

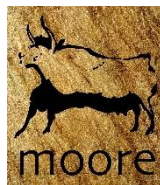
Report for the purposes of Appropriate Assessment Screening

as required under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive
(Council Directive 92/43/EEC)

Huntstown 220 kV Substation and Underground Cable Routes

Prepared by: Moore Group – Environmental Services

7 September 2021



On behalf of
Huntstown Power Company Limited
& An Bord Pleanála

Project Proponent	Huntstown Power Company Limited
Project	Huntstown Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) Substation and Underground Cables
Title	Report for the purposes of Appropriate Assessment Screening Huntstown Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) Substation and Underground Cables



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Appendix A – Finding of No Significant Effects Report

Abbreviations

AA	Appropriate Assessment
EEC	European Economic Community
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EU	European Union
GIS	Geographical Information System
LAP	Local Area Plan
NHA	Natural Heritage Area
NIS	Natura Impact Statement
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
OSI	Ordnance Survey Ireland
pNHA	proposed Natural Heritage Area
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SPA	Special Protection Area
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage System
WFD	Water Framework Directive

1. Introduction

1.1. General Introduction

This report for the purposes of Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening has been prepared to support a Planning Application for the Proposed Development (described in Section 3 below). This report contains information required for the competent authority to undertake screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) on the potential construction and operation of a Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) Substation and Underground Cables at Huntstown, Co. Dublin (Fingal) (hereafter referred to as the Proposed Development) to significantly affect European sites.

Screening is the process that addresses the first two tests of Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (as amended) (referred to as the Habitats Directive):

- I). whether a plan or project is directly connected to or necessary for the management of the site, and
- II). whether a plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, is likely to have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site in view of its conservation objectives.

Having regard to the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (section 177U and 177V), the purpose of a screening exercise under section 177U of the PDA 2000 is to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with another plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a European site.

If it cannot be *excluded* on the basis of objective information that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site then it is necessary to carry out a stage 2 appropriate assessment.

When screening the project, there are two possible outcomes:

- the project poses no risk of a significant effect and as such requires no further assessment; and
- the project has potential to have a significant effect (or this is uncertain) and AA of the project is necessary.

This report has been prepared by Moore Group - Environmental Services to support an application for planning permission for the Proposed Development to allow An Bord Pleanála to carry out AA screening in relation to the Proposed Development. The report was compiled by Ger O'Donohoe (B.Sc. Applied Aquatic Sciences (GMIT, 1993) & M.Sc. Environmental Sciences (TCD, 1999)) who has 25 years' experience in environmental impact assessment and has completed numerous Appropriate Assessment Screening Reports and Natura Impact Statements on terrestrial and aquatic habitats for numerous Data Storage Facilities.

1.2. Legislative Background - The Habitats and Birds Directives

It is necessary that the Proposed Development has regard to Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. This is transposed into Irish Law by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 to 2015 (referred to as the Habitats Regulations). The Planning and Development Act 2000 (section 177U and 177V) govern the requirement to carry out appropriate assessment per Section 1.1 above.

The Habitats Directive is the main legislative instrument for the protection and conservation of biodiversity in the European Union (EU). Under the Habitats Directive, Member States are obliged to designate Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) which contain habitats or species considered important for protection and conservation in a EU context.

The Birds Directive (Council Directive 2009/147/EC on the Conservation of Wild Birds), transposed into Irish law by the Habitats Regulations 2011, is concerned with the long-term protection and management of all wild bird species and their habitats in the EU. Among other things, the Birds Directive requires that Special Protection Areas (SPAs) be established to protect migratory species and species which are rare, vulnerable, in danger of extinction, or otherwise require special attention.

SACs designated under the Habitats Directive and SPAs, designated under the Birds Directive, form a pan-European network of protected sites known as Natura 2000. The Habitats Directive sets out a unified system for the protection and management of SACs and SPAs. These sites are also referred to as European sites.

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the requirement for an assessment of proposed plans and projects likely to affect Natura 2000 sites.

Article 6(3) establishes the requirement to screen all plans and projects and to carry out a further assessment if required (Appropriate Assessment (AA)). Article 6(4) establishes requirements in cases of imperative reasons of overriding public interest:

Article 6(3): *“Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subjected to an 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 implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.”*

Article 6(4): *“If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature, Member States shall take all*

compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted. Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to the beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest.”

2. Methodology

The Commission’s methodological guidance (EC, 2002 & 2018, see Section 2.1 below) promotes a four-stage process to complete the AA and outlines the issues and tests at each stage. An important aspect of the process is that the outcome at each successive stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required.

Stages 1 and 2 deal with the main requirements for assessment under Article 6(3). Stage 3 may be part of Article 6(3) or may be a necessary precursor to Stage 4. Stage 4 is the main derogation step of Article 6(4).

Stage 1 Screening: This stage examines the likely effects of a project either alone or in combination with other projects upon a Natura 2000 site and considers whether it can be objectively concluded that these effects will not be significant. In order to screen out a project, it must be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment: In this stage, there is a consideration of the impact of the project with a view to ascertain whether there will be any adverse effect on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, with respect to the site’s structure and function and its conservation objectives. Additionally, where there are predicted impacts, an assessment of the potential mitigation of those impacts is considered.

Stage 3 Assessment of Alternative Solutions: This stage examines alternative ways of implementing the project that, where possible, avoid any adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site.

Stage 4 Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain: Where imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) exist, an assessment to consider whether compensatory measures will or will not effectively offset the damage to the sites will be necessary.

To ensure that the Proposed Development complies fully with the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and all relevant Irish transposing legislation, Moore Group compiled this report to support an application for planning permission for the Proposed Development to allow An Bord Pleanála to carry out AA screening in relation to the Proposed Development to determine whether the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with another plan or project will have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site.

2.1. Guidance

This report has been compiled in accordance with guidance contained in the following documents:

- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities. (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2010 rev.).
- Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities. Circular NPWS 1/10 & PSSP 2/10.
- 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 (European Commission Environment Directorate-General, 2001); hereafter referred to as the EC Article Guidance Document.
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC (EC Environment Directorate-General, 2000); hereafter referred to as MN2000.
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2018).
- OPR Practice Note PN01 Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management (OPR, 2021).

2.2. Data Sources

Sources of information that were used to collect data on the Natura 2000 network of sites, and the environment within which they are located, are listed below:

- The following mapping and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) data sources, as required:
 - National Parks & Wildlife (NPWS) protected site boundary data;
 - Ordnance Survey of Ireland (OSI) mapping and aerial photography;
 - OSI/Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rivers and streams, and catchments;
 - Open Street Maps;
 - Digital Elevation Model over Europe (EU-DEM);
 - Google Earth and Bing aerial photography 1995-2021;
- Online data available on Natura 2000 sites as held by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) from www.npws.ie including:
 - Natura 2000 - Standard Data Form;
 - Conservation Objectives;
 - Site Synopses;
- National Biodiversity Data Centre records;
 - Online database of rare, threatened and protected species;
 - Publicly accessible biodiversity datasets.
- Status of EU Protected Habitats in Ireland. (National Parks & Wildlife Service, 2019); and
- Relevant Development Plans;
 - Fingal County Development Plan 2017-2023

3. Description of the Proposed Development

The underground transmission lines (4 no.) will connect the proposed 220 kV GIS Mooretown Substation serving the data hall development proposed under concurrent application (Reg. Ref. FW21A/0151) located on lands adjacent to Huntstown Power Station, North Road, Finglas, Dublin 11 with the 220 kV Finglas cable route located to the south of the site on the private road connecting the North Road with Huntstown Power Station and Huntstown Quarry, with the 220 kV Corduff cable route located to the west of the site and just north of the private road connecting the North Road with Huntstown Power Station and Huntstown Quarry and to the existing Huntstown 220 kV AIS station to the west via 220 kV cables to the Huntstown A and Huntstown B circuits. The four proposed transmission cables cover a distance of between c.125m and c.300m each between the proposed substation and the adjacent connection points.

