storage

Will be provided underground, using a proprietary product, Y-ESS – Pluvial Cube or similar approved to temporarily store the 1 in 100 year ARI including a 10% allowance for climate change, which is to be provided below the vehicle storage area towards the north of the site. A total of 170m³ temporary storage is to be provided in the underground attenuation. A total of 256m³ temporary storage is to be provided comprising of the proprietary system (170 m³), pervious paving (66 m³), interception storage (20m³).

Filter Drains

Will be provided along the northern and eastern boundary of the development. Hardstanding areas will be allowed to drain into these filter drains which will act as over the edge drainage. These will provide a small amount of attenuation along with providing treatment of runoff through the provision of drainage stone, these filter drains will increase the time of concentration for the runoff entering the surface water network. These filter drains will convey runoff from the hardstanding areas to the main attenuation through the use of perforated pipes.

Water Quality

Water quality of the surface water, discharging from site, is to be improved with the following provisions:

- Pervious Paving in parking areas, as described above.
- Filter drains to act as over the edge drainage.
- Interception storage below the attenuation.
- Silt traps to be provided on manholes immediately upstream of attenuation systems, as a further preventative measure to trap silt and other gross pollutants.
- Class 1 bypass fuel separator to be provided prior to discharging from site.

WASTEWATER AND REFUELLING

It is proposed to separate the wastewater and surface water networks which are to serve the proposed development. A new wastewater sewer is to be installed within the site to serve the proposed extension. A class 1 fuel separator is to be provided on this sewer to aid in removing gross pollutants, prior to connecting to the existing wastewater sewer on site. The new wastewater sewer is to consist of 150mm pipes.

In order to serve the proposed fuel fill area a connection is to be provided from the gully within the petrol fill area to the existing wastewater sewer. This wastewater sewer passes through a fuel separator which is part of the existing network prior to discharging to the main wastewater network to north of the site.

FLOOD RISK

The proposed development site is entirely located within Flood Zone C and is considered to be not at risk from fluvial, coastal or pluvial flooding.

3.2 SITE LOCATION AND SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT

The site in question is approximately 3.4 hectares in area. It is located within the Liffey Valley Motor Mall Complex, which is to the north-west of the Liffey Valley Shopping Centre. The site is immediately south the N4 road corridor and it will be accessed via a road that is just off the Fonthill Road. The site is 3.2km east of Lucan village, 1.2km west of Palmerston and it is 9.4km west of Dublin City Centre.

The site is surrounded by the urban fabric of Lucan, Ballyowen and Fonthill and their associated residential, commercial and industrial areas. The dominant habitats associated with these areas include buildings and artificial surfaces, as well as amenity grasslands and gardens. There are also some natural habitats associated with the area surrounding Liffey Valley to the north of the site. These areas include scattered trees and parklands, treelines, hedgerows, areas of broadleaved woodland, as well as the River Liffey and its riparian habitats. The site is zoned C1.1, i.e., commercial and retail by South Dublin County Council. Site location maps can be seen in Figures 2 and 3.

