EU Habitats Directive

Screening Statement for Appropriate Assessment

in relation to

Grange Castle Central Carriageway

for

CSEA Consulting Engineers

Doherty Environmental

May 2013

Clifton Scannell Emerson (CSEA) Ltd.

Grange Castle Central Carriageway

06 May, 2013

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For and on behalf of
Doherty Environmental

Prepared By: Pat Doherty

Signed: 

Date: 6th May, 2013

This report has been prepared by Doherty Environmental with all reasonable skill, care and diligence. Information report herein is based on the interpretation of data collected and has been accepted in good faith as being accurate and valid.

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1 Introduction

The EU Birds and Habitat Directive oblige member states to establish a network of designated conservation areas known as the Natura 2000 (N2K) Network. The N2K network includes sites designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), under the EU Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) under the EU Birds Directive. Under Irish legislation SACs and SPAs are referred to as European Sites. Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive imposes strict land-use control measures on SACs and SPAs, with Articles 6(3) and 6(4) establishing a prior authorisation process for any land-use plan or project likely to have a significant effect on a European site.

In the case of the current project to construct a new carriageway within the Grange Castle Business Park it is has been considered necessary by South Dublin County Council to examine whether the proposal will have the potential to significantly effect the integrity and conservation status of qualifying features of interests for which European Sites have been designated.

The approach for this Article 6 assessment broadly follows the guidelines outlined in the European Commission (2001) guidance document *Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological Guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the EU Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC* (to be referred to throughout this report as the "EC guidance"). The completion of an Article 6 Assessment may involve the completion of a number of assessment stages with Stage 1 Screening determining whether additional Stages in the Article 6 Assessment process are required. These stages, as outlined in the above EC guidance and in more recent guidance published by the DOEHLG[1], include:

- Stage 1 Screening for AA: This stage defines the project or activity to be assessed, establishes whether the project/activity is necessary for the conservation management of the European site and assesses the likelihood of the project having a significant effect, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, upon a European Site.

- Stage 2 AA: If a project is likely to have a significant effect, an Appropriate Assessment must be undertaken. In this stage the impact of the project to the Conservation Objectives of the European site is assessed and measures are proposed to avoid or reduce impacts so that they do not result in significant effects to the site. The outcome of this assessment will establish whether the project will have an adverse effect upon the integrity of the European site.

- Stage 3 Alternative Solutions: If it is concluded that, subsequent to the implementation of mitigation measures, a project has an adverse impact upon the integrity of a European site, it must be objectively concluded that no alternative solutions exist before the project can proceed to Stage 4.

- Stage 4 IROPI: Where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain but imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) exist for the implementation of a project, an assessment of compensatory measures that will effectively offset the damage to the European Site will be necessary.

[1] Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG) (2010). *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities*. Second Edition, February, 2010

The remainder of this report outlines the results of a Stage 1 Screening Assessment.

2 Stage 1: Screening

The function of the Screening Assessment is to identify whether or not the project will have a likely significant effect on European Sites. In this context "likely" refers to the presence of doubt with regard to the absence of significant effects (ECJ case C-127/02) and "significant" means not trivial or inconsequential but an effect that has the potential to undermine the site's conservation objectives (English Nature, 1999; ECJ case C-127/02). In other words, any effect, which would compromise the functioning and viability of a site, and interfere with achieving the conservation objectives of the site, would constitute a significant effect.

The nature of the likely interactions between the project and the integrity of European Sites will depend upon the sensitivity of the European Site's qualifying features to potential impacts arising from the project; the current conservation status of the European Sites occurring within the sphere of influence of the project; and any potential perturbations to the water quality of the Griffeen surface water catchment that will result from activities associated with the project, alone or in combination with other projects.

The EC guidance outlines the steps involved in undertaking a Screening Assessment. These steps include:

1. Describe the project and determine whether it is necessary for the conservation management of European Sites;

2. Identify European Sites likely to be influenced by the project;

3. Review the project to determine if it has the potential to affect European Sites and determine whether the European Sites are vulnerable to the effects; and

4. Identify other plans or projects that, in combination with the project, have the potential to affect European Sites.

2.1 Description of the Project and Relationship with European Sites

2.1.1 Project Description & Activities

As part of the project it is proposed to construct a new access road in Grange Castle Business Park as detailed below:

- Construction of 550m of 9m wide single carriageway road
- Construction of cycletracks, footpaths and verges
- Provision of drainage and associated features
- Provision of public lighting, road markings and signage
- Relocation of services where necessary
- Provision of other services and utilities where necessary
- Provision of landscaping finishes
- All associated site works as necessary to complete the scheme

