

		<i>sediment control measures will be undertaken throughout the construction phase. Discharge from any vehicle wheel wash areas is to be directed to on-site settlement ponds.</i> ○ <i>On-site settlement ponds are to include geotextile liners and ripped inlets and outlets to prevent scour and erosion.</i> ○ <i>Concrete batching will take place off site, wash down and wash out of concrete trucks will take place off site and any excess concrete is not to be disposed on site</i> ○ <i>Surface water discharge points during the construction phase are to be agreed with Louth County Council's Environment Section prior to commencing works on site</i> ● <i>Water Pumped from Excavations</i> ○ <i>Rainwater pumped from excavations is to be directed to on-site settlement ponds.</i> ○ <i>Groundwater pumped from excavations is to be directed to on-site settlement ponds.</i> ○ <i>On-site settlement ponds are to include geotextile liners and ripped inlets and outlets to prevent scour and erosion. Monitoring of same will be undertaken.</i> ○ <i>Surface water discharge points during the construction phase are to be agreed with Louth County Council's Environment Section prior to commencing works on site.</i> ● <i>Construction Traffic</i> ○ <i>Earthworks plant and vehicles delivering construction materials to site will be confined to predetermined haul routes around the site.</i> ○ <i>Vehicle wheel wash facilities will be installed in the vicinity of any site entrances and road sweeping implemented as necessary in order to maintain the road network in the immediate vicinity of the site.</i> ○ <i>Dust suppression measures (e.g. dampening down) will be implemented as necessary during dry periods.</i> ○ <i>A construction traffic management plan will be prepared by the contractor prior to any works commencing on site.</i> ● <i>Accidental Spills and Leaks</i> ○ <i>All oils, fuels, paints and other chemicals shall be stored in a secure bunded hardstand area.</i> ○ <i>Refuelling and servicing of construction machinery shall take place in a designated hardstand area which is also remote from any surface water inlets (when not possible to carry out such activities off site).</i> ○ <i>A response procedure shall be put in place to deal with any accidental pollution events and spillage kits shall be available and construction staff will be familiar with the emergency procedures and use of the equipment.</i> ○ <i>Monitoring of all fuel / oil storage areas will be undertaken, and spill kits will be available on site.</i> ● <i>Ground Conditions</i>
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		○ Any potentially contaminated soil encountered during the works will be assessed and if appropriate the material disposed of at a licensed waste facility, under strict controls agreed with Louth County Council. ○ Recommendations have been made that an intrusive investigation be carried out to confirm the ground model and to further understand the Geo-hazards potentially present on site. ○ Geo-environmental sampling and testing will be carried out during the geotechnical Ground Investigations (GI) and monitoring of the groundwater to determine the general flow direction of the groundwater beneath the site. ○ Investigative locations will be located close to the old disused railway line to establish of the soils here have any impact on the condition of the soils or groundwater in this area. ○ Environmental samples to be taken and testing performed to characterise material requiring disposal off site. ○ Ground workers and other staff potentially at risk will be made aware of potential site hazards via site safety induction procedures. ○ Health and Safety risk assessment will be undertaken, and management measures implemented via appropriate method statements. Direct contact between any potentially contaminated soils and skin or personal clothing will be avoided by the use of protective clothing: gloves, overalls, goggles etc. ○ Site specific ground investigations will be carried out to determine if there are any other potential risks which should be considered. ○ Stockpiles of earthwork materials will be stored at least 10m from any watercourses. ○ Water-proof construction will be used for structures beneath the water table. Suitable free-draining material will be incorporated in the backfill of retaining walls, arranged to allow the existing groundwater regime to be effectively re-established. ○ Control measures regarding preventing pollution via site run off are provided in Section 5.9.' ● 'Erosion and Sediment Control ○ Measures shall be implemented to capture and treat sediment laden surface water runoff (e.g. sediment retention ponds, surface water inlet protection, fencing and signage around specific exclusion zones and earth bunding adjacent to open drainage ditches). ○ Surface water runoff from areas stripped of topsoil and rainwater collected in excavations shall be managed locally and measures will be implemented to capture and treat sediment laden runoff prior to discharge of surface water at a controlled rate. ○ Implementation of measures to be reviewed and mitigated against as required during construction stage. ○ Surface water discharge points during the construction phase are to be agreed with Louth County Council's Environment Section prior to commencing works on site.
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	○ Weather conditions and seasonal weather variations shall also be taken account of when planning stripping of topsoil and excavations, with an objective of minimizing soil erosion.' ● Accidental Spills and Leaks ○ All oils, fuels, paints and other chemicals will be stored in a secure bunded hardstand area. ○ Refuelling and servicing of construction machinery shall take place in a designated hardstand area which is also remote from any surface water inlets (when not possible to carry out such activities off site). ○ Discharge from any vehicle wheel wash areas is to be managed locally and reviewed at construction. ○ A response procedure shall be put in place to deal with any accidental pollution events and spillage kits shall be available and construction staff will be familiar with the emergency procedures and use of the equipment. ● Concrete ○ Concrete batching will take place off site, wash down and wash out of concrete trucks will take place off site and any excess concrete is not to be disposed on site. ○ Pumped concrete will be monitored to ensure there is no accidental discharge. ○ Mixer washings are not to be discharged into surface water drains.' ● 'Water – Water Supply, Drainage & Utilities ○ 'Surface water runoff from areas stripped of topsoil and surface water collected in excavations shall be managed locally where measures will be implemented to capture and treat sediment laden runoff prior to discharge of surface water at a controlled rate. ○ Foul drainage discharge from the construction compound will be tankered off site to a licensed facility until a connection to the public foul drainage network has been established.' ● 'Biodiversity ○ High value hedgerows/treelines will be retained as per tree felling plan. ○ The removal of vegetation will not take place between 1st March and 31st August as per section 40 of the Wildlife Act. Where this cannot be avoided, vegetation must first be inspected by a suitably qualified ecologist for signs of nesting. Where no nesting is observed, vegetation can be removed within 48 hours. Where nesting is underway, vegetation cannot be removed unless under licence from the NPWS. ○ The badger sett located on site, and the associated 30m exclusion zone is to be clearly marked out on site and all construction activity is to keep clear of this location, ○ To avoid damage to trees the developer will follow the guidance from the National Road's Authority in establishing root protection areas (RPA) along hedgerows to be retained.
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		○ Nocturnal mammals are impacted by lighting. Therefore, it is important that temporary lighting installed within the proposed development site is completed with sensitivity for local wildlife while still providing the necessary lighting for human usage. The following principals will be followed: 1. Temporary lighting design should be flexible and be able to fully take into account the presence of protected species if present on site. Therefore, appropriate lighting, as detailed below, should be used within a proposed development and adjacent areas with more sensitive lighting regimes deployed in wildlife sensitive areas. 2. Dark buffer zones can be used as a good way to separate habitats or features from lighting by forming a dark perimeter around them. This could be used for habitat features noted as foraging areas for bats if present on site. 3. Buffer zones can be used to protect Dark buffer zones and rely on ensuring light levels (levels of illuminance measured in lux) within a certain distance of a feature do not exceed certain defined limits. The buffer zone can be further subdivided into zones of increasing illuminance limit radiating away from the feature or habitat that requires to be protected. 4. Luminaire design is extremely important to achieve an appropriate lighting regime. - Luminaires come in a myriad of different styles, applications and specifications which a lighting professional can help to select. The following should be considered when choosing luminaires. This is taken from the most recent BCT Lighting Guidelines (BCT, 2018). 1) All luminaires used should lack UV/IR elements to reduce impact. 2) LED luminaires should be used due to the fact that they are highly directional, lower intensity, good colour rendition and dimming capability. 3) A warm white spectrum (<2700 Kelvins is recommended to reduce the blue light component of the LED spectrum). 4) Luminaires should feature peak wavelengths higher than 550nm to avoid the component of light most disturbing to bats. 5) The use of specialist bollard or low-level downward directional luminaires should be considered in bat sensitive areas to retain darkness above. 6) Column heights should be carefully considered to minimise light spill. The shortest column height allowed should be used where possible. 7) Only luminaires with an upward light ratio of 0% and with good optical control should be used. 8) Luminaires should always be mounted on the horizontal, i.e. no upward tilt. 9) Any external security lighting should be set on motion-sensors and short (1min) timers. 10) As a last resort, accessories such as baffles, hoods or louvres can be used to reduce light spill and direct it only to where it is needed.
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		○ All wastes segregated at source where possible. ○ Waste bins, containers, skip containers and storage areas will be clearly labelled with waste types which they should contain including photographs as appropriate. ○ The site will be maintained to prevent litter and regular picking will take place throughout the site. ○ Materials will be ordered on a 'just-in-time' basis to prevent over supply and site congestion (i.e. to minimise materials stored on site). ○ Materials will be correctly stored and handled to minimise the generation of damaged materials ○ All waste material will be correctly stored in skips or other suitable receptacles in a designated area of the site. ○ Left over materials (e.g. timber off-cuts) shall be re-used on site where possible. ○ All waste leaving the site will be recycled, recovered, or reused where possible. ○ All waste leaving the site will be transported by suitable permitted contractors and taken to suitably registered, permitted, or licensed facilities. ○ All waste leaving the site will be recorded and copies of relevant documentation maintained.' ● 'Noise and Vibration ○ No plant used on site will be permitted to cause an ongoing public nuisance due to noise; ○ The best means practicable, including proper maintenance of plant, will be employed to minimise the noise produced by on site operations; ○ All vehicles and mechanical plant will be fitted with effective exhaust silencers and maintained in good working order for the duration of the contract; ○ All site access roads will be kept even to mitigate the potential for noise and vibration from lorries. ○ Compressors will be attenuated models fitted with properly lined and sealed acoustic covers which will be kept closed whenever the machines are in use and all ancillary pneumatic tools shall be fitted with suitable silencers; ○ Machinery that is used intermittently will be shut down or throttled back to a minimum during periods when not in use; ○ Noise and vibration during the construction phase will be controlled with reference to the best practice control measures within BS 5228 (2009 +A1 2014) Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites Parts 1 and 2. The contractor will ensure that all best practice noise and vibration control methods will be used as necessary in order to ensure impacts to nearby residential noise sensitive locations are not significant. This will be particularly important during site preparation works and piling works. ○ Limiting the hours during which site activities which are likely to create high levels of noise or vibration are permitted; ○ Monitoring levels of noise and vibration during critical periods and at sensitive locations;
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		○ Establishing channels of communication between the contractor/ developer, Louth County Council and residents so that receptors are aware of the likely duration of activities likely to generate higher noise or vibration, and; ○ The Contractor appointing a Site Environmental Manager (SEM) responsible for matters relating to noise and vibration.' ● 'Air, Dust & Climate Factors ○ During working hours, dust control methods shall be monitored as appropriate, depending on the prevailing meteorological conditions; ○ The name and contact details of a person to contact regarding air quality and dust issues shall be displayed on the site boundary, this notice board should also include head/regional office contact details; ○ Community engagement shall be undertaken before works commence on site explaining the nature and duration of the works to local residents and businesses; ○ A complaints register shall be kept on site detailing all telephone calls and letters of complaint received in connection with construction activities, together with details of any remedial actions carried out. ○ The contractor must demonstrate full compliance with the dust control conditions; ○ At all times the procedures put in place are to be strictly monitored and assessed; ○ Dust minimisation measures shall be reviewed at regular intervals during the works to ensure the effectiveness of the procedures in place and to maintain the goal of minimisation of dust through the use of best practice and procedures. In the event of dust nuisance occurring outside the site boundary, site activities will be reviewed, and satisfactory procedures implemented to rectify the problem; ○ A speed restriction of 20 km/hr shall be applied as an effective control measure for dust for on-site vehicles using unpaved haul roads; ○ Construction access to the site will be directly from the Castletown Road. Refer to DBFL drawing 240102-X-04-Z00-DTM-DR-DBFL-CE-1200 for further information; ○ Browsers or suitable watering equipment will be available during periods of dry weather throughout the construction period; ○ Hard surface roads will be swept to remove mud and aggregate materials from their surface while any un-surfaced roads will be restricted to essential site traffic; ○ Furthermore, any road that has the potential to give rise to fugitive dust must be regularly watered, as appropriate, during dry and/or windy conditions; ○ During periods of very high winds (gales), construction activities likely to generate significant dust emissions should be postponed until the gale has subsided;
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		○ Overburden material will be protected from exposure to wind by storing the material in sheltered regions of the site. Where possible storage piles should be located downwind of sensitive receptors; ○ Where feasible, hoarding will be erected around site boundaries. This will have the benefit of reducing the impact of larger particles on nearby sensitive receptors; ○ Material handling systems and site stockpiling of materials will be designed and laid out to minimise exposure to wind. Water misting or sprays will be used as required if particularly dusty activities such as rock blasting or earthworks are necessary during dry or windy periods; and ○ Before entrance onto public roads, trucks will be adequately inspected to ensure there is no potential for dust emissions and will be cleaned as necessary; ○ It is recommended that dust deposition monitoring be put in place to ensure dust management measures are adequately controlling emissions. Dust monitoring should be conducted using the Bergerhoff method in accordance with the requirements of the German Standard VDI 2119; ○ In the event of dust nuisance occurring outside the site boundary, movements of materials likely to raise dust will be curtailed and satisfactory procedures implemented to rectify the problem before the resumption of construction operations; ○ Vehicles delivering or collecting material with potential for dust emissions shall be enclosed or covered with tarpaulin at all times when practicable to restrict the escape of dust; ○ At the main site traffic exit, a wheel wash facility will be installed. All trucks leaving the site must pass through the wheel wash. In addition, public roads outside the site shall be regularly inspected for cleanliness, as a minimum on a daily basis, and cleaned as necessary; Due to the short, indirect hydrological pathway to the Dundalk Bay SAC and Dundalk Bay SPA, in order to maintain the integrity of the European Site, the following additional mitigation measures shall be implemented: ● An ecologist will be appointed prior to enabling works commencing on site ● All works methodologies will have prior approval of a project ecologist. ● Local silt traps established throughout site. ● Mitigation measures on site include dust control, stockpiling away from drains. ● Stockpiling of loose materials will be kept to a minimum of 20m from drains. ● Stockpiles and runoff areas following clearance will have suitable barriers to prevent runoff of fines into the drainage system. ● Stockpiles and runoff areas following clearance will have suitable barriers to prevent runoff of fines into the drainage system. ● Fuel, oil and chemical storage will be sited within a bunded area. The bund will be at least 50m away from drains, ditches, excavations and other locations where it may cause pollution.
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RECEIVED: 27/11/2025		• Bunds will be kept clean and spills within the bund area will be cleaned immediately to prevent groundwater contamination. Any water-filled excavations, including the attenuation tank during construction, that require pumping will not directly discharge to the drainage, without interception. Prior to discharge of water from excavations adequate filtration will be provided to ensure no deterioration of water quality. • Bulk fuel storage areas will be adequately protected with the provision of appropriate bunding to provide a minimum storage volume of 110% of total fuel storage capacity with the provision of a spill kit and the use of drip trays. Fuel storage must be sited 50m away from any watercourse or on-site services as far as possible and have a designated area. • During the construction works silt traps will be put in place in the vicinity of all runoff channels to prevent sediment entering the surface water network and nearby watercourse/SAC. • On-site inspections to be carried out by project ecologist. • Maintenance of any drainage structures (e.g. de-silting operations) must not result in the release of contaminated water to the surface water network. • No entry of solids to the drainage network during the connection of pipework. • Full compliance with the Water Pollution Acts will be carried out on site. • Sufficient onsite cleaning of vehicles prior to leaving the site and on nearby roads, will be carried out, particularly during groundworks. • The Site Manager will be responsible for the pollution prevention programme and will ensure that at least daily checks are carried out to ensure compliance. A record of these checks will be maintained. • The site compound will include a dedicated bund for the storage of dangerous substances including fuels, oils etc. Refuelling of vehicles/machinery will only be carried out within the bunded area. • A project ecologist will be appointed and consulted in relation to all onsite drainage during construction works. Consultation with the project ecologist will not involve the formulation of new mitigation measures for the purposes of protecting any European Site, and relate only to the implementation of those mitigation measures already stated in the submission or the formulation of mitigation for other purposes. • Dewatering of excavations may be necessary. Appropriate monitoring of groundwater levels during site works will be undertaken. Standard construction phase filtering of surface water for suspended solids will be carried out. Unfiltered surface water discharges or runoff are not permitted from the site into the public surface water network during the works. • Concrete trucks, cement mixers or drums/bins are only permitted to wash out in designated wash out area greater than 50m from sensitive receptors including drains and drainage ditches.
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RECEIVED: 27/11/2025		• Ecological supervision will be required during excavation and enabling works stages. Silt interception measures will need to be in place to ensure that the drainage networks are not impacted during works and in particular during the site clearance. Operational Mitigation • A project ecologist will be appointed to oversee completion of all landscape and drainage works. • The project ecologist will inspect all SuDs measures to ensure they have been adequately implemented, namely bioretention rain gardens, attenuation tank, porous asphalt and swale. • Petrochemical interception will be inspected by the project ecologist to ensure compliance with Water Pollution Acts.
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Adverse Effects on the conservation objectives of European sites likely to occur from the project (post mitigation)