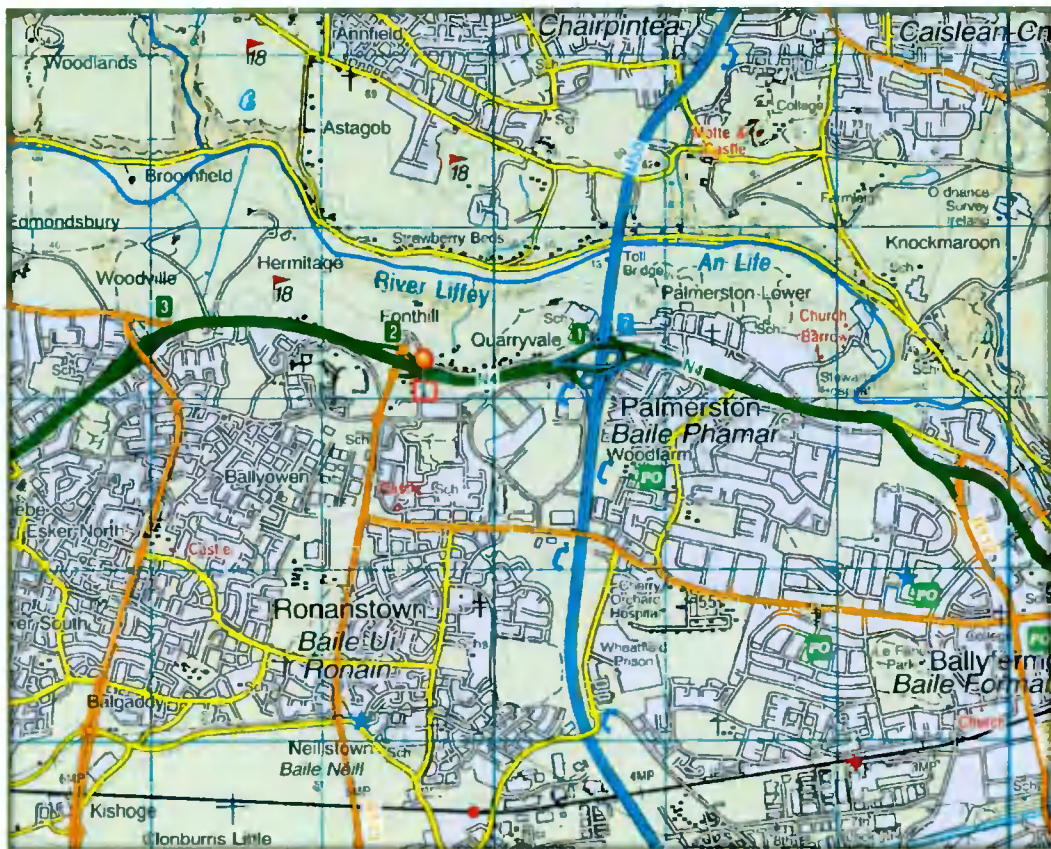


Figure 2 – Site Location Map (Pinned)



Figure 3 – Site Location Map (Site Outlined in Red)

HABITATS AND NOTABLE SPECIES

The application site does not lie within or adjacent to any area that has been designated for nature conservation purposes. All proposed development works within the application site will take place on areas of low biodiversity value. The dominant habitat within the application site currently is that associated with the existing showroom and carparks, i.e., buildings and artificial surfaces. The additional car parking space that will be constructed to the east of the existing buildings will be done on an unmanaged grassland area which is akin to a *Dry Meadow and Grassy Verges* Type habitats. There are also some pockets of bramble scrub on the site. There are no habitats of biodiversity value within the site. An overview of the local habitats surrounding the application site can be seen in the aerial photograph in Figure 4.

Records from the National Biodiversity Data Centre reveal the presence of the following protected mammals from within the 1km squares (O0635 and O0634) of this proposed application site:

- Badger *Meles meles*
- Pine martin *Martes martes*
- Daubenton’s bat *Myotis daubentonii*

- Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus sensu lato*
- Lesser Noctule *Nyctalus leisleri*
- Soprano Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*

All these species are protected under the Irish Wildlife Acts. A custom polygon that was generated for the site revealed that these records do not pertain to the application site itself. There are no suitable habitats within the application site for any of these species and these records are likely associated with the habitats to the north of the N4, including the protected river and woodland habitats of the Liffey Valley proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA 000128).

