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Natura Impact Statement

PRESENTED TO

Cozone Ventures Ltd
Railpark, Maynooth

August 2025

Environmental Consultancy Services

DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

DNV was commissioned by Cozone Ventures Ltd, to prepare an Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report in relation to a Proposed Development at Railpark Lands, Maynooth, County Kildare. The AA Screening Report concluded that a degree of uncertainty exists in whether the Proposed Development could give rise to potentially significant effects on five nearby European sites, namely:

- **Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC (001398).**

Therefore, a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) has been prepared for the Proposed Development. The purpose of this NIS report is to provide information for the relevant competent authority to carry out a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment in respect of the Proposed Development.

1.2 Quality Assurance and Competence

DNV is a multi-disciplinary consultancy specialising in the areas of the Environment, Waste Management and Planning. All DNV consultants carry scientific or engineering qualifications and have a wealth of experience working within the Environmental Consultancy sectors, having undergone extensive training and continued professional development.

DNV as a company remains fully briefed in European and Irish environmental policy and legislation. DNV staff members are highly qualified in their field. Professional memberships include the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management (CIWM), the Irish Environmental Law Association and Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM).

All surveying and reporting have been carried out by qualified and experienced ecologists and environmental consultants. CS and SC, Ecologists with DNV, authored this report. SH and KC, Ecologists with DNV, undertook the and fauna and flora surveys and for this report. TR and CS also did the winter bird survey for this report.

SC holds a B.Sc. (Hons) in Botany from the University of Galway and has over 3 years' working in the environmental consultancy sector. SC has managed and delivered ecological services for a wide range of developments including wind farms, commercial units, and large residential schemes. SC has extensive field expertise surveying bats, birds, mammals, plants, habitats, reptiles, amphibians, and invasive species. SC has been issued a bat roost disturbance licence from the NPWS every year since 2022. He also holds a licence to photograph and film bats from the NPWS. SC is proficient in preparing a wide range of ecological reports, including AA Screenings, NIS, Ecological Impact Assessments (EcIA), Bat Reports, Invasive Species Management Plans (ISMP), and constraint reports.

CS is a Consultant Ecologist with DNV and has a B.Sc. (Hons) in Zoology from University of Aberdeen and a M.Sc. in Biodiversity and Conservation from Trinity College Dublin. CS and has experience in conducting assessments of environmental

statements, ecological surveys and mitigation for major planning applications such as wind farms and large-scale residential developments, as well as practical field experience including habitat surveys and ornithological surveys. CS has broad understanding of ecological legislation, best practice methodologies for ecological surveys and mitigation measures, and legal compliance for planning conditions.

SH has a B.Sc. (Hons) in Zoology and a Ph.D. in Marine Ecology from University College Dublin, and a wealth of experience in desktop research, bioinformatics analyses, literature review and reporting, as well as practical field and laboratory experience including habitat mapping, invasive species surveys, terrestrial fauna surveys (incl. mammal presence and bat activity surveys), freshwater and marine fish surveys and environmental DNA analysis. SH has prepared several Stage I and Stage II Appropriate Assessment Reports and Ecological Impact Assessments (EclA). Additionally, SH has authored and supported the preparations of several Biodiversity Chapters for Environmental Impact Assessment Reports.

KC has BSc in Zoology and an MSc in Applied Environmental Science from University College Dublin. KC's experience includes desktop research, report writing, animal behaviour surveys, invasive species surveys, vegetation surveys, bat emergence surveys, genetic/haplotype mapping and habitat mapping. KC has experience in assessing terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and tropical environments. KC has contributed to the preparation of AA Screenings.

TR has a B.Sc. in Environmental and Natural Resource Management (Hons) and a Post-Graduate Diploma in Environmental Management with GIS. TR is an experienced Ecologist who has specialised in ornithology and terrestrial mammals with over 8 years' experience in ecological consultancy along with a lifetime of personal interest and experience in wildlife management. TR has extensive field experience with further experience and competencies in desktop research, preparing AA Screening Reports (AA), Ecological Impact Assessment Reports (EclAs), Bird Activity Reports and detailed Species-Specific Maps. His ability to deal with and understand a range of species, survey methods and habitats is excellent, having an in-depth knowledge and understanding of EU and Irish legislation.

1.3 Description of Proposed Development

1.3.1 Site Location

The Site is approx. 15.98-hectare lands at Railpark, Maynooth, Co. Kildare. The application site is bound by Parklands Grove housing estate to the northwest and situated west of the residential properties within the Rockfield development and northeast of the permitted residential development 'The Grange' under Reg. Ref.: 21155 / ABP Ref: 312671-22 (Phase 1) and Reg. Ref.: 21156 / ABP Ref: 312685-22 (Phase 2), which is currently under construction. It is approximately 230 metres north of Maynooth Educate Together National School on Celbridge Road. The site is bordered by agricultural lands to the north and east. Location of the Site is presented in Figure 1.

1.3.2 Proposed Development Description

A ten-year planning permission is being sought for a a Large-scale Residential Development (LRD) on lands at Railpark, Maynooth, Co. Kildare. The application site is bound by Parklands Grove housing estate to the northwest and situated west of the residential properties within the Rockfield development and northeast of the permitted residential development 'The Grange' under Reg. Ref.: 21155 / ABP Ref: 312671-22 (Phase 1) and Reg. Ref.: 21156 / ABP Ref: 312685-22 (Phase 2), which is currently under construction. It is approximately 230 metres north of Maynooth Educate Together National School on Celbridge Road. The site is bordered by agricultural lands to the north and east.

In summary, the proposed development will consist of 581 no. residential units, a neighbourhood centre and all associated development, on a site of approximately 15.27 hectares.

The residential component of the development consists of 185 no. apartment / duplex apartments and 396 no. houses to be provided as follows:

- 59 no. 2 bed two storey terraced houses;
- 52 no. 3 bed two storey mid terrace houses;
- 223 no. 3 bed two storey end terrace/semi-detached houses;
- 58 no. 4 bed two storey semi-detached houses;
- 4 no. 4 bed two storey detached houses;
- 185 no. duplex apartments / apartments (53 no. 1 beds, 92 no. 2 beds, 40 no. 3 beds) in a series of 3 to part 6 storey duplex apartment / apartment blocks.

The proposed neighbourhood centre consists of 3 no. buildings (Block A, Block B and a standalone café / restaurant kiosk building) and a new public plaza and communal open space. Block A is part 5 storey / part 6 storey building comprising health centre (174 sq.m) and two no. Class 1- Shop units (124 sq.m) and (166 sq.m) at ground floor level and 41 no. apartments from first to fifth floor level. Block B is a 5 storey building block comprising a childcare facility (762 sq.m) at ground floor level and 48 no. apartments from first to fourth floor level. All duplex apartments / apartment units are provided with a balcony, terrace or private garden on all elevations.

A total of 888 no. car parking spaces are proposed, which includes 711 no. in-curtilage spaces for houses, 115 no. spaces for the duplex apartments / apartments, 36 no. visitor car parking spaces, 26 no. for the commercial uses at the neighbourhood centre including visitor and staff parking. A total of 623 no. cycle spaces are proposed for residents, 42 no. spaces for the neighbourhood centre uses and 93 no. visitor cycle parking spaces.

The proposal includes significant public open space including a new Local Park, linear park and pocket parks, children's play areas and ancillary play area for the childcare facility. The development includes hard and soft landscaping, lighting, boundary treatments and communal open space areas.

The proposed development provides for two no. vehicular accesses from the permitted Maynooth Eastern Ring Road (MERR), including a new pedestrian/cyclist signalised crossing, associated internal roads, pedestrian and cycle infrastructure, set down areas, bin and bike stores, paths and access points provided up to the application site boundary to provide for potential future connections to adjoining lands to the north and south, subject to agreement with the Planning Authority / adjacent landowner.

The development includes foul and surface water drainage, 6 no. ESB Substations, green roofs, services and all associated and ancillary site works and development.

The Proposed Site layout is shown in Figure 2.

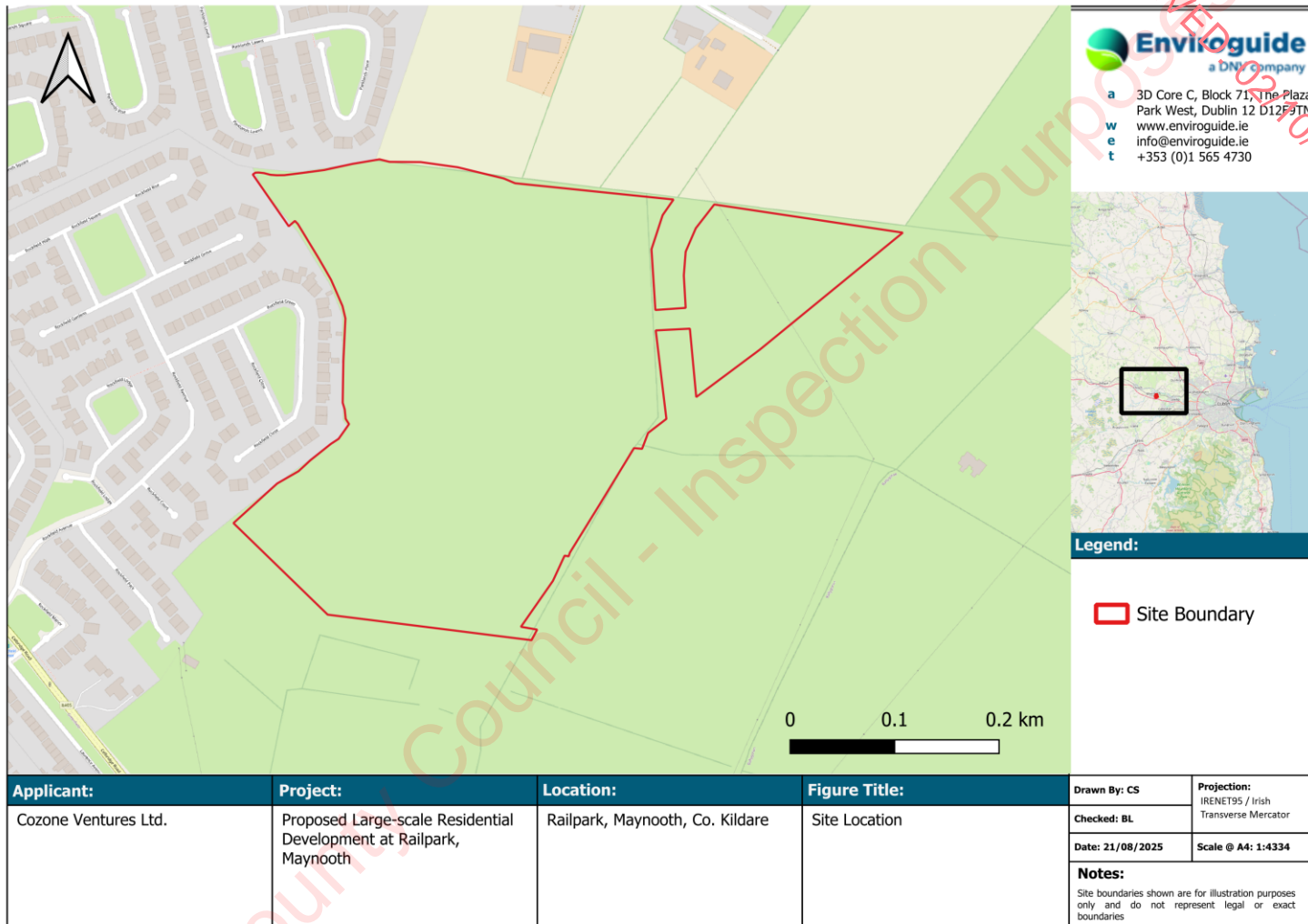


FIGURE 1. SITE LOCATION.

