

## Appropriate Assessment Screening for a proposed development in Gorey, Co. Wexford.



**1<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY 2021**

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**On behalf of:** Axis Construction

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## CONTENTS

1. Introduction .....	4
Background to Altemar Ltd. ....	4
2. Background to the Appropriate Assessment.....	4
3. Stages of the Appropriate Assessment.....	6
4. Screening Stage Assessment.....	7
Management of the Site .....	7
Description of the Proposed Project.....	7
Identification of NATURA 2000 sites/species potentially affected.....	15
Desktop Studies .....	21
Site Visit .....	21
In-Combination Effects.....	23
Conclusions .....	23
Data used for the AA Screening assessment .....	23
References.....	23
Finding of No Significant Effects Report.....	25

## 1. INTRODUCTION

An Appropriate Assessment is an assessment of the potential effects of a proposed project or plan, on its own, or in combination with other plans or projects, on one or more NATURA 2000 sites (Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) or Special Protection Areas (SPA)).

The following Appropriate Assessment (Screening Stage) has been prepared by **Altemar Ltd.** at the request Axis Construction are submitting this application to An Bord Pleanála for development at a site of c.15.7 hectares at Clonattin, Goreybridge, Wexford.

The AA Screening stage examines the likely significant effects of a plan or project, either on its own, or in combination with other plans and projects, upon a Natura 2000 site and considers whether, on the basis of objective scientific evidence, it can be concluded, in view of best scientific knowledge and the conservation objectives of the relevant European sites, that there are not likely to be significant effects on any European site.

### BACKGROUND TO ALTEMAR LTD.

Since its inception in 2001, Altemar 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 is the managing director of Altemar, is an environmental scientist and marine biologist with 20 years' experience working in Irish terrestrial and aquatic environments, providing services to the State, Semi-State and industry. He is currently contracted to Inland Fisheries Ireland as the sole "External Expert" to environmentally assess internal and external projects. He is also chair 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). Bryan Deegan carried out all elements of this Appropriate Assessment Screening.

## 2. BACKGROUND TO THE APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

The Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (together with the Birds Directive (2009/1477/EC)) forms the cornerstone of Europe's nature conservation policy. The Directive protects over 1000 animals and plant species and over 200 "habitat types" which are of European importance. In the Directive, Articles 3 to 9 provide the legislative means to protect habitats and species of European Community interest through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of conservation sites (NATURA, 2000). These are Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Birds Directive), Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to affect NATURA 2000 sites (Annex 1.1). Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for Appropriate Assessment:

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

As outlined in “Managing Natura 2000 sites The provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC” (European Commission, 21 November 2018) *“The purpose of the appropriate assessment is to assess the implications of the plan or project in respect of the site’s conservation objectives, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects. The conclusions should enable the competent authorities to ascertain whether the plan or project will adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned. The focus of the appropriate assessment is therefore specifically on the species and/or the habitats for which the Natura 2000 site is designated.”*

As outlined in the EC guidance document on Article 6(4) (January 2007)<sup>1</sup>:

*“Appropriate assessments of the implications of the plan or project for the site concerned must precede its approval and take into account the cumulative effects which result from the combination of that plan or project with other plans or projects in view of the site's conservation objectives. This implies that all aspects of the plan or project which can, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, affect those objectives must be identified in the light of the best scientific knowledge in the field.*

*Assessment procedures of plans or projects likely to affect NATURA 2000 sites should guarantee full consideration of all elements contributing to the site integrity and to the overall coherence of the network, both in the definition of the baseline conditions and in the stages leading to identification of potential impacts, mitigation measures and residual impacts. These determine what has to be compensated, both in quality and quantity. Regardless of whether the provisions of Article 6(3) are delivered following existing environmental impact assessment procedures or other specific methods, it must be ensured that:*

- *Article 6(3) assessment results allow full traceability of the decisions eventually made, including the selection of alternatives and any imperative reasons of overriding public interest.*
- *The assessment should include all elements contributing to the site’s integrity and to the overall coherence of the network as defined in the site’s conservation objectives and Standard Data Form, and be based on best available scientific knowledge in the field. The information required should be updated and could include the following issues:*
  - *Structure and function, and the respective role of the site’s ecological assets;*
  - *Area, representativity and conservation status of the priority and nonpriority habitats in the site;*
  - *Population size, degree of isolation, ecotype, genetic pool, age class structure, and conservation status of species under Annex II of the Habitats Directive or Annex I of the Birds Directive present in the site;*
  - *Role of the site within the biographical region and in the coherence of the NATURA 2000 network; and,*
  - *Any other ecological assets and functions identified in the site.*
- *It should include a comprehensive identification of all the potential impacts of the plan or project likely to be significant on the site, taking into account cumulative impacts and other impacts likely to arise as a result of the combined action of the plan or project under assessment and other plans or projects.*
- *The assessment under Article 6(3) applies the best available techniques and methods, to estimate the extent of the effects of the plan or project on the biological integrity of the site(s) likely to be damaged.*
- *The assessment provides for the incorporation of the most effective mitigation measures into the plan or project concerned, in order to avoid, reduce or even cancel the negative impacts on the site.*
- *The characterisation of the biological integrity and the impact assessment should be based on the best possible indicators specific to the NATURA 2000 assets which must also be useful to monitor the plan or project implementation.”*

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<sup>1</sup> European Commission. (2007). 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;

### 3. STAGES OF THE APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

This Appropriate Assessment screening was undertaken in accordance with the European Commission Methodological Guidance on the provision of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2001), Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, in addition to the December 2009 publication from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government; 'Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities' and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011.

