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APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT

FOR

PROPOSED

DEVELOPMENT

AT

CLONBRONE,

ESKER HILL,

LUCAN

CO. DUBLIN

ON BEHALF OF

NACUL DEVELOPMENTS LTD.

Prepared by
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Enviroguide Consulting was commissioned by Nacul Developments Ltd. to prepare a screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) in respect of the Proposed Development at Clonbrone, Esker Hill, Lucan, Co. Dublin. This Appropriate Assessment Screening report contains information to enable the Competent Authority to undertake Stage 1 Appropriate Assessment screening in respect of the Proposed Development.

1.2 Legislative Background

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

SACs and SPAs are collectively known as Natura 2000 or European Sites. It is the responsibility of each member state to designate SPAs and SACs. 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.

An 'Appropriate Assessment' (AA) is an assessment required prior to the grant of planning permission to determine whether a plan or project, based on best scientific knowledge, will have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European Site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. It is required for any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a site but likely to have a significant effect on it. Accordingly, a screening for AA determines whether a plan or project, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, is likely to have significant effects on a European Site, in view of its conservation objectives.

A competent authority must determine that an Appropriate Assessment is required in respect of any European Site where, following screening, it cannot be excluded that the plan or project will have a significant effect on the European Site, in view of its conservation objectives.

This AA Screening Report has been undertaken to determine whether the Proposed Development is likely to have a significant effect, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, on any European site, in view of their conservation objectives.

1.2.1 Legislative Context

The obligations in relation to Appropriate Assessment have been implemented in Ireland under Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended ("the 2000 Act"), and in particular Section 177U and Section 177V thereof. The relevant provisions of Section 177U in relation to AA screening have been set out below:

"***177U.—*** *(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)...

(3)...

(4) The competent authority shall determine that an appropriate assessment of a draft Land use plan or a proposed development, as the case may be, is required if it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the draft Land use plan or proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

(5) The competent authority shall determine that an appropriate assessment of a draft Land use plan or a proposed development, as the case may be, is not required if it can be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the draft Land use plan or proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site."

An Appropriate Assessment is required under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive where a project or plan may give rise to significant effects upon a European site. Paragraph 3 states that:

"*6(3) 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."*

1.2.2 Stages of AA

This Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (the "Screening Report") has been prepared by Enviroguide Consulting. It considers whether the Proposed Development is likely to have a significant effect on a European site and whether a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is required.

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

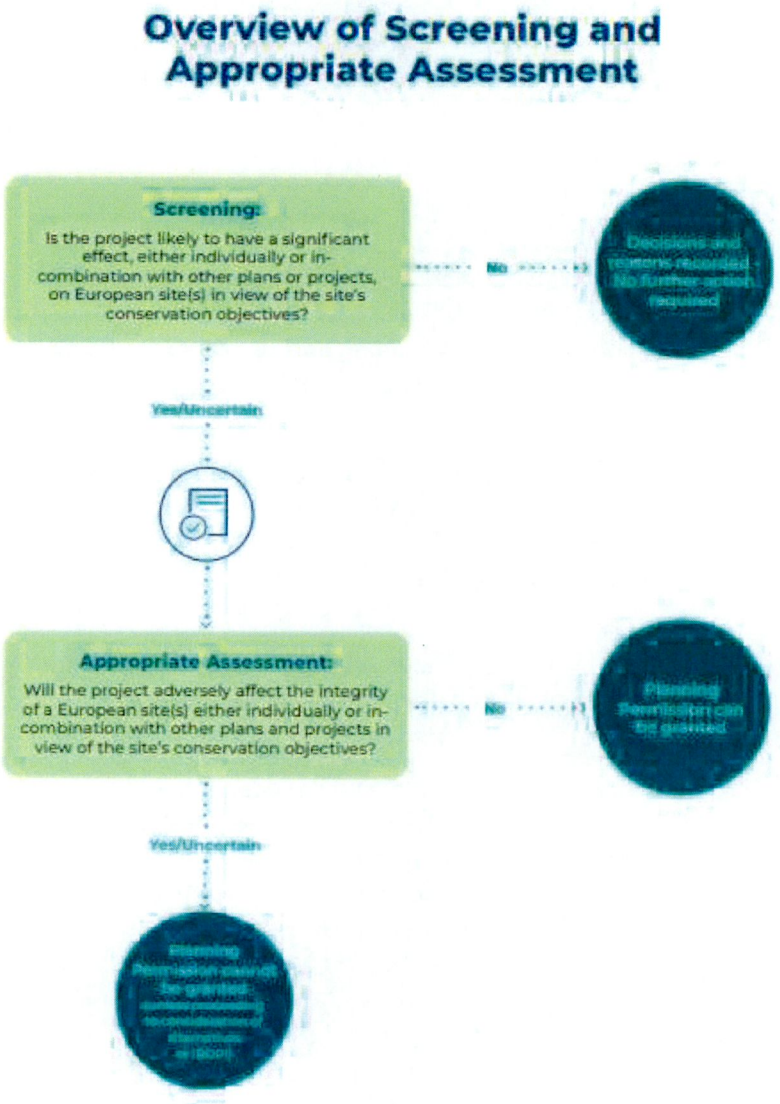

FIGURE 1: OVERVIEW OF SCREENING AND APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT (OPR, 2021)