The proposed development will consist of the following:

(1) Construction of a 2 storey 220 kV Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) substation known as 'Mooretown' comprising switchgear floor, cable pit/entry room, generator room, relay room, battery room, workshop, toilet, store room, mess room, hoist space, stair cores and circulation areas (c.2,068 sqm total gross floor area) with an overall height of c.17m located within an overall EirGrid and Customer compound (c.11,231 sqm in area). Lightning electrodes are attached to the roof of the substation building resulting in an overall height of c.20m. The compound includes 4 no. 220/20 kV transformers, 4 no. 20 kV switchgear buildings and 1 no. 20 kV control room buildings (c.5 m high and c. 35.5 sqm in area each), 220 kV series coil (equipment), fire walls (ranging from c.10 m-12.5 m high), lightning finials and monopoles (c.20 m high). The overall compound is surrounded by a c.2.6 m high palisade fence. The proposed substation will serve the data centre proposed under concurrent application Reg. Ref. FW21A/0151;

(2) The underground cable (Cable No. 1) will follow a route originating at the proposed Mooretown Substation extending south and then west along the private road connecting the North Road with Huntstown Power Station and Huntstown Quarry. The route terminates at a proposed joint bay on the existing Corduff cable route. The underground cable (Cable No. 2) will follow a route originating at the proposed Mooretown Substation Compound / series coil extending south across the internal road connecting the North Road with Huntstown Power Station and Huntstown Quarry. The route terminates at a proposed joint bay on the existing Finglas cable route. Removal of the redundant sections of the 220 kV Corduff cables and 220 kV Finglas cables serving the existing AIS bay to Huntstown Power Station. The underground cable (Cable No. 3) will follow a route originating at the Mooretown GIS Substation extending south and then west to the adjacent existing ESB Huntstown A AIS station. The route terminates in the ESB Huntstown A AIS Station. The underground cable (Cable No. 4) will follow a route originating at the Mooretown GIS Substation extending south and then west to the adjacent existing Huntstown B AIS station. The route terminates in the ESB Huntstown B AIS Station;

(3) The development includes all associated and ancillary site development and construction works, services provision, drainage works, connections to the substations, all internal road/footpath access routes, landscaping and boundary treatment works, vehicular access onto the private road to the south of the site and provision of 9 no. car parking spaces in the overall compound.

The proposed development includes the infilling a section of the existing land drain along the western side of the site and replacing with a 900mm ϕ pipe. This has also been proposed under the concurrent application data storage facility application. This existing land drain flows south to north. This replacement pipe has been designed in accordance with OPW Guidelines.

The above mentioned drainage ditch adjacent to the Huntstown Power Facility is intermittently hydraulically linked via the Huntstown Stream depending on flow rates and rainfall.

The Huntstown Stream leads to the Ward River c. 6.6km downstream and the Ward River discharges to the sea at Malahide Estuary over 15 river km downstream of the site. Therefore, the proposed development site has limited connectivity to the Malahide Estuary SAC or SPA.

Figure 1 shows the Proposed Development location and Figure 2 shows a detailed view of the Proposed Development boundary on recent aerial photography. Figure 3 shows the layout of the Proposed Development.

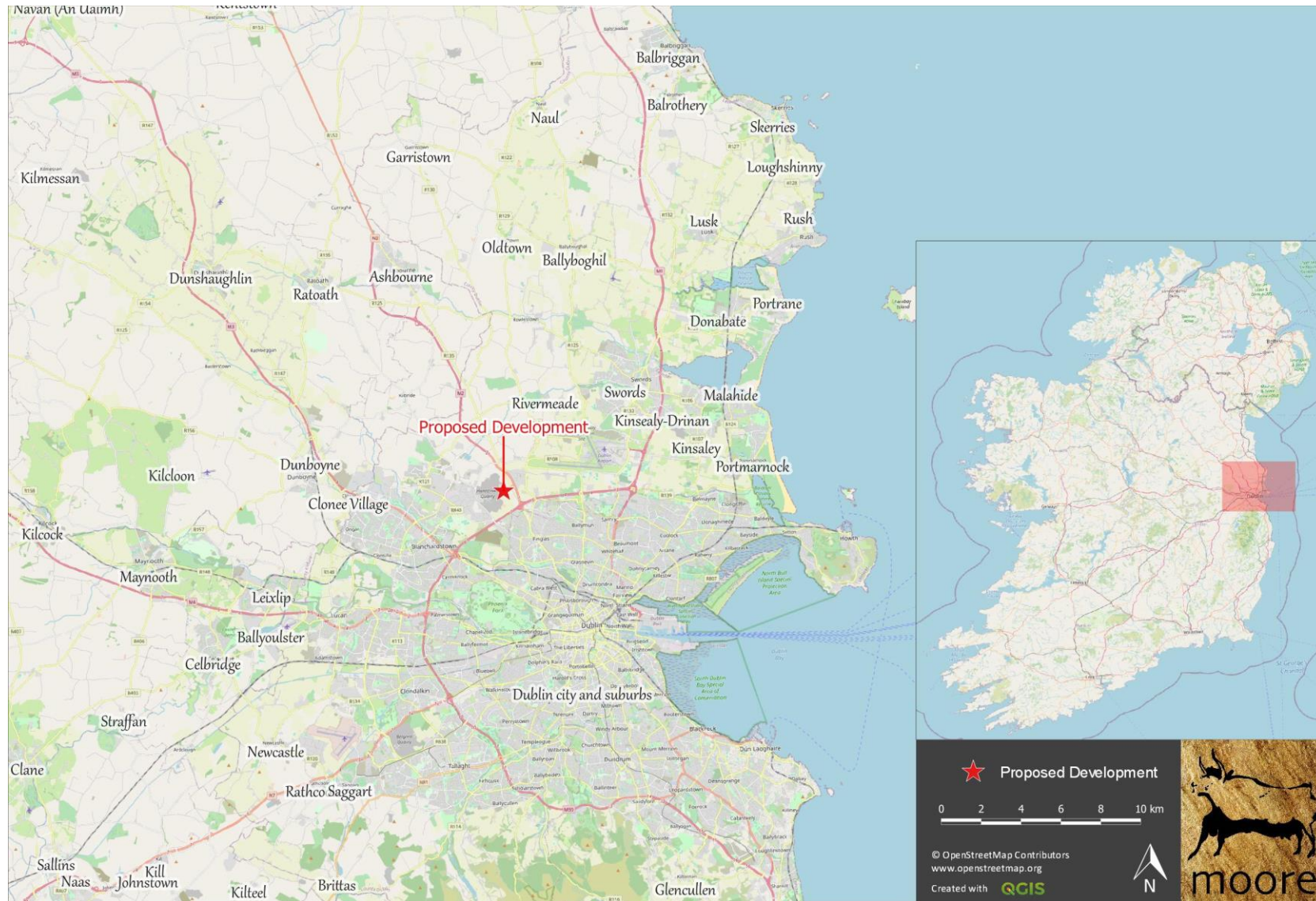


Figure 1. Showing the Proposed Development location in Huntstown, Co. Dublin.

