

Private Dwelling House at Coolmine, Saggart, Co. Dublin

Report for Screening for Appropriate Assessment



FINAL REPORT

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Faith Wilson Ecological Consultant was commissioned by William Lynch and Maeve Bambury Lynch to prepare a report for Screening for Appropriate Assessment for a proposed detached residential building, site works, well and wastewater treatment plant at Coolmine, Saggart, Co. Dublin (Grid Reference O 022 252) as shown on Figure 2.1 below (hereafter referred to as the site).

1.2 Legislative Background

The aim of the European Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of wild habitats and of wild fauna and flora) is to create a network of protected wildlife sites across Europe, which are to be maintained at a favourable conservation status¹. Each member state must designate their most important natural areas as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). The Directive specifies the scientific criteria on the basis of which SAC sites must be selected and very strictly curtails the grounds that can be used as justification for damaging a site. The network of sites is referred to as NATURA 2000 and includes SACs (Special Areas of Conservation) for protected habitats and species and SPAs (Special Protection Areas) for birds, which are designated under the European Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC as amended by Directive 2009/147/EC).

It is a requirement of the Habitats Directive ((92/43/EEC) that the competent consent authority, which in this case is the planning authority (or An Bord Pleanála on appeal), must ensure that a proposal, which is likely to have a significant effect on an SAC or SPA, is authorised only to the extent that the authority is satisfied it will not adversely affect the integrity of the area and that an appropriate assessment of the implications of the development for the conservation status of the site is undertaken.

The European Parliament, in a communication to the European Council in September 2000, states: The implementation of the European Habitats Directive and Birds Directive, both with respect to species conservation and with respect to the establishment of the Natura 2000 network, is one of the

¹ The conservation status of a habitat can be taken as "favourable" when its natural range and area it covers within that range is stable or increasing and the ecological factors that are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future.

The conservation status of a species can be taken as "favourable" when 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 and there is and will continue to be a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis. Article 1 (i) of the Habitats Directive 92/43 EEC.

most important tools for achieving the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity in the European Union and member states (European Parliament 2000).

Article 6 of the Habitats Directive provides a strict assessment procedure for any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a designated European site but which has the potential to have implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives.

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

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

Article 6(4) states:

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

The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 were implemented to transpose the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive into Irish law as well as addressing transposition failures identified in the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) judgements.

This report has taken into consideration the relevant requirements of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended by the Planning and Development Act 2010).

References to Natura 2000 sites throughout this report are to be taken as referring to European sites as defined in the above Planning Act.

1.3 Stages of Appropriate Assessment

This report has been prepared with regard to the following guidance documents where relevant:

- o *Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological Guidance on the Provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the*

Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (European Commission Environment Directorate General, 2001)

- *Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC* (EC Environment Directorate General, 2000)
- *Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC* (Commission Notice C(2018) 7621 final, Brussels, 21.11.2018)
- *Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities Circular NPW 1/10 & PSSP 2/10*
- *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities.* (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2010 revision)
- *Guidelines for Good Practice, Appropriate Assessment of Plans under Article 6(3) Habitats Directive* (International Workshop on Assessment of Plans under the Habitats Directive, 2011)
- *Guidance Document on Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC.* Clarification of the Concepts of Alternative Solutions, Imperative Reasons of Over-riding Public Interest, Compensatory Measures, Overall Coherence. Opinion of the European Commission (European Commission, January 2007)

There are four stages in an Appropriate Assessment as outlined in the European Commission Guidance Document (2001), summarised below:

• **Stage 1: Screening**

The first step to establishing if an appropriate assessment is required is referred to as 'screening' and its purpose is to determine on the basis of a preliminary assessment and objective criteria if the plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, could have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site in view of the sites conservation objectives. The process identifies any likely impacts upon a Natura 2000 Site, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant.

• **Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment**

This step considers the impact of the project or plan on the integrity of the Natura 2000 Site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, to the site's structure and function and its conservation objectives. Additionally, where there are deemed to be adverse impacts, an assessment of the potential mitigation of those impacts is considered.

• **Stage 3: Alternative Solutions**

This stage examines alternative means of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that aim to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site.

• **Stage 4: Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest**

This stage is the main derogation process outlined in Article 6(4) which examines whether there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) for allowing a plan or project which will have adverse effects on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site to proceed.

