KERRY ECOLOGICAL SERVICES

Appropriate Assessment Screening report for development at Lynbrook, Whitechurch Rd., Rathfarnham, Co. Dublin

[SD21A/0307]

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

It is proposed to develop dwelling houses at Lynbrook, Whitechurch Road, Rathfarnham, Co. Dublin (D16T2P7).

A Habitats Directive Screening Report has been requested.

The overall objectives of this assessment are:

- To assess any likely impacts that may impact on any existing Natura 2000 site(s) and their associated species.
- To assess the likely impacts, if any, on the existing habitats and associated fauna, which may arise from the proposed development.

This report has been compiled by Ciaran Ryan (B.Sc. Analytical Science; M.Sc. Environmental Science) with over 25 years experience in ecological survey (including SAC & SPA designations), SAC & SPA Management Plans, Commonage Framework Plans, SAC Appeals, Natura 2000 site assessments and reports (NIS) and general environmental consultancy. I am an accredited Native Woodland Scheme ecologist.

1.2 Description of project / development

It is proposed to develop two 2-storey dwellings and associated site works on the site of, and adjacent to, an existing 2-storey dwelling. Access will be by an existing driveway from Whitechurch Road, extended to serve the proposed new dwellings. Four car parking spaces, an on-site drainage treatment and additional soft and hard landscaping are also proposed.

Full detailed maps and drawings of the proposed buildings are given in documents already submitted.

2. LEGISLATIVE SCOPE OF THIS REPORT

2.1 Environmental Impact Assessment

The Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and EC (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997 (S.I. 94/97), require local governments to ensure that appropriate ecological assessment of any proposed developments or works is carried out. Section 31 of the Natural Habitats Regulations stipulates that where an operation or activity is likely to have a significant effect on a European Site (i.e. an SAC or SPA), then an assessment should be carried out on the implications for that site in view of the site's conservation objectives. The Environmental Impact Regulations 1989 - 2000 stipulates the classes of development that would require an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

The proposed project is sub-threshold and will not require an EIA as per the legislation.

2.2 Appropriate Assessment

The concept of Appropriate Assessment (AA) is the requirement to consider the possible nature conservation implications of any plan or project on the Natura 2000 site network, before that plan or project proceeds. The obligation to undertake an AA derives from Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive. Both involve a number of steps and tests that need to be applied in sequential order. Article 6(3) is concerned with the strict protection of sites, while Article 6(4) is the procedure for allowing derogation from this strict protection in certain restricted circumstances. An AA is a focused and detailed impact assessment of the implications of the plan or projects, alone and in combination with other plans and projects, on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site, in view of its conservation objectives. Assessments should be undertaken on the basis of best scientific evidence and methods. The first step in an AA is a Screening for an AA. This requires a description of the project, identification and description of relevant Natura 2000 sites, and an assessment of likely effects of the proposed project. If these are not deemed to be potentially significant, then there is no need to conduct a full AA.

The Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG) has issued a document entitled *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: guidance for planning authorities (2010).* This document states that it is the responsibility of the competent authority to undertake the AA. The assessment should be based on sufficient relevant information such as that submitted by the proponent of the plan.

2.3 Screening Statement/ Natura Impact Assessment

This assessment must be prepared by an ecological specialist(s) undertaking surveys, research and analysis, with input from other relevant disciplines as required e.g. engineers, hydrologists, archaeologists etc. Assessments should be undertaken on the basis of best scientific evidence and methods. Accordingly, data and information on the project and on the site must be obtained and an analysis of potential effects on the site must be undertaken.

The first step in an AA is a Screening Statement. This requires a description of the project, identification and description of relevant Natura 2000 sites, and an assessment of likely effects of the proposed project. If these are not deemed to be potentially significant, then there is no need to conduct a full AA. However, if any likely effects are deemed to be potentially significant, then a full AA or Natura Impact Assessment must be conducted.

This AA has been undertaken in accordance with the European Commission "*Methodological Guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*" and the European Commission Guidance on "*Managing Natura 2000 Sites*" and in accordance with current DoEHLG guidance. It provides the information required in order to establish whether or not the proposed development is likely to have a significant impact on any Natura 2000 site. It considers the potential impacts on local Natura 2000 sites in the context of the habitats and species for which such Natura 2000 site(s) has been selected, along with their conservation objectives.

