Deansgrange Cycle Scheme

EIA & AA Screening Report

Prepared on behalf of

Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council

April 2022

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Comhairle Contae County Council

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1 Introduction

This report provides an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and an Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report for a project called the Deansgrange Cycle Scheme, which provides for cycle lanes and pedestrian facilities and junction improvements along the linear project area.

The scheme covers an approximate length of approx. 1km, proceeding along a section of Kill Lane, providing access to and from the Clonkeen Park, before travelling along the Deansgrange Road, terminating south of the Deansgrange Road/Brookville Park signalised junction. The extents of the scheme are highlighted red on Figure 2.1.

The overall scheme aims to deliver a high quality, safe walking and cycling route that will meet the current school and commuting demand within the Deansgrange area for all cycle users. The scheme will provide an important connection between two of the proposed routes within the Active School Travel project, the "Park to Park" route and the "Mountains to Metals" route, as illustrated in Figure 1.1 below.

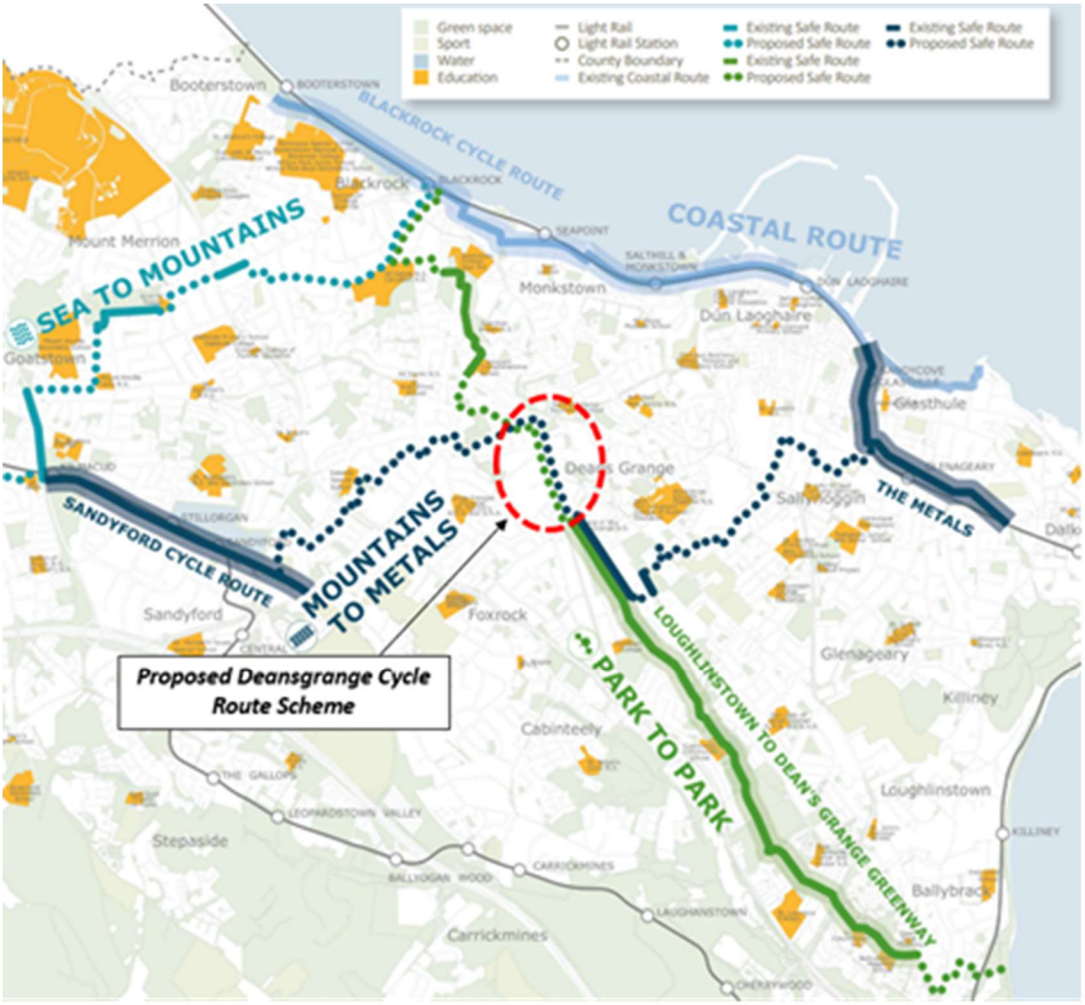


Figure 1.1: DLRCC Active School Travel Routes

The application is being pursued by Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council. The process to bring the scheme forward must have regard to the conclusions of the EIA Screening and AA Screening Report which is included in the Appendix of this document. This shall determine whether the appropriate process is a Part 8 (of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 to 2021) where the consenting authority is the Council or an application is made to An Bord Pleanála.

The EIA screening assesses the proposed scheme with reference to the relevant EIA legislation including the EIA Directive, Planning and Development Regulations, the Roads Act and Regulations. The methodology has particular regard to the '3-Step' assessment process set out in the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Practice Note PN02 (June 2021). Regard is also had to European and National guidance documents.

The consideration of potential impacts covers all significant direct, indirect and secondary impacts as relevant having regard to the criteria for determining whether development listed in part 2 of schedule 5 should be subject to an environmental impact assessment under Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 to 2021.

- Characteristics of the proposed development.
- Location of the proposed development.
- Characteristics of potential impacts.

Pursuant to Article 81(ca) of the Regulations 2001, a Planning Authority must indicate its conclusion under article 120(1)(b)(i) (a preliminary examination) or screening determination under article 120(1B)(b)(i) in the public notices that form part of a Part 8 process.

Where a local authority proposes to carry out a subthreshold development, the authority shall carry out a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the development.

Where the local authority concludes, based on such preliminary examination, that—

(i) there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall conclude that an EIA is not required,

(ii) there is significant and realistic doubt about the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, the information specified in Schedule 7A for the purposes of a screening determination, or

(iii) there is a real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall— (I) conclude that the development would be likely to have such effects, and (II) prepare, or cause to be prepared, an EIAR in respect of the development.

This EIA Screening Report is structured to assess the relevant project and environmental criteria as follows:

- Description of Site and surrounding area
- Description of the proposed development

- The legislative basis for EIA
- Mandatory Threshold Review
- Preliminary Screening Examination
- Screening determination
- Conclusions

The AA Screening is included as a standalone report in Appendix A.

1.1 Qualification

This EIA Screening Report has been prepared by Richard Hamilton, BA MSc P.Grad EMAE, MIPI MRTPI. Richard is a Chartered Town Planner with 25 years experience in public and private sectors in Ireland including the preparation of EIA and EIA Screening for infrastructure, commercial and residential development projects. He has a Post Graduate Diploma in Environmental Monitoring Assessment and Engineering (EMAE) from Trinity College Dublin.

2 Site and Location

2.1 Description of the Site and Surrounding Area

The proposed scheme covers an approximate length of approx. 1km, proceeds along a section of Kill Lane, providing access to and from the Clonkeen Park, before travelling along the Deansgrange Road, terminating south of the Deansgrange Road/Brookville Park signalised junction. The extents of the scheme are highlighted red on Figure 2.1.

The overall scheme aims to deliver a high quality, safe walking and cycling route that will meet the current school and commuting demand within the Deansgrange area for all cycle users. The scheme will provide an important connection between two of the proposed routes within the Active School Travel project, the "Park to Park" route and the "Mountains to Metals" route. The location of the subject junctions and the extent of the scheme is illustrated in Figure 2.1 below.