In order to comply with the above Guidelines and legislation, the Appropriate Assessment process must be structured as follows:

- 1) Screening stage (This report)
  - Description of plan or project, and local site or plan area characteristics;
  - Identification of relevant Natura 2000 sites, and compilation of information on their qualifying interests and conservation objectives
  - Assessment of likely effects – direct, indirect and cumulative- undertaken on the basis of available information as a desk study or field survey or primary research as necessary and,
  - Screening Statement with Conclusions.
- 2) Appropriate Assessment (Natura Impact Statement):
  - Description of the NATURA 2000 sites that will be considered further;
  - Identification and description of potential adverse impacts on the conservation objectives of these sites likely to occur from the project or plan; and,
  - Mitigation Measures that will be implemented to avoid, reduce or remedy any such potential adverse impacts
  - Assessment as to whether, following the implementation of the proposed mitigation measures, it can be concluded, beyond all reasonable scientific doubt, that there will be no adverse impact on the integrity of the relevant European Site in light of its conservation objectives"
  - Conclusions.
- 3) Alternative Solutions

If mitigation is possible that enables a risk to be avoided fully, then, subject to other necessary approvals, the project or plan may proceed. If mitigation measures are insufficient, or are not actually practicable and achievable to avoid the risk entirely, then, in the light of a negative assessment, the plan or project may not proceed. A wider search for alternative solutions may need to be considered – Stage 3. <sup>2</sup>

4) Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI)/Derogation. (: Stage 4 is the main derogation process of Article 6(4) which examines whether there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) for allowing a plan or project that will have adverse effects on the integrity of a NATURA 2000 site to proceed in cases where it has been established that no less damaging alternative solution exists. The extra protection measures for Annex I priority habitats come into effect when making the IROPI case.

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<sup>2</sup> (DoEHLG, 2009) Appropriate Assessment of Plans and projects in Ireland: Guidance for planning authorities.

## 4. SCREENING STAGE ASSESSMENT

### MANAGEMENT OF THE SITE

The plan or project is not directly connected with, or necessary to, the management of NATURA 2000 sites.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT<sup>3</sup>

Axis Construction Limited intend to apply to An Bord Pleanála for permission for a strategic housing development at this site of c.15.7 ha located on lands to the south of Clonattin Village, and north of the R742 Courtown Road, in the townlands of Goreybridge, Clonattin Upper and Raheenagurren East, Gorey, Co. Wexford.

The proposed development will consist of demolition of the existing dwelling and shed on site (c.334.27sqm); construction of 363 no. residential units, comprising 42 no. 1 bed apartments, 59 no. 2 bed apartments, 134 no. 3 bed houses, 124 no. 4 bed houses and 4 no. 5 bed houses, in a range of building typologies ranging in height from 2 to 3 storeys. The proposed development also includes a single storey creche (c. 513 sq.m), new public open spaces, provision of 690 no. car parking spaces and 222 no. cycle parking spaces. The proposal includes for new vehicular and pedestrian accesses and upgrades along Clonattin Village Road to the north, and a new access road (including bridge) to the R472 Courtown Road to the south via the existing access road serving the cinema (with associated upgrades to the existing road and at the junction with the Courtown Road).

All associated site development works (including site reprofiling), landscaping, boundary treatments and services provision including ESB substations.

An Environmental Impact Assessment Report has been prepared in respect of the proposed development.

### STORMWATER DRAINAGE ARRANGEMENTS

As outlined in the CS Consulting Engineering Services Report *“The proposed development site is currently undeveloped, however there is an existing development directly to the north (Clonattin Village). As part of the development of the Clonattin Village estate, a surface water pipe and an attenuation pond were constructed on the development lands subject to this application (Planning reference: 2003/4476). The attenuation pond was constructed to store approximately 6050 cubic metres of storm water (7,500m<sup>3</sup> when you include the freeboard) which allowed for the future discharge of surface water runoff of the applicant lands to discharge into.*

*The existing attenuation pond caters in excess of the 1 in 100 year storm event across both developments. A hydrobrake/flow control system was also installed on the outfall of the attenuation pond to the local stream and by restricting the flow, the likelihood of the proposed development adversely affecting the public drainage system or contributing to downstream flooding is mitigated. The existing hydrobrake/flow control system shall remain unchanged post the development of the applicant lands, therefore there shall be no increase in flood risk downstream of the applicant lands.”*

### Foul Drainage Infrastructure

As outlined in the CS Consulting Engineering Services Report *“Wexford County Council’s drainage records indicate a 300mm diameter uPVC foul sewer running through the subject site, from Clonattin Village towards*

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<sup>3</sup> The following is based on initial project description and is subject to change based on detailed design.