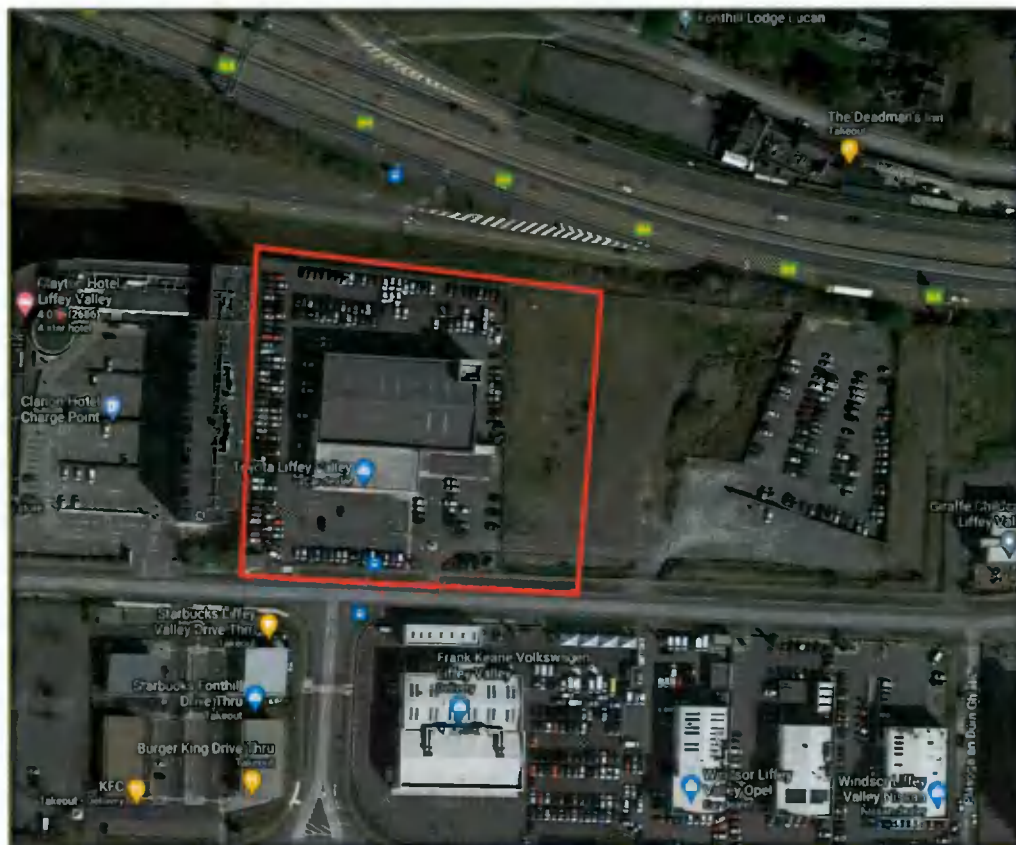


Figure 4 – Area Photo of the Site and Its Surrounding Habitats (Site Outlined in Red)

©Google Maps

WATER FEATURES AND QUALITY

The application site lies within the Liffey and Dublin Bay Hydrometric Area (09), Catchment (09), Sub-Catchment (090) and Sub-Basin (180). There are no drains or streams within or adjacent to the application site. The closest mapped water feature to the site is the Quarryvale Stream and this rises in lands approximately 220m north of the site. This stream flows north for approximately 500m until its confluence with the River Liffey.

The EPA have not classified the ecological status of the Quarryvale Stream and the River Liffey at points close to the application site. Overall, the River Liffey varies from good ecological status upstream of Lucan Bridge, to moderate status downstream of Chapelizoid. Under the requirements of the Water Framework Directive, all waterbodies must achieve good status within the timeframe set out within this Directive.

3.3 NATURA 2000 SITES IDENTIFIED

In accordance with the guidelines issued by the Department of the Environment and Local Government, a list of Natura 2000 sites within 15km of the proposed development have been identified and described according to their site synopses, qualifying interests and conservation objectives. In addition, any other sites further than this, but potentially within its zone of interest were also considered. The zone of impact may be determined by an assessment of the connectivity between the application site and the designated areas by virtue of hydrological connectivity, atmospheric emissions, flight paths, ecological corridors etc.

For significant effects to arise, there must be a potential impact facilitated by having a *source*, i.e., the proposed development and activities arising out of its construction or operation, a *receptor*, i.e., the European site and its qualifying interests and a subsequent *pathway or connectivity* between the source and receptor, e.g., a water course. The likelihood for significant effects on the European site will largely depend on the characteristics of the source (e.g., nature and scale of the construction works), the characteristics of the existing pathway and the characteristics of the receptor, e.g., the sensitivities of the Qualifying Interests (habitats or species) to changes in water quality.