The proposed scheme includes:

- Provision of segregated cycle tracks
- Junction improvements along the alignment including traffic signal upgrades/installation

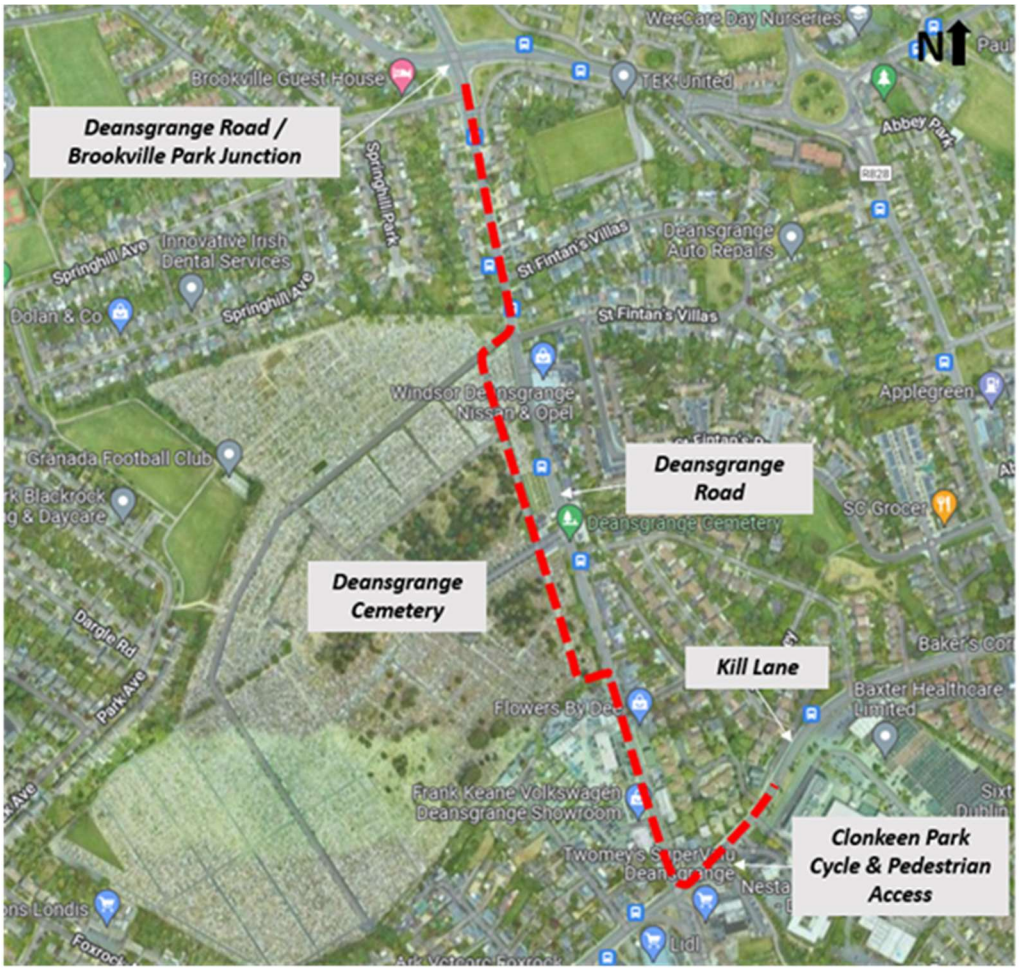


Figure 2.1: Scheme location (source: DBFL Consulting engineers*)*

The Deansgrange area is an intersectional point at the heart of the county, with Dún Laoghaire to the east, Blackrock to the north and Sandyford/ Stillorgan to the west. Clonkeen Road to the south links to Cornelscourt, Foxrock and Shankill. Kill Lane is also an important bus corridor.

The surrounding area is characterised by suburban housing estates (including St. Fintan's and Springhill) and Deansgrange Cemetery. There are also some commercial premises, sports facilities, a church (Kill o' the Grange Anglican Church) and a school (Kill o' The Grange National School).

The route traverses through generally suburban residential areas, but there a wide range of activities and land uses. The route provides access a large number of primary and secondary schools, as well as services, amenities and recreational facilities. Geodirectory mapping of the area through which the route traverses illustrates is shown in Figure 2.2 below.

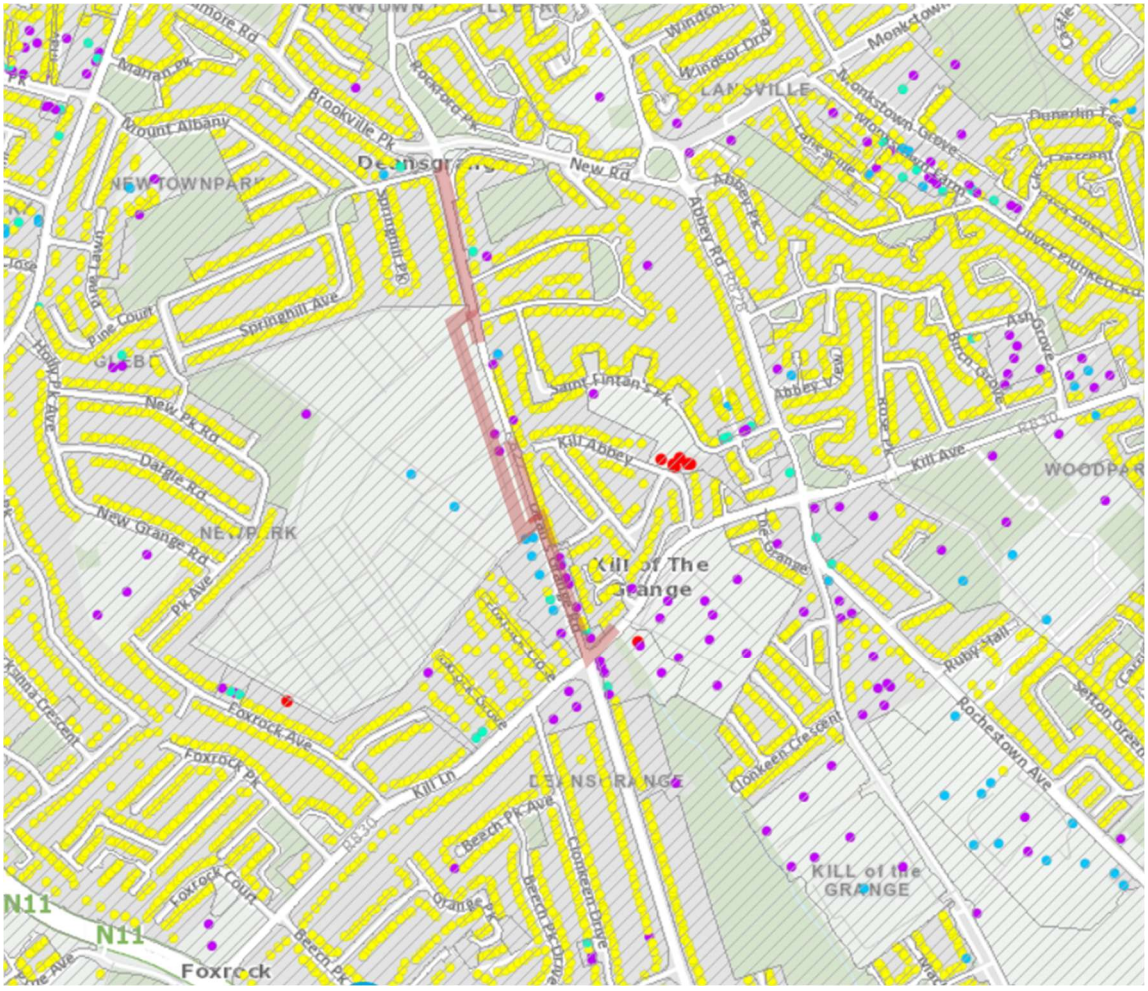


Figure 2.2 Land use in the vicinity of the project (Source: Geodirectory - Myplan.ie)

At the southern end of the route, Deansgrange is a busy commercial and neigbhourhood retail centre (purple dots), including Deansgrange Business Park, Twomeys Supervalu, Lidl, The Grange pub, Kill o the Grange National School and Gaescoil Laighean. The southern end of the route on Deansgrange Road is characterised by a parade of small commercial units on the east side of the road and two large car dealerships either side of the road. Deansgrange cemetery bounds the road for c.400m on the western side and the eastern side by residential properties. At the

northern end of the route near the junction with Brookvale Road, the route is generally bounded by residential properties on both sides of the road.

A mixed-use development comprising 151 apartments and a number of commercial units was granted permission alongside Deansgrange Road in 2020 under the Strategic Housing Development scheme (planning reference ABP307332). The development is currently under construction abuts Deansgrange cemetery to the south.

Population

The Draft County Development 2022-2028 Core Strategy reflects that population change in the County has been strong and is projected to continue to grow subject to strong market demand.