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

- Stage 1 *Screening* addresses:
    - whether a plan or project is directly connected to or necessary for the management of the site, or
    - whether a plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, is likely to have significant effects on a European site in view of its conservation objectives.
- Stage 2: *Appropriate Assessment (AA).* The second stage of the AA requires the competent authority to determine whether the project or plan (either alone or in combination with other projects or plans) will have an adverse effect on the integrity of

the European site, having regard to the conservation objectives of the site and its ecological structure and function. The developer must provide a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) to the competent authority to inform the AA, which is a statement, for the purposes of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, of the potential impacts of a proposed development, on its own or in combination with other plans or projects, for one or more than one European site, in view of the conservation objectives of the site or sites. It must include a report of a scientific examination of evidence and data, carried out by competent persons to identify and classify any potential impacts for one or more than one European site in view of the conservation objectives of the site or sites. The competent authority must consult with the public in relation to any plan or project that requires AA. If the competent authority determines that the plan or project would have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European site, it can only grant consent after proceeding through steps 3 and 4.

- Stage 3: *Assessment of alternative solutions.* If the outcome of Stage 2 is negative i.e., adverse impacts to the sites cannot be scientifically ruled out, despite mitigation, the plan or project should proceed to Stage 3 or be abandoned. This stage examines alternative solutions to the proposal.
- Stage 4: *Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain.* The final stage is the main derogation process examining whether there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) for allowing a plan or project to adversely affect a European site, where no less damaging solution exists.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Guidance

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

- *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities.* (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2010 revision),
- *Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities.* Circular NPW 1/10 & PSSP 2/10,
- *Communication from the Commission on the precautionary principle* (European Commission, 2000),
- *Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC* (European Commission, 2019),
- *Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites – Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC* (European Commission, 2021), and,
- *Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management, OPR Practice Note PN01, Office of the Planning Regulator March 2021.*

2.2 Screening Steps

Screening for AA involves the following steps:

- Establish whether the plan or project is directly connected with or necessary for the management of a European Site,
- Description of the plan or project and the description and characterisation of other projects or plans that in combination have the potential for having significant effects on the European Site,
- Identification of European Sites potentially affected,
- Identification and description of potential effects on the European Site,
- Assessment of the likely significance of the effects identified on the European Site, and
- Exclusion of sites where it can be objectively concluded that there will be no significant effects.

2.3 Desk Study

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

- Information on the network of European Sites, boundaries, qualifying interests and conservation objectives, obtained from the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) at *www.npws.ie*,
- Text summaries of the relevant European Sites taken from the respective Standard Data Forms and Site Synopses available at *www.npws.ie*,
- Information on species records and distributions, obtained from the National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) at *www.maps.biodiversityireland.ie*,
- Information on waterbodies, catchment areas and hydrological connections obtained from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at *www.gis.epa.ie*,
- Information on bedrock, groundwater, aquifers and their statuses, obtained from Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) at *www.gsi.ie*,
- Satellite imagery and mapping obtained from various sources and dates including Google, Digital Globe, Bing and Ordnance Survey Ireland,
- Information on the existence of permitted developments, or developments awaiting decision, in the vicinity of the Proposed Development available at the National Planning Application Database and South Dublin County Council.

For a complete list of the specific documents consulted as part of this assessment, see *Section 5 References*.

2.4 Assessment of Significant Effects

The potential for significant effects that may arise from the Proposed Development were considered through the use of key indicators, namely:

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

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

2.5 Field Surveys

2.5.1 Ecological surveys

A range of field surveys have been carried out at the Site of the Proposed Development. A full description of the field surveys and their results can be found in the EcIA accompanying this application under separate cover. The results from these field surveys were consulted during the preparation of this AA Screening Report.

3 Stage 1 Screening

3.1 Management of European Sites

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

3.2 Description of Proposed Development

1.1 Location

The Proposed Development is a 0.3ha Site located at Clonbrone, Esker Hill, Newlands Road, Lucan, Co. Dublin. The Site lies approximately 250 meters from Lucan's Village Green. The South and East of the Site is bound by existing residential properties, Lucan Newlands Road bounds the Site to the west.

1.2 Description

Nacul Developments Ltd. seeks permission for development at a site known as "Clonbrone", on Lucan Newlands Road / Esker Hill, Lucan, Co. Dublin, K78 Y5C2. The proposed development consists of the demolition of an existing 2 storey detached dwelling (162m²) and associated out-buildings on site, and the construction of 7 no. 2 storey (plus dormer level), 5 bedroom houses, comprised of 3 no. detached houses and 4 no. semi-detached houses, on a site area of c.0.3ha. The proposed development also provides for all associated site development works, car parking, open spaces and landscaping. Proposed access to the development will by via the existing vehicular entrance gate on the Lucan-Newlands Road / Esker Hill.