2.1.2 Site Description

The proposed site is located within the Grange Castle Business Park. The footprint of the alignment and surrounding areas were surveyed on 2nd May 2013. The project site is characterised by greenfield lands with tilled land (BC3) and improved grassland (GA1) dominating the land cover (see Figure 2.1 Habitat Map and Appendix 1 for Plates). The tilled land ocurring within and surrounding the footprint of the site is devoid of vegetation. This habitat is of negligible ecological value and conservation interest. The improved grassland is species-poor and well managed. A low-cropped sward characterised this grassland during the field survey. This habitat is considered to be of low ecological value and conservation importance.

A network of hedgerows (WL1) delineate field boundaries surrounding the proposed alignment. The hedgerows are dominated by typical hedgerow tree species such as hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and elder (*Sambuca nigra*). Mature ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) trees with dense ivy cover occur at locations along some hedgerows to the north of the proposed alignment. The location of mature ash treelines (WL2) are indicated on Figure 2.1 Habitat Map. The majority of these trees are of low potential to funtion as bat roosts, although dense ivy cover was noted in a number of trees along these hedgerows. A typical range of hedgerow herb species were noted along all hedgerows. Plants recorded include brambles (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.), nettles (*Urtica diocia*), ground ivy, ivy (*Hedera helix*), lords and ladies (Arum maculatam), lesser stitchwort, wavy bittercress (*Cardamine flexuosa*), hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*), herb robert (*Geranium robertianum*) and spear thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*)

Drainage ditches (FW4) occur along along the hedgerow field boundaries. The majority of these ditch were dry during the field survey. Where wet drains were noted they contained standing water with no evidence of flow noted. The proposed alignment and surrounding area is located within the catchment of the Griffeen River, which is a tributary of the River Liffey. The main channel of the Griffeen River discharges into the River Liffey at Lucan, approximately 5km to the north of the proposed carriageway alignment. The Griffeen River was realigned in the recent past during the development of the Grange Castle Business Park to the west of the proposed central carriageway alignment. The current route of the main channel of the Griffeen River lies outside a 50m buffer area of the proposed carriageway alignment (see Figure 2.1: Habitat Map).

Expansion of the Grange Castle Business Park over the last ten years has reduced the area of farmland and hedgerow surrounding the proposed Carriageway alignment. A review of aerial photography taken in 1995, 2000 and 2005 shows a continuous increase in built land and artificial surfaces surrounding the proposed Carriageway. Existing road corridors and built land surround the farmland and hedgerows within the vicinity of the project site leading to their isolation from the wider countryside.

Rabbit entrances occur along all hedgerow field boundaries within and adjacent to the carriageway alignment. No evidence of the presence of protected burrowing mammals, such as badgers, was noted during the field survey. Songbirds, including chaffinch, blackbird, wren, robbin, great tit, blue tit, coal tit, song thrush were noted along the hedgerows.

Overall the habitats occurring within the footprint of the proposed carriageway alignment are representative of low ecological value and low conservation importance.

No designated conservation areas occur in the immediate vicinity of the proposed carriageway alignment. The Grand Canal, a proposed Natural Heritage Area, is located approximately 700m to the north of the proposed carriageway alignment. The location of European Sites within the surrounding area are outlined in Section 2.2 below.

A habitat map of the project site and surrounding area is provided belows as Figure 2.1.

