

MWP

**Screening for Appropriate Assessment
Report and Natura Impact Statement
Proposed Magherabeg Beach Facility Centre for
Water Sports Activities, Magherabeg Beach,
Castlegregory, Co. Kerry**

Kerry County Council

September 2025

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Summary of Findings

Project Title	Proposed Magherabeg Beach Facility Centre for Water Sports Activities, Magherabeg Beach, Castlegregory, Kerry
Project Proponent	Kerry County Council
Project Location	The proposed development site is located at Magherabeg Beach, approximately 2.6 km north of Castlegregory village, on the Maharees Peninsula in Tralee Bay in west Kerry.
Screening for Appropriate Assessment	A screening for Appropriate Assessment report was undertaken in Section 3 of this report to determine the potential for likely significant effects of a proposed beach facility centre for water sports activities at Maherabeg Beach, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, in view of the conservation objectives of certain Natura 2000 sites identified within this report.
Stage 1 Conclusion	<p>It was objectively concluded during the screening process that significant effects on the following Natura 2000 sites are not likely to occur as a result of the proposed development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mount Brandon SAC (000375) • Akeragh, Banna and Barrow Harbour SAC (000332) • Slieve Mish Mountains SAC (002185) • Kerry Head Shoal SAC (002263) • Lower River Shannon SAC (002165) • Kerry Head SPA (004189) <p>However, it was concluded that potentially significant effects could not be precluded for the following Natura 2000 site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC (002070) • Magharee Islands SAC (002261) • Tralee Bay Complex SPA (004188) • Dingle Peninsula SPA (004153) • Magharee Islands SPA (004125) <p>Therefore, further assessment is required to determine whether the proposed development is likely to adversely affect the integrity of these Natura 2000 sites.</p>
Natura Impact Statement (Stage 2)	In cases where an Appropriate Assessment is required, a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) is prepared and includes a report of a scientific examination of evidence and data, carried out by competent persons to identify and classify any implications of a project, individually, or in combination with other plans or projects, for Natura 2000 sites in view of the conservation objectives of the sites. The NIS in Section 4 of this report has considered all aspects of the development, by itself, or in combination with other plans or projects, which may affect the relevant Natura 2000 sites.
Stage 2 Conclusion	<p>The NIS contains information which the competent authority may consider in making its own complete, precise and definitive findings and conclusions, and upon which the competent authority is capable of determining that all reasonable scientific doubt has been removed as to the effects of the project on the integrity of these Natura 2000 sites.</p> <p>In light of the best scientific knowledge, and for the reasons set out in detail in this report, provided that the mitigation measures are implemented in full, it has been concluded in Section 4.12 of this report that the development, either individually, or in combination with other plans/projects, will not adversely affect the integrity of the following Natura 2000 sites, or any other sites:</p>

Project Title	Proposed Magherabeg Beach Facility Centre for Water Sports Activities, Magherabeg Beach, Castlegregory, Kerry
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="539 315 1246 342">• Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC (002070)<li data-bbox="539 353 895 380">• Magharee Islands SAC (002261)<li data-bbox="539 392 911 418">• Tralee Bay Complex SPA (004188)<li data-bbox="539 430 879 456">• Dingle Peninsula SPA (004153)<li data-bbox="539 468 895 495">• Magharee Islands SPA (004125)

1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Purpose of the Assessment

Magherabeg Beach is a popular public beach located in the Maherees, Co. Kerry. The beach and surrounding area are subject to large numbers of visitors, in particular during the summer season. There are a number of existing commercial water-sport activity providers and holiday and caravan parks operating in the area. Dedicated changing facilities are not currently available for visitors to the beach; however, free-to-use public portacabin-type toilets are available.

Magherabeg is a long-established blue flag beach. Blue flag beach accreditation requirements include provision of an adequate number of toilets, water quality monitoring, environmental education and information provision, lifeguarding and health and safety requirements, a supply of drinking water and access and facilities for the physically disabled. Kerry County Council commits significant resources to the management of its Blue Flag Beaches annually. Kerry County Council aim to meet and exceed An Taisce's 'Blue Flag' qualifying criteria. All beaches are risk assessed biannually. These amenities are managed and maintained throughout the year by a multifaceted team as follows; Operational staff who manage waste facilities, enforcement staff who monitor and enforce, amongst others, the Litter Pollution Act, Beach Bye-Laws, Casual Trading Bye-Laws and Car Parking Bye-Laws, and a Water Safety Team led by two Water Safety Development Officers who co-ordinate Life Guarding resources and Life Buoy inspections and maintenance. These teams are further co-ordinated through the Councils Beach Management Steering Committee which meets regularly throughout the year ensuring effective and enhanced service delivery.

Kerry County Council (KCC) ('the Applicant') wish to develop a beach facility centre for water sports activities at Magherabeg Beach, County Kerry. The development is being progressed through a funding scheme offered by Fáilte Ireland. The proposed facility will contain a number of resources such as indoor and outdoor showers and serviced toilets, as well as external and internal seating. The proposed facility will also include a multi-functional outdoor induction space for operators and visitors. Ancillary upgrade works, including ancillary upgrade of existing beach access ramp to provide universal beach access, complementary with the blue flag beach designation, are also proposed. The proposed beach access ramp upgrade works will be confined to the footprint of the existing ramp, avoiding sensitive adjoining habitats. A new wastewater and separate stormwater treatment system are proposed to be constructed on-site, and these will replace the existing system. The new facility will provide dedicated changing and enhanced sanitation facilities to beach users, and universal beach access relative to what is currently available and will regularise and improve wastewater and stormwater management on-site.

KCC applied to the Competent Authority, in this case An Bord Pleanála (ABP) (now An Coimisiún Pleanála - ACP), on the 31st May 2024 for planning consent in relation to proposed works (ABP Case Ref: JP08.319843). The planning application was accompanied by a Planning Report and associated documents and included a Natura Impact Statement (NIS), prepared by CAAS Ltd. On the 10th February 2025, further information was requested by ABP in relation to the proposed development. The following items relevant to the NIS submitted as part of the application were raised by ABP; queries around proposals in relation to wastewater, grey water and storm water, the Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) submitted, drawings/plans and levels submitted, potential impacts from the provision of a temporary construction compound and adjoining designated sites and beach access. The RFI also requested that measures outlined in a requested Visitor Management Plan be prepared and that any measures within this be included in a revised NIS. ABP also invited responses from the Applicant in relation to concerns raised by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) in relation to discharge proposals, specifically 'discharge by percolation of nutrients and shower chemicals on to the adjacent beach and tidal waters', increased visitor usage of the surrounding area

and the recommendation to develop a Wildlife Management Plan and submit details on the plan and timeline for delivery of same.

As part of the response to the queries outlined above and in light of subsequent updates to the development being proposed, this report, comprising a new Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) and NIS, has been prepared by an ecologist from Malachy Walsh and Partners (MWP), Engineering and Environmental Consultants on behalf of KCC to accompany the response to ABP. A Visitor and Wildlife Management Plan (VWMP) has also been prepared by MWP and measures recommended within this have been incorporated into this revised NIS.

This report comprises a description of the proposed works, as described in **Section 3.2** below, particularly in relation to the aspects that could interact with the receiving environment, the identification in **Section 3.5** of the impacts that are reasonably foreseeable as potentially ensuing from it, and a determination as to whether these predicted impacts, either alone or in combination with the other plans or projects identified in **Section 3.3**, are likely to have significant effects on the Natura 2000 sites identified in **Section 3.4**, in view of those sites' conservation objectives.

This report has been prepared to provide a sufficient level of information to ACP to assist them in making an informed decision in relation to planning consent.

1.2 Legislative Context

The Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) seeks to conserve natural habitats of wild fauna and flora by the designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) seeks to protect birds of special importance by the designation of Special Protection Areas (SPAs). It is the responsibility of each member state to designate SACs and SPAs, both of which form part of Natura 2000 which is a network of protected sites throughout the European Community. The requirement for AA of the implications of plans and projects on the Natura 2000 network of sites comes from the Habitats Directive (Article 6(3)).

The Habitats Directive has been transposed into Irish law, and the relevant Regulations are the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011. Under these, the Competent Authority is required to carry out a screening for AA of a proposed development prior to issuing consent to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge and the sites conservation objectives, if that project or plan, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, is likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site.

If it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information and best scientific knowledge, that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site, in view of the site's Conservation Objectives, then AA of the proposed development is required, and a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) must be prepared.

1.3 Stages of Appropriate Assessment

The AA process is a four-stage process with issues and tests at each stage. The purpose of the screening assessment (Stage 1) is to record in a transparent and reasoned manner the likely effects on Natura 2000 sites of a proposed development. An important aspect of the process is that the outcome at each successive stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required. The stages of AA are set out in **Appendix 1**.

1.4 Statement of Competency

This report has been prepared by Hazel Dalton (BSc., BBus.). Hazel is a Principal Ecologist with over ten years' experience with MWP since graduating with a first-class Honours Degree in 'Wildlife Biology' from Munster Technological University (MTU) in 2015. Hazel is experienced in ecological surveying and impact assessment for Appropriate Assessment (AA) and EIAR. She has authored and contributed to numerous screening reports for AA, Natura Impact Statements (NIS) and Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) reports. Hazel is an experienced field ecologist with a diverse ecological survey profile including habitats and flora, mammals, bats, birds and terrestrial invertebrates. She has held/holds National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) Licences for small mammal trapping, tape lure/endoscope bird surveys, Kerry slug surveys, disturbance of bat roosts, undertaking bat surveys and photographing wild animals (badger and otter) at their resting/breeding places.

2. Methodology

2.1 Appropriate Assessment Guidance

This assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the:

- European Commission, Commission Notice - *Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites – Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC* (2021/C 437/01)
- *Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management, OPR Practice Note PN01* (Office of the Planning Regulator, 2021)
- European Commission Guidance '*Managing Natura 2000 sites*' (EC, 2018); and
- *Appropriate Assessment of Plans & Projects - Guidance for Planning Authorities* prepared by the NPWS (DoEHLG, 2010, rev. 2010)).

2.1.1 Stage 1 Screening for AA Steps

This screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) report has been undertaken to determine whether the proposed shared beach facilities at Maherabeg Beach are likely to result in significant effects on nearby sites with European conservation designations (i.e., Natura 2000 Sites).

The screening analysis comprises four steps:

1. ascertaining whether the plan or project is directly connected with or necessary to the management of a Natura 2000 site
2. identifying the relevant elements of the plan or project and their likely impacts
3. identifying which (if any) Natura 2000 sites may be affected, considering the potential effects of the plan or project alone or in combination with other plans or projects
4. assessing whether likely significant effects on the Natura 2000 site can be ruled out, in view of the site's conservation objectives.

If there are any significant, potentially significant, or uncertain effects on Natura 2000 sites, it will be necessary to proceed to AA and submit an NIS.

The following criteria were used in determining the Natura 2000 sites to be considered in the screening assessment, based on EC (2021):

- any Natura 2000 sites geographically overlapping with any of the actions or aspects of the plan or project in any of its phases, or adjacent to them
- any Natura 2000 sites within the likely 'zone of influence' (ZOI) of the plan or project.
- Natura 2000 sites in the surroundings of the plan or project (or at some distance) which host fauna that can move to the project area and then be subject to impact
- Natura 2000 sites whose connectivity or ecological continuity can be affected by the plan or project.

2.1.2 Zone of Influence

The Zone of Impact (ZOI) for the proposed development is the geographical area over which there is potential for the Qualifying Interests (QI) of a Natura 2000 site to be affected by biophysical changes arising from the construction of the proposed development. To establish which sites are located within the ZOI, the Source-Pathway-Receptor (SPR) model is applied during screening stage of AA, since according to the Office of the Planning Regulator guidelines (OPR, 2021), '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'.

The SPR model firstly considers the nature, size and location of the proposed development and then identifies characteristics that may provide a source of direct (e.g. water, noise, habitat loss) or indirect (e.g. impact to prey species) ecological impacts. Secondly, any pathways (e.g. watercourses) that exist linking the proposed development site to the Natura 2000 site(s) are identified, before, finally, establishing 'the location, nature and sensitivities of the qualifying species and habitats, the ecological conditions underpinning their survival and conservation objectives specified to maintain/restore favourable conservation status' (OPR, 2021).

Following this, and in view of best scientific knowledge, an assessment is made to ascertain whether the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans/projects, is likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site(s) in view of its conservation objectives. If there are any significant, potentially significant, or uncertain effects, it will be necessary to proceed to Appropriate Assessment and submit an NIS.

2.1.3 Assessment Criteria

As set out in the guidance outlined in **Section 2.1** above, the task of establishing whether a plan or project is likely to have an effect on a Natura 2000 site(s) is based on a preliminary impact assessment using available information and data, supplemented as necessary by local site information and ecological surveys. This is followed by a determination of whether there is a risk that the effects identified could be significant. The precautionary principle approach is required.

Once the potential impacts and effects that may arise from the proposal are identified the significance of these is assessed through the use of the following key indicators:

- Habitat loss and alteration
- Disturbance and/or displacement of species
- Habitat or species fragmentation
- Water quality

The criteria for assessing significance, in view of the site-specific conservation objectives, is as follows:

- degree of habitat loss (absolute, relative), changes in habitats structure/habitat degradation
- risk of species populations' displacement, level of disturbance, reduction of species home range, feeding area, refuge areas, alteration of favourable condition for breeding
- importance of the habitats and species affected, e.g. representativeness, local variety
- importance of the site (e.g. limit of distribution area for certain habitats and species, stepping stone, important for ecological connectivity)
- disruption or alteration of ecological functions; and
- changes to key ecological features of the site (e.g. water quality).

2.2 Consultation

Informal consultation was held between KCC and a local, proactive conservation group, the Maharees Conservation Association (MCA), in June and July 2025.

2.3 Desktop Study

A desk study was carried out to collate available information on the subject site's natural environment. This comprised a review of the following publications, data and datasets:

- Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSI) Aerial photography and 1:50000 mapping
- National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS)
- National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) (on-line map-viewer)
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) water quality data
- BirdWatch Ireland on-line resources
- Kerry County Development Plan 2022 - 2028
- KCC Biodiversity Action Plan 2022 - 2028
- Natura 2000 Standard Data Forms¹
- Other information sources and reports footnoted in the course of the report

The project site lies within the OSI National Grid hectad Q61. Concise and site-specific information on species records available for the hectad was retrieved from the NBDC on-line database. A data request for information on rare and protected species records was submitted to NPWS on the 15th July 2025. Data was received from NPWS on the 11th August 2025. Data received from NPWS in response to the data request and information received from the NBDC online database search was used to help inform the impact assessment in relation to the development.

GIS shapefiles downloaded from the websites of the NPWS and the EPA along with mapping of the proposed development were transferred to a GIS platform to allow information on the natural environment to be analysed.

¹ <https://natura2000.eea.europa.eu/ExpertViewer/?v=latest>

2.4 Field Surveys

In relation to the proposed development, a suite of ecological baseline surveys was initially conducted by CAAS Ltd. prior to the planning application being submitted to ABP. A follow up ecological walkover survey was undertaken by MWP Ecologists in July 2025 to identify if any changes had occurred within the site and surrounds. An ecological survey was also undertaken by KCC in July 2025. Surveys undertaken are summarised hereunder.

2.4.1 Original baseline surveys (2020/2021) (CAAS Ltd.)

Surveys of the proposal site and surrounding Maherabeg Beach area were undertaken by ecologists from CAAS Ltd. on various dates between August 2020 and April 2021. In relation to fauna, considering the sensitivities of the surrounding landscape of the proposed project site, emphasis was placed on mammals and birds (CAAS Ltd., 2023).

A summary of the surveys completed is provided as follows:

- Habitat surveys, including searches for any rare and/or protected plants species, of the site itself and the surrounds. Surveys were carried out with regard to standard guidelines set out in 'Best Practice Guidance for Habitat Surveys and Mapping' developed by the Heritage Council of Ireland (Smith, et al., 2011) and 'A Guide to Habitat Types in Ireland' (Fossitt, 2000). A list of the dominant and notable plant species was taken for each habitat type.
- Non-avian faunal surveys for evidence of mammals and bats, amphibians and reptiles, including for the natterjack toad (*Bufo calamita*) which is known from the Maharees Peninsula, were undertaken as part of a multi-disciplinary ecological walkover survey. Observations were made for fauna species present or likely to occur on-site and considering suitability of habitats. For mammals, searches were focused on signs of their presence, such as tracks, feeding marks and droppings, as well as direct observations. For bats, the main focus was on evaluation of suitable habitats to support roosting bats. The proposed project site was assessed also for habitat suitability for amphibian and reptile species.
- Bird surveys, comprising a targeted winter bird assessment, were conducted between October 2020 and March 2021 to determine site usage (foraging/roosting) by qualifying species from nearby SPAs within commuting range of Maherabeg Beach. A total of 36 hours of surveys were completed at the site over a 6-month period.

2.4.2 Updated baseline surveys (2025) (MWP and KCC)

A follow-up multi-disciplinary ecological walkover survey was undertaken by MWP ecologists on the 24th July 2025. The aim of the walkover survey was to confirm the site characteristics, as previously described, and gather up-to-date ecological baseline data from the subject site and surrounding areas.

A habitat survey was carried out. This was undertaken within the optimum flora survey period. The habitat survey had regard to 'Best Practice Guidance for Habitat Survey and Mapping' (Smith *et al.*, 2011) and 'A Guide to Habitats in Ireland' (Fossitt, J. A., 2000). Habitats within and surrounding the subject site were categorised to Level 3 according to Fossitt (2000). An updated habitat map for the proposed development site was prepared (see **Section 3.2.3.3**). The subject site was evaluated as to its suitability to support the plant species petalwort (*Petalophyllum ralfsii*), a QI of the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC.

During the survey, the presence of any Invasive Alien Species (IAS) was documented. Particular focus was given to species listed on the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI 477 of 2011, as amended).

An otter (*Lutra lutra*) survey was conducted at the subject site and surrounds and extending 150 m north and south along the adjoining shoreline and included checking for the presence of holts/couches or any other field evidence indicating site usage such as tracks, prints, feeding signs or spraints. The survey had regard to 'Monitoring the Otter *Lutra lutra*' (Chanin, 2003).

Aerial photography was used together with GPS to accurately enable field navigation. Notes were made on habitats encountered, including notes on dominant and indicative vegetation. A qualitative assessment was made of plant species diversity, vegetation structure, topography and drainage, disturbance and management.

The survey set out to confirm the ecological features and resources at the site, particularly in relation to the features of interest of Natura 2000 sites located within the ZOI of the proposed development site. The survey had a key focus on determining presence of and/or potential impact pathways between the proposal and the QI habitats and species of the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC (002070) and the Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of the Tralee Bay Complex SPA (004188), both of which partially overlap with the proposal site, or any other Natura 2000 site.

The 2025 walkover survey was supplemented by a site walkover undertaken by KCC Ecologists on the 2nd July 2025 during which the subject site and the surrounding shoreline was walked. This walkover survey included a check for any evidence of breeding ringed plover, which are known to nest on shingle beaches in the wider area, and other species of note. The walkover focussed in particular on the shoreline extending north-eastwards from the subject site to a distance of approximately 1 km.

Results of all field surveys were used to help inform the impact assessment in relation to the proposal.

3. Stage 1: Screening for Appropriate Assessment

The purpose of the screening assessment is to record in a transparent and reasoned manner the likely effects, on relevant Natura 2000 Sites, of the project, and whether these likely effects are significant. Screening for AA (Stage 1) determines the need for a full AA (Stage 2) and consists of a number of steps, each of which is addressed in the following sections of this report:

- 4.1** Establish whether the project is necessary for the management of a Natura 2000 site
- 4.2** Description of the proposed development
- 4.3** Identification of other plans, projects and activities with which the proposal could interact to create in-combination effects
- 4.4** Identification of Natura 2000 sites potentially affected
- 4.5** Identification and description of potential individual and cumulative impacts (in-combination effects) of the project
- 4.6** Assessment of the significance of the impacts on Natura 2000 sites
- 4.7** Conclusion of screening stage

3.1 Management of Natura 2000 Sites

The proposal is not connected with or necessary to the conservation management of a Natura 2000 Site.

3.2 Description of Proposed Development

3.2.1 Site Location and General Site Context

The proposed development site is located at Magherabeg Beach, a Blue Flag Beach, in the townland of Maherabeg, approximately 2.6 km north of Castlegregory village, on the Maharees Peninsula in Tralee Bay in west Kerry (see **Figure 1** below and **Appendix 2**). This narrow peninsula separates Tralee Bay to the east from Brandon Bay to the west and is characterised by an extensive dune system. The small coastal settlement of Fahamore is located at the north-western end of the peninsula. Maherabeg Beach is situated along the eastern side of the peninsula within a relatively sheltered corner of Tralee Bay. This is in contrast to Stradbally Beach, forming the western side of the peninsula, which is open and exposed to the Atlantic Ocean.

Maherabeg Beach and the general Maharees area are very popular with both tourists and locals, primarily during the main tourist season. The nearby village of Castlegregory is prone to large numbers of visitors during the summer months. Maherabeg Beach is an official 'Discovery Point' on the Wild Atlantic Way, a defined coastal driving route stretching over 2,500 km around Ireland's west coast from County Donegal in the north to County Cork in the south. Along the route, there are over 150 'Discovery Points' which are signposted and which direct visitors to areas of special beauty or cultural or historical significance².



Figure 1. Location of proposed development site

² <https://www.thewildatlanticway.com/>

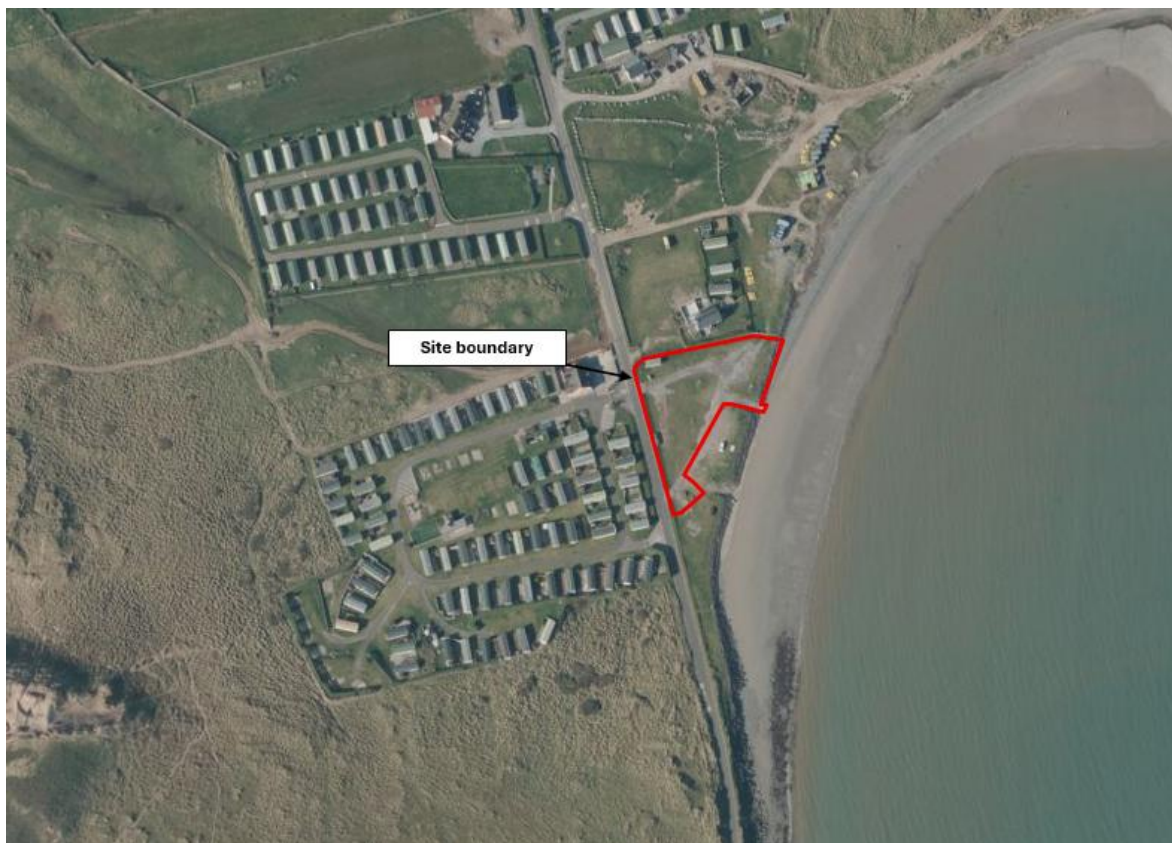


Figure 2. Proposed development site boundary (indicative) – refer to Planning Drawings

3.2.2 Purpose of the Project

Platform for Growth is a scheme under Fáilte Ireland with the aim to support the development of shared facilities at coastal and inland freshwater sites in the Republic of Ireland through the provision of funding. The funding is made available to County Councils only and there are a series of terms and conditions associated with the application process. Included in this is that the sites selected must have existing water sports operators, such as surf schools and/or stand-up paddle boarding (SUP) schools in situ. This is to consolidate existing tourism offerings and encourage the appropriate use of these areas by providing adequate facilities in suitable locations. As a condition of the investment grant scheme, all new build facilities are required to conform to nearly zero energy building standards and be appropriately and sensitively designed to integrate with the site's natural environment and surrounding location. Facilities availing of the scheme should be built to the highest possible environmental specifications.

The outcomes Fáilte Ireland is aiming to achieve with the addition of activity visitor facilities are all-weather changing facilities at existing water sports locations, the key components of which will be;

- sustainable and accessible design
- toilet provision
- shower provision
- changing provision
- secure storage
- induction space

- external terrace
- equipment washdown facilities
- orientation points and security

The requirement for enhanced beach facilities at Kerry’s Blue Flag Beaches has been identified in the County Kerry Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2016 -2022 which was prepared following extensive engagement with multiple stakeholders. Magherabeg Beach has held “Blue Flag” status since 2010 with most recent 4-year testing cycle (2020 to 2024) yielding an “Excellent Quality” Rating. The existing water activity providers in the area have identified the absence of a modern facility as a limiting factor to their business and they feel they could attract a larger number and more diverse range of customers with the provision of such a facility. Following the submission of a funding application to Fáilte Ireland under Platforms for Growth 2019-2025: Platform 2 – Facility Centres for Water Sports Activities, KCC were successful in securing funding from Fáilte Ireland to develop a facility in Magherabeg.

3.2.3 Description of Existing Site

3.2.3.1 General Site Description

The subject site comprises a grassed amenity area located just off a local road which fronts onto the adjacent beach of Maherabeg which is a popular location during the summer months. Currently, temporary, free to use portacabin-type toilet facilities which are managed by KCC are available on-site on a seasonal basis from March to October. Picnic tables are also located within the site and are available for use throughout the year. The site is used unofficially for visitor parking (see **Plate 1** below). Public recycling bins (glass, food cans etc) are also present on-site.

The stretch of shoreline adjacent to the east is separated from the proposal site by existing rock armour which fronts the north-eastern boundary of the proposal site for approximately 40 m, and elsewhere the existing amenity area along its full eastern boundary. This rock-armour continues southwards with a total overall length of approximately 240 m. Access onto the beach from the amenity area is currently via two man-made concrete and paving stone ramps which dissect the rock-armour revetment (see **Figure 3**, and **Plate 2**, below).

Two existing, well-established marine water sports operators are located in the area immediately north and north-east of the subject site. These operators offer a variety of marine leisure activities including paddle boating, kayaking, surfing, windsurfing, stand up paddle boarding and use of water trampolines and slides which are located just offshore. Sandy Bay Caravan and Camping Park is located immediately west of the subject site with more caravan and camping parks located in the surrounding area.



Figure 3. Overview of existing site and site features (indicative proposed development site boundary in red)

A review of the EPA on-line mapping tool³ determined that the Corine landcover category at the subject site and surrounds is 'Pastures'. The site occurs in an area of Dinantian Pure Unbedded Limestone overlain by Windblown Sands.

The proposal site partially overlaps with both the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC and the Tralee Bay Complex SPA in the north-east of the site (see **Section 3.4**). The SAC is designated for the protection of a variety of primarily marine and coastal habitats, as well as otter and the plant species petalwort. The SPA is designated for the protection of a large number of wintering wader and waterbird species, as well as the habitat complex 'Wetlands'.

3.2.3.2 Hydrology and Hydrogeology

The proposed development site is situated within the 'Tralee Bay-Feale' Water Framework Directive (WFD) catchment, the 'Owencashla_SC_010' WFD sub-catchment and the 'Gowlane_010' WFD River Sub-basin. The site adjoins the 'Outer Tralee Bay' WFD Coastal Waterbody⁴. There are no watercourses draining the subject site. Compliance with the reporting requirements of the WFD (Directive 2000/60/EC) obliges each member state to publish reports providing summary information about individual waterbodies relating to their status,

³ <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>

⁴ IE_SH_040_0000

risks and objectives. The latest Coastal Waterbody WFD Status (2016-2021) of the ‘Outer Tralee Bay’ is ‘Good’ with a risk status of ‘Review’⁵.

3.2.3.3 Habitats and Flora

Field Survey

The proposed development site comprises a largely grassed and heavily utilised amenity area of artificial/managed/disturbed habitats of low intrinsic ecological value. This amenity area comprises the main route/parking area whereby visitors access the beach and surrounding area (see **Plate 1**). The following Fossitt habitats were recorded on-site during the 2025 ecological walkover survey.

The dominant habitat occurring at the site comprises ‘**Amenity grassland (improved) GA2**’. This is a low-quality grassland habitat which is heavily trampled as it is subject to both pedestrian and vehicle use. The existing internal access road, existing toilet block, beach access ramps and recycling bin area are classified as ‘**Buildings and other artificial surfaces (BL3)**’. Disturbed areas of bare ground and rough gravelled/unsealed areas adjoining the roadway are classified as ‘**Spoil and bare ground (ED2)**’ or ‘**Exposed sand, gravel or till (ED1)**’. Existing rock-armour which separates the amenity area from the beach is classified as ‘**Sea walls, piers and jetties (CC1)**’ (see **Plate 2**).



Plate 1.View looking northwest across proposed development site.

⁵ <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/> Accessed 14/07/2025



Plate 2. Left) View looking north of existing beach access ramp to be upgraded, and rock armour and shoreline extending north; Right) view of same area extending south.

Habitats in the area surrounding and extending away from the proposal site comprise other areas of amenity grassland (GA2), dry meadow and grass verge (GS2), buildings and artificial surfaces (roads, hardstandings, buildings and other structures) (BL3), sandy shore (LS2), muddy sand shore (LS3), shingle and gravel banks (CB1), marram dune (CD2) and fixed dune (CD3). No Annex I habitats were recorded within the subject site.

A review of NBDC records for petalwort in the area determined that there are multiple records of this low-growing plant species from the Maharees Peninsula, the closest of which are located approximately 0.6 km to the southwest in an area of sand dunes. No evidence of petalwort was recorded during any of the ecological field surveys undertaken at the subject site. No other rare or protected plant species were noted on-site during surveys. A habitat map is available in **Figure 4** below.