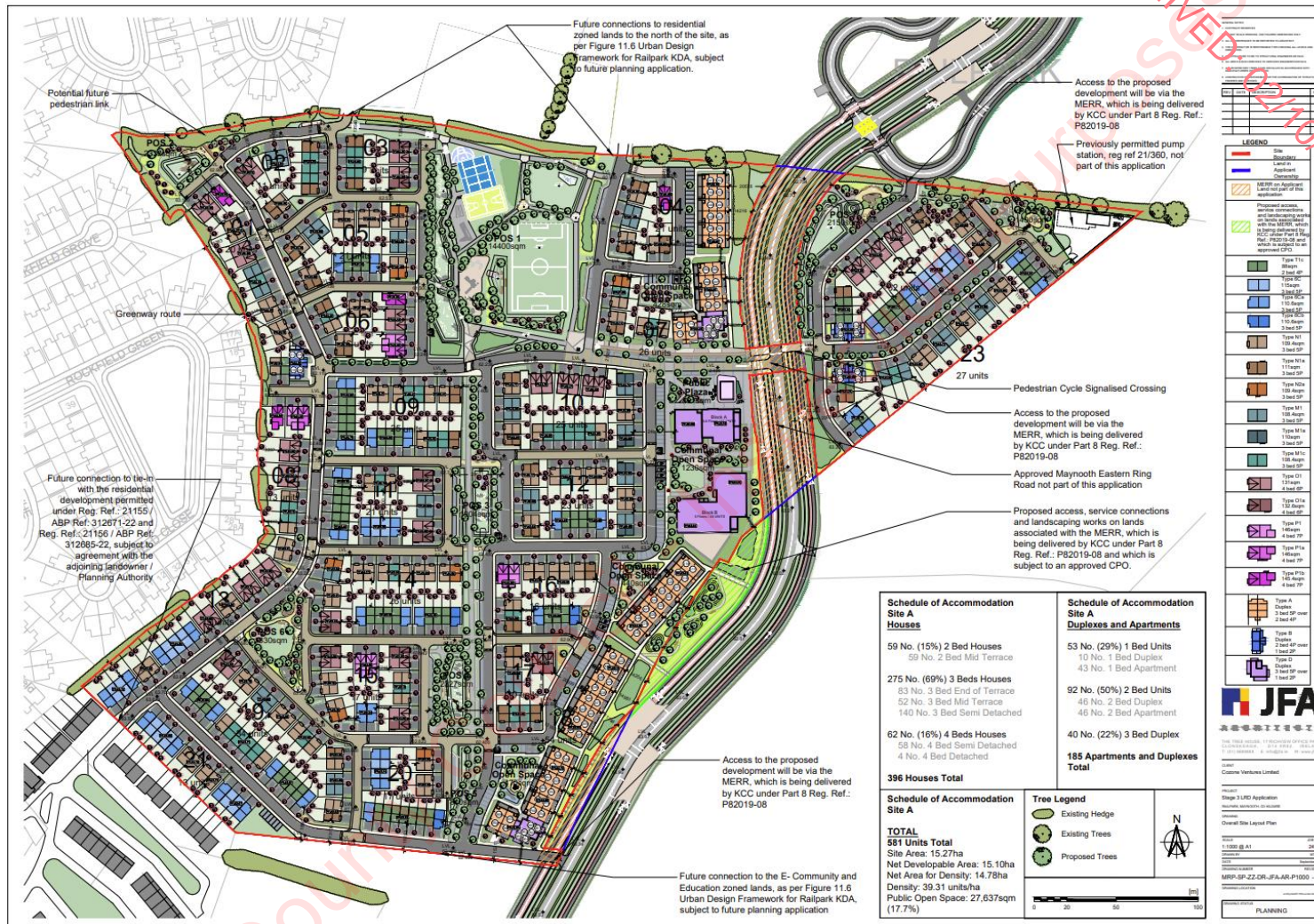


FIGURE 2. PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT (JFA ARCHITECTS, 2025, DRAWING NO. MRP-SP-ZZ-DR-JFA-AR-P1000).

1.3.3 Drainage

The following surface water and foul drainage information is extracted from the draft Engineering Report by Roughan & O'Donovan (ROD) (2025).

It is proposed to provide new separate surface and foul drainage systems to serve the Proposed Development.

1.3.3.1 Surface water

Drainage records obtained from Kildare County Council indicate that there are existing 900mm and 300mm diameter surface water gravity pipes that cross beneath the Development Site in a south to north direction. These pipes will require a localised diversion and all measures required by Kildare County Council to facilitate the diversion will be incorporated into the detailed design of the development.

A localised diversion of a 375mm diameter surface water outfall pipe from the Maynooth Eastern Ring Road Scheme will also be required.

The existing topography will allow for the Site to drain by gravity to the existing surface water pipe network located within the site and to the new surface water drainage infrastructure to be provided as part of the Maynooth Eastern Ring Road scheme.

It is proposed to construct a new surface water drainage system for the development to collect runoff and convey it to the outfall location. The Site will be served by a new network consisting of surface water pipes, surface water swales, permeable paving areas, tree pits and detention basins. The detention basins and lower sub-base levels of the permeable paving will provide for the attenuation storage requirements on site as a result of the residential development. Blue / Green roofs will also be provided on the roofs of the apartment blocks at the proposed neighbourhood centre.

1.3.3.1.1 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

As part of the development, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) management plan has been prepared by ROD (2025). The SuDS measures are proposed to minimise the impact on water quality and water quantity of the runoff and maximise the amenity and biodiversity opportunities within the site.

This is to ensure that the surface water run-off from the development does not exceed greenfield run-off in order to meet the requirements set by Kildare County Council policies on SuDS.

The proposed SuDS measures will include Source Control measures as part of a Management Train whereby the surface water is managed locally in small sub-catchments rather than being conveyed to and managed in large systems further down the catchment. The combination of the SuDS measures listed below will maximise the potential for surface water attenuation, reducing the impact on the existing surface water drainage network downstream. The proposed techniques will offer high level of treatment processes and nutrient removal of the runoff, particularly during the 'first flush'. Finally, the various measures will offer significant amenity and biodiversity opportunities compared to other drainage systems.

The following SuDS measures are to be incorporated as part of the development:

- Blue/green roof systems
- Vegetated detention basins with low flow channels.
- Vegetated swales
- Permeable paving
- Tree pits
- Flow control devices to limit discharge.

There will be regular maintenance and inspections of the operational SuDS measures, with remedial actions proposed should any issues arise with the functioning of the drainage systems.

1.3.3.2 Foul Drainage

There is an existing 300mm diameter foul drainage pipe that bisects the Site of the Proposed Development and also flows south to north. This sewer will require a localised diversion, and a diversion application will be lodged to Uisce Eireann. All measures required by Uisce Eireann to facilitate the diversion will be incorporated into the detailed design of the development.

It is also proposed to construct a new foul sewer network to serve the Proposed Development.

Foul discharge from the 272 units at the Site will discharge to the existing 300mm diameter foul sewer located within the Site and 309 units to the new foul infrastructure to be provided as part of the Maynooth Eastern Ring Road (MERR) Scheme.

A Confirmation of Feasibility Letter was received from Uisce Eireann in June 2025. Uisce Eireann have confirmed that a foul connection is feasible subject to upgrades on the wider receiving network.

These upgrades include:

- Upgrade works to increase the capacity of the wastewater network in Maynooth and accommodate the proposed connection for this development. This upgrade project (Maynooth Transfer Pipeline) has recently commenced and is scheduled to be completed by Q2 2027 (this may be subject to change) and the proposed connection could be completed as soon as possibly practicable after this date.
- The east portion of the development proposes to connect to the MERR gravity network that then flows to a future strategic Wastewater Pumping Station (WWPS). Currently the scope of the MERR project is to deliver works within MERR only, therefore, the following infrastructure is required at Connection Application Stage:
 - Construction of new strategic WWPS and associated rising main to serve the entire area
 - Provision of 24-hour storage and telemetry link to the Maynooth Primary School

- Completion of the MERR by third parties.
- Connection to the network from the east portion of the site draining to the strategic WWPS can be facilitated prior to completion of the upgraded project subject to construction and commissioning of the strategic WWPS and rising main being completed.
- Network upgrades may also be required based on connection uptake by other developments. These upgrades would consist of existing gravity sewer upsizing works. This requirement will be further determined at Connection Application stage.

The Maynooth Eastern Ring Road Scheme includes new water services infrastructure to serve future developments, with separate foul and surface water systems. Discussions with Uisce Éireann are ongoing regarding the upgrades required to the wider foul network and timelines for delivery of Uisce Éireann schemes (new Uisce Éireann foul pumping station, foul rising main from Maynooth Eastern Ring Road to Maynooth, and the Maynooth Transfer Pipeline). At the time of submitting this planning application, the envisaged timeline for delivery of the Maynooth Transfer Pipeline remains Q2 2027.

Details of any upgrade works required by Uisce Eireann to facilitate a foul connection will be agreed with Uisce Éireann at Connection Application Stage as per the Confirmation of Feasibility Letter.

A Statement of Design Acceptance (SODA) letter has also been received from Uisce Eireann dated 12th September 2025, which confirms no objections to the design details included in the proposed development.

1.3.3.3 Construction Environmental Management Plan

An Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (OCEMP) has been prepared by ROD (2025) containing compliance with good practice guidelines during the construction phase of the Proposed Development to minimise the potential for environmental impacts throughout construction.

This includes:

- Working hours from 07:00 – 19:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 – 18:00 Saturday and closed on Sundays.
- Excavation and construction works will be carefully managed to ensure no contamination of watercourses as a result of the construction work. This will involve ensuring that no dirty water from site enters the surface water sewerage network. The Contractor will be required to follow best practice in respect of the protection of watercourses during all stages of construction. Any surface water encountered during this phase will be pumped to the foul sewerage network during periods of low flow in agreement with the relevant authorities or pumped to tankers and removed from Site. In the event of an unexpected underground stream being encountered, this will be diverted in consultation with relevant

agencies before excavation works continue.

- A noise and vibration control management plan specific noise abatement measures to comply with the recommendations of BS 5228: Parts 1 and 2 and the European Communities (Noise Emission by Equipment for Use Outdoors) Regulations, 2001.
- Management of vibrations to comply with the recommendations in BS 5228 Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites – Part 2: Vibration.
- Suppression of dust and other airborne contaminants.
- Effective management of waste onsite including a details Construction Waste Management Plan (ROD, 2025)
- Surface water management and protection measures in accordance with the Control of Water Pollution from Construction Sites; Guidance for Consultants and Contractors (SP156) (CIRIA, 2002).
- The storage of oils, hydraulic fluids, etc shall be undertaken in accordance with current best practice for oil storage (Enterprise Ireland, BPGCS005).
- Focussed and controlled lighting during construction.

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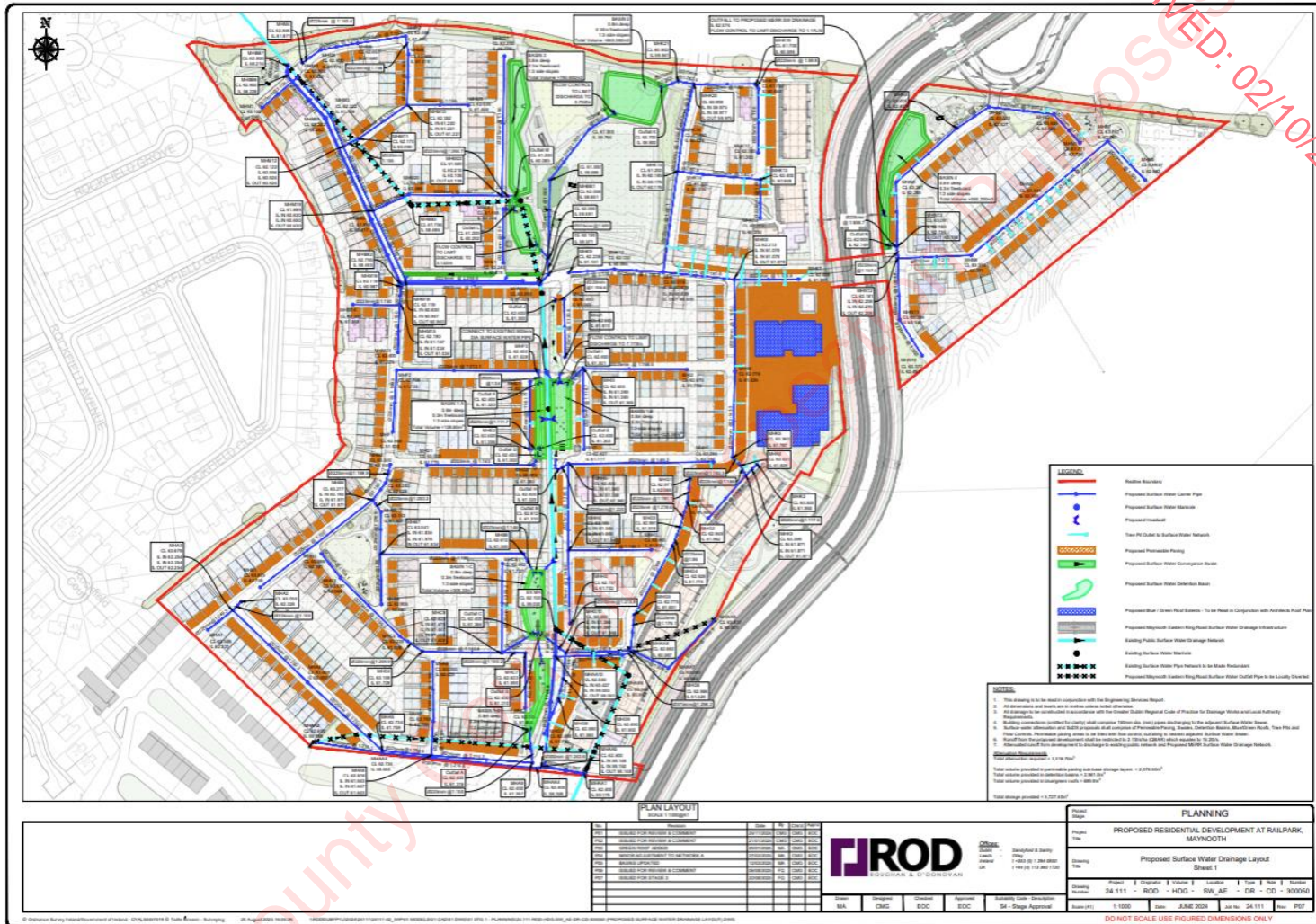


FIGURE 3. PROPOSED DRAINAGE LAYOUT (ROD, 2025).