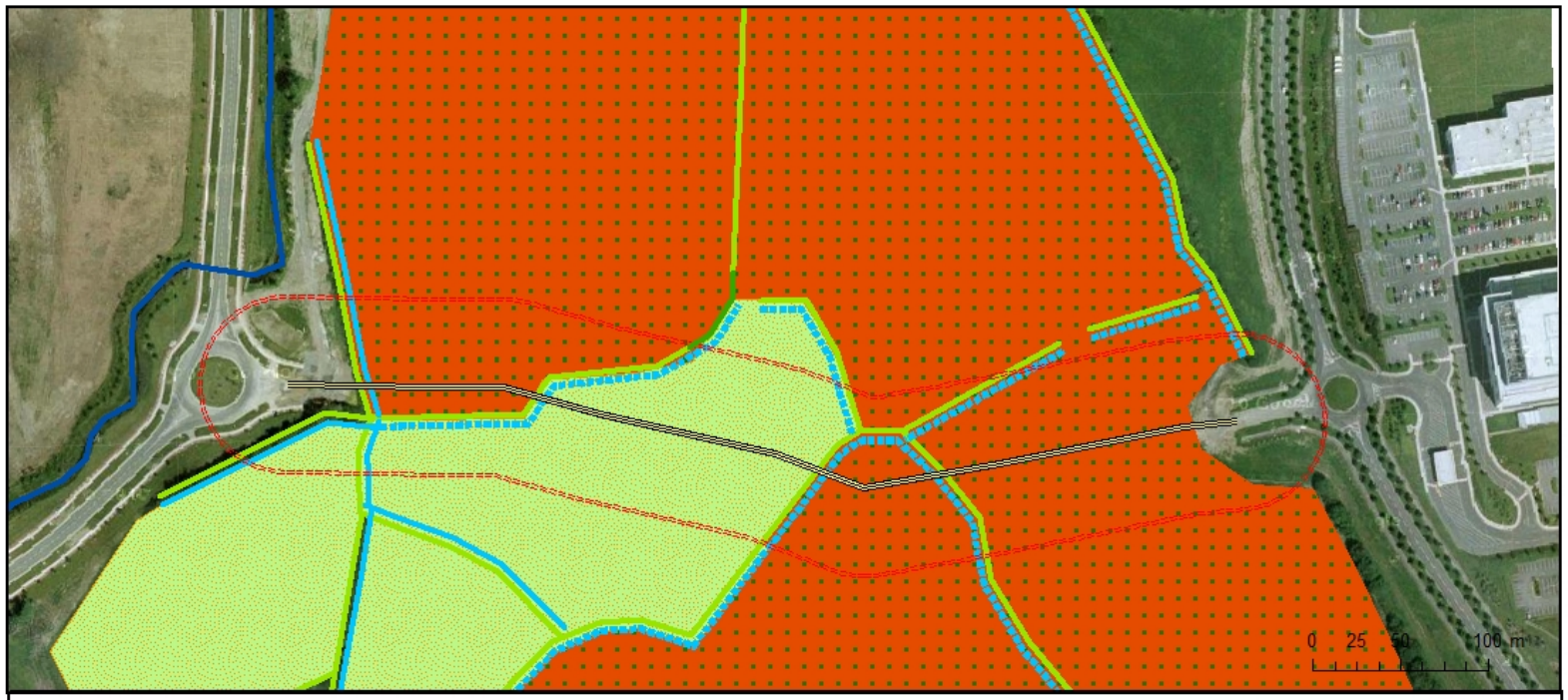


Figure 2.1

Habitat Map

- 50m Buffer of Carriageway
- Carriageway Alignment
- GriffeenRiver
- Dry Ditch
- Drainage Ditch
- Hedgerow
- Ash Treeline
- Improved Grassland
- Tilled Land

N W E S

Drawn By	Pat Doherty
Date	06/05/2013
Data Source	Google

2.2 Identification and Description of European Sites

2.2.1 Identification of European Sites

Current guidance on undertaking EU Habitats Directive Article 6 Assessments advises that all European Sites occurring within a 15km radius of a project site should be included within a Screening Assessment (Scott Wilson *et al.*, 2006; DOEHLG, 2010). Seven European Sites, 2 SPAs and 5 SACs occur within the surrounding 15km radius of the site. These sites are listed in Table 2.1 below and shown in Figures 2.2 and 2.3.

- Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC (Site Code: 001398) – located approximately 6.4km from the proposed site
- South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (Site Code: 004024) – located approximately 11.4km from the proposed site
- Glenasmole Valley SAC (Site Code: 004006) – located approximately 13km from the proposed site

However considering the nature, size and location of the project it is unlikely that European Sites:

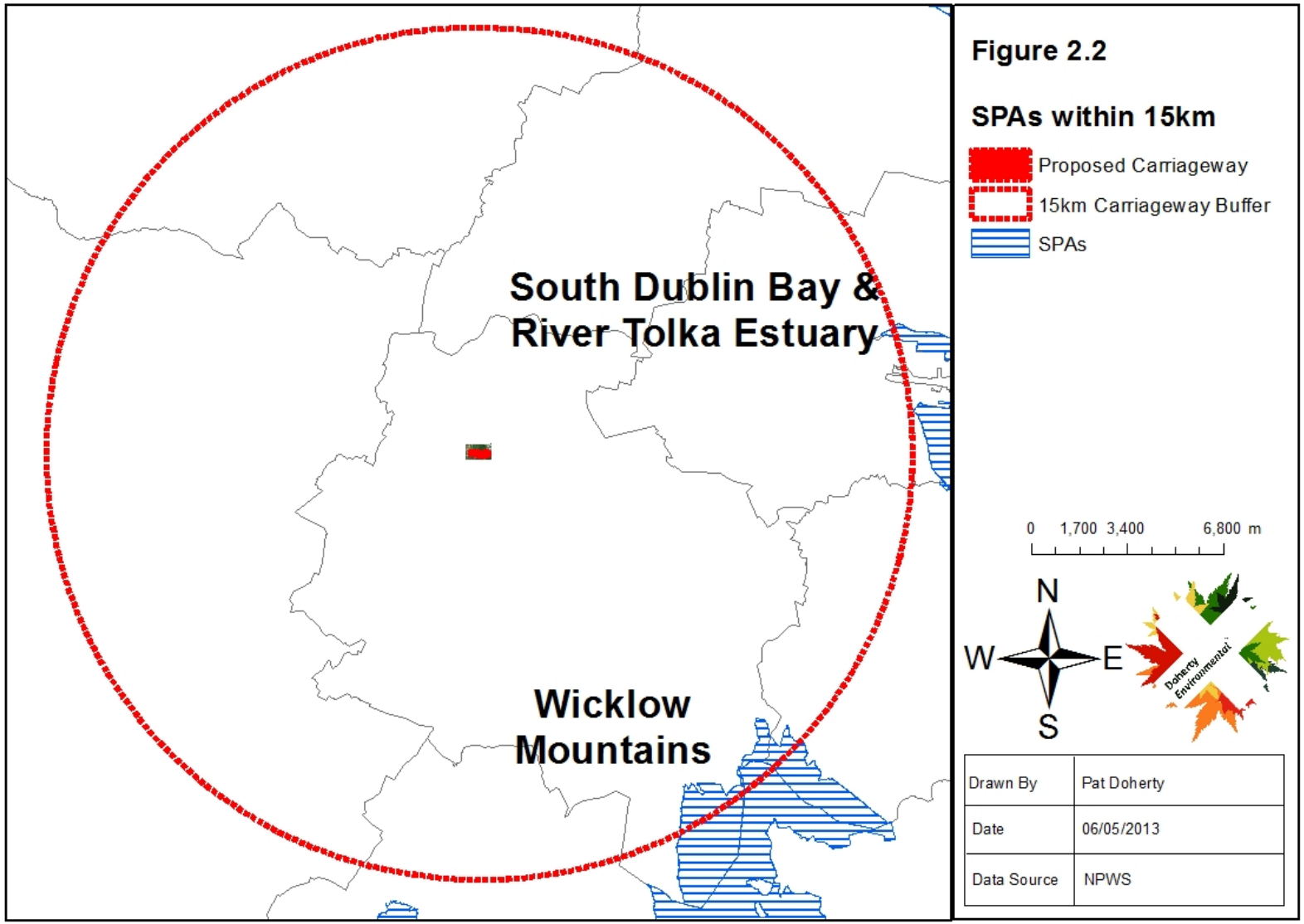
- with qualifying Annex species not supported by the project site;
- with terrestrial qualifying habitats occurring at a remote distance from the project site (i.e buffered from the project site by a minimum of 200m); and
- not hydrologically linked to, or occurring upstream of, the project site

will be effected by the proposed school development.

Table 2.1 lists the four European Sites occurring within a 15km radius of the project site and determines, using the above bullet points, whether each of these Sites occur within the sphere of influence of the project site. Figures 2.2 and 2.3 show the location of these European Sites with respect to the project site.

Table 2-1: European Sites occurring within the Sphere of Influence of the Project

European Site	Distance from Project Site	Is there a hydrological link between the Project Site and European Sites?	Are Qualifying Species of European Sites associated with the Project Site?	Are Qualifying Habitats sufficiently buffered from Direct/Indirect Impacts?	Does this European Site occur within the Sphere of Influence of the Project Site?
Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC	6.8km to the northwest	No	No	Yes	No
South Dublin Bay River Tolka Estuary SPA	14.2km to the east	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
South Dublin Bay SAC	15km to the east	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Glenasmole Valley SAC	8.6km to the south	No	No	Yes	No
Wicklow Mountains SPA	10.8km to the south	No	No	Yes	No
Wicklow Mountains SAC	10.8km to the south	No	No	Yes	No
Red Bog SAC	15km to the south	No	No	Yes	No


South Dublin Bay &
River Tolka Estuary
Wicklow
Mountains
Figure 2.2
SPAs within 15km
Proposed Carriageway
15km Carriageway Buffer
SPAs
0 1,700 3,400 6,800 m
N
W
E
S
Doherty Environmental
Drawn By
Pat Doherty
Date
06/05/2013
Data Source
NPWS