*Courtown Road to south-west of the proposed development. As part of the new development the existing 300mm sewer will be diverted as necessary to correspond with the proposed road network of the new development and retain its connection point to network on the Courtown Road. All foul effluent generated from the proposed development shall be collected in pipes of 150mm and 225mm diameter and flow under gravity into the diverted 300mm diameter uPVC sewer via new connections."*

It should be noted that all foul drainage generated in Gorey, outfalls to a local pump station, where it is then pumped to the Courtown Waste Water Treatment plant. In 2016, Irish Water invested €7.2 million in upgrading the Courtown Wastewater Treatment Plant, ensuring that treated effluent standards are met and maintained to ensure a high quality of water in Courtown's coastal areas. The increased capacity allows all wastewater from both the Courtown and Gorey catchment areas to be treated<sup>4</sup>.

A Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment was carried out by CS Consulting. It concluded:

- “• The site historically has no recorded flood events as noted in the OPW’s historical flood maps.*
- Predicted flood mapping for pluvial, tidal & fluvial flood events shall not affect the subject lands.*
- The permitted development shall have a storm water attenuation system to address a 1 in 100 year (plus climate change) extreme storm. This shall significantly reduce the volume of storm water leaving the site during extreme storms which in turn shall not affect the downstream existing public drainage system.*
- The likelihood of onsite flooding from the hydrogeological ground conditions are deemed to be minor and within acceptable levels.”*

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.independent.ie/regionals/goreyguardian/news/six-new-waste-water-plants-in-county-by-2021-37495262.html>





**ALTEMAR**  
Marine & Environmental Consultancy

Project: Residential Development  
Location: Gorey  
Date: 27/1/21  
Drawn By: Bryan Deegan



Figure 1. Site outline and location south east of Gorey, Co. Wexford.



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Figure 2. Satellite Image of proposed site and proximity of the Clonattin Upper River.