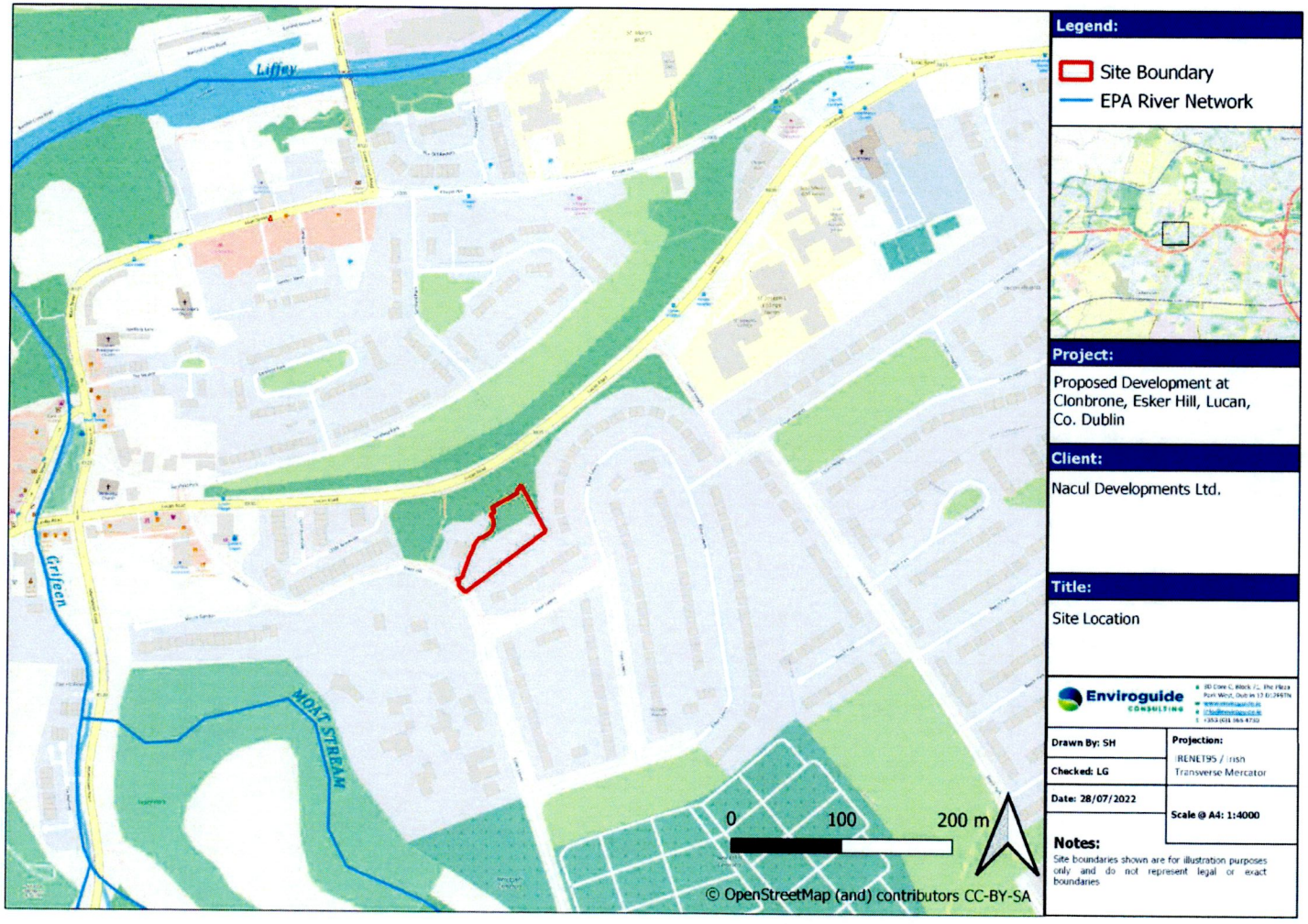

FIGURE 2. SITE LOCATION

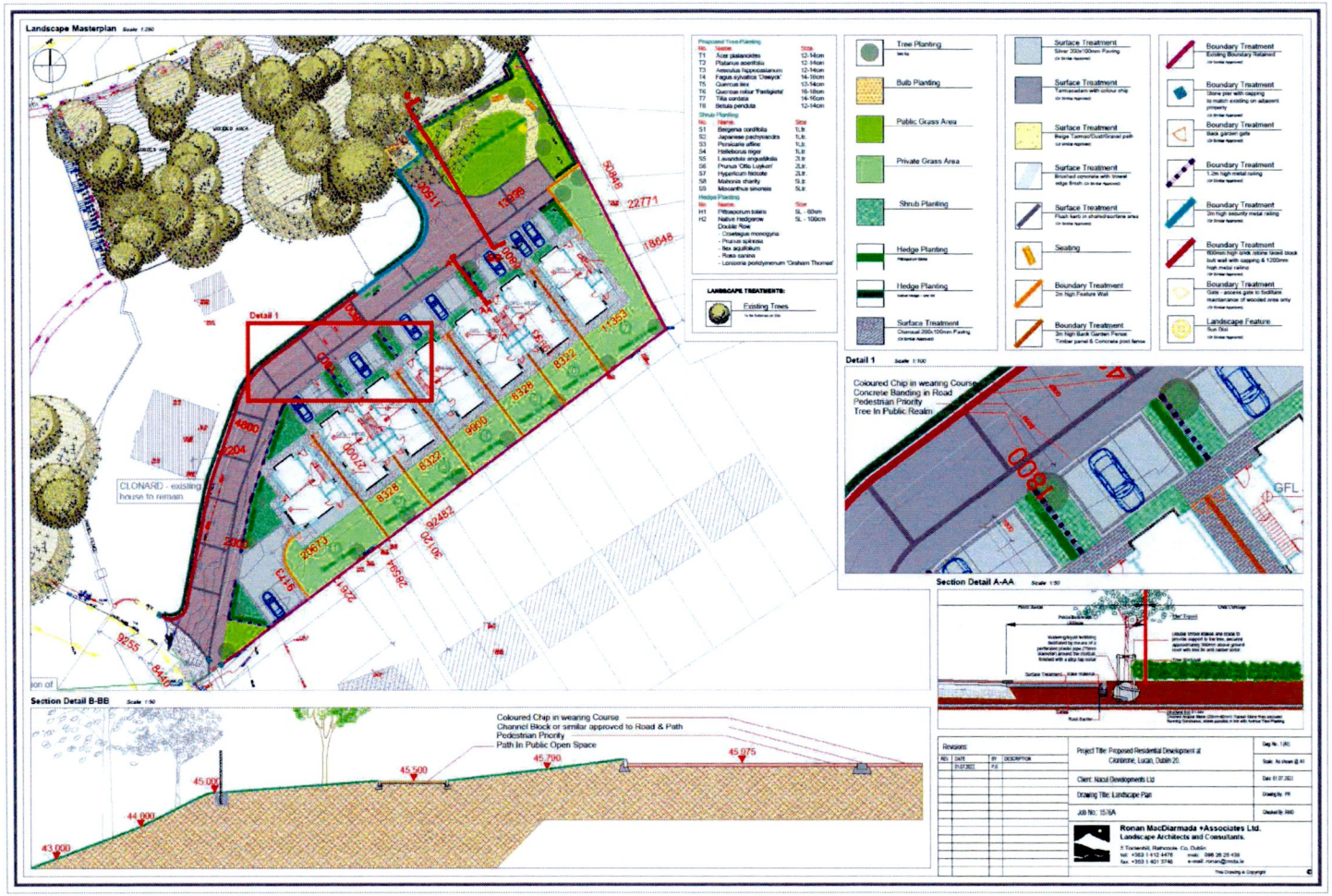

FIGURE 3. PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT.

3.3 Existing Environment

3.3.1 Hydrology

The Site of the Proposed Development is within the Liffey and Dublin Bay catchment and Liffey_SC_090 sub-catchment. There are no waterbodies within the Site of the Proposed Development.

The Moat Stream 09_2135 (IE_EA_09L012100) is located 264m south-east of the Proposed Development. This stream joins the River Grifeen 09_242 (IE_EA_09L012100) approximately 0.2 river km past the closest point to the Proposed Development and flows into the River Liffey a further 0.5 river km downstream (EPA,2022). The River Liffey 09_916 (IE_EA_09L012100) lies 0.4km to the north of the Site and flows in an easterly direction for 20 River km before discharging into the Lower Liffey Estuary. The status of the Liffey adjacent to the Site of the Proposed Development is classed as *Moderate*, and this transitional waterbody is *At Risk* of not achieving its Water Framework Directive status objectives (EPA,2022).

There are no EPA monitoring stations on the Moat Stream. Station name *Griffeen – In Lucan Village (Gauging Station),* (EPA code:RS09G010600), lies downstream of the Proposed Development on the River Griffeen and reported a Q-value score of 3, *Poor* in 2019. Another EPA monitoring station is located downstream of the Proposed Development on the River Liffey, station name *Lucan BR* (EPA code RS09L012100), which reports a Q-value score of 3-4, *Moderate* (EPA,2022).

3.3.2 Geology and Hydrogeology

The Site of the Proposed Development is situated on the Dublin groundwater body, which has a *good* status and is *Not At Risk* of not meeting its WFD objectives (EPA, 2022). The bedrock beneath the Site is mapped as *dark limestone and shale ('calp)* of the Lucan Formation (New Code CDLUCN). The bedrock aquifer is classified as *Locally Important bedrock aquifer which is moderately productive in local zones only* (Ll). Groundwater in the underlying aquifer is assigned a vulnerability rating of *Extreme* vulnerability to groundwater contamination from human activities. The quaternary sediments beneath the Site are mapped as *till derived from limestones* (GSI,2022).

3.4 Identification of Relevant European Sites

To identify the European Sites that potentially lie within the Zone of Influence (ZOI) of the Proposed Development, a Source-Pathway-Receptor method (S-P-R) was adopted, as described in 'OPR Practice Note PN01 - Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management' (OPR, 2021), a practice note produced by the Office of the Planning Regulator, Dublin. This note was published to provide guidance on screening for appropriate assessment (AA) during the planning process, and although it focuses on the approach a planning authority should take in screening for AA, the methodology is also readily applied in the preparation of Appropriate Assessment Screening Reports such as this.