A robust series of standard construction and operational mitigation measures are proposed. These would ensure that surface water entering the Cunnicar and Castletown Streams, Castletown Estuary and Dundalk Bay is clean and uncontaminated. However, given the proximity of numerous sensitive receptors and a watercourse leading to the European sites, it should be noted that the early consultation with IFI and the implementation of ecological supervision on site at initial enabling works is seen as an important element to the project, particularly in relation to the implementation of surface water runoff mitigation.

With the successful implementation of standard mitigation measures to prevent surface water impacts on the adjacent streams and the treatment of foul wastewater at Dundalk WwTP, no significant impacts on the downstream European site are foreseen from the construction or operation of the proposed project. Residual impacts of the proposed project will be localised to the immediate vicinity of the proposed works.

The construction and operational mitigation proposed for the development satisfactorily addresses potential impacts on European sites through the application of the standard construction and operational phase controls as outlined above. In particular, mitigation measures to ensure compliance with Water Pollution Acts and prevent silt and pollution entering the drainage ditch will satisfactorily address the potential impacts on downstream European sites. The mitigation measures outlined are considered best practice and will prevent significant effects on the watercourses and downstream European sites. No significant adverse impacts on the conservation objectives of European sites are likely following the implementation of the mitigation measures outlined above.

It is essential that these measures outlined are complied with, to ensure that the proposed development does not have 'downstream' environmental impacts. These measures are to protect the groundwater/surface water, which are the primary likely vectors of any potential impacts from the site, and ensure that it is not impacted during construction and /or operational phases of the proposed development.

In-combination Effects

The proposed development site is located in a suburban environment. Construction on this site will create localised light, dust and noise disturbance with potential for downstream impacts. Projects considered for in combination effects are as follows:

Table 8. In-combination effects considered

Ref. No.	Address	Proposal
211173	Mount Avenue, Dundalk, Co. Louth	Part 8 - Notice is hereby given that Louth County Council proposes to carry out the development of 93 no. residential units and all associated/ancillary works on lands at Mount Avenue, Dundalk - total area of site 2.83 hectares. The development comprises the following: 3 no. 3 bed single storey dwellings (bungalows); 2 no. 2 bed single storey dwellings (bungalows); 21 no. 2 bed two storey dwellings; 26 no. 3 bed two storey dwellings; 9 no. 4 bed two storey dwellings; Duplexes: 4 no. 2 bed ground floor apartments with 4 no. 3 bed two storey Maisonette units over; Duplexes: 12 no. 3 bed two storey Maisonette units with 12 no. 1 bed apartments over; All associated road works, boundaries, utilities & services, landscaping and ancillary site development works.
2360190	Hearthfield , Farndreg Mount Avenue Headford , Dundalk Co. Louth	Planning permission for revisions to 25 no. dwellings that form part of the permitted residential development to be known as "Hearthfield" granted under P.A. Ref. No. 18/943 (An Bord Pleanála Ref. No. 303628-19) at Farndreg, Mount Avenue, Headford, Dundalk, Co. Louth.

		The development will consist of raising the finished floor levels of the 25 no. dwellings (No.'s 1-11; 36 -45 and 47-50 of the permitted development). The proposed development also provides for amendments to elevations and roof profile of a two-storey terraced block along the western site boundary encompassing House No.'s 47-50. The development also provides for all associated site development works including landscaping and boundary treatments.
23103	Clan Na Gael GFC Sports Ground , Ard Easmuinn Road , Dundalk Co Louth	Permission for the demolition of an existing single storey gym and a storage type building, the construction of a new single storey building with 4 number changing rooms, ancillary toilet and shower facilities, gymnasium, coffee dock, photovoltaic panels to the southern and western roof facades inclusive of all associated site development works
22458	Castletown Road , Dundalk , Co Louth	Permission for the construction of a 3 storey apartment block consisting of 4 no. 2 bedroom ground floor apartments and 4 no. 3 bedroom duplex apartments; a separate 2 storey apartment block consisting of 2 no. 2 bedroom ground floor apartments with 2 no. 2 bedroom first floor apartments above and a final 3 storey apartment block consisting of 2 no. 2 bedroom ground floor apartments and 2 no. 3 bedroom duplex apartments all with associated site development works to include for 21 no. car parking spaces, bin storage, public and communal open space which are to service the proposed developments with private amenity space to service individual apartments. *Significant Further Information received on 03/05/2023 with revised development description as follows; development will consist of the construction of a 3 storey apartment block consisting of 4no. 2-bedroom ground floor apartments and 4 no. 3-bedroom duplex apartments and a separate 2 storey apartment block consisting of 2 no. 2-bedroom ground floor apartments with 2 no. 2-bedroom first floor apartment above all with associated site development works to include for 12 no. car parking spaces, Bin Storage, public and communal open space which are to service the proposed developments with private amenity spaces to service individual apartments.
21783	Lands at Lisdoon Townland, Dundalk, Co Louth	Permission for development that will consist of the completion of 34 units comprising 22 no. 3 bedroom terrace, 4 no. 2 bedroom terrace, 4 no. 1 bedroom apartments and 4 no. 3 bedroom duplex's and all associates site development and drainage works
23103	Dundalk North Business Park , Armagh Road , Dundalk	Permission is sought by Urban Green Private Ltd. acting for TrippierLtd to vary Condition 3 of the permission granted on 19/12/22 (Reg. Ref 22/524) for a warehouse development of 37,289 sq.m at Dundalk North BusinessPark, Armagh Road, Dundalk, County Louth. Condition 3 limited the hours of operation to 0800 hr - 1800hrs Monday - Saturday. This application seekds to vary this condition such that hours of operation of the facility should be unrestricted.

The proposed development in combination with other plans or projects is unlikely to have a significant effect on the European sites.

Conclusion

In a strict application of the precautionary principle, it has been concluded that significant effects on the Dundalk Bay SAC and Dundalk Bay SPA are likely from the proposed works in the absence of standard control or mitigation measures, primarily as a result of a short in-direct hydrological connection via the surface water strategy which utilises the streams on the periphery of the site which ultimately discharge to the estuarine environment of Castletown Estuary. There is the potential for downstream impacts from the project during site clearance, enabling, construction, landscaping and drainage works. For this reason, a NIS was carried out to assess whether the proposed project, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, in view of best scientific knowledge and in view of the sites conservation objectives, will adversely affect the integrity of the European Site. All other European sites were screened out at initial screening.

We conclude that we have demonstrated on the basis of the best scientific information available which we consider is adequate to make this conclusion that the project alone or in combination with other plans or projects will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Dundalk Bay SAC and Dundalk Bay SPA in view of their conservation objectives. No in combination effects are foreseen. In combination effects have been excluded.

Construction on this site will create localised light and noise disturbance that will not impact on Natura 2000 sites. Mitigation measures must be in place to ensure there are no significant impacts on the surface water that leads to Castletown Estuary and Dundalk Bay, and their associated conservation sites.

The implementation of standard construction and operational phase mitigation measures including the measures outlined above and in the IFI Guidelines on protection of fisheries during construction works, which will be followed, will be sufficient to prevent adverse effects on the integrity of European sites.

Following the implementation of the mitigation measures outlined, the construction and operation of this development would not be deemed to have a significant impact on the Cunnigar Stream, Castletown Stream and Castletown Estuary which are seen as the indirect pathways to Dundalk Bay SAC and Dundalk Bay SPA. No significant negative effects are likely on European sites, alone in combination with other plans and projects based on the implementation of mitigation measures.

This report presents a Stage 1 Appropriate Assessment Screening and Stage 2 NIS for the Proposed Development, outlining the information required for the competent authority to screen for appropriate assessment and to determine whether or not the Proposed Development, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, in view of best scientific knowledge, is likely to have a significant effect on any European or European site.

On the basis of the content of this report, the competent authority is enabled to conduct an Appropriate Assessment and consider whether, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, in view of best scientific knowledge and in view of the sites conservation objectives, will adversely affect the integrity of the European site.

No significant effects are likely on European sites, their qualifying interests or conservation objectives. The proposed project will not will adversely affect the integrity of European sites.

Data used for the AA Screening/NIS Assessment

NPWS site synopses and Conservation objectives of sites within 15km were examined. No European sites beyond 15km has a direct pathway to the proposed development site. The most recent SAC and SPA boundary shapefiles were downloaded and overlaid on ESRI terrain maps and satellite imagery. Numerous site visits were carried out, which included bat, flora, wintering bird, mammal and breeding bird surveys, to determine if the site contained possible threats to any Natura 2000 sites or Natura 2000 species or habitats.

References

The following references were used in the preparation of this AA screening report:

1. Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government Circular NPW 1/10 and PSSP 2/10 on Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive – Guidance for Planning Authorities March 2010.
2. Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government 2009;
http://www.npws.ie/publications/archive/NPWS_2009_AA_Guidance.pdf
3. Managing Natura 2000 Sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, European Commission 2000;
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/Natura2000/management/docs/art6/provision_of_art6_en.pdf
4. Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC;
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/Natura2000management/docs/art6/Natura_2000_assess_en.pdf
5. Guidance document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitats Directive' 92/43/EEC – Clarification of the concepts of: alternative solutions, imperative reasons of overriding public interest, compensatory measures, overall coherence, opinion of the commission;
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/Natura2000/management/docs/art6/guidance_art6_4_en.pdf
6. Guidance document on the implementation of the birds and habitats directive in estuaries and coastal zones with particular attention to port development and dredging;
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/Natura2000/management/docs/guidance_doc.pdf
7. The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland.
http://www.npws.ie/publications/euconservationstatus/NPWS_2007_Conservation_Status_Report.pdf
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Wintering Bird Assessment at Mount Avenue, Dundalk, Co. Louth



3rd October 2025

Prepared by: Frank Spellman of Altemar Ltd.

On behalf of: Grandspect Limited

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Summary

Structure/features:

The survey area consists primarily of arable crop fields (exposed during winter) with marginal areas of grassland, hedgerows, treelines, some scrub, and adjacent watercourses to the south and north.

Location:

Mount Avenue, Dundalk, Co. Louth

Bird species present:

Blackbird, black-headed gull, blue tit, bullfinch, buzzard, chaffinch, chiffchaff, common gull, dunnock, feral pigeon, fieldfare, goldcrest, goldfinch, great tit, greenfinch, grey wagtail, herring gull, hooded crow, jackdaw, lapwing, linnet, long-tailed tit, magpie, mallard, meadow pipit, oystercatcher, pheasant, pied wagtail, raven, redwing, robin, rook, siskin, snipe, song thrush, starling, woodpigeon, wren.

Proposed work:

Residential development.

Surveys by:

Frank Spellman.

Survey dates:

11th/23rd October 2024. 7th/15th November 2024, 4th/11th December 2024, 9th/27th January 2025, 10th February 2025, 6th/14th/19th March 2025.

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Figure 2. Site outline.