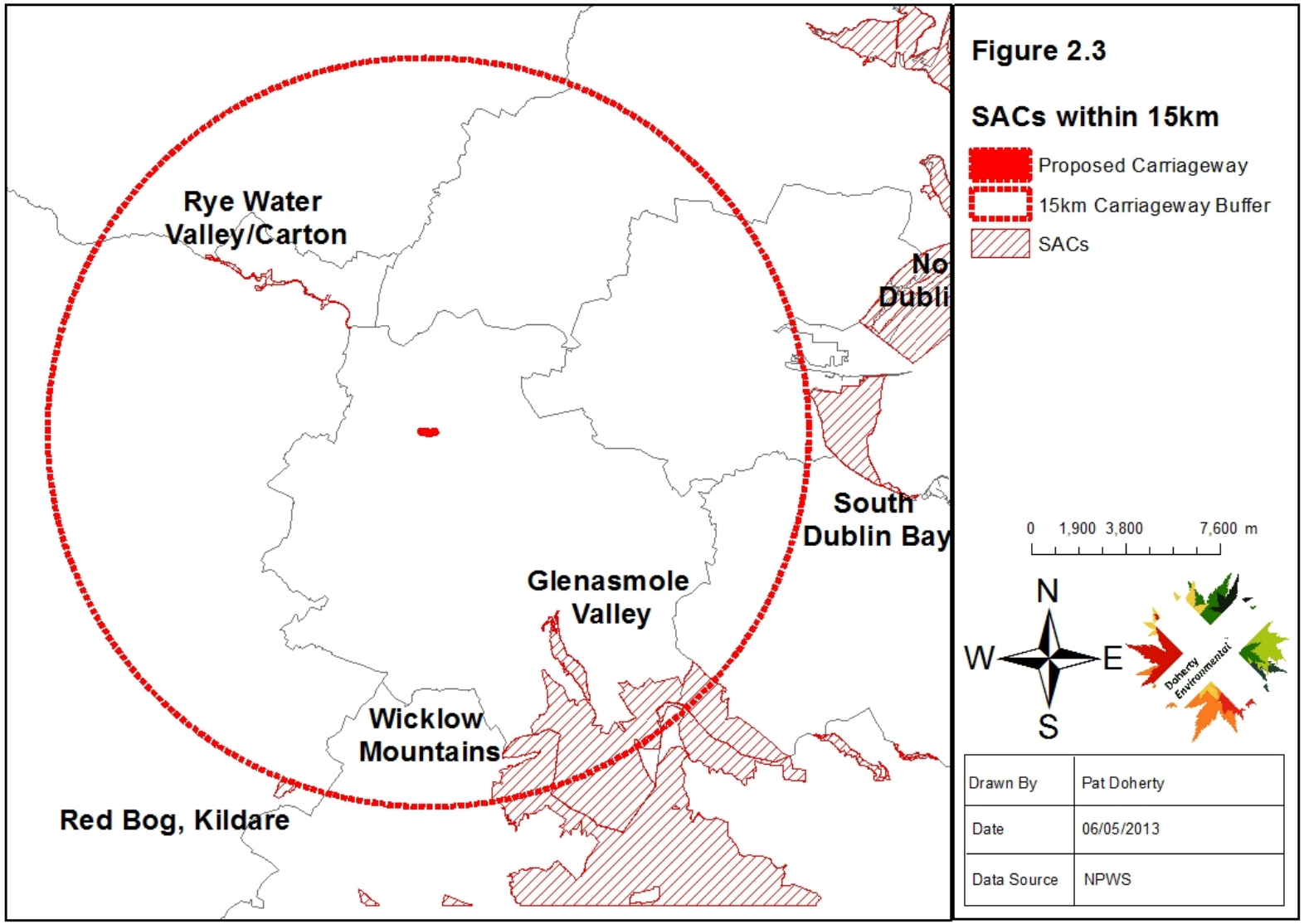

Rye Water Valley/Carton
No Dubli
South Dublin Bay
Glenasmole Valley
Wicklow Mountains
Red Bog, Kildare
Figure 2.3
SACs within 15km
Proposed Carriageway
15km Carriageway Buffer
SACs
0 1,900 3,800 7,600 m
N
W
E
S
Doherty Environmental
Drawn By | Pat Doherty
Date | 06/05/2013
Data Source | NPWS

Table 2.1 above outlines the relationship between the proposed site and the European Sites occurring within the surrounding 15km buffer area. As noted within this table no European Sites occur in close proximity to the proposed site. The site is hydrologically linked to the South Dublin Bay & River Tolka Estuary SPA and South Dublin Bay SAC. Henceforth these sites will be referred to as the South Dublin Bay European Sites. These European Sites are located a considerable distance from the project site, over 14km as the crow flies and approximately 25km downstream. While this remote distance, coupled with the scale of the proposed development are in themselves likely to ensure significant effects to European Sites are avoided a a precautionary approach to this Screening Assessment has been adopted and the potential for impacts to occur is further examined in Section 3 below.