The guidance document published by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (then DEHLG) 'Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities' (2009) recommends an arbitrary distance of 15km as the

precautionary ZOI for a plan or project being assessed for likely significant effects on European Sites, stating however that this should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

As such, the 15km ZOI is used in this report as an initial starting point for collating European Sites for AA screening.

The methodology used to identify relevant European Sites comprised the following:

- Use of current GIS spatial datasets for European designated sites and water catchments – downloaded from the NPWS website (www.npws.ie) and the EPA website (www.epa.ie) to identify European Sites which could potentially be affected by the Proposed Development;
- The catchment data were used to establish or discount potential hydrological connectivity between the Project Boundary and any European Sites.
- All European Sites within the zone of influence (within 15km of the Proposed Development Site) were identified and are shown in Figure 4.
- The potential for connectivity with European Sites at distances greater than 15km from the Proposed Development was also considered in this initial assessment. In this case, there is no potential connectivity between the Proposed Development Site and European Sites located at a distance greater than 15km from the Proposed Development based on the S-P-R model.
- Table 1 provides details of all relevant European Sites as identified in the preceding steps. The potential for pathways between European Sites and the Proposed Development Site was assessed on a case-by-case basis using the Source-Pathway-Receptor framework as per the OPR Practice Note PN01 (March 2021). Those European Sites where a pathway has been identified are highlighted in green. Pathways considered included:
    a. Direct pathways e.g., proximity (i.e., location within the European Site), water bodies, air (for both air emissions and noise impacts).
    b. Indirect pathways e.g., disruption to migratory paths, 'Sightlines' where noisy or intrusive activities may result in disturbance to shy species.
- The site synopses and conservation objectives of these sites, as per the NPWS website (www.npws.ie), were consulted and reviewed at the time of preparing this report.
- There is absolutely no reliance placed in this Appropriate Assessment Screening Report on measures intended to avoid/reduce harmful effects on the European Sites.