Competency of assessor

Since its inception in 2001, Altamar has been delivering ecological and environmental services to a broad range of clients. Operational areas include: residential; infrastructural; renewable; oil & gas; private industry; Local Authorities; EC projects; and, State/semi-State Departments.

Bryan Deegan (MCIEEM, BSc Applied Marine Biology, MSc Environmental Science)

Bryan Deegan, the managing director of Altamar, is an Environmental Scientist and Marine Biologist with over 30 years' experience working in Irish terrestrial and aquatic environments, providing services to the State, Semi-State and industry. He is currently lead project ecologist for Project Pembroke and was contracted to Inland Fisheries Ireland as the sole "External Expert" to environmentally assess internal and external projects. He is also chair of an internal IFI working group on environmental assessment. Bryan Deegan (MCIEEM) holds a MSc in Environmental Science, BSc (Hons.) in Applied Marine Biology, NCEA National Diploma in Applied Aquatic Science and a NCEA National Certificate in Science (Aquaculture).

Frank Spellman (BSc Zoology, MSc Zoology).

This report and associated surveys have been carried out by Frank Spellman. Frank has extensive experience in carrying out a wide range of fauna surveys as both a sub-contractor and employee for environmental consultancies and organisations in Ireland and the US. These include both roving and static acoustic bat surveys, terrestrial non-avian mammal surveys, breeding/wintering bird surveys, and freshwater ecology surveys. Frank has been lead ornithologist on numerous development projects within Ireland carrying out full wintering bird and breeding bird assessments.

Legislative context

The Wildlife Act 1976 protects wild birds in Ireland. Based on this legislation it is an offence to wilfully interfere with or destroy wild birds and their nests and eggs (other than the wild species mentioned in the Third Schedule of this Act). Under this legislation it is an offence for any person who *"wilfully takes or removes the eggs or nest of a protected wild bird otherwise than under and in accordance with such a licence, wilfully destroys, injures or mutilates the eggs or nest of a protected wild bird, wilfully disturbs a protected wild bird on or near a nest containing eggs or unflown young."*

Habitats Directive- Council Directive 92/43/EEC 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora has been transposed into Irish Law, including, via, *inter alia*, the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended).

Council Directive 2009/147/EC 2010 on the conservation of wild birds provides for the conservation of wild birds by, among other things, classifying important ornithological sites as Special Protection Areas. The Directive relates to the conservation of all species of naturally occurring birds in the wild state, their eggs, nests and habitats in the European territory of the Member States. The Directive prohibits in particular:

- deliberate killing or capture by any method;
- deliberate destruction of, or damage to, their nests and eggs or removal of their nests;
- taking their eggs in the wild and keeping these eggs even if empty;
- deliberate disturbance of these birds particularly during the period of breeding and rearing, in so far as disturbance would be significant having regard to the objectives of this Directive;
- keeping birds of species the hunting and capture of which is prohibited.

Under the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended), notwithstanding any consent, statutory or otherwise, given to a person by a public authority or held by a person, except in accordance with a licence granted by the Minister under Regulation 54, a person who in respect of the species referred to in Part 1 of the First Schedule:

- deliberately captures or kills any specimen of these species in the wild,
- deliberately disturbs these species particularly during the period of breeding, rearing, hibernation and migration,
- deliberately takes or destroys eggs of those species from the wild,

- damages or destroys a breeding site or resting place of such an animal, or
- keeps, transports, sells, exchanges, offers for sale or offers for exchange any specimen of these species taken in the wild, other than those taken legally as referred to in Article 12(2) of the Habitats Directive, shall be guilty of an offence.

Wintering bird surveys

This report presents the methodology and results of 12 visits to lands at Mount Avenue by Frank Spellman from October 2024 to March 2025.

Survey methodology

Wintering bird surveys were carried out over the entire wintering bird season at lands at Mount Avenue, Dundalk, in order to gather baseline data to assist in assessing the potential impacts on wintering birds from proposed developments on the site, in particular those listed as Qualifying Interests of SPAs within 15 km and other amber/red-listed birds of conservation concern in Ireland (BoCCI). Potential impacts on wintering bird species include disturbance, destruction of foraging areas, destruction of roosting areas and collision risk during construction and operation (cranes, buildings etc.). These wintering bird surveys were carried out based on the BTO Common Bird Census (Bibby *et al.*, 2000 and Gilbert *et al.*, 1998) and I-WeBS Counter Manual: Guidelines for Irish Wetland Bird Survey counters (BWI & NPWS), following CIEEM guidelines.

A 15-minute settlement period was given following arrival to allow resumption of bird activity after any possible disturbance caused by arrival to the site. Various features such as hedgerows, treelines, agricultural fields, scrub, grassland and riparian areas were present within the survey area. A roving transect survey covering the perimeter, field boundaries and all internal features and open areas was carried out on each occasion, providing clear views of all areas within, over and immediately adjacent to the survey area. Any observed behaviour by wintering bird species and other relevant species (birds of prey, red-listed BoCCI etc.) observed within, over and immediately adjacent to the survey area were recorded. The presence and abundance of all other bird species (e.g. passerine) was also recorded. Each survey was carried out by a single surveyor.

A pair of binoculars were used by the surveyor to identify and count birds at distance.

Care was taken not to double count any observations. Surveys were initiated at varying times (morning/midday/afternoon) and varying local tide levels to account for birds transiting to/from foraging and roosting areas. Local temperatures varied from 2 – 13°C. Winds varied from 1 – 3 on the Beaufort scale. Weather conditions were suitable on all occasions.

Peak counts for the survey area were compared to 1% national and international population sizes of relevant species for which data was available. Foraging areas, flight paths, large flights and other observations were mapped according to field sheet records.

Survey results/discussion

Habitats of wintering bird potential

A desk and ground level wintering bird habitat assessment were carried and used to examine the structures, features and vegetation on site that could provide wintering bird habitat. Potential features associated with foraging/roosting include agricultural fields, improved/amenity grassland, scrub, watercourses and drainage ditches, estuaries and intertidal zones. All open areas, vegetated areas, built areas and water-holding features within and immediately adjacent to the site were assessed for wintering bird potential.

Habitat of foraging value for wintering birds was present throughout the site. The site and its surroundings consisted mainly of arable crop fields, exposed soil, agricultural grassland, a watercourse, and drainage ditches. No buildings or structures were present within the survey area that may provide breeding habitat for gull species, although buildings/structures in the surrounding area may facilitate this. The site is in close proximity (< 2 km) from Dundalk Bay SPA, and so there is a high potential for Qualifying Interests of this SPA to utilise and/or fly over the site. The next closest and only other SPA within 15 km is Stabannan-Braganstown SPA (13km).

Wintering bird activity survey

A total of 38 species were recorded within, above and adjacent to the survey area across 12 surveys (see Appendix I for individual observations). 24 green, eight amber and six red-listed species of conservation concern were recorded either within, over and adjacent to the overall survey area. Details regarding the status, behaviour and abundances of species recorded on/over/adjacent to the site relevant to the conservation interests of Special Protected Areas (SPAs) and red listed Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (BoCCI) are discussed below.

Black-headed gull (amber BoCCI) was observed in flight over and/or foraging within the survey area on eight occasions. A total of 21 observations of black-headed gull were made of a total of 705 individuals. This species was primarily observed flying over or adjacent to the site although large numbers of birds were observed foraging on agricultural grassland to the southwest of the proposed site, of which none existed within the site. The proposed site is likely periodically more attractive to this species during harvest of arable crops. Flights generally occurred in an west-east pattern, likely due to movements between inland foraging areas and coastal foraging/roosting areas. Peak count was 606 individuals, although the majority of these individuals were observed in fields adjacent to the survey area. This species is a Qualifying Interest of the nearby Dundalk Bay SPA. The peak number is below 1% of the international population (table 2). Observations are demonstrated in figures 3 & 13.

Herring gull (amber BoCCI) was observed in flight over and foraging adjacent to the survey area during six surveys. A total of 19 observations of herring gull were made of a total of 617 individuals. This species was only observed foraging on agricultural grassland to the southwest of the survey area. This species likely forages in areas similar to black-headed gull, occasionally foraging within the survey area (although not observed), particularly during ploughing/sowing/harvesting. Flight paths generally followed a rough east-west pattern, similar to black-headed gull. Peak count was 584 individuals. This species is a Qualifying Interest of the nearby Dundalk Bay SPA. The peak number is below 1% of the international population (table 2). Observations are demonstrated in figures 4 & 13.

Common gull (amber BoCCI) was observed in flight on one occasion (survey 8) over the northern boundary of the survey area. This observation was of one individual (figure 5). This species was not observed foraging. Suitable foraging habitat for this species in the surrounding area are similar to those of black-headed gull and herring gull. Peak count was one individual. This species is a Qualifying interest for the nearby Dundalk Bay SPA. The peak number is below 1% of the international population (table 2). Observation of this species is demonstrated in figure 5.

Oystercatcher (red BoCCI) was observed on two occasions (surveys 3 & 7), once in flight across the south of the survey area and once foraging around standing water with lapwings during a cold-snap. Suitable foraging habitat for this species in the surrounding area are similar to those of black-headed gull and herring gull

(agricultural and amenity grassland). Peak count was six individuals. This species is a Qualifying interest for the nearby Dundalk Bay SPA. The peak number is below 1% of the national and international populations (table 2). Observation of this species are demonstrated in figures 6 & 13.

Lapwing (red BoCCI) was observed on one occasion (survey 7), thrice in flight from south to north across the centre and to the east of the survey area in flocks of 45, 34 and 25, and foraging around standing water and on exposed arable fields within the survey area (two flocks of 6 and 33). This survey was carried out during a cold snap (2°C on arrival) with much of the land partially frozen and waterlogged. Although suitable foraging habitat for this species was present throughout the site, it was not observed on any other occasion. Suitable foraging habitat for this species is abundant in the surrounding area. Peak count was 143 individuals. This species is a Qualifying interest for the nearby Dundalk Bay SPA. The peak number is below 1% of the national and international populations (table 2). Observation of this species are demonstrated in figures 7 & 13.

Mallard (amber BoCCI) was observed in flight on five occasions. This species was not observed foraging or landing on or adjacent to the survey area. Flights by this species generally occurred in the afternoon as circling flights over and adjacent to the survey area before moving south or north, likely to local water features. Peak count was 25 individuals (survey 1). This species is a Qualifying interest for the nearby Dundalk Bay SPA. The peak number is below 1% of the national and international populations (table 2). Observation of this species are demonstrated in figures 8 & 9.

Grey wagtail (red BoCCI) was observed on two occasion (surveys 6 & 10). Peak count was 2 individuals (table 2). This species was primarily recorded in the northwest of the site, proximate to the watercourse along the northwest boundary of the survey area. The riparian corridor in this area is likely of foraging and potentially of breeding value to this species.

Meadow pipit (red BoCCI) was observed on one occasion (survey 1). Peak count was 2 individuals (table 2). This species was recorded foraging on exposed arable fields in the centre of the site. The survey area is not likely to be of foraging significance to this species due to low occurrence and abundance, and large areas of better suited habitat in the surrounding area. Foraging by this species is demonstrated in figure 13.

Redwing (red BoCCI) was observed on two occasions (surveys 5 & 9). Peak count was 78 individuals (table 2). This species was primarily recorded in the centre and south of the site in flight, foraging on an exposed arable field, and perching within treelines. Flights and foraging by this species are demonstrated in figures 11 & 13.

Snipe (red BoCCI) was observed on two occasions (surveys 1 & 6). Peak count was 3 individuals (table 2). This species was only recorded in flight. Flights by this species are demonstrated in figure 11.

Buzzard (green BoCCI) was observed on six occasions. Peak count was 6 individuals (table 2). This species was primarily recorded in the west, centre and south of the survey area, generally flying over and between treelines. The survey area and mature treelines within and adjacent to the southwest are likely of foraging, resting and nesting value for this species.

All observations of relevant target species of this report are included in Appendix I of this report.

Table 1. Species recorded within, above and/or immediately adjacent to the survey

Common name	BTO	Latin name	BCCCI
Blackbird	B.	<i>Turdus merula</i>	Green
Black-headed Gull	BH	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	Amber
Blue Tit	BT	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	Green
Bullfinch	BF	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	Green
Buzzard	BZ	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	Green
Chaffinch	CH	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	Green
Chiffchaff	CC	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	Green
Common Gull	CM	<i>Larus canus</i>	Amber
Dunnock	D.	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	Green
Feral Pigeon	FP	<i>Columba livia f. domestica</i>	Green
Fieldfare	FF	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	Green
Goldcrest	GC	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	Amber
Goldfinch	GO	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	Green
Great Tit	GT	<i>Parus major</i>	Green
Greenfinch	GR	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	Amber
Grey Wagtail	GL	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	Red
Herring Gull	HG	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	Amber
Hooded Crow	HC	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	Green
Jackdaw	JD	<i>Corvus monedula</i>	Green
Lapwing	L.	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	Red
Linnet	LI	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>	Amber
Long-tailed Tit	LT	<i>Aegithalus caudatus</i>	Green
Magpie	MG	<i>Pica pica</i>	Green
Mallard	MA	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Amber
Meadow Pipit	MP	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	Red
Oystercatcher	OC	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	Red
Pheasant	PH	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	Green
Pied Wagtail	PW	<i>Motacilla alba yarrellii</i>	Green
Raven	RN	<i>Corvus corax</i>	Green
Redwing	RE	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	Red
Robin	R.	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	Green
Rook	RO	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	Green
Siskin	SK	<i>Spinus spinus</i>	Green
Snipe	SN	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	Red
Song Thrush	ST	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Green
Starling	SG	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Amber
Woodpigeon	WP	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Green
Wren	WR	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Green

Table 2. Peak counts of bird species recorded within, above and/or immediately adjacent to the survey area.