This report is to provide information to the consenting authority to carry out Stage 1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment. This report deems that it is not necessary to undertake any further stage of the Appropriate Assessment process and neither a Stage 2 A full Appropriate Assessment (Natura Impact Statement), Stage 3. Assessment of Alternative Solutions nor Stage 4. Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain were applicable in this instance, as the proposed development of a private residential dwelling at Coolmine will not adversely affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 site.

The report for Screening for Appropriate Assessment was based on a desk-top study drawing on information sources which included the following: NPWS on-line data for Natura 2000 sites; Ordnance Survey of Ireland mapping and aerial photography; geological, hydrological and soils data available from GSI. The site was previously visited in 2011 when the receiving habitats were surveyed and was revisited on 12th January 2022.

2. SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

2.1 Project Description

A new residential property is proposed for lands at Coolmine, Saggart, Co. Dublin as shown on Figure 2.1 below.

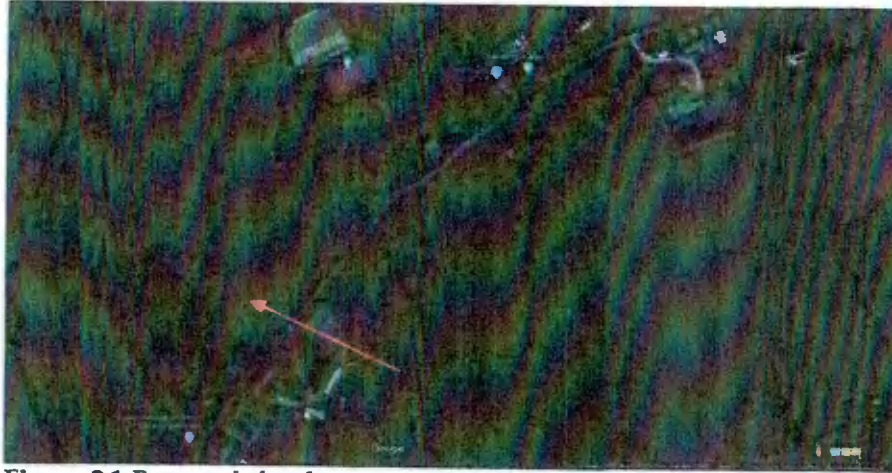


Figure 2.1 Proposed development site on land at Coolmine - indicated by red arrow.

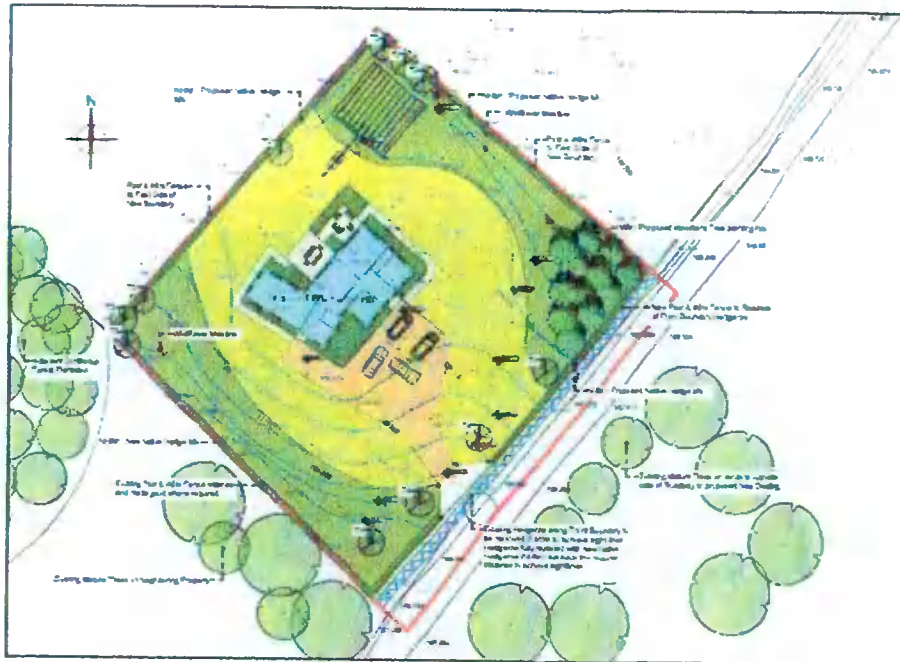


Figure 2.2. Proposed site layout.