> *DLR has experienced a significant reversal in population growth trends from a County that was experiencing a period of population stagnation through the noughties, to a County that has experienced consistent and strong population growth over the last 10 to 15 years. The 2016 Census records indicate that DLR has a population of c.218,000 people which comprises an increase of c. 24,000 people over the two intercensal periods from 2006 to 2016.*
>
> *This in in stark contrast to the previous 10-year period between 1996 and 2006 which saw an increase of only c. 4,000 people. This acceleration in population growth is further emphasised by the fact that DLR had the lowest population increase of any County in the State between the years 2002-2006, whereas in the most recent intercensal period (2011-2016) DLR had the fourth highest growth rate of all Counties in Ireland.*

Table 2.1 DLR Core Strategy –Population Projections (Source: Draft DLR CDP 2022-2028)

	2016	2026 (Low to High)	2028 (Low to High)	Total Population Growth 2016-2028	Average Annual Pop Growth 2016-2028
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown	218,000	246,750 – 252,375[1]	250,550 – 258,375 [2]	32,550 – 40,375	2,713 – 3,365

Table 2.1 above (from Table 2.5 of the Core Strategy) shows there is a variation between historical average annual growth (c. 2,400 persons per annum between 2006 and 2016) and future average annual population (c. 2,900-3,400 between 2016 to 2026 and 1,900- 3,000 between 2026 and 2031).

Table 2.2 Population change in the 4 local Electoral Divisions (Eds) from 2011 to 2016.

Electoral District	2011	2016	Change 2011-2016	% Change 2011-2016
Blackrock-Stradbrook	2,299	2,466	167	7.3
Foxrock-Deans Grange	2,434	2,446	12	0.5
Foxrock-Beechpark	1,653	1,674	21	1.3
Cabinteely-Pottery	4,833	4,988	155	3.2
	11,219	11,574	355	3.2

Table 2.2 shows population change in the 4 local Electoral Divisions (EDs) from 2011 to 2016. Figure 2.3 illustrates that patterns of population change varies along the route. As mature a

suburban area, population change in the locality has maintained a relatively stable population level of change as might be expected.

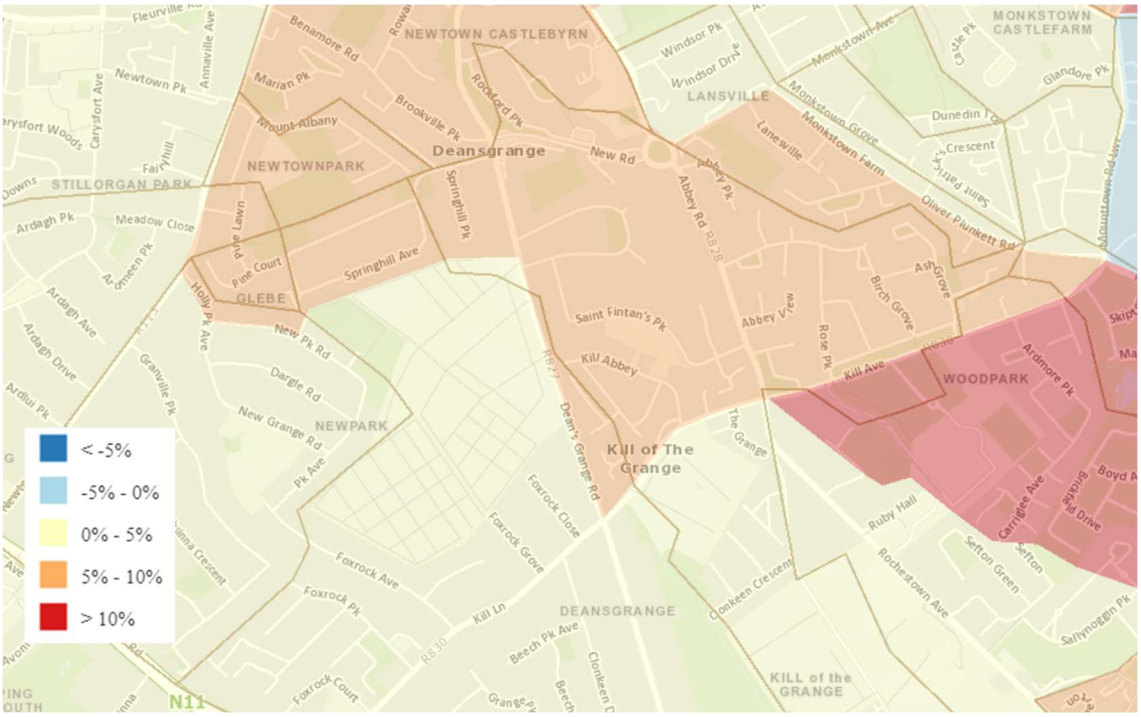


Figure 2.3: Population Change by ED (2011-2016) (Source: Myplan.ie)

Figure 2.4 Population by ED 2016 (Source: Myplan.ie)

Plate 1: Junction of Kill Lane and Deansgrange Road with Church of Ireland and Deansgrane Business Park in background

Plate 2: Deansgrange Road facing north from junction with Kill Lane

Plate 3: Main Entrance to Deansgrange Cemetery with Gate Lodge and Tea Room

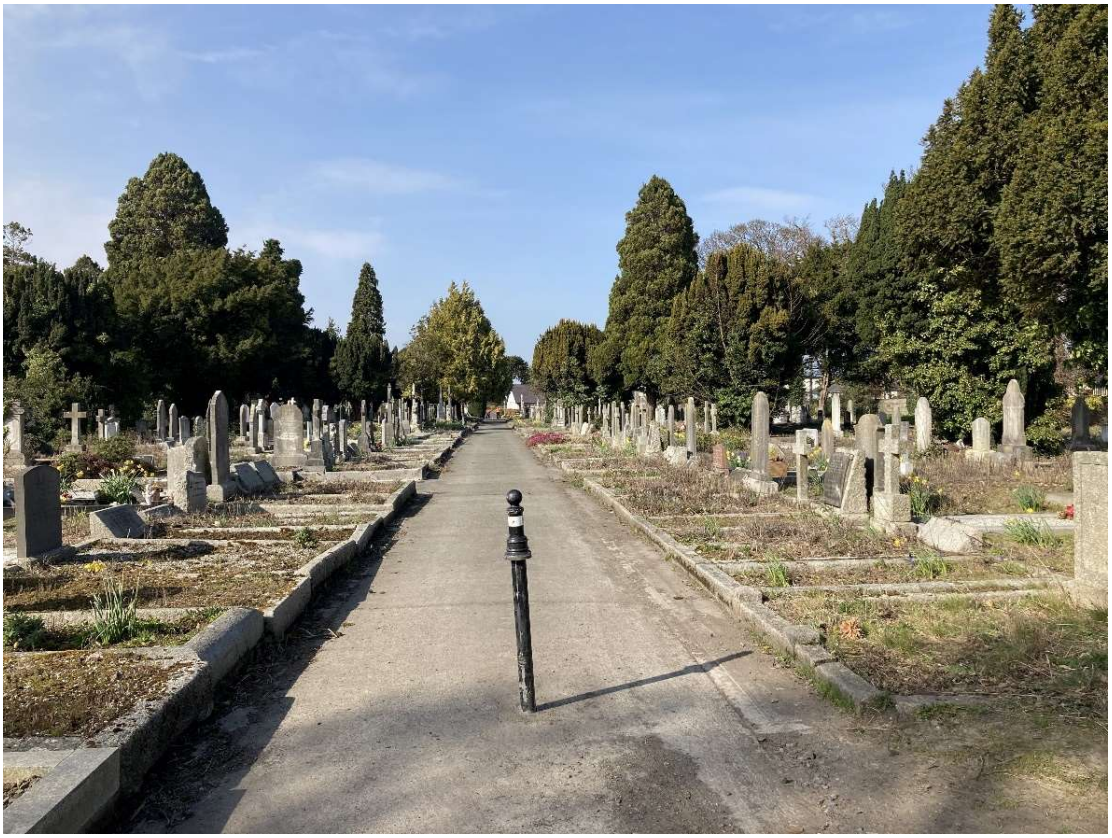


Plate 4: Internal pathway inside Deansgrange Cemetery proposed for use in cycle scheme

Plate 6: Pathway along boundary wall of cemetery facing south.

Plate 6: Deansgrange Road facing north towards Brookville Park junction

2.2 Environmental Sensitivity of the Site

Soils and geology

Based on the GeoHive ESM (Environmental Sensitivity Mapping) web resources, the Bedrock in the vicinity of the project is Caledonian Granite.

The EPA mapping indicates the majority of the site subsoil is classified as Made Ground.

Air quality

The EPA Air Zone designation is 'Zone A' 'Dublin Conurbation'. The Air Quality Index Regions indicate that Air Quality is Good.