2.3 European Sites Baseline and Sensitivity

Conservation management objectives have been formulated for the each of the Dublin Bay European Sites. The following subsections outline these objectives along with the qualifying interests and their conservation status and sensitivities for each European Site.

South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA

Objective: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species (see Table 2 below) listed as Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) for this SPA. With regard to SPA the SCIs represent the qualifying features of interest for which the SPA is designated.

Table 2.2: South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA

SCIs	Conservation Status
Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*)	Amber listed species- Species of medium conservation concern
Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*)	Amber listed species- Species of medium conservation concern
Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*)	Amber listed species- Species of medium conservation concern
Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*)	Amber listed species- Species of medium conservation concern
Knot (*Calidris canutus*)	Red listed species – Species of high conservation concern[†]
Sanderling (*Calidris alba*)	Green listed species – Species not threatened
Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*)	Amber listed species- Species of medium conservation concern
Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*)	Amber listed species- Species of medium conservation concern
Redshank (*Tringa totanus*)	Red listed species – Species of high conservation concern
Black-headed Gull	Red listed species – Species of high

(*Croicocephalus ridibundus*)	conservation concern
Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*)	Green listed species – Species not threatened
Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*)	Amber listed species- Species of medium conservation concern
Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*)	Amber listed species- Species of medium conservation concern
Wetlands & Waterbirds	

South Dublin Bay SAC

Objective: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and /or Annex II species (see Table 2.3 below) for which the SAC has been selected.

Table 2.3: South Dublin Bay SAC Qualifying Features

Qualifying Annex Feature	Conservation Status
Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide	Poor

Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- Its natural range, and area it covers within that range, is stable or increasing, and
- The ecological factors that are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and
- The conservation status of its typical species is favourable as defined below.

Favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

- Population data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself, and
- The natural range of the species is neither being reduced or likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
- There is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

3 Assessment of Effects

Describe the individual elements of the project that could give rise to impacts (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the European Site.

As the project site is not located within or immediately adjacent to European Sites it will not have the potential to result in likely significant direct impacts. Furthermore the project will not result in the loss of important foraging or resting habitat for qualifying bird species outwith the South Dublin Bay SPA.

With regard to indirect impacts, it is considered that disturbance to qualifying bird species and mudflats as a result of perturbation to the water quality will represent the only potential source of impact to European Sites. The Griffeen River catchment and River Liffey forms a potential pollution pathway linking the project site to the South Dublin Bay European Sites. Without the implementation of best construction practices and safeguards construction activities could pose a threat of pollution/contamination to the water quality of the Griffeen River. Any such pollution/contamination could be transported downstream towards the European Sites via the pollution pathway. It is reiterated that the remote distance between the project site and the South Dublin Bay European Sites, located over 25km downstream is likely to ensure that the hydrological pathway of the Griffeen and Liffey does not function as an effective pollution pathway – this distance is likely to ensure that pollution is attenuated or assimilated downstream prior to final discharge at Dublin Bay, thus avoiding potential indirect impacts.

Nevertheless, as a precautionary approach has been adopted to the project, a detailed examination of the likelihood of disturbance arising during the construction and operation phase is outlined in Table 3.1 below. The assessment of the effects of the construction phase is informed by the various measures that will be incorporated into the construction approach to ensure risks to the water quality of the Griffeen surface water catchment are minimised to a low risk and/or avoided.

3.1 Screening Assessment Criteria

Table 3.1 outlines the assessment criteria against which the project is examined for its potential to result in likely significant effects to the South Dublin Bay European Sites.

Table 3.1: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects to European Sites

Assessment Criteria	
Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the European Site by virtue of	
Size and Scale	The proposed carriageway will be 550m in length. The construction phase of the project will last for approximately 7 months.
Land-take	The project will not involve any land take from European Sites. The land take associated with project will be restricted to an improved agricultural grassland and tilled land, both representing habitats of low ecological value. Hedgerows will be severed along the length of the carriageway and drainage ditches will be crossed. All drainage ditches to be crossed by the alignment will be culverted.