The result of this preliminary screening concluded that there is a total of three SACs and one SPA located within the precautionary ZOI of the Proposed Development Site. The distances to each site listed are taken from the nearest possible point of the Proposed Development Site boundary to the nearest possible point of each European Site.

No pathways between the Proposed Development Site and the European Sites within the ZOI were identified.

TABLE 1. EUROPEAN SITES WITHIN THE 15KM PRECAUTIONARY ZONE OF INFLUENCE OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND POTENTIAL PATHWAYS BETWEEN THEM. THOSE EUROPEAN SITES FOR WHICH A S-P-R LINK WAS IDENTIFIED ARE HIGHLIGHTED IN GREEN.

Site Name & Site Code	Qualifying Interests (*= priority habitats)	Distance to Site	Connections (Source- Pathway- Receptor)
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)			
Rye Water Valley / Carton SAC (001398)	[7220] Petrifying springs [1014] Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail *Vertigo angustior* [1016] Desmoulin's Whorl Snail *Vertigo moulinsiana*	3.1 km	**None** – There are no impact pathways present linking the Proposed Development and the habitats and species listed for these SACs. Rye Water Valley / Carton SAC is located upstream of the Proposed Development and thus has no hydrological connectivity to the Site. Additionally, both Glenasmole Valley SAC and Wicklow Mountains SAC are located in the Wicklow Mountains, upgradient from the Site and within a different river catchment. The intervening distances between the Site and the SACs are sufficient to exclude the possibility of significant effects on the SACs arising from: emissions of noise, dust, pollutants and/or vibrations emitted from the Site during the Construction Phase; increased traffic volumes during the Construction and Operational Phases and associated emissions; potential increased lighting emitted from the Site during the Construction and Operational Phase; and increased human presence at the Site during the Construction and Operational Phase.
Glenasmole Valley SAC (001209)	[6210] Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco Brometalia) (* important orchid sites)* ; [6410] *Molinia* meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae); [7220] Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion)*	11.9 km	
Wicklow Mountains SAC (002122)	[3110] Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (*Littorelletalia uniflorae*); [3160] Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds; [4010] Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix;* [4030] European dry heaths; [4060] Alpine and Boreal heaths; [6130] Calaminarian grasslands of the *Violetalia calaminariae*; [6230] Species-rich Nardus grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe); [7130] Blanket bogs (* if active bog); [8110] Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (*Androsacetalia alpinae* and *Galeopsietalia ladani*); [8210] Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation; [8220] Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation; [91A0] Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles; [1355] *Lutra lutra* (Otter)	13.9 km	

Site Name & Site Code	Qualifying Interests (*= priority habitats)	Distance to Site	Connections (Source- Pathway- Receptor)
Special Protection Areas (SPA)			
South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (004024)	[A046] Light-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla hrota ;* [A130] Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus ;* [A137] Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula ;* [A141] Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola ;* [A143] Knot *Calidris canutus* ; [A144] Sanderling *Calidris alba* ; [A149] Dunlin *Calidris alpina alpina* ; [A157] Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica ;* [A162] Redshank *Tringa tetanus ;* [A179] Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus* ; [A192] Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii ;* [A193] Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* ; [A194] Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea* ; [A999] Wetlands and Waterbirds	14.3 km	**None** – The hydrological pathways between the Site and this SPA are insignificant. Any surface water discharges that could potentially enter the river Liffey and eventually reach this SPA in Dublin Bay would be diluted to indiscernible levels within the receiving freshwater environment of the Liffey. Additionally, foul water from the Proposed Development will be treated at Ringsend WwTP. It is considered that effects on marine biodiversity and the European Sites within Dublin Bay from the current operation of Ringsend WwTP are unlikely (Irish Water 2018). Furthermore, given the intervening distance between the Site and the relevant European Sites, and the potential for dilution and dispersion of any spillage / leakage within the groundwater body, the possibility of significant effects on the European Sites within Dublin Bay arising from groundwater contamination can be excluded. In addition, the distance of 14.3km is sufficient to exclude the possibility of significant effects on the SPA arising from: emissions of noise, dust, and/or vibrations emitted from the Site during the Construction Phase; increased traffic volumes during the Construction and Operational Phases and associated emissions; potential increased lighting emitted from the Site during the Construction and Operational Phase; and increased human presence at the Site during the Construction and Operational Phase. The Site does not provide *ex-situ* habitat for the SCI species associated with this SPA.

