

Portmarnock Phase 1F Outline Habitat Management Plan

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**Brady Shipman
Martin**
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Client:

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Portmarnock Real Estate
Developments Ltd
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1 Introduction

This Outline Habitat Management Plan (HMP) has been prepared to support the planning application for proposed development at Portmarnock Phase 1F. It sets out the biodiversity management measures that will be implemented to help protect and enhance biodiversity within the proposed development site.

This Plan focuses on the Phase 1F project – it does not address issues that are considered elsewhere – such as the long-term management of the Bird Quiet Zone, the Ecological Buffer Zone or any other biodiversity-related works.

This Outline HMP has been prepared by Ecologist and Associate, Matthew Hague BSc MSc Adv. Dip. Plan. & Env. Law CEnv MCIEEM of Brady Shipman Martin. Matthew has over 20 years of experience in ecological and environmental consultancy.

This document is provided as **Appendix 6.3** to the EIAR that accompanies the planning application. The applicant is committed to enhancing the biodiversity of the development site, and this Outline HMP aims to provide biodiversity enhancement as per the Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029.

In reading this report, reference should also be made to the Outline Landscape Specification contained in the Landscape Design Statement, prepared by the project landscape architects (Brady Shipman Martin) and submitted separately.

As was the case with Phases 1A, 1B, and 1C as well as 1D and 1E of the developments at Portmarnock South the proposed development (Phase 1F) is in accordance with the provisions of the detailed Local Area Plan (LAP) (now expired), which set out the development framework for the overall Portmarnock South lands.

1.1 Previous works

As part of the Phase 1A development, and again in accordance with the provisions of the LAP, significant mitigation measures were put in place, both within the Phase 1A land itself, and within the wider lands covered by Portmarnock South LAP. These included the following, which were designed to mitigate any potential impacts on the Special Conservation Interests and Qualifying Interests of Baldoyle Bay SPA and SAC resulting from residential development to be delivered as part of Portmarnock South Local Area Plan (see **Figure 1.1**):

- Provision of a large area of Ecological buffer/parkland, located between residential zoned lands within the LAP to the west and the boundary with Coast Road to the east and with Mayne Road to the south;
- Provision of a ‘Quiet Zone’ for birds, in the southern part of the Portmarnock South Local Area Plan lands;
- Provision of an arable plot and retention of an existing small attenuation pond located between the above ‘Bird Quiet Zone’ and Mayne Road;

Clearing of bramble scrub and reseeding of areas to grassland within the Murragh Spit east of the R106 Coast Road (within Baldoyle Bay SAC and SPA), undertaken in 2016 and 2017. This was undertaken, in agreement with Fingal County Council and NPWS, to provide additional areas of foraging habitat for bird species, in particular overwintering light-bellied Brent geese;

Treatment of invasive species listed on Schedule 3 of the Birds and Habitats Regulations, 2011 as amended, specifically a small area of Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*) on the Murragh Spit and giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) located within the Phase 1A lands. No growth of these species has been observed in recent years, nevertheless the site will continue to be managed during future construction phases to ensure full and permanent eradication of these plants.