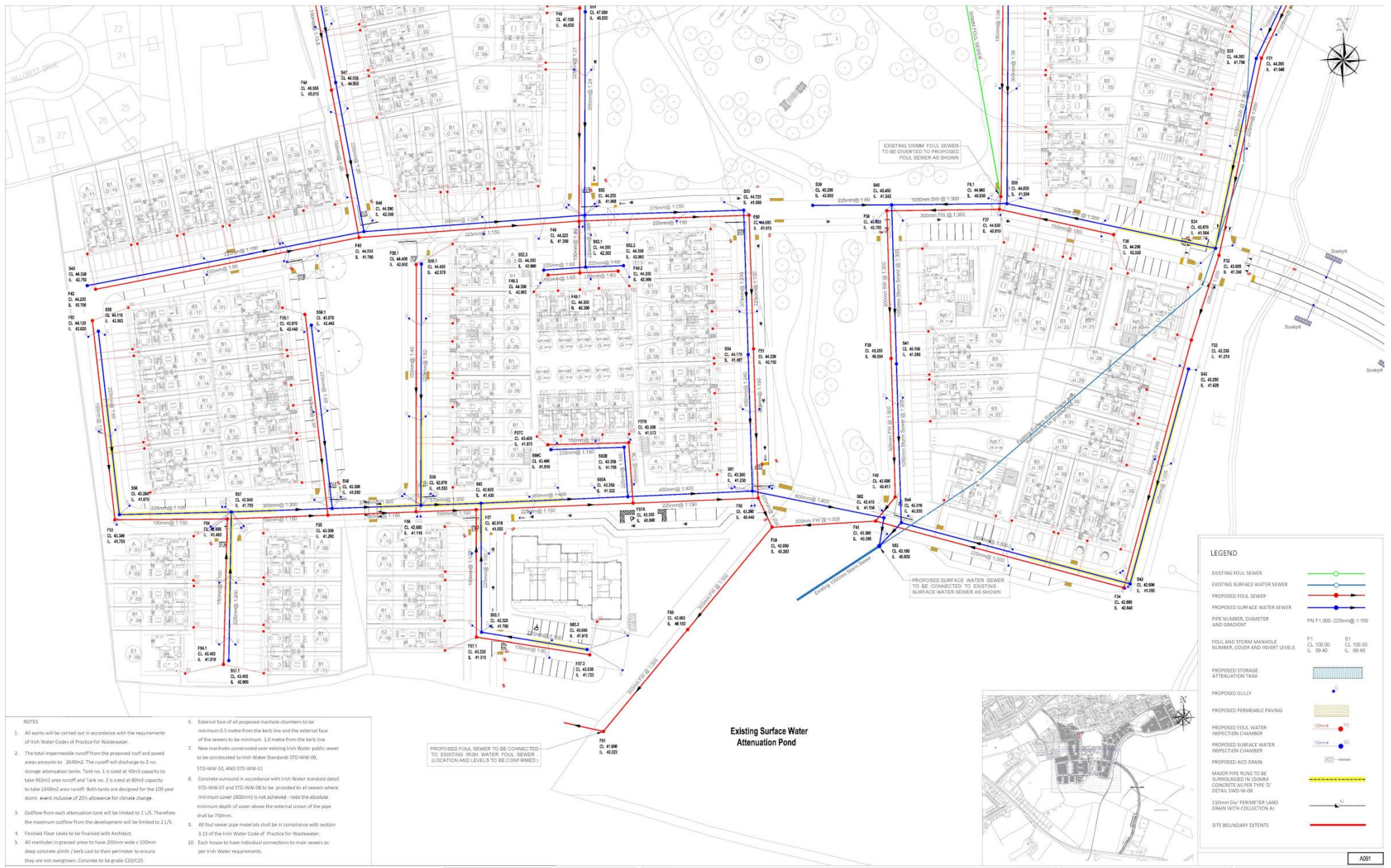


Figure 6. Proposed drainage strategy.

## IDENTIFICATION OF NATURA 2000 SITES/SPECIES POTENTIALLY AFFECTED.

The proposed works are not within a NATURA 2000 site. The NATURA 2000 sites within 15km are seen in Figures 6 & 7 and Table 1. Their features of interest and the potential impact of the works on the features of interest, are seen in Table 2. As can be seen from the EPA Waterframework Directive (WFD) data in Figure 8, the site is proximate to the Clonattin Stream and the drainage from the site will discharge to the Clonattin River which leads to the River Banogue. Instream works are proposed on the Clonattin River. There is a pathway from the site to the marine environment. However, there is no direct, or indirect, connection to any Natura 2000 site. No Natura 2000 sites are deemed to be in the potential Zone of Influence (ZoI). However, following the precautionary principle screening of all Natura 2000 within 15km (Table 1) is carried out in Table 2. It should be noted that there is no direct or indirect pathway to designated sites beyond 15km.

**Table 1.** Natura 2000 within 15km

Site Code	Name	Distance
<b>SPA</b>		
IE004143	Cahore Marshes SPA	13.5 km
<b>SAC</b>		
IE000781	Slaney River Valley SAC	4.0 km
IE001742	Kilpatrick Sandhills SAC	9.1 km
IE000700	Cahore Polders and Dunes SAC	13.9 km

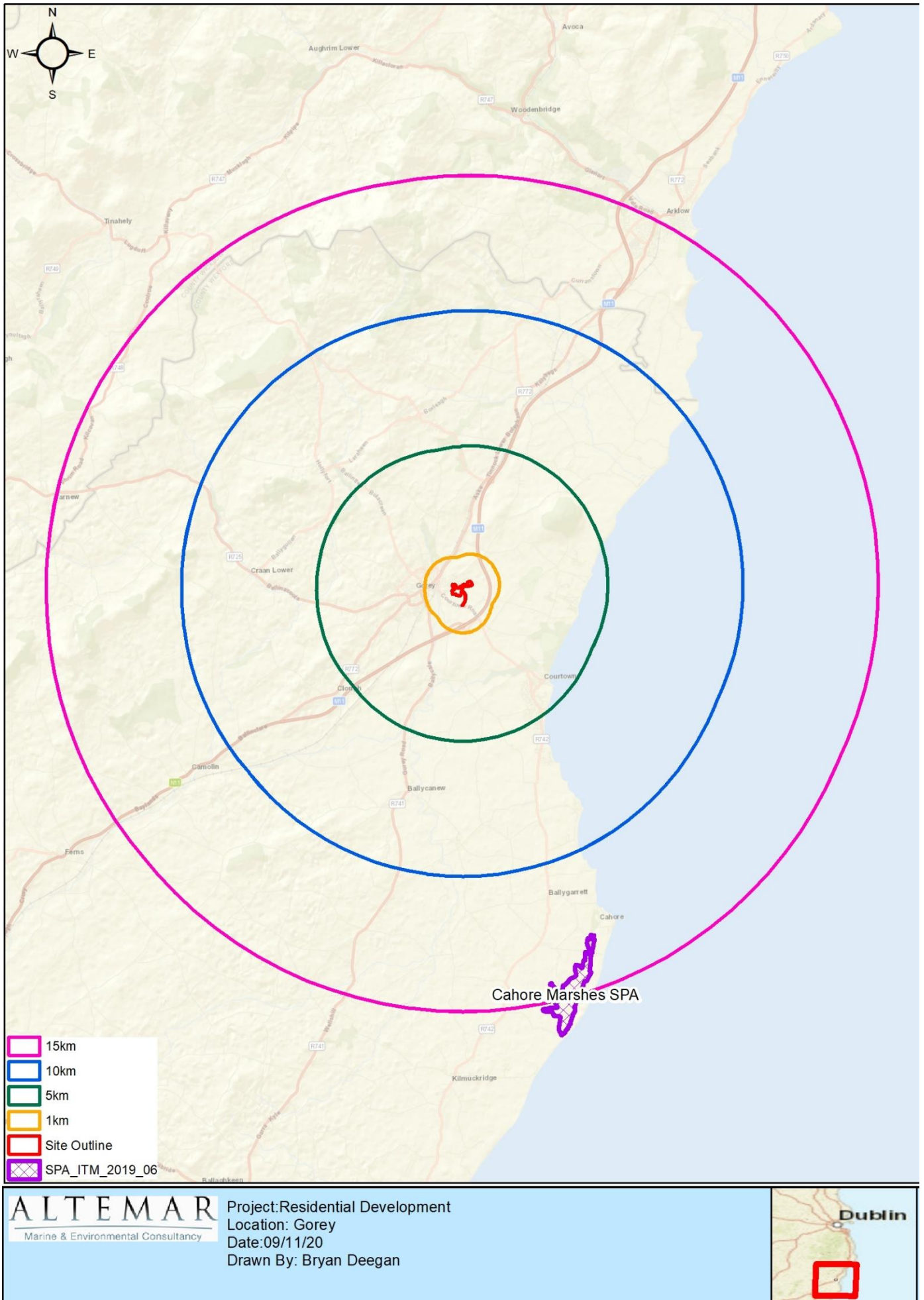
**Table 2.** Initial screening of NATURA 2000 sites within 15km of the proposed development.