2.2 Desk Study

A desk study was carried out to collate the available information on the ecological environment potentially impacted by the proposed development at

Coolmine. The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) database of designated conservation areas and NPWS records of rare and protected plant species as listed under the Irish Red Data list of Vascular Plants (Wyse Jackson, 2016) were checked with regard to the location of the lands at Coolmine.

Information on protected species of fauna and flora listed for protection under Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), Annex I of the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) and the Wildlife (Amendment) Act (2000) was also sought from NPWS and published sources. Recent, high resolution, colour aerial photographs were also used to identify and map potential habitats.

2.3 Field Survey

The lands consist of a field of improved agricultural grassland (GA1 in Fossitt 2000) which is grazed by horses. The sward is dominated by Perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*), Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), Creeping bent grass (*Agrostis stolonifera*), Creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), White clover (*Trifolium repens*), with occasional Dandelion (*Taraxacum* agg.), Ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), Spear thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), Red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), Ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*) and docks (*Rumex* sp.).



Plate 1. Looking north over the city.

A private dwelling is located to the south west within what was previously conifer woodland (WD4).

The shared boundary with the property to the south west consists of an old stone wall (BL1) behind which remnants of an old hedgerow of Elder (*Sambucus nigra*), Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.), Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) with Rosebay willowherb (*Chamaenerion angustifolium*), bramble, cleavers (*Galium aparine*) and nettle (*Urtica dioica*). Beyond this is a treeline (WL2) of Sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*), which is a remnant of the previous conifer woodland (WD4) which was present here when the site was first visited in 2011.

A post and rail fence is found to the north west and north east.

The lands are bounded to the south east by a hedgerow (WL1) along the local road. This hedgerow is heavily flailed and is dominated by bramble and elder, with occasional honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*), Ivy (*Hedera helix*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), with Cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*), Cleavers, Nettle, Hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*) and Bush vetch (*Vicia sepium*) at the base. At the northern end of this hedgerow adjoining the entrance to Coolmine Equestrian Centre there is a semi-mature ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) tree.



Plate 2. A private residence is found to the south of the site, which was developed in a former conifer plantation.

There are no watercourses or ditches within the site. The adjoining lands are used for agricultural purposes (grazing animals) including various equestrian businesses and a number of private residences are found in the area.



Plate 3. A heavily flailed and species poor hedgerow forms the south eastern boundary of the site.

2.4 Identification of Sites

In line with the European Commission Methodological Guidance (EC (2001)) and the DoEHLG Guidance (DoEHLG (2009)) a review of all Natura 2000 sites that could be potentially affected by the proposed project was made using the NPWS online map viewer. These included any Natura 2000 sites within or adjacent to the land at Coolmine and any Natura 2000 sites within the likely zone of impact of the proposed development (a 15km radius) including any downstream. These are summarised in **Table 2.4.1** below.

In addition to the identified Natura 2000 sites consideration is also given to relevant species listed under Annexes I and II of the Birds and Habitats Directives respectively, which form part of the qualifying/conservation interests of the sites – namely Otter, Kingfisher, Peregrine Falcon and Merlin, as well as various species of bats.

The lands at Coolmine are not currently designated for any nature conservation purposes.

A number of Natura 2000 designated sites occur within a 15km radius of the site as shown on **Figure 2.2** below. These include;

- Red Bog, Kildare SAC (Site Code: 000397)
- Glenasmole Valley SAC (Site Code: 001029)
- Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC (Site Code: 001398)
- Wicklow Mountains SAC (Site Code: 002122)
- Wicklow Mountains SPA (Site Code: 004040)

- Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA (Site Code: 004063)