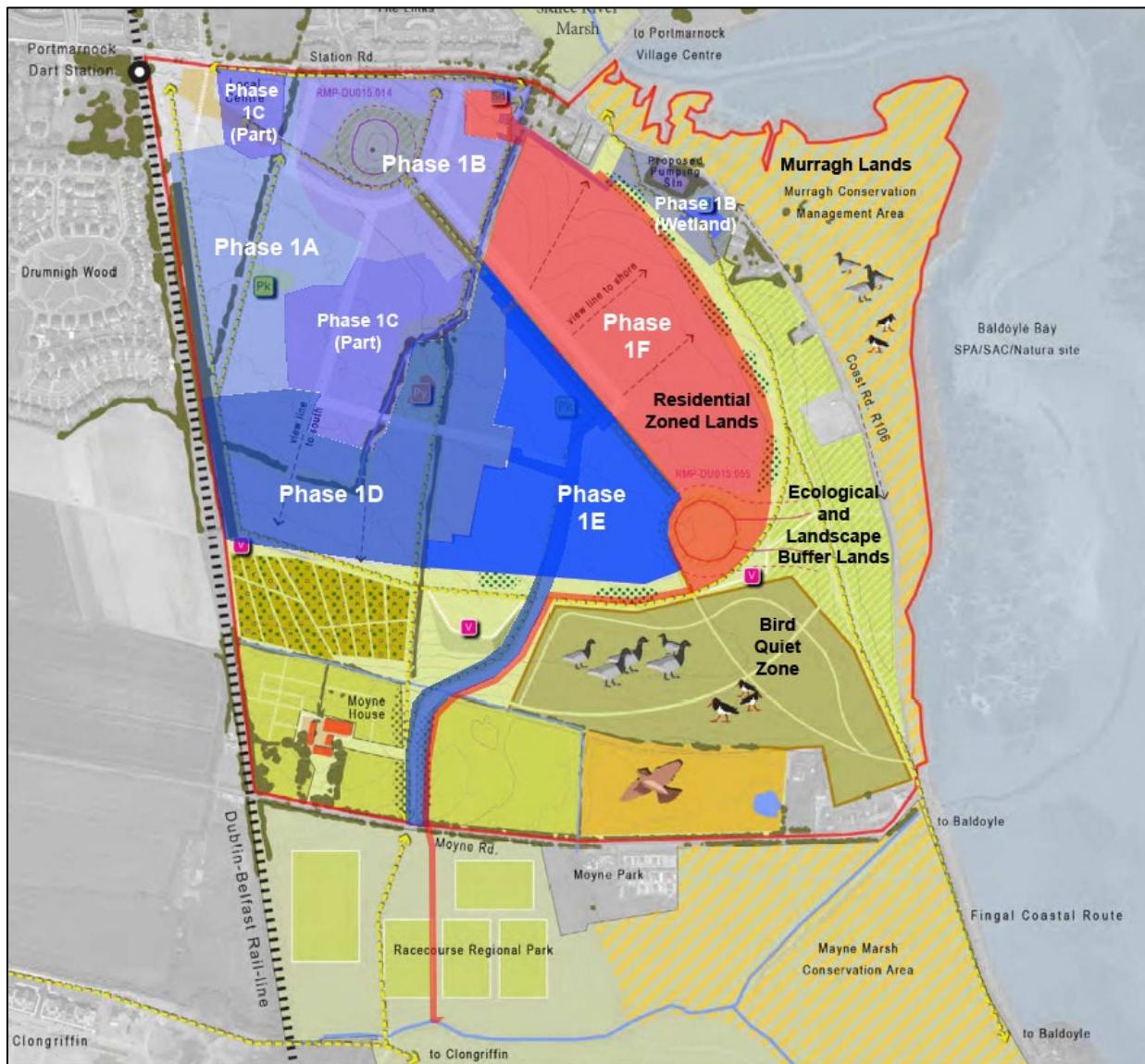
These measures have all been implemented and are subject to ongoing management, including mowing of the reseeded grass areas within the Murragh so as to ensure that the sward length is suitable for foraging light-bellied Brent geese.

Failed sections of the hawthorn hedging that was planted around the perimeter of the Bird Quiet Zone have been replanted (in early 2024) and continue to be monitored (July 2025).

In compliance with planning conditions for the Phase 1A and Phase 1B developments, the ecological buffer lands have been handed over to Fingal County Council. This has enabled Fingal County Council to take full charge of the long-term management of the ecological buffer area and bird quiet zone.

The location of the proposed development site is shown in **Figure 1.1**.

Figure 1.1 Green Infrastructure and Landscape Strategy (extract from Figure 5.2 from Portmarnock LAP). – showing approximate areas for Phases 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E & proposed Phase 1F (shaded in red).