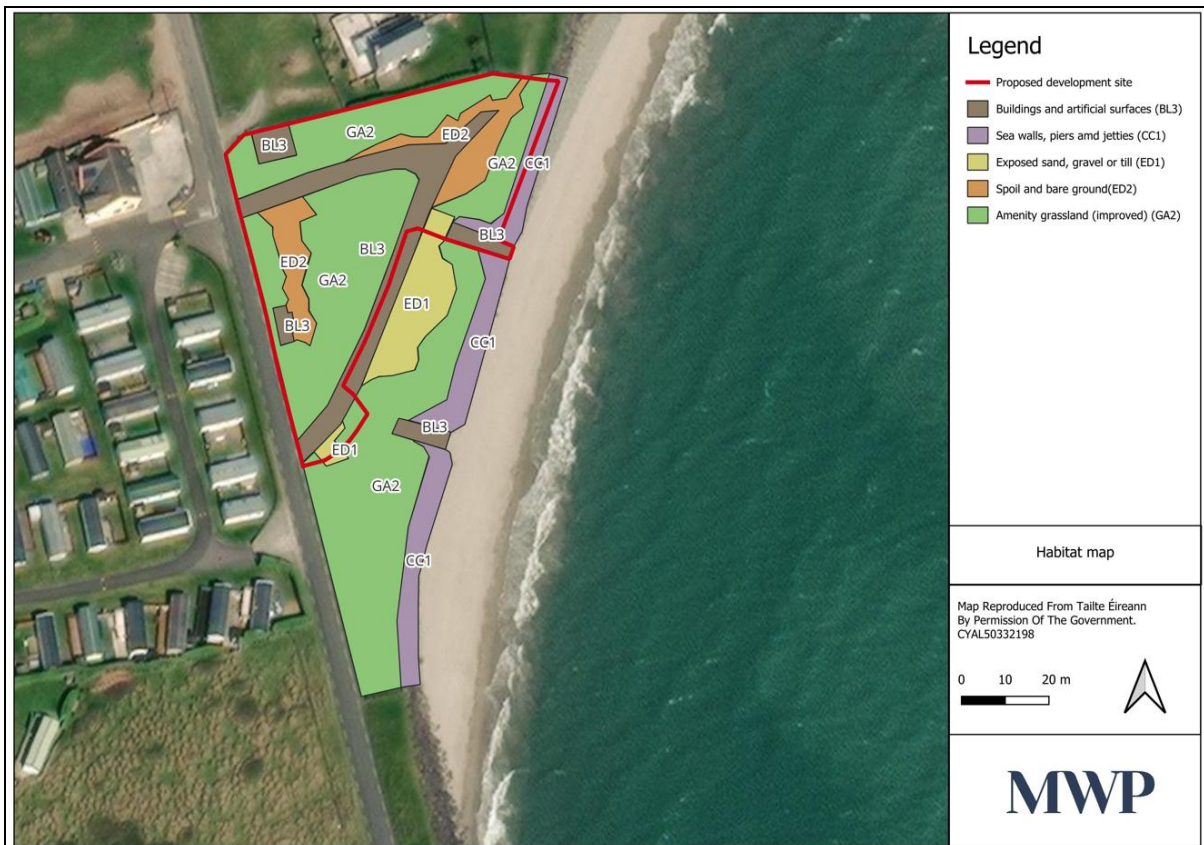


Figure 4. Habitat map (indicative proposed development site boundary in red)

3.2.3.4 Invasive Species

Documented NBDC records of high/medium impact invasive plant species, including species listed on the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI 477 of 2011, as amended), exist within the 2km grid square Q61D encompassing the subject area and the adjacent 2km grid square extending south along the peninsula (Q61C). There are no records of invasive plant species held by the NBDC for the 2km grid square extending northwards (Q61I). NBDC on-line records of non-native/invasive species previously recorded in Q61D and Q61C are listed in **Table 1** below.

No invasive plant species were recorded within the subject site during any of the field surveys undertaken.

Table 1. Desktop records of invasive plant species for the 2 km grid squares Q61D and Q61C

Common name	Relevant 2 km grid square	Designation
Common broomrape <i>Orobanche minor</i>	Q61D, Q61C	Medium impact species
Sea-buckthorn <i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i>	Q61D, Q61C	Medium impact species; listed on Third Schedule of EC (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011

3.2.3.5 Birds

The Maharees and Tralee Bay are internationally important for wintering populations of several bird species, including light-bellied Brent goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*), whooper swan (*Cygnus cygnus*), shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*), wigeon (*Mareca penelope*), teal (*Anas crecca*), pintail (*Anas acuta*), scaup (*Aythya marila*) and waders such as ringed plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*), dunlin (*Calidris alpina*), curlew (*Numenius arquata*) and redshank (*Tringa tetanus*). Ringed plover is also known to nest on shingle beaches on the peninsula, including in the wider Maherabeg area. On the Magharees Islands located offshore, breeding seabird species such as storm petrel (*Hydrobates pelagicus*), common tern (*Sterna hirundo*), Arctic tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) and little tern (*Sternula albifrons*) can be found.

Previous winter bird surveys of the subject site and surrounding area undertaken by CAAS Ltd. between October 2020 and April 2021 to inform the previous NIS submitted recorded several wader and waterbird species, some of which comprise SCIs for nearby Natura 2000 sites. Observations of SCIs recorded comprised 11 oystercatchers (*Haematopus ostralegus*) seen foraging in grassland just north of the proposal site (on one occasion in January), as well as up to 40 oystercatchers recorded roosting on the water approximately 0.25 km east of the proposal site. Approximately 25 black-headed gulls (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) and 5 turnstones (*Arenaria interpres*) were also recorded. Approximately 100 black-headed gulls were recorded foraging on a rocky outcrop approximately 0.7 km to the north-east. One common gull (*Larus canus*) was recorded flying over. Offshore, five Brent geese were also seen roosting on open water approximately 0.65 km south-east of the proposal site, with approximately 76 Brent geese also seen roosting on open water further out to sea, in excess of 2 km south-east of the proposal site (CAAS Ltd., 2023). All of the above species are SCIs of the Tralee Bay Complex SPA. Common gull is also an SCI of the Magharee Islands SPA.

Other bird species recorded included small groups of herring gull (*Larus argentatus*) recorded roosting on the water approximately 0.25 km east of the proposal site. Two cormorants (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) were observed foraging in the shallow waters offshore, and in the wider area. Low numbers of great black-backed gull (*Larus marinus*), lesser black-backed gull (*Larus fuscus*), little egret (*Egretta garzetta*) and grey heron (*Ardea cinerea*) were also recorded (CAAS Ltd., 2023).

3.2.3.6 Otter

A review of NBDC records for otter (a QI of the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC) in the area determined that there is one existing record from the Maharees Peninsula. This record, which pertains to a sighting of live animal, is located at a remove from the subject site at Kilshanig (approximately 4 km to the north). The next closest NBDC records are held for the Aughacasma area southwest of Castlegregory village, all in excess of 5 km from the subject site⁶.

No evidence of otter was recorded during any of the ecological field surveys and no otter breeding or resting places were identified. While it is likely that otter commute or forage along this stretch of coastline on occasion, it is considered that the subject site and the surrounding landward area are of low ecological value due to a lack of optimal habitat and the high levels of human disturbance which occur in the area.

3.2.4 Characteristics of the Project

The proposed facility will contain a number of resources such as indoor and outdoor showers (which are to be heated through solar power), serviced toilets, as well as external and internal seating. The proposed facility will also include a multi-functional outdoor induction space for operators and visitors. Additional amenities included in the design plan are lockers for storage and elsewhere within the site washdown areas, bicycle stand, bin store and mechanical and electrical plant room, boardwalk and concrete walkway to beach access ramp. A grass roof is proposed for the structure. There is also provision for disabled car-parking spaces (2 no.). The proposed development site encompasses an overall area of 2,995 m². Within this area, the proposed building footprint comprises 187 m².

3.2.4.1 Provision of Toilet/Shower Facilities and Management of Wastewater

The existing site currently provides toilet facilities to beach users in the form of a portable structure on a concrete base housing free-to-use male and female toilets (WCs), male urinals and wash hand basins (WHBs). These toilet facilities are connected to an existing septic tank with percolation area. Kerry County Council provide and maintain these facilities during the annual period March to October. The existing toilet facilities consist of a maximum of eight WCs, four urinals and associated WHBs. There are no existing showers. Potable water records available for this facility for the years 2006 to 2025 show that the months of July and August are the peak usage months, as would be expected. Existing potable water is provided via an Uisce Eireann (UE) watermain on the main road.

The proposed facilities will include seven shower/changing rooms, five WCs and four free outdoor cold washdown showers. Since these facilities will be pay-per-use, it is expected that they will only be used by persons taking part in prolonged water-based activities e.g., wind surfing etc. It is proposed to retain provision of free-to-use facilities also for general beachgoers.

A new Wastewater Treatment System (WWTS) is required to cater for both the proposed pay-per-use toilet/shower facilities and existing free toilet facilities to be retained. This new system, comprising a Sequencing Batch Reactor (SBR) package treatment plant followed by a Tertiary Polishing Filter, proposed to cater for the peak use months, will replace the existing septic tank and percolation area on-site. All wastewater (foul from toilets and 'grey' from showers/sinks) will be delivered from the proposed pay-per-use toilet/shower facilities and the existing free toilet facilities to the proposed WWTS (SBR treatment system) via new 150mmØ UPVC foul pipes. Refer to MWP Drawing No. 23173-MWP-00-01-DR-C-0105-P09 Proposed Drainage Layout.

⁶ <https://maps.biodiversityireland.ie/Map>

The proposed WWTS will consist of the following main components:

- - 1 no. new precast concrete primary/buffer tank (7,500 litres),
- - 1 no. new precast concrete reactor tank (4,500 litres) and
- - 1 no. 200m² soil polishing filter with 2 no. closed cell percolation modules (2 streams).

There will be no direct discharge of effluent to the beach or tide; however, there will be discharge of treated effluent to ground within the grassed amenity area adjacent to the shoreline, thus treated effluent will ultimately indirectly discharge to groundwater and the sea. However, the use of a Sequencing Batch Reactor (SBR) package treatment plant followed by a Tertiary Polishing Filter, as outlined above, will ensure that tertiary level treatment of effluent will be achieved prior to discharge to ground. The proposed wastewater treatment system has been designed for the specific site physical and usage parameters and is considered sufficient to achieve a high level of treatment which will safeguard the receiving environment.

An SBR of this type may be expected to produce an effluent of less than 25 mgs/l BOD⁷, 35mgs/L SS⁸ and 125 mgs/l COD⁹. The SBR treatment process will fully nitrify and de-nitrify the wastewater so that nitrate is expected to be less than 5 mg/l, ammonia between 2 -5 mg/l and phosphorus, as P, < 3 mg/l. Tertiary Treatment is proposed to follow the secondary Treatment stage in the form of dual closed cell modules. These will reduce the effluent quality to a maximum of 5 mgs/l BOD, 5mgs/L SS and 25 mgs/l COD or better before percolation, and it is expected that the Tertiary effluent will be significantly better than the above standard as provided by the specialist design and build contractor.

The projected daily wastewater discharge is expected to be circa 3.7m³. **Table 2** gives the estimated quality of the treated discharge, while **Table 3** presents the on-site domestic wastewater treatment minimum performance standards from the EPA Code of Practice Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems 2021.

Table 2. Treated wastewater quality

Parameter	BOD	SS	COD	Ammonia	Phosphorus
Secondary Treatment Standard	25mg/l	35mg/l	125mg/l	<5mg/l	<3mg/l
Tertiary Treatment	5mg/l	5mg/l	25mg/l	<5mg/l	<3mg/l

Table 3. Domestic wastewater standards (EPA, 2021)

Parameter	Standard mg/l
BOD	≤20
SS	≤30
Ammonium Nitrogen	≤20

⁷ Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD)
⁸ Suspended solids (SS)
⁹ Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD)

The ultimate discharge from the new facility will be locally to ground, via a raised gravel/sand bed and distribution pipework network. The overall area of percolation is designed in accordance with the EPA 'Code of Practice for Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems 2021' to match the site's percolation characteristics during full capacity discharge.

Refer to the '*Wastewater Treatment System Design Report*' (Document No. 25609-ZZ-ZZZ-RP-MWP-CE-6001) prepared by MWP.

The existing foul system, including septic tank, will be decommissioned and removed off-site. Decommissioning of the existing tank will follow general guidance outlined in the EPA guidance document '*Remediation and replacement of Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems (DWWTS)*' (EPA, 2020).

3.2.4.2 Management of Stormwater

The extent of hardstanding on-site is currently minimal, and the site is largely grassed. Surface run-off will be managed via temporary attenuation ponds during construction, if required.

During operation, it is proposed that all stormwater as well as saltwater washdown from the external coldwater showers will be conveyed to a proposed stormwater soakpit via new 150mmØ UPVC storm pipes and 150mmØ perforated land drains. Refer to MWP Drawing No. 23173-MWP-00-01-DR-C-0105-P09 Proposed Drainage Layout.

3.2.4.3 Water Supply

Water supply will remain unchanged and will be via the existing Uisce Eireann watermain on the main road. Refer to MWP Drawing No. 23173-MWP-00-01-DR-C-0105-P09 Proposed Drainage Layout.

3.2.4.4 Operation and Management of the Facility

Under the Fáilte Ireland Platforms for Growth investment scheme, Fáilte Ireland have prepared an '*Operating Manual and Standard Operating Procedures*' for scheme Facility Centres for Water Sports Activities in conjunction with participating Local Authorities, commercial water sports operators, water sports participants and in line with international and domestic best practice. This guidance provides a clear, detailed, and comprehensive set of principles which outline how these facilities must be managed, maintained, and promoted over the course of their operational lifetime and cover aspects such as detailed maintenance and cleaning schedules, waste disposal, safety, sustainability, environmental protection, and monitoring (including of drainage systems and green roof). It also sets out 'Proposed Terms of Use' outlining agreements between Local Authorities and commercial operators which wish to avail of the facilities. In the event of non-compliance with these terms, commercial operators can be precluded from using the facilities.

The proposed facility at Maherabeg Beach will be required to adhere to this guidance under the Fáilte Ireland Platforms for Growth Investment Scheme. A site-specific '*Operating Manual and Standard Operating Procedures*' document, incorporating the above elements, will be prepared for the proposed Maherabeg Facility by KCC. Commercial operators who wish to sign up to avail of the facility will have to abide by all Terms of Use.

In addition to this, as is required in line with the Fáilte Ireland guidance, a '*Facilities Consultative Group*' (or Operating Working Group) shall be created in order to allow scope for stakeholder input and to ensure a smooth running of operations. This working group will comprise representatives from KCC, Fáilte Ireland, an Garda Síochána, local community and commercial operator groups.

3.2.4.5 Project Characteristics Overview

The following table provides a summary of the characteristics of the project. This has been confirmed with the project engineer and design team.

<p>Size, scale, area, land-take</p>	<p>The proposed development site has an overall area of approximately 2,995 m². Within this area, the proposed building has a footprint of approximately 187 m².</p> <p>The proposal site partially overlaps with both the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC and the Tralee Bay Complex SPA in the east of the site. Proposed works within the SAC/SPA boundary comprise upgrade of the existing concrete beach access ramp, encompassing an area of 15m². Works here will be confined to the footprint of the existing ramp. There is no proposal to increase the footprint of the ramp. There will be no landtake associated with this or any other aspect of the proposal.</p> <p>All works will be undertaken above the high-water mark. There is no direct hydrological connection between the proposal site and any Natura 2000 site; however, the proposal site is located immediately adjacent to the shoreline. There is considered to be an indirect hydrological link to the marine zone/Natura 2000 sites via overland or groundwater flow.</p>
<p>Details of physical changes that will take place during the various stages of implementing the proposal</p>	<p>Construction phase</p> <p>The development site will be secured with safety fencing and a site access point opened. The northern vehicular entrance to the site will be used for construction traffic and will be closed to the public.</p> <p>A temporary site compound will be installed for the storage of construction materials and site welfare facilities.</p> <p>Temporary removal of the existing toilet block.</p> <p>Demolish existing site structures including toilets slab (to be broken up and removed off-site), stone seating, signage, entrance posts and barrier, timber fencing, bottlebanks and storage container off site.</p> <p>Existing foul system will be flushed and the existing septic tank desludged and effluent removed off-site by an appropriately licenced operator. Existing foul system, including existing septic tank, will be decommissioned and removed, and trenches backfilled.</p> <p>All the existing site surfaces will be cleared and topsoil stripped. Ground excavated to the formation level. The site consists of mostly sand and gravel with a minimal amount of topsoil. Excavations and filling for new underground services including foul, storm, water, power and comms trenching and filling, ducting and chambers. Bulk excavations for wastewater treatment plant.</p> <p>The existing water connection and power connections will be modified for the new building.</p> <p>All surface water runoff will be collected and discharged to a new storm water soakpit.</p> <p>A new wastewater treatment system with a polishing filter and percolation area</p>

	<p>will be constructed in the amenity area. This will involve stripping of topsoil and excavation. Following installation, the area will be reinstated with topsoil.</p> <p>The slope of the northern entrance to the beach will be adjusted to provide improved, universal access. The building and surrounding public realm will be constructed. Vehicle access at the south of the proposed development site will be upgraded to improve access.</p>
<p>Description of resource requirements for the construction/operation and decommissioning of the proposal (water resources, construction material, human presence etc)</p>	<p>Construction Phase</p> <p>The new building structure and surrounding area will consist of standard construction materials such as reinforced concrete, wood, stone, metal cladding and plastics.</p> <p>The building fit out will consist of standard materials such as tiling, sanitary ware, electrical and plumbing materials.</p> <p><i>Construction Materials</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Various components of new sewerage and stormwater treatment systems ○ Hoarding, scaffolding, fencing ○ Structural Steel (rebar) in footings – 2.5 tons ○ Ready-mix concrete for structure and boardwalk - approximately 125m³ ○ Clause 804 fill under footings – 125m³ ○ Imported fill peagravel surround – 50m³ ○ Imported fill base for wastewater system tanks – 16m³ ○ Imported fill for site structures – 70m³ ○ Concrete – total approx. 460m³ ○ Ground floor insulation – 26m³ ○ Masonry block wall – approx. 250m² ○ Sand – 10m³ ○ Grasscrete walkway to recycling centre ○ Rebar – 1.5T ○ Suspended 2m/3m wide timber boardwalk with 1.2m high timber railings - 80m² ○ 2.0m wide concrete ramps/walkway with metal handrails – 70m ○ Timber joinery, cedar cladding ○ UPVC piping ○ Mineral felt roof cladding ○ Site services incl foul, storm, water, comms ducting and services, total 160m

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 1.5m high timber fencing and painted and galvanised decorative gates ○ Site signage ○ Lighting standards ○ Soft landscaping (topsoiling, native species) <p><i>Plant/Machinery/Equipment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 3 tonne Mini Excavators for digging foundations ○ Generator ○ Concrete mix truck for ready mix concrete ○ Various delivery trucks for delivery of materials ○ Cement mixers ○ 1 No teleporter for day-to-day use ○ General tools including electrical saws, nail guns, concrete cutting equipment, jack hammers, drills, angle grinders <p><i>Human Resources</i></p> <p>It is anticipated that between 10-15 construction personnel will be on site during this period.</p> <p>Operational Phase</p> <p>General materials for upkeep and maintenance of the facility, including restocking of toilet areas.</p> <p>Daily cleaning/any necessary maintenance or upkeep works will take place during the open season; however, the facility will not be staffed.</p>
<p>Description of timescale for the various activities that will take place as a result of implementation (including likely start and finish date)</p>	<p>The proposed development is envisaged to take 10-12 months in total to complete. This will comprise of site establishment and clearance, expected to take 1 month, and an estimated construction phase of approximately 9-11 months.</p> <p>It is anticipated that works will commence during the ‘closed’ (winter) season. The sewerage treatment system and new concrete apron for the free-to-use public toilets will be completed first. This will allow for the reinstatement of the free-to-use toilets in advance of the subsequent ‘open’ season ensuring that availability is maintained throughout the typical period.</p>
<p>Description of wastes arising and other residues (including quantities) and their disposal</p>	<p>Construction phase</p> <p>Excavated materials (sands, gravels and topsoil) for new underground services will be temporarily stockpiled on-site for redistribution (total volume 160 m³). Excavated materials for new wastewater treatment plant (110m³) will be temporarily stockpiled on-site for redistribution.</p> <p>Volumes of topsoil will be minimal – all to be reused on-site. No material will be disposed of offsite unless deemed unsuitable for the infilling and landscaping. Excavated unsuitable fill will be minimal.</p>

	<p>Concrete spoil max 7.5 m³ (from existing 100mm reinforced concrete apron for current free to use toilet cabin and existing septic tank to be removed and disposed of by a licenced contractor).</p> <p>Other construction phase waste may comprise the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Waste steel and other scrap metal○ Miscellaneous and incidental waste materials such as pallets, plastics and packaging○ Liquid fuel/oil/lubricant residues○ Temporary W/C utilities waste○ Domestic waste from temporary canteen facilities on site. <p>Refuelling of construction machinery and vehicles will only take place in designated, bunded refuelling areas. All hydrocarbons and associated equipment will be stored in impermeable storage areas.</p> <p>Temporary W/C utilities will be provided on site during the construction phase for contractor staff. Wastewater from wash hand basins in temporary W/C utilities will be held in above-ground sealed storage tanks. The temporary W/C utilities will be maintained appropriately by an approved and permitted contractor. Wastewater will be disposed of by the approved and permitted contractor subject to the agreement of KCC.</p> <p><i>Waste Management Plan</i></p> <p>An outline Waste Management Plan (WMP) is included in the CEMP. An integrated WMP will be developed and implemented for the duration of the works. As part of this, individual waste streams will be identified at source, segregated appropriately and stored in dedicated skips for subsequent disposal to authorised waste facilities. Waste timber, steel, cardboard/plastics will be separated into skips for recycling. All other non-hazardous waste will be collected and disposed of at an approved facility. Removal of any waste from the construction site will be carried out by licenced waste contractors only.</p> <p>KCC will diligently maintain a comprehensive record of all decommissioning activities, encompassing detailed documentation such as waste transfer docketts and evidence of completed works.</p> <p>Operational phase</p> <p>The main operational wastes will be wastewater which will be discharged to the ground following Primary, Secondary and Tertiary treatment in the new wastewater treatment system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Showers – total anticipated wastewater volume of 3,000L/day○ Toilets - total anticipated wastewater volume of 1,320L/day○ Total peak daily wastewater volume = 4,320L/day <p>Stormwater to a new stormwater soak pit.</p>
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	<p>In addition, general waste from the community facility will be generated. This will be stored in wheeled bins in the waste storage area and collected on a daily basis or on demand during peak usage period.</p>
<p>Identification of wastes arising and other residues (including quantities) that may be of particular concern in the context of the Natura 2000 network</p>	<p>Construction Phase</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fuels/oils/lubricant etc residues. ○ Waste concrete and other cementitious material. ○ Effluent from temporary welfare facilities. <p>Operational Phase</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Wastewater and stormwater generated throughout this phase.
<p>Description of any additional services required to implement the project or plan, their location and means of construction</p>	<p>A temporary site compound including contractor's office and welfare facilities will be required. This will be sited inside the existing gate (refer to MWP Drawing No. 23173-MWP-00-01-DR-C-0100-P02 Proposed Site Layout). All services such as water, power, and telecoms are currently available on site.</p>

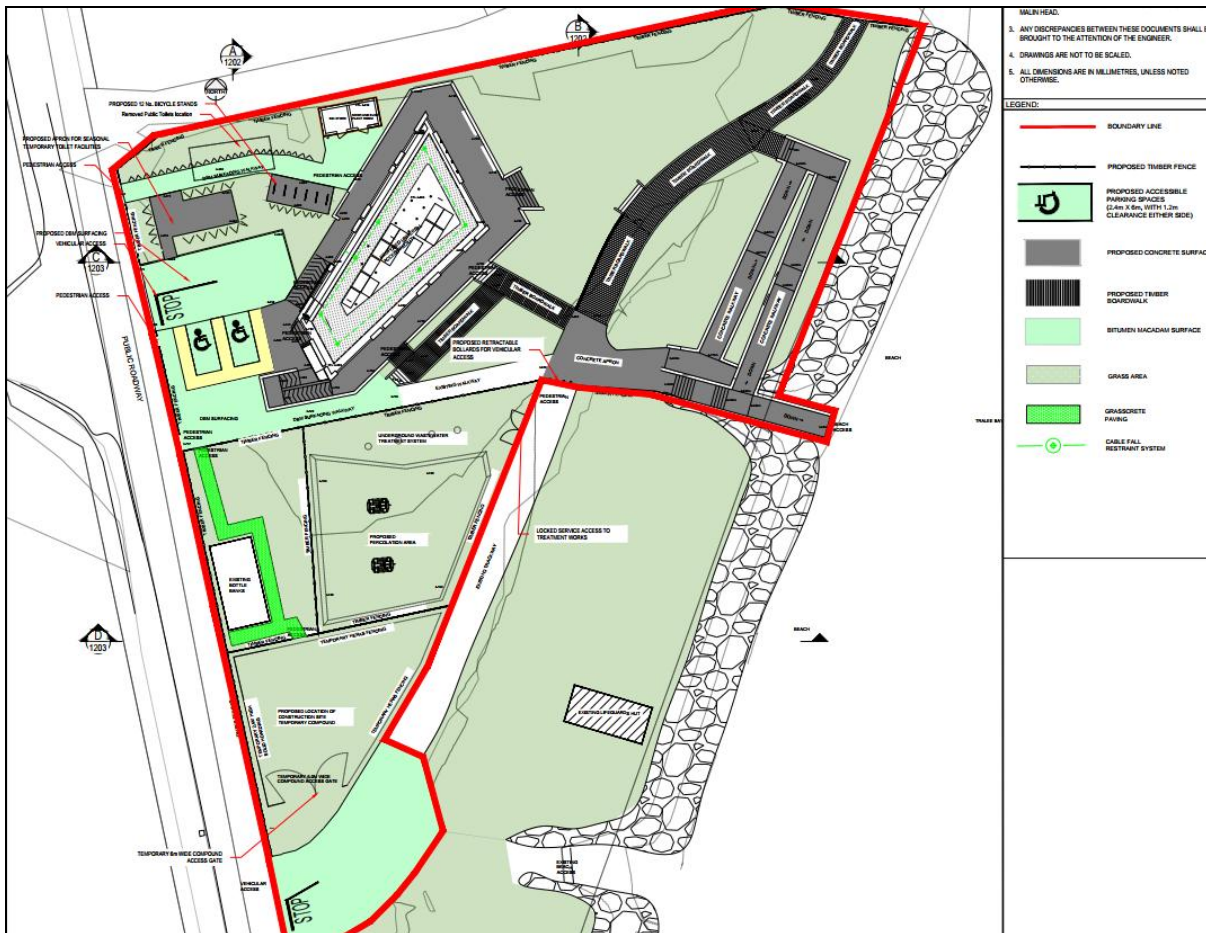


Figure 5. Proposed site layout (extract) (refer to MWP Drawing No. 23173-MWP-00-01-DR-C-0100-P02)

3.3 Identification of Other Projects or Plans or Activities

3.3.1 Plans

With regards to the potential for in-combination effects, the Kerry County Development Plan 2022 – 2028, the Kerry Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2016 –2022, the East Dingle Peninsula Settlements Local Area Plan (LAP) 2008-2014 (which includes the Fahamore area encompassing the Maharees Peninsula) and the Dingle Visitor Experience Development Plan 2021 were reviewed.

3.3.2 Permitted and Proposed Developments

A search of Kerry County Council’s online planning enquiry system¹⁰ for granted or on-going planning applications for the townlands of Maherabeg, Kilshannig, Fahamore, Cutteen and Garrywilliam was undertaken on the 23rd July 2025. No results were found for the townlands of Maherabeg, Cutteen and Garrywilliam. Numerous results were found for the townlands of Kilshannig and Fahamore, most of which pertain to renovations of existing dwellings or construction of new dwellings, construction of new wastewater systems/septic tanks or retention of old septic tanks. There are no major infrastructural or commercial developments proposed that would have the potential for significant in-combination environmental effects with the proposed development.

The results of the planning search are presented in **Appendix 3**.

3.3.3 EPA Licenced/Registered Facilities

There are no IPPC, IPC or IEL¹¹ facilities located near the proposed development site. The closest is ‘Henry Denny and Sons Limited’, licence number P0161, located across Tralee Bay in Tralee, approximately 21.5 km east of the proposed development¹².

The Castlegregory Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) (agglomeration PE 500 – 1,000) (Licence No. D0461-01) is located in Castlegregory village, approximately 2.7 km south of the subject site. This plant, which provides primary treatment, has a primary discharge location on the Cloosguire Stream which drains to Castlegregory Beach. This plant has a plant design PE of 300. The latest agglomeration PE is recorded as 720 (2024). A review of the latest Annual Environmental (AER) report for 2023 determine that the annual mean hydraulic loading is less than the peak Treatment Plant Capacity and the annual maximum hydraulic loading is less than the peak Treatment Plant Capacity. The WWTP is compliant with the ELV’s set in the Wastewater Discharge Licence¹³.

3.3.4 Existing Land-use and On-going Activities

The subject site comprises a public amenity area used for informal parking, public recycling and with a summer beach lifeguard area. Low-intensity agriculture (mainly cattle grazing and crops), recreation and rural settlement are the primary land-uses occurring in the wider area. There are several existing operators offering a variety of visitor activities including marine water-based activities, horse-riding etc. Parts of the dune systems are used for grazing by cattle – poaching and over-grazing are localised issues within the dune and grassland habitats. ‘Wild’ camping has been an historical issue in the area and local conservation groups have taken steps to curb this due to associated negative impacts such as littering, campfires, vehicle access to dune areas, erosion etc. There are

¹⁰ <https://www.kerrycoco.ie/planning/online-planning-enquiry/> Accessed 23-07-2025

¹¹ Integrated Pollution Prevention Control (IPPC); Integrated Pollution Control (IPC); Industrial Emissions Licence (IEL)

¹² <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/> Accessed 16-07-2025

¹³ <https://leap.epa.ie/docs/acc450a3-b1b0-4c4e-8ee6-399592b0946c.pdf> Accessed 16-07-2025

multiple single dwellings in the surrounding area. The small coastal settlement of Fahamore is located at the north-western end of the peninsula. Many of the dwellings here are occupied on a seasonal basis. There is no wastewater treatment plant servicing the area and dwellings are instead serviced by individual septic tanks and wastewater treatment systems¹⁴.

3.3.5 Potential for Significant In-combination Effects

The potential for significant in-combination effects is discussed further in **Section 3.6.2** below.

3.4 Identification of Natura 2000 Sites

3.4.1 Characteristics and Location of Natura 2000 Sites

The screening stage of AA involves compiling a 'long list' of Natura 2000 sites within a potential zone of impact for later analysis which may or may not be significantly impacted upon by the proposed development. All Natura 2000 sites within the wider area surrounding the proposed development site will be characterised in the context of the rationale for designation and qualifying features in **Table 4** below.

The locations of these designated sites in relation to the subject site are shown on maps in **Figures 6 to 9**, below.

