

SCREENING STATEMENT

IN SUPPORT OF THE
APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

FOR THE
PROPOSED BLACKROCK PARK MASTERPLAN

for: Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council

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Section 1 Introduction

1.1 Background

This Screening Statement has been prepared in support of the Appropriate Assessment (AA) of the proposed Blackrock Park Masterplan extension works ("the Masterplan") at Blackrock Park, Blackrock, Co. Dublin in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (as amended) (hereafter referred to as the "Habitats Directive").

1.2 Legislative Context

The Habitats Directive provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the "favourable conservation status" of habitats and species of European Community Interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives (Council Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds) with Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as European sites and Natura 2000.

AA is required by the Habitats Directive, as transposed into Irish legislation by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended) and the Planning and Development Act (as amended). AA is an assessment of the potential for adverse or negative effects of a plan or project, in combination with other plans or projects, on the conservation objectives of a European site. These sites consist of SACs and SPAs and provide for the protection and long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats.

1.3 Approach

The AA is based on best scientific knowledge and has utilised ecological and hydrological expertise. In addition, a detailed online review of published scientific literature and 'grey' literature was conducted. This included a detailed review of the National Parks and Wildlife (NPWS) website including mapping and available reports for relevant sites and in particular sensitive qualifying interests/special conservation interests described and their conservation objectives.

The ecological desktop study completed for the AA of the Masterplan comprised the following elements:

- Identification of European sites within 15km of the Masterplan boundary with identification of potential pathways links for specific sites (if relevant) greater than 15km from the Masterplan boundary;
- Review of the NPWS site synopsis and conservation objectives for European sites with identification of potential pathways from the Masterplan area; and
- Examination of available information on protected species.

There are four main stages in the AA process as follow:

Stage One: Screening

The process which identifies the likely impacts upon a European site of a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant.

Stage Two: Appropriate Assessment

The consideration of the impact on the integrity of the European site of the project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, with respect to the site's structure and function and its conservation objectives. Additionally, where there are adverse impacts, an assessment of the potential mitigation of those impacts. If adequate mitigation is proposed to ensure no significant adverse impacts on European sites, then the process may end at this stage. However, if the likelihood of significant impacts remains, then the process must proceed to Stage Three.

Stage Three: Assessment of Alternative Solutions

The process which examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of the European site.

Stage Four: Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain

An assessment of compensatory measures where, in the light of an assessment of imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI), it is deemed that the project or plan should proceed.

The Habitats Directive promotes a hierarchy of avoidance, mitigation and compensatory measures. This approach aims to avoid any impacts on European sites by identifying possible impacts early in the plan-making process and avoiding such impacts. Second, the approach involves the application of mitigation measures, if necessary, during the AA process to the point where no adverse impacts on the site(s) remain. If potential impacts on European sites remain, the approach requires the consideration of alternative solutions. If no alternative solutions are identified and the plan/project is required for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, then compensation measures are required for any remaining adverse effect(s).

The assessment of potential effects on European sites is conducted following a standard source-pathway-receptor model, where, in order for an effect to be established all three elements of this mechanism must be in place. The absence or removal of one of the elements of the mechanism is sufficient to conclude that a potential effect is not of any relevance or significance.

- Source(s) – e.g. pollutant run-off from proposed works;
- Pathway(s) – e.g. groundwater connecting to nearby qualifying wetland habitats and
- Receptor(s) – qualifying aquatic habitats and species of European sites.

In the interest of this report, receptors are the ecological features which are known to be utilised by the qualifying interests or special conservation interests of a European site. A source is any identifiable element of the Masterplan provision which is known to have interactions with ecological processes. The pathways are any connections or links between the source and the receptor. This report provides information on whether direct, indirect and cumulative adverse effects could arise from the Masterplan.

The AA Screening exercise has been prepared taking into account legislation including the aforementioned legislation and guidance including the following:

- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland. Guidance for Planning Authorities, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2009;
- "Commission Notice: Managing Natura 2000 sites - The provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC", European Commission 2018;
- "Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC", European Commission Environment DG, 2002; and
- "Managing Natura 2000 sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC", European Commission, 2000.

Section 2 Description of the Draft Masterplan

2.1 Receiving Environment

The site sits within a suburban environment along the coast, between the dart line and the Blackrock Road. Blackrock town centre lies to the south of the site, and the park is adjoined by a number of residential estates, apartment complexes and small commercial units. To the north of the site is the Booterstown salt marsh which is a vital resource for many wading bird species. Similarly, the intertidal zone on the coastal side of the dart line adjacent to the park is a key area for bird species and marine life. The wider area is similar in nature and is predominantly residential with a series of large fields west of the Blackrock park which are part of the Blackrock College Campus complex.

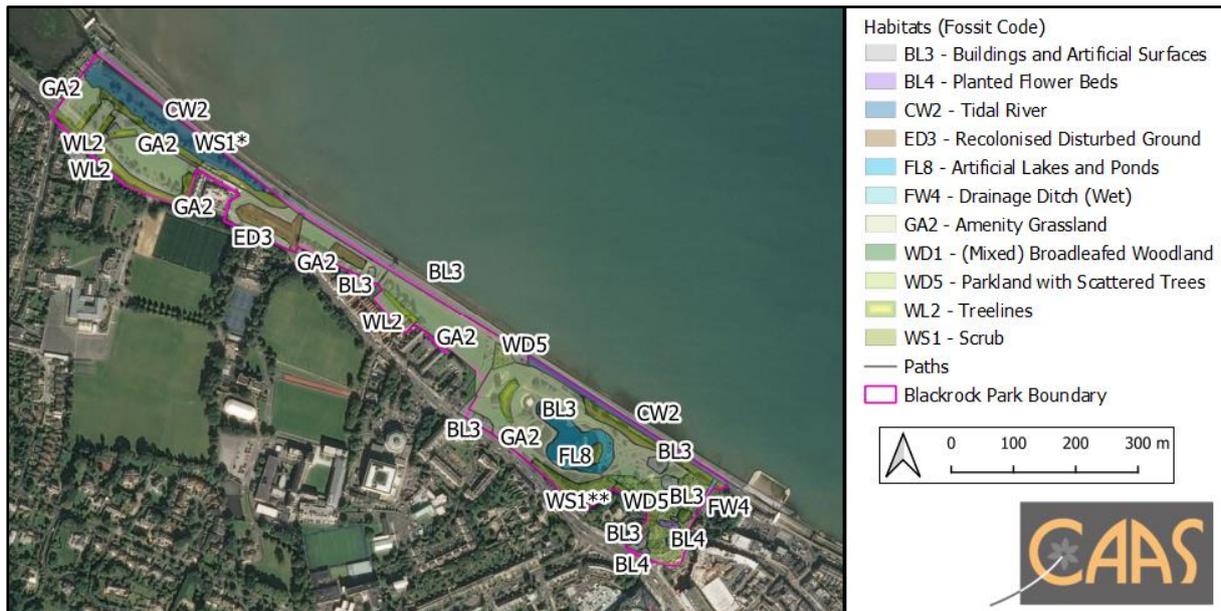


Figure 2.1 Habitat present¹ within the redline boundary – further detail can be found in the Biodiversity Chapter of the accompanying Ecological Impact Assessment

2.2 Draft Masterplan

The proposed Blackrock park Masterplan aims to provide for amenity areas such as an outdoor skating facility, augmentations to the existing hard surface areas and additional planting within the park. There are 35 key objectives of the Masterplan which are as follows:

1. Demolish defunct public toilet block and replace with soft landscaping;
2. Sensitively restore the Victorian Pavilion and develop a modern structure alongside for use as park tearooms & public toilets;
3. Create a naturalised bank along Priory Stream;
4. Remove old porta-cabins and restore Victorian viewing platform;
5. Introduce a new pedestrian entrance and dramatic bridge feature that creates a better interface between the park and the town;
6. Reduce the height of the wall at appropriate locations to create a stronger physical and visual connection with Blackrock Village;
7. Upgrade bridge and access for cyclists and pedestrians;
8. Create a prominent entrance at Blackrock DART Station to improve connectivity with Blackrock Village and the seafront;
9. Expand the existing laneway to improve pedestrian/cycle permeability and connectivity;
10. Potential location for a sculptural bench on alignment of pavilion and bandstand;
11. Review existing tree cover and consider more appropriate enclosure to enhance and expand the bandstand setting;
12. Replace existing playground with integrated natural play features to enhance and expand the play opportunities and encourage free play;
13. Remove superfluous warren of paths and replace with a simplified path network in keeping with the original layout;
14. Restore fountain and island folly and reinstate the tidal inlet/outlet mechanism for regulating the lakes water level;
15. Increase tree canopy along coastal edge using evergreen species to enhance year-round greening;

