



Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown

Invasive Alien Species Action Plan

2020 - 2022

Screening Report for Appropriate  
Assessment

21<sup>st</sup> April 2021

**Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council**

**Invasive Alien Species Action Plan**

**Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment**

Document Stage	Document Version	Prepared by
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## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council intends to implement an Invasive Alien Species Action Plan (referred to hereafter as the DLR IAS Plan or IAS Plan) for Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown (DLR). DEC Ltd. have been appointed by DLR County Council to prepare a Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment for the proposed plan.

The function of this report is to identify whether or not the plan has the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites and to provide information so that DLR County Council can determine whether a Natura Impact Statement and Appropriate Assessment is required for the IAS Plan.

## 1.2 HABITATS DIRECTIVE ASSESSMENT

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires an assessment of the potential effects of a land use plan or project on one or more Natura 2000 (N2K) Sites. It is noted that a Habitats Directive Assessment (HDA) is commonly referred to as an “Appropriate Assessment” (Dodd *et al*, 2007). However “Appropriate Assessment” forms only one stage of the HDA process (all stages making up the assessment process are outlined in detail below). The EU Habitats Directive provides the legislative framework for the protection of habitats and species throughout Europe through the establishment of a network of designated conservation areas known as the N2K network. The N2K network includes sites designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), under the EU Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the EU Birds Directive. Under the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011, as amended) SACs and SPAs are referred to as European Sites. SACs are designated in areas that support habitats listed on Annex I and/or species listed on Annex II of the Habitats Directive. SPAs are designated in areas that support: 1% or more of the all-Ireland population of bird species listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive; 1% or more of the population of a migratory species; and more than 20,000 waterfowl.

Articles 6(1) & (2) of the Habitats Directive set out provisions for the conservation management of European Sites. Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of this Directive set out a series of procedural steps to test whether or not a plan or project is likely to affect a European Sites. Article 6(3) also establishes the requirement for a HDA:

*“any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the (European) site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, shall be subjected to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implication for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public”.*

Therefore, the objective of this Screening is to identify whether or not any land use measures that may be supported by the Plan will have the potential to negatively affect the Conservation Objectives of European Sites. Such a conclusion will be arrived at by assessing the implications of future land use activities that could be implemented or supported by the Plan on each European Site occurring within its zone of influence.

The HDA is underpinned by the precautionary principle. Therefore, if the risk of negative impacts to the conservation objectives of a European Site cannot be ruled out it is assumed that the potential for an adverse impact will exist. Where such uncertainties are identified during the assessment, measures will be proposed to avoid or mitigate the risk of adverse impacts occurring.

The Screening was undertaken with reference to the following guidance documents on Habitats Directive Assessments:

- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities (2009). DEHLG.
- 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 of the Provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats directive 92/43/EEC. European Commission (2001).

### 1.3 STAGES OF THE HABITATS DIRECTIVE ASSESSMENT

The European Commission (2001) Guidance has outlined a staged process for the completion of a HDA.

- Stage 1 – Screening: This stage defines the proposed plan, establishes whether the proposed plan is necessary for the conservation management of the European Site and assesses the likelihood of the plan to have a significant effect, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, upon a European Site.
- Stage 2 – Appropriate Assessment: If a plan or project is likely to have a significant effect an Appropriate Assessment must be undertaken. In this stage the impact of the plan or project to the Conservation Objectives of the European Site is assessed. The outcome of this assessment will establish whether the plan will have an adverse effect upon the integrity of the European Site.
- Stage 3 – Assessment of Alternative Solutions: If it is concluded that, subsequent to the implementation of mitigation measures, a plan has an adverse impact upon the integrity of a European Site it must be objectively concluded that no alternative solutions exist before the plan can proceed.
- Stage 4 – Where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain but imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) exist for the implementation of a plan or project an assessment of compensatory measures that will effectively offset the damage to the Natura site 2000 will be necessary.

## 2.0 SCREENING METHODOLOGY

The function of the Screening Assessment is to identify whether the Plan will have a likely significant effect on European Sites. In this context “likely” means a risk or possibility of effects occurring that **cannot** be ruled out based on objective information and “significant” means an effect that would undermine the conservation objectives of the European sites, either alone or in-combination with other plans and projects (Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR), 2021) .

The nature of the likely interactions between the Plan and the Conservation Objectives of European Sites will depend upon the:

- the ecological characteristics of the species or habitat, including their structure, function, conservation status and sensitivity to change; *and/or*
- the character, magnitude, duration, consequences and probability of the impacts arising from land use activities associated with the plan, in combination with other plans and projects.

The European Commission Guidelines (2001) outline the stages involved in undertaking a Screening assessment of a plan or project that has the potential to have likely significant effects on European Sites. The methodology adopted for the Screening of the Plan is informed by these guidelines and was undertaken in the following stages:

- A brief description of the Plan is provided and determine whether it is necessary for the conservation management of European Sites;
- Identification of European Sites occurring within the zone of influence of the Plan;
- Identification of potential likely significant effects to European Sites; and
- Identification of other plans or projects that, in combination with the Plan, have the potential to affect European Sites.

## **3.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES ACTION PLAN**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This Plan has been prepared by the Biodiversity Section of DLR County Council under the Actions of the draft DLR Biodiversity Plan 2021-2025. An overview of the new DLR IAS Plan 2021 is provided below and a detailed presentation on key elements of the plan is provided in Annex A to this report.

### **3.2 OVERVIEW OF DÚN LAOGHAIRE RATHDOWN INVASIVE SPECIES ACTION PLAN 2021**

The overall aim of the DLR IAS Plan is as follows:

*“To provide a roadmap for invasive species to be eradicated from Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown when possible; controlled when eradication is not possible; for new introductions to be prevented; and for damaged habitats to be restored”.*

Eight Objectives are identified and form the basis of this plan, these are as follows:

- Objective 1: To develop a record of invasive species within the county
- Objective 2: To prevent new introductions of IAS into DLR
- Objective 3: To prevent further spread of IAS within the county
- Objective 4: To effectively treat IAS currently present in the county
- Objective 5: To create awareness of IAS and the threats they pose, and to provide training and education for the public
- Objective 6: To minimise the impacts of IAS and restore damaged ecosystems to their previous state
- Objective 7: To create ties and cooperative relationships with other counties and agencies in order to effectively tackle IAS
- Objective 8: To consider the impact of Climate Change in relation to IAS

A set of goals and key actions are grouped around the Objectives above. These are detailed in Annex A along with the main aim and objectives to this report and are accompanied by a commentary in relation to potential environmental effects.