NATURA CODE	NAME	Screened In/Out	Reason
<b>Special Protection Areas</b>			
IE004143	Cahore Marshes SPA	<b>Out</b>	<p><b>Conservation Objectives</b> To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat at Cahore Marshes SPA as a resource for the regularly-occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it.</p> <p><b>Features of Interest</b> Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) [A050] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142] Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b> The development site is located to the south east of Gorey, 13.5 km from the Cahore Marshes SPA. Any pollution, silt or discharges from the site that may enter the Clonattin River in the absence of any mitigation will undergo significant mixing will enter the marine environment and would not be at levels to cause impacts on the conservation objectives of this SPA, which is located inland of the marine environment. There is no direct or, indirect pathway to the proposed development site. Noise from the construction and operation of the proposed development will be localised in impact and would not extend to the SPA. Any measures, including standard construction phase controls used on site, are not necessary for the protection of the conservation interests of this SPA. The proposed development would not impact on the qualifying interests of this SPA.</p> <p><b>No significant effects are likely.</b></p>

Special Areas of Conservation			
NATURA CODE	NAME	Screened In/Out	Reason
IE000781	Slaney River Valley SAC	Out	<p><b>Conservation Objectives</b> To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected</p> <p><b>Features of Interest</b> Estuaries [1130] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] 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 Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitricho-Batrachion vegetation [3260] Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0] 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>Alosa fallax fallax</i> (Twaite Shad) [1103] <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106] <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355] <i>Phoca vitulina</i> (Harbour Seal) [1365]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b> The development site is located to the south east of Gorey, 4.0 km from the Slaney River Valley SAC. This SAC is located in a different river catchment with no direct or indirect hydrological or biodiversity pathway to the proposed development site. In the absence of mitigation measures, pollution, silt or discharges from the site could enter the Clonattin River which leads to the marine environment will undergo significant mixing and would not be at levels to cause impacts on the conservation objectives of this SAC which is located in a different catchment. The proposed development would not impact on the features of interest or the conservation objectives of this SAC.</p> <p><b>No significant effects are likely.</b></p>
IE001742	Kilpatrick Sandhills SAC	Out	<p><b>Conservation Objectives</b> To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.</p> <p><b>Features of Interest</b> Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] 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] Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (<i>Calluno-Ulicetea</i>) [2150]</p>



			<p><b>Potential Impact</b>  The development site is located to the south east of Gorey, 9.1 km from the Kilpatrick Sandhills SAC. This SAC is located in a different on the coast with no direct or indirect hydrological or biodiversity pathway to the proposed development site. In the absence of mitigation measures, pollution, silt or discharges from the site could enter the Clonattin River which leads to the marine environment will undergo significant mixing and would not be at levels to cause impacts on the conservation objectives of this SAC. The proposed development would not impact on the features of interest or the conservation objectives of this SAC.</p> <p><b>No significant effects are likely.</b></p>
IE000700	Cahore Polders and Dunes SAC	<b>Out</b>	<p><b>Conservation Objectives</b>  To restore the favourable conservation condition of the Features of Interest of Polders and Dunes SAC.</p> <p><b>Feature of Interest</b>  Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]  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]</p> <p><b>Potential Impact</b>  The development site is located to the south east of Gorey, 13.9 km from the Cahore Polders and Dunes SAC. This SAC is located in a different on the coast with no direct or indirect hydrological or biodiversity pathway to the proposed development site. In the absence of mitigation measures, pollution, silt or discharges from the site could enter the Clonattin River which leads to the marine environment will undergo significant mixing and would not be at levels to cause impacts on the conservation objectives of this SAC. The proposed development would not impact on the features of interest or the conservation objectives of this SAC</p> <p><b>No significant effects are likely.</b></p>