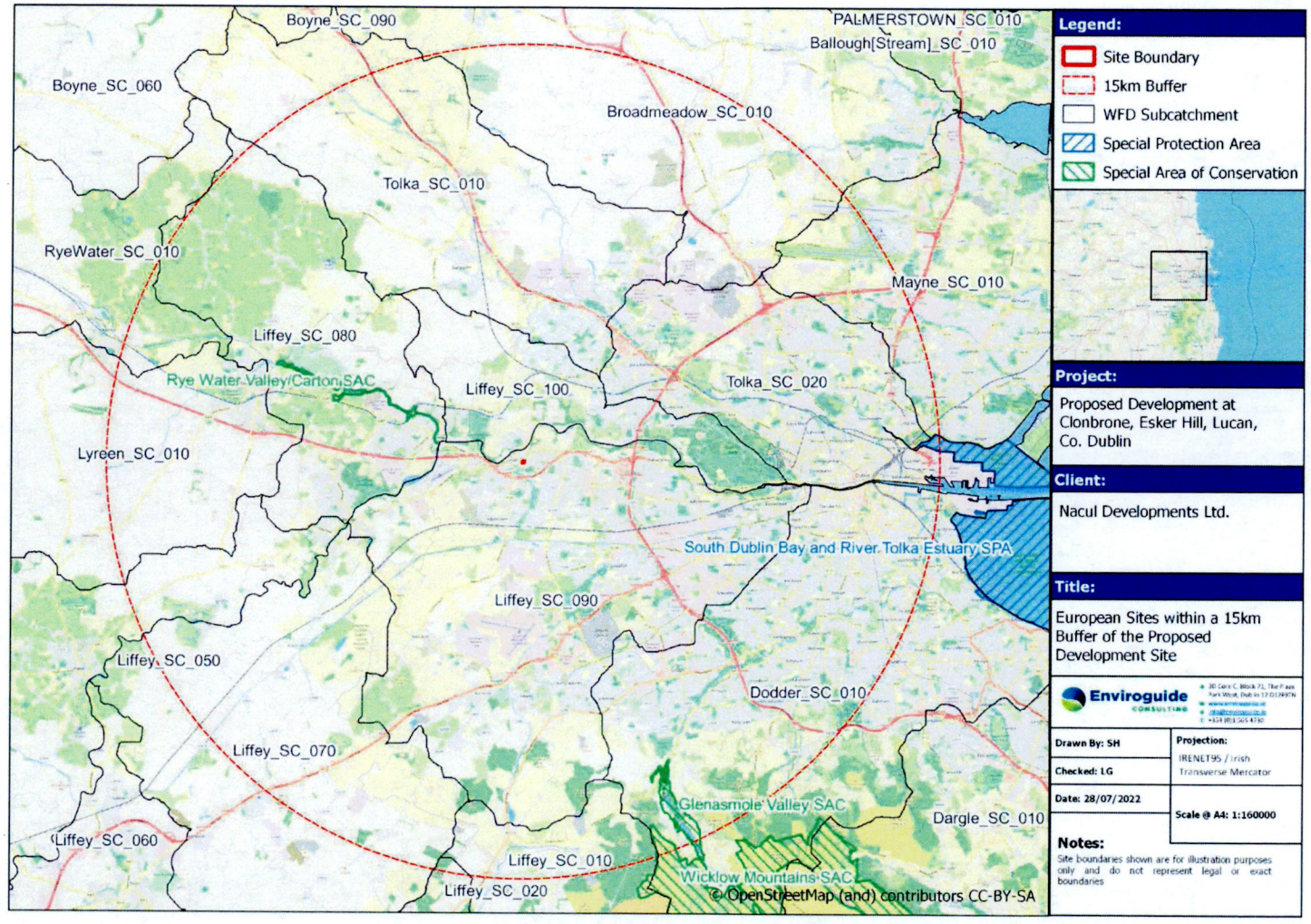

FIGURE 4. EUROPEAN SITES WITHIN 15KM OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT SITE.

3.5 Identification & Assessment of Likely Significant Effects

The conservation objectives of the European Sites within the zone of influence were reviewed and assessed to establish whether the construction and operation of the Proposed Development has the potential to have a negative impact on any of the qualifying interests and/or conservation objectives of the European Sites listed above.

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

The potential for significant effects resulting from the Proposed Development during the Construction and Operational Phases is determined based on a range of indicators, including:

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

The following elements of the Proposed Development were assessed for their potential for likely significant effects on European Sites.

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

- **Operational Phase**
  - Surface water drainage from the Site of the Proposed Development.
  - Foul water from the Proposed Development leading to increased loading on wastewater treatment plants.
  - Increased lighting in the vicinity emitted from the Proposed Development; and
  - Increased human presence in the vicinity as a result of the Proposed Development.

A European Site will only be at risk from likely significant effects where the Source-Pathway-Receptor link exists between the Proposed Development and the European Site. Given the absence of a Source-Pathway-Receptor link between the Proposed Development and the European sites within the precautionary Zone of Influence (Table 1), there is no potential for significant effects on European Sites. As such, no further assessment is required.

3.5.1 Assessment of Potential for In-combination Effects

Although the Proposed Development itself does not have the potential to cause significant effects on European sites, it could act in combination with other plans/projects within the general area. Therefore, this section reviews existing planning permissions within approx. 200m radius of the Site of the Proposed Development and evaluates the potential for them to act in-combination with the Proposed Development to cause likely significant effects on the relevant European sites as listed in Table 1. Additionally, larger developments along the river Liffey within Lucan were also considered and evaluated for their potential for in-combination effects with the Proposed Development via hydrological pathways to the European Sites in Dublin Bay.

Note that all existing pending/granted permissions within the 200m radius and along the river Liffey within Lucan from the Proposed Development are considered to be located at a sufficient distance from any European site to exclude the possibility of in-combination effects via land and/or air pathways arising from (i) emissions of noise, dust, pollutants and/or vibrations emitted from the Site during the Construction Phase; (ii) increased traffic volumes during the Construction and Operational Phase and associated emissions; (iii) potential increased lighting emitted from the Site during Construction and Operational Phase; and (iv) increased human presence at the Site during Construction and Operational Phase. Thus, the only potential pathway for in-combination effects considered and assessed here is via discharges of foul and surface water into the existing combined sewer network.