## **4.0 IDENTIFICATION OF EUROPEAN SITES WITHIN THE ZONE OF INFLUENCE OF THE PLAN**

In order to identify the European Sites that could be significantly affected by the implementation of the Plan an initial long-list of sites occurring within a 15km radius of the Plan area (i.e. DLR County Council) has been compiled. The establishment of a 15km buffer area surrounding the Plan area is in line with the DAHLG recommended procedures for identifying European Sites. The buffer distance of 15km was also considered sufficient to ensure all potential impacts to European Sites arising from the implementation of the Plan were taken into account (see Section 4.1 below for more information). This is based on the absence of any impact pathways (i.e. the absence of a hydrological pathway) between the Plan area and other European Sites occurring at a distance greater than 15km from the Plan area.

## **4.1 CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES OF EUROPEAN SITES**

Generic conservation objectives for all European Sites have been established by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). The generic conservation objective for the two habitats occurring within the zone of influence of the project is to maintain the favourable conservation status of these habitats. The favourable conservation status of these habitats is achieved when

- its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing, and
- 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.

The generic conservation objective for the qualifying species occurring within the zone of influence of the project is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of these species. This 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, and

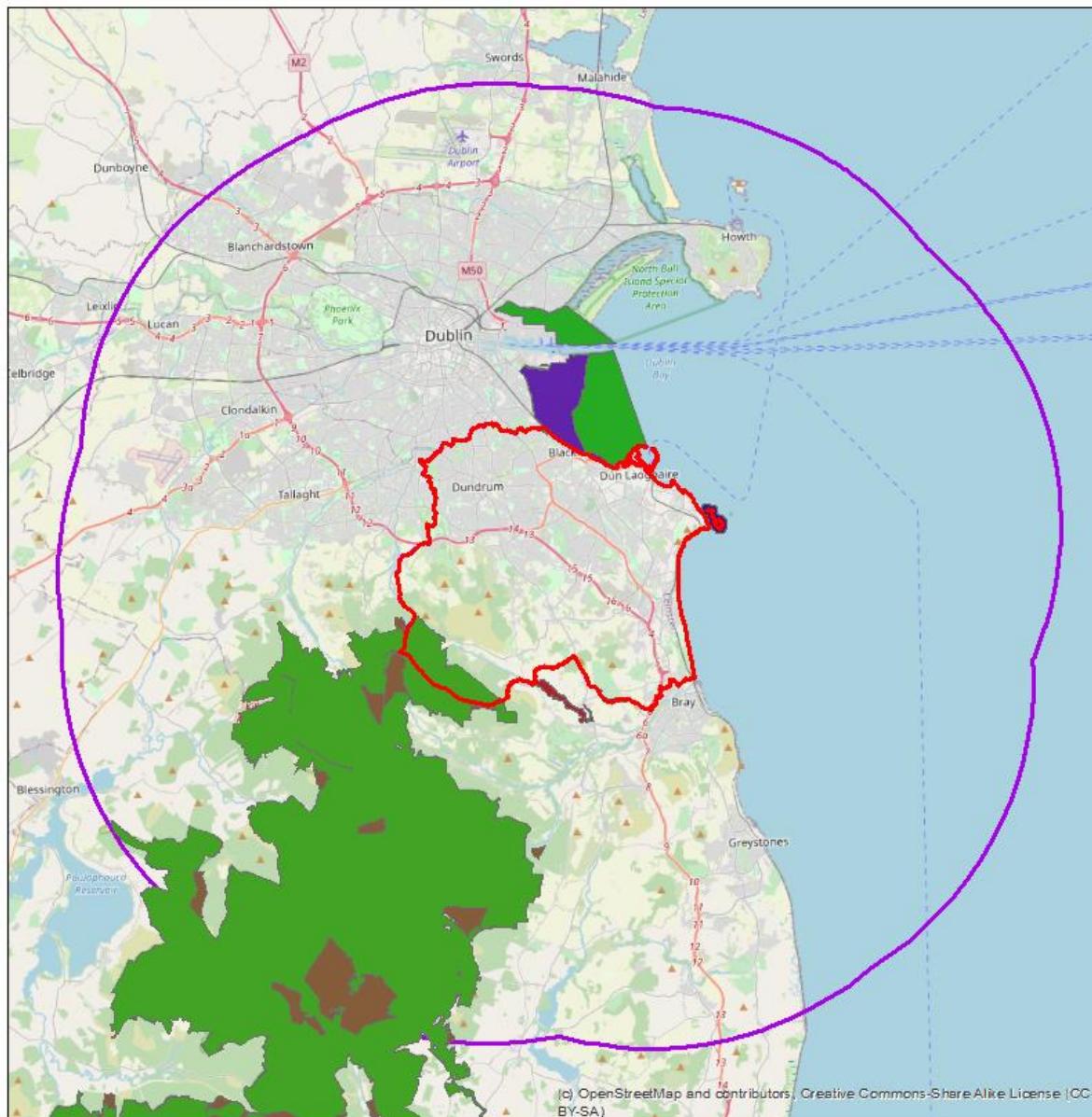
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
- there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

Site-specific conservation objectives of European Sites have been identified for many of the European Sites occurring within a 15km radius of the plan area and the details of these site-specific conservation objectives are provided by the NPWS at <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/conservation-management-planning/conservation-objectives>.

## 4.2 EUROPEAN SITES WITHIN 15KM OF THE PLAN

Table 4.1 lists all European Sites occurring within and surrounding the Plan area. A total number of seven European Sites, comprising four SACs and three SPAs occur within the Plan Area (see Figure 4.1). In addition to these European Sites a total of 13 SACs and 5 SPAs occur within a 15km radius of the Plan Area (see Figure 4.2 and Figure 4.3).