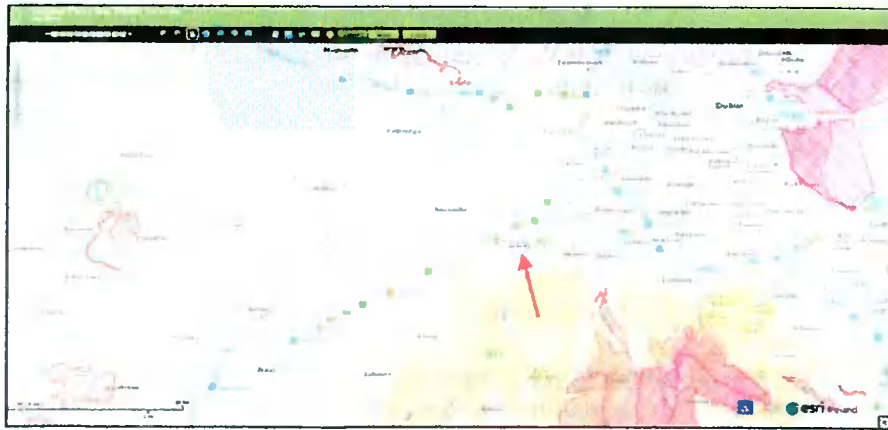


Figure 2.2 Designated areas in the vicinity of the lands at Coolmine (Source: National Parks and Wildlife Service).

The site synopses for these sites are presented in Appendix 1.

Some of these and a number of other sites in the area are also designated as proposed Natural Heritage Areas:

- Glenasmole Valley pNHA (Site Code: 001029),
- Poulaphouca Reservoir pNHA (Site Code: 000731)
- Liffey Valley pNHA (Site Code: 000128),
- Grand Canal pNHA (Site Code: 002104),
- Dodder Valley pNHA (Site Code: 000991),
- Lugmore Glen pNHA (Site Code: 001212),
- Slade of Saggart and Crooksling pNHA (Site Code: 000211),
- Killeel Wood pNHA (Site Code: 001394).

The 10km square in which the site is located (O12) contains a number of historical records of rare and scarce botanical species – namely Red Hemp Nettle (*Galeopsis angustifolia*), Bog Orchid (*Hammarbya paludosa*), Lesser Snapdragon (*Misopates orontium*), Small-white Orchid (*Pseudorchis albida*), and Great Burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*).

None of these species were recorded from Coolmine or are likely to occur within the proposed development.

Conservation Management Plans:

A detailed conservation management plan for all of these sites has not been published yet but the following general objectives for sites have been outlined by NPWS.

'The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives and Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas are designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as the Natura 2000 network. The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000

sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level'.

Glenasmole Valley SAC Conservation Management Plan²

Objective: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and /or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected:

- o 6210 Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (*Festuco-Brometalia*) (* important orchid sites)
- o 6410 *Molinia* meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinion caeruleae*)
- o 7220 Petrifying springs with tufa formation (*Cratoneurion*)*

Wicklow Mountains SAC Conservation Management Plan³

Objective: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and /or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected:

- o Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the *Littorelletea uniflorae* and/or *Isoeto-Nanojuncetea* [3130]
- o Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160]
- o Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix* [4010]
- o European dry heaths [4030]
- o Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060]
- o Species-rich *Nardus* grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe) [6230]
- o Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]
- o Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (*Androsacetalia alpinae* and *Galeopsietalia ladani*) [8110]
- o Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210]
- o Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220]
- o Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles [91A0]
- o *Lutra lutra* (Otter) [1355]

Red Bog SAC Conservation Management Plan⁴

Objective: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and /or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected:

- o 7140 Transition mires and quaking bogs

Rye Water Valley/Carlton SAC Conservation Management Plan⁵

² NPWS (2021) Conservation Objectives: Glenasmole Valley SAC 001209. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

³ NPWS (2017) Conservation Objectives: Wicklow Mountains SAC 002122. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

⁴ NPWS (2019) Conservation Objective: Red Bog, Kildare SAC [000397]. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

⁵ NPWS (2021) Conservation Objectives: Rye Water Valley/Carlton SAC 001398. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Objective: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and /or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected:

- Petrifying springs with tufa formation (*Cratoneurion*) [7220]
- *Vertigo angustior* (Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail) [1014]
- *Vertigo moulinsiana* (Desmoulin's Whorl Snail) [1016]

Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA Conservation Management Plan⁶

Objective: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA:

- Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*) [A043]
- Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*) [A183]

Wicklow Mountains SPA Conservation Management Plan⁷

Objective: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA:

- Merlin (*Falco columbarius*) [A098]
- Peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*) [A103]

This report has examined the detailed and generic conservation objectives for each Natura 2000 site and has not identified any potential risk of significant impact on any of these targets.