2 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Legislative Background

The Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) seeks to conserve natural habitats and wild fauna and flora by the designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) seeks to protect birds of special importance by the designation of Special Protected Areas (SPAs). The Habitats Directive has been transposed into Irish law through the EC (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI 477 of 2011). It is the responsibility of each member state to designate SPAs and SACs, both of which will form part of Natura 2000, a network of protected sites throughout the European Community.

SACs and SPAs are collectively known as “Natura 2000” or “European” sites. SACs are selected for the conservation of Annex I habitats (including priority types which are in danger of disappearance) and Annex II species (other than birds). SPAs are selected for the conservation of Annex I birds and other regularly occurring migratory birds and their habitats. The annexed habitats and species for which each site is selected correspond to the Qualifying Interests (QIs) and Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of the sites; from these the conservation objectives of the site are derived.

An ‘Appropriate Assessment’ (AA) is an assessment required prior to the grant of planning permission to determine whether a plan or project, based on best scientific knowledge, will have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. It is required for any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a site but likely to have a significant effect on it.

An AA is required under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive where a project or plan may give rise to significant effects upon a Natura 2000 site. Paragraph 3 states that:

“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 subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site, in view of the site's conservation objectives. In the 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.”

2.1.1 Legislative Context

An Appropriate Assessment (AA) is required under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive where a project or plan may give rise to significant effects upon a European site. Paragraph 3 states that:

“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 subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site, in view of the site's conservation objectives. In the 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."

The obligations in relation to AA have been implemented in Ireland under the Planning and Development Act 2024. Chapter 3 of Part 6 of the Act provides a detailed framework for the AA of 'Development and Proposed Development' to ensure compliance with the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive¹.

The relevant sections in relation to screening for AA have been summarised below:

Section 212 of the Planning and Development Act 2024 mandates that the competent authority must conduct a screening for appropriate assessment of relevant development projects². This applies to developments that are not directly connected with, or necessary for, the management of a European site, but which have the potential to cause a significant impact.

1. Subsection (1) specifies that the screening is required for:
 - Applications for permission for relevant developments.
 - Determining if the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, is likely to significantly affect a European site, considering its conservation objectives.
2. Subsection (2) extends the screening requirement to:
 - Alterations or extensions of permissions for development.
 - Determining if such changes, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, are likely to significantly affect a European site, considering its conservation objectives.
3. Subsection (3) allows the competent authority to:
 - Request additional information or clarification from the applicant.
 - Consult with appropriate persons to facilitate the screening process.

¹ A framework for Appropriate Assessment of Plans is given in Chapter 2 of Part 6 of the Planning and Development Act 2024.

² In the context of the Planning and Development Act 2024, a "relevant development" generally refers to any project or activity that requires planning permission and has the potential to impact the environment, particularly European sites. This includes new construction projects; material changes in use; alterations or extensions; and some exempted developments (certain developments that are typically exempt from requiring permission but may still need to be assessed if they impact European sites). Further details can be found in Part 2 of the Act.

4. Subsection (4) states that if the applicant fails to provide the requested information within the specified period, the competent authority may refuse to grant permission.

The Appropriate Assessment (AA) screening under Section 212 can result in several determinations:

1. No Likely Significant Effect: If the screening concludes that the Proposed Development, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site, considering its conservation objectives, the project can proceed without further assessment.
2. Likely Significant Effect: If the screening determines that the Proposed Development is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, an Appropriate Assessment must be carried out. This involves a more detailed examination of the potential impacts on the site's conservation objectives and the preparation of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS).
3. Insufficient Information: If the competent authority finds that there is insufficient information to make a determination, it can request additional information from the applicant. The screening process will be paused until the necessary information is provided.
4. Refusal Due to Non-Compliance: If the applicant fails to provide the requested information within the specified timeframe, the competent authority may refuse to grant permission for the development.

These determinations ensure that any potential impacts on European sites are thoroughly considered and addressed, promoting sustainable development and environmental protection.

Where a NIS is required, the report may be prepared and submitted by the applicant as part of the application for permission.

For full details of the Planning and Development Act 2024 in relation to AA Screening (including details of AA for plans and local or state authority developments), please refer to the full Planning and Development Act 2024 documentation available on the Irish Statute Book website³.

2.2 Policy Context

2.3 Kildare County Council Development Plan 2023 – 2029

The Kildare County Development Plan (KCDP) 2023 - 2029 addresses the protection of European sites through policies and objectives in the following chapters.

- Chapters 6 Infrastructure & Environmental Services.
- Chapters 12 Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure.

³ <https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2024/act/34/enacted/en/print>

- Chapters 15 Development Management Standards.

Policies and objectives of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029 that are of relevance to this Screening Report are outlined below:

TABLE 1. RELEVANT POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES TO AA/AA SCREENING IN KCDP 2023-2029.

Aim / Target	Policies and Objectives
Chapter 6: Infrastructure Environmental Services	
Pollution Control – Water, Air, Noise and Light	IN P7, IN P8, IN O57, IN O58, IN O64
Chapter 12: Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure	
Designated sites for nature conservation	BI P2, BI O9, BI O10, BI O11
Protected habitats and species outside designated areas	BI P4, BI O15, BI O16, BI O17, BI O20, BI O22
Management of invasive species and noxious weeds	BI P9, BI O58

In addition, Chapter 15 - Development Management Standards of the KCDP 2023-2029 contains detailed guidance on relevant legislation standards to Appropriate Assessment and screening.

2.4 Kildare Biodiversity Action Plan 2009-2014

Kildare Biodiversity Action Plan 2009-2014 is set out to protect and improve biodiversity through the following objectives:

- To facilitate the collection and dissemination of heritage information.
- To raise public awareness, understanding and appreciation of County Kildare’s heritage.
- To promote best practice in heritage conservation and management.
- To inform policy and provide advice to Kildare local authorities.

2.5 Maynooth and Environs Joint Local Area Plan 2025-2031

The Maynooth and Environs Joint Local Area Plan was adopted by Kildare County Council in February 2025 and has come into effect since April 2025. The plan sets out an overall strategy for the planning and sustainable development of Maynooth and Environs.

This includes the objectives GBIO1.1 – GBIO1.5 to protect and enhance local biodiversity within the town. The following objective is relevant to designated sites within or adjacent to Maynooth and Environs:

- Objective GBIO 1.1: Protect, conserve and manage the Rye Water Valley / Carton SAC by ensuring that screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA), in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive is carried out with respect to any plan or project, including masterplans.

In addition, the following objective is set out for surface water and ground water management, and is relevant to AA screening within the Railpark area:

- Objective IO 2.4: Pursue opportunities within the Railpark area to divert surface water drainage away from the town centre by developing a surface water

drainage network which discharges into the Rye Water River down stream of Maynooth, subject to Appropriate Assessment (AA).

2.6 Stages of Appropriate Assessment

The AA process is a four-stage process. Each stage requires different considerations, assessments and tests to ultimately arrive at the relevant conclusion for 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.

The four stages of an AA, can be summarised as follows:

- **Stage 1: Screening.** The Screening for AA considers whether a plan or project is directly connected to or necessary for the management of a European site, or whether a plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, is likely to have significant effects on a European site in view of its conservation objectives.
- **Stage 2: Natura Impact Statement (NIS).** Where Stage 1 determines that significant effects are likely, uncertain or unknown, the preparation of a NIS is required. The NIS must include a scientific examination of evidence and data to classify potential impacts on any European site(s) in view of their conservation objectives in the absence of mitigation. The NIS will identify appropriate mitigation to remove the potential for likely significant adverse effects on any European site(s). If the competent authority determines that the plan or project would have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European site(s) despite mitigation, it can only grant consent after proceeding through stages 3 and 4.
- **Stage 3: Assessment of alternative solutions.** If the outcome of Stage 2 is negative i.e., adverse impacts to the sites cannot be scientifically ruled out, despite mitigation, the plan or project should proceed to Stage 3 or be abandoned. This stage examines alternative solutions to the proposal.
- **Stage 4: Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain.** The final stage is the main derogation process examining whether there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) for allowing a plan or project to adversely affect a European site, where no less damaging solution exists.

The Habitats Directive promotes a hierarchy of avoidance, mitigation, and compensatory measures. First the project should aim to avoid any negative effects on European sites by identifying possible effects early in the planning stage and designing the project to avoid such effects. Second, mitigation measures should be applied, if necessary, during the AA process to the point where no adverse impacts on the site(s) remain. If the project is still likely to result in adverse effects, and no further practicable mitigation is possible, a refusal for planning permission may be recommended. In this case, the project will generally only be considered where no alternative solutions are identified and the project is required for IROPI, or, in the case of priority habitats, considerations of health or safety, or beneficial consequences of primary importance

for the environment or to other IROPI. Then compensation measures are required for any remaining adverse effects.

2.7 Stage 1: Appropriate Assessment Screening Conclusion

An AA Screening Report was prepared for the Stage 2 submission of the Proposed Development by DNV on 18th March 2025.

The conclusion of the AA Screening Report is as follows:

“The Proposed Development at Railpark Lands, Maynooth, Co. Kildare has been assessed taking into account:

- *The nature, size and location of the proposed works and possible impacts arising from the construction works.*
- *The QIs and conservation objectives of the European sites.*
- *The potential for in-combination effects arising from other plans and projects.*

*In conclusion, upon the examination, analysis and evaluation of the relevant information and applying the precautionary principle, it is concluded by the authors of this report that the possibility **cannot be excluded** that the Proposed Development will have a significant effect on any of the European sites listed below:*

- **Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC (001398).**

In carrying out this AA screening, any targeted ecological mitigation measures and/or measures intended or included for the purposes of avoiding adverse effects arising as a result of the Proposed Development on any European site have not been taken into account.

On the basis of the screening exercise carried out above, it can be concluded, on the basis of the best scientific knowledge available and objective information, that the possibility of any significant effects on the above listed European sites, whether arising from the project itself or in combination with other plans and projects, cannot be excluded in light of the above listed European sites’ conservation objectives. Thus, there is a requirement to proceed to Stage 2 of the Appropriate Assessment process; and a NIS will be prepared for the Stage 3 LRD application stage under a separate cover.”

As such, this NIS will assess the potential effects of the Proposed Development on

- **Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC (001398).**

This site is linked to the Proposed Development via hydrological and hydrogeological pathways.

2.7.1 Designated sites screened out at Stage 1 AA Screening

S-P-R Pathways to designated sites in the Dublin bay, such as **North Dublin Bay SAC (000206)** (c. 26km east of the Site), **South Dublin Bay SAC (000210)**, (c. 24km east of the Site), **North Bull Island SPA (004006)** (c. 26km east of the Site); and **South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (004024)** were also considered during the

Stage 1 AA screening, however, these designated sites were screened out at Stage 1 of the AA screening process. Please refer to the AA screening for further details.