¹⁴ <http://docstore.kerrycoco.ie/KCCWebsite/planning/lap/eastdingle/fahamore.pdf>

Table 4. Identification of Natura 2000 Sites

Designated site	Qualifying Interests/ Special Conservation Interests	Distance from proposed development (km)	Known Threats & Pressures (High/Medium/Low) ¹⁵
Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC (002070)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estuaries [1130] • Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] • Coastal lagoons [1150] • Large shallow inlets and bays [1160] • Reefs [1170] • Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] • Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] • Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] • <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] • Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330] • Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] • Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] • Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120] • Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]* • Dunes with <i>Salix repens</i> ssp. <i>argentea</i> (<i>Salicion arenariae</i>) [2170] • Humid dune slacks [2190] • <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410] • Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>) 	The proposal site partially overlaps with this designated site.	<p>High Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Other human intrusions and disturbances <p>Medium Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dispersed habitation - Fertilisation - Golf course - Grazing - Interspecific floral relations - Marine and Freshwater Aquaculture - Removal of hedges and copses or scrub - Sylviculture, forestry <p>Low Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disposal of household / recreational facility waste - Fertilisation - Golf course - Hunting - Industrial or commercial areas - Leisure fishing - Nautical sports - Sand and gravel extraction

¹⁵ As referenced in the Standard Data Forms for each site. Available at <https://natura2000.eea.europa.eu/expertviewer/>

Designated site	Qualifying Interests/ Special Conservation Interests	Distance from proposed development (km)	Known Threats & Pressures (High/Medium/Low) ¹⁵
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [91E0] • <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355] • <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (Petalwort) [1395] 		
Mount Brandon SAC (000375)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] • Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae) [3110] • Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae and/or Isoetoneanojuncetea [3130] • Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010] • European dry heaths [4030] • Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] • Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> 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] • <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] • <i>Vandenboschia speciosa</i> (Killarney Fern) [6985] 	Designated site located approximately 4.1 km south of the proposal site.	<p>High Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grazing <p>Medium Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dispersed habitation - Erosion - Mowing / cutting of grassland - Peat extraction - Restructuring agricultural land holding - Sylviculture, forestry <p>Low Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Camping and caravans - Fire and fire suppression - Removal of hedges and copses or scrub - Roads, motorways - Walking, horseriding and non-motorised vehicles
Magharee Islands SAC (002261)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reefs [1170] 	Designated site located approximately 4.3 km north of the proposal site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No threats or pressures listed.
Akeragh, Banna and Barrow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] 	Designated site located	High Impact:

Designated site	Qualifying Interests/ Special Conservation Interests	Distance from proposed development (km)	Known Threats & Pressures (High/Medium/Low) ¹⁵
Harbour SAC (000332)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] • Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330] • Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] • Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] • Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120] • Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] • Humid dune slacks [2190] • European dry heaths [4030] 	approximately 9.5 km east of the proposal site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Camping and caravans - Golf course - Walking, horseriding and non-motorised vehicles <p>Medium Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grazing - Removal of beach materials
Slieve Mish Mountains SAC (002185)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010] • European dry heaths [4030] • Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] • Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130] • Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladani</i>) [8110] • Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210] • Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220] • <i>Vandenboschia speciosa</i> (Killarney Fern) [6985] 	Designated site located approximately 11.4 km southeast of the proposal site.	<p>High Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grazing <p>Medium Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fire and fire suppression - Peat extraction - Restructuring agricultural land holding <p>Low Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dispersed habitation - Fertilisation - Military manouvres <p>Sand and gravel quarries</p>
Kerry Head Shoal SAC (002263)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reefs [1170] 	Designated site located approximately 13.8 km north of the proposal site.	<p>Low Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hunting, fishing or collecting activities not referred to above - Leisure fishing

Designated site	Qualifying Interests/ Special Conservation Interests	Distance from proposed development (km)	Known Threats & Pressures (High/Medium/Low) ¹⁵
Lower River Shannon SAC (002165)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time [1110] • Estuaries [1130] • Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] • Coastal lagoons [1150] • Large shallow inlets and bays [1160] • Reefs [1170] • Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] • Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] • <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] • Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330] • Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] • Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculon fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260] • <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410] • Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0] • <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] • <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) [1095] • <i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey) [1096] • <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> (River Lamprey) [1099] • <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106] • <i>Tursiops truncatus</i> (Common Bottlenose Dolphin) [1349] 	Designated site located approximately 15 km northeast of the proposal site.	<p>Medium Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Air pollution, air-borne pollutants - Discharges - Eutrophication (natural) - Fertilisation - Grazing - Polderisation - Reclamation of land from sea, estuary or marsh - Urbanised areas, human habitation <p>Low Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hand cutting of peat - Hunting - Invasive non-native species - Management of aquatic and bank vegetation for drainage purposes - Marine and Freshwater Aquaculture - Nautical sports - Paths, tracks, cycling tracks - Removal of beach materials - Sea defense or coast protection works, tidal barrages - Sylviculture, forestry

Designated site	Qualifying Interests/ Special Conservation Interests	Distance from proposed development (km)	Known Threats & Pressures (High/Medium/Low) ¹⁵
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355] 		
Tralee Bay Complex SPA (004188)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) [A038] • Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] • Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] • Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052] • Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>) [A053] • Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054] • Scaup (<i>Aythya marila</i>) [A062] • Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] • Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] • Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] • Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] • Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142] • Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144] • Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] • Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] • Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] • Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160] • Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] • Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) [A169] • Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] • Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182] • Wigeon (<i>Mareca penelope</i>) [A855] • Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] 	The proposal site partially overlaps with this designated site.	<p>High Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Urbanised areas, human habitation - Walking, horseriding and non-motorised vehicles <p>Medium Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fertilisation - Grazing - Removal of beach materials <p>Low Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nautical sports
Dingle Peninsula SPA (004153)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) [A009] • Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>) [A103] • Chough (<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>) [A346] 	Designated site located approximately 0.03 km south of the proposal site.	<p>Medium Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agricultural structures, buildings in the landscape <p>Low Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agricultural structures, buildings in the landscape

Designated site	Qualifying Interests/ Special Conservation Interests	Distance from proposed development (km)	Known Threats & Pressures (High/Medium/Low) ¹⁵
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Competition - Predation
Magharee Islands SPA (004125)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storm Petrel (<i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i>) [A014] • Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) [A018] • Barnacle Goose (<i>Branta leucopsis</i>) [A045] • Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182] • Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] • Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194] • Little Tern (<i>Sternula albifrons</i>) [A885] 	Designated site located approximately 3.7 km north of the proposal site.	<p>Low Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grazing - Nautical sports
Kerry Head SPA (004189)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) [A009] • Chough (<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>) [A346] 	Designated site located approximately 15 km northeast of the proposal site.	<p>Medium Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agricultural structures, buildings in the landscape - Storage of materials <p>Low Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Abandonment of pastoral systems, lack of grazing - Cultivation - Modification of cultivation practices - Use of biocides, hormones and chemicals.

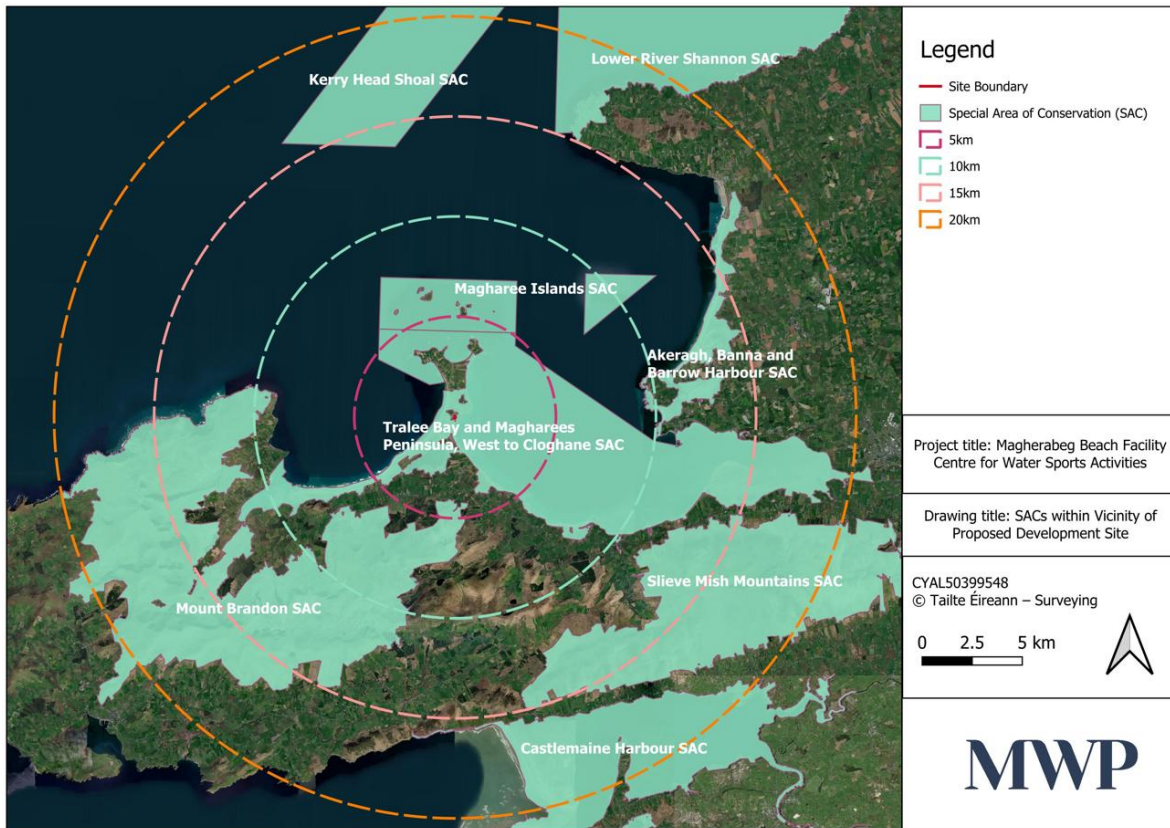


Figure 6. SACs located within the vicinity of the proposed development site

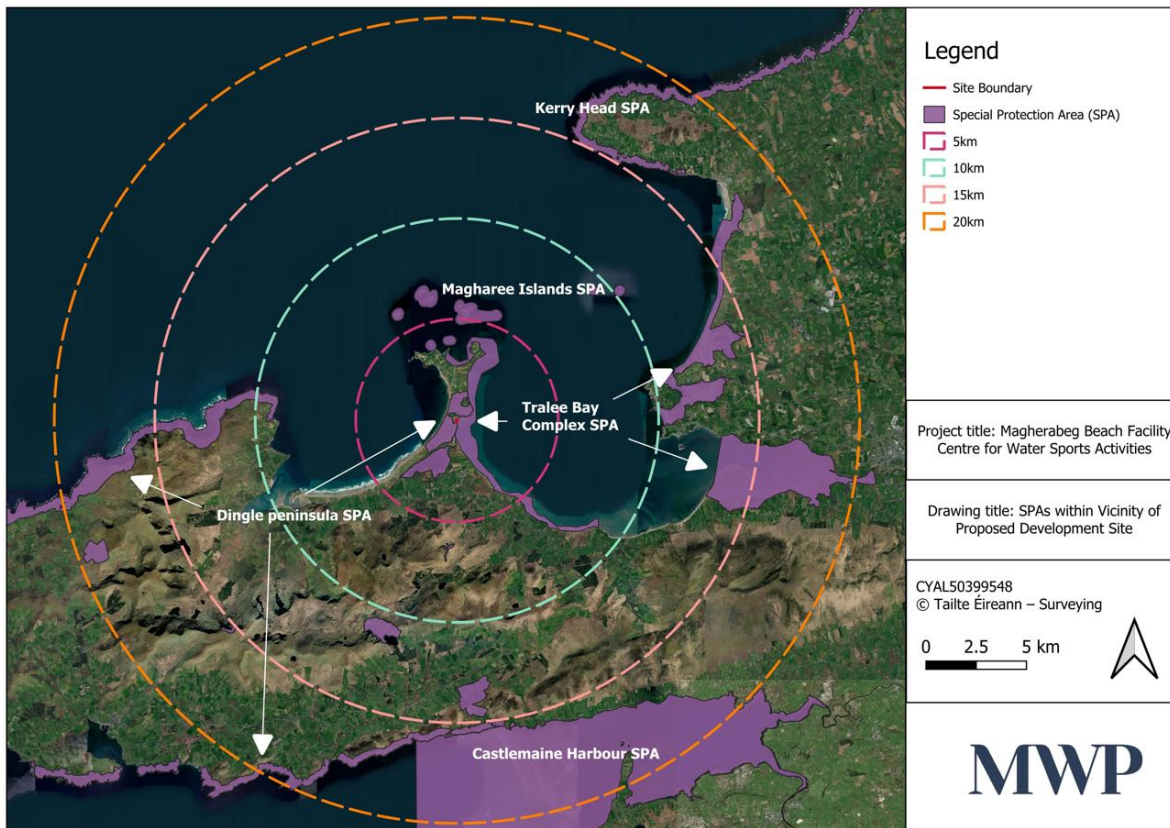


Figure 7. SPAs located within the vicinity of the proposed development site

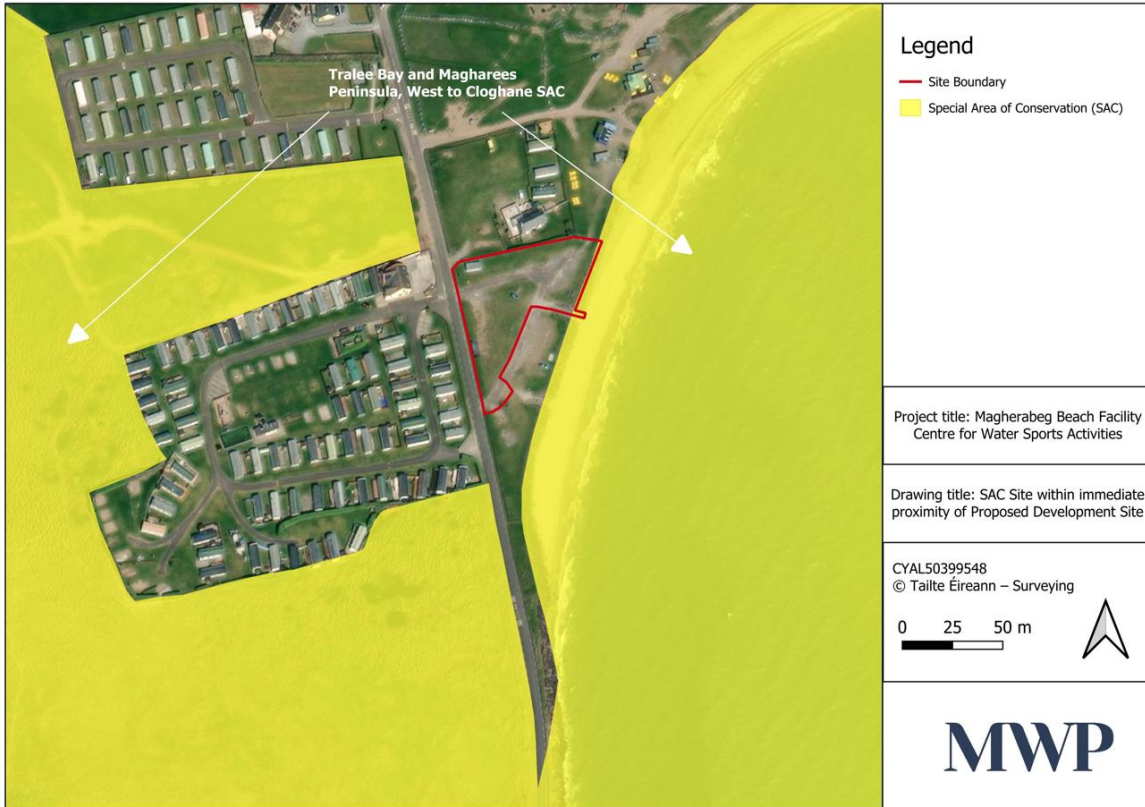


Figure 8. Extent of the Tralee Bay and Magharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC in the vicinity of the proposed development site



Figure 9. Extent of the Dingle Peninsula SPA and the Tralee Bay Complex SPA in the vicinity of the proposed development site

3.4.2 Conservation Objectives

According to the Habitats Directive, the *conservation status of a natural habitat* will be taken as 'favourable' within its biogeographic range when:

- its natural range and areas it covers within that range are stable or increasing, and
- the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and
- the conservation status of its typical species is favourable as defined below.

According to the Habitats Directive, the conservation status of a species means the sum of the influences acting on the species concerned that may affect the long-term distribution and abundance of its populations. The conservation status will be taken as 'favourable' within its biogeographical range 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, and
- 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 probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

The Conservation Objectives for each individual site listed in **Table 4** above are available on www.npws.ie. These have been accessed on the 2nd September 2025. Management plans are not currently available for any of the designated sites.

Site-specific conservation objectives were available for the following sites:

- Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC (002070). Version 1.0. Produced February 2014.
- Magharee Islands SAC (002261). Version 1.0. Produced December 2013.
- Kerry Head Shoal SAC (002263). Version 1.0. Produced October 2013.
- Lower River Shannon SAC (002165). Version 1.0. Produced August 2012.
- Akeragh, Banna and Barrow Harbour SAC (000332). Version 1.0. Produced January 2017.
- Mount Brandon SAC (000375). Version 1.0. Produced July 2016.
- Slieve Mish Mountains SAC (002185). Version 1.0. Produced December 2021.
- Castlemaine Harbour SAC (000343). Version 2.0. Produced July 2011.
- Dingle Peninsula SPA (004153). Version 1.0. Produced June 2025.
- Tralee Bay Complex SPA (004188). Version 1.0. Produced April 2014.
- Magharee Islands SPA (004125). Version 1.0. Produced May 2025.
- Kerry Head SPA (004189). Version 1.0. Produced March 2025.

3.5 Identification of Potential Impacts and Effects

Potential likely direct, indirect or secondary ecological impacts arising from the proposed development (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) are identified in this section.

Table 5. Description of elements of the project likely to give rise to potential ecological impacts

Construction Phase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site set-up, mobilisation, vegetation clearance. • Excavations and other ground disturbance. • Removal of existing foul system on-site, including decommissioning of septic tank. • General construction activity, including in proximity to a marine waterbody. • Importation/stockpiling of materials. • Generation of waste/spoil/dust/construction run-off. • Use of machinery/equipment and associated increase in air/noise emissions/vibration for duration of the works, albeit at low quantities and during standard work hours only. • Increased human presence/activity levels (negligible) for duration of the works and during daylight hours only. • Use of construction lighting. • Use of temporary site compound/welfare facilities. • Use and storage of fuels/oils/lubricants, concrete, chemicals and other such substances.
Operation phase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased human presence/activity levels or change in frequency of visitors across the season leading to potential recreational pressure in the immediate and surrounding area. • Increase in generation of surface water and on-site management and disposal of same • Increase in generation of wastewater and on-site management and disposal of same.
Decommissioning phase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decommissioning not anticipated, but potential effects would be similar to construction phase but reduced.

Table 6. Direct, indirect or secondary ecological impacts of the construction, operational and decommissioning phases (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) which have the potential for having significant effects

<p><i>Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary ecological impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) by virtue of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Size and scale;</i> • <i>Land-take;</i> • <i>Distance from Natura 2000 Site or key features of the Site;</i> • <i>Resource requirements;</i> • <i>Emissions;</i> • <i>Excavation requirements;</i> • <i>Transportation requirements;</i> • <i>Duration of construction, operation etc.; and Other.</i> 	<p>The proposed development site is small in scale with an overall footprint of approximately 2,995m². There is minor partial overlap (15 m²), comprising the existing beach access ramp, between the subject site and both the Tralee Bay, Magharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC and the Tralee Bay Complex SPA (refer to Figure 8 and 9). No land-take within either site is proposed as a result of the development.</p> <p>There are no watercourses draining the proposal site and thus there is no direct hydrological connection with any Natura 2000 site; however, the proposal site is located immediately adjacent to the shoreline and thus works will take place in close proximity to the marine zone, albeit above the high-water mark. There is considered to be an indirect hydrological link between the proposal site and the marine zone/Natura 2000 sites via overland or groundwater flow to coastal waters during construction and operation.</p> <p>Construction Phase</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for marine/ground water quality impacts (via generation of surface run-off during construction works or in the event of spillage/leakage of fuels/oils or via decommissioning of the
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	<p>existing septic tank).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for direct loss/alteration of habitats within the development footprint. • Potential for indirect alteration of habitats via potential water quality impacts. • Potential for direct species disturbance/displacement impacts due to noise or human activity. • Potential for indirect species disturbance/displacement impacts through habitat loss/alteration, impairment of water quality and/or impacts on prey availability. • Potential for spread of invasive species. <p>Operational Phase</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for habitat alteration impacts through increased footfall/access to the immediate and surrounding areas. • Potential for disturbance/displacement of species due to increased footfall/access to the immediate and surrounding areas. • Potential for water quality impacts (groundwater/marine) through on-site management and disposal of stormwater and wastewater.
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3.6 Assessment of Significance of Potential Impacts

An evaluation based on the S-P-R model to determine which Natura 2000 sites listed in **Table 4** above are the plausible ecological receptors for potential impacts of the proposed development, as outlined in **Section 3.5** above, is now conducted. This evaluation considers the scope, scale, nature and size of the project, its location relative to the Natura 2000 sites which have been identified within a potential ZOI, and the degree of connectedness that exists between the project and the Natura 2000 sites and their respective features of conservation interest as potential ecological receptors. Identifying the Natura 2000 sites that may be affected takes into consideration all aspects of the project that could have potential effects on any Natura 2000 sites located within the ZOI of the proposed development. This takes account of all of the designating features (species, habitat types) of the sites and their conservation objectives.

3.6.1 Natura sites determined to be outside the likely ZOI using the S-P-R Model

With regards to the proposed development at Maherabeg Beach, it is considered that the works do not include any element that has the potential to significantly affect the conservation objectives for the following Natura 2000 sites, listed in **Table 7**. These sites are determined to be outside the likely ZOI of the proposal due to the absence of plausible impact pathways, whether ecological and/or structural. On this basis, it is objectively concluded that the proposal does not include any element that has the potential to significantly affect the conservation objectives for these designated sites. These are outlined in **Table 7** below along with their respective distance from the proposal site and the rationale for their exclusion from further assessment.

Table 7. Natura sites determined to be outside the likely ZOI using the S-P-R Model

Designated site	Distance from proposed development (km)	Rationale for exclusion from further consideration
Mount Brandon SAC (000375)	Designated site located approximately 4.1 km south of the proposal site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designated for a wide variety of coastal, freshwater, and terrestrial habitats and the species freshwater pearl mussel and Killarney fern. - There is no spatial overlap or hydrological connection between the subject site and the SAC. - No plausible impact pathways for either habitats or species effects have been identified. - No potential for significant effects. - Excluded from further consideration.
Akeragh, Banna and Barrow Harbour SAC (000332)	Designated site located approximately 9.5 km east of the proposal site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designated for a variety of coastal and terrestrial habitats. - There is no spatial overlap between the subject site and the SAC. - No plausible impact pathways for habitat effects have been identified. - No potential for significant effects. - Excluded from further consideration.
Slieve Mish Mountains SAC (002185)	Designated site located approximately 11.4 km southeast of the proposal site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designated for a variety of terrestrial habitats and Killarney fern. - There is no spatial overlap between the subject site and the SAC. - No plausible impact pathways for habitat or species effects have been identified. - No potential for significant effects. - Excluded from further consideration.
Kerry Head Shoal SAC (002263)	Designated site located approximately 13.8 km north of the proposal site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designated for one marine habitat (reef) which is noted as being subtidal in nature. - There is no spatial overlap between the subject site and the SAC. - No plausible impact pathways for habitat effects have been identified. - No potential for significant effects. - Excluded from further consideration.
Lower River Shannon SAC (002165)	Designated site located approximately 15 km northeast of the proposal site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designated for a wide variety of coastal, freshwater and terrestrial habitats and a variety of freshwater species, common dolphin and otter. - There is no spatial overlap or hydrological connection between the subject site and the SAC. - No plausible impact pathways for habitat or species effects have been identified. - No potential for significant effects. - Excluded from further consideration.
Kerry Head SPA (004189)	Designated site located	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designated for two bird species, fulmar and

Designated site	Distance from proposed development (km)	Rationale for exclusion from further consideration
	approximately 15 km northeast of the proposal site.	<p>chough.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is no spatial overlap between the subject site and the SPA. - No plausible impact pathways for species effects have been identified. - No potential for significant effects. - Excluded from further consideration.

3.6.2 Natura sites determined to be within the likely ZOI using the S-P-R Model

Of the Natura 2000 Sites listed in **Table 4**, above, five are considered to have the potential to be impacted as a result of the proposed development at Maherabeg Beach. Designated sites within the likely ZOI of the proposal, along with their respective distance from the proposal site and the rationale for inclusion for further assessment are outlined in **Table 8** below.

Table 8. Natura sites determined to be within the likely ZOI using the S-P-R Model

Designated site	Distance from proposed development (km)	Rationale for inclusion for further consideration
Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC (002070)	The proposal site partially overlaps with this designated site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designated for a wide variety of coastal and terrestrial habitats and the species otter and petalwort. - There is, albeit minor, overlap with the subject site. - Due to the overlap with and immediate proximity of the SAC, potential impact pathways have been identified for both habitats and species during both the construction and operational phases of the project. - On a precautionary basis, there is potential for significant effects. - Further assessment is required.
Magharee Islands SAC (002261)	Designated site located approximately 4.3 km north of the proposal site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designated for reef habitat (including both sub-tidal and inter-tidal reef). - Despite the intervening distance, due to the nature of the proposed development, potential impact pathways have been identified, primarily during the operational phase of the project (recreational users (e.g. kayakers etc) potentially accessing the islands/areas of reef habitat). - On a precautionary basis, there is potential for significant effects. - Further assessment is required.
Tralee Bay Complex SPA (004188)	The proposal site partially overlaps with this designated site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designated for a wide variety of wintering waders and waterbird species and the habitat complex 'Wetlands'. - There is, albeit minor, overlap with the

Designated site	Distance from proposed development (km)	Rationale for inclusion for further consideration
		subject site. - Due to the overlap with and immediate proximity of the SPA, potential impact pathways have been identified during both the construction and operational phases of the project. - On a precautionary basis, there is potential for significant effects. - Further assessment is required
Dingle Peninsula SPA (004153)	Designated site located approximately 0.03 km south of the proposal site.	- Designated for fulmar, peregrine and chough. - There is no overlap; however, the designated site is located in close proximity. - Due to the immediate proximity, potential impact pathways have been identified during both the construction and operational phases of the project. - On a precautionary basis, there is potential for significant effects. - Further assessment is required
Magharee Islands SPA (004125)	Designated site located approximately 3.7 km north of the proposal site.	- Designated for a variety of breeding/non-breeding seabird species. - Despite the intervening distance, due to the nature of the proposed development, potential impact pathways have been identified, primarily during the operational phase of the project. - On a precautionary basis, there is potential for significant effects. - Further assessment is required.

This section considers the list of sites identified in **Table 8** above, together with the potential ecological impacts identified in the previous section and determines whether the project is likely to have significant effects on this/these Natura 2000 site(s).

The likelihood of significant effects from the project to the Natura 2000 sites outlined above was determined based on several indicators including:

- Water quality
- Habitat loss/alteration
- Disturbance and/or displacement of species
- Habitat or species fragmentation

The likelihood of significant in-combination effects is also assessed at the end of this section.

Water Quality

The development site is situated immediately adjacent to the shoreline. It is noted that there is partial minor overlap between the development site and two designated sites, namely the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC and the Tralee Bay Complex SPA, with other sites in close proximity and occurring in the wider area.

Above the high-water mark and with an absence of any watercourses draining the site, there is no direct pathway or hydrological connection through which direct water quality impacts could arise. However, the proposal site is located immediately adjacent to the shoreline and thus works will take place in close proximity to the marine zone and adjacent Natura 2000 sites. There is considered to be an indirect hydrological link via potential overland or groundwater flow.

During the construction phase, various construction activities adjacent to the inter-tidal marine zone pose a potential indirect risk to marine water quality. During the operational phase, the use of a raised percolation area will ensure there will be no direct discharge to the beach or tide. While discharge of foul water to ground in close proximity to the shoreline could theoretically give rise to some degree of indirect ground or surface water impacts in a scenario where a sufficient level of treatment was not achieved prior to discharge, this is considered highly unlikely as effluent will be treated to tertiary level prior to discharge to ground (see **Section 3.2.4.1**).

Based on the precautionary principle, it is considered that there is potential for significant water quality impacts to arise mainly during construction, or significant water quality impacts cannot be ruled out at this stage, as a result of the proposal and thus further detailed assessment is required.

Habitat Loss/Alteration

There is partial overlap between the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC in the east of the proposal site. This SAC is designated for a wide variety of coastal and terrestrial habitats, including habitats such as 'Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide' and 'Large shallow inlets and bays', as well as various annexed sand dune habitats, as outlined in **Section 3.4.1**. Field surveys have determined that the area of overlap between the proposal site and the SAC (comprising existing concrete beach access ramp) does not comprise any qualifying habitats for which the SAC is designated, and therefore, there will be no direct loss of any qualifying habitat within the SAC.

As discussed previously, the proposal site also partially overlaps with the Tralee Bay Complex SPA at the same location as described above. The SPA is designated for the habitat complex 'Wetlands'. As above, field surveys have determined that the area of overlap between the proposal site and the SPA does not comprise qualifying habitat for which the SPA is designated, and therefore, there will be no direct loss of qualifying wetland habitat within the SPA.

However, it has been determined above that construction, and to a lesser extent operational, phase water quality impacts cannot be precluded with certainty at this stage. Any potential water quality impacts would have the potential to result in indirect alteration of some habitats for which certain Natura 2000 sites listed in **Table 8** above are designated. Similarly, increased human activity/footfall/access potentially associated with the operational phase has the potential to increase recreational pressure on habitats both within the immediate and wider surrounding areas, such that direct and indirect alteration of qualifying habitats could potentially occur within some Natura 2000 sites.

Based on the precautionary principle, it is considered that there is potential for significant habitat alteration impacts to arise, or significant habitat alteration impacts cannot be ruled out at this stage, as a result of the proposal and thus further detailed assessment is required.

Disturbance and/or Displacement of Species

In relation to the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC, the plant species petalwort was not recorded on-site and the area of habitat overlapping with the SAC was deemed to be not suitable to support it. However, the SAC is also designated for otter and the shoreline adjoining the proposal site has the potential to support foraging and commuting activity by this species. In relation to the Tralee Bay Complex SPA, this designated site supports a variety of wintering waders and waterbirds. There are two other SPAs located within the ZOI of the proposed development; the Dingle Peninsula SPA, located in close proximity to the proposal site and the Magharees Islands SPA, albeit located at a much further remove.

It is considered that disturbance/displacement of qualifying species for either the SAC or the SPAs in the surrounding area could arise during both the construction and operational phases of the proposed development, including via noise and construction activity or increased human activity.

Based on the precautionary principle, it is considered that there is potential for significant species disturbance/displacement impacts to arise, or significant species disturbance/displacement impact cannot be ruled out at this stage, as a result of the proposal and thus further detailed assessment is required.

Habitat or Species Fragmentation

The preceding sections have concluded that the development may potentially result in some degree of habitat alteration, water quality and/or species disturbance/displacement impacts within the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC, the Tralee Bay Complex SPA, the Dingle Peninsula SPA, the Magharees Islands SPA or the Magharees Islands SAC.

Therefore, the potential for significant habitat or species fragmentation impacts on Natura 2000 sites cannot be ruled out at this stage, and further assessment is required.

In-Combination Effects

As well as singular effects, the potential for in-combination effects also need to be considered. The development which is the subject of this Stage 1 screening for AA was considered in combination with other relevant plans, projects and activities in the area, identified in **Section 3.3** above.