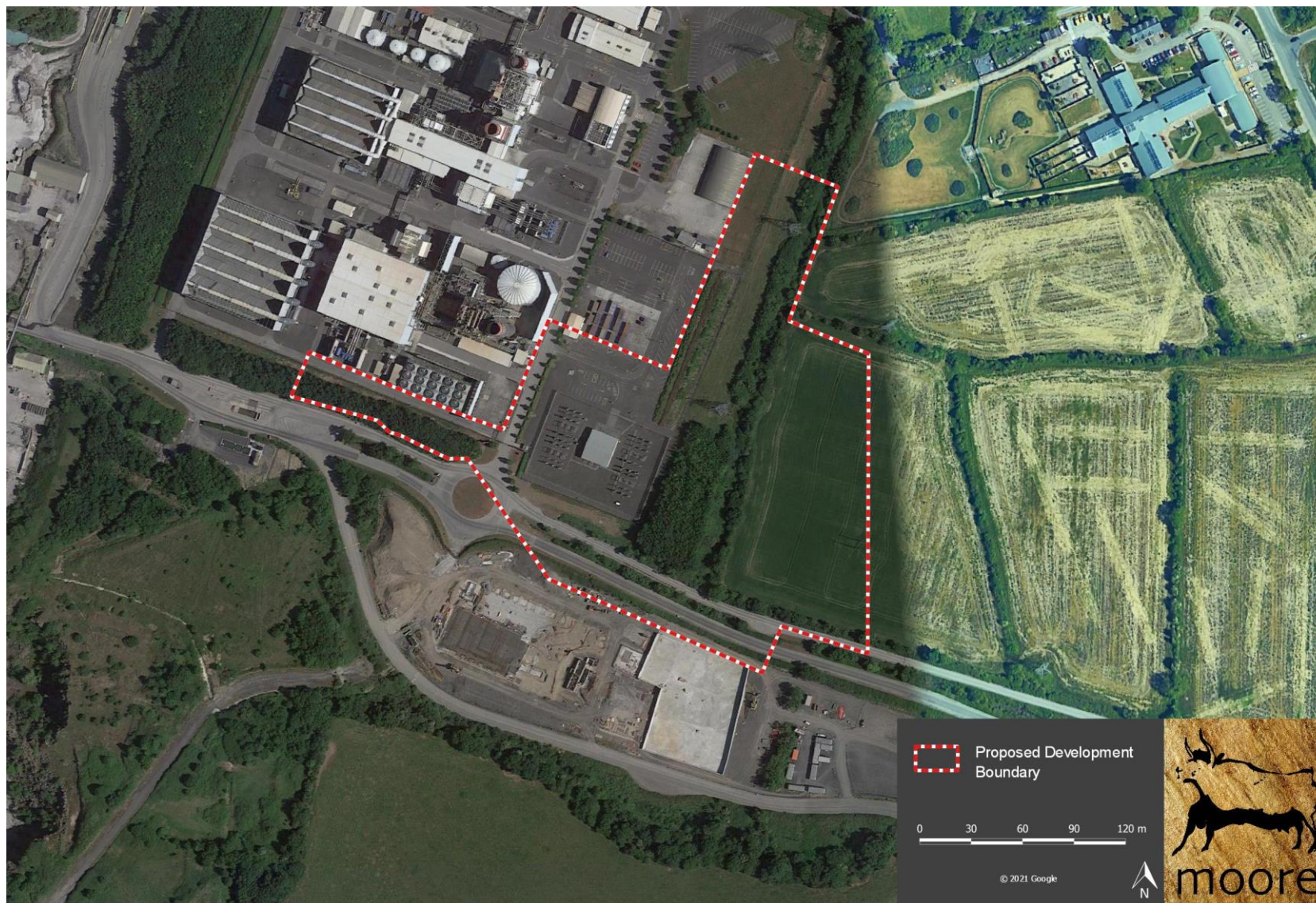


Figure 2. Showing the Proposed Development boundary on recent aerial photography.

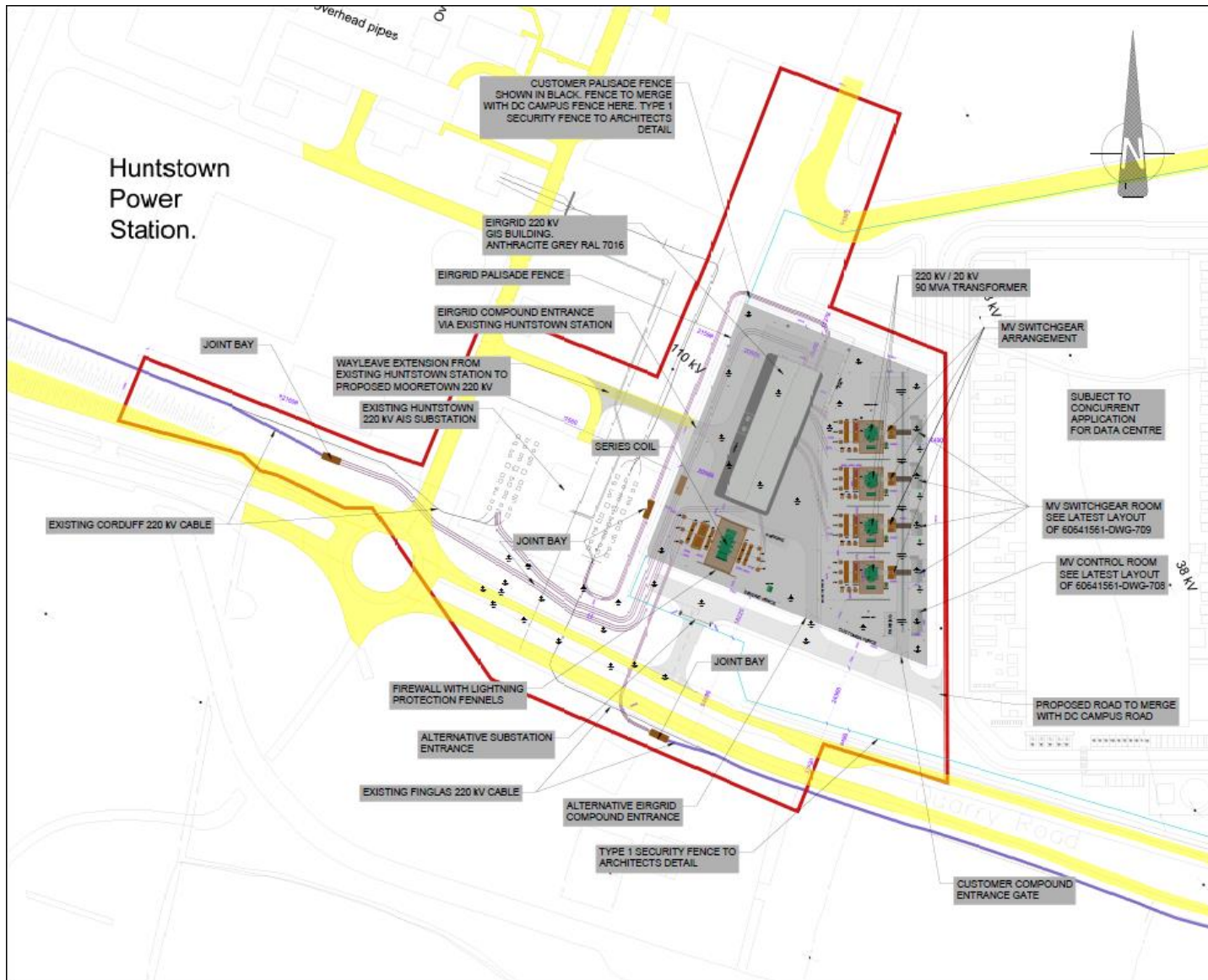


Figure 3. Plan of the Proposed Development.

4. Identification of Natura 2000 Sites

4.1. Description of Natura Sites Potentially Affected

Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2009) Guidance on Appropriate Assessment recommends an assessment of European sites within a Zone of Influence (Zoi) of 15km. This distance is a guidance only and a zone of influence of a proposed development is the geographical area over which it could affect the receiving environment in a way that could have significant effects on the Qualifying Interests of a European site. This should be established on a case-by-case basis using the Source- Pathway-Receptor framework and not by arbitrary distances (such as 15 km).

The Zone of Influence may be determined by connectivity to the Proposed Development in terms of:

- Nature, scale, timing and duration of works and possible impacts, nature and size of excavations, storage of materials, flat/sloping sites;
- Distance and nature of pathways (dilution and dispersion; intervening 'buffer' lands, roads etc.); and
- Sensitivity and location of ecological features.

The potential for source pathway receptor connectivity is firstly identified and detailed information is then provided on sites with connectivity. European sites that are located within 15km of the Proposed Development are listed in Table 1 and presented in Figures 4 and 5, below.

Table 1 European Sites located within 15km or the potential Zone of Influence¹ of the Proposed Development.