Table 4.1 lists the qualifying features of interest of the SAC and the special conservation interests of the SPAs occurring within the Plan area and the surrounding 15km buffer zone. In addition the broad habitat types and species for which each site is designated are also outlined



## DLR IAS Plan

Figure 4.1

European Sites within 15km of DLR County Council Boundary

DLR County Boundary

### SACs

- Ballyman Glen
- Knocksink Wood
- South Dublin Bay
- Wicklow Mountains

### SPAs

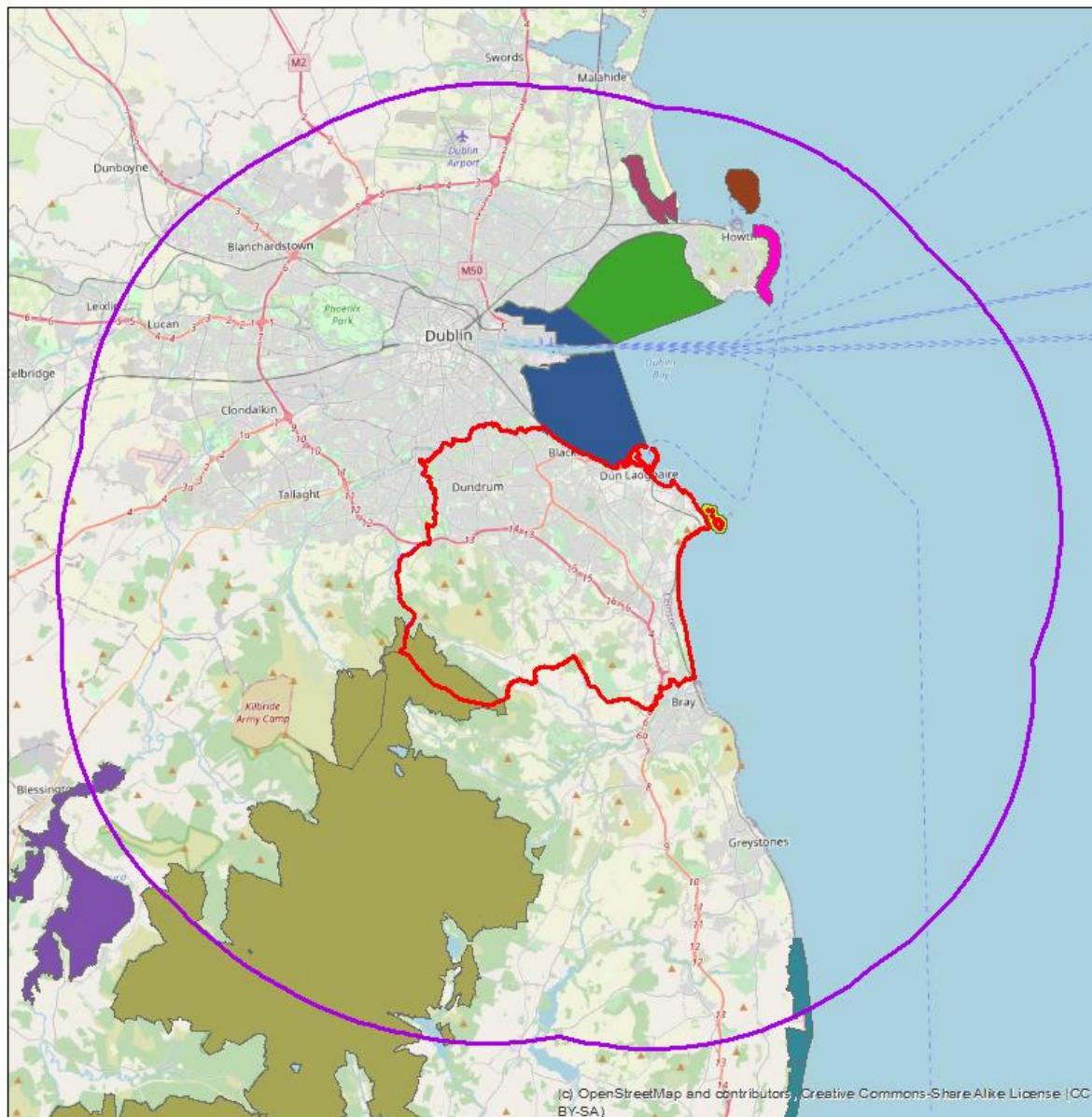
- Dalkey Islands
- S. Dublin Bay & R. Tolka Estuary
- Wicklow Mountains