Designated sites

There are two Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and two Special Protection Areas (SPA) located near the proposed scheme. These areas are shown in Figure 2 of the AA Screening Report:

- South Dublin Bay SAC
- Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC
- South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA
- Dalkey Islands SPA

The Dalkey Island SPA and the Rockabill to Dalkey SAC are located approximately 200m off the coast of Dalkey and 1.5km from the nearest surface water discharge point. The South Dublin Bay SAC and SPA are located off the South Dublin coast between Ringsend and Dún Laoghaire. The AA Screening Report (Appendix A) notes:

> *Indirect impacts can occur if there is a viable pathway between the source (the Scheme) and the receptor (the habitats and species for which a Natura 2000 site has been designated). The most common pathway for impacts is surface water, e.g. if a pollutant is washed into a river and carried downstream into a Natura 2000 site. Other potential pathways are groundwater, air (e.g. airborne dust or sound waves), or land (e.g. flow of liquids, vibration). The zone of effect for hydrological impacts can be several kilometres, but for air and land it is rarely more than one hundred metres. An appraisal of potential pathways to Natura 2000 sites is provided below.*
>
> *The South Dublin Bay SAC and the South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA are both located approx. 1.3 km north of the Site. There is substantial overlap between these Natura 2000 sites, so they are considered here in combination. The SAC has been designated to protect extensive sandflats and mudflats that are exposed at low tide, and the SPA has been designated to protect a range of overwintering birds that feed and roost in these tidal habitats, as well as tern species that breed in the area during summer months. There are no watercourses linking the Site with either the SAC or SPA. Groundwater would not provide a feasible pathway due to the filtration provided by 1.3 km of intervening soils. Pathways via land and air can be ruled out due to the distances involved.*
>
> *The Dalkey Islands SPA and Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC are located 4.5 and 4.8 km (respectively) from the eastern end of the Site. The SPA has been designated to protect breeding populations of common tern, roseate tern and Arctic tern on the Dalkey Islands, and*

the SAC to protect offshore reefs and harbour porpoise between Rockabill Lighthouse and the Dalkey Islands. Although there could theoretically be a surface water pathway between the Site and coastal waters via the Deansgrange Stream and coastal waters (see Figure 2), the coastal waters of Dublin Bay would dilute any waterborne pollutants to negligible levels before they could reach the SAC or SPA. Therefore, surface water pathways to both sites can be ruled out. Pathways via groundwater, land and air can be ruled out due to the distances involved.

In summary, no potential pathways were identified between the Site and any of the Natura 2000 sites listed.

The AA Screening report's analysis of potential indirect impacts notes the following at Section 4 (Appendix A of this report):

The Site is not located within or adjacent to any Natura 2000 sites, so there is no risk of habitat loss, fragmentation or any other direct impacts.

4.2 Indirect impacts

Potential changes in water quality (construction phase)
Construction works typically generate fine sediments, and may occasionally cause accidental spills of oil or other toxic chemicals. If pollutants reach watercourses in significant quantities, they can cause impacts on riparian habitats and species downstream of the Site. However, no pathways were identified between the Site and any Natura 2000 sites. Therefore, there is no risk of any indirect impacts on Natura 2000 sites during the construction of the proposed development.

Potential changes in water quality (operational phase)
All roads within the Site have roadside drainage networks, which collect rainwater and convey it to discharge points at local watercourses. The scheme will not involve any substantial changes to the roadside drainage network, so there will be no change from the baseline scenario. The scheme will not generate any foul water, so this can be screened out of the assessment.

4.3 Potential in-combination effects

As noted in the Section 2.3, the majority of the Site is not zoned for development. One largescale mixed-use development was identified adjacent to the proposed development, but impacts on Natura 2000 sites from that development were screened out (when considered in isolation), and the proposed development will not cause any direct or indirect impacts on Natura 2000 sites, so there is no risk of in-combination effects.

Hydrology

The project is located within the Loughlinstown-Coastal Catchment.

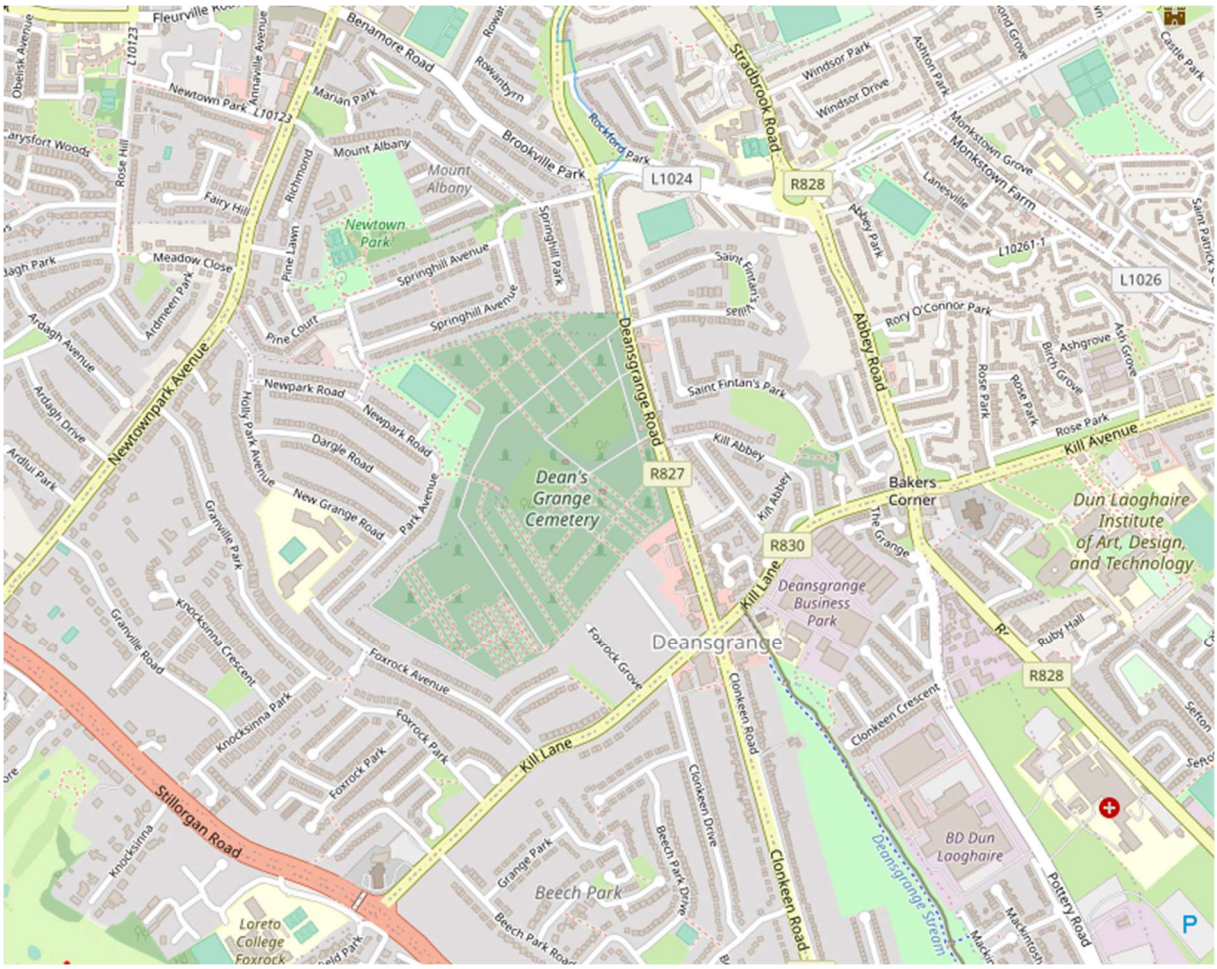


Figure 2.5: Water bodies in proximity to the Scheme – Deansgrange Steam and Monkstown Stream (in culvert) (Source EPA Maps)

The southern end of the proposed development will cross the Deansgrange Stream [Code: IE_EA_10K020200] (also referred to as Kill of the Grange Stream) in the vicinity of the Kill o' the Grange church. The stream appears to originate at Kill Lane, as there is no evidence of a river to the north of the road (see Figure 2.5). It should be noted that the proposed development will not involve any modification of the stream or its banks, as the cycle and pedestrian facilities will be on existing roads and pavements that cross above the stream. The Deansgrange Stream flows south-east and meets the coast of Dublin Bay at Ballybrack / Shankill, approximately 5 km downstream of the Site. Under the Water Framework Directive Status Assessments 2013-2018, the Deansgrange Stream is of "Poor" status and "At Risk", and the coastal waters at the mouth of the stream are of "High" Status "Not at Risk".