**Figure 6.** Special Protected Areas located within 15km of the proposed development.

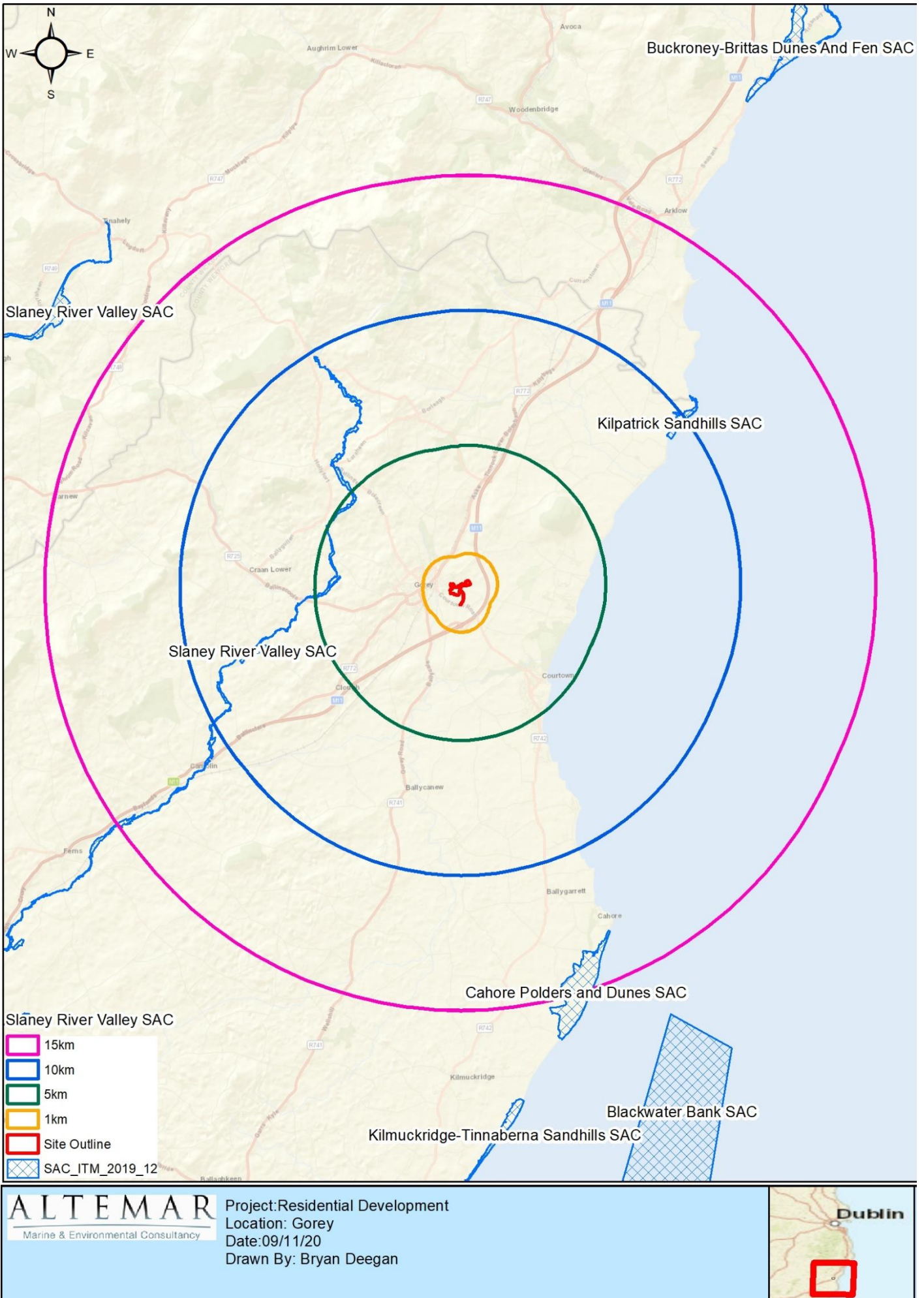
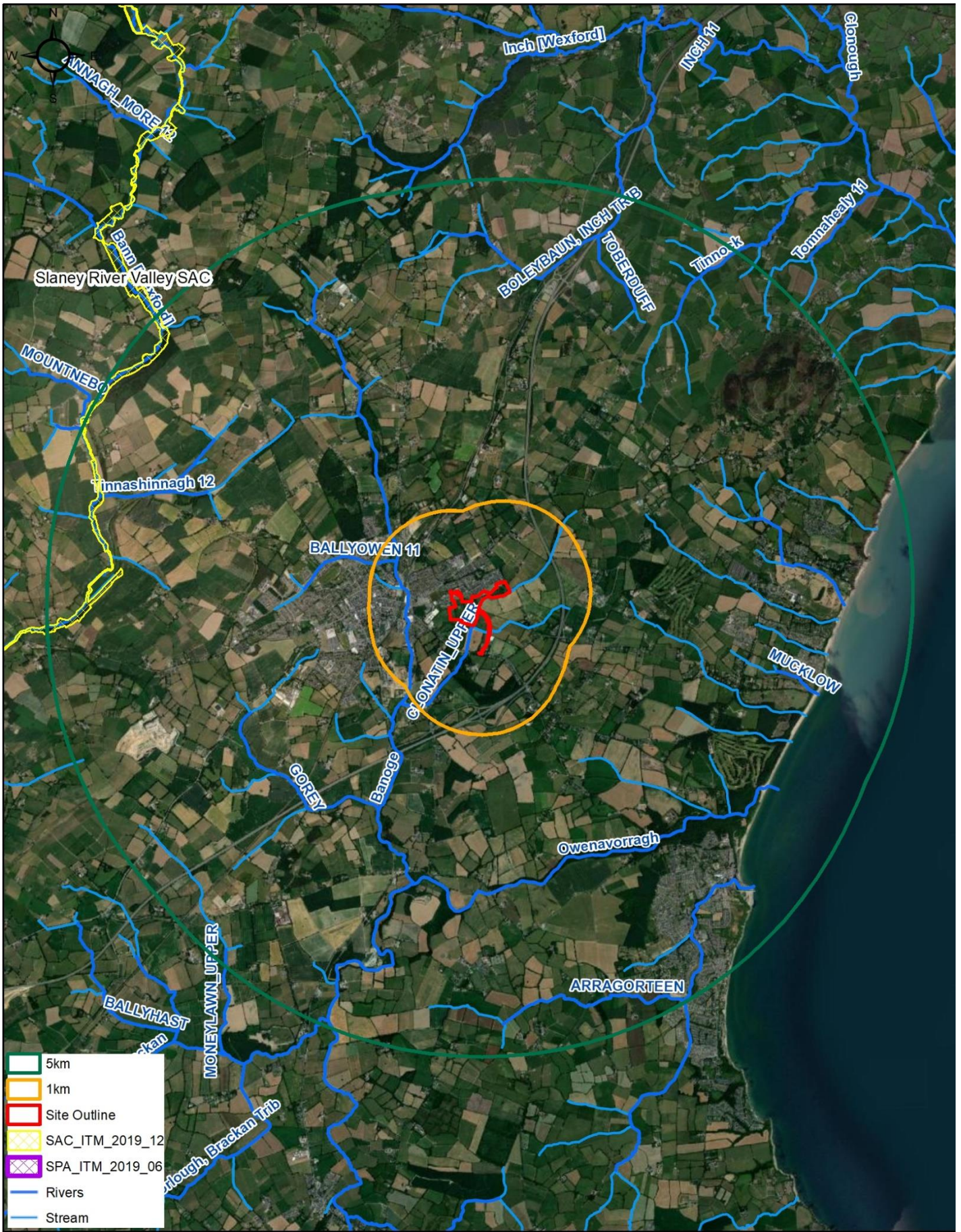