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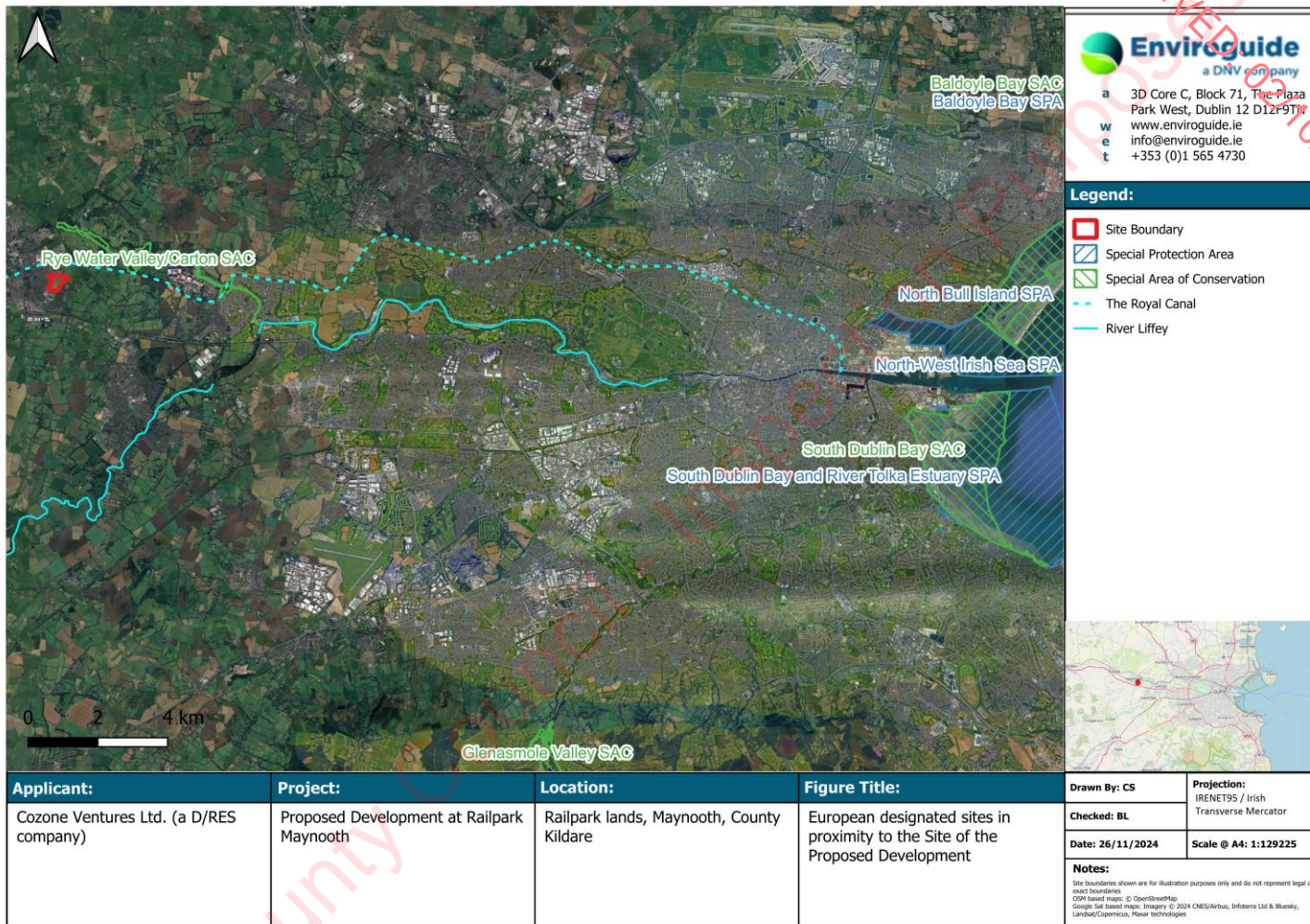


FIGURE 4. RELEVANT EUROPEAN SITES AS IDENTIFIED IN AA SCREENING (DNV, 2025).

3 NIS METHODOLOGY

3.1 Guidance

This NIS has been undertaken in accordance with the following guidance:

- *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities.* (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2010 revision);
- *Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities.* Circular NPW 1/10 & PSSP 2/10;
- *Communication from the Commission on the precautionary principle* (European Commission, 2000);
- *Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC* (European Commission, 2019);
- *Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites – Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC* (European Commission, 2021);
- *Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management, OPR Practice Note PN01, Office of the Planning Regulator March 2021;* and
- *Amendments to section 42 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended and associated Planning and Development Regulations 2001. Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. (2021). Circular Letter: EUIPR 01/2021.*

3.2 NIS Steps

This NIS has been prepared following the steps described below:

- Description of the baseline existing environment at the Site of the Proposed Development;
- Review and description of available data for the relevant European site(s) potentially affected as identified in the Screening Report (DNV 2025);
- Identification and description of potential effects on the relevant European site(s) and their designated QIs/SCIs;
- Assessment of the likely significance of the effects and/or impacts identified on the relevant QIs/SCIs in view of their Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs) where available;
- Description and characterisation of other projects or plans that in combination with the Proposed Development have the potential for having significant effects on the relevant QIs/SCIs;

- Identification of appropriate mitigation measures to remove the likelihood of significant effects on any European site(s) and their QIs/SCI; and
- Exclusion of sites where it can be objectively concluded that there will be no significant effects once mitigation measures are adhered to.

3.3 Desk Study

A desktop study was carried out to collate and review available information, datasets and documentation sources relevant for the completion of the NIS. The desk- top study, completed in June 2025, relied on the following sources:

- Information on the network of European sites, relevant boundaries, QIs and conservation objectives, obtained from the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) at www.npws.ie and the European Environment Agency (EEA) at <https://natura2000.eea.europa.eu/>;
- Information on the status of EU protected habitats and species in Ireland, obtained from the NPWS Article 17 reports;
- Text summaries of the relevant European sites taken from the respective Site Synopses for each site, available at www.npws.ie;
- Information on waterbodies, catchment areas and hydrological connections obtained from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at www.gis.epa.ie;
- Information on bedrock, groundwater, aquifers and their statuses, obtained from Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) at www.gsi.ie;
- Satellite imagery and mapping obtained from various sources and dates including Google, Digital Globe, Bing and Ordnance Survey Ireland; and
- Information on the extent, nature and location of the Proposed Development, provided by the applicant and their design team.

A comprehensive list of all the specific documents and information sources consulted in the completion of this report is provided in Section 6 - References.

3.4 Field Surveys

A range of field surveys have been carried out at the Site to date. These are summarised in Table 2. For full details on the methods and results of the fields surveys listed, please refer to the Biodiversity (Chapter 5) of the EIAR accompanying this application under separate cover. Results relevant to this Screening Report have been summarised in section 4.1.1.1.

TABLE 2. FIELD SURVEYS UNDERTAKEN AT THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT SITE.

Survey	Surveyor	Dates
Preliminary Habitat and Invasive Flora Survey	DNV (SH and KC)	17th of July 2024.
Bat Transect survey	DNV (BMcC and BS)	9th of October 2024
Winter Bird Survey	DNV (CS and TR)	20th of November 2024 17th of December 2024 19th January 2025 19th February 2025

Survey	Surveyor	Dates
Badger Survey	DNV (CS, BS, LG, SC)	5 th of December 2024 16 th July 2025 – 23 rd July 2025

3.5 Impact Prediction

Potential impacts on the relevant European site(s) identified during the AA Screening are based on information regarding their QIs and/or SCI species, and the attributes and targets relating to their SSCOs where available. These have been informed by the desk study and any field surveys carried out prior to the preparation of this report.

Impact prediction is based on the Source-Pathway-Receptor (S-P-R) model. The following describes the steps of the S-P-R approach taken in this NIS:

- Potential sources of effects were identified based on the Proposed Development description and details, including changes to potentially suitable ex-situ habitats at the Site (i.e., habitats utilised by Species of Conservation Importance (SCI) bird species outside of their designated SPAs).
- Up-to-date GIS spatial datasets for water catchments as well as any information from relevant site investigations and/or field surveys were used to identify the QIs/ SCIs within the relevant European site(s) that have a notable S-P-R connection to the Proposed Development:
 - The catchment data were used to establish or discount potential hydrological connectivity between the Proposed Development and any QIs/SCIs.
 - Groundwater and bedrock information used to establish or discount potential hydrogeological connectivity between the Proposed Development and any QIs/SCIs.
 - Air and land connectivity assessed based on Proposed Development details and proximity to QIs/SCIs.
 - Consideration of potential indirect pathways, e.g., impacts to flight paths, *ex-situ* habitats, etc.
- Identification of potential impacts for those QIs/SCIs linked to the Proposed Development via notable S-P-R connections.

Where the preceding steps identified any potential for adverse impacts on any QIs/SCIs for the relevant European site(s), appropriate mitigation measures to eliminate the potential for significant adverse effects are identified in this report.

3.6 Limitations

No limitations were encountered which would prevent robust conclusions being drawn as to the potential impacts of the Proposed Development on the relevant European sites.

4 NATURA IMPACT STATEMENT

4.1 Existing Environment

4.1.1 Desk Study Results

4.1.1.1 Hydrology

The Site of the Proposed Development is within the Liffey and Dublin Bay catchment (Catchment I.D 09) and the Liffey_SC_080 sub catchment (Subcatchment I.D. 09_5) (EPA, 2025).

The closest waterbody is the Royal Canal (IE_09_AWB_RCMLE) which lies approximately 428m north of the Site. The WFD ecological potential status of the Grand Canal for the 2016-2021 period was classed as 'Good' (EPA, 2025). The Royal Canal flows west to east and eventually discharges into the Liffey Estuary Lower (IE_EA_090_0300), 22.59km east of the Site, which flows into Dublin Bay (IE_EA_090_0000) approx. 30km east of the Site. The Liffey Estuary Lower has a status of 'Moderate' and is projected to be 'At Risk' of not achieving its WFD objectives (EPA, 2025).

The Maynooth stream is 469m northwest of the Site within the town of Maynooth. The Maynooth stream flows northwards into the Lyreen 09 (IE_EA_09L020100), and then the Rye Water (IE_EA_09R010600), which flows west to east and lies 1.3km north of the Site. The Rye water flows into the River Liffey (IE_EA_09L011900) approx. 5.7km east of the Site, which also eventually flows into the Dublin Bay. The WFD ecological potential status of the Rye Water for the 2016-2021 period was classed as 'Moderate' but it is projected to be 'At Risk' of not achieving its WFD objectives (EPA, 2025). The Liffey has a 'Good' status and its risk of achieving its WFD objectives is under review (EPA, 2025).

The EPA water quality monitoring data for the stations on the Rye water and Liffey located closest to the Site is summarised in [TABLE 3](#). The reported Q-value results indicate that water quality in the Lyreen and Rye Water in the vicinity of the Site is "Poor" and "Moderate". The EPA data indicates that macroinvertebrates were the main drivers of Q value for the water course for the period 2016-2022 (EPA, 2025).

TABLE 3. EPA MONITORING STATIONS AND ASSIGNED Q VALUES.

EPA Monitoring Station name	Station Code	Location from Site	Distance from Site	Assigned Q value
~200m d/s Mill Street Bridge	RS09L020050	Northwest downstream	1.04km	3 "Poor"
Just u/s Rye Water confl	RS09L020100	Northwest downstream	1.44km	3 "Poor"
Kildare Br	RS09R010400	North downstream	1.37km	3-4 "Moderate"
Sandfords Bridge	RS09R010500	Northeast downstream	2.74km	3-4 "Moderate"
Br in Leixlip	RS09R010600	East downstream	5.54km	3-4 "Moderate"

The Waterbody Status for river, groundwater, transitional and coastal water bodies relevant to the Site as recorded by the EPA (2023) in accordance with European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (SI no. 722/2003) are provided in Table 4. WFD Risk and Water Body Status

TABLE 5. HYDROLOGY SUMMARY TABLE.

Waterbody Name	Water body; EU code	Location from Site	Distance from Site (km)	WFD water body status (2016-2021)	WFD 3 rd cycle Risk Status	Hydraulic Connection to the Site
Surface Water Bodies						
The Royal Canal Main Line (Liffey and Dublin Bay)	IE_09_AW B_RCMLE	North	0.43	Good	Review	No hydrological connection to the Site
Maynooth stream (Lyreen 09)	IE_EA_09L 020100	North-west	0.47	Poor	At Risk	Downstream of the surface water drainage network
Rye Water	IE_EA_09R 010600	North	1.3	Moderate	At Risk	Downstream of the surface water drainage network
Liffey	IE_EA_09L 011900	East	5.7	Moderate	At Risk	Downstream of the Site drainage network
Transitional Water bodies						
Liffey Estuary Lower	IE_EA_090 _0300	East	22.59	Moderate	At Risk	Downstream of the Site drainage network
Coastal Waterbodies						
Dublin Bay	IE_EA_090 _0000	East	30	Good	Not at Risk	Downstream of the Site drainage network
Groundwater Bodies						
Dublin	IE_EA_G_0 08	N/A	N/A	Good	Review	Underlying groundwater-body

4.1.1.2 Geology and Hydrogeology

4.1.1.2.1 Aquifer

The underlying geology of the Site comprises Waulsortian Limestone (GSI, 2025). This is described as “*Massive, unbedded limestone and mudstone*”. Unbedded limestone is a bedrock that is comprised of one large mass, as opposed to bedded limestone which contains many layers and hence has fissures and crevices through which water can pass more easily.