Site Code	Site name	Distance (km) ²
000199	Baldoyle Bay SAC	11.94
000205	Malahide Estuary SAC	9.76
000206	North Dublin Bay SAC	10.82
000208	Rogerstown Estuary SAC	12.83
000210	South Dublin Bay SAC	11.03
001398	Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC	11.83
004006	North Bull Island SPA	10.82
004015	Rogerstown Estuary SPA	13.44
004016	Baldoyle Bay SPA	11.97
004024	South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA	8.39
004025	Malahide Estuary SPA	9.81

¹ All European sites potentially connected irrespective of the nature or scale of the Proposed Development.

² Distances indicated are the closest geographical distance between the proposed Project and the European site boundary, as made available by the NPWS. Connectivity along hydrological pathways may be significantly greater.

Spatial boundary data on the Natura 2000 network was extracted from the NPWS website (www.npws.ie) on the 1 June 2021.

The large deep drainage ditch adjacent to the Huntstown Power Facility is intermittently hydraulically linked via the Huntstown Stream depending on rainfall and flow rates.

The Huntstown Stream leads to the Ward River c. 6.6km downstream and the Ward River discharges to the sea at Malahide Estuary over 15 river km downstream of the site. Therefore, the proposed development site has limited connectivity to the Malahide Estuary SAC or SPA.

The Qualifying Interests (QIs) and Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of the European sites in the vicinity of the Proposed Development are provided in Table 2 below.

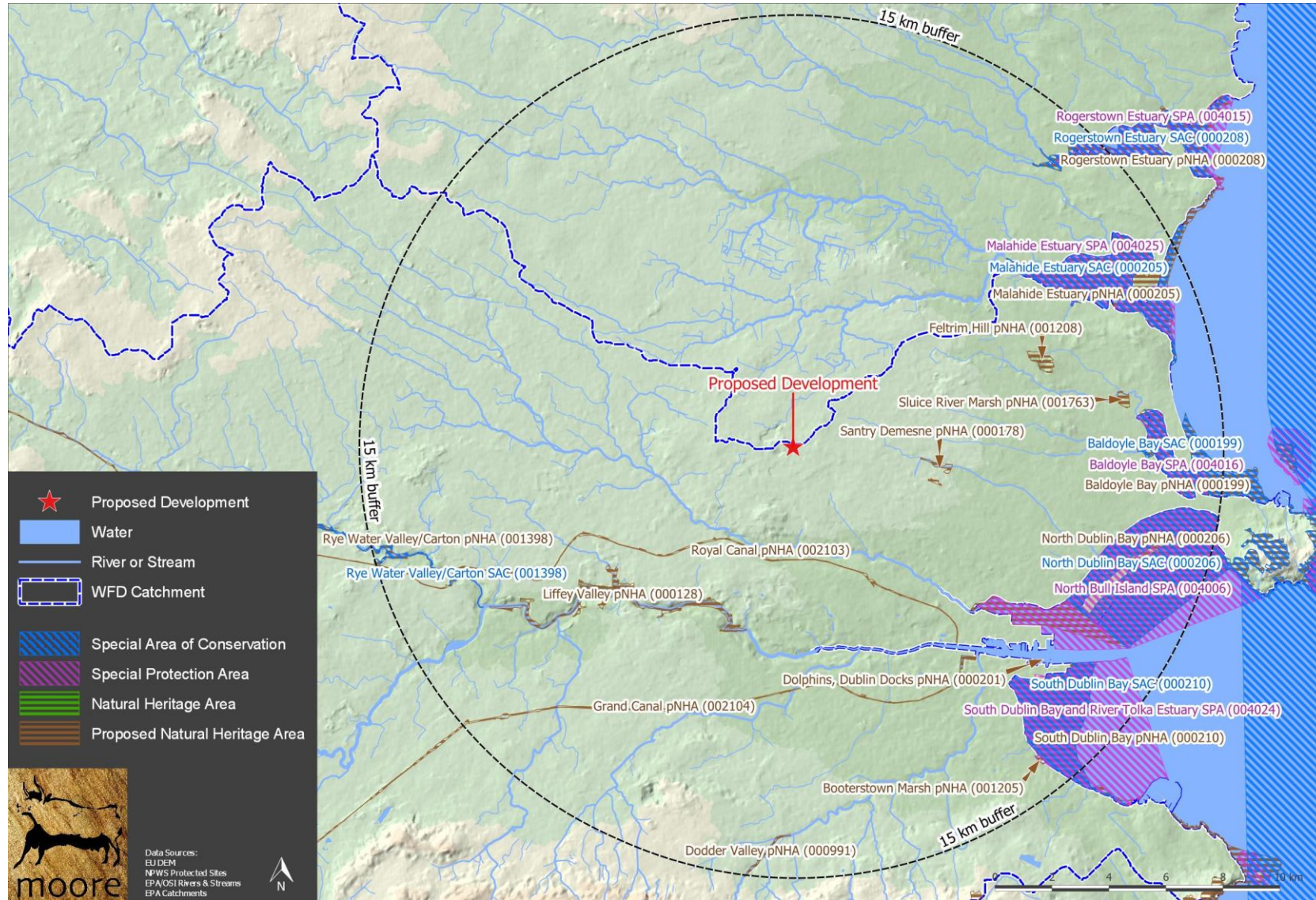


Figure 4. Showing European sites and NHAs/pNHAs within 15km of the Proposed Development.