2 Baseline Ecological Conditions at Phase 1F

The site proposed for development (Phase 1F) is effectively made up of two separate areas, the wide upper section, north of the permitted and under construction Phase 1E, that will contain residential units and associated development, and the long, thin corridor that will contain the rising main connecting the existing St. Marnock's Pump Station at Station Road with the North Fringe Sewer to the south.

The following habitat types (and/or mosaics) were recorded within the study area during the field surveys in 2025:

- Amenity grassland (**GA2**)
- Dry meadows & grassy verges (**GS2**)
- Buildings and artificial surfaces (**BL3**)
- Artificial pond (currently dry) (**FL8**)
- Spoil and bare ground (**ED2**)
- Scrub (**WS1**)
- Hedgerow/Tree line (**WL1/WL2**)
- Lowland rivers (**FW2**)
- Matrix of scrub and dry meadows (**WS1 / GS2**)
- Matrix of spoil and bare ground and recolonising bare ground (**ED2 / ED3**)
- Current construction area matrix (**BL3 / ED2 / ED3 / ED5**)

The main section of the development site is primarily dry grassland (Fossitt habitat code **GS2**) of moderate to high diversity, with areas of spoil/bare ground, recolonising bare ground, refuse/waste and artificial surfaces (**ED2**, **ED3**, **ED5**, **BL3**) that make up the existing construction compound and ongoing works area. The **GS2** habitat included species such as daisy (*Bellis perennis*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), hawkbit (*Leontodon hispidus*), buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), scarlet pimpernel (*Lysimachia arvensis*), ragged robin (*Silene flos-cuculi*), red campion (*S. dioica*), corn marigold (*Glebionis segetum*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), vetches (*Vicia Spp.*), thistles (*Cirsium spp.*), docks (*Rumex spp.*), red clover (*Trifolium pratense*), white clover (*T. repens*), and alexanders (*Smyrnium olusatrum*). In the northern half of the upper section (on the eastern side of the hedgerow) exists a small artificial pond (**FL8**) used for storm water retention and surrounded by a high vegetated bank. At the time of the survey the pond was completely dry. At the southern end of the upper section is a fenced-off circular area (the archaeological site) of primarily willow (*Salix spp.*) and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus agg.*) scrub (**WS1**), approximately 1.0ha in area.

- The grassland habitat is considered to be of Local importance (higher value) due to the species diversity present. The other habitats including the construction compound, built surfaces, and ongoing works are of negligible importance.

The corridor linking the proposed Phase 1F development site to the North Fringe Sewer Comprises bare ground (**ED2**) in the section to the north of Mayne Road, and a scrub/grassland matrix to the south of Mayne Road (**WS1**, **GS2**). The River Mayne (**FW2**) runs west to east through the southern scrub/grassland matrix.

- The northern bare ground is of negligible importance, while the southern scrub/grassland matrix is considered to be of Local importance (higher value) due to the presence of the River Mayne ecological corridor.¹

¹ It is important to note that this area is located within the Fingal County Council Racecourse Park development, permitted by An Bord Pleanála. A series of playing fields and a greenway, connecting north will be located in this area.

Further east and to the south/south east of the Proposed Development site of Phase 1F, the site wider lands at Portmarnock South includes former agricultural land which is now within the landscape and ecological buffer areas (previously transferred to Fingal County Council) which enclose the residential zoned lands. These areas include the Bird Quiet Zone (to the south) and the Ecological Buffer Zone (to the east).