The unbedded limestone aquifer beneath the Site is classified as “*Locally Important Aquifer - Bedrock which is Moderately Productive only in Local Zones*” (GSI, 2025) indicating low regional permeability with limited groundwater movement except where localised fracturing

occurs. Neither the Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC nor any other European site overlies the same aquifer unit (Figure 5).

4.1.1.2.2 Groundwater Body

The Site lies within the Dublin groundwater body (GWB) (IE_EA_G_008) as the Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC. A GWB is a large hydrogeological unit delineated by the EPA for the purposes of monitoring, management and protection under the WFD (EPA, 2025). GWB's are broader management units that may encompass multiple aquifer types of varying productivity and permeability. Unlike aquifers, which describe the physical and hydraulic characteristics of specific rock units deep below the surface, groundwater bodies are delineated on the basis of catchment-scale groundwater flow patterns, topography, pressure gradients, recharge areas, and discharge points.

While the aquifer underlying the Site is not shared with any nearby European sites, the GWB extends over a broad region and includes the Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC, indicating that the site and SAC are part of the same regional groundwater system. Additionally, groundwater vulnerability at the Site is classed as "*High*" (GSI, 2025) (Figure 6).

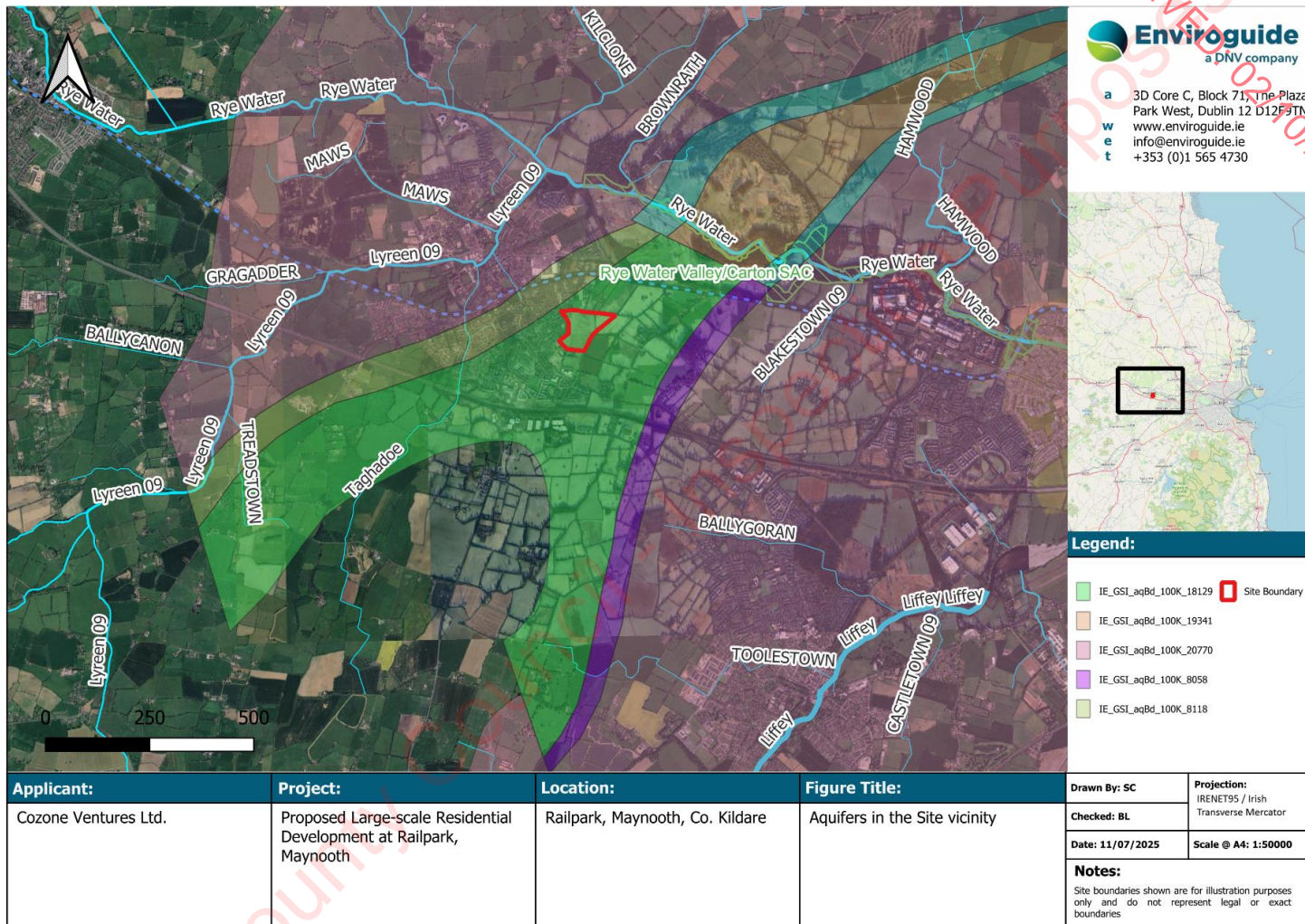


FIGURE 5. AQUIFERS IN THE VICINITY OF THE SITE.

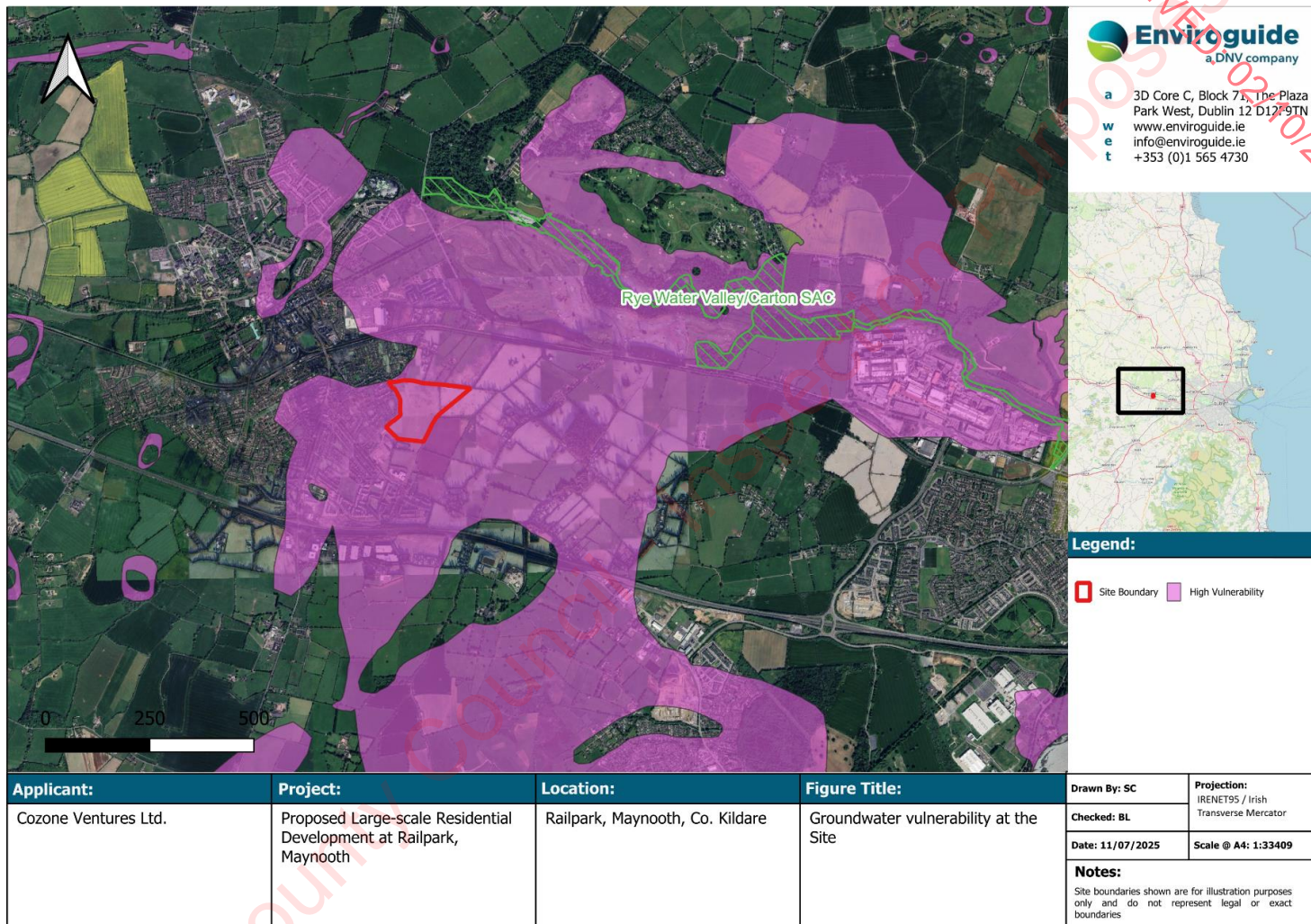


FIGURE 6. GROUNDWATER VULNERABILITY AT THE SITE.

4.2 Summary Of Relevant European Sites

The following descriptions of the relevant habitats and species occurring within the European site(s) considered in this NIS have been extracted from the Standard Data Forms (EEA 2025), Site Synopses (NPWS, 2019) and any supporting documents available for the relevant site(s).

4.2.1 Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC

The following is extracted from the NPWS Site Synopsis (NPWS, 2013):

“Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC is located between Leixlip and Maynooth, in Counties Meath and Kildare, and extends along the Rye Water, a tributary of the River Liffey. ...

*The marsh, mineral spring and seepage area found at Louisa Bridge supports a good diversity of plant species, including stoneworts, Marsh Arrowgrass (*Triglochin palustris*), Purple Moorgrass (*Molinia caerulea*), sedges (*Carex* spp.), Common Butterwort (*Pinguicula vulgaris*), Marsh Lousewort (*Pedicularis palustris*), Grass-of-parnassus (*Parnassia palustris*) and Cuckooflower (*Cardamine pratensis*). The mineral spring found at the site is of a type considered to be rare in Europe and is a habitat listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive. The Red Data Book species Blue Fleabane (*Erigeron acer*) is found growing on a wall at Louisa Bridge. ...*

*The Rye Water is also a spawning ground for Trout and Salmon, and the rare, White-clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*) has been recorded at Leixlip. The latter two species are listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive. The rare Narrow mouthed Whorl Snail and Desmoulin’s Whorl Snail occur in marsh vegetation near Louisa Bridge. Both are rare in Ireland and in Europe, and are listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive. The scarce dragonfly, *Orthetrum coerulescens*, has also been recorded at Louisa Bridge. The conservation importance of the site lies in the presence of several rare and threatened plant and animal species, and the presence of petrifying springs, a habitat type listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive. The woods found on Carton Estate and their birdlife are of additional interest.”*

4.2.2 Qualifying Interests and Conservation Objectives

The QIs/SCIs and their respective conservation objectives for each of the relevant European site(s) are detailed in Table 6 below and Figure 5.

TABLE 6. QUALIFYING INTERESTS (QIs) / SPECIAL CONSERVATION INTERESTS (SCIs) AND THEIR CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES FOR THE RELEVANT EUROPEAN SITES. THE CONSERVATION STATUS OF EACH QI / SCI WAS SOURCED FROM THE RELEVANT STANDARD DATA FORM(S) (SOURCE: EEA (2023)) AND THE LATEST NATIONAL STATUS IS TAKEN FROM THE LATEST ARTICLE 17 REPORT (NPWS, 2019A & 2019B) AND BOCCI⁴ RESPECTIVELY.

QI / SCI (* = priority habitat)	Conservation Status	National Status	Conservation Objective
Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC (001398)			
[7220] Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion)*	Moderate	Inadequate	To restore the favourable conservation condition of Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion)* in Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC
[1014] Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo angustior</i>)	Good	Bad	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Narrow Mouthed Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo angustior</i>) in Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC,
[1016] Desmoulin's Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>)	Moderate	Inadequate	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Desmoulin's Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>) in Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC

⁴ Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland (BOCCI) 2020-2026 (Gilbert, Stanbury & Lewis, 2021). The colours represent the species designation on the various BOCCI lists.