Given the potential/likely impacts which have been identified in **Section 3.5** above, it is considered that the development has the potential to result in significant cumulative or in-combination effects in conjunction with other permitted/proposed developments and/or existing land-uses and on-going activities in the area, and thus further assessment is required.

3.7 Conclusion of Screening Stage

A screening for AA is undertaken to determine the potential for likely significant effects of a project, individually, or in combination with other plans or projects, on Natura 2000 sites, in view of the conservation objectives of those sites.

The proposed development was considered in light of the assessment requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive. No pathways for likely significant effects have been identified for the following sites:

- Mount Brandon SAC (000375)
- Akeragh, Banna and Barrow Harbour SAC (000332)
- Slieve Mish Mountains SAC (002185)
- Kerry Head Shoal SAC (002263)

- Lower River Shannon SAC (002165)
- Kerry Head SPA (004189)

It has been objectively concluded beyond all reasonable scientific doubt that the project will have no likely significant effects on the above Natura 2000 sites, either individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, in view of those site's Conservation Objectives. These Natura 2000 sites can therefore be screened out for AA.

However, it is concluded that significant effects potentially associated with the proposed development cannot be precluded at this stage for the following Natura 2000 sites:

- Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC (002070)
- Magharee Islands SAC (002261)
- Tralee Bay Complex SPA (004188)
- Dingle Peninsula SPA (004153)
- Magharee Islands SPA (004125)

Therefore, further assessment is required to determine whether the proposed development is likely to have an adverse effect on the integrity of these Natura 2000 sites (see **Section 4** below).

4. Stage 2: Natura Impact Statement

Appropriate Assessment (AA) is the consideration of the impact of a project on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, with respect to the site's ecological structure and function, and in view of the site's Conservation Objectives. The Conservation Objectives of a Natura 2000 site are site specific and based on the ecological requirements of the species and habitats present. They define the desired conservation condition of certain species and habitat types for the site. Conservation Objectives are defined using attributes and targets that are based on parameters as set out in the Habitats Directive for defining favourable status, namely area, range, structure and function. The Conservation Objectives may be either to 'maintain' or 'restore' the favourable conservation condition of a habitat/species.

The Stage 1: screening for AA (**Section 3** above) concluded that significant effects are likely to ensue from impacts associated with the development, or significant effects cannot be ruled out for certain sites, as outlined in **Section 3.6.2** above. As it cannot be excluded on the basis of objective information that the development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not have significant effects on these Natura 2000 sites, in view of those site's Conservation Objectives, it is therefore determined that AA of the development is required, and an NIS must be prepared.

This NIS is a scientific examination of evidence and data, carried out by competent persons, to identify and classify any implications (ecological effects) for the sites listed above in view of the Conservation Objectives of those sites as a result of the proposed development. This NIS identifies the aspects of the development that may interact with the ecological requirements or sensitivities of the species and habitats relevant to the sites and determines whether these have the potential to result in adverse impacts on the achievement of the sites conservation objectives and thus the integrity of the sites. Where potentially significant effects are identified, mitigation measures to avoid or reduce ecological effects will be recommended, where necessary.

The aim of this NIS is to provide a sufficient level of information to the Competent Authority, in this case An Coimisiún Pleanála (ACP), on which to base their Appropriate Assessment of the development.

4.1 Description of Natura 2000 Sites Selected for Impact Assessment

4.1.1 Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC (002070) SAC

In describing the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC, the following information is summarised from the Standard Data Form¹⁶ for the site.

*Tralee Bay and Magharees Peninsula West to Cloghane SAC comprises a very diverse area of important coastal habitats. The site forms a unit of interconnecting coastal habitats stretching from inner Tralee Bay west to Fenit Harbour and Brandon Bay. Tralee Bay itself is shallow, sheltered and sedimentary. Within the site there are several types of coastal habitat, the dominant and most ecologically important of which are estuarine habitats (mudflats and sandflats not covered by water at low tide, Atlantic and Mediterranean salt meadows & *Salicornia* swards), dune-complexes ('white-dunes', grey-dunes and dune-slacks) and a lagoon. The site features large expanses of intertidal mudflats, often fringed with saltmarsh vegetation.*

*In the transition zone between mudflats and saltmarsh, specialised colonisers of mud predominate: swards of *Spartina anglica* frequently occur in sheltered areas of mudflat particularly in the vicinity of Derrymore Island. Saltmarsh vegetation frequently fringes the mudflats & the most important and extensive areas of this habitat are around Blennerville, Derrymore Island and Fermoy. Soft sea-cliffs occur on both the northern and southern shores of Tralee bay and are best represented between Derrymore and Kilgobbin. Sand dunes comprise a significant portion of the terrestrial habitat of this site, including four Annexed dune habitats. The most extensive and most important area of the dune complex comprises the Magharees Tombola and it is here that the priority Fixed dune habitat is most extensive within the site.*

4.1.2 Magharee Islands SAC (002261)

In describing the Magharee Islands SAC, the following information is summarised from the Standard Data Form¹⁷ for the site.

This marine site lies about 2 km north of the Magharee Peninsula and is centred around the Magharee Islands, a group of seven main islands. The site includes two of the smaller islands, Illaunabarnagh and Mucklaghmore, which lie about 5 km to the north-east of the main group of islands. The islands are exposed on their west coasts and more sheltered on their east coasts with moderately strong currents between them. A maritime grassy sward occurs on the islands. Site has important examples of infralittoral reef communities. These are varied, being exposed to wave action on the west coasts of the islands, and more sheltered on the east coasts with tideswept areas due to the currents between the islands.

4.1.3 Tralee Bay Complex SPA (004188)

In describing the Tralee Bay Complex SPA, the following information is summarised from the Standard Data Form¹⁸ for the site.

The Tralee Bay Complex SPA is located along the coast of north Co. Kerry between Ballyheigue in the north, Tralee in the east and Stradbally in the west. The site includes the inner part of Tralee Bay, including Derrymore Island, the inlets of Barrow Harbour and Carrahane Strand, Akeragh Lough, Lough Gill, and much of the intertidal habitat from Scraggane Point at the northern end of the Magharees Peninsula around the coast to c. 2 km south of Ballyheige.

¹⁶ <https://natura2000.eea.europa.eu/Natura2000/sdf/#/sdf?site=IE0002070&release=55>

¹⁷ <https://natura2000.eea.europa.eu/Natura2000/sdf/#/sdf?site=IE0002261&release=55>

¹⁸ <https://natura2000.eea.europa.eu/Natura2000/sdf/#/sdf?site=IE0004188&release=55>

Tralee Bay Complex SPA is an international important site supporting over 20,000 wintering waterbirds, including an international important population of Branta bernicla hrota. Nationally important populations of 21 other species also occur at the site including Cygnus cygnus, Pluvialis apricaria and Limosa lapponica.

4.1.4 Dingle Peninsula SPA (004153)

In describing the Dingle Peninsula SPA, the following information is summarised from the Standard Data Form¹⁹ for the site.

The Dingle Peninsula SPA is a large site situated on the west coast of Co. Kerry. It encompasses the high coast and sea cliff sections of the peninsula from south of Brandon Point in the north, around to the end of the peninsula at Slea Head, and as far east as Inch in the south. The site includes the sea cliffs, the land adjacent to the cliff edge, an area of sand dunes near Murreagh and also several upland areas further inland of the coast about Ballybrack, Lough Doon, Anscaul Lough, Arraglen and Ballynane. The high-water mark forms the seaward boundary.

The topography of the Dingle Peninsula, with its mosaic of grazed semi-improved and improved pasture, extensive well-drained uplands, and sand dune systems in close proximity of breeding cliffs, favours Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax. Particularly high densities of this species occur at Reenbeg in the south of the site, the Three Sisters in the north-west and Ballydavid Head in the north. Large flocks gather, particularly in the autumn, at inland sites and at coastal locations such as the dune systems at Inch and Castlegregory (which are included in other adjacent SPAs). Marked individuals have provided evidence that young birds converge in these flocks from throughout the peninsula and it is possible that the species gathers in the dunes here from further afield. The sea cliffs also support nationally important populations of breeding Falco peregrinus and Fulmarus glacialis.

4.1.5 Magharee Islands SPA (004125)

In describing the Magharee Islands SPA, the following information is summarised from the Standard Data Form²⁰ for the site.

The Magharee Islands or Seven Hogs lie about 2 km north of the Magharees Peninsula. The group includes seven main islands (Illaunimmill and Illauntannig being the largest) plus a number of holms and skerries. The islands are exposed on their west coasts and more sheltered to the east, with moderately strong currents between them. Illaunimmill and Illauntannig were at one time inhabited and both are still grazed by cattle and sheep. On these islands the main vegetation type is unimproved grassland. A maritime grassy sward occurs around the shoreline of the larger islands and also on the smaller islands. The marine areas around each island to a distance of 200 m are included in the site for the benefit of the breeding birds. The marine areas have important examples of infralittoral reef communities.

The site is of international importance for breeding seabirds. There is a long-established tern colony, with Sternula albifrons, Sterna paradisaea and small numbers of Sterna hirundo. Other breeding seabirds are Fulmarus glacialis, Phalacrocorax carbo, Phalacrocorax aristotelis, Larus canus, Larus fuscus and Cephus grylle. The Phalacrocorax aristotelis and Larus canus populations are of national importance. The wintering population of Branta leucopsis is of national importance and is notable as it is the most southerly population in Ireland.

¹⁹ <https://natura2000.eea.europa.eu/Natura2000/sdf/#/sdf?site=IE0004153&release=55>

²⁰ <https://natura2000.eea.europa.eu/Natura2000/sdf/#/sdf?site=IE0004125>

4.2 Selection of Qualifying Features for Impact Assessment

When Natura 2000 sites are selected for Stage 2 assessments, then all the qualifying features of conservation interest must be included in that stage of the assessment. However, when assessing impact, qualifying features are only considered relevant where a credible or tangible S-P-R link exists between the development and a protected species or habitat type (see **Section 2.1.2** above). Identifying a risk that could, in theory, cause an impact does not automatically mean that the risk event will occur, or that it will cause or create an adverse impact. However, identification of the risk does mean that there is a latent possibility of ecological or environmental damage occurring, with the level and significance of the impact depending upon the nature of the risk, the extent of the exposure to the risk and the characteristics of the receptor.

An evaluation based on the above factors to determine which conservation interests for relevant sites, as outlined in **Section 3.6.2** above, comprise plausible ecological receptors for potential impacts of the unmitigated development has been conducted to evaluate through a scientific examination of evidence and data whether or not these features should or should not be selected for further assessment in the NIS. This is presented in **Sections 4.2.1 to 4.2.5** below.

4.2.1 Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC (002070) SAC

Table 9. Selection of qualifying features of the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC for further assessment

Qualifying Interest (QI)	Potential for Impact	Rationale	Conclusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Estuaries [1130] - Alluvial forests [91E0] - Atlantic salt meadows [1330] - Mediterranean salt meadows [1410] - Coastal lagoons [1150] - Vegetated sea cliffs [1230] - <i>Molinia</i> meadows [6410] - <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] 	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A review of Conservation Objectives mapping for the SAC determined that Estuaries [1130] are mapped in inner Tralee Bay, in excess of 17km away, Alluvial woodland [91E0] is mapped in excess of 7km away, salt meadow [1330; 1410] is mapped in excess of 3km away, and Coastal lagoon [1150] is mapped 1.5 km away from the proposal site. - Neither Sea cliff [1230] nor <i>Molinia</i> meadow [6410] nor <i>Salicornia</i> [1310] habitat is mapped in the Conservation Objectives documentation; however, none of these habitats occur in the vicinity of the proposed development site which is characterised by artificial surfaces, amenity areas and the low-lying shoreline with various dune habitats and agricultural grassland extending further away. - No source impact pathway for significant effects identified. 	No potential for significant effects. These QIs are not considered further in this report.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] 	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A review of Conservation Objectives mapping for the SAC determined that all of these habitats are known from 	Potential for significant effects. Further assessment is required in relation to these

Qualifying Interest (QI)	Potential for Impact	Rationale	Conclusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Large shallow inlets and bays [1160] - Reefs [1170] - Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] - Dunes with <i>Salix repens</i> ssp. <i>argentea</i> (Salicion arenariae) [2170] 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the immediate or proximal area to the proposed development site. - Due to the nature of the project, it is considered that there is potential for construction and/or operational phase habitat impacts. - Source impact pathways for potentially significant effects have been identified. 	QIs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] - Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] - Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] - Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120] - Humid dune slacks [2190] 	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A review of Conservation Objectives mapping for the SAC determined that these habitats are not mapped within the vicinity of the subject site but are known from the wider area. - On a precautionary basis, and due to the nature of the project, it is considered that there is potential for operational phase impacts. - Source impact pathways for potentially significant effects have been identified. 	Potential for significant effects. Further assessment is required in relation to these QIs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355] - <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (Petalwort) [1395] 	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is one NBDC record for otter from the Magharees Peninsula. - The habitats within the proposed development site are not suitable; however, the habitats, including the shoreline and open water, adjoining and extending away from the site are suitable to support commuting or foraging otter. - There are NBDC records for petalwort within the vicinity of the subject area. - On a precautionary basis, and due to the nature of the project, it is considered that there is potential for construction and/or operational phase impacts on otter and petalwort. - Source impact pathways for potentially significant effects have been identified. 	Potential for significant effects. Further assessment is required in relation to these QIs.

4.2.2 Magharee Islands SAC (002261)

Table 10. Selection of qualifying features of the Maharee Islands SAC for further assessment

Qualifying Interest (QI)	Potential for Impact	Rationale	Conclusion
- Reefs [1170]	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designated for both sub-tidal and inter-tidal reef. - Despite the intervening distance of 4.3km overland, or minimum 5 km via sea, due to the nature of the proposed development, potential impact pathways have been identified during the operational phase of the project. - Source impact pathways for potentially significant effects have been identified. 	Potential for significant effects. Further assessment is required in relation to this QI.

4.2.3 Tralee Bay Complex SPA (004188)

Table 11. Selection of qualifying features of the Tralee Bay Complex SPA for further assessment

Special Conservation Interest (SCI)	Potential for Impact	Rationale	Conclusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) [A038] - Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] - Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] - Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052] - Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>) [A053] - Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054] - Scaup (<i>Aythya marila</i>) [A062] - Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] - Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] - Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] - Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] - Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142] - Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144] 	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designated for wintering bird species. - There is, albeit minor, overlap with the subject site, which is otherwise in immediate proximity. - There is potential for some wintering wader and waterbird species to occur in proximity to, and in the case of some species, within the proposed development site. - Due to the overlap with and immediate proximity of the SPA, potential impact pathways have been identified during both the construction and operational phases of the project. - Source impact pathways for potentially significant effects have been identified. 	Potential for significant effects. Further assessment is required in relation to these SCIs.

Special Conservation Interest (SCI)	Potential for Impact	Rationale	Conclusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] - Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] - Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] - Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160] - Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] - Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) [A169] - Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] - Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182] - Wigeon (<i>Mareca penelope</i>) [A855] 			
- Wetland [A999]	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A review of Conservation Objectives digital mapping data for the SPA determined that Wetlands [A999] is mapped along the shoreline and open water of the bay adjoining and extending away from the proposal site. - There is minor overlap at the existing beach access ramp location. - Due to the overlap with and immediate proximity of this SCI, potential impact pathways have been identified during the construction phase. - Source impact pathways for potentially significant effects have been identified. 	Potential for significant effects. Further assessment is required in relation to this SCI.

4.2.4 Dingle Peninsula SPA (004153)

Table 12. Selection of qualifying features of the Dingle Peninsula SPA for further assessment

Qualifying Interest (QI)	Potential for Impact	Rationale	Conclusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) [A009] - Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>) [A103] 	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fulmar is a species of seabird which feed offshore. Fulmar breed in colonies, mainly on grassy or rocky sea cliffs, or steep 	No potential for significant effects. These SCIs are not considered further in this report

Qualifying Interest (QI)	Potential for Impact	Rationale	Conclusion
		<p>slopes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Peregrine is a species of raptor which breed on inland and coastal cliffs. - The habitats encompassed within and extending away from the proposed development site are not suitable for either fulmar or peregrine. Neither species would be expected to occur at the proposed development site. - The proposal is not envisaged to have any potential for any effects to either fulmar or peregrine due to the nature, scale and location of the works. - No source impact pathway for significant effects identified. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chough (<i>Pyrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>) [A346] 	<p>Yes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chough is a species of corvid which favour short-cropped coastal grassland typically maintained by grazing for foraging. Chough nest in caves, on cliff-faces, and in derelict structures. - The subject site does not encompass suitable breeding habitat for chough, and there is none available in the surrounding area. - The habitats encompassed within the proposal site are subject to a high degree of disturbance and so are sub-optimal for foraging chough; however, there is potentially suitable foraging habitat in the dunes and grassland in the wider area. - Due to the overlap with and immediate proximity of the SPA, potential impact pathways have been identified on foraging chough, primarily during the operational phase, and to a lesser extent during the construction phase. - Source impact pathways for potentially significant effects have been identified. 	<p>Potential for significant effects. Further assessment is required in relation to this SCI.</p>

4.2.5 Magharee Islands SPA (004125)

Table 13. Selection of qualifying features of the Maharee Islands SPA for further assessment

Qualifying Interest (QI)	Potential for Impact	Rationale	Conclusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Storm Petrel (<i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i>) [A014] - Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) [A018] - Barnacle Goose (<i>Branta leucopsis</i>) [A045] - Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182] - Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] - Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194] - Little Tern (<i>Sternula albifrons</i>) [A885] 	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Despite the intervening distance of 3.7km, due to the nature of the proposed development, potential impact pathways have been identified, primarily during the operational phase of the project. - On a precautionary basis, there is potential for impacts to breeding/non-breeding SCIs. - Source impact pathways for potentially significant effects have been identified. 	Potential for significant effects. Further assessment is required in relation to these SCIs.

4.3 Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects

There follows an evaluation of potentially significant effects which may arise as a result of the proposed development on the qualifying features that have been selected for impact assessment in **Section 4.2** above. Following this, a determination is made as to whether the proposal is likely to have adverse effect on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites selected for assessment.

In **Sections 4.3.1** to **4.3.4** below, the likelihood of adverse effects on Natura 2000 sites from the proposed development has been determined based on a number of indicators including:

- Water quality
- Habitat loss or alteration
- Disturbance and/or displacement of species
- Habitat or species fragmentation

The effects of the project on the qualifying features which have selected for impact assessment are then assessed against the measures designed to achieve the Conservation Objectives of the sites in **Section 4.4** to **4.8**. The likelihood of significant cumulative/in-combination effects is assessed in **Section 4.9** below.

4.3.1 Water quality

In general, construction works can pose a risk to the aquatic environment via a number of mechanisms. This risk is heightened when construction works take place within or in close proximity to surface waters. Excavation works, ground movement, and stockpiling of materials can result in sediment erosion/run-off. Where sediment laden run-off makes its way to drainage features or receiving waterbodies, it can result in siltation within the aquatic environment which can result in increased concentrations of suspended solids within the water column and increased turbidity which reduces water quality. Disturbance of soils can result in leaching of nutrients from soil or release of pollutants. Sediment-laden run-off can also therefore be a potential source of contamination.

Use/storage of plant and machinery and fuels/chemicals poses a risk of accidental ingress to the aquatic environment. Use/storage of concrete and other cementitious materials poses a risk to water quality. Generation of effluent or wastewater from temporary, on-site welfare facilities poses a risk in the event of improper disposal. Release of contaminants to the aquatic environment can therefore result in aquatic pollution and degradation of aquatic eco-systems. In general, such materials can enter the aquatic environment via direct discharges or overland flow to drainage features/surface waters, and/or leaching to groundwater in the event of a spillage/leakage.

With regards to potential water quality impacts associated with the construction phase of the proposal, the proposed development site does not encompass any watercourses; however, is located immediately adjacent to the shoreline and thus works will take place in close proximity to the marine zone, albeit above the high-water mark. There is considered to be an indirect hydrological link between the proposal site and the marine zone/Natura 2000 sites via overland or groundwater flow to coastal waters during construction. In addition, a minor portion (15m²) of the proposal site (existing beach access ramp) extends slightly onto the adjacent shoreline.

With regard to potential direct water quality impacts associated with construction, use of concrete and machinery, including to construct the proposed upgraded concrete beach access ramp, poses a potential risk to marine water quality in the event of inundation by seawater, although it is noted that the access ramp and rest of the site is located above the high-tide mark.

With regard to potential indirect water quality impacts associated with construction, sediment laden run-off could potentially arise from erosion and overland transport of sediment from areas exposed/disturbed during site set-up, clearance and preliminary groundworks, excavations/disturbed ground, material storage areas or from other potential sources such as construction vehicles/plant. These aspects of proposed construction work have the potential to generate some minor degree of run-off which, via overland flow, poses a potential risk to marine water quality.

Use and storage of fuels/oils, chemicals and cementitious materials pose a potential risk to surface and/or groundwater quality in the event of improper management or disposal, or accidental or uncontrolled spillage or leakage. Such substances could potentially reach the shoreline and marine zone via overland run-off or via leaching to the underlying groundwater resource and could therefore result in impacts on local water quality.

Regarding the significance of such impacts, a number of factors are considered relevant. The proposal site is small in scale, the works themselves are not complex, and the construction phase is temporary. Due to the nature and scale of the works, excavations will be minimal and localised within the development site. Excavations will be generally limited to topsoil stripping, with localised deeper excavations for removal of septic tank and construction of new SBR. The building foundations will be in the order of 1m deep for shallow foundations, the soak pit will require excavations of 2m depth, while excavations for the foul SBR will be to depth of 3.6m. This will be the deepest excavation and is expected to encounter the water table. All remaining excavations will be above the water table. The vast majority of excavated material will be reused on-site. Large volumes of plant and machinery are not required to complete the works. All works areas are separated from the shoreline by either existing grassed areas and/or existing rock armour which will have an attenuating effect on any localised run-off generated. The topography of the site slopes upwards towards the shoreline, so site run-off potentially generated will naturally flow westwards towards the road and existing drainage infrastructure.

The above factors will reduce the risk posed by site run-off to marine water quality. Any impacts potentially arising are expected to be localised, temporary and not significant. regarding use and storage of fuels, oils, chemicals, concrete and other cementitious materials, as well as generation of construction run-off, it is considered that, in the absence of appropriate prevention and control measures, there is a potential risk to

marine and ground water quality. Therefore, mitigation measures in relation to these aspects of the proposal are recommended in **Section 4.10.2** below.

With regard to proposed decommissioning and removal of the existing foul system, including existing septic tank, this will be undertaken strictly in accordance with EPA best-practice guidance (EPA, 2020), and thus this aspect of the proposal is not considered to have any potential for adverse effects on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites.

During construction, temporary on-site welfare facilities will be used; however, these will be maintained accordingly by an approved and licenced waste contractor, as is standard construction and environmental practice, who will dispose of waste to a licenced facility in agreement with KCC. This aspect of the proposal is not considered to have any potential for adverse effects on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites.

During the operational phase of the development, the proposal to manage and dispose of both stormwater and wastewater on-site has the potential to result in ground and marine water impacts in the event of improper treatment and/or disposal. In relation to stormwater, it is proposed to convey stormwater to a new stormwater soak pit via a new drainage network. In relation to wastewater, this will be treated to a very high standard via a new SBR package treatment system followed by tertiary level treatment. The proposed wastewater treatment system has been designed for the site physical and usage parameters. The use of a raised percolation area will ensure there will be no direct discharge to the beach or tide and that tertiary level treatment of effluent will be achieved prior to discharge to ground (see **Section 3.2.4.1**). The proposed system will replace the existing septic tank and percolation area and will comprise a significant improvement in the context of existing, on-going management of wastewater on-site. Based on the characteristics of the proposed waste and stormwater treatment systems, significant direct or indirect impacts to ground or marine water quality are not foreseen during the operational phase of the project.

Decommissioning is not envisaged; however, in the event that decommissioning is required, it is considered that potential water quality impacts via ground clearance, excavations, use of plant/machinery/fuels/oils etc would be of similar, albeit lesser, scale as for the construction phase.

Based on the precautionary principle, in order to avoid and/or reduce potential water quality impacts, mitigation measures are recommended with regards to construction (and decommissioning) works and protection of water quality, as discussed above (see **Section 4.10.2** below). Residual impacts are assessed in **Section 4.11** below.

4.3.2 Habitat loss/alteration

4.3.2.1 Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC (002070)

4.3.2.1.1 Construction phase

Proposed works within the SAC boundary comprise upgrade of the existing concrete beach access ramp, encompassing an area of 15m². Both 'Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]' and 'Large shallow inlets and bays [1160]' are mapped as occurring along the eastern edge of the proposed development site, including at the location of the existing beach access ramp. The only work proposed in this area comprises the upgrade of the existing concrete beach access ramp to provide improved and universal access to the beach. All upgrade works will be undertaken within the footprint of the existing ramp. There is no proposal to increase the size of or extend the ramp. Therefore, there will be no direct loss of any adjoining habitat, including either 'Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]' and 'Large shallow inlets and bays [1160]'. Neither will there be any land-take associated with the proposal.

There may be direct alteration of adjoining sandflat during construction works due to movement of machinery at the foot of the ramp associated with the ramp upgrade works; however, this will be highly localised, temporary and will not be significant.

As discussed above, 'Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]' and 'Large shallow inlets and bays [1160]' overlap with the proposal site. In addition, the QI 'Reefs [1170]' is located approximately 115 m offshore to the north-east and so is located within the vicinity of the works and is indirectly hydrologically connected via the marine zone. In **Section 4.3.1** above, potential water quality impacts as a result of use and storage of fuels/oils/chemicals/concrete and other cementitious materials and site run-off have been identified. Potential water quality impacts could result in indirect alteration of these QI habitats. However, mitigation measures in relation to protection of water quality have been proposed in **Section 4.10.2**. Implementation of these measures will avoid any significant water quality impacts and thus significant indirect alteration of these QI habitats is not envisaged.

The temporary construction compound will be located outside of any Natura site. The temporary compound will be located on the low-value habitats (amenity grassland/spoil and bare ground) within the west of the proposed development site, adjacent to the local road (refer to MWP Drawing No. 23173-MWP-00-01-DR-C-0100-P02 for proposed location of temporary site compound). No significant impacts on any Natura 2000 sites are envisaged from the use of a temporary construction compound.

It is also considered that construction works have the potential to result in the introduction of invasive species to a site which poses a risk to QI habitats and species in the surrounding area. No invasive species were recorded on-site; however, in general plant/machinery, tools/equipment, workers clothing/footwear and imported building and other materials including soil and fill can all potentially be contaminated with infested soil, seed or other viable material from other locations. These aspects of the proposal could potentially result in the introduction of previously unrecorded invasive species to the development site which could adversely affect qualifying habitats and/or species in the surrounding area. In the absence of appropriate controls, it is considered that proposed works have the potential to result in indirect habitat and species impacts via potential introduction and/or spread of invasive species.

Due to the nature of the proposed development, and the overlap between the proposed development site and the SAC, it is concluded that, in the absence of mitigation, there is potential for adverse effects on the integrity of the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC with respect to the sites ecological structure and function, and in view of the sites Conservation Objectives.

Mitigation measures are therefore proposed in relation to protection of qualifying habitats/species from the risk posed by impairment of marine water quality and invasive species, to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of the SAC. **Section 4.10.2** below outlines mitigation measures designed to ameliorate the potential impacts that might ensue as a result of the unmitigated proposal. Residual impacts are assessed in **Section 4.11** below.

4.3.2.1.2 Operational phase

A review of the Conservation Objectives mapping has determined that 'Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]', 'Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]', 'Dunes with *Salix repens* ssp. *argentea* (*Salicion arenariae*) [2170]' and 'Reefs [1170]' are mapped as occurring within the immediate or reasonably close proximity of the proposal site, with 'Humid dune slacks [2190]', 'Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]', 'Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* (white dunes) [2120] and 'Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]' occurring in the wider area. On a precautionary basis, while not mapped as occurring, due to its transient nature, it is considered that there is potential for 'Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220]' to also occur in the wider area of shoreline extending away from the site, although it is

noted that ‘Level, or gently-sloping, high-level mobile beaches, with limited human disturbance, supports the best examples of this vegetation’ (NPWS, 2014).

The beach itself, corresponding to ‘Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]’ is considered resilient to any potential impacts by visitors. In relation to dune QIs, as part of the ongoing Coastal Monitoring Project (CMP), it was noted by Ryle et al., (2009) that the sand dune systems of the Maharees have been impacted mainly by farming and recreational activities, such as from over-grazing, erosion and encroachment/modification due to recreational development (caravan and holiday parks, golf course). Invasive sea buckthorn (*Hippophae rhamnoides*), originally planted to help stabilise the dunes, was also found to be an issue. The establishment of a local, proactive conservation group, the Maharees Conservation Association (MCA), in 2016 has seen considerable progress in terms of dune protection and conservation with successful initiatives including installation of fencing to protect the dunes from human and animal disturbance²¹.

Once operational, the facility will provide upgraded facilities to visitors for changing and sanitation. As already discussed, toilet facilities and beach access are already in place at the beach. The proposal will provide enhanced facilities relative to what is there currently, while also regularising and modernising the waste and stormwater treatment systems on-site. The main aims of the facility are to improve the overall visitor experience and provide facilities to extend water sports into the shoulder season. It is not envisaged that the facility will result in any large increase in the number of people visiting the area. The proposal does not seek to increase the number of car parking spaces.

In CAAS Ltd., (2023), it was reported that this recent WAW monitoring by Fáilte Ireland found that over 90% of visitors stayed within 500 m of the discovery point (i.e., the attraction or hub of a given tourism/visitor destination), 97% within 1.2 km from the discovery point and less than 1% of visitors extend beyond 2 km away from the discovery point. In general, the vast majority of visitors observed at WAW discovery points are having low or no effects on the ecological features or processes present.

Dune habitats generally are more sensitive/vulnerable to visitor effects, and it is considered that there is some potential for negative impacts on surrounding dune and other shoreline habitats, mainly from possible trampling of vegetation which can damage flora and if undertaken in high numbers can lead to exposure of bare soil/sand surfaces, increasing the susceptibility of an area to further erosion.

In relation to potential operational phase water quality impacts, it has been concluded in **Section 4.3.1** above that due to the characteristics of the proposed waste and stormwater treatment systems, significant direct or indirect impacts to ground or marine water quality are not foreseen during the operational phase of the project. Potential operational phase water quality impacts on ‘Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]’, ‘Large shallow inlets and bays [1160]’ or ‘Reefs [1170]’ are not therefore foreseen.

It is concluded that, in the absence of mitigation, there is potential for adverse effects on the integrity of the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC with respect to the site’s ecological structure and function, and in view of the site’s Conservation Objectives.

Based on the precautionary principle, in order to avoid and/or reduce potential habitat alteration or fragmentation impacts as a result of any increase in human presence/activity levels in the vicinity of the site or wider area or any change in the frequency of visitors across the season, mitigation measures are recommended in relation to use of biodiversity signage and sensitive habitats (see **Section 4.10.2** below). Residual impacts are assessed in **Section 4.11** below.