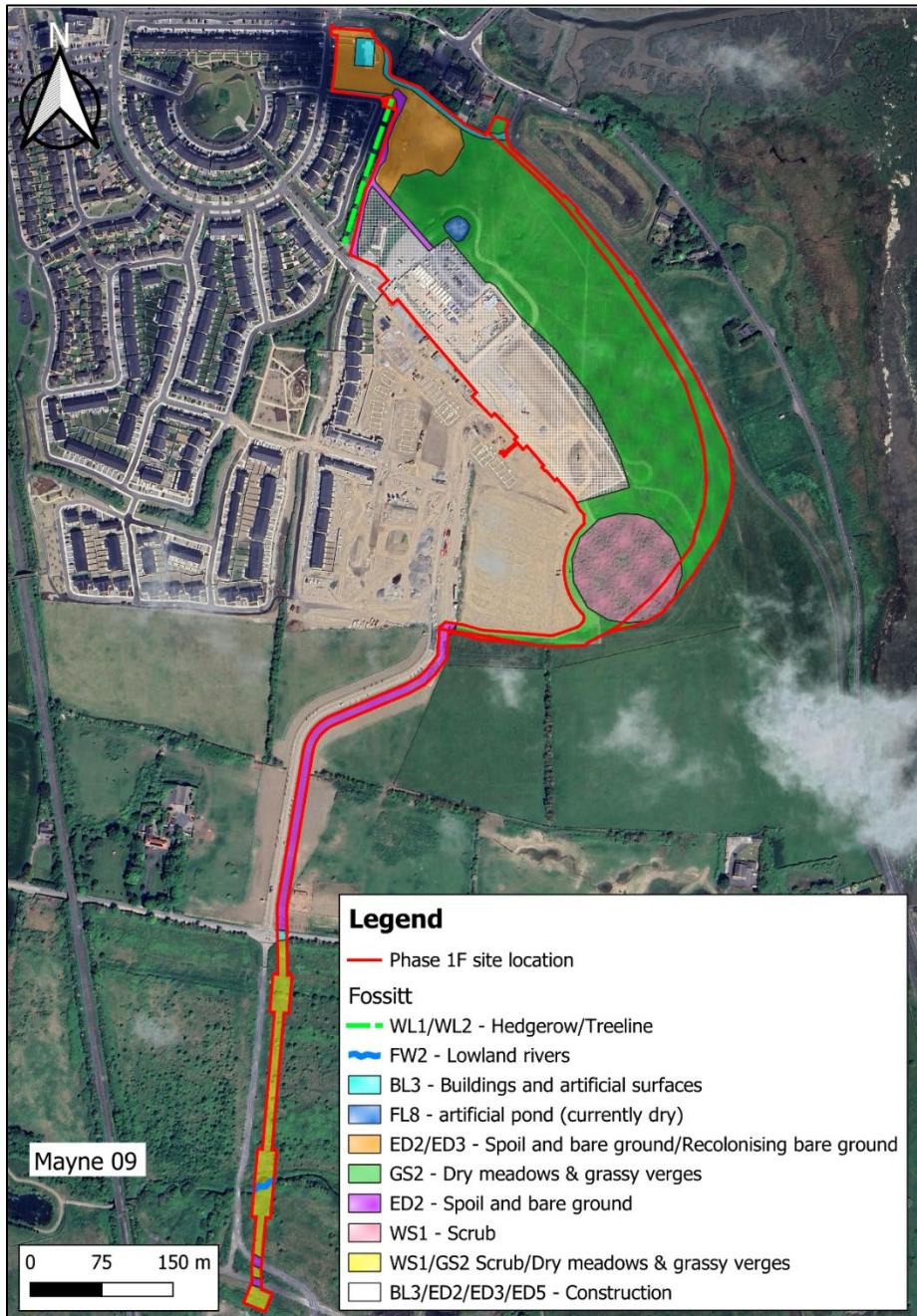


Figure 2.1 Habitat map for the proposed development site

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3 Roles and Responsibilities

The following key personnel will be involved in the implementation of the Outline HMP, also refer to **Table 4.1**:

3.1 Project Manager

The project manager will be responsible for ensuring that the site manager and the appointed contractors comply with the biodiversity measures and recommendations as stated in this Outline HMP. The project manager will ensure that the HMP and CEMP are included in the site manager's and contractor's contract and all site personnel are trained in accordance with the HMP requirements. The project manager will also be responsible for liaising between the site manager and project ecologist and contacting the latter for checks ahead of any site clearance works.