There are eight Natura 2000 designated sites within 15km of the application site. These designated areas and their closest points to the application site are summarised in Table 1 and a map showing their locations relative to the application site is shown in Figure 5. A full description of all these sites can be read on the website of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (npws.ie).

Site Name & Code	Distance	Qualifying Interests	Significant Effects
Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC 001398	6km north-west	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desmoulin's Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>) • Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo angustior</i>) • Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion)* 	<i>No direct hydrological or ecological connectivity between this Natura 2000 site and the application site therefore significant effects are unlikely.</i>
Glenasmole Valley SAC 001209	10.8km south	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites) • Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or 	<i>No direct hydrological or ecological connectivity between this Natura 2000 site and the application site therefore significant effects are unlikely.</i>

		<p>clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) 	
<p>South Dublin Bay / River Tolka Estuary SPA 004024</p>	<p>11.3km east</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) • Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) • Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) • Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) • Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) • Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) • Dunlin (<i>Calidris tetanus</i>) • Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) • Redshank (<i>Tringa tetanus</i>) • Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) • Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) • Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) • Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) • Wetland and Waterbirds 	<p><i>No direct hydrological or ecological connectivity between this Natura 2000 site and the application site therefore significant effects are unlikely.</i></p>
<p>South Dublin Bay SAC 000201</p>	<p>12.6km east</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide • Annual vegetation of drift lines • Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand • Embryonic shifting dunes 	<p><i>No direct hydrological or ecological connectivity between this Natura 2000 site and the application site therefore significant effects are unlikely.</i></p>
<p>Wicklow Mountains SAC 002122</p>	<p>13.1km south</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae) • Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds • Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> • European dry heaths • Alpine and Boreal heaths • Calaminarian grasslands of the Violetalia 	<p><i>No direct hydrological or ecological connectivity between this Natura 2000 site and the application site therefore significant effects are unlikely.</i></p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> calaminariae • Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe) • Blanket bogs (* if active bog) • Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladani</i>) • Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation • Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation • Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles • <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) 	
North Dublin Bay SAC 000206	14.5km east	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide • Annual vegetation of drift lines • <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand • Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) • Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia z3renaria</i>) • Embryonic shifting dunes • Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila z3renaria</i> (white dunes) • Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) • Humid dune slacks • <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (Petalwort) 	<i>No direct hydrological or ecological connectivity between this Natura 2000 site and the application site therefore significant effects are unlikely.</i>
Wicklow Mountains SPA 004040	14.5km south	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>) • Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>) 	<i>No direct hydrological or ecological connectivity between this Natura 2000 site and the application site therefore significant</i>

			<i>effects are unlikely.</i>
North Bull Island SPA 004006	14,5km east	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) • Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) • Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) • Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) • Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) • Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) • Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) • Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) • Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) • Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) • Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) • Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) • Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) • Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) • Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) • Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) • Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) • Wetland and Waterbirds 	<i>No direct hydrological or ecological connectivity between this Natura 2000 site and the application site therefore significant effects are unlikely.</i>