Figure 7. Special Areas of Conservation located within 15km of the proposed development.



<p>ALTEMAR Marine &amp; Environmental Consultancy</p>	Project: Residential Development	
	Location: Gorey	
	Date: 09/11/20	
	Drawn By: Bryan Deegan	

Figure 8. Watercourses within 5km of the proposed development (EPA-WFD data)

## **DESKTOP STUDIES**

The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG) database of designated conservation areas and NPWS records of rare and protected plant species, in addition to the National Biodiversity Data centre records were checked. No species (flora or fauna) have been noted within 1km, with the exception of bat species ((Brown Long-eared Bat (*Plecotus auritus*), Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus sensu lato*) and Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*)(2002 & 2005). Based on a search of historic satellite imagery approximately fifty percent of the proposed development site has been previously cleared for development (Google, June 2010) with the laying of stone, with additional areas of builders rubble and debris. The Clonattin Stream borders the south east of the site and runs along the southern boundary. The Clonattin Stream becomes the Clonattin River just after the where the existing attenuation pond connects to the watercourse. In line with Inland Fisheries Ireland guidance and the Gorey Local Area Plan 2017-2023 a 10m buffer will be maintained from the watercourse to the proposed development. In stream works are proposed.

## **SITE VISIT**

A site visit was carried out on the 29<sup>th</sup> September 2019 (Plate 1) and on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020. This included an inspection of the grounds for species and habitats of conservation importance.

## **Evaluation of Habitats**

The proposed development site is a mosaic of recolonising bare ground, agricultural grassland, hedgerows, with watercourses on the southern perimeter of the site. A drainage ditch is located within a hedgerow on the western portion of the site. No rare or protected habitats were noted.

## **Plant Species**

No rare or plant species of conservation value were noted during the field assessment. No rare or threatened plant species were recorded in the vicinity of the proposed site. No invasive species were noted on site e.g. Japanese knotweed, giant rhubarb, Himalayan balsam or giant hogweed.

## **Terrestrial Mammals**

No active setts or large burrows were seen on site. No mammal activity was noted. However, otter (*Lutra lutra*) may be present in the vicinity of the watercourse or attenuation pond. No holts were observed on site.

## **Amphibians**

The common frog (*Rana temporaria*) was not observed on site. However, given the watercourses and drainage ditches on site amphibians would be expected.