In complying with the obligations under Article 6(3) and following the above guidelines, this AA has been prepared using the following structure:

Stage 1: Screening
This includes:

- Description of the proposed development/project (and if the plan/project is necessary for the management of the Natura 2000 site(s)).
- Consultation with NPWS.
- Identification of all Natura 2000 sites potentially affected by the plan/project.
- Identification and description of individual and cumulative impacts likely to result from the plan/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.
- Determination of the necessity or otherwise for a Natura Impact Statement (NIS).

Screening for AA examines the likely effects of a project or plan, alone and in combination with other projects or plans, upon a Natura 2000 site and considers whether it can be objectively concluded that these effects will not be significant. If it is determined during screening that the development may have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site then a NIS will need to be prepared.

This report complies with a Screening Statement in accordance with current DoEHLG guidance. It provides the information required in order to establish whether or not the proposed development is likely to have a significant impact on any Natura 2000 site. It considers the potential impacts on local Natura 2000 sites in the context of the habitats and species for which such Natura 2000 site(s) has been selected, along with their conservation objectives.

3. ECOLOGICAL STATUS

3.1 General background

The proposed development is approximately 5km from the nearest Natura 2000 site(s) i.e. Wicklow Mountains SAC/SPA (codes 2122/4040). These are part of the EU designated Natura 2000 site network.

With the introduction of the Birds Directive in 1979 (79/409/EEC) and the Habitats Directive in 1992 (92/43/EEC), came the obligation to establish the Natura 2000 network of sites of highest biodiversity importance for rare and threatened habitats and species across the EU. In Ireland, the Natura 2000 network of European sites comprises Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs). 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 of the sites; from these the conservation objectives of the site are derived.

SACs are to be managed in a method to maintain a favourable ecological status for the relevant Annex I habitat(s) and Annex II species listed under the Habitats Directive.

Similarly, SPAs require the maintenance of the favourable conservation status of habitats for birds listed under Annex I of the EU Birds Directive, or areas that are important to migratory bird species. Important migratory sites are graded as either of national or of international importance i.e:

- holds 1% of the estimated national population for non-Annex I migratory species,
- regularly supports 20,000 waterfowl,
- regularly sustains 1% of the all-Ireland bird population for an Annex I species,
- regularly sustains 1% of the bio-geographical (European) bird population for an non-Annex I migratory species.

3.2 Natura 2000 site(s)

3.2.1 Wicklow Mountains SAC / SPA (codes 2122/ 4040)

The proposed works are approximately 5km from this SAC (2122) which has been designated for:

- Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae) [3110]
- Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160]
- Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix* [4010]
- European dry heaths [4030]
- Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060]
- Calaminarian grasslands of the Violetalia calaminariae [6130]
- Species-rich *Nardus* grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe) [6230]
- Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]
- Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (Androsacetalia alpinae and Galeopsietalia ladani) [8110]
- Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210]
- Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220]
- Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles [91A0]
- *Lutra lutra* (Otter) [1355]

The site is also c. 5km from Wicklow Moutains SPA (4040) which has been designated for:

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

Full site synopsis for this site can be accessed on the NPWS database, while details of the conservation objectives for this site can be accessed at:

http://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/ CO002122.pdf (/CO004040.pdf)

3.2.2 Qualifying interests & Conservation Objectives

The conservation objectives of the SAC are to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of Annex I Habitats and Annex II Species.

The potential impacts on habitats and species within this SAC/SPA are addressed in section 5. This shows that there is no significant ecological impact.

3.2.3 Other designated sites

The proposed development is also approximately 10km west of Dublin Bay SAC (code 0210). However, the separation distance with intervening suburbs and urban environment of Dublin City and relatively small scale of this development, would rule out be any detrimental impact on this SAC. As such any potential impact on this SAC can be screened out at this stage.