Table 1 – Natura 2000 Sites Within 15km of the Proposed Site

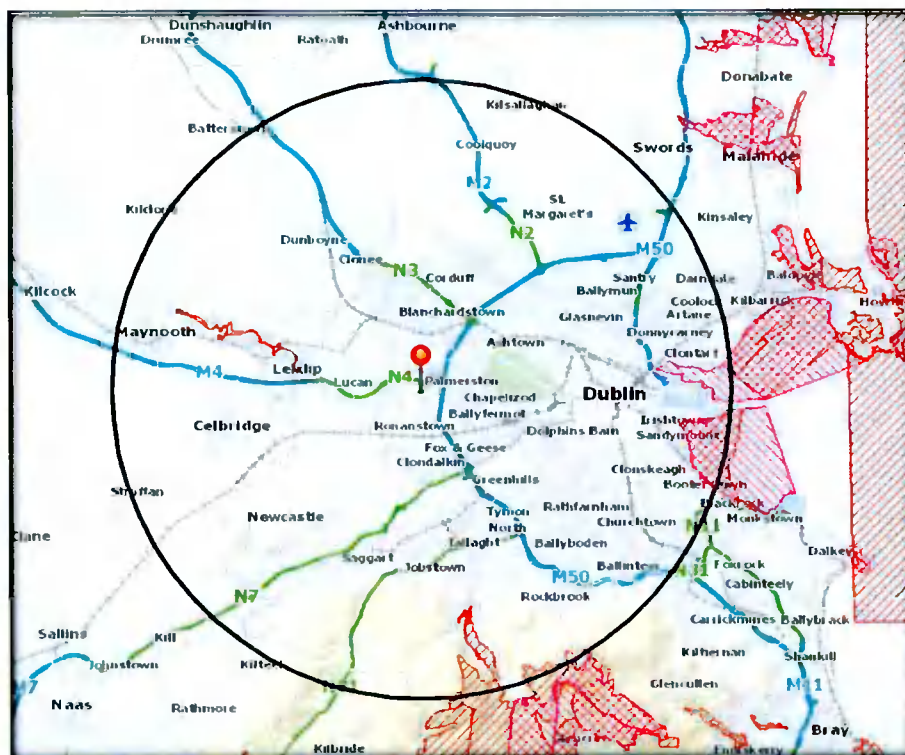


Figure 5 – The Application Site (Pinned) in relation to the Natura 2000 Sites (SACs – Red Hatching; SPAs – Pink Hatching). 15km Boundary Shown.

3.4 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The potential impacts of the proposed development on the Natura 2000 sites identified above are described below.

Describe the individual elements of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on nearby Natura 2000 site:

The construction and operation of the proposed development will have **no significant effects** upon the designated sites identified. There are no individual elements of the proposed project that are likely to give rise to negative impacts on these sites. There are no watercourses on site and there is no hydrological connectivity between the application site and any designated area. As there are no potential pollution pathways between the application site and the designated areas, therefore potential direct and indirect impacts and subsequent significant effects on the sites within 15km of the development will be avoided.

Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the nearby Natura 2000 sites by virtue of:

Size and scale: Given the small size and scale of the development in relation to the overall size of the Natura 2000 sites identified, the likelihood of any direct, indirect or cumulative impacts on these designated sites arising from the construction and operation of the proposed development are low.

Land-take: There will be no land-take from any designated site. There will be no interference with the boundaries of any designated site. There will be no loss of undesignated habitats of biodiversity value.

Distance from Natura 2000 site or key features of the site: There are 8 Natura 2000 sites within 15km of the application site. The closest Natura 2000 site to the application site is Rye Water Valley/Cartron SAC and this is 6km north-west of the site. In this instance, as there is no hydrological connectivity, this distance is sufficient to ensure that significant effects upon this site will not arise.

Resource requirements (water abstraction etc.): No resources will be taken from any Natura 2000 site and there are no resource requirements that will impact upon any designated site.

Emissions: There will be no emissions from the application site to any Natura 2000 site during the construction phase of the project. A detailed surface water management plan has been provided and surface water from the site will be dealt with in accordance with the GDSDS and in line with SuDs protocols. All excess surface water from the site will ultimately discharge to the public surface water network following attenuation and treatment through silt traps and petrol interceptors. This strategy will have no effects upon any designated site.

Excavation requirements: Construction and demolition waste and excavated material from the construction will be used on site. Any remaining will be disposed of in a responsible manner in a

licensed facility away from any designated sites.

Transportation requirements: No access to any areas of any designated site will be required during any phase of project.

In-Combination / Cumulative Impacts: The proposed application was considered in combination with other developments or proposed developments in the Liffey Valley/Lucan/Dublin area and potential cumulative impacts were considered. Any individual application that has the potential to impact upon a Natura 2000 site will be subject to Appropriate Assessment as required under Articles 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. The construction and operation of the proposed development will have no impacts when considered in combination with other plans and projects that have been screened for Appropriate Assessment or where mitigation measures have been included as part of Appropriate Assessment (Natura Impact Statement).