Bat Interest

Consultation with Bat Conservation Ireland has identified that several species of bats have been recorded within the 10km square (O 02) in which the site is located. These include:

- Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*),
- Soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*),
- Daubenton's bat (*Myotis daubentonii*),
- Leisler's bat (*Nyctalus leisleri*),
- Brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*),
- Several unidentified *Myotis* species, and
- an unidentified pipistrelle species (*Pipistrellus* sp.).

There are several confirmed bat roosts in close proximity to the lands at Coolmine but no roosts are recorded from the site. Known roosts include a roost of soprano pipistrelles at Crockaunadreenagh, Saggart, a roost of brown long-eared bat at the Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Mary in Saggart, several roosts of unidentified bats in Rathcoole Village, soprano pipistrelle bats in a private residence at Tinode, and common pipistrelle bats at Santry Hill.

⁶ : NPWS (2021) Conservation objectives for Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA [004063]. Generic Version 8.0. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

⁷ NPWS (2021) Conservation objectives for Wicklow Mountains SPA [004040]. Generic Version 8.0. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Table 2.4.1. Designated Natura 2000 sites within a 15km radius of the proposed development site at Coolmine.

Site Code	Site Name and Designation	Approximate distance from Coolmine	Conservation Interest (summarised from site synopsis)
004040	Wicklow Mountains SPA	10km SE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peregrine falcon (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>), • Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>), • (3130) Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletta uniflora and/or of the Isoetes-Nannojuncetia • (3160) Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds, • (4010) Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i>, • (4030) European dry heaths, • (4060) Alpine and Boreal heaths, • (6230) Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas, • (7130) Blanket bog (active only), • (8110) Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Caleopsidalia ladanii</i>), • (8210) Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation, • (8220) Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation, • (9990) Blanket bog (not active), • (1355) Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>).
001209	Glensasmole Valley SAC	6.4km E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (6210) Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco Brometalia) (important orchid sites) • (6410) <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinia caerulea</i>) • (7220) Petrifying springs with tufa formation (<i>Crotoncurtion</i>)
004063	Rod Bog, Kildare SAC Poulaphuca Reservoir SPA	8.7km SW 9.5km S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (7140) Transition mires and <u>glaiking</u> bogs • Greylag goose • Whooper swan • Lesser black-backed gull

Site Code	Site Name and Designation	Approximate distance from Coolin	Conservation Interest (summarised from site synopsis)
001398	Rye Water Valley/Caron SAC	10.6km NW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patriating springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220] • <i>Vertigo angustior</i> (Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail) [1014] • <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> (Desmoulin's Whorl Snail) [1016]

2.5 Identification of Potential Impacts

The potential impacts of the proposed development at Coolmine on the Natura 2000 sites within a 15km radius of the site are assessed using the following factors:

- size and scale
- land-take
- distance from the Natura 2000 site or key features of the site
- resource requirements (water abstraction etc.)
- emissions (disposal to land, water or air)
- excavation requirements
- transportation requirements
- duration of construction, operation, decommissioning, etc.
- reduction of habitat area
- disturbance to key species
- habitat or species fragmentation
- reduction in species density
- changes in key indicators of conservation value (water quality etc.)
- climate change
- key relationships that define the structure of the sites
- key relationships that define the function of the site

These impacts on the Natura 2000 sites within a 15km radius of the site are summarised below in Table 2.5.1.

Table 2.5.1. Likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on Natura 2000 sites within a 15km radius of the site by virtue of:

Size and scale	None
Land-take	None
Distance from Natura 2000 sites	10km SE Wicklow Mountains SPA 6.9km Se Wicklow Mountains SAC 6.4km E Glenasmole Valley SAC 8.7km SW Red Bog, Kildare SAC 9.5km S Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA
Resource requirements (water abstraction, etc.)	All water requirements for this project will be provided from a private well and will not impact on the water levels or the hydrology of any Natura 2000 site
Emissions (disposal to land, water or air)	Surface water drainage from the site will be attenuated via a series of soakaways within the site as designed by the project engineers Declan Kearns & Associates Ltd. Consulting Engineers. Wastewater generated from the proposed development will be discharged to a dedicated wastewater treatment system (Graf One 2 Clean 7PE Wastewater Treatment Plant with

	Pumped discharge followed by a 105m ² Soil Polishing Filter) within the site as designed by the project engineers Declan Kearns & Associates Ltd. Consulting Engineers. There will be no direct discharges to any SAC/SPA from the development.
Excavation requirements	None within any Natura 2000 site
Transportation requirements	Unknown at present - will use local road infrastructure
Duration of construction, operation, decommissioning, etc.	Unknown at present - estimate 12 months
Reduction of habitat area	None within any Natura 2000 site

Changes to any Natura 2000 sites within a 15km radius of the site arising as a result of disturbance, fragmentation, etc. are summarised below in Table 2.5.2.