4. SITE ASSESSMENT

4.1 General

The site was surveyed on the 23rd March, 2022. The site was walked, identifying habitats and species likely to be affected. The survey was carried out in accordance with the Smith *et al.*, (2011), Foulkes *et al.*, (2013) and the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2011 & 2012). Even though the timing was not ideal for field survey, it was possible to classify each habitat and identify relevant species. Using the information gathered in the field, together with any published and/or local information on the site and its environs, it is considered that an adequate ecological assessment is achieved

Survey for terrestrial mammals was carried out by means of a search within the site and immediate vicinity focusing on mammal dwellings (e.g. Badger setts, Otter holts), feeding signs or droppings and direct observations if possible. Special attention is paid to species listed under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife Act, 1976; 2000 in particular Badger or Otter. Bird sampling such as those recommended by Bibby *et al.*, (2000) were not carried out, but any bird species seen or heard were recorded. The survey also took account of the presence of any invasive species listed under the Third Schedule of the EC (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011).

The underlying soil is predominantly acid, brown earths / podzolics (i.e. acid, deep, poorly drained mineral) on granite rocks and appinite bedrock (geohive.ie /epa.ie mapviewers).

4.2 Habitats

Habitats identified are categorised as per level 3 habitat mapping classification (Fossitt, 2000).

The principal habitat on lands proposed for development is amenity grassland (GA2) adjacent to an existing house, shed and tarmac driveway (BL3) surrounded by a garden hosting ornamental shrubs (BC4, GA2). The grassland is dominated by typical grasses (e.g. *Lolium perenne, Agrostis stolonifera, Poa* spp., *Anthoxanthum odoratum*), with abundant Creeping Buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*) along with Dock (*Rumex* sp.) and Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale* agg.) also present. It is species-poor.

Adjacent to the development lands is an eroding / upland river (FW1) – the Whitechurch Stream. This is approximately 2m wide, < 0.5m deep, medium flowing and with a boulder, cobble and pebble substrate. The source of this stream is at Tibradden in the Dublin/Wicklow Mountains. The river waterbody status (2013-18) within this stream is classified as good (EPA database).

The watercourse has an associated corridor (3-5m) of riparian woodland / scrub (WN5) running along its banks. This strip of woodland (WD2) / scrub (WS1) also extends along the western / north-western site boundary on an embankment sloping downwards toward the development lands. These woodland strips comprise Cypress (*X Cupressocyparis leylandii, Chamaecyuparis lawsoniana*), one large Silver Fir (*Abies alba*) beside the stream, Scots Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) on north-west bank, Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) along the stream, Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and Elder (*Sambucus nigra*) trees; with Buddleja (*Buddleja davidii*), Rose-of-Sharon (*Hypericum calycinum*) and Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) in the understorey. Other species present include ferns (*Polystichum setiferum, Asplenium scolopendrium*), Pendulous Sedge (*Carex pendula*), Honeysuckle (*Lonincera pericyclemenum*), Ivy (*Hedera helix*), Hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*), Cow Parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*), Creeping Buttercup, Cleavers (*Galium aparine*), Ramsons (*Allium ursinum*), Bluebell (*Endymion*

non-scriptus), Lords-and-Ladies (*Arum maculatum*), Herb Robert (*Geranium robertianum*), Nettle (*Urtica dioica*), Sanicle (*Sanicula europaea*), Violet (*Viola rivinlana*) and non-native Winter Heliotrope (*Petasites fragrans).* Tree diameters are generally < 0.5m, but along the north-western boundary away from the stream, tree diameters can by up to 1m with Ivy covered limbs. In the far north-western corner, there is a very small area of more open scrub (WS1) adjacent to the woodland corridor.

There were no invasive non-native species recorded e.g. Japanese Knotweed.

4.3 Fauna

4.3.1 General

There is no notable fauna recorded on this site. Notable species present within O1425 1km grid (encompassing development site) include Badger, Long-eared Owl and the protected species Long-eared Bat (Biodiversityireland.ie). However, none are qualifying interests for the SAC.

4.3.2 Mammals

The woodland corridors with dense undergrowth could be suitable habitat for Badger. However, there were no setts recorded or any evidence of Badger activity. The adjacent Whitechurch Stream watercourse may be utilised by Otter, although there are no recent records for this species occurring here.