Species	Peak count (2024/25)	1% national	1% international
Blackbird	6		
Black-headed Gull	606	n/a	>10,000 ¹
Blue Tit	3		
Bullfinch	3		
Buzzard	6		
Chaffinch	23		
Chiffchaff	2		
Common Gull	1	n/a	>10,000 ¹
Dunnock	3		
Feral Pigeon	17		
Fieldfare	18		
Goldcrest	1		
Goldfinch	2		
Great Tit	3		
Greenfinch	4		
Grey Wagtail	2		
Herring Gull	584	n/a	>1,000 ¹
Hooded Crow	18		
Jackdaw	41		
Lapwing	143	850 ²	>10,000 ¹
Linnet	140		
Long-tailed Tit	5		
Magpie	6		
Mallard	25	280 ²	>10,000 ¹
Meadow Pipit	2		
Oystercatcher	6	610 ²	1,000 ¹
Pheasant	2		
Pied Wagtail	5		
Raven	2		
Redwing	78		
Robin	4		
Rook	19		
Siskin	40		
Snipe	3	n/a	>10,000 ¹
Song Thrush	2		
Starling	2		
Woodpigeon	54		
Wren	3		

¹ AEWA. (2022). *AEWA Conservation Status Review 8 (CSR8) Report on the conservation status of migratory waterbirds in the agreement area*. Eight Edition. Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds, September 2022. *

² Burke, B. et al (2018) *Estimates of waterbird numbers wintering in Ireland, 2011/12 – 2015/16*. *

*Out of caution, where discrepancies in international flyway estimates occurred between sources, the lowest estimate was utilised.

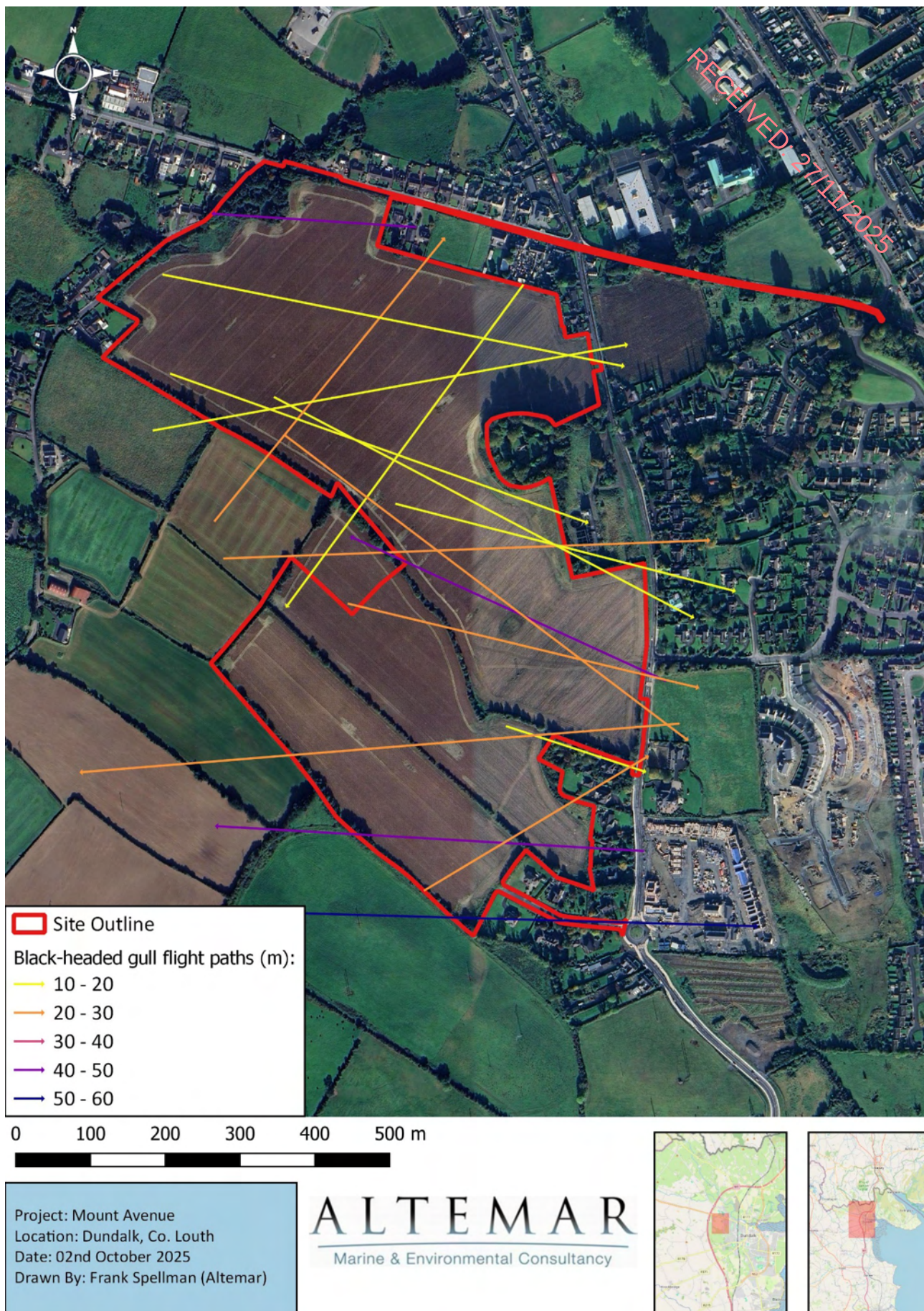


Figure 3. Black-headed gull flight paths.

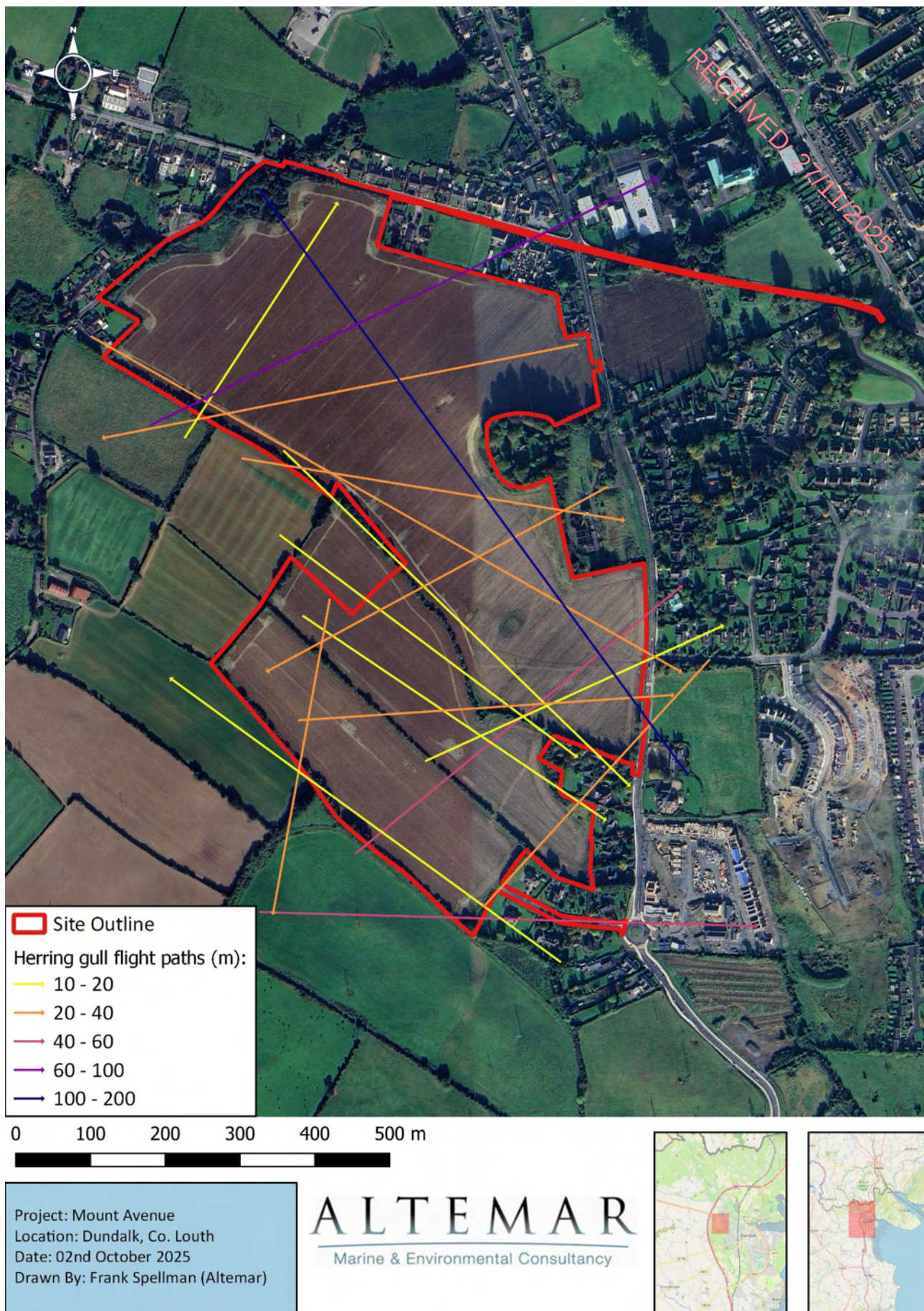


Figure 4. Herring gull flight paths

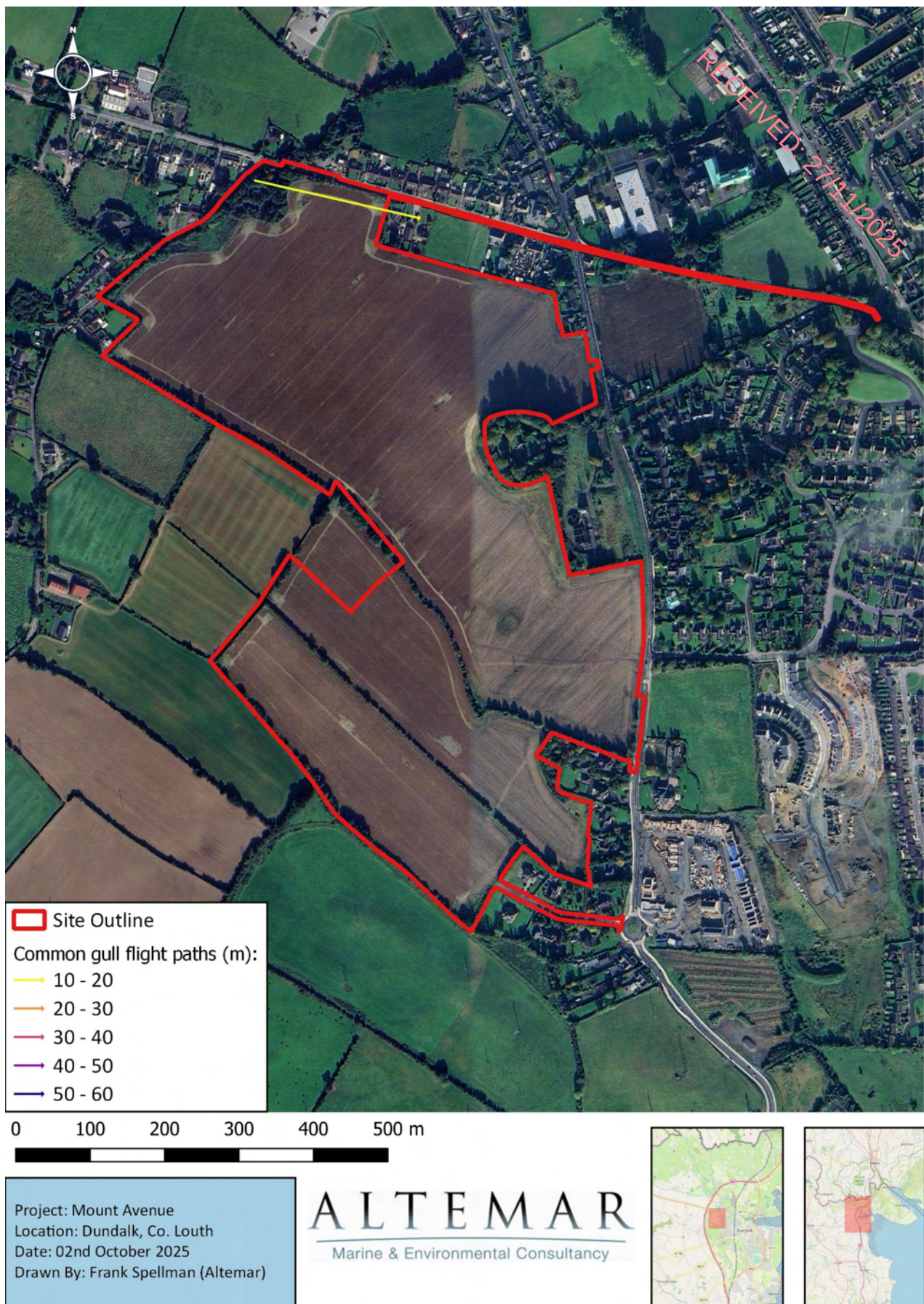


Figure 5. Common gull flight paths.