## **Bats**

Two bat emergent surveys were carried out in optimal conditions towards the end of the bat survey and flora survey season. In 2019 a bat emergent survey found Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) and Daubentons bats (*Myotis daubentonii*) foraging along hedgerows and over the pond respectfully. A second bat survey was carried out on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 noted three Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) exiting from the front facia of the derelict building on site. An application for a derogation licence in relation to the removal of the building has been submitted to the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Bats are not features of interest of nearby SAC's.

## **Summary of ecological importance**

No flora or terrestrial fauna of conservation importance were noted on site. No records of threatened or legally protected plant species are known to occur within the site. No signs of badger activity including foraging were noted on site. An EIAR is being submitted in conjunction with the AA Screening.



**Plate 1.** Proposed development site.



**Plate 2.** Existing Attenuation Pond for the development.

## **IN-COMBINATION EFFECTS**

The proposed development site is to the south east of Gorey. It is currently comprised primarily of recolonising bare ground and agricultural grassland with hedgerows and an existing attenuation pond on site. Based on a review of the planning application viewer ([www.myplan.ie](http://www.myplan.ie)) there are no developments of significance proposed in proximity of the proposed development. No in-combination effects are foreseen.

## **CONCLUSIONS<sup>5</sup>**

No Natura 2000 sites are within the zone of influence of this development. Having taking into consideration the effluent discharge from the proposed development works, the distance between the proposed development site to designated conservation sites, lack of direct or indirect hydrological pathway or biodiversity corridor link to conservation sites and the dilution effect with other effluent and surface runoff, it is concluded that this development that would not give rise to any significant effects to designated sites. The construction and operation of the proposed development will not impact on the conservation objectives of features of interest of Natura 2000 sites.

This report presents a Stage 1 Appropriate Assessment Screening 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 Natura 2000 site.

On the basis of the content of this report, the competent authority is enabled to conduct a Stage 1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment and consider whether, in view of best scientific knowledge and in view of the conservation objectives of the relevant European sites, the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect on any European site. There is no possibility of significant impacts on Natura 2000 sites, features of interest or site specific conservation objectives. A Natura Impact Statement is not required.

Accordingly, having carried out the Stage 1 Appropriate Assessment Screening, the competent authority may determine that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment of the Proposed Development is not required as it can be excluded, on the basis of objective scientific information following screening under this Regulation 42 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, as amended, that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on any European site.

## **DATA USED FOR THE AA SCREENING ASSESSMENT**

NPWS site synopses and Conservation objectives of sites within 10km and sites with a potential hydrological connection within 15km were examined. The most recent SAC and SPA boundary shapefiles were downloaded and overlaid on Bing road map and satellite imagery. A site visit was carried out including survey to determine if the site contained possible threats to a NATURA 2000 site.

## **REFERENCES**

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

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<sup>5</sup> Provisional conclusions based on information received to date.

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](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](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](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](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](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](http://www.npws.ie/publications/euconservationstatus/NPWS_2007_Conservation_Status_Report.pdf)
8. NPWS (2018) Conservation objectives for Cahore Marshes SPA [004143]. Generic Version 6.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
9. NPWS (2011) Conservation Objectives: Slaney River Valley SAC 000781. Version 1.0. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
10. NPWS (2017) Conservation Objectives: Kilpatrick Sandhills SAC 001742. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.



## FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS REPORT

Details of project	Appropriate Assessment Screening for a proposed development at Goreybridge, Co. Wexford..
Name and Location of the NATURA 2000 sites within 15km.	Cahore Marshes SPA- No direct or indirect pathway Slaney River Valley SAC - No direct or indirect pathway Kilpatrick Sandhills SAC - No direct or indirect pathway Cahore Polders and Dunes SAC - No direct or indirect pathway
Description of the Project	Axis Construction are submitting this application to An Bord Pleanála for development at a site at Clonattin, Goreybridge, Wexford.
Is the Project directly connected with the management of the NATURA 2000 site?	No
Details of any other projects or plans that together with this project could affect the NATURA 2000 site	None
The assessment of significant effects	
Describe how the project is likely to affect the NATURA 2000 site	Negligible Impact Predicted.
Response to consultation	N/A
Data collected to carry out the assessment	Site Visit and Supporting NPWS data.
Who carried out the assessment	Altemar Ltd.
Sources of data	NPWS website, standard data form, conservation objectives data, field surveys of the site and references outlined in the AA Screening Report.
Explain why the effects are not considered significant	No Natura 2000 sites are within the zone of influence of this development. Having taking into consideration the works, instream construction, the effluent discharge from the proposed development works, the distance between the proposed development site to designated conservation sites, lack of direct or indirect hydrological pathway or biodiversity corridor link to conservation sites and the dilution effect with other effluent and surface runoff, it is concluded that this development that would not give rise to any significant effects to designated sites.
Level of assessment completed	Stage 1 Screening
<b>Overall conclusions</b>	
On the basis of the content of this report, the competent authority is enabled to conduct a Stage 1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment and consider whether, in view of best scientific knowledge and in view of the conservation objectives of the relevant European sites, the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect on any European site.	