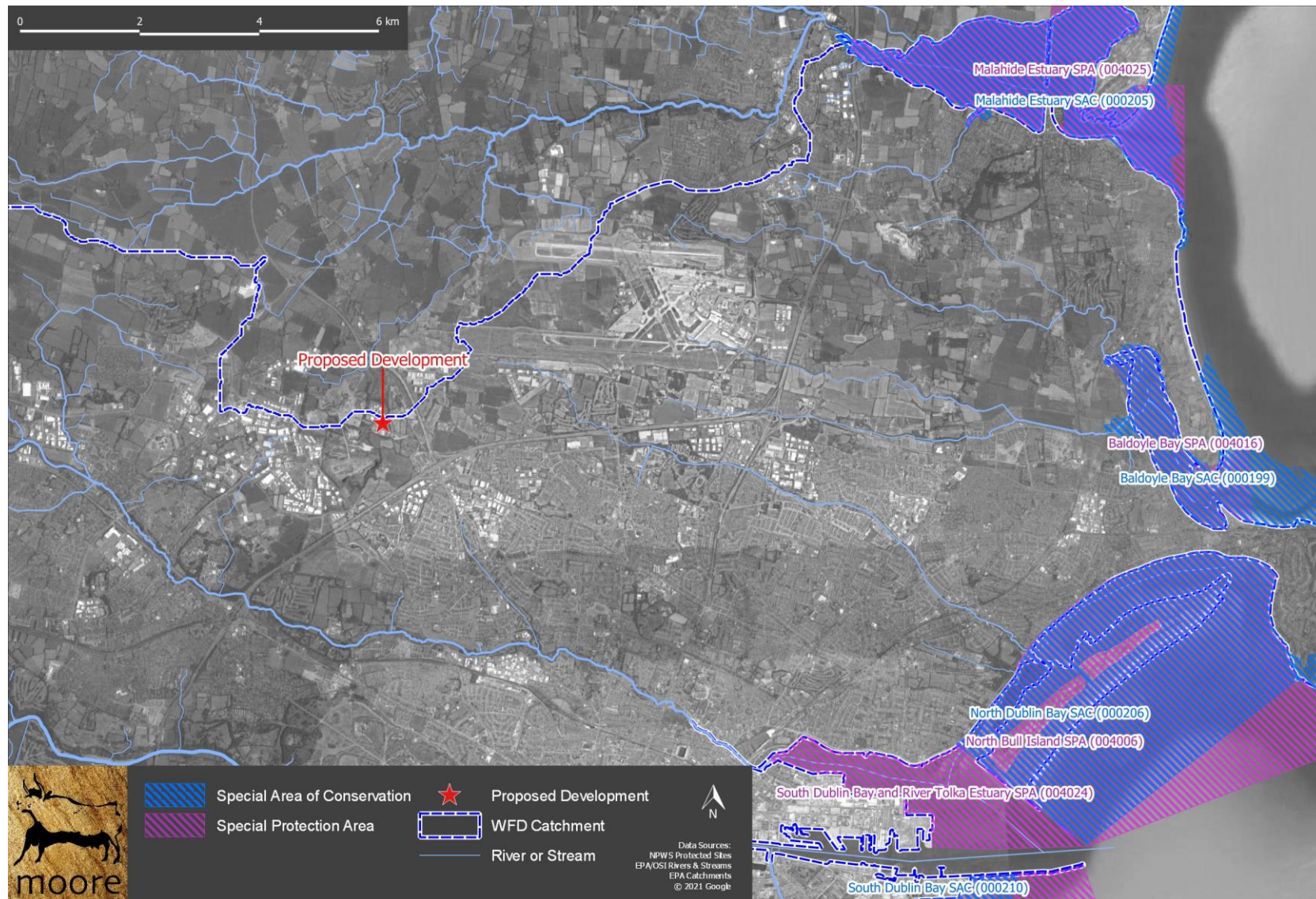


Figure 5. Detailed view of European sites in the vicinity of the Proposed Development.

Table 2 Identification of relevant European sites using Source-Pathway-Receptor model and compilation of information QIs and conservation objectives.

European site name & Site code	Location Relative to the Proposed Development Site	Connectivity – Source-Pathway-Receptor	Considered further in Screening – Y/N
<p>Baldoyle Bay SAC (000199)</p> <p>4 Qualifying Interests</p> <p>NPWS (2012) Conservation Objectives: Baldoyle Bay SAC 000199. Version 1.0. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.</p>	<p>11.94km to the east of the Proposed Development</p>	<p>No</p> <p>There are no pathways or connectivity to the habitats of this site.</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>Malahide Estuary SAC (000205)</p> <p>7 Qualifying Interests</p> <p>Including Priority Habitat – Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]</p> <p>NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: Malahide Estuary SAC 000205. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.</p>	<p>9.76km to the northeast of the Proposed Development</p>	<p>No</p> <p>The significant distance between the proposed development site and any European Sites, and the very weak and indirect ecological pathway is such that the proposal will not result in any likely changes to the European sites that comprise part of the Natura 2000 network in Malahide Estuary.</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>North Dublin Bay SAC (000206)</p> <p>10 Qualifying Interests</p> <p>Including Priority Habitat – [2130] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)</p> <p>NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: North Dublin Bay SAC 000206. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.</p>	<p>10.82km to the southwest of the Proposed Development</p>	<p>No</p> <p>There are no pathways or connectivity to the habitats or species of this site.</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>Rogerstown Estuary SAC (000208)</p> <p>7 Qualifying Interests</p> <p>Including Priority Habitat – Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]</p> <p>NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: Rogerstown Estuary SAC 000208. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.</p>	<p>12.83km to the northeast of the Proposed Development</p>	<p>No</p> <p>There are no pathways or connectivity to the habitats of this species.</p>	<p>N</p>

European site name & Site code	Location Relative to the Proposed Development Site	Connectivity – Source-Pathway-Receptor	Considered further in Screening – Y/N
<p>South Dublin Bay SAC (000210)</p> <p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]</p> <p>NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: South Dublin Bay SAC 000210. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.</p>	<p>11.03km to the southeast of the Proposed Development</p>	<p>No</p> <p>There are no pathways or connectivity to the habitats of this species.</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC (001398)</p> <p>3 Qualifying Interests</p> <p>Including Priority Habitats – [7220] Petrifying springs with tufa formation (<i>Cratoneurion</i>)</p> <p>NPWS (2021) Conservation objectives for Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC [001398]. Generic Version 8.0. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage</p>	<p>11.83km to the southwest of the Proposed Development</p>	<p>No</p> <p>There are no pathways or connectivity to the habitats of this species.</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>North Bull Island SPA (004006)</p> <p>18 SCI's</p> <p>NPWS (2015) Conservation Objectives: North Bull Island SPA 004006. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.</p>	<p>10.82km to the southeast of the Proposed Development</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Due to distance and the lack of any relevant ex-situ factors of significance to these species or habitat.</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>Rogerstown Estuary SPA (004015)</p> <p>12 SCI's</p> <p>NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: Rogerstown Estuary SPA 004015. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.</p>	<p>13.44km to the northeast of the Proposed Development</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Due to distance and the lack of any relevant ex-situ factors of significance to these species or habitat.</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>Baldoyle Bay SPA (004016)</p> <p>7 SCI's</p> <p>NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: Baldoyle Bay SPA 004016. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.</p>	<p>11.97km to the east of the Proposed Development</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Due to distance and the lack of any relevant ex-situ factors of significance to these species or habitat.</p>	<p>N</p>

European site name & Site code	Location Relative to the Proposed Development Site	Connectivity – Source-Pathway-Receptor	Considered further in Screening – Y/N
<p>South Dublin and River Tolka Estuary SPA (004024)</p> <p>14 SCI's</p> <p>NPWS (2015) Conservation Objectives: South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA 004024. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.</p>	<p>8.39km to the southeast of the Proposed Development</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Due to distance and the lack of any relevant ex-situ factors of significance to these species or habitat.</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>Malahide Estuary SPA (004025)</p> <p>15 SCI's</p> <p>NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: Malahide Estuary SPA 004025. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.</p>	<p>9.81km to the northeast of the Proposed Development</p>	<p>No</p> <p>The significant distance between the proposed development site and any European Sites, and the very weak and indirect ecological pathway is such that the proposal will not result in any likely changes to the European sites that comprise part of the Natura 2000 network in Malahide Estuary.</p>	<p>N</p>

4.2. Ecological Network Supporting Natura 2000 Sites

An analysis of the proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA) and designated Natural Heritage Areas (NHA) in terms of their role in supporting the species using Natura 2000 sites was undertaken. It was assumed that these supporting roles mainly related to mobile fauna such as mammals and birds which may use pNHAs and NHAs as “stepping stones” between Natura 2000 sites.

Article 10 of the Habitats Directive and the Habitats Regulations 2011 place a high degree of importance on such non-Natura 2000 areas as features that connect the Natura 2000 network. Features such as ponds, woodlands and important hedgerows were taken into account during the preparation of this AA Screening report .

The NHAs and pNHAs identified in Figure 4 are either associated with the Malahide Estuary or located in outside the Zone of Influence. It has been established that there is limited connectivity to Malahide Estuary. Therefore, there are no areas of supporting habitat that will be affected by the Proposed Development.

5. Identification of Potential Impacts & Assessment of Significance

The Proposed Development is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the sites considered in the assessment and therefore potential impacts must be identified and considered.

5.1. Assessment of Likely Significant Effects

The large deep drainage ditch adjacent to the Huntstown Power Facility at the centre of the proposed development area is intermittently hydraulically linked via the Huntstown Stream depending on flow rates.

The Huntstown Stream leads to the Ward River c. 6.6km downstream and the Ward River discharges to the sea at Malahide Estuary over 15 river km downstream of the site. Therefore, the proposed development site has limited connectivity to the Malahide Estuary SAC or SPA.

There is no connectivity to the majority of European sites within or outside the guideline 15km potential Zone of Influence and connectivity to Malahide Estuary is intermittent and distant.

The consideration of all potential direct and indirect impacts that may result in significant effects on the conservation objectives of a European site, taking into account the size and scale of the Proposed Development are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Assessment of Likely Significant Effects.

Identification of all potential direct and indirect impacts that may result in significant effects on the conservation objectives of a European site, taking into account the size and scale of the project.	
Impacts:	Significance of Impacts:
Construction phase e.g. Vegetation clearance Demolition Surface water runoff from soil excavation/infill/landscaping (including borrow pits) Dust, noise, vibration Lighting disturbance Impact on groundwater/dewatering Storage of excavated/construction materials	The significant distance between the proposed development site and any European Sites, and the very weak and indirect ecological pathway is such that the proposal will not result in any likely changes to the European sites that comprise part of the Natura 2000 network in Malahide Estuary.