3.2 Site Manager

The site manager will be responsible for ensuring that the Outline HMP is implemented by the contractor and all site personnel and will ensure that any on-site mitigation measures as stated in the CEMP and EIA Biodiversity Chapter and NIS are implemented in full. The site manager will also be responsible for keeping the HMP up to date and will include any revisions or amendments to the HMP that arise during the course of the proposed development as per discussions with the project ecologist.

Further, the site manager will be responsible for checking for compliance on-site as per the measures and recommendations of the Outline HMP. The site manager will schedule meetings with the project manager and project ecologist as required to discuss the progress of the HMP and also to report and record any non-conformances and correction measures.

3.3 Project Ecologist

A suitably qualified and experienced project ecologist will be contracted for the duration of the construction period to ensure that all mitigation measures are undertaken. The project ecologist will be the primary contact for the project manager and site manager for on-site implementation of the HMP. The project ecologist, working with the project landscape architect, will be responsible for regular site inspections to ensure compliance with the HMP and to raise any non-conformances to the project and site managers. During the course of the proposed development, if any changes to design or construction methodology arise, the project ecologist will be required to review the documentation and update the HMP accordingly.

The project ecologist will also be responsible for reporting the progress of the HMP and will report any ecological incidents and non-conformances to the project manager.

4 Management and Enhancement Measures

Table 4.1 below describes the biodiversity objectives and measures that will be undertaken for the proposed development at Portmarnock Phase 1F. This HMP requires all the commitments made in the project EIAR and the planning application documentation as they apply to the protection and management of habitats and species to be fulfilled, as follows:

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Table 4.1 Biodiversity objectives and measures for the proposed development at Portmarnock Phase 1F

Reference	Habitat or Species	Objective	Measure	Personnel Responsible
HMP 1	Meadow grassland within public open space areas	Habitat Creation	<p>Where possible, existing topsoil will be retained and reused on site (utilising the existing natural seedbank to maintain seedbank diversity).</p> <p>Native wildflower planting areas will, where possible, be seeded with seed harvested from the existing meadows on site to retain local biodiversity. Where seed mixes must be bought, a suitable, native mix will be used, following a review by the project ecologist.</p> <p>Prior to planting proper ground preparation and weed elimination will be undertaken and factors such as soil and aspect will be considered for successful creation of grassland habitat.</p> <p>The creation and management of wildflower meadow areas will be undertaken as per National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) Guide- <u>How to guide creation and management of a wildflower meadow (2018)</u>.</p>	Site Manager Project Ecologist/landscape architect
HMP 2	Grassland and, if relevant, trees, hedgerows, shrubs and scrub	Protection of fauna (nesting birds)	<p>All site clearance and landscaping works will comply with current legislative requirements and best practice. The clearance of any vegetation that may be suitable for use by nesting birds will be undertaken outside the bird nesting season (avoiding the period 1 March to 31 August). Should the construction programme require vegetation clearance between March and August, and this is unavoidable, bird nesting surveys will be undertaken by suitably qualified ecologists. If no active nests are recorded, vegetation clearance will take place within 24 hours. In the event that active nests are observed, an appropriately sized buffer zone (up to 5 m radius around the nest) will be maintained around the nest until such time as all the eggs have hatched and the birds have fledged – a period that may be three weeks from the date of the survey. Once it is confirmed that the birds have fledged and no further nests have been built or occupied, vegetation clearance may take place immediately.</p>	Site Manager Project Ecologist
HMP 3	Trees, hedgerows, shrubs and scrub	Protection of retained habitats	<p>Where applicable, retained hedgerows / treeline will be treated in accordance with British Standard BS5837:2012 <i>Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations</i>, with protective fencing being installed prior to commencement of development. This specifically refers to the northern-most part of the townland boundary, on the eastern side of the Phase 1F site</p>	Site Manager