15km Buffer of DLR

0 1.75 3.5 7 Km



Drawn By	PD
Date	16/03/2021
Data Source	OSM; NPWS



## DLR IAS Plan

Figure 4.2

SPAs within 15km of DLR County Council Boundary

DLR County Boundary  
15km Buffer of DLR

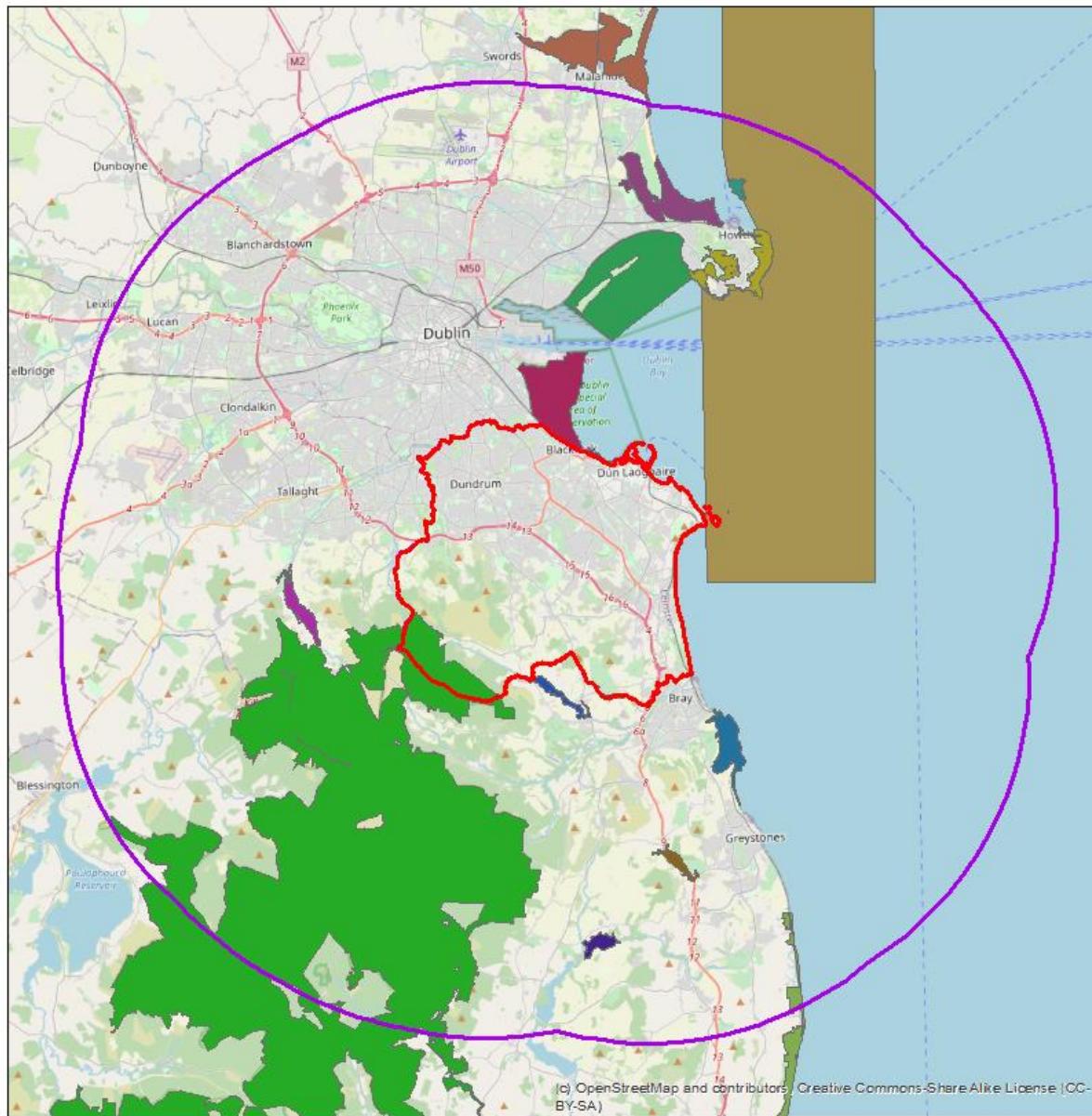
### SPAs

- Baldoyle Bay
- Dalkey Islands
- Howth Head Coast
- Ireland's Eye
- North Bull Island
- Poulaphouca Reservoir
- S. Dublin Bay & R. Tolka Estuary
- The Murrough
- Wicklow Mountains

0 1.75 3.5 7 Km



Drawn By	PD
Date	16/03/2021
Data Source	OSM; NPWS



## DLR IAS Plan

Figure 4.3

SACs within 15km of DLR County Council Boundary

DLR County Boundary  
15km Buffer of DLR

### SACs

- Baldoyle Bay SAC
- Ballyman Glen SAC
- Bray Head SAC
- Carraigower Bog SAC
- Glen Of The Downs SAC
- Glenasmole Valley SAC
- Howth Head SAC
- Ireland's Eye SAC
- Knocksink Wood SAC
- Malahide Estuary SAC
- North Dublin Bay SAC
- Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC
- South Dublin Bay SAC
- The Murrough Wetlands SAC
- Wicklow Mountains SAC

0 1.75 3.5 7 Km



Drawn By	PD
Date	16/03/2021
Data Source	OSM; NPWS

**Table 4.1: European Sites within 15km of the Plan Area**

European Sites	Distance from Plan Area	Qualifying Features of Interest/Special Conservation Interests	Broad QI/SCI Category
European Sites within the Plan Area			
Dalkey Island SPA	Within Plan area	Roseate Tern ( <i>Sterna dougallii</i> ) [A192]  Common Tern ( <i>Sterna hirundo</i> ) [A193]  Arctic Tern ( <i>Sterna paradisaea</i> ) [A194]	Breeding waterbirds
Ballyman Glen SAC	Within Plan area	Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220]  Alkaline fens [7230]	Groundwater dependent habitats
Knocksink Woods SAC	Within Plan area	Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220]  Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0]	Groundwater dependent habitats
South Dublin Bay & Tolka Estuary SPA	Within Plan area	Light-bellied Brent Goose ( <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i> ) [A046]	Wintering coastal waterbirds  Breeding Terns

		<p>Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130]</p> <p>Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137]</p> <p>Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141]</p> <p>Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143]</p> <p>Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144]</p> <p>Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149]</p> <p>Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157]</p> <p>Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162]</p> <p>Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179]</p> <p>Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) [A192]</p> <p>Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193]</p> <p>Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194]</p> <p>Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</p>	Coastal habitats
South Dublin Bay SAC	Within Plan area	<p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]</p> <p>Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]</p> <p>Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]</p>	Coastal habitats

		Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]	
Wicklow Mountain SAC	Within Plan area	<p>Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110]</p> <p>Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160]</p> <p>Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010]</p> <p>European dry heaths [4030]</p> <p>Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060]</p> <p>Calaminarian grasslands of the <i>Violetalia calaminariae</i> [6130]</p> <p>Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe) [6230]</p> <p>Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]</p> <p>Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladani</i>) [8110]</p> <p>Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210]</p> <p>Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220]</p> <p>Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0]</p>	<p>Surface water dependent habitats</p> <p>Terrestrial grassland, peatland, woodland and exposed rock habitat</p> <p>Mammals (otters)</p>

		Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355]	
Wicklow Mountain SPA	Within Plan area	Merlin (Falco columbarius)  Peregrine (Falco peregrinus)	Breeding raptor bird species
European Sites within 15km of the Plan area			
Glenasmole Valley SAC	4km to the west	Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites) [6210]  Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae) [6410]  Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220]	Terrestrial grassland and peatland habitat  Groundwater dependent habitat
North Dublin Bay SAC	km to the	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 (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae) [1330]  Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi) [1410]	Coastal habitats  Plant species (Petalwort liverwort)

		<p>Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]</p> <p>Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes) [2120]</p> <p>Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]</p> <p>Humid dune slacks [2190]</p> <p><i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (Petalwort) [1395]</p>	
North Bull Island SPA	4.5km to the north	<p>Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046]</p> <p>Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048]</p> <p>Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052]</p> <p>Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054]</p> <p>Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056]</p> <p>Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130]</p> <p>Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140]</p> <p>Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141]</p> <p>Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143]</p> <p>Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144]</p> <p>Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149]</p>	<p>Wintering coastal waterbirds</p> <p>Coastal habitats</p>

		<p>Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156]</p> <p>Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157]</p> <p>Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160]</p> <p>Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162]</p> <p>Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) [A169]</p> <p>Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179]</p> <p>Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</p>	
Baldoyle Bay SAC	10km to the north	<p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]</p> <p>Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]</p> <p>Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330]</p> <p>Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]</p>	Coastal habitats
Baldoyle Bay SPA	10km to the north	<p>Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046]</p> <p>Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048]</p> <p>Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137]</p>	<p>Wintering coastal waterbirds</p> <p>Coastal habitats</p>