3.5.1.1 *Existing Planning Permissions*

There are several existing planning permissions on record in the area ranging from small-scale extensions and alterations to existing residential properties to some larger-scale developments. The larger-scale development identified within the vicinity of the Proposed Development are as follows:

Planning Ref: SD16A/0072/EP. **Applicant**: Board of Management. **Address**: Saint Joseph's College, Post Primary School and Scoil Mhuire Girls National School, Lucan Road, Lucan, Co. Dublin **Decision date**: 26/06/2021. **Decision**: Grant extension of duration permission. **Description**: *(1) Demolition of existing single and two storey post primary school buildings (1050sq.m) to the east of the main school building. (2) Construction of a part two, part three storey post primary school extension (3346sq.m in total) configuring as follows; (a) three storey extension (1817sq.m) north of the main school building along the Lucan Road forming a new post primary school pedestrian entrance off the Lucan Road, (b) two storey extension (1340sq.m) to the east of main school buildings, (c) two storey extension (escape stairs 55sq.m) to the south of main school buildings on the west side of the two storey classroom block, (d) single storey extension (133sq.m) at first floor north of the existing PE hall. (3) Reconfiguration of the existing vehicular and pedestrian access off Lucan Heights to form the main post primary school vehicular entrance and secondary pedestrian entrance. (4) The reconfiguration of the existing primary school pedestrian entrance in its current location off the Lucan Road and the re-designation of the existing post primary school vehicular entrance as the primary school vehicular entrance. (5) All associated site works.*

Planning Ref: SD18A/0429. **Applicant:** Liam Treacy & Donal Dixon. **Address:** Block 3, Millbank Business Park, Lower Lucan Road, Lucan, Co. Dublin. **Decision date:** 06/01/2020. **Decision:** Grant permission. **Description:** *Demolition of a one storey warehouse building*

(c.1,051.2sq.m) and site boundary wall and the construction of 11 three storey residential units; 11 three bed units ranging in size from c. 105.9 - 112.2sq.m all with associated private back gardens, balconies and terrace areas; vehicular and pedestrian access is proposed off the Lower Lucan Road via two entrance points; 17 car parking spaces (including 1 disabled); sheltered bicycle storage and bin storage at surface level; a central public open space area of c. 282sq.m with all boundary treatment and landscaping works as well as all associated site development works on an overall site of c. 0.242Ha.

Planning Ref: SD18A/0310. **Applicant**: Phoenix Croft Ltd. **Address**: Ardeevin Avenue, Lucan, Co. Dublin **Decision date**: 15/05/2019. **Decision**: Grant permission. **Description**: *Construction of a 25 unit residential housing development on a site extending to 0 .96 hectares to the north of the N4 Lucan by-pass and to the east (end of) Ardeevin Avenue, consisting of the following: 1 detached, two and a half storey 5 bedroom house (Type 1, 295sq.m); 1 detached, two and half storey 5 bedroom house (Type 1a, 270sq.m); 1 detached, two and a half storey 4 bedroom house (Type 1b, 270sq.m); 1 detached, two and a half storey 5 bedroom house (Type 1c, 280sq.m); 1 detached, two and a half storey 5 bedroom house (Type 1d, 270sq.m); 8 detached, two and a half storey houses (Type 2, 150sq.m each); a two storey, semi-detached block consisting of: 1 two bedroom house (Type 3, 70sq.m); 1 two bedroom house (Type 3a, 74sq.m), 10 semi-detached two and a half storey houses (Type 4, 150sq.m each); all associated site development works including landscaping works, public lighting, ground works, (reduction of existing site level), boundary treatment, roads, footpaths, foul drainage, surface water drainage including attenuation, water main and site entrance piers (with no gates).*

Planning Ref: SD18A/0398. **Applicant**: Ronan Campbell & Laura Tully. **Address**: 19 Beech Park, Lucan, Co. Dublin 8. **Decision date**: 02/04/2019. **Decision:** Grant Permission. **Description**: *Demolition of a single storey extension to the side; construction of a detached 2 storey 3 bedroom dwelling to side garden; screened balcony to rear of first floor to new dwelling with external stair access; vehicular entrance with dishing of public footpath; new boundary walls and all associated site works.*

Planning Ref: SD22A/0066 **Applicant**: John Pope. **Address**: 'Hillview', Dispensary Lane, Lucan, Co. Dublin, K78K2N1 **Decision date**: 20/04/2022. **Decision:** Request additional information. **Description:** The demolition of the existing 3-bedroom, single storey detached house and sheds and the construction of three houses; two 3 bedroom 3 storey; semi-detached houses extending to 131.50sq.m each and one 3-bedroom; 3 storey detached house extending to 131.5sq.m; and all associated site works. Each house will have 2 off-street parking spaces to the front of the house (the total number of car spaces will be 6).

Planning Ref: SD17A/0241 and PL06S.249325. **Applicant**: Sharon O'Brien **Address**: 17 Esker Lawns, Lucan, Co. Dublin. **Decision date**: 14/03/2018. **Decision**: Grant Permission. **Description:** Permission for the demolition of an existing side extension to the west and rear shed to the north of the existing house, the construction of 2 new 2 storey, semi-detached 3 bedroom houses to the west of the site, along with proposed parking for proposed houses no's 1 and 2 and revised parking for existing no. 17 Esker lawns, with associated site works and new boundary walls.