The northern end of the proposed development it will cross a culverted section of the Monkstown Stream (also known as the Stradbrook Stream). It appears to be a small, highly-modified watercourse that has been culverted for almost all of its length, with only a small above-ground section in the vicinity of Dalguise House and Richmond House in Monkstown. As the proposed development will take place on existing roads and paved surfaces, and will not involve any modification of the culverted stream beneath the road, the Monkstown stream is not considered to be of relevance to this assessment.

Groundwater and Flooding

Based on the GeoHive ESM (Environmental Sensitivity Mapping) web resources, the WFD (Water Framework Directive) Groundwater Status notes the area as 'Poorly productive bedrock' and therefore WFD status is 'Not at risk'.

The ESM resource notes the Bedrock Aquifer is described as 'Poor Aquifer' – 'Bedrock which is Generally Unproductive except for Local Zones (Geological Survey of Ireland). Aquifer Vulnerability is generally described as Moderate (Score: 2). The National Groundwater Vulnerability of the site is classified as Moderate (M).

Heritage

The Deansgrange Local Area Plan 2010-2020 noted the following in respect of Heritage Amenities (Section 5.5)

5.5.1 Deansgrange Cemetery
Deansgrange Cemetery is a multi denominational cemetery located immediately to the north of the village. It contains the graves of a number of important national figures, two fine cut-stone Mortuary Chapels which are Protected Structures, formally laid out pedestrian walks and old yew trees amongst other items of interest. The cemetery is therefore of very significant heritage value. In recent years, Deansgrange Cemetery has featured on the county's Heritage Trail with guided tours of the cemetery included. To further improve accessibility to the cemetery, objective P14, as outlined within Section 3.1.5 of this LAP, indicates that the Council will seek to provide a discreet pedestrian only access, at the south eastern corner of the cemetery, immediately adjacent to the Deansgrange Neighbourhood Centre area on Deansgrange Road. In addition, it is proposed to install information panels at an appropriate location within Deansgrange Cemetery in order to provide an improved level of information to the public and raise public awareness of the significance of this burial ground.

5.5.2 Kill Abbey
The ecclesiastical site of Kill Abbey is located adjacent to both St. Fintan's Park and the Kill Abbey residential area, just under 400m north east of Deansgrange Village and approximately 200m north west of Baker's Corner. The ruined Church of St Fintan, which presently occupies the site, is considered to be amongst the oldest and most important ecclesiastical remains in the county. The churchyard, which was used for burials up until the First World War, is currently in the care of the Council.

The Kill Abbey site is accessible via a public footpath through St. Fintan's Park. This footpath however is quite narrow and does not have good provision for cyclists. Objective P7, as outlined within Section 3.1.4 of this plan, indicates that the Council will seek to provide improved pedestrian and cycle access arrangements through St. Fintan's Park. As well as improving overall permeability within this general area, improved footpath and cycle way provision will also improve accessibility to this important heritage amenity. In addition to improved overall pedestrian and cycle access, there is also a need to improve actual access to the site itself. This might be achieved by including the site on the County's Heritage Trail and / or organising a contact within the local community, where a key may be obtained to access the site.

A small number of sites are included on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) close to the route (indicated in red dots). This includes the following:

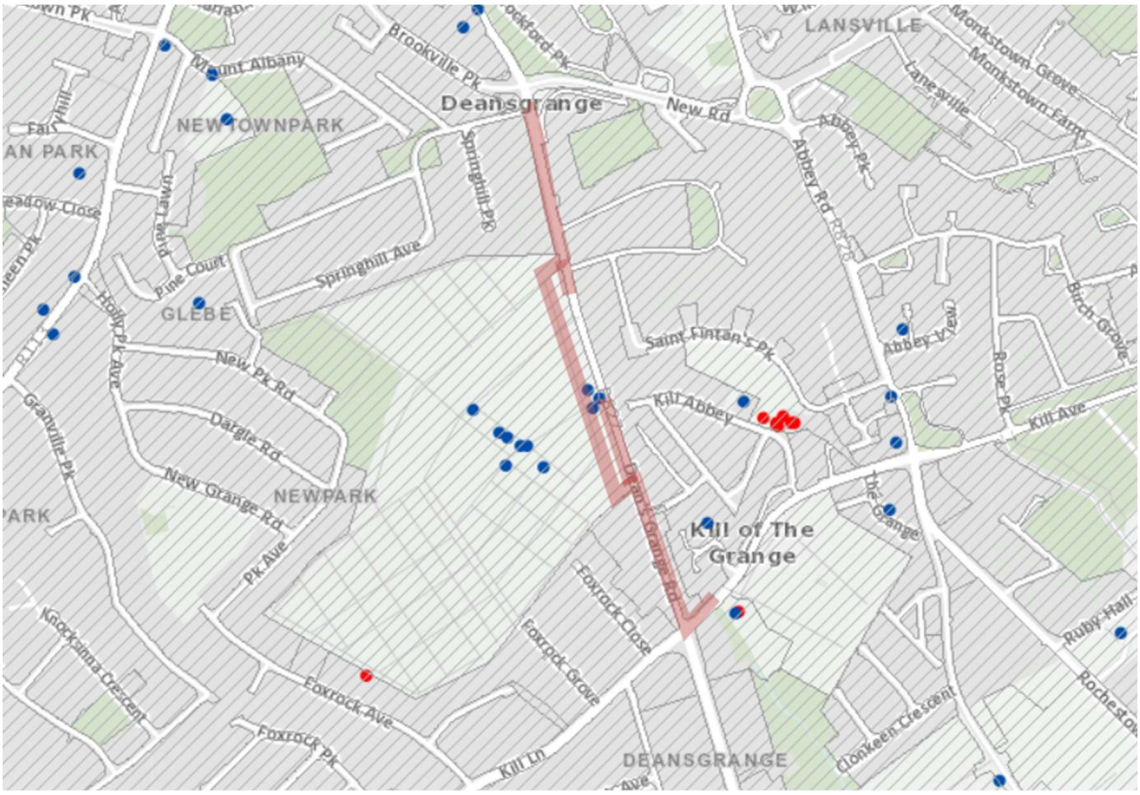


Figure 2.6 NIAH site designations adjoining proposed scheme route (Source: Myplan.ie)

Table 2.2 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage sites located adjacent to project

Reference	Description
Protected Structure: RPS Ref. 2076 **NIAH Ref:** 60230114	Deans Grange Cemetery- Gateway (Built 1931)
Protected Structure: RPS Ref. 2035 **NIAH Ref:** 60230113	Deans Grange Cemetery- Gate Lodge (built 1898)
Protected Structure: RPS Ref. 1992 **NIAH Ref:** 60230112	Deans Grange Cemetery- Office/Tearoom (built 1908)
NIAH Ref:60,230,127 National Monuments Ref: DU023-016	The Church of Ireland Kill of the Grange Church (Kill)
Protected Structure: RPS Ref. 1444 **NIAH Ref:**60,230,104	Mortuary Chapel (Cof I)
Protected Structure: RPS Ref. 1441 **NIAH Ref:**60,230,105	Mortuary Chapel (RC)

3 Proposed Development

The Deansgrange Cycle Scheme is proposed under the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council (DLR) Active School Travel project. This is centred on the concept of providing a connected and safe network of walking and cycling routes to schools across the county, and this concept has been emphasised from project inception in August 2020.

There are parts of two of the routes, Mountains to Metals and Park to Park, that go through the Deansgrange area. The design for these routes was completed based on providing a safe, continuous active travel route from end to end.

The Active School Travel Safe Walking and Cycling Routes Project Update December 2021 notes that six design options for the route were considered, with stakeholder engagement progressed from September to November 2021.

The multicriteria analysis recommended that Option 6. Providing segregated cycle facilities along Deansgrange Road and utilising the Cemetery, would be the preferred option as it would:

- Maintain two-way access by vehicle for residents and reduce potential traffic displacement or rat-running into other areas
- Maintain the bus service in both directions
- Allow HGV access along the street
- Maintain the majority of parking / loading
- Provide direct segregated cycle facilities.