<p>Access to site</p> <p>Pests</p>	
<p>Operational phase e.g.</p> <p>Direct emission to air and water</p> <p>Surface water runoff containing contaminant or sediment</p> <p>Lighting disturbance</p> <p>Noise/vibration</p> <p>Changes to water/groundwater due to drainage or abstraction</p> <p>Presence of people, vehicles and activities</p> <p>Physical presence of structures (e.g. collision risks)</p> <p>Potential for accidents or incidents</p>	<p>All foul and surface water runoff, once the facility is operational, will be contained on site and discharged to urban drainage systems.</p> <p>There is no real likelihood of any significant effects on European Sites in the wider catchment area.</p> <p>The facility is located at a distance of removal such that there will be no disturbance to qualifying interest species in any European sites.</p>
<p>In-combination/Other</p>	<p>No likely significant in-combination effects are identified.</p>
<p>Describe any likely changes to the European site:</p>	
<p>Examples of the type of changes to give consideration to include:</p> <p>Reduction or fragmentation of habitat area</p> <p>Disturbance to QI species</p> <p>Habitat or species fragmentation</p> <p>Reduction or fragmentation in species density</p> <p>Changes in key indicators of conservation status value (water quality etc.)</p> <p>Changes to areas of sensitivity or threats to QI</p> <p>Interference with the key relationships that define the structure or ecological function of the site</p> <p>Climate change</p>	<p>None.</p> <p>The Proposed Development site is not located adjacent or within a European site, therefore there is no risk of habitat loss or fragmentation or any effects on QI species directly or ex-situ.</p> <p>It can be noted that the habitat type recorded during fieldwork and distance from the coastal SPAs do not present opportunities to support the bird species (predominantly waders) for which the Malahide Estuary or any other SPA is designated.</p>

Are 'mitigation' measures necessary to reach a conclusion that likely significant effects can be ruled out at screening?	
No	While best practice construction methods may be included in the EIAR these are not required to avoid or reduce any effects on a European site. These measures are not relied upon to reach a conclusion of no likely significant effects on any European site.

On the basis of the information supplied, which is considered adequate to undertake a screening determination and having regard to:

- the nature and scale of the proposed development on fully serviced lands,
- the intervening land uses and distance from European sites,
- the lack of direct connections with regard to the Source-Pathway-Receptor model,

It may be concluded that the proposed development, individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, would not be likely to have a significant effect on the above listed European sites or any other European site, in view of the said sites' conservation objectives.

5.2. Assessment of Potential In-Combination Effects

In-combination effects are changes in the environment that result from numerous human-induced, small-scale alterations. In-combination effects can be thought of as occurring through two main pathways: first, through persistent additions or losses of the same materials or resource, and second, through the compounding effects as a result of the coming together of two or more effects.

As part of the Screening for an Appropriate Assessment, in addition to the Proposed Development, other relevant plans and projects in the area must also be considered at this stage. This step aims to identify at this early stage any possible significant in-combination effects of the Proposed Development with other such plans and projects on European sites.

A review of the National Planning Application Database was undertaken. The first stage of this review confirmed that there were no data outages in the area where the Proposed Development is located. The database was then queried for developments granted planning permission within 500m of the Proposed Development within the last three years, these are presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Planning applications granted permission in the vicinity of the Proposed Development.

Planning Ref.	Description of development	Comments
F17A/0436	Revisions to existing Hawk House (Unit 4) granted under F07A/0389.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
F17A/0728	The construction of a single storey unit for industrial and/or warehouse use with ancillary two storey offices.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
F17A/0769	Development will consist of the construction of two single storey units for industrial and/or warehousing use with ancillary two storey offices.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
FW18A/0038	Amendments to previously approved application (ref FW14A/0162) which consisted of demolition of existing 2no. two storey semi-detached dwellings, construction of 2 detached dwellings.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
FW18A/0082	The development is a wastewater treatment plant.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
F18A/0139	The construction of an extension to internal access road from Maple Avenue with associated works including public lighting and the development of 2 no. plots generally for industrial, warehouse, storage and logistic use.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
FW18A/0159	Planning Permission is sought for an increase in the annual volume of waste to be imported to the permitted bioenergy plant at Huntstown, North Road, Finglas, Dublin 11. The proposed increase is 9,900 tonnes, which would take the permitted volume from 90,000 tonnes to 99,900 tonnes.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
F18A/0683	Permission for a new shed (floor area 180m ²) for horticultural related uses and ancillary works including new vehicular entrance.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
FW19A/0015	The development will consist of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) which will include up to 9 no. containerised battery storage modules (up to 14m length, 2.44m wide and 2.9m high) and ancillary equipment including up to: 9 no transformers (2.5m wide and 2.9m high), 7 no. power conditioning unit blocks (8m length and 1.5m wide), 1 no. power conditioning unit block (5m length by 5m wide), 9 no. switchgear units (1.5m length, 1.5m wide and 1.6m high), a sub-station container (4.5m length, 3.0m wide and 3.0m high) and all other associated site development works as required to facilitate the development.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
FW19A/0053	The proposed development consists of amendments to Planning Permission reference F17A/0769 as granted.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any

Planning Ref.	Description of development	Comments
		Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
FW19A/0143	The construction of 2 no. Single-Storey Units for industrial and/or Warehouse use with ancillary Two-Storey offices.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
FW19A/0170	Construction of a two storey unit for training facility use, with ancillary offices.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
FW19A/0185	Construction of a two storey unit for training facility use, with ancillary offices.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
F19A/0218	Amendments to Planning Permission reference F17A/0769 as granted.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
FW20A/0021	The development will consist of storage and logistic facilities comprising yards, warehouses, workshops and ancillary offices at Plots 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 9 and amendment to permitted development (Reg. Ref. FW19A/0101 and F18A/0139) at Plot 8 and internal road network at Dublin Inland Port.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
FW20A/0044	The proposed development consists of amendments to Planning Permission F17A/0769 as granted. The amendments are as follows to unit 2: high level building signage to the east and west facing facades along the M2 and R135 respectively.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
FW20A/0045	The proposed development consists of amendments to Planning Permission reference F17A/0769 as granted. The amendments relate only to Unit 1 of the permitted development.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
FW20A/0097	Fingal County Council. Dublin Port Company intends to apply for planning permission for development and amendments to development permitted under Reg. Ref. F18A/0139 /, ABP Ref. 302361 – 18 as amended.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
FW21A/0144 Concurrent Application	The proposed development, as described in the public notices, consists of the installation of electrical infrastructure between Finglas substation and Huntstown Power Station to facilitate the retirement of existing Electricity Supply Board overhead powerlines and facilitate site clearance for the future development of a data centre and substation (subject to separate planning application).	The concurrent adjacent applications have been assessed by Moore Group and reports for AA Screening report found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site. No in-combination effects are predicted.
FW21A/0151	The proposal comprises the demolition of two residential properties fronting the R135 (North Road), and the development of 2 no. data hall	The concurrent adjacent applications have been assessed by Moore Group and reports for AA Screening report found that the proposed

Planning Ref.	Description of development	Comments
Concurrent Application	<p>buildings arranged over three storeys and associated structures and infrastructure.</p> <p>The development will be accessed from the R135 (North Road) from the east. An emergency/secondary entrance will be provided via the Roadstone Huntstown Quarry and Huntstown Power Station access road to the south-west. Temporary access for construction works and to enable a phased delivery of the development is proposed through an existing site entrance off the North Road.</p> <p>Associated structures and infrastructure including water treatment facility, sprinkler tanks, external plant equipment, emergency generators and diesel fuel storage, vehicular access roads, car and bicycle parking, attenuation ponds and sustainable urban drainage measures, underground foul and storm water drainage network, associated landscaping and boundary treatment works.</p>	development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site. No in-combination effects are predicted.