²¹ <https://mahareesconservation.com/>

4.3.2.2 Magharee Islands SAC (002261)

4.3.2.2.1 Construction phase

The Magharee Islands SAC is designated for one habitat 'Reefs [1170]'. The SAC is located in excess of 4 km from the proposal site. Therefore, there will be no direct loss/alteration of 'Reef' habitat as a result of the works. With regards to potential indirect alteration via potential water quality impacts, there is no direct hydrological connection between the proposal site and the SAC; however, in the event of marine water quality impacts arising in the vicinity of the works as a result of construction activity, there is a hydrological connection between Maherabeg Bay and the SAC via the marine zone. However, the intervening hydrological distance of minimum 5 km comprising the marine zone (the bay and extending northwards around the end of the peninsula), the minor scale of the works and the dilution factor of the marine zone intervening is sufficient to ensure that there is no potential for significant indirect alteration of QI reef within the SAC as a result of potential water quality impacts.

4.3.2.2.2 Operational phase

In terms of potential operational phase impacts via a potential increase in visitors' numbers to the area or change in visitor frequency, it is noted that there is a considerable intervening distance between the proposal site and the SAC. The proposal is not considered to have the potential to result in significant alteration of designated 'Reef' habitat, as the intervening distance is considered sufficient to discourage the vast majority of people visiting the Maherabeg area from travelling to the Maherabeg Islands/SAC via boat/kayak etc. However, there is a possibility that some visitors may make the journey by kayak or other form of travel. There is a possibility of some impact to 'Reef' habitat as a result of visitors to the islands.

On a highly precautionary basis, it is concluded that, in the absence of mitigation, there is potential for adverse effects on the integrity of the Magharee Islands SAC with respect to the site's ecological structure and function, and in view of the site's Conservation Objectives.

In order to avoid and/or reduce potential habitat alteration impacts as a result of any increase in human presence/activity levels in the vicinity of the site or wider area or any change in the frequency of visitors across the season, mitigation measures are recommended with regards to use of biodiversity signage and habitats (see **Section 4.10.2** below). Residual impacts are assessed in **Section 4.11** below.

4.3.2.3 Tralee Bay Complex SPA (004188)

4.3.2.3.1 Construction phase

The Tralee Bay Complex SPA is designated for the habitat complex 'Wetland [A999]' and Magerabeg Bay is mapped as this SCI habitat. The only work proposed in this area comprises the upgrade of the existing concrete ramp. All upgrade works will be undertaken within the footprint of the existing ramp. Therefore, there will be no direct loss of any 'Wetland' habitat as a result of the proposed works.

As discussed already, in **Section 4.3.1** above, potential water quality impacts as a result of use and storage of fuels/oils/chemicals/concrete and other cementitious materials and site run-off have been identified. Potential marine water quality impacts could result in indirect alteration of this SCI habitat. However, mitigation measures in relation to protection of water quality have been proposed in **Section 4.10.2**. Implementation of these measures will avoid any significant water quality impacts and thus significant indirect alteration of qualifying 'Wetland' habitat is not envisaged.

4.3.2.3.2 Operational phase

Designated 'Wetland [A999]' within the SPA is considered resilient to any potential operational phase impacts by visitors. In relation to potential water quality impacts, it has been concluded in **Section 4.3.1** above that due to the characteristics of the proposed waste and stormwater treatment systems, significant direct or indirect impacts to ground or marine water quality are not foreseen during the operational phase of the project. Potential operational phase water quality impacts on 'Wetland [A999]' is therefore not foreseen.

4.3.3 Disturbance and/or Displacement of species

4.3.3.1 Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC (002070)

4.3.3.1.1 Construction phase

The Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC is designated for the protection of two species, namely otter and petalwort.

No evidence of otter, including any breeding or resting sites, was recorded during any of the ecological field surveys carried out in relation to the proposal. The proposal site does not contain any watercourses, and the proposal site itself is sub-optimal for otter. The adjacent shoreline is considered unsuitable to support breeding/resting otter; however, the shoreline and bay comprise potential foraging and commuting habitat. Habitat loss will be restricted to within the development footprint and will pertain to low value modified, managed or artificial habitats. Habitat loss will not be of such an extent to result in significant direct effects on otter in the context of the types of habitats which will be directly affected. This aspect of the proposal does not have the potential to result in significant effects on otter breeding, resting, foraging or commuting habitats.

In relation to foraging/commuting otter, and potential for direct disturbance/displacement effects, there will be fugitive noise emissions from machinery and plant and human/construction activity during the construction phase which could impact on otters occurring in the area. However, presence of plant/machinery and construction workers will be localised and of small scale in terms of quantities present on-site. Construction works will also only take place during daytime hours when otters are typically less active. The proposal site and surrounds comprise very busy environments with high levels of human disturbance during much of the year. In summary, any potential direct disturbance/displacement effects on foraging/commuting otter potentially occurring in the vicinity of the works will be temporary and localised in terms of spatial and temporal extent due to the nature of the works. On the basis of the rationale outlined above, significant disturbance/displacement effects on foraging/commuting otter during the construction phase are not envisaged.

With regards to potential indirect disturbance/displacement via potential impairment of water quality, including potential impacts on aquatic habitats and/or prey availability for otter, the potential for water quality impacts during the construction phase has been discussed in detail in **Section 4.3.1** above. This has concluded that there is potential for water quality impacts associated with the works in the absence of mitigation. Water quality protection measures are recommended in **Section 4.10.2** in relation to the construction phase. Implementation of these measures will avoid any significant water quality impacts and thus significant indirect disturbance/displacement of otter is not envisaged in this regard.

Petalwort is a thalloid liverwort. It requires very specific habitat and is considered rare. In Ireland, nearly all known populations are found in coastal dune systems with damp, calcareous slacks or machair (Campbell, et al., 2013), where it grows in compacted, sandy ground, maintained by grazing (rabbits and cattle) and some trampling (by walkers) and vehicles (NPWS, 2014b).

The Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC contains three sub-populations: at Maherabeg, Kilshannig and southwest of Lough Naparka, all on the Maharees Peninsula. The closest of these populations, at Maherabeg, is located approximately 0.6 km south-west of the proposal site. As part of Article 17 reporting on annex species, Campbell et al., (2013) reported in 2009 that at this sub-population, '*Colonies occurred on disturbed hillocks and eroded sand mounds in a dune slack with a dune ridge to the northeast*'.

The proposal site does not comprise suitable habitat for this QI species, and it was not recorded on-site during any of the ecological field surveys. The construction phase of the project does not have any potential for either direct or indirect effects on petalwort.

4.3.3.1.2 Operational phase

In relation to the operational phase and potential disturbance/displacement impacts to otter due to potential impairment of water quality, impacts on otter aquatic habitats and/or prey availability, it has been concluded in **Section 4.3.1** above that significant water quality impacts during operation are not anticipated.

In relation to the operational phase and potential disturbance/displacement impacts due to increased human presence associated with recreational use, it is considered that this will not be of a scale which will be considerably over and above existing baseline levels, on the basis of the existing high amenity value and usage of the local and wider area. In the case whereby otter occur in the general area during operation, any potential disturbance/displacement impacts are expected to be temporary, intermittent and localised.

With regard to petalwort, it is acknowledged that an increase in human presence/activity levels or change in the frequency of visitors within sensitive dune habitats in the wider area has the potential to adversely affect the QI petalwort where it occurs, although it is noted that this species is tolerant of compaction and, as it is a poor competitor, in many instances it relies on some degree of trampling by humans and livestock and/or movement by vehicles to keep the habitat sufficiently open²².

Significant disturbance/displacement effects on otter or petalwort due to this aspect of the proposal are not anticipated; however, on a precautionary basis, it is concluded that, in the absence of mitigation, there is potential for adverse effects on the integrity of the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC with respect to the site's ecological structure and function, and in view of the site's Conservation Objectives.

Mitigation measures have been proposed in **Section 4.10.2** in relation to biodiversity signage and sensitive species. Implementation of this measure will reduce the potential for disturbance/displacement impacts on the QI species otter and petalwort. Residual impacts are assessed in **Section 4.11** below.

4.3.3.2 Tralee Bay Complex SPA (004188)

4.3.3.2.1 Construction phase

The Tralee Bay Complex SPA is designated for a wide variety of wintering wader and waterbird species²³. Records of SCI species recorded in the vicinity of the proposal site during previous baseline winter bird surveys include oystercatcher, black-headed gull, turnstone, common gull and Brent goose. There were no sightings within the proposed development site itself.

There is very minor overlap between the proposal site and the SPA. Habitat loss will be restricted to within the development footprint and will pertain to low value modified, managed or artificial habitats. There will be no loss of suitable habitat for any SCI species within the SPA boundary. Although the amenity grassland habitat which will be lost within the proposal site is suitable for foraging for some SCI species, such as oystercatcher,

²² <https://www.britishbryologicalsociety.org.uk/learning/species-finder/petalophyllum-ralfsii/>

²³ <https://natura2000.eea.europa.eu/Natura2000/sdf/#/sdf?site=IE0004188&release=55>

this loss will occur outside the SPA and will be minor and highly localised in extent. Habitat loss will not be of such an extent to result in significant direct effects on any wintering SCIs in the context of the types and scale of habitat which will be directly affected.

In relation to the potential for direct disturbance/displacement effects on wintering SCIs, there will be fugitive noise emissions from machinery and plant and human/construction activity during the construction phase which could impact on SCIs foraging/loafing/commuting through the area. However, presence of plant/machinery and construction workers will be localised and of small scale in terms of quantities present on-site. The proposal site and surrounds comprise very busy environments with high levels of human disturbance during much of the year. In summary, any potential direct disturbance/displacement effects on SCI species foraging/loafing/commuting in the vicinity of the works will be temporary and localised in terms of spatial extent due to the nature of the works. On the basis of the rationale outlined above, significant disturbance/displacement effects on wintering SCIs during the construction phase are not envisaged.

With regards to potential indirect disturbance/displacement via potential impairment of water quality, including potential impacts on aquatic habitats and/or prey availability for SCI bird species, the potential for water quality impacts during the construction phase has been discussed in detail in **Section 4.3.1** above. This has concluded that there is potential for water quality impacts associated with the works in the absence of mitigation. Water quality protection measures are recommended during the construction phase in **Section 4.10.2**. Implementation of these measures will avoid any significant water quality impacts and thus significant indirect disturbance/displacement of wintering SCIs is not envisaged in this regard.

4.3.3.2.2 Operational phase

A number of wintering SCIs for the SPA were previously recorded within the vicinity of the proposal site, albeit in low numbers.

The proposal will provide enhanced facilities to beach users relative to what is available on-site currently. The facility main aims are to improve the overall visitor experience and provide facilities to extend water sports into the shoulder season. It is not envisaged that the facility will result in any large increase in the number of people visiting the area. While the new facility will aim to extend the season for visitors for a greater portion of the year by providing enhanced facilities, the main summer/tourist season is still expected to represent the busiest period in terms of numbers visiting the area. A *'Report to Monitoring Committee of 2016 Environmental Surveying and Monitoring Programme of the Wild Atlantic Way'*²⁴ noted that in relation to Castlegregory Beach, located in close proximity to Maherabeg Beach and also the Tralee Bay Complex SPA, this beach is located close to areas used by large numbers of wintering waterbirds, however, it was considered that the potential for significant displacement impacts was low. This was based on a number of factors including that the highest number of visitors occur during summer when birds are at their summer breeding grounds, and that the areas of most value to wintering birds (intertidal mudflats and other wetlands) are usually sufficiently removed from those areas most frequented by visitors.

In relation to the operational phase and potential disturbance/displacement impacts to wintering SCIs due to increased human presence associated with recreational use, it is considered that this will not be of a scale which will be considerably over and above existing baseline levels, on the basis of the existing high amenity value and usage of the local and wider area. In the case whereby wintering SCIs occur in the general area during operation, any potential disturbance/displacement impacts are expected to be temporary, intermittent and localised.

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https://www.failteireland.ie/FailteIreland/media/WebsiteStructure/Documents/4_Corporate_Documents/Strategy_Operations_Plans/Report-to-Monitoring-Committee-2016.pdf

In consideration of the above factors, significant disturbance/displacement effects on wintering SCIs during operation are not anticipated; however, on a precautionary basis, it is concluded that, in the absence of mitigation, there is potential for adverse effects on the integrity of the Tralee Bay Complex SPA with respect to the site's ecological structure and function, and in view of the site's Conservation Objectives.

Mitigation measures have been proposed in **Section 4.10.2** in relation to biodiversity signage and sensitive species. Implementation of this measure will reduce the potential for disturbance/displacement impacts on SCI species. Residual impacts are assessed in **Section 4.11** below.

4.3.3.3 Dingle Peninsula SPA (004153)

4.3.3.3.1 Construction phase

Choughs are largely coastal in distribution in Ireland with the maritime influence (wind exposure and salt deposition) and grazing by livestock (preferably sheep, or cattle) helping to maintain short swards in grassland pasture which comprises optimal foraging habitat. Choughs often use maritime grassland throughout the breeding season and dune grassland between summer and winter, but may also utilise winter stubble fields, improved grassland and arable land. Choughs require secure nest-sites and typically nest in sea-cliffs and caves on ledges or in crevices. They can also use abandoned buildings and other man-made stone structures as nest-sites.

The SPA is located adjacent to the proposal site. The proposal site and surrounds do not comprise suitable breeding habitat for chough. In terms of foraging, there will be no loss of habitat within the SPA boundary. The area of amenity grassland habitat which will be lost within the proposal site occurs outside the SPA and will be minor and highly localised in extent. Habitat loss will not be of such an extent to result in significant direct effects on chough in the context of the type and scale of habitat which will be directly affected.

In relation to the potential for direct disturbance/displacement effects on foraging chough, suitable grassland occurs in the surrounding area to support foraging chough. However, presence of plant/machinery and construction workers will be localised and of low scale. The proposal site and surrounds comprise very busy environments with high levels of human disturbance during much of the year. In summary, any potential direct disturbance/displacement effects on chough foraging in the vicinity of the works will be temporary and localised in terms of spatial extent due to the nature of the works. On the basis of the rationale outlined above, significant disturbance/displacement effects on chough during the construction phase are not envisaged.

4.3.3.3.2 Operational phase

With regard to foraging chough, it is acknowledged that any increase in human presence/activity levels or change in the frequency of visitors within the surrounding area, notably dune/grassland habitats in the wider area where foraging choughs are most likely to be encountered, has the potential to adversely affect this QI.

However, foraging chough are tolerant to a level of disturbance. A study by Owen (1988, as cited in Poole, 2003) found that human activity, at levels of up to thirty tourist groups per day, did not appear to cause chough to move to alternative feeding areas. More recently, chough surveys undertaken in relation to a proposed replacement of a cable car and construction of a visitor centre on Dursey Island in 2019 noted that chough were recorded feeding on grassland within c. 15 m of a car park during the daytime when there was 'plenty of visitor activity at the cable car site' (Roughan & O'Donovan Consulting Engineers, 2019).

In relation to the operational phase and potential disturbance/displacement impacts to foraging chough due to potential increased human presence associated with recreational use, it is considered that this will not be of a scale which will be considerably over and above existing baseline levels, on the basis of the existing high amenity value and usage of the local and wider area, and that the proposed development is aimed at watersports users.

In the case where foraging chough occur in the general area during operation, any potential disturbance/displacement impacts are expected to be temporary, intermittent and localised.

In consideration of the above factors, significant disturbance/displacement effects on foraging chough during operation are not anticipated. On a highly precautionary basis, mitigation measures have been proposed in **Section 4.10.2** in relation to biodiversity signage and sensitive species, including chough. Implementation of this measure will reduce the potential for disturbance/displacement impacts on foraging chough. Residual impacts are assessed in **Section 4.11** below.

4.3.3.4 Magharee Islands SPA (004125)

4.3.3.4.1 Construction phase

The Magharees Islands SPA is designated for several breeding and non-breeding species of seabird and waterbird. Records of SCI species recorded in the vicinity of the proposal site during previous baseline winter bird surveys comprised common gull only and there were no sightings within the proposed development site itself. The proposal site is situated at a remove of 3.7 km from the SPA; therefore, there will be no direct habitat loss within the SPA.

In relation to the potential for direct disturbance/displacement effects on SCI species, there will be fugitive noise emissions from machinery and plant and human/construction activity during the construction phase which could impact on SCIs foraging/loafing/commuting through the area. However, presence of plant/machinery and construction workers will be localised and of small scale. The proposal site and surrounds comprise very busy environments with high levels of human disturbance during much of the year. Any potential direct disturbance/displacement effects on SCI species occurring in the vicinity of the works will be temporary and localised. On the basis of the rationale outlined above, significant disturbance/displacement effects on SCIs during the construction phase are not envisaged.

With regards to potential indirect disturbance/displacement via potential impairment of water quality, including potential impacts on aquatic habitats and/or prey availability for SCI bird species, the potential for water quality impacts during the construction phase has been discussed in detail in **Section 4.3.1** above. This has concluded that there is potential for water quality impacts associated with the works in the absence of mitigation. Water quality protection measures are recommended during the construction phase. Implementation of these measures will avoid any significant water quality impacts and thus significant indirect disturbance/displacement of SCIs is not envisaged in this regard.

4.3.3.4.2 Operational phase

In terms of potential operational phase impacts via a potential increase in visitors' numbers to the area or change in visitor frequency, it is noted that there is a considerable intervening distance between the proposal site and the SPA. The proposal is not considered to have the potential to result in significant disturbance/displacement of breeding/non-breeding SCIs, as the intervening distance is considered sufficient to discourage the vast majority of people visiting the Maherabeg area from travelling to the SPA via boat/kayak etc. However, there is a possibility that some visitors may make the journey by kayak or other form of travel, as per existing conditions. There is therefore a continued possibility of some impact to breeding/non-breeding SCIs as a result of visitors to the islands.

On a highly precautionary basis, it is concluded that, in the absence of mitigation, there is potential for adverse effects on the integrity of the Magharees Islands SPA with respect to the site's ecological structure and function, and in view of the site's Conservation Objectives.

In order to avoid and/or reduce potential disturbance/displacement impacts as a result of any increase in human presence/activity levels in the vicinity of the site or wider area or any change in the frequency of visitors across the season, mitigation measures are recommended with regards to use of biodiversity signage and sensitive species (see **Section 4.10.2** below). Residual impacts are assessed in **Section 4.11** below.

4.3.4 Habitat or Species fragmentation

Habitat fragmentation has been defined as ‘reduction and isolation of patches of natural environment’ (Hall *et al.*, 1997 cited in Franklin *et al.*, 2002) usually due to an external disturbance that alters the habitat and ‘create[s] isolated or tenuously connected patches of the original habitat’ (Wiens, 1989 cited in Franklin *et al.*, 2002). This results in spatial separation of habitat units which had previously been in a state of greater continuity. Negative effects of habitat fragmentation on species or populations can include increased isolation of populations or species which can detrimentally impact on the resilience or robustness of the populations reducing overall species diversity and altering species abundance.

It has been determined in **Sections 4.3.1 to 4.3.3** above that the proposal has potential to result in water quality, habitat and species impacts during the construction and/or operational phases of the development which could negatively affect certain QI and SCIs for nearby Natura 2000 sites. In relation to the operational phase in particular, on a precautionary basis, it is considered that increased footfall and/or recreational access to more sensitive areas in terms of the habitats or species they support, could have the potential to result in some degree of species and/or habitat fragmentation. While a large increase in visitor numbers is not anticipated as a result of the proposal, on a precautionary basis, mitigation is recommended in relation to the operational phase of the proposal.

Mitigation measures in relation to prevention of indirect impacts on qualifying habitats and species are outlined in **Section 4.10.2**. Residual impacts are assessed in **Section 4.11** below.

4.4 Assessment of Effects on the Conservation Objectives of the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC (002070)

In **Section 4.2** above, an evaluation was undertaken to determine which of the Qualifying Interests (QIs) of the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC potentially lie within the zone of influence of the proposed development and thus required further assessment in the NIS. This was done through a scientific examination of ecological evidence and data listed above in **Section 2.3** or referenced, as well as the results of the ecological field surveys (**Section 3.2.3**).

The effects of the project on these QIs have been assessed against the measures designed to achieve the Conservation Objectives of the site (NPWS, 2014). The outcome of the assessment has been presented in the following sections.

4.4.1 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]

The Conservation Objective for the SAC in relation to mudflat and sandflat habitat [1140] is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of this habitat, as defined by specific attributes and targets (NPWS, 2014). The specific habitat Attributes and Targets with regard to this qualifying habitat, which are defined in relation to the achievement of the Conservation Objectives for the SAC, are presented in **Table 14** below, which also includes an assessment of the effects of the project against these measures.

Table 14. Specific Conservation Objective attributes and targets for mudflat and sandflat habitat 1140 within the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC (002070)

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Habitat area/Hectares	Permanent habitat area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes.	There will be no change in habitat area as a result of the proposal. This attribute will not be adversely affected by the proposed development.	No
Community extent/Hectares	Maintain the extent of <i>Mytilus</i> -dominated community and the <i>Zostera</i> -dominated and <i>Sabellaria</i> -dominated community complexes, subject to natural processes.	Impact pathways have been identified through which impairment of water quality could potentially arise during construction in the absence of appropriate mitigation measures. This could indirectly result in changes in community extents or structure. This could negatively affect these attributes. Mitigation measures are therefore recommended in relation to protection of water quality during construction.	Yes
Community structure: <i>Zostera</i> density / Shoots/m ²	Conserve the high quality of the <i>Zostera</i> -dominated community complex, subject to natural processes		
Community structure: <i>Mytilus edulis</i> density/ Individuals/m ²	Conserve the high quality of the <i>Mytilus</i> -dominated community, subject to natural processes		
Community structure: <i>Sabellaria</i> density/ Individuals/m ²	Conserve the high quality of the <i>Sabellaria</i> dominated community complex, subject to natural processes		
Community distribution /Hectares	Conserve the following community types in a natural condition: Sand to sandy mud with polychaetes and bivalves community complex; Sand with <i>Nephtys cirrose</i> community complex; <i>Ostrea edulis</i> -dominated community.		

4.4.2 Large shallow inlets and bays [1160]

The Conservation Objective for the SAC in relation to shallow bays [1160] is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of this habitat, as defined by specific attributes and targets (NPWS, 2014). The specific habitat Attributes and Targets with regard to this qualifying habitat, which are defined in relation to the achievement of the Conservation Objectives for the SAC, are presented in **Table 15** below, which also includes an assessment of the effects of the project against these measures.

Table 15. Specific Conservation Objective attributes and targets for shallow bays 1160 habitat within the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC (002070)

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Habitat area/Hectares	Permanent habitat area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes.	There will be no change in habitat area as a result of the proposal. This attribute will not be adversely affected by the proposed development.	No
Community extent/Hectares	Maintain the extent of <i>Mytilus</i> -	Impact pathways have been identified	Yes

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
	dominated community and the <i>Zostera</i> -dominated and <i>Sabellaria</i> -dominated community complexes, subject to natural processes.	through which impairment of water quality could potentially arise during construction in the absence of appropriate mitigation measures.	
Community structure: <i>Zostera</i> density / Shoots/m ²	Conserve the high quality of the <i>Zostera</i> -dominated community complex, subject to natural processes	This could indirectly result in changes in community extents or structure. This could negatively affect these attributes.	
Community structure: <i>Mytilus edulis</i> density/ Individuals/m ²	Conserve the high quality of the <i>Mytilus</i> -dominated community, subject to natural processes	Mitigation measures are therefore recommended in relation to protection of water quality during construction.	
Community structure: <i>Sabellaria</i> density/ Individuals/m ²	Conserve the high quality of the <i>Sabellaria</i> dominated community complex, subject to natural processes		
Community distribution /Hectares	Conserve the following community types in a natural condition: Sand to sandy mud with polychaetes and bivalves community complex; Sand with <i>Nephtys cirrosa</i> community complex; Mixed sediment with crustaceans, bivalves and polychaetes community complex; <i>Ostrea edulis</i> -dominated community; Intertidal reef community complex; Subtidal reef community complex; <i>Laminaria</i> dominated reef community		

4.4.3 Reefs [1170]

The Conservation Objective for the SAC in relation to reefs [1170] is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of this habitat, as defined by specific attributes and targets (NPWS, 2014). The specific habitat Attributes and Targets with regard to this qualifying habitat, which are defined in relation to the achievement of the Conservation Objectives for the SAC, are presented in **Table 16** below, which also includes an assessment of the effects of the project against these measures.

Table 16. Specific Conservation Objective attributes and targets for reefs 1160 habitat within the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC (002070)

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Habitat area/Hectares	Permanent habitat area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes.	There will be no change in habitat area or distribution as a result of the proposal.	No
Distribution/Occurrence	The distribution of reefs is stable or increasing, subject to natural processes	These attributes will not be adversely affected by the proposed development.	
Community distribution/Hectares	Maintain the extent of <i>Mytilus</i> -dominated community and the	Impact pathways have been identified through which impairment of water	Yes

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
	<i>Sabellaria</i> -dominated community complexes, subject to natural processes.	quality could potentially arise during construction, or habitat alteration could arise during operation, in the absence of appropriate mitigation measures.	
Community structure: <i>Mytilus edulis</i> density/ Individuals/m ²	Conserve the high quality of the <i>Mytilus</i> -dominated community, subject to natural processes	This could indirectly result in changes in community extents or structure. This could negatively affect these attributes.	
Community structure: <i>Sabellaria</i> density/ Individuals/m ²	Conserve the high quality of the <i>Sabellaria</i> dominated community complex, subject to natural processes	Mitigation measures are therefore recommended in relation to protection of water quality during construction.	
Community structure /Biological composition	Conserve the following community types in a natural condition: Intertidal reef community complex, Subtidal reef community complex; <i>Laminaria</i> dominated reef community		

4.4.4 Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]

The Conservation Objective for the SAC in relation to fixed dunes [2130] is to restore the favourable conservation condition of this habitat, as defined by specific attributes and targets (NPWS, 2014). The specific habitat Attributes and Targets with regard to this qualifying habitat, which are defined in relation to the achievement of the Conservation Objectives for the SAC, are presented in **Table 17** below, which also includes an assessment of the effects of the project against these measures.

Table 17. Specific Conservation Objective attributes and targets for fixed dune 2130 habitat within the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC (002070)

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Habitat area/Hectares	Area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes, including erosion and succession.	On a precautionary basis, effects of potentially increased trampling/access/activity in sensitive areas could result in adverse effects on these attributes.	Yes
Distribution/Occurrence	No decline, or change in habitat distribution, subject to natural processes	Mitigation measures are therefore recommended in relation to protection of habitats during operation.	
Vegetation structure: zonation /Occurrence	Maintain the range of coastal habitats including transitional zones, subject to natural processes including erosion and succession	On a precautionary basis, effects of potentially increased trampling/access/activity in sensitive areas could result in adverse effects on these attributes.	Yes

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Vegetation structure: bare ground /Percentage cover	Bare ground should not exceed 10% of fixed dune habitat, subject to natural processes	Mitigation measures are therefore recommended in relation to protection of habitats during operation.	
Vegetation structure: sward height /Centimetres	Maintain structural variation within sward		
Vegetation composition: typical species and subcommunities/ Percentage cover at a representative number of monitoring stops	Maintain range of subcommunities with typical species listed in Delaney et al. (2013)		
Vegetation composition: negative indicator species (including <i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i>)/ Percentage cover	Negative indicator species (including non-natives) to represent less than 5% cover	The construction phase poses a risk of introduction of invasive species. On a precautionary basis, construction could result in an adverse effect on this attribute. Mitigation measures are therefore recommended in relation to protection of habitats during construction.	Yes
Physical structure: functionality and sediment supply /Presence/ absence of physical barriers	Maintain the natural circulation of sediment and organic matter, without any physical obstructions	There will be no change in these attributes as a result of the proposal.	No
Vegetation composition: scrub/trees Percentage cover	No more than 5% cover or under control		

4.4.5 Dunes with *Salix repens* ssp. *argentea* (*Saliclon arenariae*) [2170]

The Conservation Objective for the SAC in relation to dunes with *Salix repens* [2170] is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of this habitat, as defined by specific attributes and targets (NPWS, 2014). The specific habitat Attributes and Targets with regard to this qualifying habitat, which are defined in relation to the achievement of the Conservation Objectives for the SAC, are presented in **Table 18** below, which also includes an assessment of the effects of the project against these measures.

Table 18. Specific Conservation Objective attributes and targets for dunes with *Salix repens* 2170 habitat within the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC (002070)

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Habitat area/Hectares	Area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes, including erosion and succession.	On a precautionary basis, effects of potentially increased trampling/access/ activity in sensitive areas could result in adverse	Yes

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Distribution/Occurrence	No decline, subject to natural processes	effects on these attributes. Mitigation measures are therefore recommended in relation to protection of habitats during operation.	
Vegetation structure: zonation /Occurrence	Maintain the range of coastal habitats including transitional zones, subject to natural processes including erosion and succession		
Vegetation structure: bare ground /Percentage cover	Bare ground should not exceed 10% cover, subject to natural processes	On a precautionary basis, effects of potentially increased trampling/access/activity in sensitive areas could result in adverse effects on these attributes.	Yes
Vegetation structure: vegetation height /Centimetres	Maintain structural variation within sward		
Vegetation composition: typical species and subcommunities/ Percentage cover at a representative number of monitoring stops	Maintain range of subcommunities with typical species listed in Delaney et al. (2013)	Mitigation measures are therefore recommended in relation to protection of habitats during operation.	
Vegetation composition: cover and height of <i>Salix repens</i> / Percentage cover; centimetres	Maintain more than 10% cover of creeping willow (<i>Salix repens</i>); vegetation height should be in the average range 5 - 20cm		
Vegetation composition: negative indicator species (including <i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i>)/ Percentage cover	Negative indicator species (including non-natives) to represent less than 5% cover	The construction phase poses a risk of introduction of invasive species. On a precautionary basis, construction could result in an adverse effect on this attribute. Mitigation measures are therefore recommended in relation to protection of habitats during construction.	Yes
Physical structure: functionality and sediment supply /Presence/ absence of physical barriers	Maintain the natural circulation of sediment and organic matter, without any physical obstructions	There will be no change in these attributes as a result of the proposal.	No
Vegetation composition:	No more than 5% cover		

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
scrub/trees Percentage cover	or under control		

4.4.6 Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]

The Conservation Objective for the SAC in relation to annual drift lines [1210] is to restore the favourable conservation condition of this habitat, as defined by specific attributes and targets (NPWS, 2014). The specific habitat Attributes and Targets with regard to this qualifying habitat, which are defined in relation to the achievement of the Conservation Objectives for the SAC, are presented in **Table 19** below, which also includes an assessment of the effects of the project against these measures.

Table 19. Specific Conservation Objective attributes and targets for annual drift lines 1210 habitat within the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC (002070)

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Habitat area/Hectares	Area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes, including erosion and succession.	On a precautionary basis, effects of potentially increased trampling/access/activity in sensitive areas could result in adverse effects on these attributes.	Yes
Distribution/Occurrence	No decline, subject to natural processes	Mitigation measures are therefore recommended in relation to protection of habitats during operation.	
Physical structure: functionality and sediment supply /Presence/ absence of physical barriers	Maintain the natural circulation of sediment and organic matter, without any physical obstructions	There will be no change in this attribute as a result of the proposal.	No
Vegetation structure: zonation /Occurrence	Maintain the range of coastal habitats including subject to natural processes including erosion and succession	On a precautionary basis, effects of potentially increased trampling/access/activity in sensitive areas could result in adverse effects on these attributes.	Yes
Vegetation composition: typical species and subcommunities/ Percentage cover at a representative number of monitoring stops	Maintain the presence of species-poor communities with typical species: sea rocket (<i>Cakile maritima</i>), sea sandwort (<i>Honckenya peploides</i>), prickly saltwort (<i>Salsola kali</i>) and orache (<i>Atriplex</i> spp.)	Mitigation measures are therefore recommended in relation to protection of habitats during operation.	
Vegetation composition: negative indicator species/ Percentage	Negative indicator species (including non-	The construction phase poses a risk of introduction	Yes

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
cover	natives) to represent less than 5% cover	of invasive species. On a precautionary basis, construction could result in an adverse effect on this attribute. Mitigation measures are therefore recommended in relation to protection of habitats during construction.	