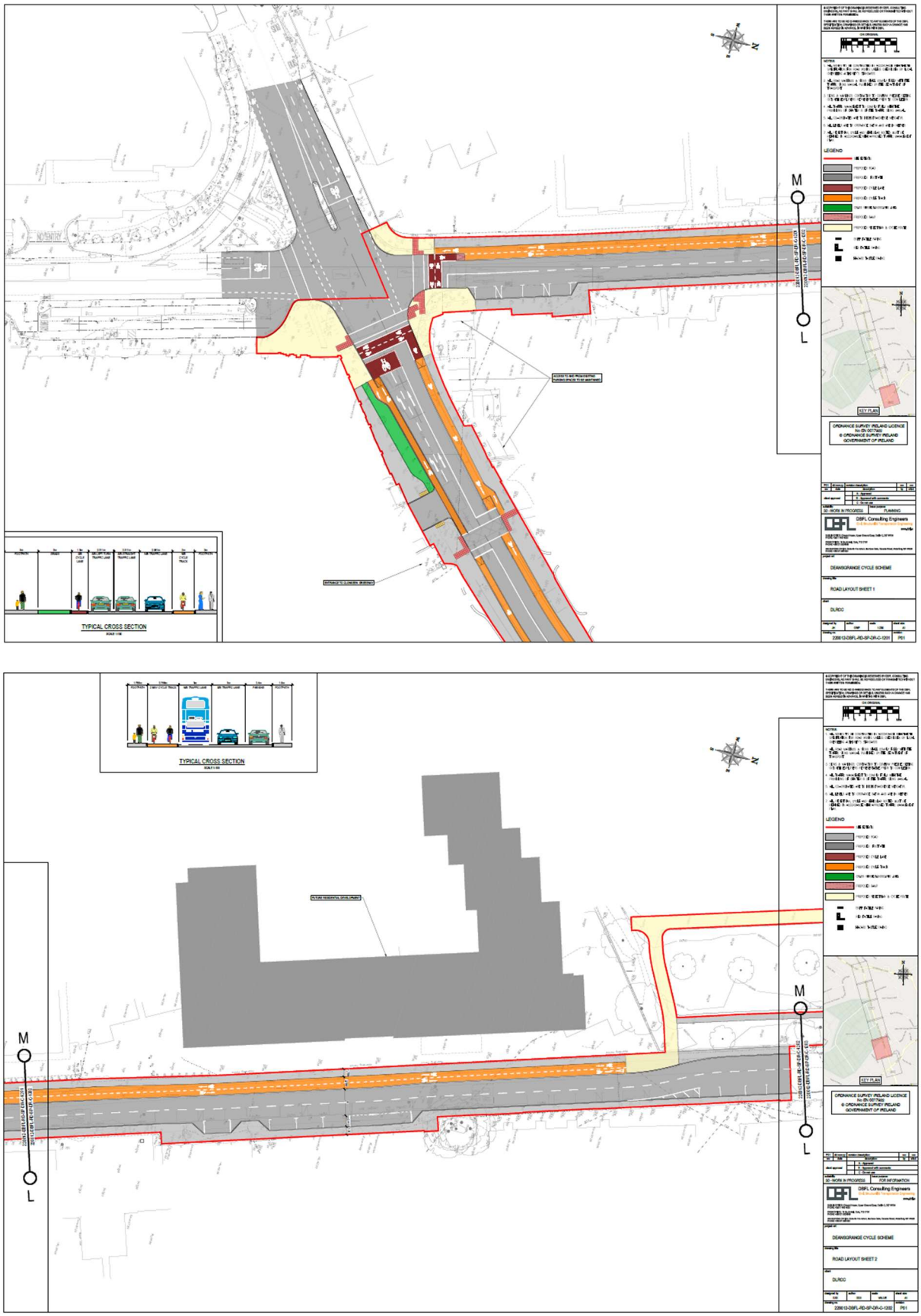
The Council's Project Update report expected the works outside of Deansgrange Road to commence in Q1 2022 and works relating to Deansgrange Road to commence in Q3 2022 assuming a favourable outcome of the Part 8 planning process.

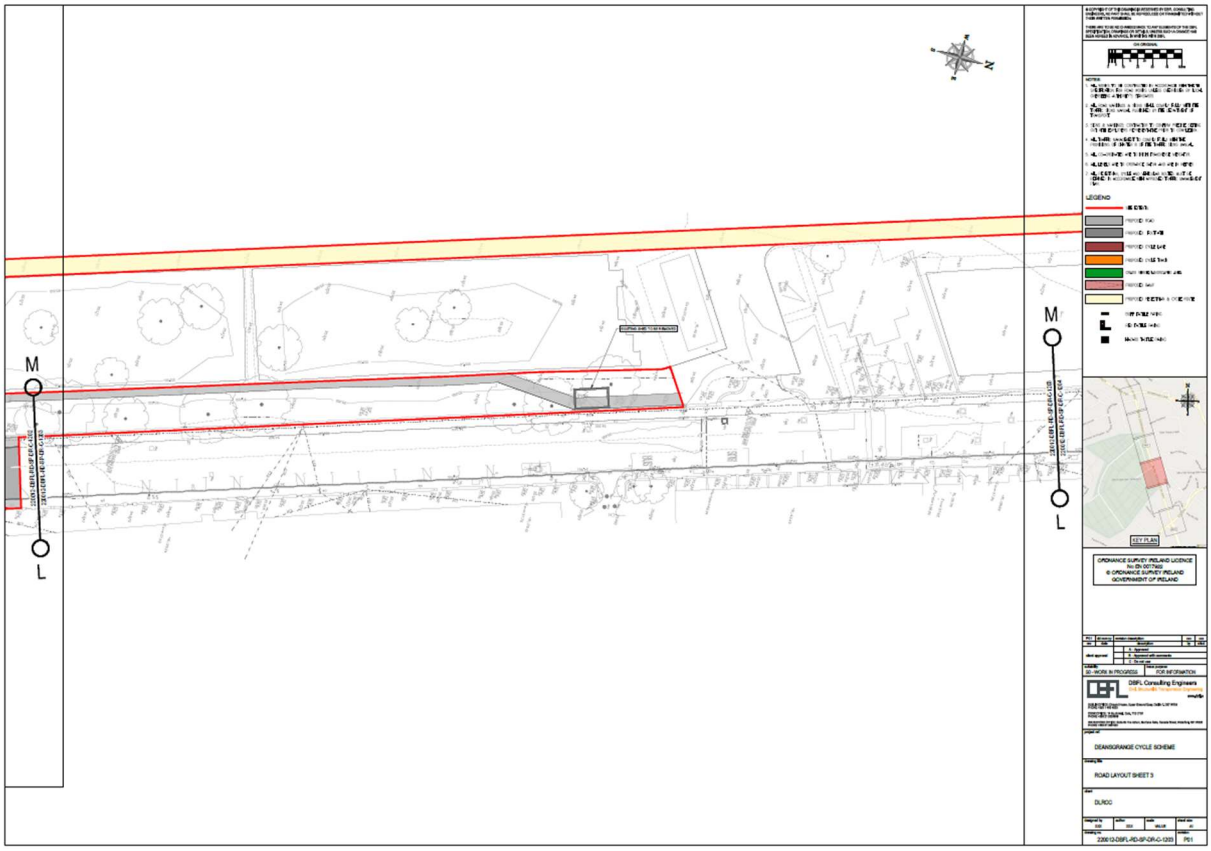
The location of the outline design of the scheme is illustrated in a series of maps below (**Figure 3.1** below). The proposed scheme includes:

- Reconfigure west side footpath from Deansgrange Junction with Kill Lane to the Cemetery to allow for the introduction of two-way segregated facility (this would require localised narrowing of the existing path).
- Cycling path provided through the Cemetery returning to Deansgrange Road north of the existing entrance near St Fintan's Villas, with the route utilising existing paths within the Cemetery.
- New entrances to the Cemetery
- Lighting within the Cemetery.
- New two-way segregated facility provided on Deansgrange Road from the exit of the Cemetery to Springhill Ave.
- Loss of approx. 7 parking spaces near the bungalows and 7 parking spaces and loading bay adjacent to businesses opposite Mooney site (but with provision of 4 indent parking spaces and loading bay).

The final layout and detailed design for the junctions remains to be finalised post this Screening Stage and will be determined as part of the preliminary design and application stage as the project progresses.