Distance from European Sites or key features of the site	The project site is located approximately 25km upstream from the nearest point of the South Dublin Bay European Sites.
Resource requirements	No resources associated with European Sites (e.g. water or mud/sand for abstraction etc.) will be required for, or utilized by the project.
Emissions	Water Emissions As part of the proposed carriageway a road drainage network will be incorporated into the design. The drainage network will be designed to ensure that surface water runoff from the central carriageway does not pose a risk to the water quality of Griffeen surface water catchment. Petrol interceptors will be installed along the drainage network and all surface water draining from the road will be directed via petrol interceptors to detention ponds prior to release into the surrounding surface water drainage system. The installation of petrol interceptors and detention ponds will attenuate and treat runoff prior to release. Best practice construction methods will be used during the construction phase of the central carriageway. The following measures will be implemented to control the release of sediment during the construction stage: • Where possible construction activity in the vicinity of surface waterbodies will be carried during drier weather and activity will be postponed during periods of heavy rainfall. • The clearance of surface vegetation will be kept to a minimum. • Slopes associated with the construction of the route will be kept to as shallow a grade as possible to avoid erosion and scouring by runoff. • Runoff will be directed away from denuded areas. • Drainage waters originating in construction areas will be collected in a closed system and treated prior to controlled, release. Drainage waters from construction areas will be managed through a series of treatment stages that may include swales, check dams and detention ponds along with other pollution control measures such as silt fences and silt mats. • A three-stage treatment train will be employed to capture, retain and treat discharges during the construction phase. This treatment

	train is also proposed for discharges from hard surfaces that will be installed as a result of the proposed development. • Detention ponds will be used to attenuate and treat runoff. Stockpiled construction material will be stored away from all drainage ditches and the Griffeen River. Potentially contaminating materials such as fuels, oil etc. will be stored in secure bunded areas a safe distance away from drainage ditches and the Griffeen River. The above measures, coupled with the remote distance downstream to the nearest European Site will ensure that the proposed carriageway will not have the potential to effect the conservation status of these sites as a result of hydrological pollution. Furthermore the above measures will also ensure that the proposed carriageway does not result in perturbations to surface water quality in the area immediately surrounding the project site. **Noise** Any changes to the baseline noise levels as a result of the proposed carriageway will be restricted to the local surrounding area and will not have the potential to result in significant effects to European Sites. **Aerial Emissions** Due to the small-scale nature of activities at the proposed site no potential impacts to the local environment derived from air emissions are predicted to occur. **Light Emissions** All works will be undertaken during the daytime hours. Lighting during the operation phase will be restricted to the carriageway and will not interfere with European Sites.
Excavation requirements	The project will not involve any excavations from European Sites. Minor excavations are likely to be associated with the project for the installation of bridge supports.
Transportation requirements	The project is not expected to result in changes to baseline traffic at or surrounding the proposed site.
Duration of the project	The project will be constructed to a design life of 50 years.
Other	See Below
Describe any likely changes to the European site arising as a result of:	

Reduction of habitat area	The project will not result in a reduction in area of any habitats occurring within European Sites.
Disturbance of key species	No key species, listed as qualifying interests of the South Dublin Bay European Sites, occur within the vicinity of the project site. Downstream indirect impacts to key species will be avoided by implementing the approach and design features to the construction and operation phases as outlined above under the *Emissions* section. This approach will ensure the water quality within the surrounding surface water catchment and downstream is not negatively affected by the proposed carriageway.
Habitat or species fragmentation	The project site is located over 25km upstream of the South Dublin Bay European Sites and will not result in habitat or species fragmentation.
Reduction in species density	For the reasons outlined above there will be no risk of the project resulting in a reduction in density of qualifying species occurring at South Dublin Bay.
Changes in key indicators of conservation status	The European Commission (2006) Explanatory Notes and Guidelines for the Assessment, Monitoring and Reporting under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive outlines key indicators for assessing the conservation status of designated sites. The key indicators for assessing the conservation status of key species i.e. species listed on Annex 1 of the EU Birds Directive and Annex 2 of the EU Habitats Directive are: *Range:* as outlined above the elements of the project will not result in direct or indirect impacts to European Sites. Therefore the distribution of qualifying species associated with European Sites will not be altered by the project. *Population:* As the project will not result in direct or indirect impacts to European Sites the populations of SCI will not be affected; *Habitat for the species*: As direct or indirect impacts to European Sites are not predicted to occur, habitats which support SCIs and qualifying species will not be affected by the project; and *Future Prospects*: As the project will not result in direct or indirect affects to European Sites the future prospect of the SCIs or qualifying interests of this site will not be affected. The key indicators for assessing the conservation status of Annex 1 habitats of South Dublin Bay SAC and wetlands of South Dublin Bay SPAs are: *Range:* As qualifying habitats are located at remote distances from the project site and the risk of pollution via hydrological pathways will be avoided, the range of qualifying habitats will not be affected by the project. *Area covered by habitat type within range*: The project will not result in changes to the area covered by qualifying habitats. *Specific structures and functions:* Mudflats and other coastal habitats such as dunes