On examination of the above developments, it is considered that there are no means for the Proposed Development to act *in-combination* with any project that would cause any likely significant effects on any European Sites. The developments in the vicinity of the Proposed

Development are either small in scale, were granted planning permission over one year ago or are separated from the Proposed Development by a significant urban buffer. It is also noted that each of the granted developments were determined to not have the potential for significant effects on any European Site, either alone or in-combination with other developments.

3.5.1.2 *Relevant Policies and Plans*

The following policies and plans were reviewed and considered for possible in-combination effects with the Proposed Development.

- Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2015-2020
- Draft Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2025
- South Dublin County Development Plan 2022 - 2028
- Draft Biodiversity Action Plan for South Dublin County – Connecting with Nature 2020-2026

The draft Biodiversity Action Plan for South Dublin County is set out to protect and improve biodiversity, and as such will not result in negative in-combination effects with the Proposed Development. The South Dublin County Development Plan 2022 - 2028 has directly addressed the protection of European Sites through specific policies and objectives (NCBH3). The relevant recommendations and mitigation measures have been integrated into the plan.

On examination of the above it is considered that there are no means for the Proposed Development to act in-combination with any plans or projects, that would cause any likely significant effects on any European Sites.

3.5.1.3 *Operation of Ringsend WWTP*

In June 2018 Irish Water applied for and subsequently received planning permission in 2019 for upgrade works to the Ringsend WwTP facility. The first phase of upgrade works to Ringsend WwTP was completed in December 2021, which increased the capacity of the plant by 400,000 P.E. These works, together with the future works permitted will ultimately increase the capacity of the facility from 1.6 million P.E. to 2.4 million P.E. This plant upgrade will result in an overall reduction in the final effluent discharge of several parameters from the facility including BOD, suspended soils, ammonia, DIN and MRP. An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) was submitted by Irish Water as part of this application. The EIAR contains sections relating to Marine Biodiversity and Terrestrial Biodiversity, and each contains a section on the 'do-nothing scenario'. These review the effects of the WwTP on biodiversity in Dublin Bay *in the absence of the upgrade works* and so are relevant to this report.

The EIAR report acknowledges that under the do-nothing scenario "*the areas in the Tolka Estuary and North Bull Island channel will continue to be affected by the cumulative nutrient loads from the river Liffey and Tolka and the effluent from the Ringsend WwTP*", which could result in a decline in biodiversity and the deterioration of the biological status of Dublin Bay (Irish Water, 2018). Nevertheless, these negative impacts of nutrient over-enrichment are considered "unlikely" (Irish Water, 2018). This is because historical data suggests that pollution in Dublin Bay has had little or no effect on the composition and richness of the benthic macroinvertebrate fauna. The EIAR notes that "*although a localised decline could occur, it is not envisaged to be to a scale that could pose a threat to the shellfish, fish, bird or marine mammal populations that occur in the area.*" Furthermore, the EIAR notes that significant

impacts on waterbird populations foraging on invertebrates in Dublin Bay due to nutrient over-enrichment are "*unlikely*" to occur (Irish Water, 2018). What is important in the context of this AA screening report is that the do-nothing scenario predicts that nutrient and suspended solid loads from the WwTP will "*continue at the same levels and the impact of these loadings should maintain the same level of effects on marine biodiversity*" and that "*if the* status *quo is maintained there will be little or no change in the majority of the intertidal faunal assemblages found in Dublin Bay which would likely continue to be relatively diverse and rich across the bay.*"

Therefore, it can be concluded that significant effects on marine biodiversity and the European sites within Dublin Bay from the *current* operation of Ringsend WwTP are unlikely. Importantly, this conclusion is not dependent upon any future works to be undertaken at Ringsend. Thus, in the absence of any upgrading works, significant effects to European sites are not likely to arise.

3.5.1.4 *Potential In-combination effects*

On examination of the above it is considered that there are no means for the Proposed Development to act in-combination with any plans or projects, that would cause any likely significant effects on any European sites.

TABLE 2. SUMMARY OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT ON EUROPEAN SITES AS A RESULT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT.

Site	Habitat Loss / Alteration	Habitat or Species Fragmentation	Disturbance and/or Displacement of Species	Changes in Population Density	Changes in Water Quality and/or Resource	In-combination effects	Stage 2 AA Required
SAC							
Wicklow Mountains SAC (002122)	No	No	No	None	None	None	NO
Glenasmole Valley SAC (001209)	No	No	No	None	None	None	NO
Rye Water Valley / Carton SAC (001398)	No	No	No	None	None	None	NO
SPA							
South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (004024)	No	No	No	None	None	None	NO

4 APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING CONCLUSION

The Proposed Development at Clonbrone, Esker Hill, Lucan, Co. Dublin has been assessed taking into account:

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

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

- Wicklow Mountains SAC (002122)
- Glenasmole Valley SAC (001209)
- Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC (001398)
- South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (004024)

In carrying out this AA screening, mitigation measures **have not been taken into account**. Standard best practice construction measures which could have the effect of mitigating any effects on any European Sites have similarly not been taken into account.

On the basis of this screening exercise, it can be concluded, based on the best scientific knowledge available, that the possibility of any significant effects on any European Sites, whether arising from the project itself or in combination with other plans and projects, **can be excluded**. Thus, there is no requirement to proceed to Stage 2 of the Appropriate Assessment process; and the preparation of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) is not required.

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