There are no predicted in-combination effects given that the reasons discussed in the 'Comments' column of Table 4 above and given that the Proposed Development is unlikely to have any adverse effects on the Malahide Estuary European sites.

The Fingal County Development Plan in complying with the requirements of the Habitats Directive requires that all Projects and Plans that could affect the Natura 2000 sites in the same zone of impact of the Proposed Development site would be initially screened for Appropriate Assessment and if requiring Stage 2 AA, that appropriate employable mitigation measures would be put in place to avoid, reduce or ameliorate negative impacts. In this way any, in-combination impacts with Plans or Projects for the proposed development area and surrounding townlands in which the proposed development site is located, would be avoided.

The listed developments have been granted permission in most cases with conditions relating to sustainable development by the consenting authority in compliance with the relevant Local Authority Development Plan and in compliance with the Local Authority requirement for regard to the Habitats Directive. The development cannot have received planning permission without having met the consenting authority requirement in this regard. There are no predicted in-combination effects given that it is predicted that the Proposed Development will have no effect on any European site.

Any new applications for the Proposed Development area will be assessed on a case by case basis *initially* by Fingal County Council which will determine the requirement for AA Screening as per the requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.

6. Conclusion

The significant distance between the proposed development site and any European Sites, and the very weak and indirect ecological pathway is such that the proposal will not result in any likely changes to the European sites that comprise part of the Natura 2000 network in Malahide Estuary.

There are no predicted effects on any European sites given:

- The distance between the Proposed Development and any European Sites, approximately 8.08km (this increases to over 15km when considering the river network);
- The Proposed Development is to be connected to the existing public sewer network for the treatment of wastewater.
- There are no predicted emissions to air, water or the environment during the construction or operational phases that would result in significant effects.

It has been objectively concluded by Moore Group Environmental Services that:

1. The Proposed Development is not directly connected with, or necessary to the conservation management of the European sites considered in this assessment.
2. The Proposed Development is unlikely to either directly or indirectly significantly affect the Qualifying interests or Conservation Objectives of the European sites considered in this assessment.
3. The Proposed Development, alone or in combination with other projects, is not likely to have significant effects on the European sites considered in this assessment in view of their conservation objectives.
4. It is possible to conclude that significant effects can be excluded at the screening stage.

It can be *excluded*, on the basis of objective information and in the absence of mitigation measures, that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

An appropriate assessment is not, therefore, required.

A finding of no significant effects report is presented in Appendix A in accordance with the EU Commission's methodological guidance (European Commission, 2002).

7. References

Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2010) Guidance on Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland (as amended February 2010).

European Commission (2000) Managing Natura 2000 sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC.

European Commission Environment DG (2002) 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. European Commission, Brussels.

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 interests, compensatory measures, overall coherence and opinion of the Commission. European Commission, Brussels.

European Commission (2018) Managing Natura 2000 sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC.

NPWS (2019) The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin.

NPWS (2021) National Parks and Wildlife Service Metadata available online at <https://www.npws.ie/maps-and-data>

Office-of-the-Planning-Regulator (2021) Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management OPR Practice Note PN01. March 2021

Appendix A

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS REPORT

Finding no significant effects report matrix

Name of project or plan

Huntstown Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) Substation and Underground Cables

Name and location of the Natura 2000 site(s)

A large deep drainage ditch adjacent to the Huntstown Power Facility is intermittently hydraulically linked via the Huntstown Stream depending on rainfall and flow rates eventually leading north converging with several other streams to the Ward River, which flows into northeast to Malahide Estuary over 15 river km downstream. Therefore, the proposed development site has limited connectivity to the Malahide Estuary SAC or SPA.

Description of the project or plan

The underground transmission lines (4 no.) will connect the proposed 220 kV GIS Mooretown Substation serving the data hall development proposed under concurrent application (Reg. Ref. FW21A/0151) located on lands adjacent to Huntstown Power Station, North Road, Finglas, Dublin 11 with the 220 kV Finglas cable route located to the south of the site on the private road connecting the North Road with Huntstown Power Station and Huntstown Quarry, with the 220 kV Corduff cable route located to the west of the site and just north of the private road connecting the North Road with Huntstown Power Station and Huntstown Quarry and to the existing Huntstown 220 kV AIS station to the west via 220 kV cables to the Huntstown A and Huntstown B circuits. The four proposed transmission cables cover a distance of between c.125m and c.300m each between the proposed substation and the adjacent connection points.

The proposed development will consist of the following:

(1) Construction of a 2 storey 220 kV Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) substation known as 'Mooretown' comprising switchgear floor, cable pit/entry room, generator room, relay room, battery room, workshop, toilet, store room, mess room, hoist space, stair cores and circulation areas (c.2,068 sqm total gross floor area) with an overall height of c.17m located within an overall EirGrid and Customer compound (c.11,231 sqm in area). Lightning electrodes are attached to the roof of the substation building resulting in an overall height of c.20m. The compound includes 4 no. 220/20 kV transformers, 4 no. 20 kV switchgear buildings and 1 no. 20 kV control room buildings (c.5 m high and c. 35.5 sqm in area each), 220 kV series coil (equipment), fire walls (ranging from c.10 m-12.5 m high), lightning finials and monopoles (c.20 m high). The overall compound is surrounded by a c.2.6 m high palisade fence. The proposed substation will serve the data centre proposed under concurrent application Reg. Ref. FW21A/0151;

(2) The underground cable (Cable No. 1) will follow a route originating at the proposed Mooretown Substation extending south and then west along the private road connecting the North Road with Huntstown Power Station and Huntstown Quarry. The route terminates at a proposed joint bay on the existing Corduff cable route. The underground cable (Cable No. 2) will follow a route originating at the proposed Mooretown Substation Compound / series coil extending south across the internal road connecting the North Road with Huntstown Power Station and Huntstown Quarry. The route terminates at a proposed joint bay on the existing Finglas cable route. Removal of the redundant sections of the 220 kV Corduff cables and 220 kV Finglas cables serving the existing AIS bay to Huntstown Power Station. The underground cable (Cable No. 3) will follow a route originating at the Mooretown GIS Substation extending south and then west to the adjacent existing ESB Huntstown A AIS station. The route terminates in the ESB Huntstown A AIS Station. The underground cable (Cable No. 4) will follow a route originating at the Mooretown GIS Substation extending south and then west to the adjacent existing Huntstown B AIS station. The route terminates in the ESB Huntstown B AIS Station;

(3) The development includes all associated and ancillary site development and construction works, services provision, drainage works, connections to the substations, all internal road/footpath access routes, landscaping and boundary treatment works, vehicular access onto the private road to the south of the site and provision of 9 no. car parking spaces in the overall compound.

The proposed development includes the infilling a section of the existing land drain along the western side of the site and replacing with a 900mm pipe. This has also been proposed under the concurrent application data storage facility application. This existing land drain flows south to north. This replacement pipe has been designed in accordance with OPW Guidelines.

The Huntstown Stream leads to the Ward River c. 6.6km downstream and the Ward River discharges to the sea at Malahide Estuary over 15 river km downstream of the site. Therefore, the proposed development site has limited connectivity to the Malahide Estuary SAC or SPA.

Is the project or plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site(s)

No

Are there other projects or plans that together with the projects or plan being assessed could affect the site

A review of the National Planning Application Database was undertaken. The first stage of this review confirmed that there were no data outages in the area where the Proposed Development is located. The database was then queried for developments granted planning permission within 500m of the Proposed Development within the last three years, these are presented in the Table below.

Planning applications granted permission in the vicinity of the Proposed Development.