¹ Habitat codes according to the Fossett classification system

16. Extend natural play area to exploit gradient of site and historic folly;
17. Screen car park with groundcover and low hedge;
18. Introduce groves of small trees and meadow planting along steep bank or consider alternative method of maintaining the grass;
19. Eliminate awkward kink in path at this location for safety purposes;
20. Upgrade the existing pedestrian/cycle path in the park to improve safety and enhance usage in line with the coastal greenway project;
21. Explore the feasibility of providing a community garden;
22. Explore the feasibility of supporting works to improve the aesthetics of the bridge;
23. Create sustainable public use for the Martello Tower;
24. Reduce levels around Martello Tower to reveal more of the original structure;
25. Create active hub with a focus on alternative sports;
26. Introduce tree cover to buffer from Rock Road;
27. New Parks sub-depot for storage and staff welfare facilities;
28. Explore the feasibility of providing a platform to view the lagoon area and educate the public about the wildlife associated with the Special Protection Area;
29. Eliminate minor entrances from Rock Road and create uniform park boundary;
30. Provide a prominent park entrance to form a strong gateway to the county of DLR;
31. Demolish defunct utility structures, improve the boundary and integrate the recycling units;
32. Explore the feasibility of providing improved pedestrian connectivity at this location;
33. Introduce a large scale high-quality herbaceous display suitable for coastal conditions;
34. Upgrade and expand playground into the Italian Garden to create an integrated natural play space;
35. Enhance viewing opportunities of Booterstown Marsh and Blackrock Park.

Section 3 Screening for Appropriate Assessment

3.1 Introduction to Screening

This stage of the process identifies any potential significant affects to European sites from a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans.

An important element of the AA process is the identification of the “conservation objectives”, “Qualifying Interests” (QIs) and/ or “Special Conservation Interests” (SCIs) of European sites requiring assessment. QIs are the habitat features and species listed in Annexes I and II of the Habitats Directive for which each European site has been designated and afforded protection. SCIs are wetland habitats and bird species listed within Annexes I and II of the Birds Directive. It is also vital that the threats to the ecological / environmental conditions that are required to support QIs and SCIs are considered as part of the assessment.

The following NPWS Generic Conservation Objectives have been considered in the screening:

- For SACs, to maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected; and
- For SPAs, to maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.

Where available, Site-Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs) designed to define favourable conservation status for a particular habitat² or species³ at that site have been considered.

3.2 Identification of Relevant European sites

The Department of the Environment (2009) Guidance on AA recommends a 15km buffer zone to be considered. A review of all sites within this zone has allowed a determination to be made that in the absence of significant hydrological links the characteristics of the Masterplan will not impose effects beyond the 15km buffer. All European sites within a 15km radius of the Masterplan area were examined to assess potential connectivity corridors on a landscape scale and assess potential interactions between the Masterplan and the conservation objectives of each of the sites.

Details of European sites that occur within 15km of the Masterplan is listed in Table 3.1. Information on QIs, SCIs and site-specific vulnerabilities and sensitivities (see Appendix I) and background information (such as that within Ireland’s Article 17 Report to the European Commission, site synopses and Natura 2000 standard data forms) has been considered. Conservation objectives that have been considered by the assessment are included in the following NPWS/ Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht documents:

NPWS (2015) Conservation Objectives: South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA 004024. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: South Dublin Bay SAC 000210. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

NPWS (2018) Conservation objectives for Dalkey Islands SPA [004172]. Generic Version 6.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC 003000. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

NPWS (2018) Conservation objectives for Ballyman Glen SAC [000713]. Generic Version 6.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

NPWS (2018) Conservation objectives for Knocksink Wood SAC [000725]. Generic Version 6.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: North Dublin Bay SAC 000206. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

² Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when: its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing; the specific structure and functions which 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.

³ The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when: population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats; the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is 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.

NPWS (2015) Conservation Objectives: North Bull Island SPA 004006. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
 NPWS (2018) Conservation objectives for Wicklow Mountains SPA [004040]. Generic Version 6.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
 NPWS (2017) Conservation Objectives: Wicklow Mountains SAC 002122. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.
 NPWS (2017) Conservation Objectives: Bray Head SAC 000714. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.
 NPWS (2016) Conservation Objectives: Howth Head SAC 000202. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.
 NPWS (2018) Conservation objectives for Howth Head Coast SPA [004113]. Generic Version 6.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
 NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: Baldoyle Bay SPA 004016. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
 NPWS (2012) Conservation Objectives: Baldoyle Bay SAC 000199. Version 1.0. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
 NPWS (2018) Conservation objectives for Glen of the Downs SAC [000719]. Generic Version 6.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
 NPWS (2018) Conservation objectives for Ireland's Eye SPA [004117]. Generic Version 6.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
 NPWS (2018) Conservation objectives for Glenasmole Valley SAC [001209]. Generic Version 6.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

The assessment considers available conservation objectives. Since conservation objectives focus on maintaining the favourable conservation condition of the QIs/SCIs of each site, the screening process concentrated on assessing the potential effects of the Plan against the QIs/SCIs of each site. The conservation objectives for each site were consulted throughout the assessment process.

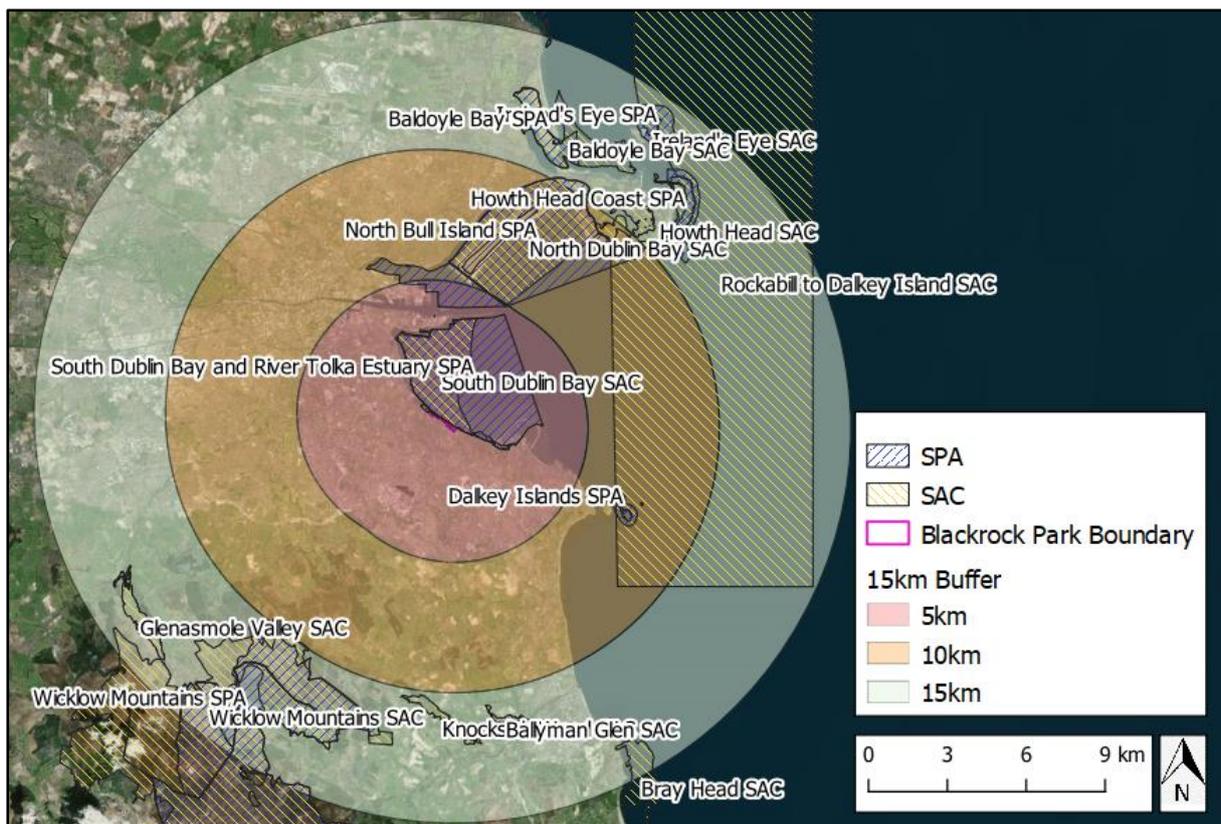


Figure 3.1 European sites within 15km of the Masterplan boundary⁴

3.3 Assessment Criteria and Screening

3.3.1 Is the Masterplan Necessary to the Management of European sites?

The overarching objective of the Masterplan is not the nature conservation management of the sites, but to provide a coordinated landscape plan, park management plan and provide community spaces in

⁴ Source: NPWS (datasets downloaded April 2020)

Blackrock Park. Therefore, the Masterplan is not considered to be directly connected with or necessary to the management of European sites.