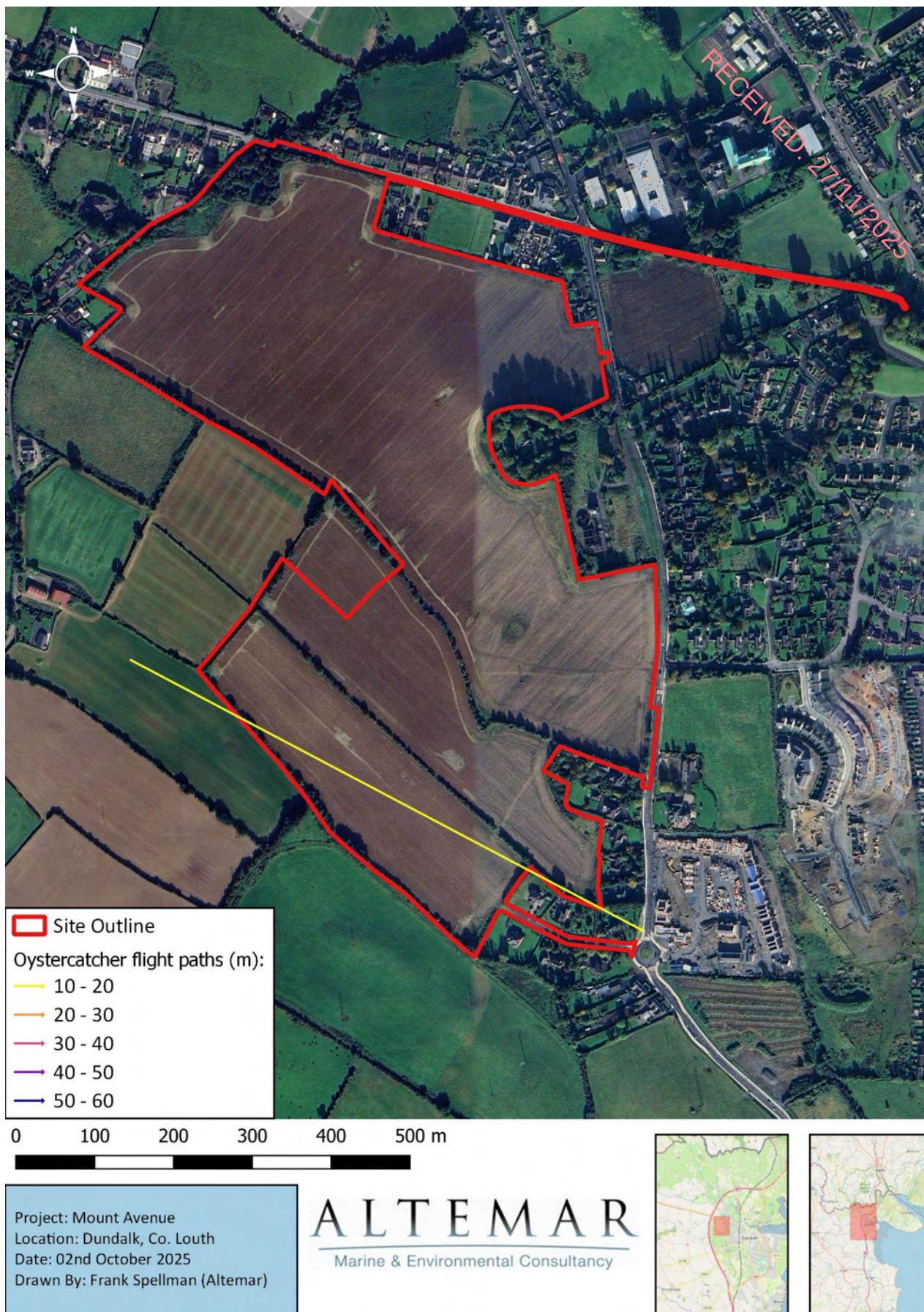


Figure 6. Oystercatcher flight paths.

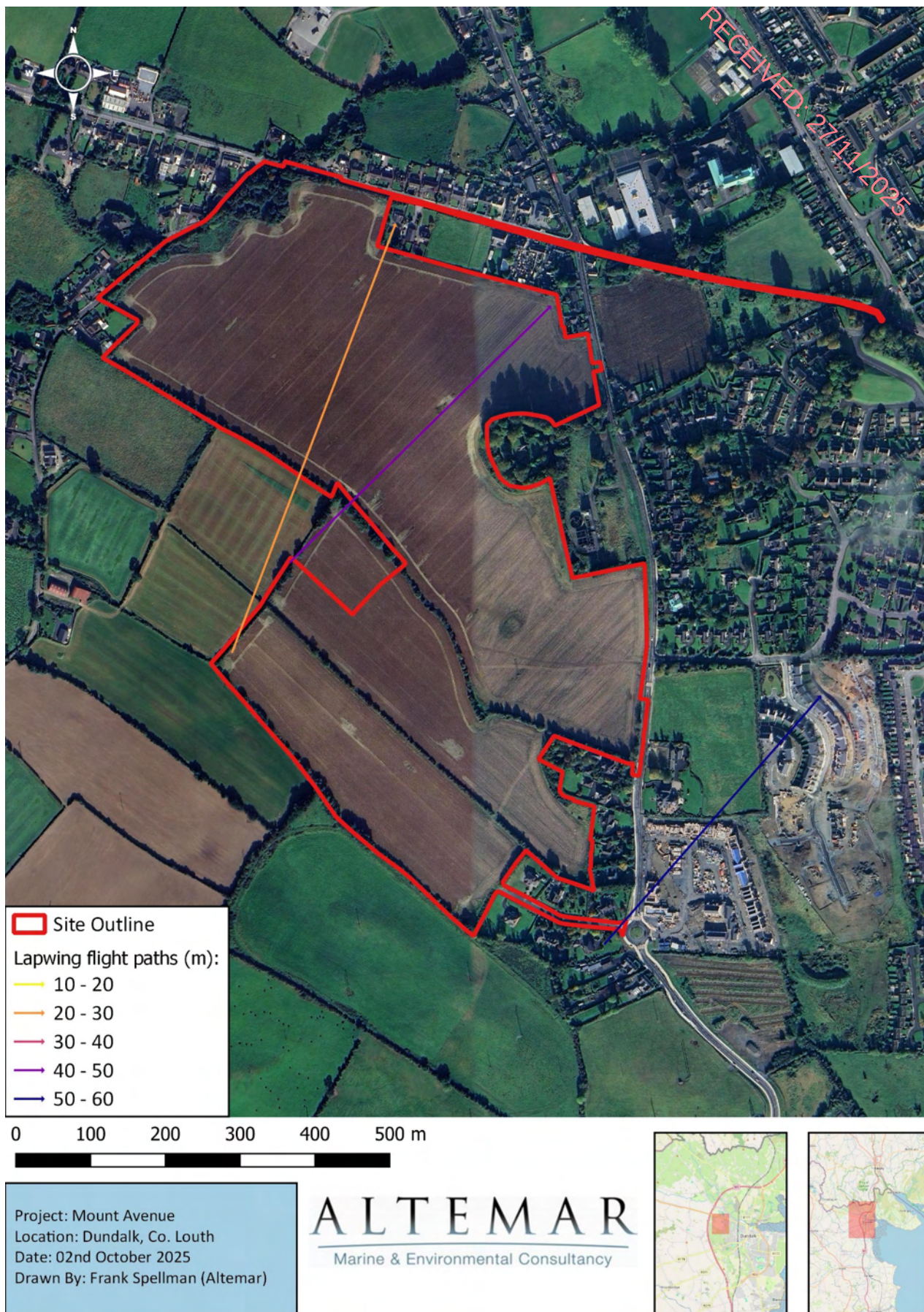


Figure 7. Lapwing flight paths

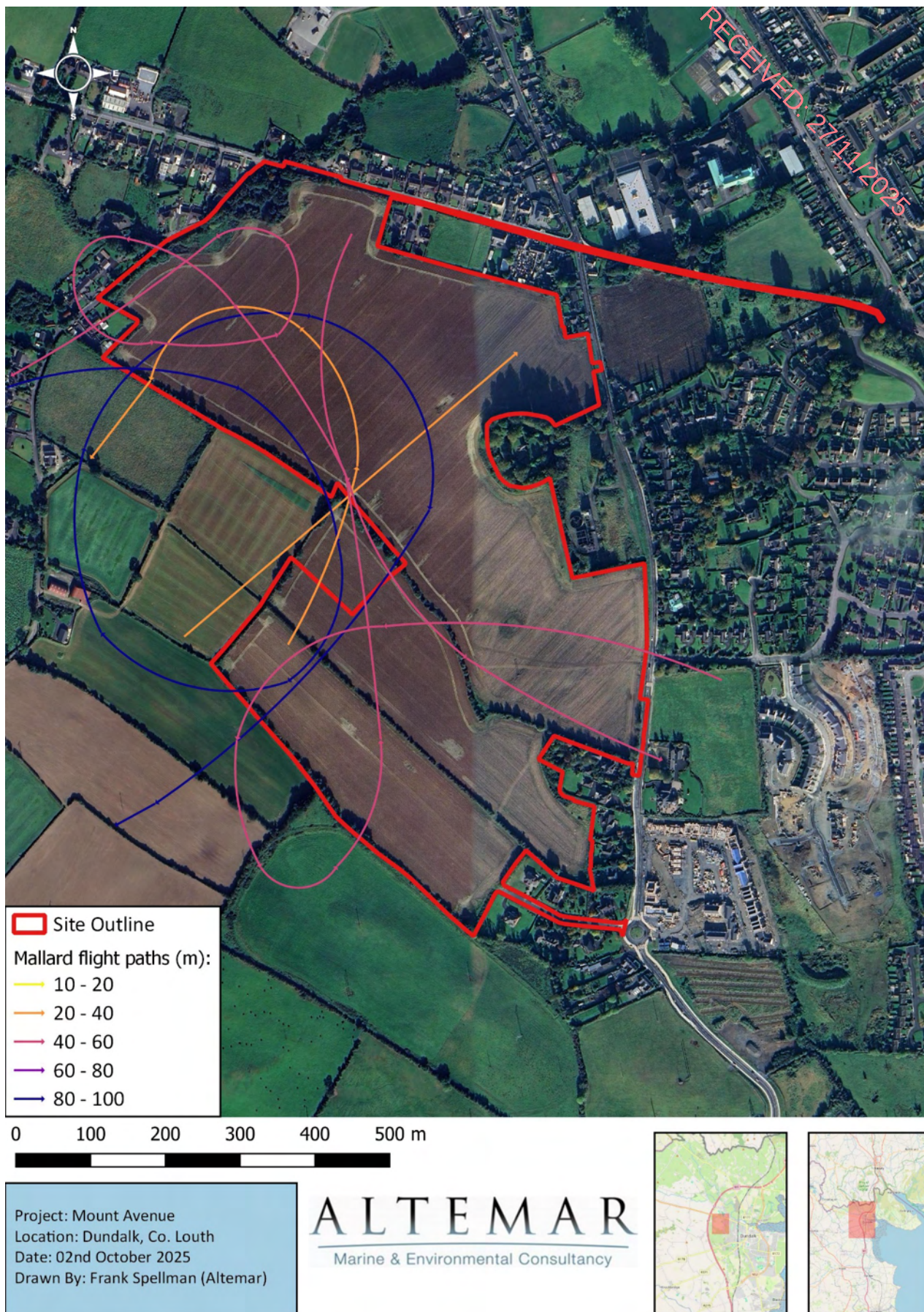


Figure 8. Mallard flight paths.

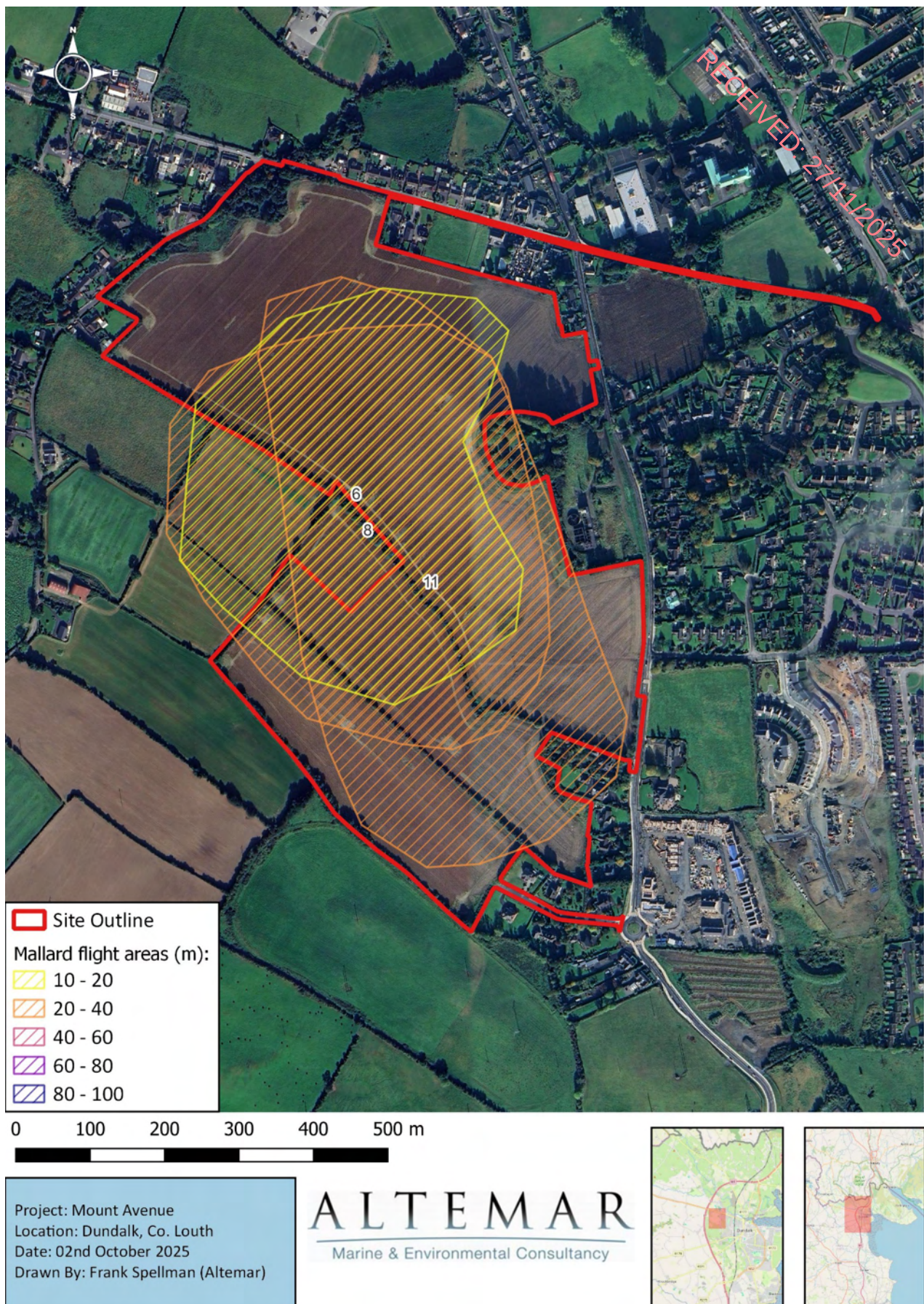


Figure 9. Mallard flight areas.