4.4.7 Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220]

The Conservation Objective for the SAC in relation to perennial vegetation [1220] is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of this habitat, as defined by specific attributes and targets (NPWS, 2014). The specific habitat Attributes and Targets with regard to this qualifying habitat, which are defined in relation to the achievement of the Conservation Objectives for the SAC, are presented in **Table 20** below, which also includes an assessment of the effects of the project against these measures.

Table 20. Specific Conservation Objective attributes and targets for perennial vegetation 1220 habitat within the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC (002070)

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Habitat area/Hectares	Area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes, including erosion and succession.	On a precautionary basis, effects of potentially increased trampling/access/activity in sensitive areas could result in adverse effects on these attributes.	Yes
Distribution/Occurrence	No decline, subject to natural processes	Mitigation measures are therefore recommended in relation to protection of habitats during operation.	
Physical structure: functionality and sediment supply /Presence/absence of physical barriers	Maintain the natural circulation of sediment and organic matter, without any physical obstructions	There will be no change in this attribute as a result of the proposal.	No
Vegetation structure: zonation /Occurrence	Maintain the range of coastal habitats including transitional zones, subject to natural processes including erosion and succession	On a precautionary basis, effects of potentially increased trampling/access/activity In sensitive areas could result in adverse effects on these attributes.	Yes

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Vegetation composition: typical species and subcommunities/ Percentage cover at a representative number of monitoring stops	Maintain the typical vegetated shingle flora including the range of subcommunities within the different zones	Mitigation measures are therefore recommended in relation to protection of habitats during operation.	
Vegetation composition: negative indicator species/ Percentage cover	Negative indicator species (including non-natives) to represent less than 5% cover	The construction phase poses a risk of introduction of invasive species. On a precautionary basis, construction could result in an adverse effect on this attribute. Mitigation measures are therefore recommended in relation to protection of habitats during construction.	Yes

4.4.8 Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* (white dunes) [2120]

The Conservation Objective for the SAC in relation to shifting dunes [2120] is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of this habitat, as defined by specific attributes and targets (NPWS, 2014). The specific habitat Attributes and Targets with regard to this qualifying habitat, which are defined in relation to the achievement of the Conservation Objectives for the SAC, are presented in **Table 21** below, which also includes an assessment of the effects of the project against these measures.

Table 21. Specific Conservation Objective attributes and targets for shifting dunes 2120 habitat within the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC (002070)

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Habitat area/Hectares	Area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes, including erosion and succession.	On a precautionary basis, effects of potentially increased trampling/access/activity in sensitive areas could result in adverse effects on these attributes.	Yes
Distribution/Occurrence	No decline, subject to natural processes	Mitigation measures are therefore recommended in relation to protection of habitats during operation.	
Physical structure: functionality and sediment supply /Presence/ absence of physical barriers	Maintain the natural circulation of sediment and organic matter, without any physical obstructions	There will be no change in this attribute as a result of the proposal.	No
Vegetation structure: zonation /Occurrence	Maintain the range of coastal habitats	On a precautionary basis, effects of potentially	Yes

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
	including transitional zones, subject to natural processes including erosion and succession	increased trampling/access/activity in sensitive areas could result in adverse effects on these attributes.	
Vegetation composition: plant health of dune grasses/Percentage cover	95% of marram grass (<i>Ammophila arenaria</i>) and/or lyme-grass (<i>Leymus arenarius</i>) should be healthy (i.e. green plant parts above ground and flowering heads present).	Mitigation measures are therefore recommended in relation to protection of habitats during operation.	
Vegetation composition: typical species and subcommunities/ Percentage cover at a representative number of monitoring stops	Maintain the presence of species-poor communities dominated by marram grass (<i>Ammophila arenaria</i>) and/or lyme grass (<i>Leymus arenarius</i>)		
Vegetation composition: negative indicator species/ Percentage cover	Negative indicator species (including non-natives) to represent less than 5% cover	The construction phase poses a risk of introduction of invasive species. On a precautionary basis, construction could result in an adverse effect on this attribute. Mitigation measures are therefore recommended in relation to protection of habitats during construction.	Yes

4.4.9 Humid dune slacks [2190]

The Conservation Objective for the SAC in relation to dune slacks [2190] is to restore the favourable conservation condition of this habitat, as defined by specific attributes and targets (NPWS, 2014). The specific habitat Attributes and Targets with regard to this qualifying habitat, which are defined in relation to the achievement of the Conservation Objectives for the SAC, are presented in **Table 22** below, which also includes an assessment of the effects of the project against these measures.

Table 22. Specific Conservation Objective attributes and targets for dune slacks 2190 habitat within the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC (002070)

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Habitat area/Hectares	Area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes, including erosion and succession.	On a precautionary basis, effects of potentially increased trampling/access/activity in sensitive areas could result in adverse effects on these attributes.	Yes
Distribution/Occurrence	No decline, subject to natural processes		
Physical structure: functionality and sediment supply /Presence/ absence of physical barriers	Maintain the natural circulation of sediment and organic matter, without any physical obstructions	There will be no change in these attributes as a result of the proposal.	No
Physical structure: hydrological and flooding regime/ Water table levels; groundwater fluctuations (metres)	Maintain natural hydrological regime		
Vegetation structure: zonation /Occurrence	Maintain the range of coastal habitats including transitional zones, subject to natural processes including erosion and succession	On a precautionary basis, effects of potentially increased trampling/access/activity in sensitive areas could result in adverse effects on these attributes.	Yes
Vegetation structure: bare ground/ Percentage cover	Bare ground should not exceed 5% of dune slack habitat, with the exception of pioneer slacks which can have up to 20% bare ground		
Vegetation structure: vegetation height /Centimetres	Maintain structural variation within sward		
Vegetation composition: typical species and subcommunities/ Percentage cover at a representative number of monitoring stops	Maintain range of subcommunities with typical species listed in Delaney et al. (2013)		
Vegetation composition: cover of <i>Salix repens</i> / Percentage cover; centimetres	Maintain less than 40% cover of creeping willow (<i>Salix repens</i>)		

4.4.10 Otter [1355]

The Conservation Objective for the SAC in relation to otter [1355] is to restore the favourable conservation condition of this species, as defined by specific attributes and targets (NPWS, 2014). The specific Attributes and Targets with regard to this qualifying species, which are defined in relation to the achievement of the Conservation Objectives for the SAC, are presented in **Table 23** below, which also includes an assessment of the effects of the project against these measures.

Table 23. Specific Conservation Objective attributes and targets for otter 1355 within the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC (002070)

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Distribution/ Percentage positive survey sites	No significant decline	On a precautionary basis, effects of potentially increased access/activity in sensitive areas could result in adverse effects on these attributes.	Yes
Couching sites and holts/ Number	No significant decline	Mitigation measures are therefore recommended in relation to protection of species during operation.	
Fish biomass available /Kilograms	No significant decline	Impact pathways have been identified through which impairment of water quality could potentially arise during construction in the absence of appropriate mitigation measures. This could indirectly result in the quantity of fish biomass available. Mitigation measures are therefore recommended in relation to protection of water quality during construction	Yes
Extent of terrestrial habitat /Hectares	No significant decline. Area mapped and calculated as 82.3ha above high water mark (HWM); 50.4ha along riverbanks/around lakes and ponds		
Extent of marine habitat /Hectares	No significant decline. Area mapped and calculated as 702.2ha	There will be no change in these attributes as a result of the proposal.	No
Extent of freshwater (river) habitat/ Kilometres	No significant decline. Length mapped and calculated as 19.5km		
Extent of freshwater (lake/lagoon) habitat/ Hectares	No significant decline. Area mapped and calculated as 53.8ha		
Barriers to connectivity/ Number	No significant increase.		

4.4.11 Petalwort [1395]

The Conservation Objective for the SAC in relation to petalwort [1395] is to restore the favourable conservation condition of this species, as defined by specific attributes and targets (NPWS, 2014). The specific Attributes and Targets with regard to this qualifying species, which are defined in relation to the achievement of the Conservation Objectives for the SAC, are presented in **Table 24** below, which also includes an assessment of the effects of the project against these measures.

Table 24. Specific Conservation Objective attributes and targets for petalwort 1395 within the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC (002070)

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Distribution of populations/ Number and geographical spread of populations	No decline of the three known sub-populations	On a precautionary basis, effects of potentially increased trampling/access/activity in sensitive areas could result in adverse effects on these attributes.	Yes
Population size/Number of individuals	No decline.		
Vegetation: open structure/Height and percentage cover of vegetation	Maintain open, low	Mitigation measures are therefore recommended in relation to protection of species during operation.	
Area of suitable habitat/Hectares	No decline		
Hydrological conditions: soil moisture/Occurrence of damp soil conditions	Maintain hydrological conditions so that substrate is kept moist and damp throughout the year, but not subject to prolonged inundation by flooding in winter	There will be no change in this attribute as a result of the proposal.	No

4.5 Assessment of Effects on the Conservation Objectives of the Magharee Islands SAC (002261)

In **Section 4.2** above, an evaluation was undertaken to determine which of the QIs of the Magharee Islands SAC potentially lie within the zone of influence of the proposed development and thus required further assessment in the NIS. This was done through a scientific examination of ecological evidence and data listed above in **Section 2.3** or referenced, as well as the results of the ecological field surveys (**Section 3.2.3**).

The effects of the project on this QI have been assessed against the measures designed to achieve the Conservation Objectives of the site (NPWS, 2013). The outcome of the assessment has been presented in the following sections.

4.5.1 Reefs [1170]

The Conservation Objective for the SAC in relation to reefs [1170] is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of this habitat, as defined by specific attributes and targets (NPWS, 2013). The specific habitat Attributes and Targets with regard to this qualifying habitat, which are defined in relation to the achievement of the Conservation Objectives for the SAC, are presented in **Table 25** below, which also includes an assessment of the effects of the project against these measures.

Table 25. Specific Conservation Objective attributes and targets for reefs 1160 habitat within the Magharee Islands SAC (002261)

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Habitat area/Hectares	Permanent habitat area stable or increasing, subject to natural processes.	There will be no change in habitat area or distribution as a result of the proposal.	No
Distribution/Occurrence	The distribution of reefs is stable or increasing, subject to natural processes	These attributes will not be adversely affected by the proposed development.	
Community structure /Biological composition	Conserve the following community types in a natural condition: Intertidal reef community complex; <i>Laminaria</i> -dominated community complex; Subtidal reef community complex	Impact pathways have been identified through which habitat alteration could arise during operation, in the absence of appropriate mitigation measures. This could indirectly result in changes in community structure. On a highly precautionary basis, mitigation measures are therefore recommended in relation to protection of habitat during operation.	Yes

4.6 Assessment of Effects on the Conservation Objectives of the Tralee Bay Complex SPA (004188)

In **Section 4.2** above, an evaluation was undertaken to determine which of the SCIs of the Tralee Bay Complex SPA potentially lie within the zone of influence of the proposed development and thus required further assessment in the NIS. This was done through a scientific examination of ecological evidence and data listed above in **Section 2.3** or referenced, as well as the results of the ecological field surveys (**Section 3.2.2**).

The effects of the project on these SCIs have been assessed against the measures designed to achieve the Conservation Objectives of the site (NPWS, 2014c). The outcome of the assessment has been presented in the following sections.

4.6.1 SCI species (all wintering species)

The Conservation Objective for the SPA in relation to all bird SCIs is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of these species, as defined by specific attributes and targets (NPWS, 2014). In relation to grey plover, the Conservation Objective is to maintain/restore the favourable conservation condition of the species. The specific Attributes and Targets with regard to these qualifying species, which are defined in relation to the achievement of the Conservation Objectives for the SPA, are presented in **Table 26** below, which also includes an assessment of the effects of the project against these measures.

Table 26. Specific Conservation Objective attributes and targets for all wintering SCI bird species for the Tralee Bay Complex SPA (004188)

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Population trend/Percentage change	Long term population trend stable or increasing.	Impact pathways have been identified through which species disturbance/displacement impacts could arise during construction and	Yes
Distribution/Range, timing and intensity of use of area	No significant decrease in the range, timing and		

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
	intensity of use of areas by common gull, other than that occurring from natural patterns of variation	operation, in the absence of appropriate mitigation measures. On a precautionary basis, mitigation measures are therefore recommended in relation to protection of SCIs.	

4.6.2 Wetland [A999]

The Conservation Objective for the SPA in relation to ‘wetland A999’ is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of this habitat, as defined by specific attributes and targets (NPWS, 2014). The specific Attributes and Targets with regard to this qualifying habitat, which are defined in relation to the achievement of the Conservation Objectives for the SPA, are presented in **Table 27** below, which also includes an assessment of the effects of the project against these measures.

Table 27. Specific Conservation Objective attributes and targets for Wetland A999 habitat for the Tralee Bay Complex SPA (004188)

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Habitat area/Hectares	The permanent area occupied by the wetland habitat should be stable and not significantly less than the area of 3,657 hectares, other than that occurring from natural patterns of variation	There will be no change in permanent habitat area as a result of the proposal. This attribute will not be adversely affected by the proposed development.	No

4.7 Assessment of Effects on the Conservation Objectives of the Dingle Peninsula SPA (004153)

In **Section 4.2** above, an evaluation was undertaken to determine which of the SCIs of the Dingle Peninsula SPA potentially lie within the zone of influence of the proposed development and thus required further assessment in the NIS. This was done through a scientific examination of ecological evidence and data listed above in **Section 2.3** or referenced, as well as the results of the ecological field surveys (**Section 3.2.3**).

The effects of the project on this SCI have been assessed against the measures designed to achieve the Conservation Objectives of the site (NPWS, 2025). The outcome of the assessment has been presented in the following sections.

4.7.1 Chough [A346]

The Conservation Objective for the SPA in relation to chough A346 is to restore the favourable conservation condition of this species, as defined by specific attributes and targets (NPWS, 2025). The specific Attributes and Targets with regard to this qualifying species, which are defined in relation to the achievement of the Conservation Objectives for the SPA, are presented in **Table 28** below, which also includes an assessment of the effects of the project against these measures.

Table 28. Specific Conservation Objective attributes and targets for Chough A346 for the Dingle Peninsula SPA (004153)

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Population size /Number of breeding pairs	Population is increasing	Impact pathways through which the attributes population size/trend, productivity rate, foraging habitat quality and quantity, food available, distribution of roosting sites or supporting winter habitat area and quality have not been identified as a result of the proposal.	No
Population trend /Percentage change	Long term population trend stable or increasing		
Productivity rate/ Number of fledged young per confirmed pair	Sufficient to maintain population size target		
Foraging habitat: quality and quantity (breeding and wintering)/ Hectares (ha)	Maintain sufficient quality and quantity of coastal grassland and other relevant habitats to support the population targets		
Food availability: prey biomass /Quantity per unit area	Maintain adequate levels of prey biomass (including preferred invertebrate prey items such as leatherjackets, dung beetles, etc.)		
Distribution of roosting sites/ Spatial distribution	The distribution of preferred roosts is maintained		
Supporting winter habitat: area and quality/ Area (ha) and quality	Sufficient area of utilisable habitat available in ecologically important sites outside the SPA		
Disturbance at breeding or wintering sites/ Intensity, timing, frequency and duration	Disturbance occurs at levels that do not significantly impact upon Chough in the SPA	Impact pathways have been identified through which species disturbance/displacement impacts could arise during operation, in the absence of appropriate mitigation measures.	Yes
Winter spatial distribution /Extent of range (ha), time and intensity of use	No significant decline in the range size, timing and intensity of use of areas by Chough, other than that occurring from natural patterns of variation		
		On a highly precautionary basis, mitigation measures are therefore recommended.	

4.8 Assessment of Effects on the Conservation Objectives of the Magharee Islands SPA (004125)

In Section 4.2 above, an evaluation was undertaken to determine which of the SCIs of the Magharee Islands SPA potentially lie within the zone of influence of the proposed development and thus required further assessment in the NIS. This was done through a scientific examination of ecological evidence and data listed above in Section 2.3 or referenced, as well as the results of the ecological field surveys (Section 3.2.3).

The effects of the project on these SCIs have been assessed against the measures designed to achieve the Conservation Objectives of the site (NPWS, 2025b). The outcome of the assessment has been presented in the following sections.

4.8.1 Storm Petrel [A014]

The Conservation Objective for the SPA in relation to storm petrel A014 is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of this species, as defined by specific attributes and targets (NPWS, 2025b). The specific

Attributes and Targets with regard to this qualifying species, which are defined in relation to the achievement of the Conservation Objectives for the SPA, are presented in **Table 29** below, which also includes an assessment of the effects of the project against these measures.

Table 29. Specific Conservation Objective attributes and targets for storm petrel A014 for the Magharees Islands SPA (004125)

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Breeding population size/ Apparently Occupied Sites (AOS)	Long term SPA population trend is stable or increasing	Impact pathways have been identified through which species disturbance/displacement impacts could arise during operation, in the absence of appropriate mitigation measures.	
Productivity rate/ Number of fledged young per breeding pair	Sufficient to maintain a stable or increasing population		
Disturbance at the breeding site/ Intensity, frequency, timing and duration	Disturbance occurs at levels that do not significantly impact on birds at the breeding site	These attributes could therefore be affected during operation.	Yes
Disturbance at areas ecologically connected to the colony /Intensity, frequency, timing and duration	Disturbance occurs at levels that do not significantly impact on breeding population	On a highly precautionary basis, mitigation measures are therefore recommended.	
Distribution: extent of available nesting options within the SPA /Numbers and spatial distribution	Sufficient availability of suitable nesting sites throughout the SPA to maintain a stable or increasing population	Impact pathways through which the attributes extent of available nesting options, forage spatial distribution, extent, abundance and availability and barriers to connectivity have not been identified as a result of the proposal.	No
Forage spatial distribution, extent, abundance and availability/ Location, hectares, and forage biomass	Sufficient number of locations, area of suitable habitat and available forage biomass to support the population target		
Barriers to connectivity/ Number, location, shape, and area (ha)	Barriers do not significantly impact the population's access to the SPA or other ecologically important sites outside the SPA	These attributes will not be adversely affected by the proposed development	

4.8.2 Shag [A018]

The Conservation Objective for the SPA in relation to shag [A018] is to restore the favourable conservation condition of this species, as defined by specific attributes and targets (NPWS, 2025b). The specific Attributes and Targets with regard to this qualifying species, which are defined in relation to the achievement of the Conservation Objectives for the SPA, are presented in **Table 30** below, which also includes an assessment of the effects of the project against these measures.

Table 30. Specific Conservation Objective attributes and targets for shag A018 for the Magharees Islands SPA (004125)

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Breeding population size /Number of Apparently Occupied Nests (AON)	Long term SPA population trend is stable or increasing	Impact pathways have been identified through which species disturbance/displacement impacts	Yes

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Productivity rate/ Number of fledged young per breeding pair	Sufficient to maintain a stable or increasing population	could arise during operation, in the absence of appropriate mitigation measures.	
Disturbance at the breeding site/ Intensity, frequency, timing and duration	Disturbance occurs at levels that do not significantly impact on birds at the breeding site	These attributes could therefore be affected during operation.	
Disturbance at areas ecologically connected to the colony /Intensity, frequency, timing and duration	Disturbance occurs at levels that do not significantly impact on breeding population	On a highly precautionary basis, mitigation measures are therefore recommended.	
Distribution: extent of available nesting options within the SPA/ Numbers and spatial distribution	Sufficient availability of suitable nesting sites throughout the SPA to maintain a stable or increasing population	Impact pathways through which the attributes distribution extent of available nesting options, forage spatial distribution, extent, abundance and availability and barriers to connectivity have not been identified as a result of the proposal.	No
Forage spatial distribution, extent, abundance and availability /Location, hectares, and forage biomass	Sufficient number of locations, area of suitable habitat and available forage biomass to support the population target		
Barriers to connectivity/ Number, location, shape, and area (ha)	Barriers do not significantly impact the population's access to the SPA or other ecologically important sites outside the SPA	These attributes will not be adversely affected by the proposed development	

4.8.3 Barnacle Goose [A045]

The Conservation Objective for the SPA in relation to barnacle goose [A045] is to restore the favourable conservation condition of this species, as defined by specific attributes and targets (NPWS, 2025b). The specific Attributes and Targets with regard to this qualifying species, which are defined in relation to the achievement of the Conservation Objectives for the SPA, are presented in **Table 31** below, which also includes an assessment of the effects of the project against these measures.

Table 31. Specific Conservation Objective attributes and targets for barnacle goose A045 for the Magharees Islands SPA (004125)

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Winter population trend /Percentage change in number of individuals	Long term winter population trend is stable or increasing	Impact pathways through which the attributes winter population trend, barriers to connectivity, forage spatial distribution, roost spatial distribution and supporting habitat have not been identified as a result of the proposal.	No
Barriers to connectivity and site use /Number, location, shape and hectares	Barriers do not significantly impact the wintering population's access to the SPA or other ecologically important sites outside the SPA		
Forage spatial distribution, extent and abundance/ Location, hectares, and forage biomass	Sufficient number of locations, area of suitable habitat and available forage biomass to support the population target	These attributes will not be adversely affected by the proposed development	
Roost spatial distribution, extent and abundance	Sufficient number of locations, area and availability of suitable roosting		

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
/Location, hectares, and forage biomass	habitat to support the population target		
Supporting habitat: area and quality /Hectares and quality	Sufficient area of utilisable habitat available in ecologically important sites outside the SPA		
Winter spatial distribution/ Hectares, time and intensity of use	Sufficient area and availability (in terms of timing and intensity of use) of suitable habitat to support the population target	Impact pathways have been identified through which species disturbance/displacement impacts could arise during operation, in the absence of appropriate mitigation measures.	
Disturbance at wintering site/ Intensity, frequency, timing and duration	Disturbance occurs at levels that do not significantly impact the achievement of targets for population trend and distribution	These attributes could therefore be affected during operation. On a highly precautionary basis, mitigation measures are therefore recommended.	Yes

4.8.4 Common Gull [A182]

The Conservation Objective for the SPA in relation to common gull [A182] is to restore the favourable conservation condition of this species, as defined by specific attributes and targets (NPWS, 2025b). The specific Attributes and Targets with regard to this qualifying species, which are defined in relation to the achievement of the Conservation Objectives for the SPA, are presented in **Table 32** below, which also includes an assessment of the effects of the project against these measures.

Table 32. Specific Conservation Objective attributes and targets for common gull A182 for the Magharees Islands SPA (004125)

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Breeding population size /Number of Apparently Occupied Nests (AON)	Long term SPA population trend is stable or increasing	Impact pathways have been identified through which species disturbance/displacement impacts could arise during operation, in the absence of appropriate mitigation measures.	
Productivity rate/ Number of fledged young per breeding pair	Sufficient to maintain a stable or increasing population		
Disturbance at the breeding site/ Intensity, frequency, timing and duration	Disturbance occurs at levels that do not significantly impact on birds at the breeding site	These attributes could therefore be affected during operation.	Yes
Disturbance at areas ecologically connected to the colony /Intensity, frequency, timing and duration	Disturbance occurs at levels that do not significantly impact on breeding population	On a highly precautionary basis, mitigation measures are therefore recommended.	
Distribution: extent of available nesting options within the SPA /Numbers and spatial distribution	Sufficient availability of suitable nesting sites throughout the SPA to maintain a stable or increasing population	Impact pathways through which the attributes distribution (nesting options within the SPA), forage spatial distribution and barriers to connectivity	No

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Forage spatial distribution, extent, abundance and availability/ Location, hectares, and forage biomass	Sufficient number of locations, area of suitable habitat and available forage biomass to support the population target	have not been identified as a result of the proposal. These attributes will not be adversely affected by the proposed development	
Barriers to connectivity /Number, location, shape, and area (ha)	Barriers do not significantly impact the population's access to the SPA or other ecologically important sites outside the SPA		

4.8.5 Common Tern [A193]

The Conservation Objective for the SPA in relation to common tern [A193] is to restore the favourable conservation condition of this species, as defined by specific attributes and targets (NPWS, 2025b). The specific Attributes and Targets with regard to this qualifying species, which are defined in relation to the achievement of the Conservation Objectives for the SPA, are presented in **Table 33** below, which also includes an assessment of the effects of the project against these measures.

Table 33. Specific Conservation Objective attributes and targets for common tern A193 for the Magharees Islands SPA (004125)

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Breeding population size /Number of Apparently Occupied Nests (AON)	Long term SPA population trend is stable or increasing	Impact pathways have been identified through which species disturbance/displacement impacts could arise during operation, in the absence of appropriate mitigation measures.	
Productivity rate/ Number of fledged young per breeding pair	Sufficient to maintain a stable or increasing population		
Disturbance at the breeding site /Intensity, frequency, timing and duration	Disturbance occurs at levels that do not significantly impact on birds at the breeding site	These attributes could therefore be affected during operation.	Yes
Disturbance at areas ecologically connected to the colony /Intensity, frequency, timing and duration	Disturbance occurs at levels that do not significantly impact on breeding population	On a highly precautionary basis, mitigation measures are therefore recommended.	
Distribution: extent of available nesting options within the SPA/ Numbers and spatial distribution	Sufficient availability of suitable nesting sites throughout the SPA to maintain a stable or increasing population	Impact pathways through which the attributes distribution (nesting options within the SPA), forage spatial distribution and barriers to connectivity have not been identified as a result of the proposal.	No
Forage spatial distribution, extent, abundance and availability/ Location, hectares, and forage biomass	Sufficient number of locations, area of suitable habitat and available forage biomass to support the population target		
Barriers to connectivity /Number, location, shape, and area (ha)	Barriers do not significantly impact the population's access to the SPA or other ecologically important sites outside the SPA	These attributes will not be adversely affected by the proposed development	

4.8.6 Arctic Tern [A194]

The Conservation Objective for the SPA in relation to Arctic tern [A194] is to restore the favourable conservation condition of this species, as defined by specific attributes and targets (NPWS, 2025b). The specific Attributes and Targets with regard to this qualifying species, which are defined in relation to the achievement of the Conservation Objectives for the SPA, are presented in **Table 34** below, which also includes an assessment of the effects of the project against these measures.

Table 34. Specific Conservation Objective attributes and targets for Arctic tern A194 for the Magharees Islands SPA (004125)

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Breeding population size /Number of Apparently Occupied Nests (AON)	Long term SPA population trend is stable or increasing	Impact pathways have been identified through which species disturbance/displacement impacts could arise during operation, in the absence of appropriate mitigation measures.	
Productivity rate /Number of fledged young per breeding pair	Sufficient to maintain a stable or increasing population		
Disturbance at the breeding site /Intensity, frequency, timing and duration	Disturbance occurs at levels that do not significantly impact on birds at the breeding site	These attributes could therefore be affected during operation.	Yes
Disturbance at areas ecologically connected to the colony/ Intensity, frequency, timing and duration	Disturbance occurs at levels that do not significantly impact on breeding population	On a highly precautionary basis, mitigation measures are therefore recommended.	
Distribution: extent of available nesting options within the SPA/ Numbers and spatial distribution	Sufficient availability of suitable nesting sites throughout the SPA to maintain a stable or increasing population	Impact pathways through which the attributes distribution (nesting options within the SPA), forage spatial distribution and barriers to connectivity have not been identified as a result of the proposal.	No
Forage spatial distribution, extent, abundance and availability /Location, hectares, and forage biomass	Sufficient number of locations, area of suitable habitat and available forage biomass to support the population target		
Barriers to connectivity/ Number, location, shape, and area (ha)	Barriers do not significantly impact the population's access to the SPA or other ecologically important sites outside the SPA	These attributes will not be adversely affected by the proposed development	

4.8.7 Little Tern [A885]

The Conservation Objective for the SPA in relation to little tern [A885] is to restore the favourable conservation condition of this species, as defined by specific attributes and targets (NPWS, 2025b). The specific Attributes and Targets with regard to this qualifying species, which are defined in relation to the achievement of the Conservation Objectives for the SPA, are presented in **Table 35** below, which also includes an assessment of the effects of the project against these measures.

Table 35. Specific Conservation Objective attributes and targets for little tern A885 for the Magharees Islands SPA (004125)

Attribute/Measure	Target	Assessment of Potentially Significant Effects	Mitigation Required
Population size /Number of Apparently Occupied Nests (AON)	Long term SPA population trend is stable or increasing	Impact pathways have been identified through which species disturbance/displacement impacts could arise during operation, in the absence of appropriate mitigation measures.	Yes
Productivity rate /Number of fledged young per breeding pair	Sufficient to maintain a stable or increasing population		
Disturbance at the breeding site/ Intensity, frequency, timing and duration	Disturbance occurs at levels that do not significantly impact on birds at the breeding site	These attributes could therefore be affected during operation.	
Disturbance at areas ecologically connected to the colony /Intensity, frequency, timing and duration	Disturbance occurs at levels that do not significantly impact on breeding population	On a highly precautionary basis, mitigation measures are therefore recommended.	
Distribution: extent of available nesting options within the SPA /Numbers and spatial distribution	Sufficient availability of suitable nesting sites throughout the SPA to maintain a stable or increasing population	Impact pathways through which the attributes distribution (nesting options within the SPA), forage spatial distribution and barriers to connectivity have not been identified as a result of the proposal.	No
Forage spatial distribution, extent, abundance and availability/ Location, hectares, and forage biomass	Sufficient number of locations, area of suitable habitat and available forage biomass to support the population target		
Barriers to connectivity/ Number, location, shape, and area (ha)	Barriers do not significantly impact the population's access to the SPA or other ecologically important sites outside the SPA	These attributes will not be adversely affected by the proposed development	

4.9 Assessment of Potentially Significant Cumulative Effects

4.9.1 Plans

As well as singular effects, the potential for in-combination or cumulative effects also need to be considered. A cumulative effect arises from incremental changes caused by another past, present or reasonably foreseeable future actions together with the proposed development. The EC (2021) guidelines on the provision of Article 6 of the Habitats’ Directive state that the phrase ‘in combination with other plans or projects’ in Article 3(3) of the Habitats Directive refers to the cumulative effects due to plans or projects ‘that are currently under consideration together with the effects of any existing or proposed projects or plans.’ Relevant plans and projects have been identified in **Section 3.3** above.

With regards to the potential for in-combination effects with Plans, the Kerry County Development Plan (2022-2028) was considered. Examples of objectives of the KCDP which are relevant include:

KCDP 10-35 Promote and facilitate the sustainable development of outdoor activities including winter and adventure sports, in appropriate locations, such as walking, rambling, cycling, land and sea-based activities with specialised centres and facilities in association with Munster Technological University, Fáilte Ireland, National Trails Office, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Local

Development Companies, Sport Ireland, Healthy Ireland, Local Development Companies, Kerry Education and Training Board and other relevant national and County based departments and agencies.

KCDP 10-56 Support the provision of appropriately designed and located toilet and changing facilities at blue flag beaches in the county and at other locations subject to need assessment and environmental compatibility.