3.3.2 Elements of the Masterplan with Potential to Give Rise to Effects

The operational phase elements of the project will be consistent with the existing land use activities; however, the increased recreational facilities could introduce larger visitor numbers within the park, particularly around the skate park area. This area is currently disturbed ground with negligible ecological value.

The construction phase elements of the project also introduce potential sources for effects to ecological processes such as:

- Removal or thinning of vegetation;
- Disturbance effects through noise;
- Dust; and
- Surface water run-off.

The Masterplan is small in scale with minor infrastructural changes such as amendments to existing path widths, redevelopment of existing structures and conversion of disturbed ground into a skate park with flower beds integrated into the design. Therefore, the construction phase and increased visitor effects identified are considered in the context of European sites identified above, their sensitivities and conservation objectives.

3.3.3 Screening of Sites

Table 3.1 examines whether there is potential for effects on European sites considering information provided above, including Appendix I. Sites are screened out based on one or a combination of the following criteria:

- Where it can be shown that there are significant pathways such as hydrological links Masterplan proposals and the site to be screened;
- Where the site is located at such a distance from that area to which the Masterplan relates that effects are not foreseen; and
- Where it is that known threats or vulnerabilities at a site cannot be linked to potential impacts that may arise from the Masterplan.

3.3.4 Characterising Potential Significant Effects

The following parameters are described when characterising impacts⁵:

Direct and Indirect Impacts - An impact can be caused either as a direct or as an indirect consequence of a Plan/Project.

Magnitude - Magnitude measures the size of an impact, which is described as high, medium, low, very low or negligible.

Extent - The area over which the impact occurs – this should be predicted in a quantified manner.

Duration - The time for which the effect is expected to last prior to recovery or replacement of the resource or feature.

- Temporary: Up to 1 Year;
- Short Term: The effects would take 1-7 years to be mitigated;
- Medium Term: The effects would take 7-15 years to be mitigated;
- Long Term: The effects would take 15-60 years to be mitigated; and
- Permanent: The effects would take 60+ years to be mitigated.

Likelihood - The probability of the effect occurring taking into account all available information.

- Certain/Near Certain: >95% chance of occurring as predicted;
- Probable: 50-95% chance as occurring as predicted;
- Unlikely: 5-50% chance as occurring as predicted; and
- Extremely Unlikely: <5% chance as occurring as predicted.

⁵ These descriptions are informed by publications including: Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2016) "Guidelines for ecological impact assessment"; Environmental Protection Agency (2002) "Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Statements"; and National Roads Authority (2009) "Guidelines for Assessment of Ecological Impacts of National Roads Schemes".

Ecologically Significant Impact - An impact (negative or positive) on the integrity of a defined site or ecosystem and/or the conservation status of habitats or species within a given geographic area.

Integrity of a Site - The coherence of its ecological structure and function, across its whole area, which enables it to sustain the habitat, complex of habitats and/or the levels of populations of the species for which it was classified.

The Habitats Directive requires the focus of the assessment at this stage to be on the integrity of the site as indicated by its Conservation Objectives. It is an aim of NPWS to draw up conservation management plans for all areas designated for nature conservation. These plans will, among other things, set clear objectives for the conservation of the features of interest within a site.

SSCOs have been prepared for a number of European sites. These detailed SSCOs aim to define favourable conservation condition for the qualifying habitats and species at that site by setting targets for appropriate attributes which define the character habitat. The maintenance of the favourable condition for these habitats and species at the site level will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.

***Favourable conservation status of a species** can be described as being 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.'*

***Favourable conservation status of a habitat** can be described as being 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'.*

Generic Conservation Objective for cSACs:

- To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.

One generic Conservation Objective for SPAs:

- To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.

3.3.5 Types of Potential Effects

Assessment of potential impacts on European sites is conducted utilising a standard source-pathway model (see approach referred to under Sections 1.3 and 3).

The 2001 European Commission AA guidance outlines the following potential changes that may occur at a designated site, which may result in effects on the integrity and function of that site:

- Loss/reduction of habitat area;
- Habitat or species fragmentation;
- Disturbance to key species;
- Reduction in species density;
- Changes in key indicators of conservation value (water quality etc.); and
- Climate change.

3.3.5.1 Loss/Reduction of Habitat Area

There are no European sites present within the redline boundary. The South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA and South Dublin Bay SAC are physically separated from the Blackrock park by the Dart line and associated walls. All works related to the plan will be undertaken within the park boundary and therefore there will be no loss or reduction of habitat area related to any European site. Similarly, there were no Annex I habitats identified within Blackrock Park during the field work (see associated EcIA for

further details). The grassland areas and water bodies on site provide some foraging areas for small numbers of wading birds.

A report by Natura Environmental Consultants⁶ was used to inform this section. This report presents the results from 2 years winter wading surveys for the Dublin Bay area, as well as the Blackrock Park itself. It was identified that 'from December onwards small numbers of Brent Geese used the lake and immediately surrounding grassland' in the southern part of Blackrock park and 'in previous winters Brent Geese have been occasionally recorded on the grassland as it lies between the shoreline and Blackrock College which are both regularly used by this species'. The report also notes 'The grassland is used occasionally by Black-headed Gulls'. Only small numbers of wading birds were recorded within the park boundary, with most of the bird activity recorded at low tide on the shore side of the Dart line or within the Booterstown Marsh area to the north of the site.

The policies of the Masterplan ensure that the grassland areas and water bodies will be maintained. The infrastructural developments proposed are on existing hard surfaces areas – such as the activity hub – and the landscaping works being undertaken are small scale in nature. Therefore, there will be no loss of available grazing areas for birds or aquatic habitats. The augmented planting will provide increased pollination potential to support invertebrate species which will provide increased prey availability. Therefore, there will be no significant effects posed to European sites in respect to habitat loss or reduction.

3.3.5.2 Habitat or Species Fragmentation

The site provides ecological connectivity and foraging resources for species such as bats and breeding birds as it is a green space within an urban landscape. The habitats present are heavily managed parkland habitats. A landscape scale assessment of habitats showed that there are no ecological corridors connecting any of the European sites identified above; however, there is potential for the grasslands and waterbodies to provide foraging grounds for small numbers of waders. The site is a managed parkland and the features of the Masterplan will maintain the overall characteristics of the site with some minor amendments to existing trees and supplementary planting of additional tree clusters. Furthermore, all of the existing water bodies will remain intact. Similarly, there were no Annex I habitats identified on site during the field work. As the overall characteristics of the site will be maintained, there are no features of the Masterplan that will result in habitat fragmentation. Therefore, there will be no effects posed to European sites in this respect.

3.3.5.3 Disturbance to Key Species

The key species with potential effects arising from this Masterplan are the SCIs for the South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA; namely:

- Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) [A046]
- Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*) [A130]
- Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*) [A137]
- Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) [A141]
- Knot (*Calidris canutus*) [A143]
- Sanderling (*Calidris alba*) [A144]
- Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) [A149]
- Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) [A157]
- Redshank (*Tringa totanus*) [A162]
- Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) [A179]
- Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*) [A192]
- Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) [A193]
- Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) [A194]

The features of the Masterplan relate to minor augmentations to landscape features and the aesthetic value of the park. The operational phase elements of the Masterplan will be consistent with the existing condition of the site, therefore there are no additional sourced for effects identified in this regard. The construction phase elements of the infrastructure requirements of the Masterplan such as the development of the activity hub and office buildings etc. have potential to cause disturbance effects.