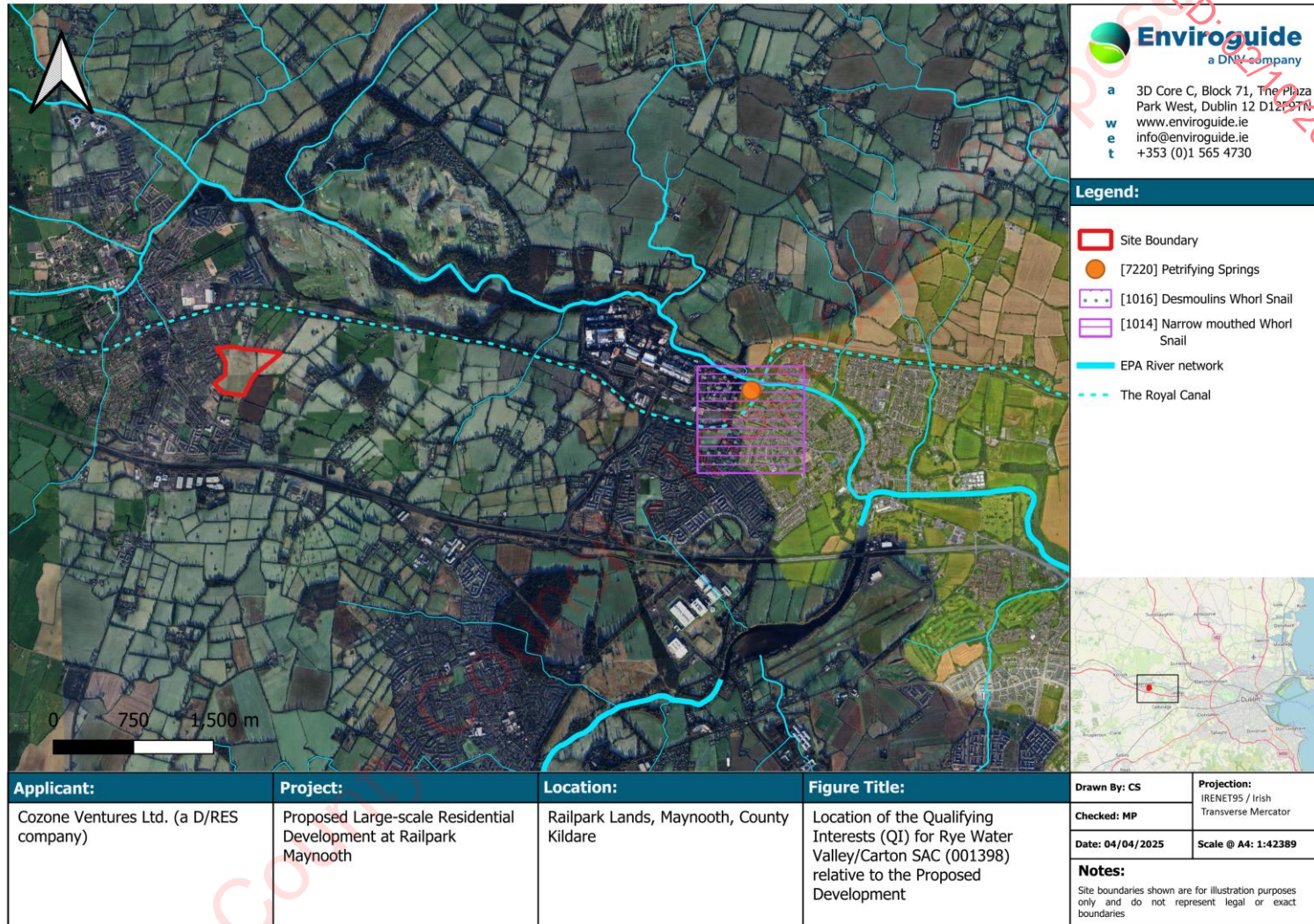


FIGURE 7. QI FEATURES OF THE RYE WATER VALLEY/CARTON SAC RELATIVE TO THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT.

4.3 Impact Prediction

This section follows the S-P-R method to identify if and how any of the QIs/SCIs of the relevant European site are linked to the Proposed Development. Once the connections have been identified the potential impacts of the Proposed Development on the Rye water Valley/Carlton SAC (001398) in light of its QIs/SCIs are assessed.

For the purposes of objectivity and clarity, mitigation measures are not considered in the impact prediction. This includes all measures that will act limit or eliminate the potential for significant adverse impacts on the relevant European site.

4.3.1 Source-Pathway-Receptor Connections

The following elements of the Proposed Development were identified and assessed for their potential to cause likely significant effects on European sites.

Construction Phase (Estimated duration: 5-6 years)

- Surface water run-off containing silt, sediments and/or other pollutants into nearby waterbodies (i.e., the Lyreen River);
- Surface water run-off containing silt, sediments and/or other pollutants into the local groundwater;
- Waste generation during the Construction Phase comprising soils and construction wastes;
- Increased noise, dust and/or vibrations as a result of construction activity;
- Increased dust and air emissions from construction traffic;
- Increased lighting in the vicinity as a result of construction activity; and
- Increased human presence and activity as a result of construction activity.

Operational Phase (Estimated duration: Indefinite)

- Surface water drainage from the Site of the Proposed Development;
- Foul water from the Proposed Development;
- Increased lighting at the Site and in the vicinity emitted from the Proposed Development; and
- Increased human presence and activity at the Site and in the vicinity as a result of the Proposed Development.

The QIs/SCIs for the **Rye Water Valley/Carlton SAC (001398)** are shown on Figure 7 and described in Table 7 below. Descriptions are sourced from the relevant Conservation Objectives and supporting documents (NPWS 2017b, NPWS 2019a), Standard Data Forms (EEA, 2025) as well as the surveys carried out at the Site.

Table 7 below outlines the identified pathways between the Proposed Development and the relevant QIs/SCIs and assesses the potential significant effects of the Proposed Development on these. The assessment outlined below does not consider

mitigation measures that will be implemented as part of the Proposed Development, but the nature of mitigation that will be required to eliminate the potential for significant adverse impacts is identified in the table, if any.

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TABLE 7. ASSESSMENT OF THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT ON THE QIS AND SCIS OF THE RELEVANT EUROPEAN SITES.

Description	Impact Pathway(s)	Assessment of likely significant effects	Mitigation Requirement
Rye water Valley/Carlton SAC (001398)			
[7220] Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion)*			
<i>Conservation objective:</i> To restore the favourable conservation condition of Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion)* in Rye Water Valley/Carlton SAC			
<p>This is a mineral spring found at the Louisa Bridge. It is estimated at c1,250m² (NPWS 2021). The habitat is restricted to the area at the Louisa Bridge (sub-site code PS001), 4km east of the Proposed Development. The petrifying spring is fed by permanent irrigation from two separate upwelling groundwater and seepage sources that differ in chemical compositions, creating the series of shallow springs, pools flushes and paludal tufa habitat in this area. The habitat has good plant species diversity, with a composition of sedges, stoneworts, and several other positive indicators for this rare Annex I habitat. This is a dynamic habitat which is significantly impacted by water and ground water supply including flow rate, water table height, and chemical composition.</p>	<p><u>Hydrogeological connection</u></p> <p>The Proposed Development is within the same ground waterbody therefore there is a potential impact pathway from the Site to this habitat via groundwater.</p>	<p>This habitat occurs approximately 4 km east of the Site at Louisa Bridge, where it is supported by two distinct upwelling groundwater sources. Its conservation value depends on sustained groundwater supply, including flow volume, hydrochemistry, and upwelling dynamics. The Proposed Development does not overlie the same aquifer unit, but it does lie within the wider Dublin groundwater body, and the Site is classed as having high groundwater vulnerability. A potential hydrogeological pathway is present via this shared groundwater body.</p> <p>Construction Phase Hydrogeological Pathway</p> <p>During excavation and foundation works, there is potential for contamination of groundwater via accidental fuel spills, concrete leachate, or fine sediment infiltration. Given the high vulnerability of the groundwater, these contaminants could theoretically migrate through the local groundwater system. While regional flow patterns are generally short and localised, the sensitivity of the petrifying spring habitat to groundwater alterations means that minor changes in groundwater chemistry or flow regime could pose a risk.</p> <p>Mitigation is required during the construction phase.</p> <p>Operational Phase</p> <p>Surface water management proposals include permeable paving, swales, detention basins, and hydrobrakes to regulate runoff and allow slow percolation as per the requirements of the WFD and not specifically mitigation for the Site. Once operational, the Proposed Development is not expected to release pollutants to ground, and the drainage design includes appropriate attenuation and infiltration features. There is no anticipated alteration to groundwater quality or chemistry under normal operational conditions.</p>	<p>Construction Phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard construction-phase groundwater protection measures. • CEMP <p>Operational Phase:</p> <p>No mitigation measures during Operational phase deemed necessary.</p>

Description	Impact Pathway(s)	Assessment of likely significant effects	Mitigation Requirement
<p>Mitigation is not required during the operational phase.</p>			
<p>[1014] Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo angustior</i>) <u>Conservation Objective:</u> To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Desmoulin's Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>) in Rye Water Valley/Carlton SAC</p>			
<p>This is a small land snail last recorded in the floodplain habitat at the base of a spring-fed slope along the banks of the Rye Water River. The habitat is in a narrow zone of wet grassland between the saturated ground influenced by the tuffaceous springs and the river floodplain. The area has a delicate hydrology with potential to be impacted by hydrological changes to the springs and the river water level and quality. The snails distribution is restricted to a 1km grid square location near Louisa Bridge and have not been recorded in the SAC since 1997.</p>	<p><u>Hydrogeological connection</u> The Proposed Development is within the same ground waterbody as the groundwater fed springs within the snails known habitat therefore there is a potential impact pathway from the Site to this habitat via groundwater.</p> <p><u>Hydrological Connection</u> The surface water drainage at the Site drains into the Lyreen River, which is connected to the Rye Water, providing a potential hydrological impact pathway to the river bed where the</p>	<p>This Annex II species is associated with wet grassland habitats at the base of spring-fed slopes adjacent to the Rye Water River floodplain, approximately 4 km east of the Proposed Development. The species is sensitive to both water quality and water level, with a dependence on consistent soil moisture influenced by adjacent tufa springs and river hydrology. Though last recorded in 1997, its potential presence in the SAC requires precaution.</p> <p>Construction Phase Hydrological Pathway There is no direct surface water connectivity between the Site and the SAC. However, surface water runoff during the construction phase, if not controlled, could enter minor watercourses within 1 km of the Site which eventually connect to the Rye Water. Contaminated runoff (e.g. hydrocarbons, silt, concrete washout) could reach downstream habitats indirectly via these channels.</p> <p>Mitigation is required during the construction phase for the hydrological pathway.</p> <p>Construction Phase Hydrogeological Pathway The Site and SAC share the wider Dublin groundwater body, and groundwater vulnerability at the Site is classed as high. Though regional groundwater flow is typically shallow and localised, there remains a plausible, if weak, pathway for contaminated infiltration water to reach the SAC's sensitive groundwater-dependent habitats.</p>	<p>Construction Phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard construction-phase surface water and groundwater protection measures. CEMP <p>Operational Phase: No mitigation measures during Operational phase deemed necessary.</p>

Description	Impact Pathway(s)	Assessment of likely significant effects	Mitigation Requirement
	<p>snail was last recorded to inhabit.</p>	<p>Mitigation is required during the construction phase for the hydrogeological pathway.</p> <p>Operational Phase Hydrological Pathway</p> <p>The operational drainage design incorporates permeable paving, swales, detention basins, and hydrobrakes, ensuring slow, filtered percolation of runoff. No direct discharges to surface water are planned, and the system is designed to maintain greenfield runoff rates.</p> <p>Mitigation is not required for the operational phase.</p> <p>Operational Phase Hydrogeological Pathway</p> <p>Once constructed, the Proposed Development will not involve activities likely to release pollutants to ground. Percolating water will be clean surface runoff passed through SuDS features. No significant alteration to groundwater flow, chemistry, or infiltration is expected.</p> <p>Mitigation is not required for the operational phase.</p>	
<p>[1016] Desmoulin's Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>) <u>Conservation Objective:</u> To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Desmoulin's Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>) in Rye Water Valley/Cartron SAC</p>			
<p>This species is a small land mollusk that occurs along river margins on tall monocotyledons and also disperses by floating on the water's surface or on floating vegetation. The snails' distribution is restricted to a 1km grid square location near Louisa Bridge. The habitat conditions that this species is sensitive to relies on soil wetness, and water quality of the Rye Water River.</p>	<p><u>Hydrological Connection</u></p> <p>The surface water drainage at the Site drains into the Lyreen River, which is connected to the Rye Water, providing a potential hydrological impact pathway to the river bed where the</p>	<p>This Annex II mollusc is found along river margins and relies on a stable hydrological regime, particularly sustained soil wetness and high water quality. It inhabits wetland vegetation along the Rye Water River near Louisa Bridge, c.4 km downstream of the Proposed Development. It can disperse passively via water, increasing its potential exposure to catchment-scale impacts.</p> <p>Construction Phase Hydrological Pathway</p> <p>There is no direct hydrological connection from the Site to the SAC; however, local surface water features within 1 km eventually feed into the Rye Water system. Construction-phase contamination (e.g. silt,</p>	<p>Construction Phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard construction-phase surface water and groundwater protection measures. • CEMP <p>Operational Phase:</p> <p>No mitigation measures during Operational phase deemed necessary.</p>