		<p>Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140]</p> <p>Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141]</p> <p>Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157]</p> <p>Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</p>	
Malahide Estuary SAC	14.5km to the north	<p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]</p> <p>Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]</p> <p>Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330]</p> <p>Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]</p> <p>Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120]</p> <p>Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]</p>	Coastal Habitats
Howth Head SAC	8km to the north	<p>Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]</p> <p>European dry heaths [4030]</p>	Terrestrial exposed rock and peatland habitats

Howth Head Coast SPA	8km to the north	Kittiwake ( <i>Rissa tridactyla</i> ) [A188]	
Ireland's Eye SAC	11km to the north	Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220]  Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]	Terrestrial peatland habitats
Ireland's Eye SPA	11km to the north	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]	Terrestrial peatland habitats
Bray Head SAC	2km to the south	Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]  European dry heaths [4030]	Terrestrial exposed rock and peatland habitats
Carriggower Bog SAC	11km to the southwest	Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140]	Terrestrial peatland habitats
Glen Of The Downs SAC	7km to the south	Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0]	Terrestrial woodland habitats

Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA	km to the	Greylag Goose ( <i>Anser anser</i> ) [A043]  Lesser Black-backed Gull ( <i>Larus fuscus</i> ) [A183]	Winter waterbirds
The Murrough Wetlands SAC	11km to the south	Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]  Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220]  Atlantic salt meadows ( <i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i> ) [1330]  Mediterranean salt meadows ( <i>Juncetalia maritimi</i> ) [1410]  Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> [7210]  Alkaline fens [7230]	Groundwater dependent habitats  Groundwater/surface water dependent species
The Murrough SPA	11km to the south	Red-throated Diver ( <i>Gavia stellata</i> ) [A001]  Greylag Goose ( <i>Anser anser</i> ) [A043]  Light-bellied Brent Goose ( <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i> ) [A046]  Wigeon ( <i>Anas penelope</i> ) [A050]  Teal ( <i>Anas crecca</i> ) [A052]  Black-headed Gull ( <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i> ) [A179]	Wintering waterbirds  Breeding Terns

		Herring Gull ( <i>Larus argentatus</i> ) [A184] Little Tern ( <i>Sterna albifrons</i> ) [A195] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	
Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC	Adjacent to the Plan area	Reefs [1170] Phocoena phocoena (Harbour Porpoise) [1351]	Marine Habitat Marine mammal

## 5.0 IMPACTS TO EUROPEAN SITES

The next step of this report is to identify whether or not the plan has the potential to damage, disturb or result in the loss of qualifying habitat or qualifying species of European Site and undermine the conservation objectives of the European Sites listed in Table 4.1 above.

Table 5.1 identifies the aims, objectives and actions of the plan and evaluates the potential for each to result in likely significant effects to European Sites. Where objectives and actions have the potential to result in positive implications for European Sites, such implications are recognised in Table 5.1.

**Table 5.1: Evaluation of the Aims, Objectives and Actions of the DLR IAS Plan**

Overall Aim, Objectives, Goals and Actions under DLR IAS Plan	Examination of Likely Significant Effects
<p><b>Aim:</b> <i>The overall aim of this Action Plan is to provide a roadmap for invasive species to be eradicated from Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown when possible; controlled when eradication is not possible; for new introductions to be prevented; and for damaged habitats to be restored.</i></p>	
<p><b>Objectives:</b> The following eight objectives are identified in this IAS Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Objective 1: To develop a record of invasive species within the county</li><li>• Objective 2: To prevent new introductions of IAS into Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown</li><li>• Objective 3: To prevent further spread of IAS within the county</li><li>• Objective 4: To effectively treat IAS currently present in the county</li></ul>	<p>The development of a record of invasive species in the county will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.</p> <p>The aim of this objectives is compatible with the conservation objectives of European Sites and will not have the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.</p> <p>The aim of this objectives is compatible with the conservation objectives of European Sites and will not have the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.</p> <p>The effective treatment of IAS within the county will have the potential to contribute to the conservation objectives of European Sites and will not have the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Objective 5: To create awareness of IAS and the threats they pose, and to provide training and education for the public</li><li>• Objective 6: To minimise the impacts of IAS and restore damaged ecosystems to their previous state</li><li>• Objective 7: To create ties and cooperative relationships with other counties and agencies in order to effectively tackle IAS</li><li>• Objective 8: To consider the impact of Climate Change in relation to IAS</li></ul>	<p>The creation of awareness will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.</p> <p>The aim of this objectives is compatible with the conservation objectives of European Sites and will not have the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.</p> <p>The creation of ties and cooperative relationships with other counties and agencies in order to effectively tackle IAS will have the potential to contribute to the conservation objectives of European Sites and will not have the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.</p> <p>The consideration of climate change in relation to IAS will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.</p>
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#### Goal A: Recording and Prioritising Invasive Alien Species

<b>A1</b> Record the known locations of IAS throughout the county on the National Biodiversity Data Centre portal via the desktop invasive recording form or the smartphone ‘Biodiversity’ App	The recording of invasive species in the county on the NBDC portal will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.
<b>A2</b> Encourage use of ‘Report Invasive’ or ‘Biodiversity’ applications among Council staff. Staff will input the findings into the app	The use of such tools to record invasive species in the county will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites. It will have the potential to contribute to the elimination of the threats and pressures posed by IAS to native flora and fauna and habitats in the county as well as those occurring within European Sites. This action has the potential to result in positive effects for European Sites.
<b>A3</b> Establish a link from the DLR website to the National Biodiversity Data Centre Mapping feature for the county IAS records	The establishment of such a web link will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.