⁶ Nairn & Fox (2020), Dublin bay trail S2S Dun Laoghaire to Ringsend Pedestrian and cycle route Winter bird surveys 2018/19 & 2019/20

These infrastructure works however, will take place in existing hard standing areas where there have been no records of wading bird activity and there is an absence of suitable habitat. For the less intensive development works related to landscaping and/or path augmentations etc. are identified as small-scale temporary effects. The overall characteristics and condition of the habitats present on site will be maintained. The site usage from the SCI species is shown to be low, and therefore the disturbance effects will be minor temporary effects. Thus, there are no significant adverse effects identified in relation to disturbance effects on the ecological integrity of any European site.

3.3.5.4 Reduction in Species Density

As detailed above, the sources for effects from the Masterplan will result in temporary small-scale effects to small numbers of wading birds as they forage. The existing condition of the park is a busy urban green space and the Brent geese within the park have been observed feeding on bread from locals. The potential disturbance effects from the works will be minor due to the low population density and opportunistic foraging processes employed by the waders in the area. The Blackrock College area is a known grazing area for these species as well as the open shoreline. The availability of alternate foraging space and low population numbers using the park ensure that there will be no impact to the species density in the SPA during construction. The operational phase will be consistent with the existing condition and therefore there will be no effects in that regard.

3.3.5.5 Changes of Indicators of Conservation Value

The site is within 20m of the South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA and South Dublin Bay SAC. The operational phase of the Masterplan will be consistent with the existing condition of the site, therefore there are no additional sources for effects in this regard. There are no direct effects identified to the European sites as result of the implementation of the Masterplan. However, there are hydrological pathways present. Water quality is a key indicator of conservation value. The Masterplan provides for works to be undertaken directly on the banks of the Priory stream which flows into Dublin Bay. These works specifically relate to creating naturalised banks, therefore increased sedimentation levels are anticipated due to these works. There are no elements of the Masterplan that relate to hazardous materials and construction phase site run off is the only source for potential effects identified to effect water quality. All construction and infrastructure works are small in scale and best practice construction measures and the physical barrier between Blackrock park and Dublin Bay are seen to be robust buffers. Due to the scale and nature of the works there are no significant adverse effects identified as a result of the implementation of the Masterplan. In addition to this, the Masterplan does not provide consent for any development and all projects that arise due to the Masterplan will be subject to their own environmental assessment processes when design features are known. Therefore, there are no sources for effects that are likely to cause significant adverse effects to the ecological integrity of any European site with respect to water quality. No other indicators of conservation value were identified on site.

3.3.5.6 Climate Change

The Plan will not result in any greenhouse gas emissions to air during the operational phase. The construction phase works will have increased temporary emissions which will be localised however, given the small-scale nature of the development projects identified within the Masterplan effects due to emissions are determined to be negligible. Such effects upon greenhouse gas emissions will not affect changes projected to arise from climate change to the degree that it would affect the QIs or SCIs of the European sites considered.

Table 3.1 Screening of European sites within 15km of the Masterplan boundary

Site Code	Site Name	Distance (Km)	Qualifying Features (Qualifying Interests & Special Conservation Interests)	Potential effects (refer also to Sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3 above)	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
004024	South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA	Less than 20m	Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143] Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) [A192] Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	<p>The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats for the site such as fishing, recreational activities, bait digging and disposal of waste resulting in discharges. There are no sources for effects from the Masterplan that will add to these pressures.</p> <p>The SCI species are sensitive to disturbance effects. The features of the Masterplan relate to minor augmentations to landscape features and the aesthetic value of the park. The operational phase elements of the Masterplan will be consistent with the existing condition of the site, therefore there are no additional sourced for effects identified in this regard. The construction phase elements of the infrastructure requirements of the Masterplan such as the development of the activity hub and office buildings etc. have potential to cause disturbance effects. These infrastructure works however will take place in existing hard standing areas where there have been no records of wading bird activity and there is an absence of suitable habitat. For the less intensive development works related to landscaping and/or path augmentations etc. are identified as small-scale temporary effects. The overall characteristics and condition of the habitats present on site will be maintained. The site usage from the SCI species is shown to be low, and therefore the disturbance effects will be minor temporary effects. Thus, there are no significant adverse effects identified in relation to disturbance effects on the ecological integrity of any European site.</p> <p>The Masterplan provides for works to be undertaken directly on the banks of the Priory stream which flows into Dublin Bay. These works specifically relate to creating naturalised banks, therefore increased sedimentation levels are anticipated due to these works. There are no elements of the Masterplan that relate to hazardous materials and construction phase site run off is the only source for potential effects identified to effect water quality. All construction and infrastructure works are small in scale and best practice construction measures and the physical barrier between Blackrock park and Dublin Bay are seen to be robust buffers. Due to the scale and nature of the works there are no significant adverse effects identified as a result of the implementation of the Masterplan. In addition to this, the Masterplan does not provide consent for any development and all projects that arise due to the Masterplan will be subject to their own environmental assessment processes when design features are known. Therefore, there are no sources for effects that are likely to cause significant adverse effects to the ecological integrity of any European site with respect to water quality.</p>	No	No
000210	South Dublin Bay SAC	Less than 20m	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]	The conservation objectives relate to area, community composition and distribution of Zetera species. There are no direct sources for effects to influence these conservation objectives. Indirect effects could arise due to construction phase elements of the Masterplan, specifically with regard to site run off and works along the banks of the Priory Stream. Increased sediment is not a known threat or pressure for mud flat species that thrive on sediment fluctuations. All construction and infrastructure works are small in scale and best practice construction measures and the physical barrier between Blackrock park and the SAC are seen to be robust buffers. In addition to this, the Masterplan does not provide consent for any development and all projects that arise due to the Masterplan will be subject to their own environmental assessment processes when design features are known. Therefore, there are no sources for	No	No

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Site Code	Site Name	Distance (Km)	Qualifying Features (Qualifying Interests & Special Conservation Interests)	Potential effects (refer also to Sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3 above)	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
				effects that are likely to cause significant adverse effects to the ecological integrity of the SAC.		
000206	North Dublin Bay SAC	4.93	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] Humid dune slacks [2190] <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (Petalwort) [1395]	The conservation objectives relate to hydrological characteristics, community dynamics and localised other objectives. There is no direct hydrological pathway for potential effects to the habitat features of the site; the dilution effects of the Irish Sea will reduce potential effects due to the scale and extent of the Masterplan. Due to the localised small-scale nature of the potential sources for effects of the site and the absence of pathways for effects; the Masterplan will have no effects on the ecological integrity of the SAC.	No	No
004006	North Bull Island	4.93	Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052] Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054] Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056] Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143] Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160] Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) [A169] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	There is no direct hydrological pathway for potential effects to the habitat features of the site; the dilution effects of the Irish Sea will reduce potential effects due to the scale and extent of the Masterplan. The conservation objectives relate primarily to the home ranges and populations of the SCI bird species. Given the distances between the sites, the urban nature of the habitats present on site, and the availability of exiting habitats in the area; there are no significant effects identified to the populations of the SCI species. Similarly, the overall aim of the Masterplan will improve the ecological integrity of the site. The distance between the site and the SPA is sufficient to eliminate any potential disturbances related to noise pollution. Due to the nature, scale and location of the development and the absence of any direct pathways for effects there are no adverse effects foreseen to the ecological integrity of the SPA.	No	No
003000	Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC	6	Reefs [1170] <i>Phocoena phocoena</i> (Harbour Porpoise) [1351]	The SSCO's identify a requirement to maintain favourable conservation condition of the QI's. Relating to maintenance of community dynamics and suppression of adverse human interactions. Harbour porpoise face threats such as the enlargement of fishing gear, prey availability, pollution, habitat derogation and human disturbance. Reefs have a low tolerance to fishing and changes in ecological quality. There are no sources identified that will have effects beyond the immediate vicinity of the Masterplan due to the scale and nature of works. There is no direct hydrological pathway between the site and the	No	No