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Reference	Habitat or Species	Objective	Measure	Personnel Responsible
			Spoil materials such as rubble, topsoil, building goods and equipment, will not be placed within the RPA of trees or within 5m of hedgerows.	
HMP 4	Trees, hedgerows, shrubs and scrub	Habitat Creation	The planting proposed for the development will, wherever possible, comprise an appropriate mixture of native trees and shrubs, preferably of local provenance. The planting will also incorporate a range of species that will attract feeding invertebrates, including moths, butterflies and bees. It will take account of and implement the relevant objectives of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025.	Site Manager Project Ecologist/landscape architect
HMP 5	Trees, hedgerows, shrubs and scrub	Habitat Creation	All trees planted shall be of appropriate age, structure and species to provide an immediate positive impact, and in the long term offer significant benefits that see an improvement upon the pre-development baseline.	Site Manager Project landscape architect
HMP 6	Trees, hedgerows, shrubs and scrub	Habitat Creation	Supplementary native understorey shrub and herbaceous planting is proposed for the site, to strengthen green and blue infrastructure within the site. Tree planting along the streets will create new habitat connectivity.	Project Manager Project Ecologist/landscape architect
HMP 7	Invasive Species - Giant hogweed and Japanese knotweed	Control spread of invasive species	These species have been successfully eradicated from the Portmarnock South lands. Nevertheless a watching brief will be maintained to ensure they are not re-introduced. Appropriate biosecurity measures will be implemented during the construction phase of the proposed development to ensure that no invasive species are introduced or dispersed, either deliberately or inadvertently, to the site. An invasive species management plan will be prepared by the project ecologist prior to commencement of works.	Site Manager Project Ecologist Specialist invasive species controller (if necessary)
HMP 8	Surface water	Protection of surface water	Detailed measures for the protection of surface water are not repeated here – for full details on all construction phase surface water protection measures reference should be made to the CEMP (and the NIS). In summary however, where applicable the following measures will be implemented for stripping of topsoil, excavation of subsoil layers, surface water runoff, dust suppression and accidental spills and leaks:	Site Manager

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Reference	Habitat or Species	Objective	Measure	Personnel Responsible
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stripped topsoil and excavated subsoil stockpiles will be protected for the duration of the works and located away from the areas where sediment laden runoff has potential to enter the existing ditches. Typical seasonal weather variations will also be taken account of when planning stripping of topsoil and excavations with an objective of minimising soil erosion and silt generation. Measures such as sediment retention ponds, silt fencing, hydrocarbon interceptors, surface water inlet protection and earth bunding adjacent to open drainage ditches will be implemented to capture and treat sediment laden surface water runoff. Surface water runoff from areas stripped of topsoil, surface water collected in excavations or discharge from any vehicle wheel wash areas will be directed to on-site settlement ponds / settlement tanks where measures will be implemented to capture and treat sediment laden runoff prior to discharge of surface water at a controlled rate. On-site settlement ponds are to include geotextile liners and rip-rapped inlets and outlets to prevent scour and erosion. Monitoring of these sediment control measures will be undertaken throughout the construction phase. Wash down and wash out of concrete trucks will take place off-site. All oils, fuels, paints and other chemicals will be stored in a secure, bunded, hardstand area. These areas shall be bunded to a volume of 110% of the capacity of the largest tank/container within the bunded area(s) (plus an allowance of 30 mm for rainwater ingress). Drainage from the bunded area(s) shall be diverted for collection and safe disposal. Refuelling and servicing of construction machinery will take place in a designated hardstand area that is also remote from any surface water inlets (when not possible to carry out such activities off-site). A response procedure will be put in place to deal with any accidental pollution events. Spill kits will be available and construction staff will be familiar with the emergency procedures and use of the equipment. Monitoring of all fuel / oil storage areas will be undertaken. 	