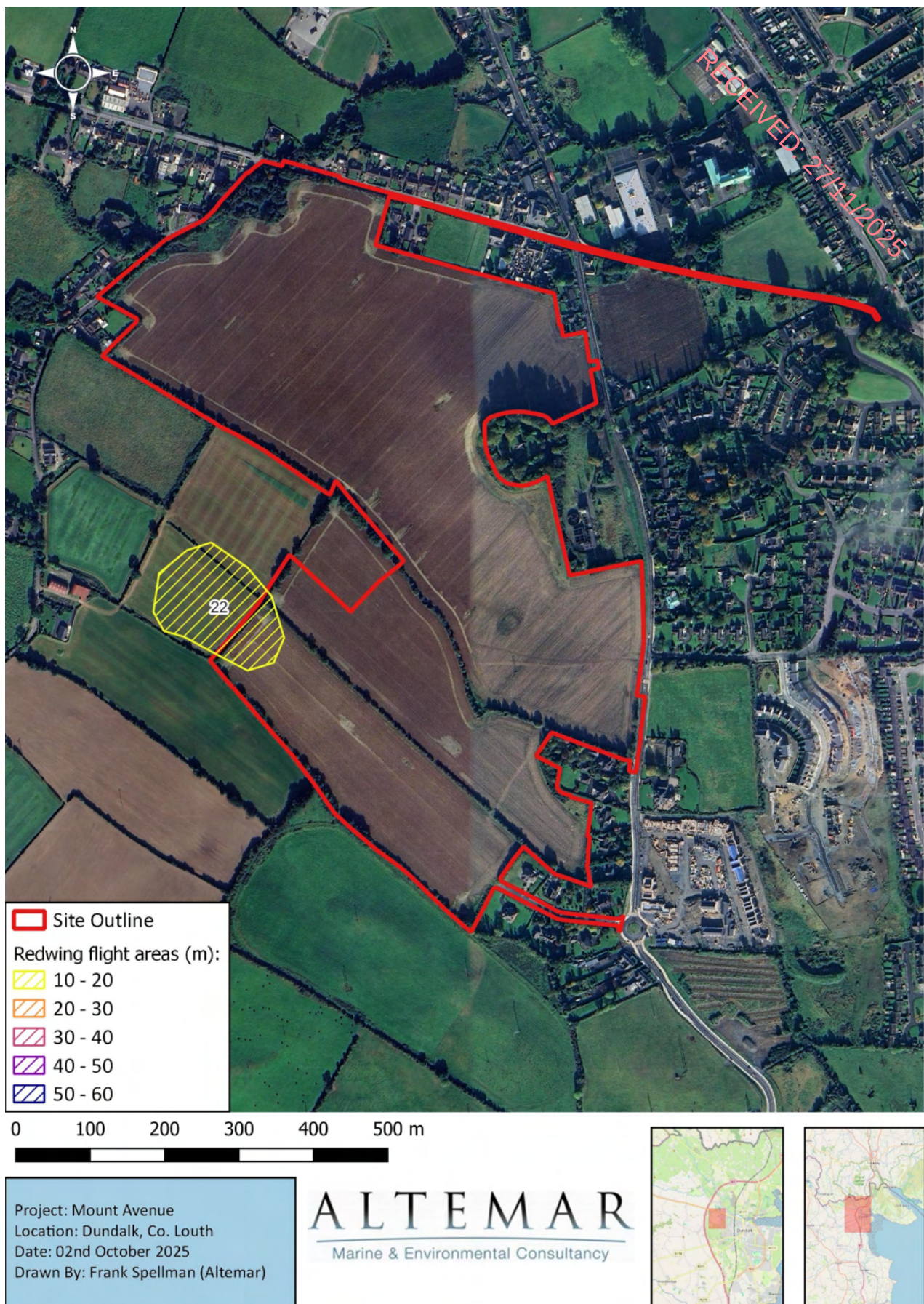


Figure 10. Redwing flight areas.

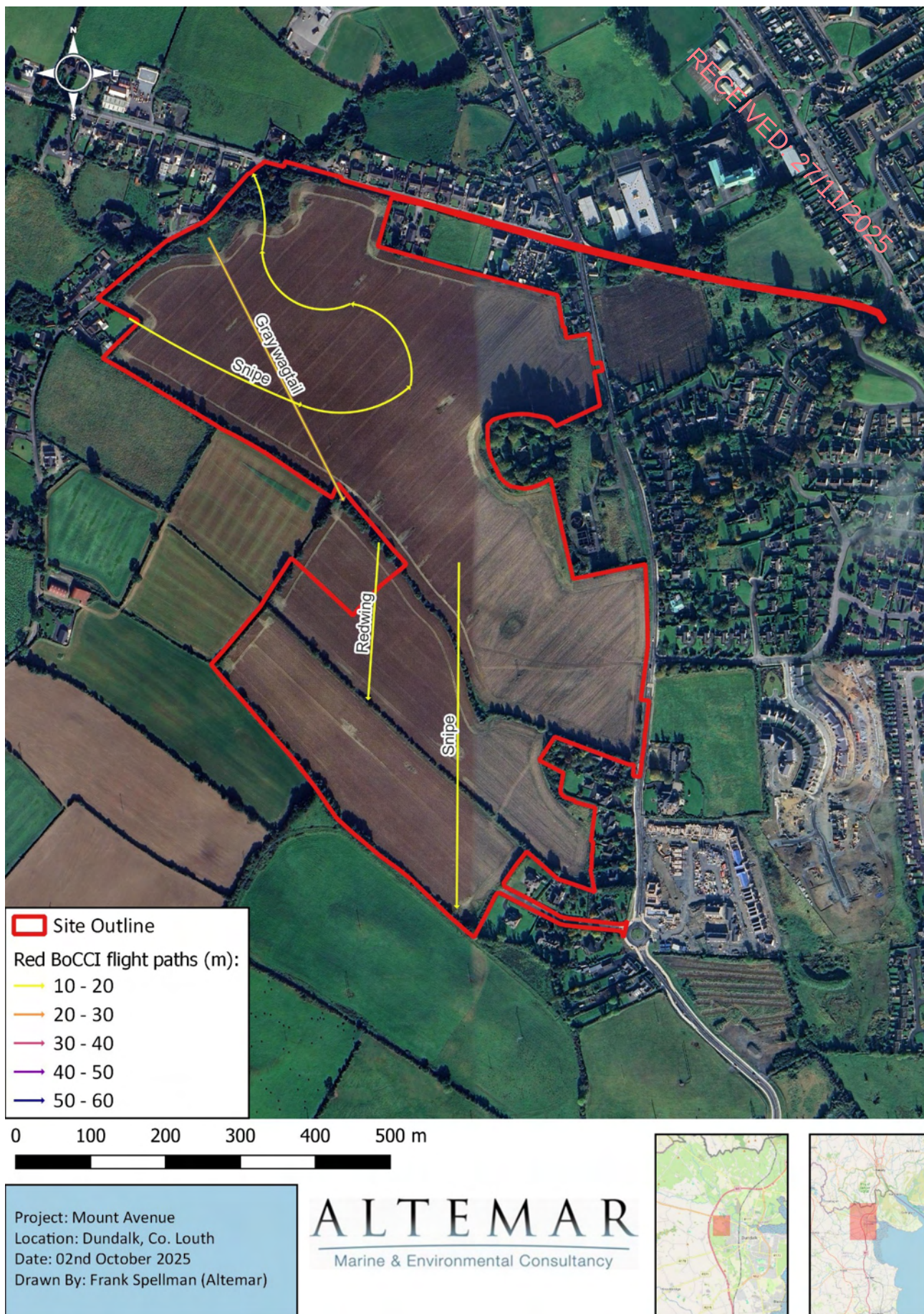


Figure 11. Flight paths of other red-listed Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (BoCCI).

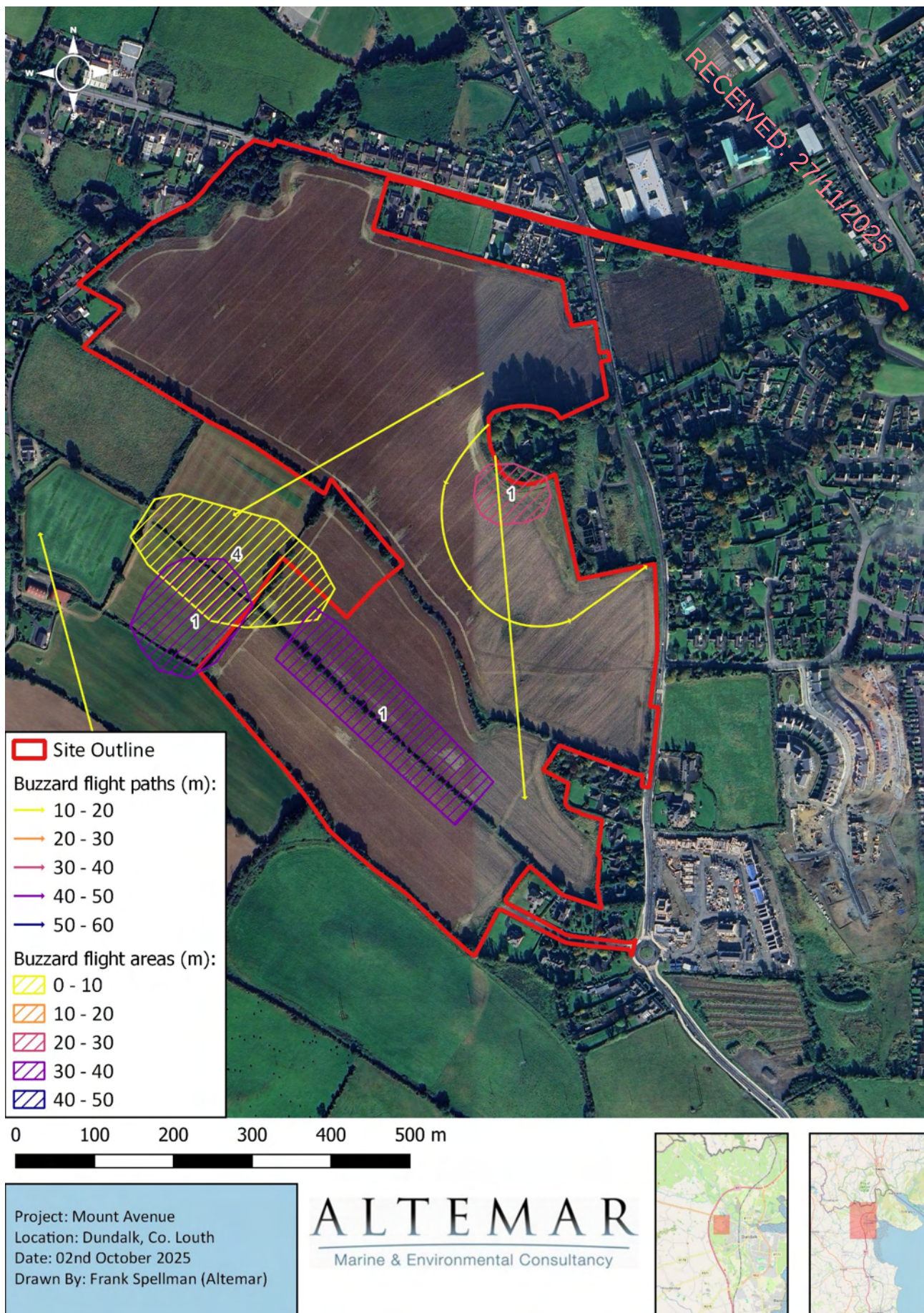


Figure 12. Buzzard flight paths and areas.

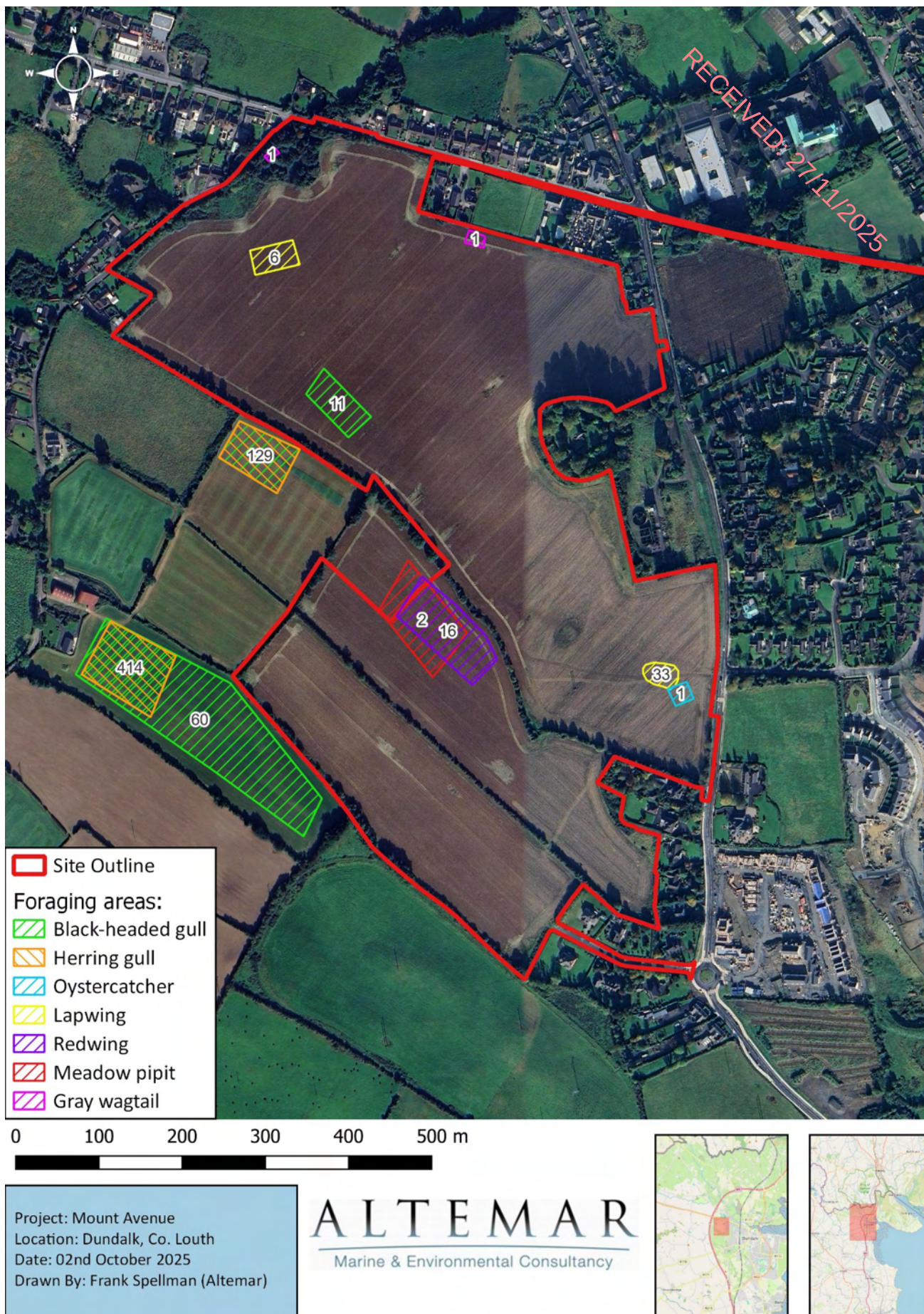


Figure 13. Foraging areas by species.