<p><b>A4</b> Prioritise species, sites and infestations for treatment based on a matrix combining the risks they pose in their current environment and the likelihood of achieving eradication or control</p>	<p>The provision of a prioritisation matrix will facilitate the eradication of high risk infestations within the county. This will have the potential to eliminate the threat and pressure posed by IAS to native flora and fauna and habitats in the county as well as those occurring within European Sites. This action has the potential to result in positive effects for European Sites.</p>
<p><b>A5</b> Identify a flagship species that is not yet well established in the DLR area that can be targeted for complete eradication as a means of engaging public and media interest in the IAS action plan, e.g. American Skunk Cabbage or Giant Hogweed</p>	<p>The eradication of flagship species not yet well established within the county will have the potential to contribute to the conservation objectives of European Sites and will not have the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.</p>
<p><b>A6</b> Climate Proofing our IAS Plan: Record and report species increasing in spread across the county as a result of climate change and also the arrival of new species in collaboration with the National Biodiversity Database Centre</p>	<p>The recording of invasive species in the county as a result of climate change will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.</p>
<b>Goal B: Preventing our activities causing spread of IAS</b>	
<p><b>B1</b> Provide Biosecurity training for council field staff, amenity managers and other key personnel to provide them with the knowledge to protect the areas in which they work</p>	<p>The provision of biosecurity training will not result in land use activities that have the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites. The provision of such training will have the potential to contribute to the conservation objectives of European Sites, through an increased awareness of field staff and the methods required to avoid or minimise the spread of IAS.</p>
<p><b>B2</b> Establish Biosecurity cleaning station at DLR Harbour and at DLR water-based events. Promote the use of cleaning stations to other event organisers outside of DLR County Council Provide a Biosecurity Support Pack for event organisers</p>	<p>The implementation of these measures aim to avoid and minimise the spread of IAS during such events. These measures well have the to contribute to the conservation objectives of European Sites through the avoidance of IAS spread within European Sites and throughout the county.</p>

<p><b>B3</b> Conduct public awareness campaigns on the impacts of IAS and the importance of biosecurity, e.g., require event organisers to include an IAS awareness campaign as part of their contracts</p>	<p>The provision of public awareness campaigns will not result in land use activities that have the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites. The provision of such campaigns will have the potential to contribute to the conservation objectives of European Sites, through an increased awareness of the public, event organisers etc. of IAS, their spread and impact on native flora and fauna and ecosystems.</p>
<p><b>B4</b> Establish new planning standard that means that new developments, plans and projects must submit an IAS survey as part of their planning application and a management plan where relevant</p>	<p>The requirement of this standard will not result in land use activities that have the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites but will have the potential to contribute to the conservation objectives of European Sites, through the identification of IAS and the avoidance of their spread prior to any development works.</p>
<p><b>B5</b> Produce a best-practice biosecurity document for outdoor staff, field workers and contractors, developers, etc. to follow while on-site, e.g., Construction Industry Invasive Species Good Housekeeping Plan</p>	<p>The provision of a best-practice document will not result in land use activities that have the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites. The provision of such best-practice standards will have the potential to contribute to the conservation objectives of European Sites, through better management of IAS and their eradication in the county.</p>

### **GOAL C: Early Detection, Rapid Response for new IAS**

<p><b>C1</b> Provide invasive Species Identification training for council field staff, amenity managers and other key personnel. Training to include section on the importance of reporting sightings and details of how to report, treat, dispose of (where relevant) and monitor</p>	<p>The provision of identification training will not result in will not result in land use activities that have the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites. The provision of such training will have the potential to contribute to the conservation objectives of European Sites, through better management of IAS and their eradication in the county.</p>
<p><b>C2</b> Place an Invasive Species Section on the DLR website to include an Invasive Species Page with ID information and advice on treatment for home owners/landowners, etc.</p>	<p>This objective will not result in will not result in land use activities that have the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites. The provision of such ID information will have the potential to contribute to the conservation objectives of European Sites, through increased awareness, education and identification of IAS and their distribution in the county, which will in turn contribute to their eradication in the county.</p>

<p><b>C3</b> Continue involvement in Invasive Species Week – Provide information to the public with list of IAS recorded in DLR County and information on how to report suspected IAS to NBDC. Provide IAS identification training for the public</p>	<p>This objective will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites. The provision of such information will have the potential to contribute to the conservation objectives of European Sites, through an improved understanding of the distribution of IAS in the county, which will in turn contribute to their eradication in the county.</p>
<p><b>C4</b> Maintain contact with National Biodiversity Data Centre so DLR will be alerted and will take immediate action when alerted on any new invasive species in their area</p>	<p>This objective will have the potential to contribute to the conservation objectives of European Sites through the timely eradication of IAS within the County.</p>
<p><b>C5</b> Keep regular check on the National Biodiversity Data Centre Invasive Species Alerts to monitor new invasive species introductions nationally, including any changes as a result of Climate Change</p>	<p>This objective will have the potential to contribute to the conservation objectives of European Sites through the timely eradication of IAS within the County.</p>
<p><b>C6</b> Establish and monitor an Early Warning System through the coordination of Actions C1 to C5</p>	<p>This objective will have the potential to contribute to the conservation objectives of European Sites through the timely eradication of IAS within the County.</p>
<p><b>C7</b> Establish Rapid Response procedures for newly recorded species or infestations. Rapid Response procedures should be based on best-practice biosecurity and control for the species or taxon concerned</p>	<p>This objective will have the potential to contribute to the conservation objectives of European Sites through the timely eradication of IAS within the County.</p>

#### GOAL D: Minimising the impacts of IAS

<p><b>D1</b> Identify the most prevalent invasive species in DLR and the ecosystem types and ecosystem services most at risk from these species</p>	<p>This objective will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites. The identification of ecosystems most at risk will have the potential to contribute to the conservation objectives of European Sites, particularly if ecosystems that are identified as being most at risk are also those that are supported by European Sites.</p>
<p><b>D1.1</b> Identify the significant benefits to be gained economically from implementing control measures</p>	<p>This objective will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.</p>

<b>D1.2</b> Identify the ecosystem service benefits that will be realised and the benefits in turn to the people and county of DLR	This objective will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.
<b>D2</b> Minimise the impacts of IAS in Natura 2000 sites and other important nature conservation sites within DLR	The aim of this objective is directly connected to the conservation objectives of European Sites and its achievement will have the potential to result in positive impacts for the conservation status of European Sites.
<b>D2.1</b> Identify IAS that occur within the Natura 2000 site network and other important protected nature conservation sites within DLR and assign priority in accordance with Action A4	The aim of this objective is directly connected to the conservation objectives of European Sites and its achievement will have the potential to result in positive impacts for the conservation status of European Sites.
<b>D2.2</b> Engage with the National Parks and Wildlife Service to establish a joint effort policy for tackling IAS within Natura 2000 sites and important nature conservation sites	The aim of this objective is directly connected to the conservation objectives of European Sites and its achievement will have the potential to result in positive impacts for the conservation status of European Sites.
<b>D2.3</b> Carry out treatments of priority infestations on DLR lands	This objective aims to eradicate IAS infestations which in turn will contribute to reducing the spread of such species in the county. This will have the potential to result in positive effects for ecosystems within the county including those supported by European Sites.
<b>D2.4</b> Identify and engage with landowners where priority invasive species are present	This objective will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.
<b>D2.5</b> Continue public engagement with Invasive Species Week by offering ID workshops and funding information for community initiatives at important nature conservation sites	The provision of identification training workshops will not result in land use activities that have the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites. The provision of such training will have the potential to contribute to the conservation objectives of European Sites, through better management of IAS and their eradication in the county.
<b>D3</b> Minimise the impacts of IAS along the roadsides	This objective will contribute to reducing the spread of such species in the county. This will have the potential to result in positive effects for ecosystems within the county including those supported by European Sites.
<b>D3.1</b> Identify IAS along roadsides using the master IAS county map	This objective will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.