Duration of construction, operation, decommissioning etc: Construction will take approximately 6 months – one year.

Describe any likely changes to the nearby Natura 2000 sites arising as a result of:

Reduction of habitat area: The proposed development lies outside the boundaries of the Natura 2000 sites identified in Section 3.3. There will be no reduction of designated habitat area or interference with any protected habitat within any SAC or SPA. There will be no interference with the boundaries of any designated site.

Disturbance to key species: The bird species identified as using the SPAs within 15km of the site are wading species that use the estuarine and coastal habitats of Dublin Bay and the surrounding areas. They will not be impacted upon by the construction or operation of the proposed development. There will be no deterioration in water quality within any SPA that may lead to indirect impacts upon these bird species. There are no suitable feeding sites within the application site for these birds.

Habitat or species fragmentation: There will be no habitat or species fragmentation within any SAC or SPA. There will be no impacts upon the conservation condition of any of the habitats that have been listed as Qualifying Interests of any SAC within 15km and the targets and attributes that define the favourable conservation condition of these habitats will remain unaffected. No ecological corridors between the site and any Natura 2000 site will be damaged or destroyed. There will be no loss of any habitat of biodiversity value.

Reduction in species density: There will be no reduction in species density within any SAC and SPA. There will be no reduction of bird density in any SPA arising from the application. There will be no loss of any non-designated feeding areas used by birds that are listed in Annex I of the Birds Directive.

Changes in key indicators of conservation value (water quality etc.): There will be no negative impacts upon surface or ground water quality within any SAC or SPA. The proposed development will not lead to any changes in any of the attributes or targets that define the favourable conservation

condition of any Natura 2000 site.

Describe any likely impacts on the nearby Natura 2000 sites as a whole in terms of:

Interference with the key relationships that define the structure or function of the site: It is not considered likely that there will be any impacts on the key relationships that define the structure or function of the Natura 2000 sites identified.

Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of:

Loss - Estimated percentage of lost area of habitat: None

Fragmentation: None

Disruption & disturbance: None

Change to key elements of the site (e.g. water quality etc.): None

3.5 FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS

Finding of No Significant Effects Report Matrix	
Name of project	Proposed Expansion of the Toyota Showrooms and Motor Hall at Liffey Valley, Dublin 22.
Name and location of Natura 2000 site	There are eight Natura 2000 sites within 15km of this proposed development. The closest of these is the Rye Water Carlton SAC and this is 6km north-west of the application site.
Description of project	A Small Scale Commercial Development
Is the project directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site?	No
Are there other projects or plans that together with project being assessed could affect the site?	No
The Assessment of Significance of Effects	
Describe how the project is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site	Having regard to the location, nature and scale of the proposed development, it is considered that there is no potential for significant effects either from the proposed development on its own or in combination with other plans and projects.
Explain why these effects are not considered significant	Not applicable as there is no potential for negative impacts
Describe how the project is likely to affect species designated under Annex II of the Habitats Directive.	No impacts likely
Data Collected to Carry out the Assessment	
Who carried out the assessment	Noreen McLoughlin, MSC, MCIEEM. Consultant Ecologist
Sources of data	NPWS, EPA, National Biodiversity Data Centre, South Dublin County Council
Level of assessment completed	Stage1 Appropriate Assessment Screening
Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed	Full results included

4 APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT CONCLUSION

In accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, the relevant case law, established best practice and the precautionary principle, this AA Screening Report has examined the details of the project in relation to the relevant Natura 2000 sites within 15km of the application site. This report has analysed the potential impacts and effects of the proposed project on the Special Conservation Interests of these designated sites. It has evaluated the significance of these potential impacts and effects in view of these sites' conservation objectives.

In view of best scientific knowledge and on the basis of objective information, it can be concluded that this application, whether individually or in combination with other plans and projects, will have no impacts upon the Natura 2000 sites. It is of the opinion of this author that this application does not need to proceed to Stage II of the Appropriate Assessment process.



Noreen McLoughlin, MSc, MCIEEM.
Ecologist.

(PI Insurance details available on request)