Other Plans considered were the Kerry Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2016 -2022, the Dingle Visitor Experience Development Plan 2021 and the East Dingle Peninsula Settlements Local Area Plan (LAP) 2008-2014.

No specific elements of these Plans were identified which were considered to have the potential to interact with the proposal in the context of potentially significant in-combination effects.

The Plans referred to above have been subject to Appropriate Assessment through Habitats Directive Assessments to ensure no adverse effects to the integrity of Natura 2000 sites. The Appropriate Assessment process is fully integrated within the various stages of the Plan development process to ensure that elements of the Plans do not adversely affect any areas designated as Natura 2000 sites. In general, CDPs, LAPs and other development plans incorporate a range of environmental and natural heritage policy safeguards. These safeguards to protect the natural environment will also apply to the proposal described in this report. No significant in-combination effects are predicted between the proposal and any of the Plans identified in **Section 3.3.1**.

4.9.2 Permitted and Proposed Developments in the Locality

No granted or on-going planning applications in relation to consented or proposed development within the local area were identified with regard to potential cumulative impacts. Significant in-combination effects arising due to interaction between the proposal and permitted or proposed developments in the locality, as outlined in **Section 3.3.2** above, are not envisaged.

4.9.3 EPA Licenced/Registered Facilities

Significant in-combination effects arising due to interaction between the proposal and any EPA licenced/registered facilities, as outlined in **Section 3.3.3** above, are not envisaged.

4.9.4 Existing Land-use and On-going Activities

Existing land-use within and in the immediate vicinity of the proposed development site comprises predominantly recreational use. Tourism and recreational activities in general have the potential to result in habitat and water quality impacts and disturbance of fauna. For example, through increased pressure on receiving waterbodies through the management of wastewater in more rural areas, from increased footfall, particularly in sensitive habitats, which can result in significant impacts via trampling, erosion etc.

Non-intensive agriculture is a feature of the wider area, albeit of a much smaller scale. In general, agriculture can result in increased nutrient/sediment run-off to watercourses and habitat loss and fragmentation within the landscape.

With regards to the marine aquatic environment, in the absence of mitigation, potential construction phase water quality impacts have been identified in relation to the proposal. Due to the nature and scale of the works, these impacts, if they were to occur, are predicted to be minor, temporary and localised. Significant in-combination effects arising due to potential water quality impacts are not envisaged. On a precautionary basis,

measures to protect water quality and reduce the potential for localised water quality impacts within Maherabeg Bay have been recommended (**Section 4.10.2**).

With regards to sensitive habitats and species in the immediate and wider area extending away from the proposal site, in the absence of mitigation, potential operational phase impacts have been identified as a result of increased footfall or access to or usage of sensitive areas, which may arise as a result of the proposal. On a precautionary basis, measures to inform and educate visitors as to the sensitivity of the surrounding area and reduce potential habitat and species impacts have been recommended (**Section 4.10.2**).

In summary, in the absence of mitigation, potentially significant in-combination effects have been identified with regard to the proposed development and other existing land-uses and on-going activities.

4.10 Mitigation

4.10.1 Mitigation by Design

From the outset, the proposal has been designed with due consideration of the sensitive nature of the location and has aimed to avoid or minimise environmental impacts throughout all stages of design. The approach to the proposed shared access facility uses an exemplar design developed by Fáilte Ireland in conjunction with various stakeholders.

Examples of this are:

- All new build facilities are required to conform to nearly zero energy building standards and be appropriately and sensitively designed to integrate with the site's natural environment and surrounding location.
- Low-cost water heating on site, electrical power generation and measures to reduce water usage and the multi-functional nature of the proposal.
- Use of robust materials which offer a long-life assurance to minimise waste, maintenance and wear and tear.
- Use of low energy processes and materials to suppress the carbon footprint of the proposal.
- Use of PV panels, ground-source heat pumps and/or air source heat pumps to create a low-cost, low-energy design.
- Facilities will have an intensive green roof which uses native species of grass to further echo the buildings' natural surroundings.
- Use of natural ventilation and natural lighting to reduce the need for mechanical and electrical features and energy use.

4.10.2 Mitigation by Management

Mitigation measures which are recommended are provided in **Table 36** and **Table 37** below. The methodology for the incorporation of environmental control measures has considered the project and site characteristics and the relevant sensitive ecological receptors. Where relevant, proposed management measures have had regard

to ecological control measures which have been developed by Fáilte Ireland generally for the Wild Atlantic Way²⁵.

Measures below are presented in accordance with Section 3.2.4 of the EC commission Notice 2021/C 437/01 'Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites – Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC' guidance document.

4.10.2.1 Construction Phase

Construction phase mitigation measures which aim to avoid or reduce ecological impacts which may arise as a result of construction are outlined in **Table 36** below.

Table 36. Schedule of construction phase mitigation measures

Potential adverse effects identified	Description of the measures, details on implementation, effectiveness, monitoring				
<p>Potential indirect habitat alteration, water quality and indirect species disturbance/ displacement impacts via impairment of water quality.</p> <p>Construction works will take place immediately adjacent to ecologically-sensitive areas (SAC/SPA).</p>	<p>Measure #1 Protection of Environment / Preparation and Implementation of a Detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)</p> <p>An outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been developed by MWP in relation to the proposal. The outline CEMP sets out the minimum requirements which will be adhered to during the construction phase.</p> <p>The development of the CEMP ensures that all mitigation measures from this NIS are incorporated into the development and will be implemented and adhered to during construction. The CEMP will also ensure that best practice construction methods are adopted throughout the construction phase.</p> <p>A detailed, site-specific CEMP will be developed in advance of construction by the appointed Contractor. It will incorporate the requirements of conditions attached to statutory consents granted in respect of the development. All mitigation measures outlined in the NIS are to be incorporated into the final CEMP and implemented on-site. Construction method statements will be prepared by the appointed Contractor prior to commencement of construction, agreed in advance with KCC, and incorporated into the CEMP. The detailed, site-specific CEMP will comprise a 'live' document which will be updated as the project progresses.</p> <p>The final CEMP will include, but is not limited to, the following environmental controls and will take cognisance of the following Best Practice Guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sediment and Erosion Control • Noise, Vibration, Dust and Air Control • Management of Construction and Demolition Waste • Fuel and Oils Management • Management of Concrete • Incident Reporting Procedures and Emergency Response Plan • CIRIA C692: Environmental Good Practice on Site, (Audus <i>et al.</i>, 2010). 				
	How will the measure contribute to avoiding/reducing the effects on the integrity of the site?	How will the measure be implemented and by whom?	Effectiveness of the measure	Timescale of implementation	Proposed monitoring scheme and reporting requirements
	The final CEMP will outline the construction practices and environmental management	The measure will be required as part of planning approval and will be implemented by the appointed Contractor and	The CEMP will ensure that the proposed development will be carried out in	The final CEMP prepared by the appointed contractor is be submitted to KCC for agreement and approval prior to	The appointed Contractor is responsible for preparing the final CEMP and getting approval

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https://www.failteireland.ie/FailteIreland/media/WebsiteStructure/Documents/2_Develop_Your_Business/Key%20Projects/Appendix-5-Site-Maintenance-Guidelines_1.pdf

Potential adverse effects identified	Description of the measures, details on implementation, effectiveness, monitoring				
	measures which will be implemented to ensure that best practice measures are adhered to so that impacts on the surrounding environment are avoided or minimised.	Environmental Manager who will be responsible for ensuring that construction practices and environmental management measures outlined within the final CEMP are implemented in full.	accordance with the grant of planning. CEMPs are standard tools used by developers and Planning Authorities to set out clear commitments to protecting the environment during the construction phase of a project.	the commencement of any construction activity. All measures, as relevant, within the CEMP are to be implemented at the outset of the construction phase and are to remain in place until construction works are complete.	from KCC. The appointed Construction Manager/ Environmental Manager will be responsible for monitoring implementation of all measures in the final CEMP throughout the construction phase. Documentation will be retained to ensure full implementation and compliance.
As above	Measure #2 Protection of Environment / Appointment of Environmental Manager				
	<p>An Environmental Manager (member of contractor site personnel who is to be suitably qualified and trained) is to be appointed prior to works commencing on-site. The Environmental Manager will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the requirements of the final CEMP are implemented and adhered to with respect to environmental matters on-site. • Undertake routine environmental inspections of construction activity. Inspections are to be undertaken on a daily basis throughout the construction phase. The purpose of the routine environmental inspections is to ensure all controls to prevent environmental impact, relevant to the construction activities taking place at the time, are in place. • Review of all Contractor method statements to ensure that works are taking place in compliance with the CEMP and that all environmental controls and mitigation are being implemented in full. • Review the environmental responsibilities of other managed Contractors in scoping their work and during Contract execution. • Delivery of toolbox talks. All operatives/personnel working at or visiting the site are to be made aware of the sensitive nature of the site through toolbox talks given by the Environmental Manager who will explain the sensitivities of the development site in the context of its location adjacent to protected areas. • The Environmental Manager will have the power to halt works in the event that any environmental impacts, other than those identified and where necessary mitigated against in the NIS, arise. • Advise upon the production of Contractor and sub-contractor written method statements. • Investigate incidents of significant, potential or actual environmental damage, ensure corrective actions are carried out and recommend means to prevent recurrence. • Ensure that advice, guidance and instruction on all CEMP matters are provided to all managers, employees, construction contractors and visitors on site. • Report to and advise site management on environmental matters. • Maintain all site inspection and other environmental records and documentation. 				
	How will the measure contribute to avoiding/reducing the effects on the integrity of the site?	How will the measure be implemented and by whom?	Effectiveness of the measure	Timescale of implementation	Proposed monitoring scheme and reporting requirements
	The measure will ensure that the works are undertaken in compliance with the CEMP and planning conditions and that any issues or potential issues which may arise are detected and addressed, where required, in a timely manner.	The measure will be required as part of planning approval and will be implemented by the appointed Contractor.	The measure will ensure that all environmental controls within the CEMP are adhered to during construction and the proposed development will be carried out in	Measure is to be implemented prior to works commencing on-site and to remain in place until construction works are complete.	The appointed Contractor will be responsible for ensuring that all duties of the Environmental Manager are carried out satisfactorily. The Environmental Manger will be responsible for maintenance of

Potential adverse effects identified	Description of the measures, details on implementation, effectiveness, monitoring				
			accordance with the grant of planning.		all site inspection and other environmental records. Documentation will be retained to ensure full implementation and compliance with the CEMP and grant of planning.
<p>Surface water runoff during the construction phase has the potential to degrade marine water quality in the SAC/SPA.</p> <p>This may lead to habitat alteration, disturbance and displacement of species.</p>	<p>Measure # 3 Protection of Water Quality / Construction Run-off Standard construction measures are to be implemented with regard to runoff and sediment control.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erosion and sediment controls are to be implemented, as required, prior to any site works commencing to prevent runoff flowing across exposed ground. Clean water runoff will be intercepted and diverted away from construction site runoff to avoid cross-contamination of clean water with soiled water. Discharge from silt control measures will be discharged into an area of vegetation for dispersion or infiltration. The area of exposed ground will be minimised. Excavations will be minimised. Works will be suspended during periods of prolonged rainfall events. The volume of excavated material will be minor. Temporary stockpiling of materials should follow best practice at all times and be restricted to designated material deposition areas only, located at least 20m away from water features. Bunds or other diversions to prevent run off from entering the stockpile area will be provided where required. Impermeable mats (plastic sheeting) will be used, as required, to cover mounded excavated material and open excavations during periods of heavy rainfall. 				
	<p>How will the measure contribute to avoiding/reducing the effects on the integrity of the site?</p>	<p>How will the measure be implemented and by whom?</p>	<p>Effectiveness of the measure</p>	<p>Timescale of implementation</p>	<p>Proposed monitoring scheme and reporting requirements</p>
<p>The use of fuels and oils during construction poses the risk of pollutants entering the marine zone potentially degrading water quality within the SAC/SPA.</p> <p>This may lead to habitat alteration, fragmentation, disturbance, and</p>	<p>Measure # 4 Protection of Water Quality / Management of Fuels/Oils/Other Chemicals The management of fuel/oil and other chemicals on site will have regard to the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refuelling of construction machinery and vehicles will only take place in designated refuelling areas using a prescribed refuelling procedure. Refuelling will be carried out using 110% capacity double banded mobile bowsers and will be carried out on bunded area, using drip trays. The bowser will have spill containment equipment which the operators will be fully trained in using. All containers of any size will be correctly labelled indicating their contents and any hazard warning signs. All oil, diesel, mobile bowsers, tanks and drums will be stored in impermeable storage areas at least 30m from any watercourse. 				

Potential adverse effects identified	Description of the measures, details on implementation, effectiveness, monitoring				
<p>displacement of species.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fuel fill pipes will not extend beyond the bund wall and will have a lockable cap secured with a chain. Plant nappies or absorbent mats to be placed under refuelling point during all refuelling to absorb drips. Plant nappies to be provided beneath small mobile plant (e.g. small generators, pumps, etc.). To reduce the potential for oil leaks, only vehicles and machinery that are mechanically sound will be allowed onto site. An up-to-date service record will be required from the main contractor. Should there be an oil leak or spill, the leak or spill will be contained immediately using oil spill kits which will be easily accessible and kept in site vehicles and machinery and the prescribed spill containment procedure followed. All vehicle/machinery operators will be trained by the Environmental Manager in the use of spill kits and the correct containment of oil spills or leaks. In the event of a major oil spill, a company who provide a rapid response emergency service for major fuel spills will be immediately called for assistance, their contact details will be kept in the site office. Only the required volume of oil will be stored for the works taking place at the time. Collision with oil stores will be prevented by locating oils within a steel container in a designated area away from vehicle movements. The volume of leakages will be prevented through monitoring oil storage tanks/drums for leaks and signs of damage. Long term storage of waste oils will not be allowed on site. These waste oils will be collected in leak-proof containers and removed from the site for disposal or re-cycling by an approved service provider. 				
	<p>How will the measure contribute to avoiding/reducing the effects on the integrity of the site?</p>	<p>How will the measure be implemented and by whom?</p>	<p>Effectiveness of the measure</p>	<p>Timescale of implementation</p>	<p>Proposed monitoring scheme and reporting requirements</p>
	<p>The source and pathway to receptors will be controlled, managed and/or removed by the measures. By utilising secure storage, designated refuelling areas, spill kits and trained personnel, the risk of oil and fuel spills is minimised.</p>	<p>The measure will be required as part of planning approval, included in the CEMP and will be implemented by the appointed contractor. Machinery operators and designated staff members will be responsible for adhering to the protocols.</p>	<p>Standard best practices for the management of fuels and oils for the protection of water quality and prevention of ground contamination.</p>	<p>Measures to be implemented at the outset of the construction phase and to remain in place until construction works are complete</p>	<p>The Environmental manager shall oversee all fuel/oil handling activities and shall monitor and ensure that all fuel/oil storage facilities will be regularly inspected and maintained during the construction phase.</p> <p>Emergencies/incidents, if any, should be reported to KCC and corrective actions will be documented in the subsequent reports.</p>
<p>The use of concrete during construction poses the risk of pollutants entering the marine zone potentially degrading water quality with the SAC/SPA.</p> <p>This may lead to habitat alteration,</p>	<p>Measure # 5 Protection of Water Quality / Management of Concrete</p> <p>The management of concrete on site will have regard to the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A designated trained operator experienced in working with concrete will be employed for all concrete works. There shall be no pouring/use of concrete during periods of rain reducing risk of run-off. Concrete works will be regularly inspected by the Environmental Manager. Any small volumes of incidental wash generated from cleaning of hand tools, cement mixers or other plant, as required, will be contained in designated areas within the temporary site compounds. Sediment in washout will be allowed to settle out and reach neutral pH before clarified water is released and allowed to percolate to ground. Settled solids will be appropriately disposed 				

Potential adverse effects identified	Description of the measures, details on implementation, effectiveness, monitoring				
fragmentation, disturbance, and displacement of species.	of off-site. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concrete trucks will be prohibited from washing out on-site. The use of wet concrete and cement in or close to any water body will be carefully controlled so as to minimise the risk of any material entering the water. Concrete will not be allowed to enter watercourses under any circumstances, and drainage from excavations in which concrete is being poured will not be discharged directly into existing watercourses without appropriate treatment and consent from the relevant authority. In case of a spill, immediate action will be taken. Any contaminated runoff will be retained and treated until neutral pH is achieved before discharge of clarified water to ground. 				
	How will the measure contribute to avoiding/reducing the effects on the integrity of the site?	How will the measure be implemented and by whom?	Effectiveness of the measure	Timescale of implementation	Proposed monitoring scheme and reporting requirements
	The source and pathway to receptors will be controlled, managed and/or removed by the measures.	The measure will be required as part of planning approval, included in the CEMP and will be implemented by the appointed Contractor.	Standard best practices for the management of concrete for the protection of water quality and prevention of ground contamination.	Measures to be implemented at the outset of the construction phase and to remain in place until construction works are complete.	The Environmental Manager shall regularly inspect concrete works. The Environmental manager shall monitor and ensure that concrete washout areas are regularly inspected and maintained during the construction phase. Emergencies/incidents, if any, should be reported to KCC and corrective actions will be documented in the subsequent reports.
Storage of construction materials could lead to potential degrading of water quality in the SAC/SPA. This could lead to habitat alteration, fragmentation, and species disturbance and displacement.	Measure # 6 Protection of Water Quality/Biodiversity / Storage of Construction Materials Storage of construction materials brought to site will have regard to the following elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Storage of construction materials is to take place in designated areas only, located at least 20m away from water features. Material stockpiles should be kept to a minimum size, and be located on impermeable bases, where necessary. 				
	How will the measure contribute to avoiding/reducing the effects on the integrity of the site?	How will the measure be implemented and by whom?	Effectiveness of the measure	Timescale of implementation	Proposed monitoring scheme and reporting requirements
	The source and pathway to receptors will be controlled, managed and/or removed by the measure.	The measure will be required as part of planning approval, included in the CEMP and will be implemented by the appointed Contractor.	Standard best practices for storage of materials for the protection of water quality.	Measures to be implemented at the outset of the construction phase and to remain in place until construction works are complete.	The Environmental Manager shall regularly inspect all construction materials areas.
Generation of wastes during construction poses the risk of pollutants entering the marine zone potentially degrading water quality or habitat quality within the SAC/SPA. This may lead to alteration/fragmentation or disturbance, and	Measure # 7 Protection of Water Quality/Biodiversity / Management of Construction Waste The management of construction waste on site will have regard to the following elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate storage of all non-hazardous and hazardous wastes on-site will be undertaken to minimise potential for environmental impacts. Dedicated banded storage containers will be provided in the temporary site compound for hazardous wastes which may arise such as batteries, paints, oils, chemicals etc, if required. All wastes are to be removed from site by relevant, licenced waste contractors to suitable waste facilities. 				
	How will the measure contribute to	How will the measure be implemented	Effectiveness of the measure	Timescale of implementation	Proposed monitoring scheme and reporting requirements

Potential adverse effects identified	Description of the measures, details on implementation, effectiveness, monitoring				
displacement impacts on qualifying habitats and species.	avoiding/reducing the effects on the integrity of the site?	and by whom?			
	The source and pathway to receptors will be controlled, managed and/or removed by the measure. The measures serve as barriers, preventing uncontrolled contaminated runoff.	The measure will be required as part of planning approval, included in the CEMP and will be implemented by the appointed Contractor.	Standard best practices for the management of construction waste for the protection of water quality and biodiversity.	Measures to be implemented at the outset of the construction phase and to remain in place until construction works are complete.	The Environmental Manager shall regularly inspect all storage areas for construction wastes.
Construction activity poses a risk of disturbance to surrounding habitats/species within the SAC/SPA. This may lead to alteration/fragmentation or direct/ indirect disturbance/ displacement impacts on qualifying habitats and species.	Measure # 8 Protection of Biodiversity / General Construction Activity Given the sensitivity of the immediate surrounding area, general construction activity will have regard to the following elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent of the development site boundary will be clearly marked out using temporary stakes, high-visibility tape/bunting or similar together with advisory signage such that the extent of access for all construction personnel, plant and machinery, temporary site compounds and material storage areas, are defined and clearly visible to all contractor staff and machine operators. Movement of construction personnel, plant and machinery is to be restricted to within the development site boundary as much as is practically possible. Where possible, machinery shall only operate from existing parking or built surfaces, and shall not enter any sensitive or designated ecological habitat. Construction phase lighting will be controlled to minimise light pollution and lighting will be turned off at night. Excavated areas will be covered over outside of working hours to reduce risk of accidental entrapment of wildlife. All areas material stockpiles, spoil and or waste storage are to be covered or otherwise secured outside of working hours such that they do not pose any risk of endangerment to wildlife. 				
	How will the measure contribute to avoiding/reducing the effects on the integrity of the site?	How will the measure be implemented and by whom?	Effectiveness of the measure	Timescale of implementation	Proposed monitoring scheme and reporting requirements
	Clearly demarcating the extent of works areas will avoid/minimise encroachment onto adjacent areas of semi-natural habitat and will avoid direct/indirect habitat/species impacts.	The measure will be required as part of planning approval and will be implemented by the appointed Contractor, under the supervision of the Environmental Manager.	The measures will ensure that disturbance of habitats and species is minimised, that ecological sensitivities on-site are considered throughout the construction phase and that the proposed development will be carried out in accordance with the grant of planning.	Measure is to be implemented at the outset of the construction phase and to remain in place until construction works are complete.	The Construction Manager/ Environmental Manager will be responsible for ensuring the measures are implemented accordingly for the duration of the construction phase and are to maintain appropriate records of same to ensure compliance with the CEMP and grant of planning.
Construction activity poses a risk of introduction of invasive	Measure # 9 Protection of Biodiversity / Invasives and Construction Site Biosecurity The management of biosecurity on-site and the prevention of introduction of invasive species will have regard to the following elements:				

Potential adverse effects identified	Description of the measures, details on implementation, effectiveness, monitoring				
<p>species which poses a risk to SAC/SPA.</p> <p>This may lead to alteration/fragmentation or disturbance/displacement impacts on qualifying habitats and species.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No invasives were recorded on-site; however, on a precautionary basis, a pre-construction invasive species survey should be undertaken by a suitably qualified individual to confirm this finding prior to works starting. To reduce the likelihood of invasive species being introduced to the site from other areas, prior to first accessing site, validation is to be provided by all suppliers that construction machinery and vehicles are free from any invasive species, and this is to be documented, and records retained. All vehicles, machinery and equipment/tools are to arrive to site clean and steam washed. Visual inspections are to take place. All PPE brought to site is to be clean and dry. All PPE will be visually inspected, and any attached vegetation or debris removed and disposed of appropriately. Work boots will be dipped in or scrubbed with a disinfectant solution and thoroughly dried afterwards before being used on site. Prior to being brought to site, certification is to be obtained from all suppliers that all raw materials including soil, fill, sand, gravel and any landscaping materials, where required to be imported, are free from invasive species. This is to be documented, and records retained. A schedule of regular site inspections for invasive species is to be prepared and undertaken for the duration of the construction works. In the event of an invasive species being encountered on-site (introduced to site within raw building materials or on plant/machinery etc. or otherwise), the area/equipment is to be isolated, and the advice and direction of the Environmental Manager and/or an invasive specialist is to be sought as soon as possible in relation to the management/treatment approach to be adopted. Records are to be kept of all biosecurity inspections and/or measures. 				
	<p>How will the measure contribute to avoiding/reducing the effects on the integrity of the site?</p>	<p>How will the measure be implemented and by whom?</p>	<p>Effectiveness of the measure</p>	<p>Timescale of implementation</p>	<p>Proposed monitoring scheme and reporting requirements</p>
	<p>The source and pathway to receptors will be controlled, managed and/or removed by the measure.</p>	<p>The measure will be required as part of planning approval, included in the CEMP and will be implemented by the appointed Contractor.</p>	<p>Standard best practices for biosecurity, construction works and invasive species.</p>	<p>Measures to be implemented at the outset of the construction phase and to remain in place until construction works are complete.</p>	<p>The Environmental Manager shall regularly inspect the site.</p> <p>The Environmental Manager shall monitor and ensure that all biosecurity measures are fully implemented and maintained during the construction phase and is responsible for all record-keeping pertaining to biosecurity on-site.</p> <p>Biosecurity incidents, if any, should be reported to KCC, and corrective actions will be documented in the subsequent reports.</p>

4.10.2.2 Operational Phase

Operational phase mitigation measures which aim to improve visitor management and controls and avoid or reduce ecological impacts are outlined in **Table 37** below.

Table 37. Schedule of operational phase mitigation measures

Potential adverse effects identified	Description of the measures, details on implementation, effectiveness, monitoring
<p>Potential indirect habitat alteration and species disturbance/ displacement impacts via increased visitor numbers/access/activity levels.</p> <p>The development is located close to ecologically- sensitive areas (SAC/SPA).</p>	<p>Measure #1 Protection of Biodiversity / Signage and Interpretative Facilities</p> <p><i>“Interpretation broadly refers to educational activities used in places like zoos, museums, heritage sites and national parks, to tell visitors about the significance or meaning of what they are experiencing”</i> (Moscardo et al., 2004,). It can be used as a tool to both enhance visitor experience and manage their behaviour, thus reducing disturbance of wildlife. Interpretation plays a key role in raising visitors’ awareness and understanding of the special nature of the landscape and the need for management. Signage, when implemented alongside other measures, is an effective tool for education, information dissemination and the protection of wildlife and has been demonstrated to effectively manage the negative impacts of recreation on wildlife.</p> <p>The effectiveness of education and initiatives, like appropriate, tailored signage, together with the employment of useful technologies, such as QR codes, in increasing the protection of ecologically sensitive habitats and species, and decreasing potential damage from visitor movements and behaviours, is widely documented in research literature^{26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31}. Herstine et al. (2006) concluded that signage can be an effective approach for passively managing human behaviour and tourism in natural resource settings. A study from Iceland (Marschall et al., 2017) on the impact of signage on visitor behaviour around seals showed that signage was effective, but in particular, ‘teleological’ signage which provided an explanation as well as a command was more effective.</p> <p>Tailored, uniform biodiversity signage and interpretation facilities, including on-site notice/interpretation boards, will be installed at various locations within the site for the operational phase of the project to inform and raise awareness among visitors as to the sensitivity of the surrounding area.</p> <p>Ecological signage, consisting of at least 2 No. signage structures, will be installed at appropriate and carefully considered locations within the site. The locations of the ecological signs shall be chosen carefully to be in areas of gathering and/or resting – i.e., in areas where visitors are most likely to encounter and interact with the signage. It is proposed that signage/interpretive facilities are to be installed both inside and outside the proposed building facility (i.e., within internal building spaces within the covered induction space and at appropriate locations within the wider development site). One of the signs will be installed within the proposed shared facilities building itself, and the second will be installed outside of the proposed shared facilities building. The facility design, which incorporates induction space, is ideally suited to provide for information dissemination of this nature.</p> <p>The purpose of this signage is to educate visitors on habitats and species occurring in the area, encourage visitors to be cognisant of the sensitive nature of coastal habitats to impacts such as from trampling and erosion, direct visitors away from sensitive areas and encourage appropriate behaviours and activities, such as sticking to designated walkways and boardwalks, avoiding trampling of vegetation, and disposing of all rubbish appropriately. Signage will aim to educate visitors as to the sensitivity of otter and bird species to disturbance, in particular during certain periods, such as breeding, or when foraging or roosting on-land. Signage will educate visitors on the importance of keeping dogs on leads and ‘Leave No Trace’ principles.</p> <p>Signage is to be site-focussed to the sensitivities and characteristics of the development site and surrounds (i.e., make specific reference to nearby SACs/SPAs, including the Tralee Bay and Magharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC, the Tralee Bay Complex Special SPA, the Dingle Peninsula SPA, the Magharee Islands SAC and the Magharee Islands SPA, and sensitive habitat/species groups for which they are designated and other sensitive ecological receptors, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dune habitats • reef

²⁶ <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/15/23/16251>

²⁷ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S2213078016300706>

²⁸ <https://www.failteireland.ie/FailteIreland/media/WebsiteStructure/Documents/Publications/sustainable-tourism-understanding-the-opportunity.pdf?ext=.pdf?app=true>

²⁹ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13504622.2022.2117796>

³⁰ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09669582.2022.2095392>

³¹ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1617138120301618>

Potential adverse effects identified	Description of the measures, details on implementation, effectiveness, monitoring				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • off-shore islands • chough • otter • wintering waders and waterbirds • breeding seabirds, including breeding ringed plover. <p>Signage will also include general information in relation to recreational activities, including water sports, and minimising disturbance of wildlife, including birdlife, with the primary aim of educating and raising awareness among visitors as to the impact that recreational users can inadvertently have on wildlife, in particular during sensitive periods and/or in sensitive areas, such as offshore islands. Fáilte Ireland have produced guidance on recreation and waterbirds ‘Good Practice Behaviours for Water-based Recreation Users Relating to Water Birds’. This guidance will be circulated to water sports providers and can be made available to the public via QR code access.</p> <p>Signage will also include information on managing and reducing beach litter to encourage visitors to clean up after their visit and/or clean the beach generally. Beach management systems have been installed around the country as part of the ‘#2MinuteBeachClean’ Initiative run by Clean Coasts An Taisce and supported by Fáilte Ireland.</p> <p>Signage should be clear, engaging and of sufficient size that is readily visible and prominent. Signage is to include a combination of site-specific text, imagery and mapping. QR codes can be incorporated allowing users instant access to other relevant sources of information.</p> <p>Each sign will be designed in a format that is tailored for the expected audiences – which for this site will be families with young children, and couple and singles. Research has shown that signage, which is designed specifically with its audience in mind, especially with technological interaction (e.g., the use of QR codes) significantly increases visitor use and therefore, effectiveness.</p> <p>Signage/interpretative facilities will be developed in line with the above and maintained by Fáilte Ireland and KCC over the lifetime of the project.</p> <p>Signage flexibility is required in order to keep displays fresh and engaging and in order to prioritise matters, as appropriate.</p> <p>In summary, signage and notice boards will be provided as part of the operational phase of the proposed shared beach facility. Signage will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Highlight the protected European sites which are adjacent to the proposed shared facilities site; 2. Highlight the key protected wader and winter bird species and protected habitats for which these European sites are designated; 3. Highlight how the behaviour of visitors while they are moving around the proposed shared facilities site can negatively or positively affect these species and habitats; and, 4. Be designed in a format that is tailored for the expected audiences, ideally with interactive (QR code) elements to increase visitor use. <p>See Appendix 4 for examples of signage/interpretive facilities for biodiversity, including signage which is being developed for a similar Fáilte Ireland beach facility located at Fenit, Co. Kerry, and signage which has been developed for an inland watersports facility at Ballycuggeran, Co. Clare, which abuts the Lough Derg (Shannon) SPA.</p> <p>Recreational providers who sign up to use the facility will be required to outline environmental sensitivities and responsible recreational behaviour and to draw attention to the signage and notice boards as part of their induction talks to recreational users.</p>				
	How will the measure contribute to avoiding/reducing the effects on the integrity of the site?	How will the measure be implemented and by whom?	Effectiveness of the measure	Timescale of implementation	Proposed monitoring scheme and reporting requirements
	Use of signage has been shown to increase awareness and reduce Impacts of tourism on the surrounding	The measure will be required as part of planning approval, included in the	The effectiveness of education and initiatives, like appropriate, tailored signage, together with the employment of	To be implemented during commissioning of the development	KCC will be responsible for monitoring implementation of this measure.