	and saltmarshes represent the qualifying habitats for the Dublin Bay European Sites. The structure of these habitats is dependent on abiotic and biotic influences such as deposition, erosion, freshwater and tidal flow patterns and trophic dynamics. These habitats function as breeding and foraging habitats for bird species. These functions are maintained by ensuring the hydrological integrity (which includes structure, water quality and tidal influences) of Dublin Bay as well as managing grazing and recreational activity within the Bay area. Due to the remote distance of the project site from the South Dublin Bay European Sites and the avoidance of any likely sigificant effects to water quality upstream of the Bay, the project site will not have the potential to interfer with the structure or function of South Dublin Bay European Sites. *Future prospects*: As the proposed project will not influence the status of habitats occurring within Dublin Bay it will not adversely affect the future prospects of these habitats.
Climate change	There is currently insufficient information to predict the effects of climate change on the site. It is predicted that on a national level winters will become wetter and summers drier but the effect on local precipitation is unknown.
Describe any likely impacts on the European Site as a whole in terms of:	
Interference with key relationships that define the structure and function of the site	As outlined above the project will not have the potential to intefer with the key relationships that define the structure and function of the Dublin Bay European Sites.
In-Combination Effects	As the project design and approach to construction will incorporate the range of measures outlined in the Emissions section of this assessment it is predicted that the project will not pose a risk of significant impacts to the local surface water network. The avoidance of impacts to the surrounding surface water network will ensure that the project will not have the potential to combine with other plans or projects to result in effects to European Sites via hydroligcal pathways.
Describe from the above the elements of the project or plan or combination of elements, where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale of magnitude of impacts is not known.	
The project site is located at a remote distance from the nearest European Sites, the Rye Water Valley, approximately 6.8km to the northwest. This European Sites and all other Sites, with the exception of the South Dublin Bay European Sites were screened out of the Screening Assessment at an early stage as they were considered to lie outside the sphere of influence of the project site. The only European Sites considered to occur within the sphere of influence of the project site are those linked to the project site via hydrological pathways. During the Screening Assessment the Griffeen River and the River Liffey were identified as a hydrological pathway linking the project site and European Sites at	

South Dublin Bay.

A Source-Pathway-Receiver model was used to assess whether the project could result in likely significant effects to the South Dublin Bay European Sites via hydrological pathways.

The assessment noted that the remote distance of the project site from the South Dublin Bay European Sites, located over 25km downstream, as well as the scale of the project were likely in themselves to ensure that significant effects to European Sites would not arise during the construction or operation phase. However, a precautionary approach to the Screening Assessment was undertaken and a detailed assessment, in line with European guidelines, was undertaken.

As part of the detailed Screening Assessment elements of the proposed design of the carriageway and the approach to the construction phase with regard to drainage management were outlined. It was concluded that the implementation of these elements during the construction and operation of the carriageway to manage surface water drainage will ensure significant risks to surface water quality will be avoided.

Avoiding significant risks to the surrounding surface water quality will also ensure that the project, either alone or in combination with other projects, does not have the potential to result in likely significant effects to the Dublin Bay European Sites.

4 Screening Conclusions

This Stage 1 Screening Assessment has resulted in a Finding of No Significant Effects to the South Dublin Bay European Sites, which represent the only European Sites occurring within the potential sphere of influence of the project site.

As the implementation of the proposed project will not result in likely significant effects to European Sites a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not required.

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Appendix 1: Plates

Plate 1: View of typical project site hedgerow and tilled land

Plate 2: View tilled land habitat occurring within the proposed alignment

Plate 3: View of rabbiit warren entrances along the hedgerows

Plate 4: View of culverted drainage ditch

Plate 5: View of ash treeline to the north of the alignment

Plate 6: View of improved grassland habitat occurring within the proposed alignment.