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Site Code	Site Name	Distance (Km)	Qualifying Features (Qualifying Interests & Special Conservation Interests)	Potential effects (refer also to Sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3 above)	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
				SAC; the dilution effects of the Irish Sea will reduce potential effects due to the scale and extent of the Masterplan. Therefore, the Masterplan will not affect the ecological integrity of the SAC.		
004172	Dalkey Islands SPA	6.28	Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) [A192] Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194]	There is no direct hydrological pathway for potential effects to the habitat features of the site; the dilution effects of the Irish Sea will reduce potential effects due to the scale and extent of the Masterplan. The conservation objectives relate primarily to the home ranges and populations of the SCI bird species. Given the distances between the sites, the urban nature of the habitats present on site, and the availability of exiting habitats in the area; there are no significant effects identified to the populations of the SCI species. Similarly, the overall aim of the Masterplan will improve the ecological integrity of the site. The distance between the site and the SPA is sufficient to eliminate any potential disturbances related to noise pollution. Due to the nature, scale and location of the development and the absence of any direct pathways for effects there are no adverse effects foreseen to the ecological integrity of the SPA.	No	No
000202	Howth Head SAC	9.15	Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] European dry heaths [4030]	There are no site-specific threats identified by the NPWS. Heath and clifftop vegetation are also sensitive to abstraction, destocking, land use management and invasion. These are localised effects and there are no sources for activities that interact with these factors contained within the Masterplan. There are no hydrological linkages or other pathways for effects identified.	No	No
002122	Wicklow Mountains SAC	9.85	Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110] Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160] Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010] European dry heaths [4030] Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] Calaminarian grasslands of the <i>Violetalia calaminariae</i> [6130] Species-rich Nardus grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe) [6230] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130] Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladanii</i>) [8110] Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210] Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220] Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0] <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]	Peat erosion and grazing are existing known threats to the site as identified by the NPWS. The conservation objectives relate to hydrological characteristics, land management activities, community dynamics and localised other objectives. There is no direct hydrological pathway for potential effects to the habitat features of the site; the dilution effects of the Irish Sea will reduce potential effects due to the scale and extent of the Masterplan. Due to the localised small-scale nature of the potential sources for effects of the site and the absence of pathways for effects; the Masterplan will have no effects on the ecological integrity of the SAC.	No	No
004040	Wicklow Mountains SPA	10.02	Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>) [A098] Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>) [A103]	There is no direct hydrological pathway for potential effects to the habitat features of the site; the dilution effects of the Irish Sea will reduce potential effects due to the scale and extent of the Masterplan. The conservation objectives relate primarily to the home ranges and populations of the SCI bird species. Given the distances between the	No	No

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Site Code	Site Name	Distance (Km)	Qualifying Features (Qualifying Interests & Special Conservation Interests)	Potential effects (refer also to Sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3 above)	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
				sites, the urban nature of the habitats present on site, and the availability of exiting habitats in the area; there are no significant effects identified to the populations of the SCI species. Similarly, the overall aim of the Masterplan will improve the ecological integrity of the site. The distance between the site and the SPA is sufficient to eliminate any potential disturbances related to noise pollution. Due to the nature, scale and location of the development and the absence of any direct pathways for effects there are no adverse effects foreseen to the ecological integrity of the SPA.		
000725	Knocksink Wood SAC	10.16	Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0]	The conservation objectives relate to hydrological characteristics, land use management practices, community dynamics and localised other objectives. There is no direct hydrological pathway for potential effects to the habitat features of the site; the dilution effects of the Irish Sea will reduce potential effects due to the scale and extent of the Masterplan. Due to the localised small-scale nature of the potential sources for effects of the site and the absence of pathways for effects; the Masterplan will have no effects on the ecological integrity of the SAC.	No	No
000199	Baldoyle Bay SAC	10.54	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritima</i>) [1410]	The main threat to the SAC is from visitor pressure as identified by the NPWS. The conservation objectives relate to hydrological characteristics, community dynamics, landuse management and other localised objectives. There is no direct hydrological pathway for potential effects to the habitat features of the site; the dilution effects of the Irish Sea will reduce potential effects due to the scale and extent of the Masterplan. Due to the localised small-scale nature of the potential sources for effects of the site and the absence of pathways for effects; the Masterplan will have no effects on the ecological integrity of the SAC.	No	No
000713	Ballyman Glen SAC	10.54	Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220] Alkaline fens [7230]	It is noted that the site has been used historically as a domestic refuse landfill. The conservation objectives relate to hydrological characteristics, community dynamics and localised other objectives. There is no direct hydrological pathway for potential effects to the habitat features of the site; the dilution effects of the Irish Sea will reduce potential effects due to the scale and extent of the Masterplan. Due to the localised small-scale nature of the potential sources for effects of the site and the absence of pathways for effects; the Masterplan will have no effects on the ecological integrity of the SAC.	No	No
004016	Baldoyle Bay SPA	10.54	Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	There is no direct hydrological pathway for potential effects to the habitat features of the site; the dilution effects of the Irish Sea will reduce potential effects due to the scale and extent of the Masterplan. The conservation objectives relate primarily to the home ranges and populations of the SCI bird species. Given the distances between the sites, the urban nature of the habitats present on site, and the availability of exiting habitats in the area; there are no significant effects identified to the populations of the SCI species. Similarly, the overall aim of the Masterplan will improve the ecological integrity of the site. The distance between the site and the SPA is sufficient to eliminate any potential disturbances related to noise pollution. Due to the nature, scale and location of the development and the absence of any direct pathways for effects there are no adverse effects foreseen to the ecological integrity of the SPA.	No	No
004113	Howth Head Coast SPA	10.7	Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188]	There is no direct hydrological pathway for potential effects to the habitat features of the site; the dilution effects of the Irish Sea will reduce potential effects due to the scale and extent of the Masterplan. The conservation objectives relate primarily to the home ranges and populations of the SCI bird species. Given the distances between the sites, the urban nature of the habitats present on site, and the availability of exiting habitats in the area; there are no significant effects identified to the populations of the SCI species. Similarly, the overall aim of the Masterplan will improve the ecological	No	No

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Site Code	Site Name	Distance (Km)	Qualifying Features (Qualifying Interests & Special Conservation Interests)	Potential effects (refer also to Sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3 above)	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
				integrity of the site. The distance between the site and the SPA is sufficient to eliminate any potential disturbances related to noise pollution. Due to the nature, scale and location of the development and the absence of any direct pathways for effects there are no adverse effects foreseen to the ecological integrity of the SPA.		
001209	Glenasmole Valley SAC	12.73	Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (* important orchid sites) [6210] Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410] Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220]	The SAC has no known threats identified by the NPWS. The conservation objectives relate to localised management, land use requirements, control of species composition and hydrological characteristics. Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates and molinia meadows are sensitive to changes in species composition and structure which relates to land use management action. Similarly, drainage and hydrological condition is an important feature. Petrifying springs are sensitive to abstraction, destocking, invasion etc. These are localised sensitivities or hydrologically dependent interactions. There are no hydrological pathways for potential effects to the habitat features of the site. Due to the localised small-scale nature of the potential sources for effects of the site and the absence of pathways for effects; the Masterplan will have no effects on the ecological integrity of the SAC.	No	No
004117	Irelands Eye SPA	12.97	Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017] Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184] Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188] Guillemot (<i>Uria aalge</i>) [A199] Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>) [A200]	There is no direct hydrological pathway for potential effects to the habitat features of the site; the dilution effects of the Irish Sea will reduce potential effects due to the scale and extent of the Masterplan. The conservation objectives relate primarily to the home ranges and populations of the SCI bird species. Given the distances between the sites, the urban nature of the habitats present on site, and the availability of exiting habitats in the area; there are no significant effects identified to the populations of the SCI species. Similarly, the overall aim of the Masterplan will improve the ecological integrity of the site. The distance between the site and the SPA is sufficient to eliminate any potential disturbances related to noise pollution. Due to the nature, scale and location of the development and the absence of any direct pathways for effects there are no adverse effects foreseen to the ecological integrity of the SPA.	No	No
000714	Bray Head SAC	13.26	Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] European dry heaths [4030]	The cliff/heath is under threat from reclamation for agriculture and frequent burning. Heath and clifftop vegetation are also sensitive to abstraction, destocking, land use management and invasion. These are localised effects and there are no sources for activities that interact with these factors contained within the Masterplan. There are no hydrological linkages or other pathways for effects identified.	No	No
002193	Ireland's Eye SAC	13.29	Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220], Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]	This terrestrial habitat is sensitive to direct land use management effects. There are no pathways for effects and therefore there are no sources that could impose effects on this SAC that may arrive from the implementation of the Masterplan.	No	No
000205	Malahide Estuary SAC	14.6	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140], Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310], Spartina swards (<i>Spartinion maritimae</i>) [1320], Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410], Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120], Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130], Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330]	The main threat to the SAC is from visitor pressure as identified by the NPWS. The conservation objectives relate to hydrological characteristics, community dynamics, landuse management and other localised objectives. There is no direct hydrological pathway for potential effects to the habitat features of the site; the dilution effects of the Irish Sea will reduce potential effects due to the scale and extent of the Masterplan. Due to the localised small-scale nature of the potential sources for effects of the site and the absence of pathways for effects; the Masterplan will have no effects on the ecological integrity of the SAC.	No	No

3.4 Other Plans and Programmes

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires an assessment of a plan or project to consider other plans or projects that might, in combination with the plan or project, have the potential to adversely affect European sites.