Wintering bird assessment findings

Review of local bird records

The review of existing bird records (sourced from NBDC Database) within a 2 km² grid (Reference grid J00J) encompassing the study area reveals that 17 known bird species have previously been observed and recorded locally (Table 3).

Table 3: NBDC bird records within 2 km² (grids O17F)

Species Name	Record Count	Date of Last Record	Dataset	BoCCI Status
Blackbird (<i>Turdus merula</i>)	1	24/05/2021	Birds of Ireland	
Blackcap (<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>)	1	11/01/2021	Birds of Ireland	
Bullfinch (<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>)	1	25/01/2021	Birds of Ireland	
Buzzard (<i>Buteo buteo</i>)	1	01/10/2020	Birds of Ireland	
Chaffinch (<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>)	2	24/05/2021	Birds of Ireland	
Coal Tit (<i>Parus ater</i>)	1	11/01/2021	Birds of Ireland	
Common Sandpiper (<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>)	1	08/08/2018	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Dunnock (<i>Prunella modularis</i>)	2	24/05/2021	Birds of Ireland	
Goldcrest (<i>Regulus regulus</i>)	1	15/12/2020	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Hooded Crow (<i>Corvus cornix</i>)	1	24/05/2021	Birds of Ireland	
Jackdaw (<i>Coloeus monedula</i>)	1	24/05/2021	Birds of Ireland	
Long-tailed Tit (<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>)	1	24/05/2021	Birds of Ireland	
Sparrowhawk (<i>Accipiter nisus</i>)	1	01/03/2016	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Swallow (<i>Hirundo rustica</i>)	1	24/05/2021	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Swift (<i>Apus apus</i>)	1	15/05/2023	Swifts of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Woodpigeon (<i>Columba palumbus</i>)	1	24/05/2021	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: EU Birds Directive Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section I Bird Species Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex III, Section I Bird Species
Wren (<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>)	2	24/05/2021	Birds of Ireland	

Historical Surveys

I-WeBS

I-WeBS National and Site Trends Report 1994/95 – 2019/20 report presents national and site-specific trends of wetland birds in Ireland. This report was used to assess the trends of species recorded during wintering bird surveys at Mount Avenue in winter of 2024/25. The survey area is proximate to the Dundalk Bay (OZ401) I-WeBS site.

Lapwing, mallard and oystercatcher were the only species considered by I-WeBS recorded during wintering bird surveys at Mount Avenue over the 2024/25 season. Nationally, the lapwing population is considered to be large decline, the mallard population is considered to be in intermediate decline, and the oystercatcher population is considered to be stable or increasing.

At Dundalk Bay, the lapwing population is considered to be in moderate decline, the mallard population is considered to be in intermediate decline, and the oystercatcher population is considered to be stable or increasing.

The national wetland bird trend summary (figure 14) provides long-term population trends for wintering species in Ireland. Trends for species nationally and Dundalk Bay are included in appendix II-V of this report.

National Summary

Species	Trend (%)			Long Term Trend
	National - 5 Year	National - 12 Year	National - 25 Year	
Scaup	-33.6	-82.9	-89.2	Large Decline
Pochard	-19.8	-60.4	-79.1	Large Decline
Goldeneye	-32.5	-39.0	-66.9	Large Decline
Lapwing	-6.5	-45.1	-63.9	Large Decline
Grey Plover	-30.6	-39.4	-57.8	Large Decline
Golden Plover	-16.9	-58.1	-54.1	Large Decline
Dunlin	5.9	-21.2	-45.2	Moderate Decline
Curlew	-9.4	-23.7	-43.1	Moderate Decline
Turnstone	-33.6	-46.0	-23.7	Intermediate Decline
Coot	-10.1	1.1	-23.2	Intermediate Decline
Mallard	-11.3	-19.7	-19.1	Intermediate Decline
Wigeon	0.9	-17.0	-18.2	Intermediate Decline
Tufted Duck	-20.7	-28.9	-17.9	Intermediate Decline
Red-breasted Merganser	-12.9	5.2	-14.7	Intermediate Decline
Pintail	-0.8	-6.0	-13.7	Intermediate Decline
Great Crested Grebe	-39.5	-6.1	-10.8	Intermediate Decline
Shoveler	23.0	-21.3	-10.8	Intermediate Decline
Knot	0.0	-12.2	-9.8	Intermediate Decline
Bar-tailed Godwit	-32.6	-13.9	-5.1	Intermediate Decline
Ringed Plover	-4.3	-26.8	-1.1	Intermediate Decline
Grey Heron	1.0	-4.9	6.6	Stable or Increasing
Redshank	-14.0	-28.4	6.7	Stable or Increasing
Shelduck	6.3	-0.8	9.3	Stable or Increasing
Oystercatcher	-17.5	-31.1	10.8	Stable or Increasing
Mute Swan	4.6	9.6	13.8	Stable or Increasing
Teal	1.8	5.7	19.4	Stable or Increasing
Purple Sandpiper	-36.4	-37.6	23.5	Stable or Increasing
Gadwall	-26.5	4.3	24.4	Stable or Increasing
Little Grebe	6.1	16.7	38.2	Stable or Increasing
Greenshank	0.9	7.3	41.0	Stable or Increasing
Cormorant	38.5	8.4	42.9	Stable or Increasing
Sanderling	-23.8	-11.1	84.6	Stable or Increasing
Black-tailed Godwit	22.5	25.0	92.3	Stable or Increasing
Light-bellied Brent Goose	-11.2	1.2	93.3	Stable or Increasing
Little Egret	34.6	61.5	483.3	Stable or Increasing

Figure 14. I-WeBS National Trends Report.

Mitigation

The proposed site and areas immediately adjacent are of low importance overall to the local wintering bird population. However, the impact of the development during construction and operational phases will be the creation of potential collision risks to species transiting to and from foraging and roosting areas, and loss of foraging and possible roosting habitat. The following mitigation measures relevant to birds should be implemented to minimise any potential negative impact on biodiversity:

1. During the construction phase, lights should be incorporated onto cranes (if required) illuminating their entirety to reduce collision risk to birds from cranes and other relevant equipment/structures.
2. The construction area will be marked out prior to the commencement of construction.
3. All construction work will be confined strictly to the construction area. Any construction works required outside the construction area will require prior approval from the ER.
4. Lighting during construction should not spill outside the proposed development.
5. The adjacent watercourses along the perimeter of the site will be maintained in their current states and sufficient measures implemented and monitored to prevent downstream impacts on Dundalk Bay SPA during construction and operation.
6. An Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) will be appointed to oversee the construction phase and to oversee the implementation of all mitigation including compliance with Wildlife Acts and Water Pollution Acts and ensure that biodiversity in neighbouring areas including birds will not be impacted.
7. The effectiveness of the proposed mitigation will be monitored throughout the construction period.
8. All elements of the CEMP and other mitigation measures outlined in the accompanying NIS will be adhered to.

Conclusion

This report aims to build on the baseline data and provide information to assist in assessing the potential impact of proposed developments on lands at Mount Avenue, Dundalk, on wintering birds within/over/adjacent to the development area. This report presents the methodology and results of 12 visits to this location by Altemar Ltd. from October 2024 to March 2025.

A total of 38 species were recorded within, above and adjacent to the subject survey area across 12 surveys. Twenty four green, eight amber and six red species of conservation concern were recorded either within, over or immediately adjacent to the survey area. Six species listed as Qualifying Interests of Dundalk Bay SPA were recorded: black-headed gull, common gull, herring gull, lapwing, oystercatcher and mallard.

Proposed developments on lands at Mount Avenue are predicted to reduce available foraging areas for wintering birds, including those listed as Qualifying Interests of nearby SPA(s). However, the reduction in foraging and potential roosting areas are not significant in the context of current use by wintering birds and the widespread and abundant habitats of comparable suitability in the surrounding area. Impacts on wintering bird species foraging and moving between foraging/roosting sites are likely in the absence of mitigation measures. Following the implementation of all mitigation measures, no significant impact on species listed as Qualifying Interests of Dundalk Bay SPA or bird species of conservation interest are predicted.

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Appendix I – Individual survey observations of wintering bird, red-listed BoCCI and bird of prey.

Survey	Species	No.	Behaviour	Height (m)	Details
1	Buzzard	4	Flight area	10	Circling flights adjacent to and over southwest of survey area.
1	Buzzard	1	Flight area	40	Hovering flight over and along hedgerow in south of survey area.
1	Buzzard	1	Sighting		Perched in beech tree along north monument boundary.
1	Buzzard	1	Flight area	30	Hovering flight being harassed by jackdaw.
1	Mallard	8	Flight area	30	2 flocks of 4 from/to so circling over Southern Majority of survey area for approximately 10 minutes
1	Mallard	11	Flight area	30	Circling flight repeatedly over approximately 20 minutes.
1	Mallard	6	Flight area	20	Repeated circling flight over large proportion of centre of survey area.
1	Meadow pipit	2	Foraging		In arable field (potato).
1	Snipe	3	Flight path	20	Flying south across southeast of survey area.
2	Black-headed gull	1	Flight path	50	East flight across south of survey area.
2	Herring gull	3	Flight path	50	Northeast flight over south of site.
2	Mallard	1	Flight path	30	Northeast flight over centre of site.
2	Mallard	5	Flight path	100	Circling flight from west over west and centre of site before turning south.
3	Black-headed gull	22	Flight path	30	East flight across centre of survey area.
3	Buzzard	1	Flight area	40	Circling flight to west of survey area.
3	Buzzard	1	Flight path	20	Southwest flight over north of survey area.
3	Herring gull	1	Flight path	40	West flight across north of survey area.
3	Mallard	3	Flight path	30	North flight over west of survey area turning back south.
3	Oystercatcher	6	Flight path	20	Southeast flight across south of survey area.
5	Black-headed gull	1	Flight path	15	Southeast flight across east of area.
5	Black-headed gull	1	Flight path	50	West flight across survey area.
5	Black-headed gull	1	Flight path	50	West flight across northeast of site.
5	Black-headed gull	3	Flight path	30	East flight across east of survey area.
5	Black-headed gull	2	Flight path	20	East flight across centre of survey area.
5	Black-headed gull	2	Flight path	20	Southeast flight across centre of survey area.
5	Black-headed gull	11	Foraging		Waterlogged exposed arable field.
5	Black-headed gull & herring gull	83	Flight path	60	East flight to south of survey area.
5	Black-headed gull & herring gull	258	Foraging		Foraging in pasture.
5	Buzzard	1	Sighting		Perched in field before flying off southward.
5	Herring gull	2	Flight path	20	Northeast flight across east of site.
5	Herring gull	1	Flight path	20	Southeast flight across south of survey area.
5	Herring gull	1	Flight path	40	South flight across south of survey area
5	Herring gull	1	Flight path	20	Northwest flight across south of survey area.
5	Herring gull	1	Flight path	30	Southwest flight across southeast of survey area.
5	Herring gull	1	Flight path	20	Southeast flight across south of survey area.
5	Herring gull	1	Flight path	10	Southeast flight across centre of survey area.
5	Herring gull	1	Flight path	40	Southwest flight across southeast of survey area.
5	Herring gull & black-headed gull	828	Foraging		Both species mixed together foraging on agricultural grassland to west of survey area.