Figure 3.1 Outline design and layout of proposed scheme (source: DBFL Consulting Engineers)

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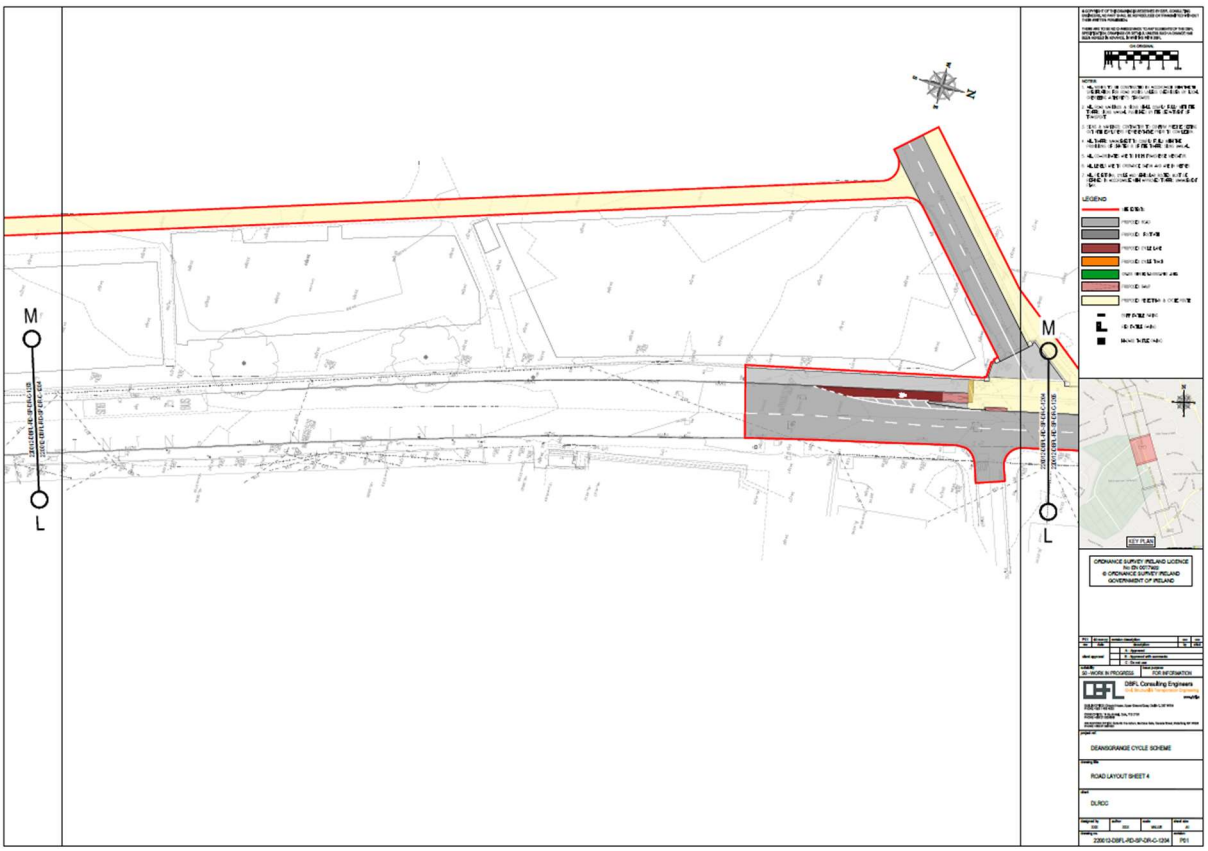
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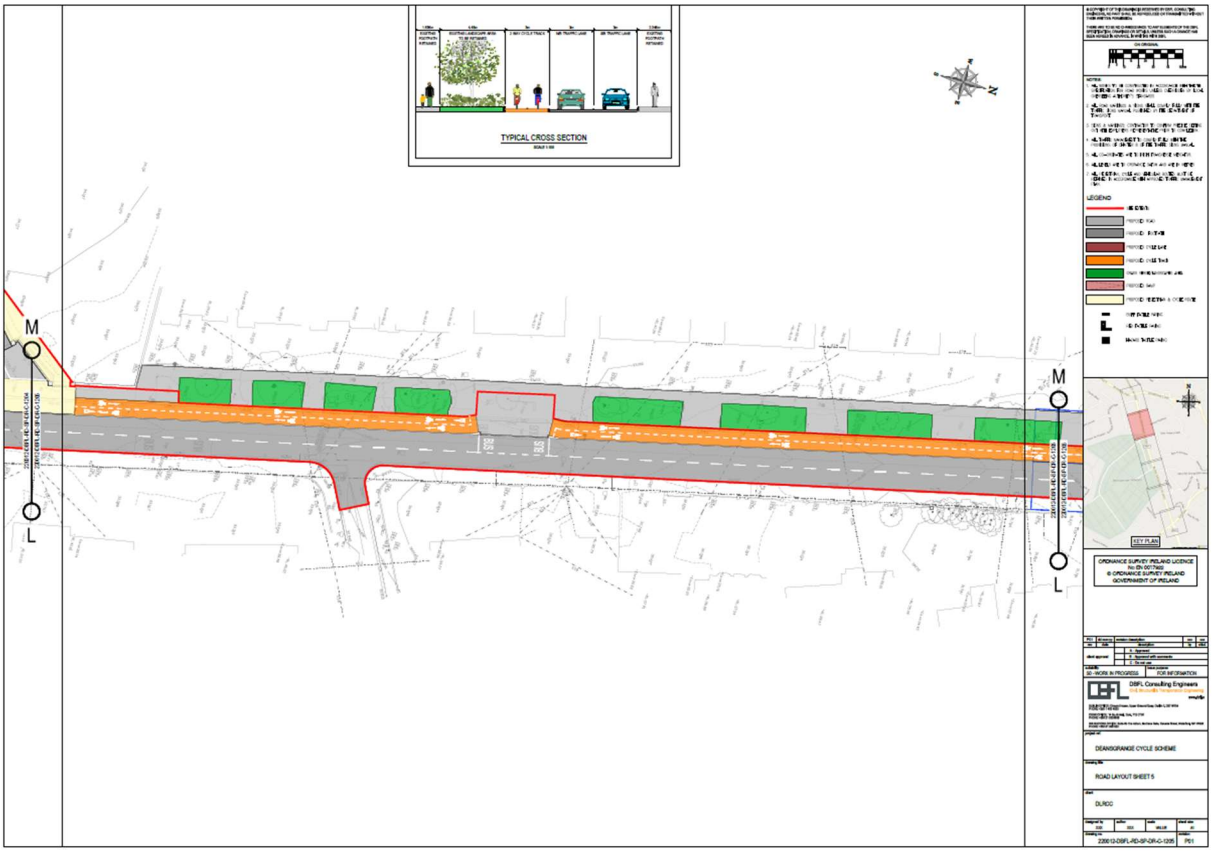
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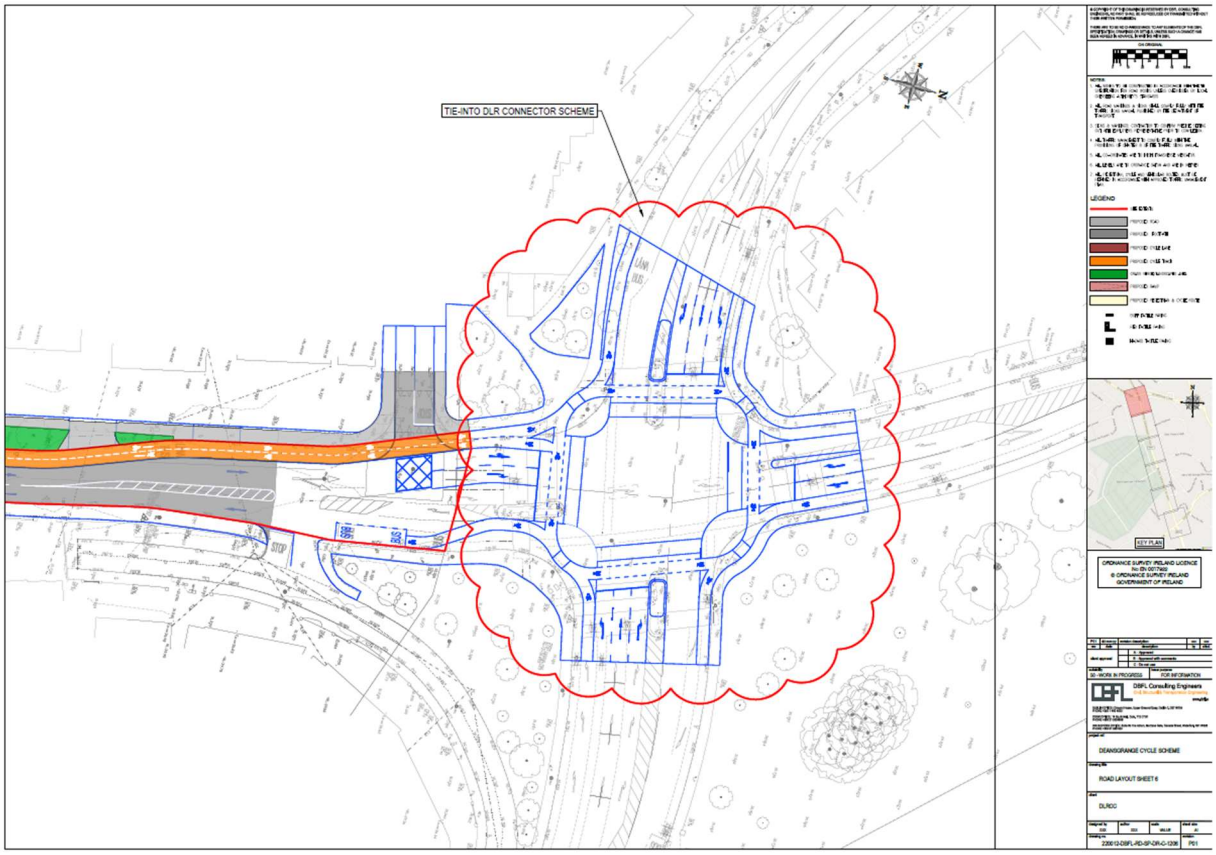
TIE-INTO DLR CONNECTOR SCHEME