A requirement of the AA process is to take into consideration any in combination effects as result of other plans in the area. Plans of relevance in the context of this proposal include:

- Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2016 -2022;
- Blackrock Local Area Plan; and
- Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016-2035.

This being an urban parkland there are numerous other proposed projects in the vicinity including works which are at planning stage or underway on various sites. A review of the DLR Co. Co. planning database for projects within the masterplan area over the past 5 years identified that the projects within the area are small scale works predominantly relating to the alterations of existing structures. The largest of these projects was identified to be Alterations to Blackrock Shopping Centre (D17A/0644). Sources of effects arising from the construction and operational phases of the proposed masterplan are consistent with the existing conditions at Blackrock village.

All construction and infrastructure works are small in scale and best practice construction measures and the physical barrier between Blackrock park and Dublin Bay are seen to be robust buffers. Due to the scale and nature of the works there are no significant adverse effects identified as a result of the implementation of the Masterplan. On this basis, guidance (CIEEM, 2016) indicates that there is no need to consider in-combination effects. However, taking a precautionary approach, relevant plans and projects (as listed above) have nonetheless been reviewed and assessed.

Section 4 AA Screening Conclusion

This stage 1 screening for AA of the proposed Blackrock Park Masterplan Amgen shows that implementation of the project is not foreseen to have any likely significant effects on any European site.

The Masterplan is located within 20m of the South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA and South Dublin Bay SAC. The AA screening process has considered potential effects which may arise during the construction and operational phases as a result of the implementation of the Masterplan. Through an assessment of the pathways for effects and an evaluation of the Masterplan characteristics, taking account of the processes involved and the distance of separation from European sites, it has been evaluated that there are no likely significant adverse effects on the qualifying interests, special conservation interest or the conservation objectives of any designated European site. This is due to the scale and nature of the proposed works in relation to the known threats, pressures and sensitivities of the European sites with pathways for effects.

Given the site context in relation to other projects identified as well as the nature of the development, its scale, and the temporary nature of the construction effects identified as potential sources the Masterplan will not lead to significant in-combination effect with any other plans or projects.

This evaluation is made in view of the conservation objectives of the habitats or species for which these sites have been designated. It is concluded that the Masterplan will not give rise to any significant adverse effects on any designated European sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects⁷. Consequently, a Stage Two – Natura Impact Statement is not required for the project.

⁷ Except as provided for in Section 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be:
a) no alternative solution available,
b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the plan to proceed; and
c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.

Appendix I Background information on European sites

List of European sites within 15km of the Masterplan boundary; including the Qualifying features (Qualifying Interests or Special Conservation Interests) and Site Vulnerability/Sensitivity

Site Code	Site Name	Distance (Km)	Qualifying Features (Qualifying Interests & Special Conservation Interests)	Site Specific Threats or Vulnerability
004024	South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA	0	Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143] Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) [A192] Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	The South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA comprises a substantial part of Dublin Bay. It includes the intertidal area between the River Liffey and Dun Laoghaire, and the estuary of the River Tolka to the north of the River Liffey, as well as Booterstown Marsh. A portion of the shallow marine waters of the bay is also included. The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats for the site such as fishing, recreational activities, bait digging and disposal of waste resulting in discharges. All of these pressures are identified within the boundary. Pressures identified by the NPWS outside the boundary include roads and motorways and industrial urbanisation. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.
000210	South Dublin Bay SAC	0	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]	This site lies south of the River Liffey in Co. Dublin, and extends from the South Wall to the west pier at Dun Laoghaire. It is an intertidal site with extensive areas of sand and mudflats. The sediments are predominantly sands but grade to sandy muds near the shore at Merrion Gates. The main channel which drains the area is Cockle Lake. The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats for the site including; urbanisation, discharge, fishing, coastal works and recreation. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.
004172	Dalkey Islands SPA	4.93	Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) [A192] Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194]	The site comprises Dalkey Island, Lamb Island and Maiden Rock, the intervening rocks and reefs, and the surrounding sea to a distance of 200 m. Dalkey Island, which is the largest in the group, lies c. 400m off Sorrento Point on the Co. Dublin mainland from which it is separated by a deep channel. The island is low-lying, the highest point of which (c. 15m) is marked by a Martello Tower. The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats for the site including Agricultural activities (grazing by feral sheep), recreational activities (walking, horse-riding, non-motorised vehicles, nautical sports). All of these pressures are identified within the SPA boundary. Urbanisation is identified as a threat by the NPWS outside the site boundary. No other threats have been identified.
003000	Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC	4.93	Reefs [1170] Phocoena phocoena (Harbour Porpoise) [1351]	This site includes a range of dynamic inshore and coastal waters in the western Irish Sea. These include sandy and muddy seabed, reefs, sandbanks and islands. This site extends southwards, in a strip approximately 7km wide and 40km in length, from Rockabill, running adjacent to Howth Head, and crosses Dublin Bay to Frazer Bank in south Co. Dublin. The site encompasses Dalkey, Muglins and Rockabill islands. The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats for the site such as: Shipping lanes, professional active fishing, noise nuisance and noise pollution, discharge and utility & service lines. All of these pressures occur within and outside the boundary. No other site-specific pressures have been identified by the NPWS.
000713	Ballyman Glen SAC	6	Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220] Alkaline fens [7230]	Ballyman Glen is situated approximately 3km north of Enniskerry and straddles the County boundary between Dublin and Wicklow. It is orientated in an east-west direction with a stream running through the centre. The glen is bounded mostly by steeply sloping pasture with Gorse (<i>Ulex europaeus</i>) and areas of wood and scrub. An area of land that slopes towards the fen has been used as a landfill site for domestic refuse. The site is also used for a clay pigeon shoot and shattered clay pigeons are scattered throughout the area. The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats for the site such as disposal of household/ recreational facility waste and grazing. All of these pressures are identified within the boundary; the site synopsis identifies a list of threats

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Site Code	Site Name	Distance (Km)	Qualifying Features (Qualifying Interests & Special Conservation Interests)	Site Specific Threats or Vulnerability
				outside the boundary including pollution to surface water, urbanisations, roads/motorways, grazing, removal of hedges, forest planting and fertilisation. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.
000725	Knocksink Wood SAC	6.28	Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0]	Knocksink Wood is situated in the valley of the Glencullen River, just north-west of Enniskerry in Co. Wicklow. The fast flowing Glencullen River winds its way over granite boulders along the valley floor. The steep sides of the valley are mostly covered with calcareous drift, and support extensive areas of woodland. The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats for the site such as recreational activities, paths/tracks, artificial planting, missing or wrongly directed conservation measures, removal of forest undergrowth and camping/caravans. All of these pressures are identified within the boundary, the site synopsis has identified pressures that occur both outside and within the boundary including improved access to site, grazing and invasive species. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.
000206	North Dublin Bay SAC	9.15	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] Humid dune slacks [2190] <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (Petalwort) [1395]	This site covers the inner part of north Dublin Bay, the seaward boundary extending from the Bull Wall lighthouse across to the Martello Tower at Howth Head. The North Bull Island is the focal point of this site. The main land uses of this site are amenity activities and nature conservation. The North Bull Island is the main recreational beach in Co. Dublin and is used throughout the year. Much of the land surface of the island is taken up by two golf courses. Two separate Statutory Nature Reserves cover much of the island east of the Bull Wall and the surrounding intertidal flats. The site is used regularly for educational purposes. North Bull Island has been designated a Special Protection Area under the E.U. Birds Directive and it is also a statutory Wildfowl Sanctuary, a Ramsar Convention site, a Biogenetic Reserve, a Biosphere Reserve and a Special Area Amenity Order site. The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats for the site such as pollution to surface water, urbanisation, agricultural activities, intensive maintenance, recreational activities, bait digging/collection, invasive species. All of these pressures are identified within the boundary. The site synopsis identifies pressures beyond the site boundary including urbanisation and a golf course. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.
004006	North Bull Island	9.85	Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052] Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054] Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056] Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143] Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160] Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) [A169] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	This site covers all of the inner part of north Dublin Bay, with the seaward boundary extending from the Bull Wall lighthouse across to Drumleck Point at Howth Head. The North Bull Island sand spit is a relatively recent depositional feature, formed because of improvements to Dublin Port during the 18th and 19th centuries. It is almost 5km long and 1km wide and runs parallel to the coast between Clontarf and Sutton. Part of the interior of the island has been converted to golf courses. The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats for the site including, recreational activities, bait digging, transportation (bridge, viaduct), discharges and urbanisation. Pressures identified by the NPWS outside the boundary include urbanisation, shipping lanes, paths/tracks and continuous urbanisation. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.
004040	Wicklow Mountains SPA	10.02	Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>) [A098] Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>) [A103]	This is an extensive upland site, comprising a substantial part of the Wicklow Mountains. The underlying geology of the site is mainly of Leinster granites, flanked by Ordovician schists, mudstones and volcanics. The area was subject to glaciation and features fine examples of glacial lakes, deep valleys and moraines. Most of site is over 300 m, with much ground over 600m and the highest peak of Lugnaquilla at 925 m. The standard data form for