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Reference	Habitat or Species	Objective	Measure	Personnel Responsible
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foul drainage discharge from the construction compound will be tinkelred off-site to a licensed facility until a connection to the public foul drainage network has been established. • To prevent emissions to air, vehicle wheel wash facilities will be installed in the vicinity of any site entrances and road sweeping will be implemented, as necessary, in order to maintain the road network in the immediate vicinity of the site. Also, dust suppression measures (e.g. dampening down) will be implemented, as necessary, during dry periods. • Further, material handling systems and site stockpiling of materials will be designed and laid out to minimise exposure to wind. Water misting or sprays will be used as required if particularly dusty activities are necessary during dry or windy periods. During movement of materials both on and off-site, trucks will be stringently covered with tarpaulin at all times. Before entrance onto public roads, trucks will be adequately inspected to ensure no potential for dust emissions. 	
HMP 9	Birds	Enhancement of habitat	A total of 8 no. assorted wooden or woodcrete bird boxes will be included at various locations to be confirmed on site by the project ecologist	Site Manager Project Ecologist
HMP 10	Insects	Enhancement of habitat	A total of 6 no. wooden insect hotels will be included at various locations to be confirmed on site by the project ecologist	Site Manager
HMP 11	Bats	Protective Measures	<p>No bat roosts have been recorded at the site and it will not be necessary to apply for a derogation licence under Regulation 54 or 55 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477/2011).</p> <p>A total of five bat boxes (Schwegler 2F) were installed in the tree lines to the south and west of the Proposed Development area, as part of the Phase 1A development. There is no evidence of bats ever having used the boxes erected as part of Phase 1A. Regardless, based on the evidence gathered and presented in Appendix 6.2 of the EIAR, it is proposed to install an additional 9 bat boxes to provide new roosting opportunities. This is not mitigation for roost loss, rather, the new bat boxes are being provided as habitat/biodiversity enhancement measures</p>	Site Manager Project Ecologist

Reference	Habitat or Species	Objective	Measure	Personnel Responsible
			Lighting (during construction and operation) will be designed to take account of the all relevant lighting guidelines.	

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5 Monitoring

5.1 Construction Phase

During the construction phase the following monitoring measures will be undertaken:

- A suitably experienced Project Ecologist will be appointed for the duration of the construction phase and regular monitoring of all related works will take place to ensure the correct and full implementation of all mitigation and management measures.
- Should vegetation clearance be required during the bird nesting season, this work will take place only after the Project Ecologist has undertaken a survey to ensure that no active bird nests or recently fledged birds are present. Similarly, no evidence of roosting bats was recorded on the site during any of the surveys undertaken. Regardless, a pre-construction survey will be undertaken to ensure that work continues to have no impact on roosting bats.
- Monitoring of all fuel / oil storage areas will also be undertaken to ensure that all related mitigation measures are being implemented effectively.
- On-site meetings will take place between the Project Ecologist and personnel from Fingal County Council, if required. The purpose of the meetings will be to review progress and to agree any amendments to the mitigation strategies that may be necessary. All monitoring tasks will be recorded and logged for inspection by the site manager.

5.2 Operational Phase

During the operational phase following monitoring measures will be undertaken:

- On completion of construction, the lighting installed will be reviewed by the Project Ecologist and a bat specialist, to ensure that it is operating according to the approved specifications. The landscape architect will similarly ensure that all works undertaken are in full compliance with the landscape specification. The arborist will ensure that all hedgerow and tree management measures are fully implemented.
- The nesting boxes and insect hotels installed on the site will be checked annually for a period of two years post-completion of the works, to ensure that they continue to be accessible to these species. If necessary, they will be repositioned within the site, under the supervision of the Project Ecologist.
- The landscape planting will be monitored by the project landscape architect, as set out in the accompanying Landscape Design Statement.

6 Conclusion

This Outline Habitat Management Plan (HMP) outlines the measures and objective for the proposed development that will contribute to the protection and enhancement of biodiversity on the site. These measures include native tree and hedgerow planting and enhancement, scrub enhancement, and provision of areas of wildflower meadow habitat, containing pollinator friendly plant species. These measures will increase habitat connectivity with the wider landscape and provide refuges for native species including pollinators.



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