Description	Impact Pathway(s)	Assessment of likely significant effects	Mitigation Requirement
	<p>snail was last recorded to inhabit.</p> <p><u>Hydrogeological connection</u> The Proposed Development is within the same ground waterbody therefore there is a potential impact pathway from the Site to this habitat via groundwater.</p>	<p>hydrocarbons, concrete washout) could, without mitigation, enter these channels and reach the SAC over time.</p> <p>Mitigation is required during the construction phase for this pathway.</p> <p>Construction Phase Hydrogeological Pathway</p> <p>As the Site and SAC share the Dublin groundwater body, and the Site is mapped as having high groundwater vulnerability, there is a plausible groundwater pathway. If contaminants infiltrate ground during construction, there is potential for effects on the groundwater feeding the SAC, including the wetland habitats required by <i>V. moulinsiana</i>.</p> <p>Mitigation is required during the construction phase for this pathway.</p> <p>Operational Phase Hydrological Pathway</p> <p>The surface water design includes SuDS features that slow, filter and attenuate runoff, including permeable paving, detention basins, swales and hydrobrakes. These prevent rapid runoff and are designed to reduce pollution loads. No discharges will enter open channels unfiltered.</p> <p>Mitigation is not required for the operational phase.</p> <p>Operational Phase Hydrogeological Pathway</p> <p>Post-construction activities will not involve release of contaminants. Clean, infiltrated stormwater is unlikely to carry pollutants or significantly alter groundwater flows. Given the low likelihood of any alteration in groundwater quality or quantity, no effects are expected.</p> <p>Mitigation is not required for the operational phase.</p>	

4.3.2 Potential for In-combination Effects

4.3.2.1 Existing Planning Permissions

A search of planning applications located within a 300m radius of the Site of the Proposed Development was conducted using online planning resources such as the National Planning Application Database (NPAD) (MyPlan.ie) and Kildare County Council Planning Applications online map. Any planning applications listed as granted or decision pending from within the last five years were assessed for their potential to act in-combination with the Proposed Development and cause likely significant effects on the relevant European sites. Long-term developments granted outside of this time period were also considered where applicable.

It is noted that the majority of the few developments within the vicinity of the Site of the Proposed Development are applications granted for small scale extensions or modifications of single dwellings. The larger developments within the vicinity of the Site are listed in Table 8 below:

TABLE 8. GRANTED AND PENDING DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS WITHIN 300 M OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT. LOCATION AND DISTANCE GIVEN IS RELATIVE TO THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT.

Planning Reference	Planning Authority	Status	Location
21156	Kildare County Council	Granted in 2022	Railpark, Celbridge Road, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.
Development Description			
<p>Development on this 1.99 ha site, approximately, at lands adjoining an existing residential development (Rockfield Court), Railpark, Celbridge Road, Maynooth, Co. Kildare. (This forms Phase 2 of a residential masterplan for some 105 No. units in total on a wider c. 3.26 ha landholding under the Applicant's control). The proposed Phase II development will consist of: Construction of a residential development comprising 47 No. dwellings in total, consisting of 11 No. two-bedroom two storey houses and 10 No. three-bedroom three storey houses (21 No. houses in total) including rear private open spaces; 13 No. one bedroom apartments and 13 No. two-bedroom apartments (26 No. three storey duplex apartments in total), including balconies and a single storey crèche facility (c.261 sqm). The development will also include: new vehicular, cyclist and pedestrian access from Celbridge Road via currently undeveloped lands to the southwest (Phase 1); a new pedestrian footpath and bicycle track along the site frontage to Celbridge Road; the provision of future access connection points to adjacent lands to the southwest (Phase 1), north and the southeast; works to facilitate connections to existing services infrastructure in Rockfield Park to the west. The development will also comprise internal roads, footpaths, cycle tracks, public open spaces, children's play area and bicycle store areas; parking at surface level (95 No. total spaces for car parking and 33 No. bicycles spaces); drainage attenuation; all hard and soft landscaping; boundary treatments; removal of the existing hedgerows adjacent to Celbridge Road; changes in levels; and all ancillary site development works and site services provision (including wayleave to the north-east) above and below ground.</p>			
Potential for In-combination effects			
<p>The AA screening associated with this site screened out any impacts to designated sites due to a lack of connection to any sites. This site is south of the Proposed Development and has no hydrological connection to designated sites. There are therefore no in-combination effects.</p>			
21155	Kildare County Council	Granted in 2024	Railpark, Celbridge Road, Maynooth

Development Description			
<p>Development on this 2.18 ha site, approximately, at lands adjoining an existing residential development (Rockfield Park), Railpark, Celbridge Road, Maynooth, Co. Kildare. (This forms Phase 1 of a residential masterplan for some 105 no. units in total on a wider c. 3.26 ha landholding under the Applicant's control). The proposed Phase 1 development will consist of: Construction of a residential development comprising 58 no. dwellings in total, consisting of 18 no. two-bedroom two storey houses, 14 no. three-bedroom three storey houses and 2 no. four-bedroom three storey houses (34 no. houses in total) including rear private open spaces; 12 no. one-bedroom apartments and 12 no. two-bedroom apartments (24 no. three storey duplex apartments in total), including balconies. The development will also include: new vehicular, cyclist and pedestrian access from Celbridge Road; a new pedestrian footpath and cycle track along the main site frontage to Celbridge Road; the provision of future access connection points to adjacent lands to the northeast (Phase 2), northwest and the southeast; works to facilitate connections to existing services infrastructure to the northeast via Phase 2 lands. The development will also comprise internal roads, footpaths, cycle tracks, public open spaces, and bicycle store areas; parking at surface level (117 no. total spaces for car parking and 30 no. bicycles spaces); drainage attenuation; all hard and soft landscaping; boundary treatments; removal of the existing hedgerows adjacent to Celbridge Road, changes in levels; and all ancillary site development works and site services provision (including wayleave to the north-east) above and below ground.</p>			
Potential for In-combination effects			
<p>The AA screening associated with this site screened out any impacts to designated sites due to a lack of connection to any sites. This site is south of the Proposed Development and has no hydrological connection to designated sites. There are therefore no in-combination effects.</p>			
211108	Kildare County Council	Granted in 2022	Parklands Grove, Railpark, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, W23 V5D4.
Development Description			
<p>the demolition of a habitable house and the construction of 40 No. houses and 36 No. apartments, 1 No. vehicular link with the approved Maynooth Eastern Ring Road and all associated and ancillary site development works. Details of the dwelling types are as follows: 24 No. "Type A", 3-Bed, 2.5 Storey Houses; 8 No. "Type B", 3-Bed 2 Storey Houses; 1 No. "Type B1", 3-Bed, 2 Storey House; 3 No. "Type C", 3-Bed, 2 Storey Houses; 2 No. "Type C1", 3-Bed, 2 Storey Houses; 2 No. "Type D", 3-Bed, 2 Storey Houses; 20 No. "Type E", 2-Bed Apartments; 10 No. "Type F", 1-Bed Apartments; 1 No. "Type H", 1-Bed Apartment; 2 No. "Type I", 1-Bed Apartments; 3 No. "Type J", 2-Bed Apartments. The application contains a statement setting out how the proposal will be consistent with objectives of the relevant development plan or local area plan. Revised by Significant Further Information which consists of the applicant has requested a 10-year permission</p>			
Potential for In-combination effects			
<p>This site screened out any potential impacts to designated sites due to the extensive treatment of water prior to any discharges into the surface water network. Provided these are implemented as reported, no in-combination impacts are predicted between this site and the Proposed Development.</p>			
2461139	Kildare County Council	Decision due date: 02/01/2024	Lands at Doctor's Lane, Maynooth, Co. Kildare
Development Description			
<p>For the construction of 18 no. residential units comprising of 1 no. 2 bed 3 storey terraced house, 10 no. 2 bed with study 3 storey terraced houses, and 7 no. 3 bed 3 storey terraced houses, all provided with private gardens and balconies/terraces; bin and bicycle stores; car parking; new vehicular access on Doctor's Lane; landscaping; boundary treatments including works to existing boundary treatments; public lighting; and all associated site infrastructure and engineering works necessary to facilitate the development including the decommissioning and removal of the existing soakaway system serving No.</p>			

8 Main Street and replacement with a new SuDS system. A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) has been prepared and is submitted to the planning authority with the application.

Potential for In-combination effects

This site is northwest of the Site of the Proposed Development, within the town of Maynooth. The surface water drainage for this Site also leads to Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC. A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) was submitted as part of this planning application, which included mitigation to prevent any contaminated surface water from entering the drainage network during both construction and operational phases of the development. Provided these are implemented as agreed, no in-combination effects are foreseen.

2460774	Kildare County Council	Granted 1/10/2024	Lands adjoining and to the rear of St Mary's Church at Mill Street, Maynooth, Co. Kildare
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Development Description

The development will comprise amendments to the permitted development as per Large-scale Residential Development permission reference 23/494 which comprised 115no. apartments in 4no. separate blocks, provision of a creche and restaurant and provision of a basement to provide for car parking, bicycle storage and ancillary bin storage areas. The proposed development incorporates the following amendments: a.Reconfiguration of the basement layout with a reduction in car parking provision within the scheme from 74no. car parking spaces to 69no. car parking spaces. b.The redesign of apartment blocks A, B1, B2 and C within the scheme with each block incorporating the following proposals: •Block A: A four storey building comprising 10no. 2bed apartments. •Block B1: A five storey building comprising 18no. 2bed apartments. •Block B2: A six storey building comprising 25no. 1bed apartments and 35no. 2bed apartments. •Block C: A part 4 storey and part 5 storey building comprising 4no. 1bed apartments, 14no. 2bed apartments and 9no. 3bed apartments. Block C will be raised on stilts with a flood storage area provided at ground level beneath this block. c.The amendment of overall unit mix within the scheme which incorporated 27no. 1bed apartments, 77no. 2bed apartments and 11no. 3bed apartments under permission 23/494 (a total of 115 apartments) to provide an amended unit mix consisting of 29no. 1 bed apartments, 77no. 2bed apartments and 9no. 3bed apartments (total of 115 apartments). d.Associated amendments to building designs, facades, floor plans, layouts and internal configurations. e.Amendments to the creche and restaurant layouts in Block A. f.The omission of the office unit from Block A. g.Amendments to communal space areas and associated parking area/turning area at podium level within the courtyard to include for provision of play areas. h.The provision of associated site works and attenuation system along with a foul pump station and foul, storm and public water networks for connection to the existing foul, storm and public water networks. i.Provision of an ESB substation adjacent to Block A. j.Site excavation works to facilitate the proposed development to include levelling, excavation and general site preparation works. k. The provision of an amended basement layout which is to be positioned beneath blocks B1, B2. The access position, public open space, internal pedestrian walkway bridge, ground levels for flood storage requirements will remain as granted under permission reference 23/494. A Natural Impact Statement has been prepared and accompanies this application.

Potential for In-combination effects

This is a proposed large residential development in Maynooth town which has the same foul and surface water drainage connections as the Site of the Proposed Development and is directly adjacent to the Lyreen river corridor. An NIS was prepared for this Site including mitigation for the CEMP to be implemented. Provided the mitigation outlined in the NIS for the site is implemented to protect the waterways throughout the Construction and Operational phases of the Development, no in-combination impacts are foreseen.

4.3.2.2 Relevant Policies and Plans

The local policies and plans were reviewed and considered for possible in-combination effects with the Proposed Development. Each of these plans has undergone AA, and where potential for likely significant effects has been identified (e.g., in the case of the Kildare County Council Development Plan 2023 – 2029), an NIS has been prepared which identifies appropriate mitigation. As such, it is considered that the plans and policies listed will not result in in-combination effects with the Proposed Development. The Kildare County Council Development Plan 2023 – 2029 has directly addressed the protection of European sites and biodiversity through specific objectives. The above listed plans are not being relied upon to rule out potential significant effects on European sites.