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Site Code	Site Name	Distance (Km)	Qualifying Features (Qualifying Interests & Special Conservation Interests)	Site Specific Threats or Vulnerability
				the site details a list of potential threats for the site such as grazing, peat extraction, recreational activities and paths/cycleways. All of these pressures are identified within the site boundary the site synopsis identifies forestry as being a threat outside the boundary. No other threats have been identified by the NPWS.
002122	Wicklow Mountains SAC	10.16	Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110] Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160] Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010] European dry heaths [4030] Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] Calaminarian grasslands of the <i>Violetalia calaminariae</i> [6130] Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe) [6230] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130] Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladani</i>) [8110] Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210] Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220] Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0] <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]	Wicklow Mountains SAC is a complex of upland areas in Counties Wicklow and Dublin, flanked by the Blessington reservoir to the west and Vartry reservoir in the east, Cruagh Mountain in the north and Lybagh Mountain in the south. Most of the site is over 300m, with much ground over 600m. Large areas of the site are owned by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and are managed for nature conservation based on traditional land uses of upland areas. The most common land use is traditional sheep grazing, but others include turf cutting, mostly hand cutting but some machine cutting also occurs. These activities are largely confined to the Military Road, where there is easy access. Large areas that had been previously hand-cut and are now abandoned are regenerating. In the last 40 years, forestry has become an important land use in the uplands, and has affected both the wildlife and the hydrology of the area. Amenity use is very high, with Dublin city close to the site. Peat erosion is frequent on the peaks. This may be a natural process, but is likely to be accelerated by activities such as grazing. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.
000714	Bray Head SAC	10.54	Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] European dry heaths [4030]	This coastal site is situated in the northeast of Co. Wicklow between the towns of Bray and Greystones. The bedrock geology is Cambrian quartzites and shales (with mudstones and greywackes). Bray Head consists of a plateau of high ground, with five prominent quartzite knolls and has a maximum height of 241m. The more exposed higher ground has a covering of shallow acidic soils, with protruding bedrock and scree. Elsewhere, deeper soils are formed by drift deposits and are calcareous in character. The heath and grassland habitats at this site are threatened by reclamation for agriculture and by frequent burning. The site is a popular recreational area and is especially used by walkers. The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats for the site such as removal of hedges, motorised vehicles, paths/tracks and vandalism. All of these pressures are identified within the boundary. The NPWS have identified pressures outside of the boundary including urbanisation. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.
000202	Howth Head SAC	10.54	Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] European dry heaths [4030]	Howth Head is a rocky headland situated on the northern side of Dublin Bay. The peninsula is composed of Cambrian slates and quartzites, joined to the mainland by a post-glacial raised beach. Limestone occurs on the north-west side while glacial drift is deposited against the cliffs in places. The main land use within the area is recreation, mostly walking and horse riding, and this has led to some erosion within the site. Fires also pose a danger to the site. There may also be a threat in some areas from further housing development. The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats for the site such as: Sand and gravel quarries, invasive species, urbanisation, recreational activities, mining and quarrying, vandalism, paths/tracks and a lack of grazing. All of these pressures are identified within and beyond the site boundary. No other pressures have been identified by the NPWS.
004113	Howth Head Coast SPA	10.54	Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188]	Howth Head is a rocky headland situated on the northern side of Dublin Bay. The peninsula is composed of Cambrian rock of the Bray Group, the most conspicuous component being quartzite. The site comprises the sea cliffs extending from just east of the Nose of Howth to the tip of the Bailey Lighthouse peninsula. The marine area is 500m from the cliff base is included within the site. The standard data form for the site details a list of potential

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Site Code	Site Name	Distance (Km)	Qualifying Features (Qualifying Interests & Special Conservation Interests)	Site Specific Threats or Vulnerability
				threats for the site including fishing and recreational activities. All of these pressures are identified within the SPA boundary and the site synopsis does not identify any specific threats for the site beyond the boundary.
004016	Baldoyle Bay SPA	10.7	Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	Baldoyle Bay, located to the north and east of Baldoyle and to the south of Portmarnock, Co. Dublin, is a relatively small, narrow estuary separated from the open sea by a large sand dune system. Two small rivers, the Mayne River and the Sluice River, flow into the inner part of the estuary. The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats for the site such as bait digging/hunting, Invasive species and recreational activities. All of these pressures are identified within the boundary. Urbanisation, agricultural activities, sport and leisure activities and roads and motorways are identified outside the boundary. The site synopsis does not identify any other specific threats for the site beyond the boundary.
000199	Baldoyle Bay SAC	12.73	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]	Baldoyle Bay SAC extends from just below Portmarnock village to the west pier at Howth in Co. Dublin. It is a tidal estuarine bay protected from the open sea by a large sand-dune system. Two small rivers, the Mayne and the Sluice, flow into the bay. The area surrounding Baldoyle Bay is densely populated and so the main threats to the site include visitor pressure, disturbance to wildfowl and dumping. In particular, the dumping of spoil onto the foreshore presents a threat to the value of the site. The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats for the site such as recreational activities, bait digging, invasive species, hunting and discharges. All of these pressures are identified within the boundary. The NPWS identifies a number of pressures outside the site such as paths/tracks and golf courses (within) no other site-specific pressures have been identified.
004117	Irelands Eye SPA	12.97	Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017] Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184] Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188] Guillemot (<i>Uria aalge</i>) [A199] Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>) [A200]	Ireland's Eye is an uninhabited island located about 1.5km north of Howth in Co. Dublin. The site encompasses Ireland's Eye, Rowan Rocks, Thulla, Thulla Rocks, Carrageen Bay and a seaward extension of 200m in the west and 500m to the north and east. The main habitat on the island is a mix of dry grassland and bracken. The seas to the north and east of the island (to a distance of 500m), where seabirds feed, bathe and socialise, are included in the site. Owing to its proximity to the mainland, the island is popular with day-trippers and has educational value. The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats for the site including fishing and recreational activities. All of these pressures are identified within the SPA boundary and the site synopsis does not identify any specific threats for the site beyond the boundary.
001209	Glenasmole Valley SAC	13.26	Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (* important orchid sites) [6210] Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410] Petrifying springs with tufa formation (<i>Cratoneurion</i>) [7220]	Glenasmole Valley in south Co. Dublin lies on the edge of the Wicklow uplands, approximately 5km from Tallaght. The River Dodder flows through the valley and has been impounded here to form two reservoirs that supply water to south Dublin. The non-calcareous bedrock of the Glenasmole Valley has been overlain by deep drift deposits that now line the valley sides. They are partly covered by scrub and woodland, and on the less precipitous parts, by a herb-rich grassland. There is much seepage through the deposits, which brings to the surface water rich in bases, which induces local patches of calcareous fen and, in places, petrifying springs. The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats for the site such as leisure fishing, invasive species, roads/paths/railroads. All of these pressures are identified within the boundary. The NPWS have identified pressures outside the site boundary these include: forest replanting, peat extraction, non-intensive grazing, pollution, forest planting (native trees), car parks and parking areas, artificial planting. No other pressures have been identified by the NPWS.
002193	Ireland's Eye SAC	13.29	Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220], Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]	Ireland's Eye is located about 1.5km north of Howth in Co. Dublin. It is a Cambrian island with quartzite which forms spectacular cliffs on the north-east side. Elsewhere much of the area is covered by drift. The thin drift soils of the Perennial Vegetation of Stony Banks Vegetated Sea Cliffs on Ireland's Eye support 'interesting' plant communities. A small area of shingle vegetation occurs above the sandy beach at Carrageen Bay on the western side of the island. Recreational pressure, agriculture, and hydrological interaction have been identified in the standard data form as threats and pressures for the site. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.
000205	Malahide Estuary SAC	14.6	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140], Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310], <i>Spartina</i> swards (<i>Spartinion maritimae</i>) [1320], Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410], Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120], Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation	Malahide Estuary is situated immediately north of Malahide and east of Swords in Co. Dublin. It is the estuary of the River Broadmeadow. The site is divided by a railway viaduct. The outer part of the estuary is mostly cut off from the sea by a large sand spit, known as 'the island'. The outer estuary drains almost completely at low tide, exposing sand and mud flats. The inner stony shore has frequent Sea-holly (<i>Eryngium maritimum</i>). Welldeveloped saltmarshes occur at the tip of the spit; Atlantic salt meadow is the principle type. The estuary is an important wintering bird site.