<b>D3.2</b> Access funding through the Transport Infrastructure Ireland IAPS Framework to treat IAS growing along the National Road network	This objective will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.
<b>D3.3</b> Develop a plan to treat all Knotweeds, Giant Hogweed and Giant Rhubarb growing along regional and byroads, and tender for contractors to carry out the treatments	The development of such a plan will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.
<b>D3.4</b> Engage with landowners who have IAS growing on their land by roadsides to enable full and effective treatment of infestations	This objective will contribute to reducing the spread of such species in the county. This will have the potential to result in positive effects for ecosystems within the county including those supported by European Sites.
<b>D4</b> Minimise the impacts of IAS in DLR's amenity areas	This objective will contribute to reducing the spread of such species in the county. This will have the potential to result in positive effects for ecosystems within the county including those supported by European Sites.
<b>D4.1</b> Identify IAS causing problems within amenity areas	This objective will contribute to reducing the spread of such species in the county. This will have the potential to result in positive effects for ecosystems within the county including those supported by European Sites.
<b>D4.2</b> Prioritise areas for treatment based on the negative impact on public enjoyment and in accordance with Action A4	This action will reduce the prevalence of IAS in the county with positive impacts for the county's ecosystems, including those supported by European Sites.
<b>D4.3</b> Carry out treatment of priority areas and establish a practical maintenance regime to prevent re-establishment	This action will reduce the prevalence of IAS in the county with positive impacts for the county's ecosystems, including those supported by European Sites.
<b>D4.4</b> Educate the public on the dangers of introducing aquarium or terrarium contents/garden waste, etc. into public areas through appropriate signage and/or information leaflets at local pet shops and on website	The provision of such public education will not result in land use activities that have the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites, but will have the potential to contribute to the conservation objectives of European Sites, through an increased awareness of the dangers posed by the inappropriate distribution of IAS, their subsequent spread and impact on native flora and fauna and ecosystems.
<b>D5</b> Minimise the impact of IAS on DLR's river systems	This objective will contribute to reducing the spread of such species in the county. This will have the potential to result in positive effects for ecosystems within the county including those supported by European Sites.

<b>D5.1</b> Identify IAS growing in riparian habitats and assign priority in accordance with Action A4	This action will reduce the prevalence of IAS in the county with positive impacts for the county's ecosystems, including those supported by European Sites.
<b>D5.2</b> Carry out treatment of priority areas on DLR land	This action will reduce the prevalence of IAS in the county with positive impacts for the county's ecosystems, including those supported by European Sites.
<b>D5.3</b> Encourage community and local action group involvement in the control of Himalayan Balsam and other select species	This action will have the potential to contribute to a reduction in the distribution of Himalayan Balsam in the county with positive impacts for the county's ecosystems, including those supported by European Sites.
<b>D6</b> Minimise the impact of IAS on DLR's marine habitats	
<b>D6.1</b> Identify IAS growing in DLR's marine and coastal habitats and assign priority in accordance with Action A4	This objective will contribute to reducing the spread of such species in the county. This will have the potential to result in positive effects for ecosystems within the county including those supported by European Sites.
<b>D6.2</b> Begin treatment of priority IAS where practical on terrestrial areas	This objective will contribute to reducing the spread of such species in the county. This will have the potential to result in positive effects for ecosystems within the county including those supported by European Sites.
<b>D6.3</b> Hold public information day when opening DLR Harbour Biosecurity cleaning station (per Action B3) to promote 'Check, Clean, Dry' initiative	The implementation of this measure aim to avoid and minimise the spread of IAS through the dissemination of training and inculcation protective protocols for people involved in marine activities. These measures well have the to contribute to the conservation objectives of European Sites through the avoidance of IAS spread within European Sites and throughout the county.
<b>D6.4</b> Erect signage promoting 'Check, Clean, Dry' at busy recreation areas	This objective will contribute to inculcating a protective behavioural protocol for people using recreational areas.
<b>D6.5</b> Ensure marine biosecurity is planned into the structure of ongoing operations and management at all levels at DLR harbour	This objective will contribute to the avoiding the spread of IAS in the county and will in turn have the potential to contribute to the conservation objectives of European Sites.
<b>GOAL E: Effective treatment of IAS</b>	

<b>E1</b> Provide training and CPD on best-practice treatments for all staff involved in managing or carrying out IAS treatments, including training updates in response to any changes as a result of Climate Change, e.g. new species. If using contractors, staff to ensure that only approved contractors are used	The provision of training and CPD on best-practice treatment will not result in land use activities that have the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites. The provision of such best-practice training will have the potential to contribute to the conservation objectives of European Sites, through better management of IAS and their eradication in the county.
<b>E2</b> Create a treatment/management calendar for IAS that details ideal times of year for treatment to occur	This objective will have the potential to contribute to the eradication of IAS and the avoidance of further spread within the county through a best-practice approach to treatment and eradication. The implementation of this objective has the potential to contribute to a reduction in IAS in the county and in European Sites.
<b>E3</b> Research into non-chemical treatments of IAS	The implementation of this objective will have the potential to result in positive impacts for ecosystems, including those supported by European Sites.
<b>E4</b> Agree on and establish a DLR county policy on the use of chemical versus non-chemical treatments of IAS	The implementation of this objective will have the potential to result in positive impacts for ecosystems, including those supported by European Sites, by establishing the best approach to IAS treatment.
<b>E5</b> Continue treatment of Grey Squirrel populations	This objective has the potential to result in positive impacts to woodland habitats occurring within the county and supported by European Sites within the county.