It is possible that bats roost within the existing dwelling house. However there was no evidence of this - assessed based on Kelleher and Marnell (2006). In any case, the proposed development does not include any disturbance to this building. The large trees present along the north-western site boundary could harbour occasional roosting bats, especially where there is dense Ivy growth. It is also quite possible that bats forage along the watercourse and woodland corridors.

With regard to the inspection of trees for bats this presents particular problems at any time of year as bats will use a wide variety of roost sites in cavities, splits, cracks, knotholes and under loose bark many of which are not easily detected from the ground. The nomadic nature of tree-dwelling bats means that the success rate of bat confirmation using a bat detector is likely to be very low – those just before dawn (which aim to detect bats returning to their roost) have a slightly higher chance of success, as bats will often swarm around a roost for some time before entering.

4.3.3 Birds

The nearby Wicklow Mountains SPA has been designated for Merlin and Peregrine Falcon, while Long-eared Owl has been recorded in the locality (refer 4.3.1). However, the site would not provide suitable nesting or foraging habitat for Merlin or Peregrine, and there was no evidence of nesting Long-eared Owl.

Some native songbirds would likely occur within the general area in hedgerow and fields e.g. Blackbird, Wren, Robin and possibly Bullfinch, Chaffinch and Willow Warbler. None of these are listed under Annex I of the EU Birds Directive or on the Birds of Conservation Concern Red List. The only other notable bird species that is considered potentially present is Kingfisher, which is listed for protection under Annex I of the EU Birds Directive.

Merlin generally occur on open moorland during the breeding season. They traditionally nest amongst heather in hilly moorland. However, they do also nest in semi-open habitat at the periphery of coniferous woodland in old corvid nests, often adjacent to heath habitat or close to residential areas. They rarely re-use a nest in subsequent years. Its core foraging range is typically 5km (Scottish Natural Heritage, 2016). In the winter, Merlin move to the coast to prey on the concentrations of bird species here.

Peregrine Falcon is widespread and relatively common in Ireland, with c. 500 breeding pairs (Cabot, 1995). It has a typical core foraging range of 2km with a maximum distance of 18km (Scottish Natural Heritage, 2016).

Long-eared Owl is seldom seen, spending the day roosting close to the trunk of a tree, only emerging at night to feed. They are more frequent in the east than the west with about 2,300 pairs, mostly in coniferous woodland (Cabot, 1995).

Merlin and Peregrine Falcon are listed for protection under Annex I of the EU Birds Directive.

4.4 Rare plants / notable species

The site does not support any of the habitats or species for which any nearby SAC and/or SPAs are designated, nor are there rare plants or other notable species present. The site is not wet enough to provide suitable habitat for amphibians such as Common Frog.

5. SCREEENING

5.1 Identification of potential impacts

Only those features of the development that have the potential to impact on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site are considered. For screening purposes the potential impacts from the proposed development are examined with regard to the following:

- Habitat loss
- Alteration of habitats
- Habitat or species fragmentation
- Potential impairment of water quality
- Disturbance and/or displacement of protected species
- Cumulative impacts

5.2 Assessment of direct impacts

5.2.1 Natura 2000 site(s)

The development site is not located within a Natura 2000 site. Consequently, there is no direct loss of habitat from within the boundaries of any Natura 2000 site and as such no loss of habitat or fragmentation of habitat for the conservation interests of any site. Therefore, it can be concluded that no direct impacts will occur on any Natura 2000 site.

5.2.2 Site habitats

The development will result in a loss of amenity grassland habitat. However, this is species-poor and is of limited ecological value. As such, any ecological impact on site habitats would not be regarded as significant. It should be noted that any impact here is localised and has no bearing any impact on nearby Natura 2000 site(s).

5.3 Assessment of indirect impacts

5.3.1 Sediment run-off / pollution

Sediment and nutrient run-off can occur owing to proposed works and the general operation of machines. These works could result in impacts on the semi-natural habitats present, notably any aquatic environment hydrologically linked with the Natura 2000 site(s). The proposed works could result in the run-off of sediment, dust, hydrocarbons and other potential pollutants into on-site drains and watercourses, which could act as conduit for the transfer of such into a Natura 2000 site(s).