Table 2.5.2. Description of likely changes to the site arising as a result of:

Disturbance to key species	None
Habitat or species fragmentation	None
Reduction in species density	None
Changes in key indicators of conservation value (water quality etc.)	None
Climate change	Unknown

Likely impacts on any Natura 2000 sites within a 15km radius of the site as a whole in terms of structure and functions are described below in Table 2.5.3.

Table 2.5.3. Describe any likely impacts on the Natura 2000 site as a whole in terms of:

Key relationships that define the structure of the sites	None
Key relationships that define the function of the site	None

2.6 Assessment of Significance

This section considers the Natura 2000 sites detailed in Table 2.4.1 and their qualifying habitats and species under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives.

The proposed development of a private residential dwelling at Coolmine will not have any significant impacts, direct or indirect on the qualifying species or habitats of the Natura 2000 sites listed above.

All of the Natura 2000 sites were excluded from further assessment on the basis that potential impacts from the development at Coolmine will have no

significant adverse effects on the integrity of these sites as defined by their status and conservation objectives.

Cumulative/In Combination Impacts

The EC Habitats Directive, the Planning Acts and the Habitats Regulations 2011 require that the impacts on Natura 2000 sites from the plan or project in question are assessed and that they are assessed in combination with other plans and projects that could affect the same Natura 2000 sites.

The Appropriate Assessment Screening Process identified other plans and projects that could act in combination with the proposed development of a private residential dwelling at Coolmine to pose likely significant effects on European sites within the study area and its environs.

These included:

- The South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2016-2022
- Other Housing Developments in the Rathcoole and Saggart areas.

All of these plans and/or projects have been screened for Appropriate Assessment or undergone an Appropriate Assessment themselves and it is therefore assumed that if a plan has been adopted or a project given planning permission following an AA that it cannot pose likely significant adverse effects on a Natura 2000 site.

As noted below, it is concluded that in relation to the Natura 2000 sites proximate to the proposed development of a private residential dwelling at Coolmine, there is no likelihood of **significant** effects on those or other sites of conservation importance.

In addition the proposed development of a private residential dwelling at Coolmine in combination or cumulatively with the above plans and projects is not likely to have a significant effect on any of the Natura 2000 sites identified.

2.7 Conclusion

In order to determine the potential impacts, if any, of the proposed development of a private residential dwelling at Coolmine on nearby Natura 2000 sites a screening process was completed. This identified six Natura 2000 sites within a 15km radius of the site. There are four Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and two Special Protection Areas (for birds) (SPA) within a 15km radius of the site. These are:

- Red Bog, Kildare SAC (Site Code: 000397)
- Glenasmole Valley SAC (Site Code: 001029)
- Rye Water Valley/Carion SAC (Site Code: 001398)
- Wicklow Mountains SAC (Site Code: 002122)
- Wicklow Mountains SPA (Site Code: 004040)
- Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA (Site Code: 004063)

It has been determined that there is no likelihood of **significant** effects on any of the Natura 2000 sites or on any other sites of conservation importance from the development of a private residential dwelling at Coolmine.

Following the review of the project during the Stage 1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment in accordance with the guidelines it is concluded that the proposed development of a private residential dwelling at Coolmine cumulatively or in combination with the other identified plans and projects will not adversely affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 site.

On the basis of the findings of this Screening for Appropriate Assessment of the Natura 2000 Sites, it is concluded that the proposed development of a private residential dwelling at Coolmine will not have a significant effect on the Natura 2000 network and a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not required.

The landscaping proposals for the site have included a suite of measures to improve biodiversity in the area including a wildflower area, the use of native species in the site boundary hedgerows and a copse of native woodland planting.

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