4.4 Avoidance and Mitigation Measures

The following sections outline the avoidance and mitigation measures required to eliminate the potential for likely significant impacts on connected European sites. Once the recommended measures in the following sections are implemented in full, no adverse impacts on the relevant European sites or their QIs/SCIs will be anticipated as a result of the Proposed Development.

4.4.1 Summary of Potential Effects

The following construction-phase effects were identified:

- Risk of hydrological and hydrogeological contamination due to accidental release of pollutants (e.g. fuels, cement, silt) during excavation and earthworks in the construction phase.
- Potential migration of contaminants through the groundwater body towards the Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC.
- Risk of temporary deterioration in groundwater quality supporting groundwater-dependent habitats (e.g. petrifying springs).
- Potential indirect impacts on terrestrial snail habitat associated with groundwater-fed and surface-fed conditions.

No operational-phase effects were identified.

The following mitigation measures will ensure no significant effects arise on designated sites as a result of the Proposed Development, either alone or in-combination with other projects.

4.4.2 Construction Phase

4.4.3 Mitigation 1: Ecological Clerk of Works

A suitably qualified and experienced Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) will be appointed prior to the commencement of construction. The ECoW will oversee the implementation of all ecological mitigation measures outlined in this report, ensure compliance with relevant legislation, and provide on-site ecological guidance during key phases of the works such as vegetation clearance or works near watercourses.

The ECoW will conduct pre-construction checks where required, oversee the installation of features such as silt fences, convey relevant information to Site personnel, and be available to respond to any unexpected ecological issues that arise during construction. Regular reporting and liaison with the project team will be maintained throughout the construction phase.

4.4.4 Mitigation 2: Construction Environmental Management Plan

A CEMP will be prepared for the construction phase that will provide a summary of the best practice development standards and mitigation measures to be implemented.

In addition, to ensure the CMP remains 'fit for purpose' for the duration of the project it should be reviewed and updated by the Project Manager during the life of the project to ensure that it remains suitable to facilitate efficient and effective delivery of the project's environmental commitments. The Contractor shall also designate a Site Engineer/Manager/Assistant Manager who will have overall responsibility for the implementation of the environmental mitigation measures detailed below on a day-to-day basis.

The CEMP may include but is not limited to the below additional measures which are identified as being necessary to prevent negative impacts on the QIs of European sites.

4.4.5 Mitigation 3: Silt Management

There are no open drains or surface watercourses present on the Site. However, an indirect hydrological pathway exists during the construction phase via the on-site connection to an existing underground 900mm surface water drainage pipe. This pipe traverses the Site and ultimately discharges to the Lyreen River, which flows into the Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC (001398). The pathway becomes viable only during works to expose or connect to this drainage pipe, at which point there is potential for silt-laden water or other construction-phase contaminants to enter the drainage system and reach the SAC.

To prevent siltation and water quality impacts on the Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC (001398) during the construction phase, specific silt mitigation measures shall be implemented at the point where the Proposed Development connects to the existing 900mm surface water drainage pipe.

To mitigate this risk, the outfall of the pipe shall be fitted with a temporary sediment control measure such as a dewatering bag, silt sock, or sediment trap. This will capture and filter any water discharged during works involving the pipe. Concurrently, surface runoff from active construction zones will be managed using temporary bunds or interceptor drains, positioned to prevent water entering the area of the pipe connection. Where surface water collects within excavations or at the base of gradients, it will be pumped to vegetated ground for infiltration or passed through a mobile sediment control unit (e.g., a dewatering tank or bag) before discharge.

All measures will be in place prior to exposing the pipe or commencing connection works, and maintained until works are complete and the ground surface has been stabilised. Daily inspections of silt control measures will be undertaken throughout the construction period, and all corrective actions recorded and acted upon without delay.

These site-specific mitigation measures are necessary to ensure no mobilisation of sediment or construction-related contaminants occurs via the existing surface water pathway to the Lyreen River and downstream SAC.

4.4.6 Mitigation 4: Surface and Ground Water Quality Protection

The following applies to all stages of the Construction Phase for the Proposed Development unless other specific measures have been identified. The following measures will treat the source or remove the pathway, thereby preventing contaminated surface water entering the drainage network, or groundwater body.

All works carried out as part of the Proposed Development will comply with all Statutory Legislation including the Local Government (Water Pollution) acts, 1977 and 1990.

4.4.6.1 Site Drainage

- All existing services will be mapped, and a plan will be put in place to decommission/divert and manage any drains or sewers which are associated with the Site.
- A plan for dealing with any unknown drains or services which may be encountered during the works will be set out and implemented.
- Any surface water inflow into the main areas of excavation will be minimised where possible.

4.4.6.2 Maintenance of Plant and Machinery

- All plant and equipment will be regularly cleaned and properly maintained.
- There will be no washing out of any concrete trucks on Site. Any washing of chutes will be carefully collected in a designated container which will be subsequently sent off site for compliant waste management.
- Pumped concrete will be monitored to ensure there is no accidental discharge and will be carried out in dry weather and with impermeable pouring mats laid down where possible.

4.4.6.3 Earthworks and Stockpiling Mitigation

The proposed earthworks mitigation measures for the Construction Phase include:

- Leachate generation from stockpiles or waste receptacles will be prevented by using waterproof covers.
- Stockpiles will be placed as far away from watercourses, drains, or areas where works to drains may be required that may provide a pathway to the Lyreen Stream. Where stockpiles are within 15m of any of these features, a minimum of two layers of silt traps will be implemented.
- Prolonged exposure of contaminated soils or groundwater to the atmosphere will be avoided where practical or unnecessary.
 - Silt fencing should be positioned at a minimum of 5 meters and where possible, up to 50 meters from surface water bodies. 2-3 layers of silt fencing shall be spaced in 1-meter intervals.
 - Where a vegetation buffer exists between the stockpile and watercourse, the following distances will be implemented from the bank of the watercourse (that is at the point closest to the center of the Site):

- Where a vegetation buffer of less than 5m is in place, a double layer, parallel silt fence is required.
- Where no vegetation buffer is in place, or where works are close to a sensitive watercourse, three parallel layers of silt fencing are required.

4.4.6.4 Storage and Use of Fuels, Oils, Chemicals, Concrete, and Other Construction Materials

The following will be implemented to minimize the risk of spills or contamination of groundwater or surface water that may reach any European site:

- Good housekeeping (daily Site clean-ups, use of disposal bins, etc.) on the Site during the Construction Phase, and the proper use, storage and disposal of potential pollutants and their containers will prevent groundwater contamination.
- Appropriate bunding, storage and signage arrangements for all deleterious substances (e.g., fuels, oils, and chemicals) will be used.
- Robust and appropriate Spill Response Plan and Environmental Emergency Plans will be put in place, the details of which will be communicated, resourced and implemented for the duration of the works.
- Control measures and spill clean-up equipment adequate to treat spills at the Site will be available and staff will be trained and experienced in using said equipment.
- Any spillage of fuels, lubricants or hydraulic oils will be immediately contained and the contaminated soil removed from the Site and properly disposed of.
- A register will be kept of all hazardous substances either used on Site or expected to be present. The register shall be available at all times and shall include as a minimum: valid safety sheets; Health & Safety, environmental controls to be implemented when storing, handling, using and in the event of spillage of materials; emergency response procedures/precautions for each material; the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) required when using the material.
- Fuels, lubricants, and hydraulic fluids for equipment used on the construction Site will be carefully handled to avoid spillage, properly secured against unauthorised access or vandalism, and provided with spill containment according to best codes of practice (Enterprise Ireland BPGCS005).
- Waste oils and hydraulic fluids will be collected in leak-proof containers and removed from the Site for disposal or recycling.
- Diesel tanks, used to store fuel for the various items of machinery, will be self-contained and double-walled.
- Refuelling will be carried out from tanks or delivery vehicles on a designated impermeable surface and will not be left unattended.
- Plant will not be left running when not in use (i.e., no idling) and plant with dust arrestment equipment will be used where practical.
- Discharge water generated during placement of concrete will be stored and removed off Site for treatment and disposal.

- Specific areas for storage, delivery, loading/unloading of materials will be designated, which will have appropriate containment/spill protection measures where required.

4.4.6.5 Spill/Emergency Response Plans

- Robust and appropriate Spill Response Plan and Site Environmental Emergency Plans (SEP) will be implemented for the duration of the works:
 - Identifying fuel storage and refuelling locations on designated areas within the compound, away from drainage ditches/waterbodies (where present), and on substrate underlain with an impermeable liner to prevent contaminant leaching to groundwater.
 - Identifying spill kit locations (spill kits will be required for each piece of heavy equipment (e.g., excavators, loaders, trucks, etc.) which will be at least 21L drum size each with spill pads, sorbent, small boom, plastic garbage bag and gloves.
 - Staff will be trained and experienced in using appropriate control measures and spill kits on-Site and will be familiar with the location of all spill kit locations and the Site layout.
- A register will be kept of all hazardous substances either used on Site or expected to be present. The register shall be available at all times and shall include as a minimum:
 - Valid safety sheets; Health & Safety, environmental controls to be implemented when storing, handling, using and in the event of spillage of materials.
 - Emergency response procedures/precautions for each material.
 - PPE is required when using the material.

4.4.6.6 Waste Management and Disposal

Waste management and disposal will comprise the following:

- Portaloo's and/or containerised toilets and welfare units will be used to provide facilities for Site personnel. All associated waste will be removed from the Proposed Development Site by a licenced waste disposal contractor.
- Mixer washings are not to be discharged into ground or drainage ditches and will be collected and disposed of at a suitably licenced facility.
- A minimal waste approach of reduction, reuse and recycling will be utilized where practicable/appropriate. Where this cannot be carried out, all wastes will be disposed of at licenced waste facilities.

4.5 Monitoring

4.5.1 Construction Phase

Responsibility for the implementation and ongoing monitoring of mitigation measures outlined in this NIS will be shared between the appointed contractor and a suitably qualified ECoW. The following framework will apply:

- Mitigation 1: Ecological Clerk of Works

All ecological mitigation measures will be overseen by an ECoW. The ECoW will be responsible for pre-works briefings, inspection of mitigation installations, and on-site supervision during sensitive activities such as vegetation clearance, silt control installation, and works near water-sensitive features.

- Mitigation 2: Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)

The main contractor will have responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of the CEMP. This includes adherence to timing restrictions, working hour limits, buffer zones, and installation of protective measures as outlined in the plan, as well as ongoing maintenance, and ensuring all protective measures remain fit for purpose.

- Mitigation 3: Silt Management

Installation and maintenance of silt control measures will be the responsibility of the contractor, subject to ECoW inspection prior to any works with potential to generate runoff. Any failures must be reported to and remediated under the guidance of the ECoW.

- Mitigation 4: Water Quality Protection

Site Drainage, Plant Maintenance, Earthworks Management, Fuel Storage, Spill Response, and Waste Handling etc. will be implemented by the contractor's environmental manager or designated personnel, with periodic checks by the ECoW to ensure compliance.

Spill kits and drainage protection features will be routinely checked by the contractor, and records maintained for audit.

The ECoW will maintain records of monitoring and report any non-compliances or ecological concerns to the Site Manager for immediate rectification. Where required, adaptive management strategies may be implemented in consultation with the relevant consenting authorities.

5 CONCLUSION

This Natura Impact Statement details the findings of the Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment conducted to further examine the potential direct and indirect impacts of the Proposed Development planning application at Railpark Lands, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, on the following European Sites:

- Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC (001398).

The above designated site was identified by a screening exercise that assessed likely significant effects of a range of impacts that have the potential to arise from the Proposed Development. The Appropriate Assessment investigated the potential direct and indirect effects of the proposed works, both during construction and operation, on the integrity and qualifying interests of the above European Site, alone and in combination with other plans and projects, taking into account the designated site's structure, function and conservation objectives.

Where potentially significant effects were identified, a range of mitigation and avoidance measures have been suggested to avoid them. This NIS has concluded that, once the avoidance and mitigation measures are implemented as proposed, the Proposed Development will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC, individually or in combination with other plans and projects. Where applicable, a suite of monitoring surveys has been proposed to confirm the efficacy of said measures in relation to ensuring no adverse impacts on the habitats of the relevant European sites have occurred.

As a result of the complete, precise and definitive findings in of this NIS, it has been concluded, beyond reasonable scientific doubt, that the Proposed Development will have no significant adverse effects on the QIs, SCIs and on the integrity and extent of Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC (001398).

Accordingly, the Proposed Development will not adversely affect the integrity of any relevant European site.

6 REFERENCES

DEHLG. (2010). Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities. Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

DHPLG. (2018). River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021. Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

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