Silt and sediment laden surface water run-off and dust deposits could potentially have a negative impact on important and sensitive species that are found within the Whitechurch Stream. Disturbance or displacement of species could potentially occur within this watercourse arising from the development if surface water was contaminated with runoff from construction activities containing sediment, nutrients and/ or pollutants.

Although slope and soil/surface permeability will have a bearing on surface water run-off, in general it can be stated that any works within 10m of this watercourse potentially result in sediment run-off into the natural aquatic environment. With steep downward slope and/or poor surface permeability this figure would decrease.

5.3.2 Assessment

(i) The Whitechurch Stream actually flows **from** Tibradden Mountain adjacent to the Wicklow Mountains SAC/SPA. However, there is no hydrological link between the proposed works and the Wicklow Mountains SAC / SPA. Although c. 5km distant, these Natura 2000 sites are elevated above the proposed works eliminating any potential for a hydrological pathway link.

(ii) There are no drainage channels on site which could act as conduits of polluting material into the nearby watercourse.

(iii) There is a woodland corridor (5-10m) with dense undergrowth between the development lands and the Whitechurch Stream. This will act as a buffer to any potential sediment run-off.

(iv) The soil present comprises acid brown earth. Any run-off would likely permeate this soil as opposed to surface run-off.

(v) The nature of the works is such that there will be minimal potential for sediment run-off.

(vi) Although technically this site has a hydrological connection to Dublin Bay SAC, this is some 10km distant. Any hydrological connection would be a multiple of this figure. This separation distance, with intervening urban environment, and already compromised water quality within intervening watercourses, is such that such run-off could not have any significant impact on this SAC. It should also be noted that Dublin Bay, being an estuarine environment is accustomed to fluctuations in sediment loading and any additional loading would not have any significant impact.

(vii) As with any development project, the application of good building (CIRIA guidelines) is assumed. Although, it is shown that there shall be no significant impact on any Natura 2000 site without such measures, these will serve to further enhance protection of the nearby aquatic environment.

Considering all the above, it is considered that there is no potential for the water run-off of sediment or polluting material having a significant negative impact upon any Natura 2000 site. As such, this development will not impact on their conservation objectives.

5.5 Assessment of impacts on relevant fauna

The site is not within any Natura 2000 site and as such cannot have any direct impact here. It comprises amenity grassland with no resident fauna of note. The nature and location of the works is such to not have any significant impact on any potential resident fauna such as Bats and Otter (along watercourse). Only a small area of amenity grassland will be impacted upon, with no impact on adjacent woodland corridor and watercourse. The proposed development is within an existing residential area.

The potential for impact on the SAC is mostly indirect, as described above. The Whitechurch Stream may provide spawning habitat for Atlantic Salmon while other aquatic based species such as Otter may also occur. These and other aquatic species could be negatively impacted upon if sediment run-off from the works entered this watercourse. This potential impact is addressed above (5.3.2).

5.6 Assessment of cumulative impacts

The proposed development was considered in combination with other developments in the area that could result in cumulative effects on Natura 2000 sites. In combination activities that could potentially impact on water quality with the proposed developments include agriculture, wastewater treatment and further development/ construction in the area. Although suburban buildings occur there is also agricultural grassland present in the surrounding area. Farming activities and urban buildings present potential point and diffuse sources of nutrients to the aquatic environment.

The following was undertaken:

- A search of on-line system for Dublin County Council recent planning applications.
- A review of aerial photography in the vicinity of the proposed forestry works.
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Both of the above indicate a mixed urban and agricultural environment. The proposed development is relatively small and will have minimal impact on the local environment.

The proposed development will not result in an additional loading to the local municipal sewerage treatment works. All foul waste will be treated within the proposed wastewater treatment system based on the site assessment report.

Researching the Dublin County Councils "Planning Enquiry System" indicates that there are no major development proposed within the vicinity that could be considered to significantly impact on the integrity of the any Natura 2000 site.