Potential adverse effects identified	Description of the measures, details on implementation, effectiveness, monitoring				
	environment.	CEMP and will be implemented by the appointed Contractor.	useful technologies, such as QR codes, in increasing the protection of ecologically sensitive habitats and species, and decreasing potential damage from visitor movements and behaviours, is widely documented in research literature (see above).	and to remain in-situ permanently.	

4.11 Residual Impacts

It has been concluded that, in the absence of mitigation, the proposal has potential for habitat, water quality and species disturbance/displacement impacts within a number of Natura 2000 sites.

Mitigation measures have been prescribed with regards to, in particular, the protection of marine water quality during construction, and the protection of habitats and species during operation.

With the implementation of the recommended mitigation measures, as outlined in **Section 4.10** above, it is objectively concluded that significant adverse residual impacts on the Conservation Objectives of any Natura 2000 sites, including the Tralee Bay and Maharees Peninsula, West to Cloghane SAC, the Magharee Islands SAC, the Tralee Bay Complex SPA, the Dingle Peninsula SPA and the Magharees Islands SPA, will not occur as a result of any phase of the proposal, either independently or in combination with other plans or projects.

Notwithstanding the above, it is noted that the Magharees Conservation Association (MCA) has agreed in principle to partner with Kerry County Council (KCC) on the visitor management of the proposed facilities at Magherabeg. In particular, the MCA has agreed to widen the scope of its community and public engagement to include users of the proposed facility and to monitor visitor behaviour beyond the site boundaries in the wider Maharees area to identify and to address, in conjunction with KCC and other partners, any unforeseen matters arising.

4.12 Conclusion

It has been objectively concluded, following an examination, analysis and evaluation of the relevant information, including in particular the nature of the predicted impacts from the proposed development and with the implementation of the mitigation measures proposed, that the proposed development will not adversely affect (either directly or indirectly) the integrity of any Natura 2000 site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, and there is no reasonable scientific doubt in relation to this conclusion.

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Appendix 1

Stages of Appropriate Assessment

Stage 1 - Screening

This is the first stage of the AA process and that undertaken to determine the likelihood of significant impacts as a result of a proposed project or plan. It determines need for a full Appropriate Assessment.

If it can be concluded that no significant impacts to Natura 2000 Sites are likely then the assessment can stop here. If not, it must proceed to Stage 2 for furthermore detailed assessment.

Stage 2 - Natura Impact Statement (NIS)

The second stage of the AA process assesses the impact of the proposal (either alone or in combination with other projects or plans) on the integrity of the Natura 2000 Site with respect to the conservation objectives of the site and its ecological structure and function. This is a much more detailed assessment than Stage 1. A Natura Impact Statement containing a professional scientific examination of the proposal is required and includes any mitigation measure to avoid, reduce or offset negative impacts.

If the outcome of Stage 2 is negative i.e. adverse impacts to the sites cannot be scientifically ruled out, despite mitigation, the plan or project should proceed to Stage 3 or be abandoned.

Stage 3 - Assessment of alternative solutions

A detailed assessment must be undertaken to determine whether alternative ways of achieving the objective of the project/plan exists.

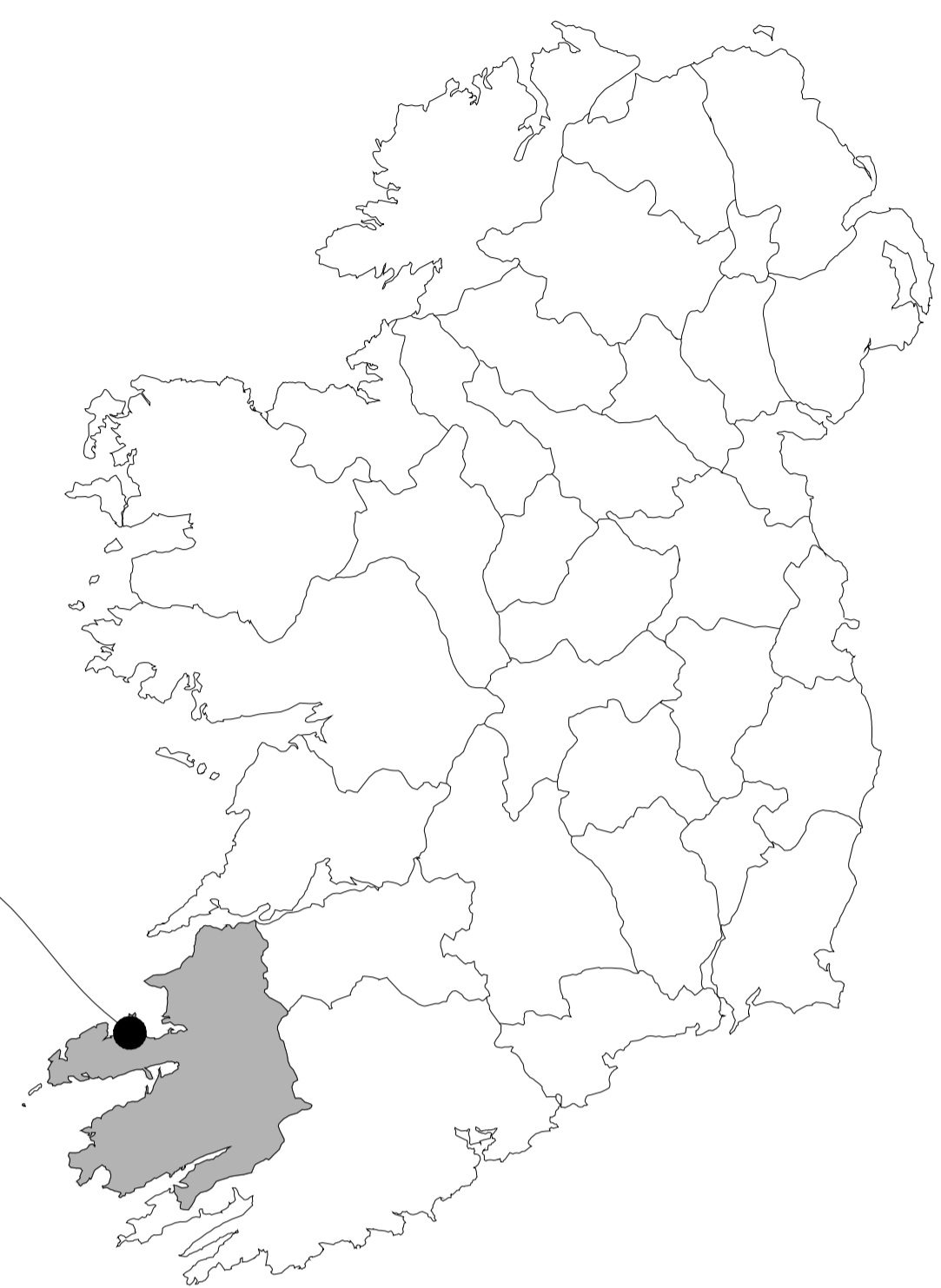
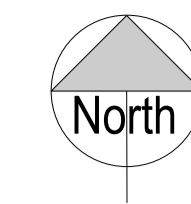
Where no alternatives exist the project/plan must proceed to Stage 4.

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 Natura 2000 Site where no less damaging solution exists.

Appendix 2

Figures



SITE LOCATION

SITE LOCATION MAP OF IRELAND

SCALE: NTS



SITE BOUNDARY LOCATION MAGHERABEG

SCALE: NTS

- NOTES:
- DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING. USE FIGURED DIMENSIONS IN ALL CASES.
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 - REPRODUCED FROM THE ORDNANCE SURVEY BY PERMISSION OF THE GOVERNMENT. LICENCE No. EN 0015717.

LEGEND:

—	OWNERSHIP OF LAND BOUNDARY
—	SAC/SPA BOUNDARY

REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY	APP
P02	21/08/25	ISSUED FOR PART 8 PLANNING	S.R.	I.B.
P01	05/10/23	ISSUED FOR PLANNING	S.S.	I.B.



PROJECT: MAGHERABEG BEACH FACILITY CENTRE FOR WATER SPORTS ACTIVITIES

CLIENT:

SITE LOCATION MAP			
DRAWN: S.S.	CHECKED: A.G.	APPROVED: I.B.	
PROJECT NUMBER: 23173	DATE: OCT '23	SCALE @ A0: 1:1000	
STATUS DESCRIPTION: FOR INFORMATION			STATUS: S2
DRAWING NUMBER: 23173 - MWP - 00 - 01 - DR - C - 0101			REV: P02



- NOTES:**
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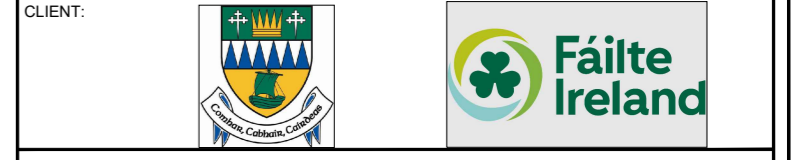
LEGEND:

	BOUNDARY LINE
	PROPOSED TIMBER FENCE
	PROPOSED ACCESSIBLE PARKING SPACES (2.4m X 6m, WITH 1.2m CLEARANCE EITHER SIDE)
	PROPOSED CONCRETE SURFACE
	PROPOSED TIMBER BOARDWALK
	BITUMEN MACADAM SURFACE
	GRASS AREA
	GRASSCRETE PAVING
	EXISTING GROUND LEVEL (mOD)
	PROPOSED GROUND LEVEL (mOD)

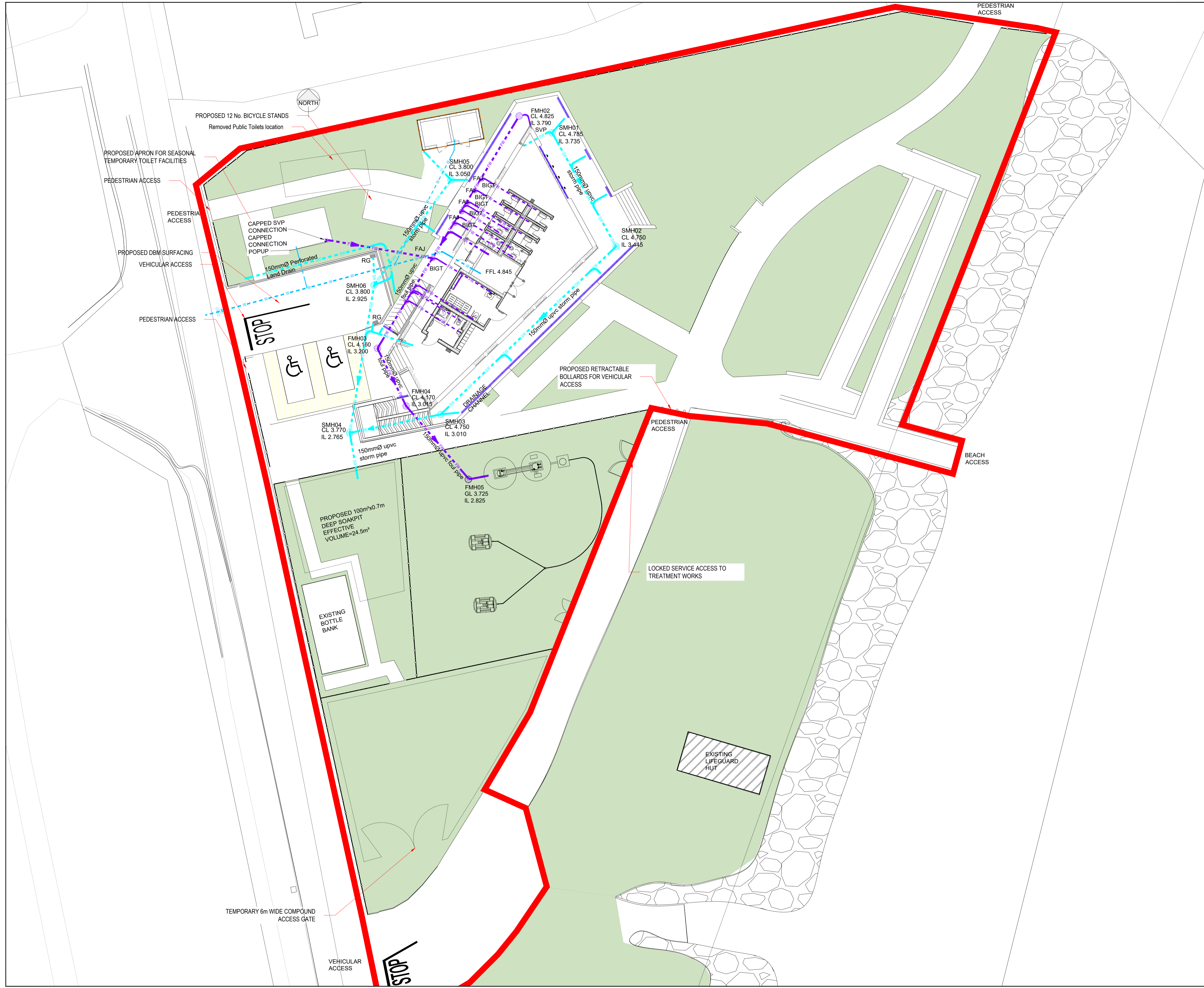
P02	21/08/25	ISSUED FOR PART 8 PLANNING	S.R.	I.B.
P01	05/10/23	ISSUED FOR PLANNING	S.S.	I.B.
REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY	APP

PROJECT: **MAGHERABEG BEACH FACILITY CENTRE FOR WATER SPORTS ACTIVITIES**

TITLE: **PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT**



DRAWN:	S.R.	CHECKED:	D.T.	APPROVED:	D.T.
PROJECT NUMBER:	23173	DATE:	OCT '23	SCALE @ A1:	1:200
STATUS DESCRIPTION:	FOR INFORMATION			STATUS:	S2
DRAWING NUMBER:	23173 - MWP - 00 - 01 - DR - C - 0100			REV:	P02



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 3. ANY DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN THESE DOCUMENTS SHALL BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE ENGINEER.
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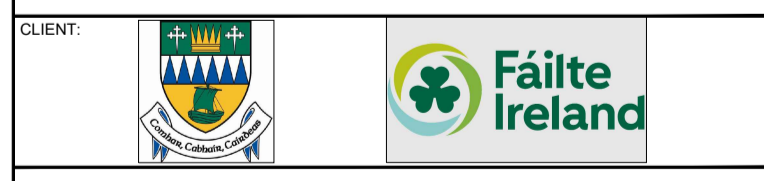
LEGEND:

	PROPOSED HDPE WATERMAIN
	PROPOSED uPVC STORM PIPE
	PROPOSED uPVC FOUL PIPE
	BIGT WITH SAND TRAPS
	DRAINAGE CHANNEL WITH SAND TRAPS
	BOUNDARY LINE

P09	21/08/25	ISSUED FOR PART 8 PLANNING	S.R.	I.B.
P08	23/05/24	ISSUED FOR PART 8 PLANNING	R.H.	I.B.
P07	17/05/24	ISSUED FOR PART 8 PLANNING	R.H.	I.B.
P06	17/05/23	ISSUED FOR PART 8 PLANNING	S.S.	I.B.
P05	29/05/23	ISSUED FOR PART 8 PLANNING	J.F.	I.B.
P04	15/05/23	ISSUED FOR INFORMATION	J.F.	I.B.
P03	08/02/23	ISSUED FOR INFORMATION	R.H.	I.B.
P02	14/12/22	ISSUED FOR INFORMATION	J.F.	I.B.
P01	12/08/22	ISSUED FOR INFORMATION	R.H.	I.B.
REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY	APP

PROJECT: MAGHERABEG BEACH FACILITY CENTRE FOR WATER SPORTS ACTIVITIES

TITLE: PROPOSED DRAINAGE LAYOUT



DRAWN:	S.R.	CHECKED:	D.T.	APPROVED:	D.T.
PROJECT NUMBER:	23173	DATE:	OCT '23	SCALE @ A1:	1:150
STATUS DESCRIPTION:	FOR INFORMATION			STATUS:	S2
DRAWING NUMBER:	23173 - MWP - 00 - 01 - DR - C - 0105			REV:	P09

Appendix 3

Granted and/or On-Going Planning Applications Within the Vicinity of The Proposed Development Site

Application No	Applicant	Location	Proposed Development	Decision	Status	Decision Date
159206	Padraig Donovan	Kilshannig Castlegregory Co Kerry	Disconnect from existing septic tank system, install new waster water treatment system and polishing filter, demolish rear kitchen and store, to construct rear two storey extension, to install window on the south west elevation and associated site works all to existing dwelling	Conditional	Finalised	30/11/2020
201014	Stephen and Aoife O'connor	Kilshannig Castlegregory Co Kerry	(A) retain a dormer style dwelling as constructed (b) retain an existing domestic garage (c) retain all of the above with revised site boundaries (d) construct an entrance onto the access road and (e) all ancillary site works	Conditional	Finalised	16/12/2020
211081	Eileen Sheehy and Mary Kerin	Kilshannig Castlegregory Co Kerry	Retain the dwelling, shed, septic tank system and all ancillary site works, all within revised site boundaries.	Conditional	Finalised	12/11/2021
211151	John and Kate Gay	Kilshannig Castlegregory Co Kerry	Construct a series of extensions and material alterations to the existing one and half storey dwelling and all ancillary site works.	Conditional	Finalised	30/11/2021
211258	Dave Mcnamara & Angela O'Kelly	Kilshannig Castlegregory Co Kerry	Retain existing dwelling house and granny flat as constructed within revised site boundaries and planning permission for (a) demolition of single storey conservatory and porch extensions to rear and 3 existing chimneys (b) conversion of existing attic to habitable accommodation comprising (1)all new roof structures (2) raising existing ridge heights by 710mm (roof on south-west to north-east axis) and 1260mm (roof on north west to south-east axis) (3) raising roof pitches from 32 to 36 degrees and (4) raising of gables accordingly (c) construction of flat roof first floor dormer extension to side (south-west) with balcony (d) construction of single storey extension to rear (e) 9 new rooflights to front (north-west)	Conditional	Finalised	01/04/2022

Application No	Applicant	Location	Proposed Development	Decision	Status	Decision Date
			roof plane, 4 new roof lights to rear (south-east) roof plane and 3 new roof lights to side (north-east) roof plane, (f) alterations to existing window and door opes to front elevation at ground floor level and new window ope to front elevation at first floor level (g) alterations to existing window opes to side (north-east) elevation at ground and first floor levels (h)demolition of existing detached domestic shed and construction of replacement detached domestic shed (i) new on-site waste water treatment system and (j) all ancillary site works.			
211307	Mark & Michelle Condon	Kilshannig Castlegregory Co Kerry	Extend and renovate an existing dwelling house, to consist of the construction of a single storey porch, raising the roof to facilitate the proposed attic accommodation, a box dormer to the rear and all associated elevational treatments, the construction of a single storey domestic garage, to decommission the existing septic tank and for the installation of a new waste water treatment system, to carry out upgrade works to the existing entrance at the public road and all ancillary site works.	Conditional	Finalised	20/01/2022
21413	Eileen Sheehy & Mary Kerin	Kilshannig Castlegregory Co Kerry	Retain minor elevational changes to the existing dwelling , and retain the dwelling, shed, septic tank system and all ancillary site works, all within revised site boundaries.	Conditional	Finalised	09/06/2021
221184	Gavin O' Connor	Kilshannig Castlegregory Co Kerry	(1) retain dwelling house and associated site works within revised boundaries, (2) for the erection of a garage/storage shed and the carrying out of associated site works and services.	Conditional	Finalised	21/07/2023
23717	Dave Mcnamara	Kilshannig Castlegregory	(A) demolition of detached single storey dwelling, (b)	Conditional	Finalised	23/11/2023

Application No	Applicant	Location	Proposed Development	Decision	Status	Decision Date
	and Angela O'Kelly	Co Kerry	construction of replacement detached storey and half dwelling, (c) demolition of existing detached domestic shed and construction of replacement detached domestic shed, (d) new on-site waste water treatment system and (e) all ancillary site works.			
2460193	Gavin O'Connor	Kilshannig Castlegregory Co. Kerry V92 YFN8	Planning Permission for the erection of a garage/storage shed and the carrying out of associated site works and services	Conditional	Finalised	26/07/2024
2460406	Patrick O'Connell	Kilshannig Castlegregory Kerry V92 HD92	Retention permission to dwelling house and sheds ancillary to the use of the dwelling house, and raised height of boundary wall to the rear of dwelling house, all within revised site boundaries at Kilshannig, Castlegregory	Conditional	Finalised	21/02/2025
179544	Huw And Emilie Roberts	Fahamore Castlegregory Co Kerry	(A) retain existing dwelling within revised site boundaries (b) planning permission for extensions to both gables of existing dwelling house to incorporate a gym on ground floor with bedroom on first floor on northwest gable extension and a sunroom on the opposite southeast gable extension (c) permission to construct a porch to rear of existing dwelling house and (d) permission to decommission existing septic tank and construct a new mechanical treatment unit and polishing filter	Conditional	Finalised	25/08/2022
211370	Maura Cronin	Fahamore Castlegregory Co Kerry	(A) retain covered barbeque area and a garden shed ancillary to the existing dwelling and (b) permission to construct a domestic shed and (c) all ancillary site works	Conditional	Finalised	03/02/2022
2132	Sinéad Fitzgerald And Alan Jacobs	Fahamore Castlegregory Co Kerry	Retain existing dwelling and tin shed on site within revised site boundaries complete with all ancillary site works associated	Conditional	Finalised	06/10/2021

Application No	Applicant	Location	Proposed Development	Decision	Status	Decision Date
			with the development.			
2135	Luke Townsend	Fahamore Castlegregory Co Kerry	Construct a single storey dwelling house and to install a mechanical wastewater treatment pumped unit, intermitent filter and polishing filter and all associaed external works, servicing and landscaping.	Conditional	Finalised	15/07/2021
21552	David Spillane	Fahamore Castlegregory Co Kerry	Construct a single storey dwelling house and to install a mechanical wastewater treatment pumped unit, intermitent filter and polishing filter and all associaed external works, servicing and landscaping.	Conditional	Finalised	20/10/2021
221094	Joe O'Connor	Fahamore Castlegregory Co Kerry	Erect a dwelling house with an effluent treatment system and carrying out associated site works	Conditional	Finalised	19/10/2022
23524	Joe O'Connor	Fahamore Castlegregory Co Kerry	Erect a dwelling house with an effluent treatment system and carrying out associated site works and services	Conditional	Finalised	29/06/2023
23911	Seamus O' Grady	Fahamore Castlegregory Co Kerry	To a) retain the domestic store/garage attached to the existing dwelling house, b) retain the location of the dwelling house and driveway as constructed within the site, c) retain elevational changes to the front door and 2 no. Windows (d) retain dwelling house within revised site boundaries and full planning permission to construct a new effluent treatment system together with all associated ancillary site works	Conditional	Finalised	25/01/2024
24432	Eithne O'Riordan	Brandon Cottage Fahamore Castlegregory Co Kerry	(A) front porch as constructed, (b) conversion of domestic garage including installation of bay window to living/sitting room, (c) extension to eastern side of dwelling as constructed, (d) car port to eastern side of dwelling as constructed, (e) alterations to elevations of dwelling and all associated site	Conditional	Finalised	01/05/2025

Application No	Applicant	Location	Proposed Development	Decision	Status	Decision Date
			works and (2) permission for (a) decommissioning of existing septic tank and soakpit and (b) installation of new domestic waste water treatment system and all associated site works.			
2460775	Rob Jones and Rose Spillane	Fahamore Castlegregory Tralee V92 X294	Retention Permission to retain an extension to an existing domestic shed and all ancillary site works.	Conditional	Finalised	03/12/2024
25177	Bairbre O'Toole	Fahamore Castlegregory Co Kerry	(A) construct an extension to front, side and rear of existing dwelling house, (b) permission to change the internal layout on the ground floor and create upper first floor layout with velux windows, (c) planning permission to construct external canopy at front and rear with all associated site works.	NA	New Application	NA
2520	Patrick Hussey	Fahamore Castlegregory Co Kerry V92 KW95	For permission to (a) construct new extension to East side of existing dwelling (b) construct new extension to West side of existing dwelling (c) create new opening in Southside of existing dwelling.	Conditional	Finalised	20/06/2025
2560340	John & Edel O'Connor	Fahamore Castlegregory Co. Kerry V92 H7X2	Retention Permission to retain minor elevational changes to the existing dwelling, an existing domestic shed, all ancillary site works and all of the above within revised site boundaries	Conditional	Finalised	18/06/2025
2560375	Maura Cronin and Conor Boden	Fahamore, Maharees, Castlegregory Co Kerry V92A0F5	Retention permission to retain (A) the change in use of the onsite shed as constructed, previously granted under previous planning reg. no. 21/1370. The current building function is ancillary to the main dwelling, in accommodating a home office and sensory room (B) all associated site works.	Conditional	Finalised	30/06/2025

Appendix 4

Example images of signage

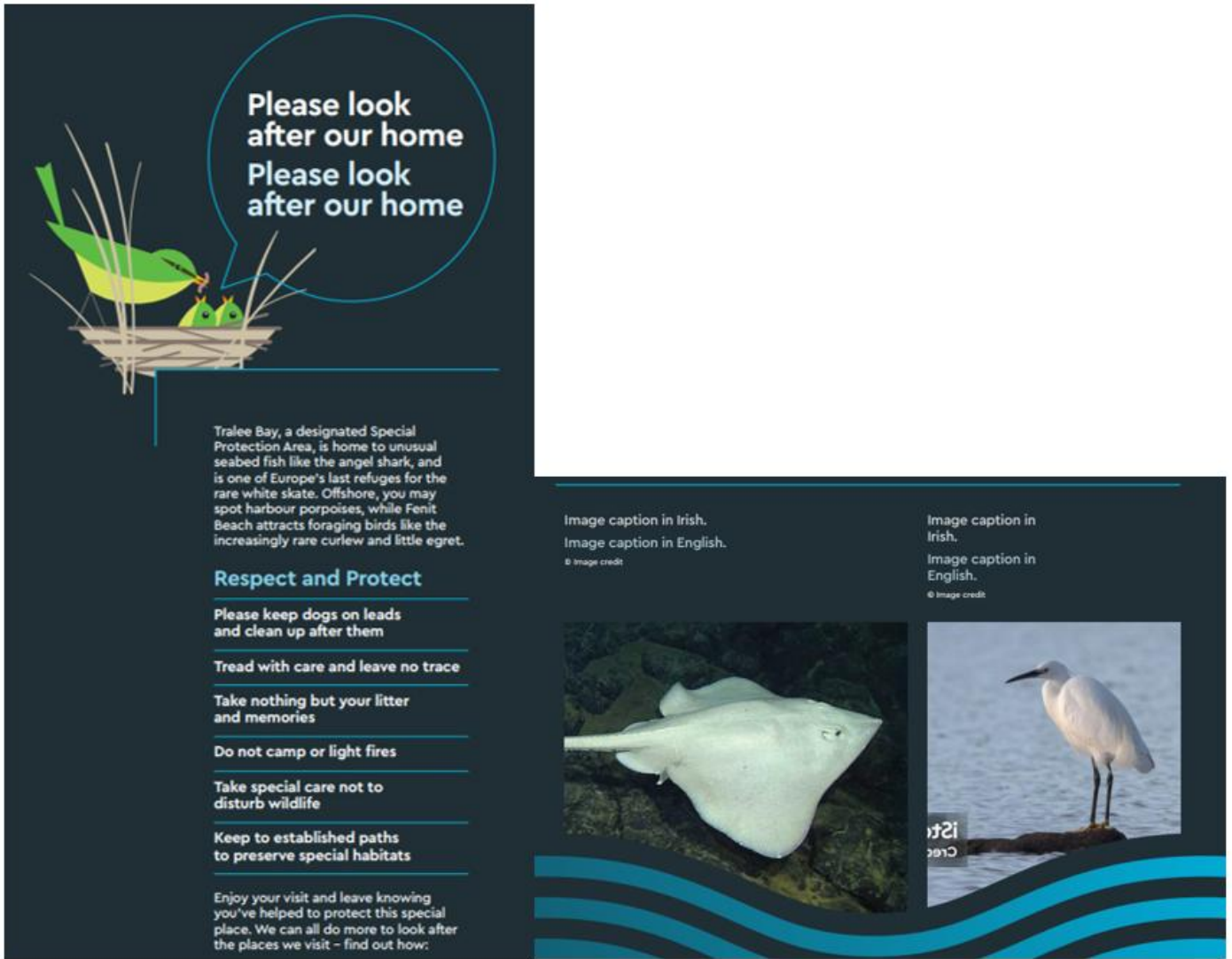


Figure 2. Example of signage being developed for the Fáilte Ireland Fenit beach facility which includes site-specific information on the ecology of the area and how visitors and users can reduce their impact on the surrounding environment. Similar signage will be developed for the proposed Maherabeg Shared Beach Facility

Please look after our home
Please look after our home

Several significant bird species like cormorant, tufted duck, goldeneye and common tern live at Ballycuggeran, which is part of the Lough Derg (Shannon) Special Protection Area (SPA).

Birds nest on the lake's islands and shallow reedbeds. Please take care while exploring not to disturb the resident birds.

Respect and Protect

- Please keep dogs on leads and clean up after them
- Tread with care and leave no trace
- Take nothing but your litter and memories
- Do not camp or light fires
- Take special care not to disturb wildlife
- Keep to established paths to preserve special habitats

Enjoy your visit and leave knowing you've helped to protect this special place. We can all do more to look after the places we visit – find out how:
leavenotraceireland.org

Stop the spread of invasive plants and animals which can harm wildlife, kill fish and block waterways.

CHECK
all gear, clothing and footwear after leaving the water for mud, aquatic animals or plant material. Remove anything you find and leave it at the site.

CLEAN
everything as soon as you can. Pay particular attention to nets, waders and areas that are damp and hard to inspect. Use hot water (at least 45°C) or a high-pressure spray when possible.

DRY
all equipment and clothing until dry for at least 48 hours as some invasive species can live for weeks in damp conditions. Disinfect all items if complete drying is not possible.

Figure 3. Example of Fáilte Ireland environmental signage developed for an inland Watersports facility at Ballycuggeran, Co. Clare located adjacent to a Special Protection Area. Source: Ballycuggeran PFG Facility signage design



Figure 4. Example of good practice signage for nature conservation. Source: Stonehouse Designs

NORTH AND WEST WALES MARINE CODE IN CARDIGAN BAY

**STAY AT LEAST
100 METRES AWAY**

<p>Look out for wildlife</p> <p>Marine mammals and birds at sea and seals and seabirds on the shore/cliffs. If you stop to watch, enjoy their company for a maximum of 10 minutes.</p>	<p>Keep your distance</p> <p>At least 100 metres away from the seabird colonies, rafting seabirds and marine mammals. Do not enter sea caves, or areas where seals or seabirds are present.</p>	<p>Reduce speed & sound</p> <p>Within 300 metres proceed at 'no wake' speed and at no more than 5 knots.</p>	<p>Be aware</p> <p>If an animal's behaviour changes in response to your presence, move away quietly.</p>
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Figure 5. Another example of signage (graphics and text) used to reduce impacts on biodiversity due to recreational activity in sensitive areas (Cardigan Bay SAC in the United Kingdom). Source: [Cardigan-Bay-Marine-Code.pdf](#)