5	Linnet	12	Foraging		Foraging on field margin in east of survey area.
5	Mallard	4	Flight path	60	South veering east flight across survey area.
5	Redwing	22	Flight path	10	South flight across field in south of survey area from one tree to another.
5	Redwing	16	Foraging		Foraging on bare arable field in south of survey area.
5	Redwing	40	Sighting		Approx 40 redwing perched in tree along field boundary in south of survey area.
6	Black-headed gull	1	Flight path	30	North flight across southeast of survey area.
6	Black-headed gull	3	Flight path	20	Southwest flight across survey area.
6	Black-headed gull	2	Flight path	30	Northeast flight across survey area.
6	Black-headed gull	60	Foraging		In improved grassland to south of survey area.
6	Buzzard	1	Flight path	20	Flight from castle anticlockwise to southeast of survey area.
6	Gray wagtail	1	Flight path	10	From marsh in west of site southwest over survey areas.
6	Gray wagtail	1	Foraging		On waterlogged arable field margin in north of survey area.
6	Herring gull	1	Flight path	30	East flight across south of survey area.
6	Herring gull	1	Flight path	20	North flight across west of survey area.
6	Linnet	35	Foraging		Foraging in scrub adjacent to castle.
6	Snipe	1	Flight path	20	Flight from southwest over site turning back west to northwest off survey area.
7	Black-headed gull	1	Flight path	20	East flight across survey area.
7	Buzzard	1	Flight path	10	South flight across east of survey area.
7	Herring gull	1	Flight path	30	East flight across survey area.
7	Herring gull	1	Flight path	40	Southeast flight across survey area.
7	Herring gull	14	Flight path	200	Southwest flight across northeast of survey area.
7	Lapwing	34	Flight path	50	Northeast flight across survey area.
7	Lapwing	45	Flight path	60	Northeast flight to southeast of survey area.
7	Lapwing	25	Flight path	30	North flight across survey area.
7	Lapwing	33	Foraging		Foraging in disturbed ground.
7	Lapwing	6	Foraging		Foraging on bare arable field in northwest of survey area.
7	Linnet	49	Foraging		Foraging on edge of field adjacent to woodland/scrub.
7	Oystercatcher	1	Foraging		Foraging around frozen standing water next adjacent to lapwings.
8	Black-headed gull	1	Flight path	20	East flight across north of survey area.
8	Black-headed gull	1	Flight path	30	West flight across south of survey area.
8	Common gull	1	Flight path	20	East flight across north of survey area.
8	Mallard	2	Flight path	60	General winding northwest to Southwest flight.
9	Black-headed gull	6	Flight path	20	Northeast flight across survey area.
9	Buzzard	1	Flight path	20	North flight across southwest of survey area.
9	Linnet	140	Foraging		Foraging on grassland between field, boundary and motte.
9	Redwing	22	Flight area	10	Circling field landing and taking off intermittently from hedgerows.
10	Black-headed gull	1	Flight path	30	Southeast flight across survey area.
10	Fieldfare	10	Foraging		Perched in treeline/hedgerow.
10	Fieldfare	8	Foraging		Perched in treeline/hedgerow.
10	Gray wagtail	1	Foraging		Foraging along bank of river.
11	Herring gull	2	Flight path	80	Northeast flight across survey area.

Site Summary

Species	Trend (%)			Long Term Trend
	Dundalk Bay - 5 Year	Dundalk Bay - 12 Year	Dundalk Bay - 23 Year	
Knot	-33.0	-22.5	-42.7	Moderate Decline
Dunlin	31.5	-26.0	-39.1	
Goldeneye	-51.3	81.9	-38.8	
Great Crested Grebe	110.1	0.6	-36.4	
Lapwing	-9.5	-21.1	-36.4	
Red-breasted Merganser	-43.5	-18.6	-32.4	
Curlew	19.1	-1.8	-25.3	
Grey Plover	-19.1	65.2	-16.2	Intermediate Decline
Shelduck	3.2	-42.1	-15.2	
Mallard	-25.9	-29.3	-14.0	
Wigeon	21.1	-26.6	-6.1	
Bar-tailed Godwit	-32.6	-23.6	0.0	Stable or Increasing
Golden Plover	-14.5	-50.4	0.9	
Mute Swan	84.2	7.1	1.9	
Oystercatcher	-10.5	-50.2	2.3	
Grey Heron	29.5	-2.9	14.8	
Ringed Plover	-30.9	-51.5	15.3	
Redshank	-9.7	-47.9	17.8	
Turnstone	-46.1	-24.1	22.4	
Pintail	17.2	-36.4	25.4	
Cormorant	47.2	-46.2	39.5	
Teal	28.1	-38.0	46.2	
Light-bellied Brent Goose	-7.4	89.9	206.1	
Black-tailed Godwit	8.0	-3.3	228.9	

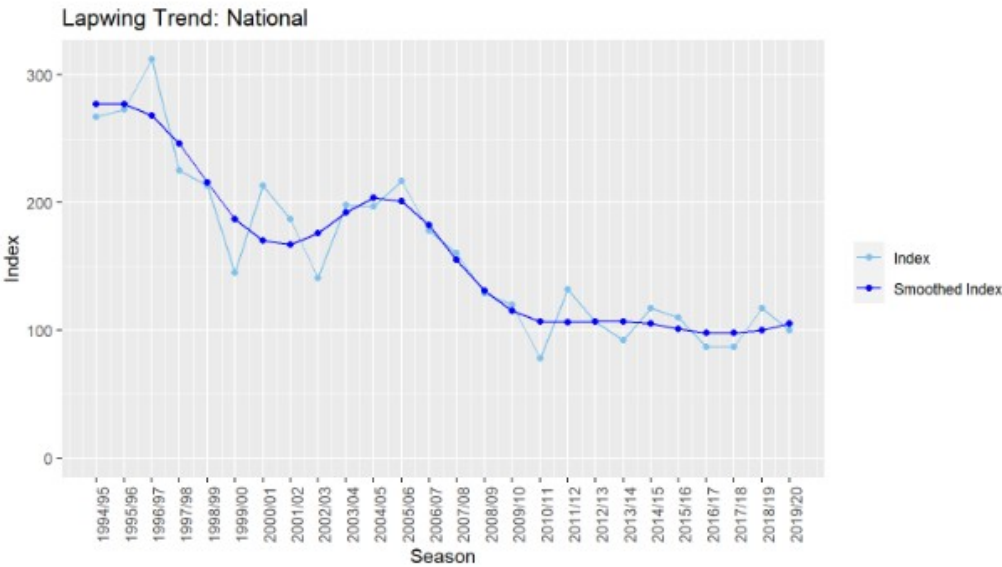
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Appendix III – I-WeBS National Trends of relevant species recorded in this report.

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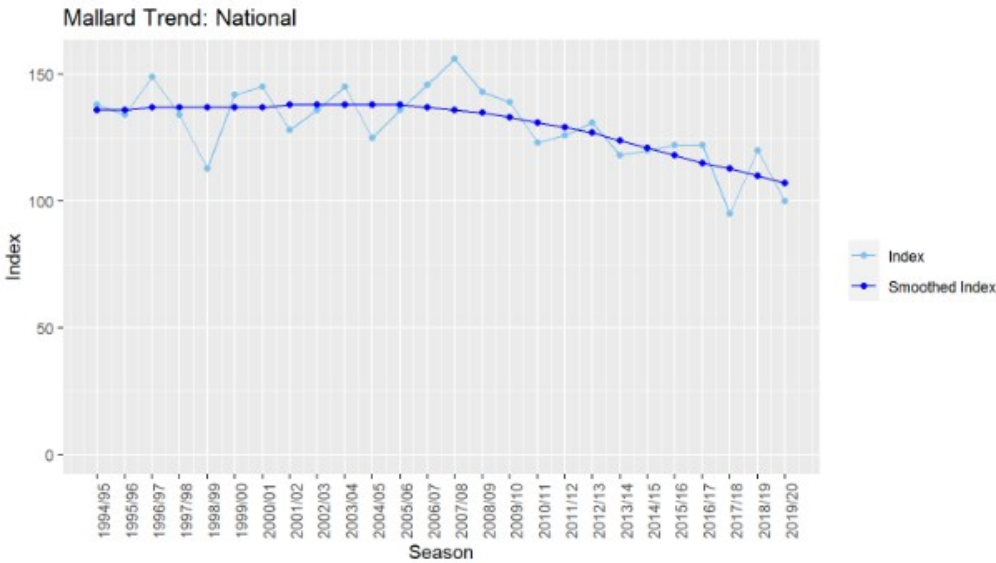
Lapwing

Site	Trend (%)		
	5 Year	12 Year	23 Year
National	-6.5	-45.1	-63.9



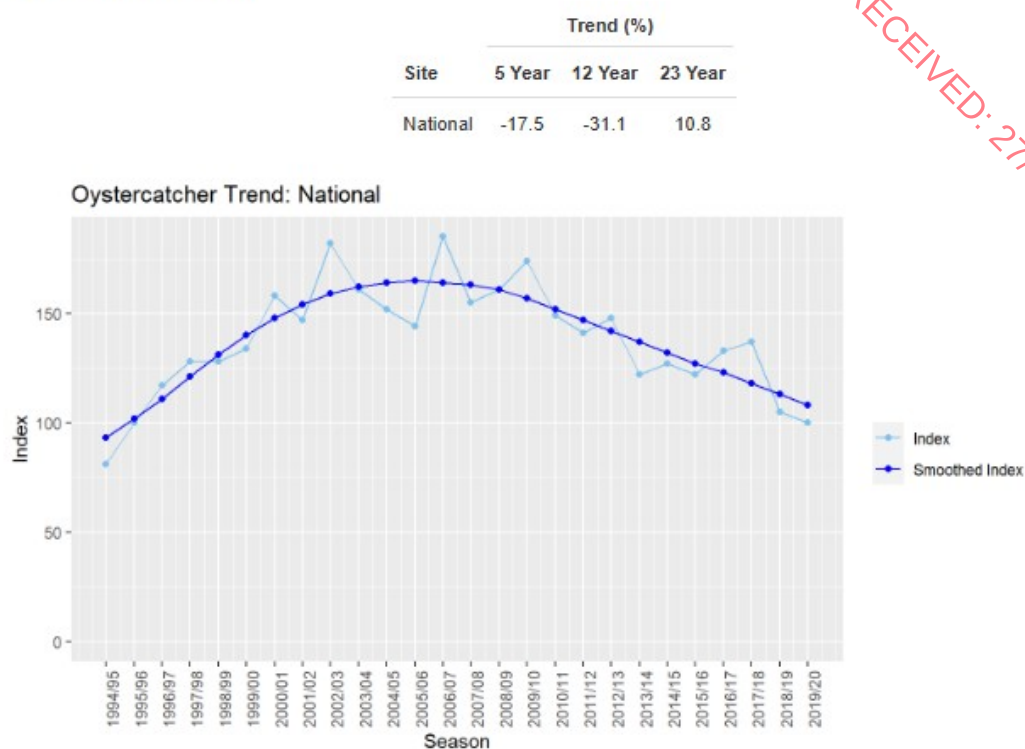
Mallard

Site	Trend (%)		
	5 Year	12 Year	23 Year
National	-11.3	-19.7	-19.1



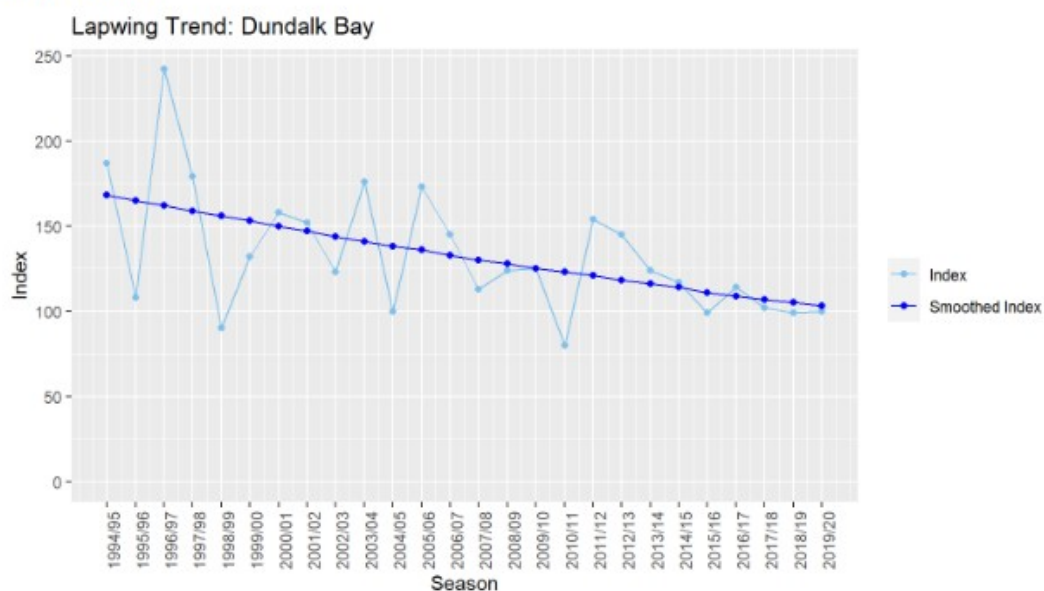
Oystercatcher

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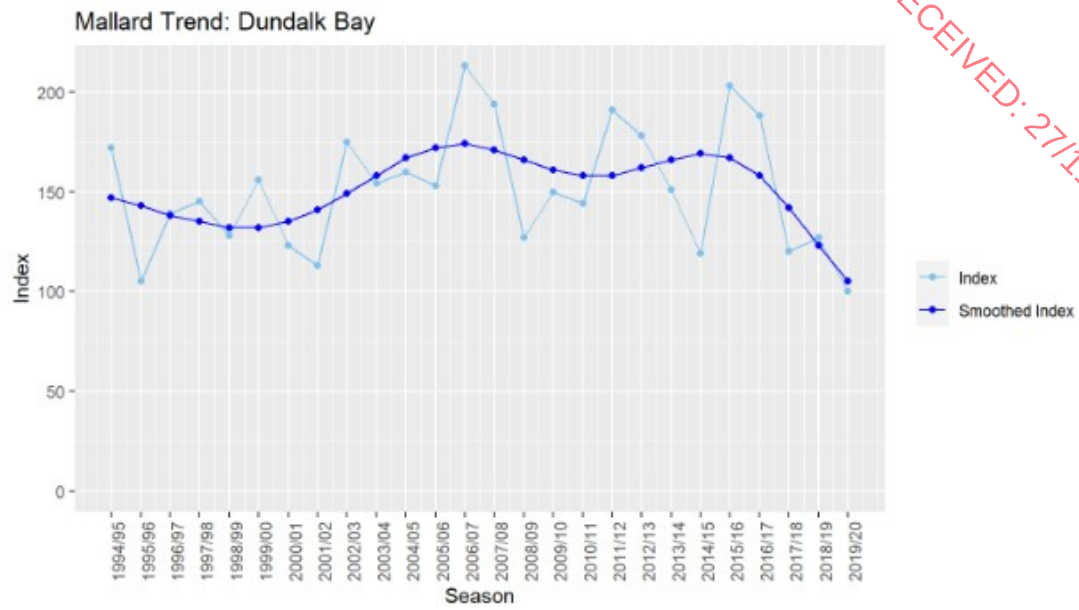


Appendix IV – I-WeBS trends for Dundalk Bay (OZ401) of relevant species recorded in this report.

Lapwing



Mallard



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Oystercatcher