Considering that it can be shown that this current project will have no significant impact on the Wicklow Moutains SAC / SPA, it would therefore contribute little to any potential cumulative /combination impacts with other potential developments. Any future development will be subject to the Appropriate Assessment process, and therefore, cumulative or in-combination impacts are unlikely to ensue.

5.8 Screening Assessment Conclusion

Based on the above assessment, there is no expected impact on any Natura 2000 site hosting designated and notable habitats and species. As such, there will be no impact on the Conservation Objectives for any Natura 2000 site (NPWS database).

A Screening Matrix for Appropriate Assessment elements is given in Appendix 1.

Appendix 1: Matrix of Screening for Appropriate Assessment elements
(European Commission, 2001)

Brief description of the project	Construction of dwelling houses
Brief description of Natura 2000 site	c. 5km from Wicklow Mountains SAC/SPA. These sites have been designated for: • Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae) [3110] • Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160] • Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetrolix* [4010] • European dry heaths [4030] • Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] • Calaminarian grasslands of the Violetalia calaminariae [6130] • Species-rich *Nardus* grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe) [6230] • Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130] • Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (Androsacetalia alpinae and Galeopsietalia ladani) [8110] • Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210] • Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220] • Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles [91A0] • *Lutra lutra* (Otter) [1355] • Merlin (*Falco columbarius*) [A098] - SPA • Peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*) [A103] - SPA
Assessment criteria	
Describe the individual elements of the project (either along or along with other projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the Natura 2000 site	Run-off from the proposed works could enter the aquatic environment.
Describe any likely impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other projects) on the Natura 2000 site by virtue of: • Size and scale • Land-take • Distance from Natura 2000 site or key features of the site • Resource requirements (e.g. water abstraction) • Emissions (land, water, air) • Excavations requirements • Transportation requirements • Duration of operation • Other	• The size and scale of the operation is small. • There is no land-take involved. • The works are c. 5km from Natura 2000 site • There are no resource requirements. • There will be no other emissions. • Excavation required for building, but outside Natura 2000 site(s) • Transportation involves importation of building materials. • Approximately 18 months.
Describe any likely changes to the site arising as a result of: • Reduction of habitat area • Disturbance to key species • Habitat or species fragmentation • Reduction in species density • Changes in key indicators of conservation value (e.g. water quality) • Climate change	• There will be no reduction in Natura 2000 habitat area. • There will be no disturbance to key species • Habitat/species fragmentation will not occur as outside any Natura 2000 site. • There will be no reduction in species density. • There are no expected changes in the conservation value of the site e.g. designated habitats and species will not be affected. • No impact on climate change

Describe any likely impacts on the Natura 2000 site as a whole in terms of: Interference with the key relationships that define the (i) structure of the site (ii) function of the site	The limited scale of the proposed works will not result in any interference with the key relationships defining the structure or function of the site.
Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of: • Loss • Fragmentation • Disruption/disturbance • Change to key elements of the site (e.g. water quality)	• There will be no habitat loss. • There will be no fragmentation as the works occur outside the site boundary. • Disturbance is restricted to a very small area for a limited time period. • No changes to key elements of the site anticipated.
Finding of no significant effects	
Is the project directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site? (- details)	No. The works relate to building under the planning regulations.
Are there other projects that together with the project being assessed could affect the site? (-details)	No
Assessment of significance of effects	
Describe how the project (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site.	Run-off from the proposed works could enter the aquatic environment.
Explain why these effects are not considered significant	There is no hydrological link to any nearby Natura 2000 site, with most of theWicklow Mountains SAC/SPA elevated above the proposed works, eliminating any potential for a hydrological pathway link. The distance between the site and Dublin Bay SAC (an estuarine environment accustomed to sediment loading variations) is such that there can be no significant impact here.
Data collected to carry out assessment	
List of agencies consulted	NPWS.
Response to consultation	Positive
Who carried out assessment?	Ciaran Ryan M.Sc. (Environmental Science)
Sources of data	NPWS, refer Bibliography
Level of assessment completed	Screening Assessment / Statement
Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed?	Dublin County Council
Overall conclusion: It is considered that the proposed development will have no significant impact on the flora fauna, conservation interests and integrity of any Natura 2000 site.	

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