Planning Ref.	Description of development	Comments
F17A/0436	Revisions to existing Hawk House (Unit 4) granted under F07A/0389.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
F17A/0728	The construction of a single storey unit for industrial and/or warehouse use with ancillary two storey offices.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
F17A/0769	Development will consist of the construction of two single storey units for industrial and/or warehousing use with ancillary two storey offices.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
FW18A/0038	Amendments to previously approved application (ref FW14A/0162) which consisted of demolition of existing 2no. two storey semi-detached dwellings, construction of 2 detached dwellings.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
FW18A/0082	The development is a wastewater treatment plant.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
F18A/0139	The construction of an extension to internal access road from Maple Avenue with associated works including public lighting and the development of 2 no. plots generally for industrial, warehouse, storage and logistic use.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
FW18A/0159	Planning Permission is sought for an increase in the annual volume of waste to be imported to the permitted bioenergy plant at Huntstown, North Road, Finglas, Dublin 11. The proposed increase is 9,900 tonnes, which would take the permitted volume from 90,000 tonnes to 99,900 tonnes.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
F18A/0683	Permission for a new shed (floor area 180m ²) for horticultural related uses and ancillary works including new vehicular entrance.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any

Planning Ref.	Description of development	Comments
		Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
FW19A/0015	The development will consist of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) which will include up to 9 no. containerised battery storage modules (up to 14m length, 2.44m wide and 2.9m high) and ancillary equipment including up to: 9 no transformers (2.5m wide and 2.9m high), 7 no. power conditioning unit blocks (8m length and 1.5m wide), 1 no. power conditioning unit block (5m length by 5m wide), 9 no. switchgear units (1.5m length, 1.5m wide and 1.6m high), a sub-station container (4.5m length, 3.0m wide and 3.0m high) and all other associated site development works as required to facilitate the development.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
FW19A/0053	The proposed development consists of amendments to Planning Permission reference F17A/0769 as granted.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
FW19A/0143	The construction of 2 no. Single-Storey Units for industrial and/or Warehouse use with ancillary Two-Storey offices.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
FW19A/0170	Construction of a two storey unit for training facility use, with ancillary offices.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
FW19A/0185	Construction of a two storey unit for training facility use, with ancillary offices.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
F19A/0218	Amendments to Planning Permission reference F17A/0769 as granted.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
FW20A/0021	The development will consist of storage and logistic facilities comprising yards, warehouses, workshops and ancillary offices at Plots 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 9 and amendment to permitted development (Reg. Ref. FW19A/0101 and F18A/0139) at Plot 8 and internal road network at Dublin Inland Port.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
FW20A/0044	The proposed development consists of amendments to Planning Permission F17A/0769 as granted. The amendments are as follows to unit 2: high level building signage to the east and west facing facades along the M2 and R135 respectively.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
FW20A/0045	The proposed development consists of amendments to Planning Permission reference F17A/0769 as granted. The amendments relate only to Unit 1 of the permitted development.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.

Planning Ref.	Description of development	Comments
FW20A/0097	Fingal County Council. Dublin Port Company intends to apply for planning permission for development and amendments to development permitted under Reg. Ref. F18A/0139 /, ABP Ref. 302361 – 18 as amended.	The Appropriate Assessment Screening report with this application found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site.
FW21A/0144 Concurrent Application	The proposed development, as described in the public notices, consists of the installation of electrical infrastructure between Finglas substation and Huntstown Power Station to facilitate the retirement of existing Electricity Supply Board overhead powerlines and facilitate site clearance for the future development of a data centre and substation (subject to separate planning application).	The concurrent adjacent application has been assessed by Moore Group and reports for AA Screening report found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site. No in-combination effects are predicted.
FW21A/0151 Concurrent Application	<p>The proposal comprises the demolition of two residential properties fronting the R135 (North Road), and the development of 2 no. data hall buildings arranged over three storeys and associated structures and infrastructure.</p> <p>The development will be accessed from the R135 (North Road) from the east. An emergency/secondary entrance will be provided via the Roadstone Huntstown Quarry and Huntstown Power Station access road to the south-west. Temporary access for construction works and to enable a phased delivery of the development is proposed through an existing site entrance off the North Road.</p> <p>Associated structures and infrastructure including water treatment facility, sprinkler tanks, external plant equipment, emergency generators and diesel fuel storage, vehicular access roads, car and bicycle parking, attenuation ponds and sustainable urban drainage measures, underground foul and storm water drainage network, associated landscaping and boundary treatment works.</p>	The concurrent adjacent applications have been assessed by Moore Group and reports for AA Screening report found that the proposed development will not have a significant effect on any Natura 2000 site within a 15km radius of the subject site. No in-combination effects are predicted.

There are no predicted in-combination effects given that the reasons discussed in the 'Comments' column of the Table above and given that the Proposed Development is unlikely to have any adverse effects on the Malahide Estuary European sites.

The Fingal County Development Plan in complying with the requirements of the Habitats Directive requires that all Projects and Plans that could affect the Natura 2000 sites in the same zone of impact of the Proposed Development site would be initially screened for Appropriate Assessment and if requiring Stage 2 AA, that appropriate employable mitigation measures would be put in place to avoid, reduce or ameliorate negative impacts. In this way any, in-combination impacts with Plans or Projects for the proposed development area and surrounding townlands in which the proposed development site is located, would be avoided.

The listed developments have been granted permission in most cases with conditions relating to sustainable development by the consenting authority in compliance with the relevant Local Authority Development Plan and in compliance with the Local Authority requirement for regard to the Habitats Directive. The development cannot have received planning permission without having met the consenting authority requirement in this regard. There are no predicted in-combination effects given that it is predicted that the Proposed Development will have no effect on any European site.

Any new applications for the Proposed Development area will be assessed on a case by case basis by *initially* Fingal County Council which will determine the requirement for AA Screening as per the requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.

THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS

Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site.

The Huntstown Stream leads to the Ward River c. 6.6km downstream and the Ward River discharges to the sea at Malahide Estuary over 15 river km downstream of the site. Therefore, the proposed development site has limited connectivity to the Malahide Estuary SAC or SPA.

Explain why these effects are not considered significant.

The significant distance between the proposed development site and any European Sites, and the very weak and indirect ecological pathway is such that the proposal will not result in any likely changes to the European sites that comprise part of the Natura 2000 network in Malahide Estuary.

There are no predicted effects on any European sites given:

- The distance between the Proposed Development and any European Sites, approximately 8.08km (this increases to over 15km when considering the river network);
- The Proposed Development is to be connected to the existing public sewer network for the treatment of wastewater.
- There are no predicted emissions to air, water or the environment during the construction or operational phases that would result in significant effects.

List of agencies consulted: provide contact name and telephone or e-mail address

The requirement for Appropriate Assessment Screening was determined during pre-planning discussion with Fingal County Council.

Response to consultation

N/A.

DATA COLLECTED TO CARRY OUT THE ASSESSMENT

Who carried out the assessment

Moore Group Environmental Services.

Sources of data

NPWS database of designated sites at www.npws.ie

National Biodiversity Data Centre database <http://maps.biodiversityireland.ie>

Level of assessment completed

Desktop Assessment. Fieldwork was carried out as part of the EIA process.

Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed

An Bord Pleanála web portal.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

The significant distance between the proposed development site and any European Sites, and the very weak and indirect ecological pathway is such that the proposal will not result in any likely changes to the European sites that comprise part of the Natura 2000 network in Malahide Estuary.

There are no predicted effects on any European sites given:

- The distance between the Proposed Development and any European Sites, approximately 8.08km (this increases to over 15km when considering the river network);
- The Proposed Development is to be connected to the existing public sewer network for the treatment of wastewater.
- There are no predicted emissions to air, water or the environment during the construction or operational phases that would result in significant effects.

It has been objectively concluded by Moore Group Environmental Services that:

1. The Proposed Development is not directly connected with, or necessary to the conservation management of the European sites considered in this assessment.
2. The Proposed Development is unlikely to either directly or indirectly significantly affect the Qualifying interests or Conservation Objectives of the European sites considered in this assessment.
3. The Proposed Development, alone or in combination with other projects, is not likely to have significant effects on the European sites considered in this assessment in view of their conservation objectives.
4. It is possible to conclude that significant effects can be excluded at the screening stage.

It can be *excluded*, on the basis of objective information and absence of mitigation measures, that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

An appropriate assessment is not, therefore, required.