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Site Code	Site Name	Distance (Km)	Qualifying Features (Qualifying Interests & Special Conservation Interests)	Site Specific Threats or Vulnerability
			(grey dunes) [2130], Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae) [1330]	The inner part of the estuary is heavily used for water sports. A section of the outer estuary has recently been infilled for a marina and housing development. Urbanisation, bridges, recreational pressures, hydrological interaction and invasive species have been identified in the standard data form as threats and pressures for the site.

List of all Qualifying Interests of SACs that have undergone Assessment including Summaries of Current Threats and Sensitivity to Effects

Qualifying Interests	Current threats to Qualifying Interests	Sensitivity of Qualifying Interests
Alkaline fens [7230]	Inappropriate management practices and changes to hydrological condition.	Drainage, chemical changes, vegetative changes
Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0]	Inappropriate grazing levels; invasive species; and clearance for agriculture or felling for timber	Surface and groundwater dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Changes in management.
Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060]	Abandonment; overgrazing; burning; outdoor recreation; quarries; communication networks; and wind farm developments.	Changes in management. Changes in nutrient or base status. Moderately sensitive to hydrological change
Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]	Grazing; sand and gravel extraction; recreational activities; coastal protection works	Overgrazing and erosion. Changes in management.
Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330]	Overgrazing; erosion; invasive species, particularly common cordgrass (<i>Spartina anglica</i>); infilling and reclamation.	Marine and groundwater dependent. Medium sensitivity to hydrological change. Changes in salinity and tidal regime. Overgrazing, erosion and accretion
Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]	Land reclamation, peat extraction; afforestation; erosion and landslides triggered by human activity; drainage; burning and infrastructural development.	Surface and groundwater dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Inappropriate management
Calaminarian grasslands of the <i>Violetalia calaminariae</i> [6130]	Land reclamation, afforestation; drainage; and infrastructural development.	Surface and groundwater dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Inappropriate management
Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210]	Overgrazing; extractive industries; recreational activities and improved access	Erosion, overgrazing and recreation.
Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]	Natural erosion processes exacerbated by recreation and sand extraction. Coastal protection interfering with natural processes	Overgrazing, and erosion. Changes in management.
European dry heaths [4030]	Afforestation, overburning, over-grazing, under-grazing and bracken invasion.	Moderately sensitive to hydrological change. Changes in management. Changes in nutrient status
Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]	Recreation; overgrazing and inappropriate grazing: non-native plant species, particularly sea buckthorn (<i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i>),	Overgrazing, and erosion. Changes in management.
Humid dune slacks [2190]	Agricultural improvement; overgrazing and inappropriate grazing; forestry; recreational activity	Overgrazing, and erosion. Changes in management. Sensitive to hydrological change.
Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355]	Decrease in water quality: Use of pesticides; fertilization; vegetation removal; professional fishing (including lobster pots and fyke nets); hunting; poisoning; sand and gravel extraction; mechanical removal of peat; urbanised areas; human habitation; continuous urbanization; drainage; management of aquatic and bank vegetation for drainage purposes; and canalization or modifying structures of inland water course.	Surface and marine water dependent. Moderately sensitive to hydrological change. Sensitivity to pollution
Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]	Over-grazing by cattle or sheep; infilling and reclamation.	Marine and groundwater dependent. Medium sensitivity to hydrological change. Changes in salinity and tidal regime. Coastal development and reclamation.
Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410]	Overgrazing; extractive industries; recreational activities and improved access	Erosion, overgrazing and recreation.
Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]	Aquaculture, fishing, bait digging, removal of fauna, reclamation of land, coastal protection works and invasive species, particularly cordgrass; hard coastal defence structures; sea-level rise.	Surface and marine water dependent. Moderately sensitive to hydrological change. Moderate sensitivity to pollution. Changes to salinity and tidal regime. Coastal development
Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160]	Hydrological interactions, improper land use management, pollution.	Hydrological change, very dependent on hydrodynamics and chemical composition.
Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010]	Reclamation, afforestation and burning; overstocking; invasion by non-heath species; exposure of peat to severe erosion.	Surface and groundwater dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Inappropriate management
Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0]	The introduction of alien species; sub-optimal grazing patterns; general forestry management; increases in urbanisation and human habitation adjacent to oak woodlands; and the construction of communication networks through the woodland.	Changes in management. Changes in nutrient or base status. Introduction of alien species.
Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110]	Nutrient enrichment; afforestation; waste water; invasive alien species; sport and leisure activities.	Surface and groundwater dependant. Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Highly sensitive to pollution
<i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (Petalwort) [1395]	There are no significant impacts affecting this species.	None identified

Qualifying Interests	Current threats to Qualifying Interests	Sensitivity of Qualifying Interests
Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220]	Ground water interactions and drainage activities	Trampling and alterations in hydrological characteristics/conditions.
Phocoena phocoena (Harbour Porpoise) [1351]	The main threats to this species include; by-catch in fishing gear, pollution of the marine environment and habitat degradation.	Falling prey densities is a threat to this species.
Reefs [1170]	Professional fishing; taking for fauna; taking for flora; water pollution; climate change; and change in species composition.	Sensitive to disturbance and pollution.
Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]	Invasive Species; erosion and accretion	Marine water dependent. Medium sensitivity to hydrological change. Changes in salinity and tidal regime. Infilling, reclamation, invasive species
Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites) [6210]	Overgrazing; extractive industries; recreational activities and improved access	Erosion, overgrazing and recreation.
Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes) [2120]	Removal of beach material and interference with the supply of sand; construction of coastal defences; sand compaction caused by vehicles and trampling.	Overgrazing, and erosion. Changes in management
Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220]	Overgrazing; extractive industries; recreational activities and improved access	Erosion, overgrazing and recreation.
Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (Androsacetalia alpinae and Galeopsietalia ladani) [8110]	Overgrazing; extractive industries; recreational activities and improved access.	Erosion, overgrazing and recreation
Species-rich Nardus grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe) [6230]	Forestry planting and agricultural improvements are ongoing and causing habitat loss, along with succession to heath and scrub.	Land use management activities
Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]	Erosion; grazing; recreational pressures; development of golf courses and housing; dumping; cutting of peat; coastal protection works; climate change	Coastal development. Erosion, over-grazing and recreation

List of all Special Conservation Interest of SPAs that have undergone Assessment including Summaries of Current Threats and Sensitivity to Effects

Special Conservation Interests	Vulnerabilities of Special Conservation Interests
Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143] Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) [A192] Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194] Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bird species are particularly vulnerable to direct disturbance due to noise and/or vibration. These effects are localised, and disturbance effects are foreseen to be low at distances beyond 2km. Direct habitat loss is a serious concern for bird species, as well as the reduction in habitat quality. Habitat degradation could occur through effects such as local enrichment due to agricultural practices or damage to habitat through activities such as trampling. Prey species diversity and availability is a key element of species conservation. Community dynamics and ecosystem functionality are complex concepts and require site specific information. The site synopsis and conservation objectives for the SPAs identified within the ZOI were used to identify any specific prey sensitivities. Availability of nesting/roosting habitat. Particularly for the Hen Harrier. Vegetation composition, structure and functionality.
Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	Direct land take is a common vulnerability to all sites; as well as significant water quality effects. The conservation objective of all SPAs designated for Wetland and Waterbirds is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat as a resource for the regularly occurring migratory waterbirds using it.