#### GOAL F: Preventing new introductions or re-establishment of IAS

<b>F1</b> Identify likely pathways for IAS introductions	The identification of likely pathways for the spread of IAS will not result in land use activities that have the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites. This objective will have the potential to result in positive effects for the conservation objectives of European Sites by identifying pathways for the spread of IAS within these sites and providing the basis upon which preventative action can be targeted.
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<b>F2</b> Monitor likely pathways for IAS introductions	The identification of likely pathways for the spread of IAS will not result in land use activities that have the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites. This objective will have the potential to result in positive effects for the conservation objectives of European Sites by identifying pathways for the spread of IAS within these sites and providing the basis upon which preventative action can be targeted.
<b>F3</b> Identify and implement specific actions that can be taken to minimise the threat posed by each identified pathway	The implementation of such actions will have the potential to minimise and/or eliminate the potential for the spread of IAS within European Sites, which will in turn have the potential to result in positive impacts for European Sites.
<b>F4</b> Monitor previously treated areas for signs of re-establishment as an integral part of the standard treatment programme	This action provides a commitment to continued monitoring of treated areas to ensure no re-infestation occurs. This will have the potential to result in a positive effect for habitats, flora and fauna supported by European Sites and contribute to the conservation objectives of European Sites.
<b>F5</b> Restore habitats wherever possible, following IAS eradication, to minimise invasion by other IAS	This action will have the potential to contribute to the conservation objectives of European Sites.
<b>F6</b> Establish strong working relationships with other partners and agencies to tackle invasive species where their pathways cross administrative boundaries	This action recognises the transboundary pathways for IAS spread and its implementation will contribute to minimising and eliminating the spread of IAS within and outside the county. This objective has the potential to contribute to the conservation objectives of European Sites.
<b>F7</b> Identifying new invasive species occurring as a result of climate change or spread of existing IAS due to climate change and their pathways	The recording of invasive species and/or their spread in the county as a result of climate change will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites. Such recording will provide information that will have the potential to contribute to the positive management of European Sites.
<b>GOAL G: Overall management and implementation of IAS Action Plan</b>	

<p><b>G1</b> Elect one member of each Council Section to manage the actions for the section, including invasive surveys and treatment contracts for their section</p>	The nomination of one elected member of each Council Section to manage the sections actions with respect to IAS will not involve land use activities with the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites. This objective will provide for the effective management of IAS within each Section so that IAS related activities, such as identification, pathways, treatment, can be shared effectively between sections. This will provide a structure for the effective management of IAS that will in turn have positive impacts for ecosystems within the county, including those occurring within European Sites.
<p><b>G2</b> Hold annual meetings between the Council Section Representative to report on progress and results</p>	The provision of annual meeting between sections will contribute to the effective management of IAS within each Section so that IAS related activities, such as identification, pathways, treatment, can be shared effectively between sections. This will provide a structure for the effective management of IAS that will in turn have positive impacts for ecosystems within the county, including those occurring within European Sites.
<p><b>G3</b> Maintain an ongoing record of actions taken and quantify their effectiveness to inform future management efforts</p>	The maintenance of such a record will contribute to the effective management of IAS within each Section so that IAS related activities, such as identification, pathways, treatment, can be shared effectively between sections. This will provide a structure for the effective management of IAS that will in turn have positive impacts for ecosystems within the county, including those occurring within European Sites.
<p><b>G4</b> Oversee actions G1 to G3</p>	Oversight of these actions will contribute to the effective management of IAS within each Section so that IAS related activities, such as identification, pathways, treatment, can be shared effectively between sections. This will provide a structure for the effective management of IAS that will in turn have positive impacts for ecosystems within the county, including those occurring within European Sites.

## **5.1 EXAMINATION OF THE PLAN'S POTENTIAL TO RESULT IN NEGATIVE IMPACTS TO EUROPEAN SITES WITHIN 15KM OF THE PLAN AREA**

European Sites and their associated qualifying features and associated conservation objectives are likely to be compromised by the plan only where the actions of the plan have the potential to result in land use activities than could result in damage or disturbance to qualifying habitat and qualifying species and the processes that they rely upon to maintain their favourable conservation status. As identified in Section 5.1 above the Plan will not result in the implementation of land use activities that will have the potential to result in negative impacts to European Sites and their conservation objectives. On the contrary all aims, objectives and actions of the plan have been identified as having the potential to result in neutral to positive implications for European Sites and their conservation status.

The potential positive implications of the plan are also reinforced when reviewed against the current threat posed by non-native invasive species to a number of the European Sites occurring within and adjacent to the Plan area. For instance, the presence of non-native invasive species has been documented by the NPWS as a risk to the following European Sites:

Knocksink Woods SAC;

Wicklow Mountains SAC

Baldoyle Bay SAC;

Baldoyle Bay SPA;

Howth Head SAC;

North Dublin Bay SAC;

Glen of the Downs SAC;

Glenasmole Valley SAC.

The implementation of the IAS Plan will have the potential to contribute to the future conservation management of Knocksink Wood SAC and Wicklow Mountains SAC, both of which occur within the county boundary. The measures outlined in the IAS Plan for collaboration with other counties and agencies to effectively tackle the spread IAS will also have the potential to contribute to the conservation management of the other European Sites listed above that occur within the wider area surrounding the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown county boundary.

## **5.2 IN-COMBINATION EFFECTS WITH OTHER PLANS & PROJECTS**

As part of the Habitats Directive Article 6(3) assessment process consideration must be given to the potential for the Plan to combine with other plans or projects to result in cumulative negative effects to European Sites. The IAS Plan has been prepared in order to tackle the spread and eradication of IAS infestations within DLR. The IAS Plan will contribute to positive environmental and biodiversity management through measures that aim to stop the spread of IAS and ultimately eradicate existing infestations within the county. The implementation of the plan will have the potential to result in a positive effect for European Sites within and surrounding the county and will not have the potential to combine with other plans to result in cumulative negative effects to European Sites.

## **6.0 SCREENING CONCLUSION**

The Screening of the DLR IAS Plan as set out above shows that the plan will not result in land use activities that have the potential to result in negative impacts to the qualifying features of interest of European Sites occurring within or surrounding the plan area and will not have the potential to compromise the achievement of the conservation objective of these European Sites. The examination of the plan has found that the plan will have the potential to contribute to the conservation management of European Sites within and surrounding the plan area and will thus have positive implications for the conservation objectives of these European Site.

In light of the findings of this report it is the considered view of the authors of this Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment that it can be concluded by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council that the Plan is not likely, alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, to have a significant effect on any European Sites in view of their Conservation Objectives and

on the basis of best scientific evidence and there is no reasonable scientific doubt as to that conclusion.

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