4 Planning Policy

4.1 Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2016-2022

The Statutory Development Plan for the entire project area is the Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2016-22. This plan is due to expire in April 2022.

The plan sets out the following relevant strategic objective at Section 2.2.3:

> *'The delivery of major strategic transportation projects and infrastructural improvements such as, the Council Cycle Network, an expanded Bus Network, Luas Line B2 from Brides Glen to Fassaroe and the package of interventions to realise the full potential of the Sandyford Business District.'*

The plan sets out further detail in respect of cycling objectives under section 2.2.5 Current Public Transport Networks

Cycling

'In 2012, a County Cycle Network was developed following a comprehensive evidence-based review that assessed all cycling routes in the County in terms of Quality of Service. Currently over 250km of cycle routes exist in the County with many off-road routes through the major parks. The Cycle Network aims to connect the main attractors (e.g town centres, colleges etc) within the County and to provide effective through movement for cyclists. It also provides a priority list for the development of a network of Primary Routes (between locations of highest cycling demand) and Secondary Routes (routes through residential estates and parks) to give cyclists route options alternative to cycling along main road traffic corridors.'

2.2.7.3 Policy ST7: County Cycle Network

'It is Council policy to secure improvements to the County Cycle Network in accordance with the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Cycle Network Review whilst supporting the NTA on the development and implementation of the Cycle Network Plan for the Greater Dublin Area.'

The plan notes the objective to deliver the following Primary Orbital Routes

- Churchtown to Booterstown Orbital Cycle Route - Braemor Road to Dundrum to N11 to the Rock Road.
- Dundrum to Dún Laoghaire Orbital Cycle Route - Nutgrove Way to York Road via Drummartin Link Road and N11.
- Ballinteer to Stillorgan Orbital Cycle Route - Grange Road to Lower Kilmacud Road via Blackthorn Drive.

The Development Plan Maps do not include a specific objective along the alignment for cycle routes or active travel projects.

The project route is located on or adjoining the public roadway and off-street through Deansgrange Cemetery. The zoning objectives along the project route alignment are the following:

- 'A' To protect and-or improve residential amenity
- 'DC' To protect, provide for and-or improve mixed-use district centre facilities.
- 'NC' To protect, provide for and-or improve mixed-use neighbourhood centre facilities
- 'F' To preserve and provide for open space with ancillary active recreational amenities.

Figure 4.1 illustrates the land use zoning along the proposed alignment of the project. The zoning is varied along he route including residential, open space, and neighbourhood centre zonings. The route does not intersect/adjoins any following Conservations Areas

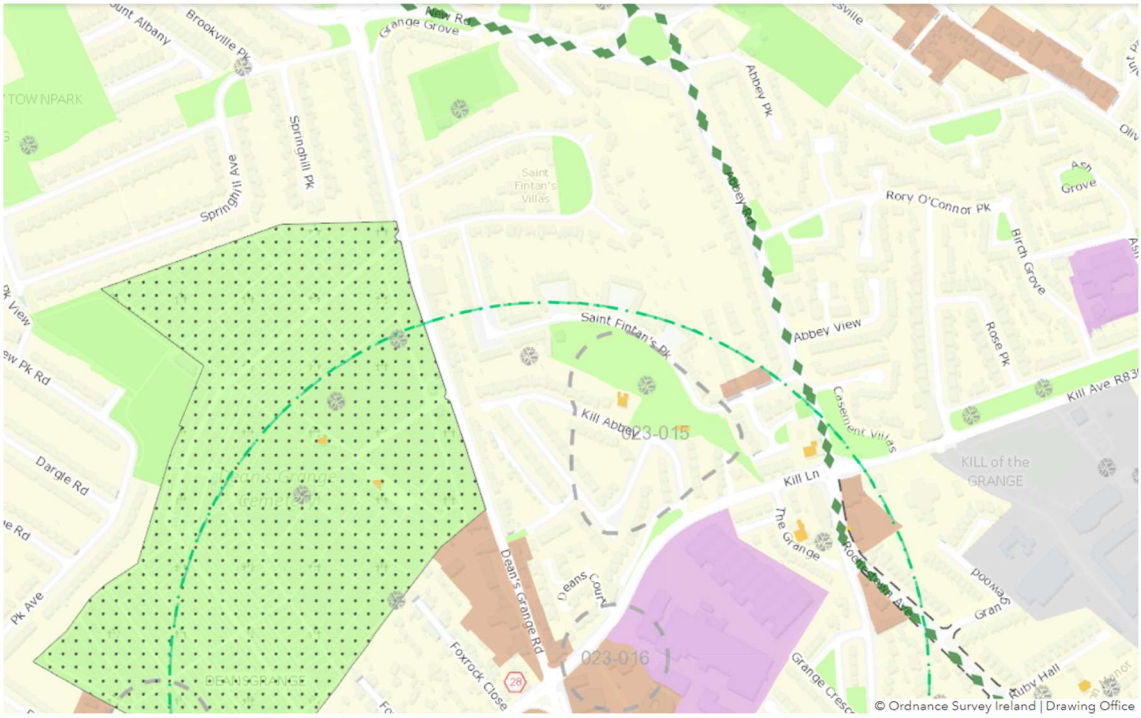

Figure 4.1 Landuse zoning along project alignment under Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2016-22 (source: DLR Co. Co. online interactive mapping tool)

4.2 Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council Draft County Development Plan, 2022-2028

The Council has prepared Draft County Development Plan for the period 2022-2028. The Plan has been adopted by the Council and is due to come into effect on 21 April 2022.

Section 5.5 of the Draft County Development Plan is titled *'Promoting Active Travel: Cycling and Walking'. Section 5.5.2* includes Policy Objective T11: Footways and Pedestrian Routes:

'It is a Policy Objective to maintain and expand the footway and pedestrian route network to provide for accessible, safe pedestrian routes within the County in accordance with best accessibility practice. (Consistent with NPO 27 and 64 of the NPF and RPO 5.3 of the RSES).'

Policy Objective T12: County Cycle Network states:

'It is a Policy Objective to secure improvements to the County Cycle Network in accordance with the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Cycle Network Review whilst supporting the NTA on the development and implementation of the Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan, subject to environmental assessment. (Consistent with RPO 5.2, 5.3 of the RSES).'

The adopted plan further notes:

'In 2012, a County Cycle Network was developed following a comprehensive evidence-based review that assessed all cycling routes in the County in terms of quality of service. The Cycle Network, with an associated Cycle Network Map, provides a priority listing for the development of Primary and Secondary Cycle Routes in the County. The delivery of this Network is ongoing.'

Figure 4.2 illustrates that the designation of zoning objectives is consistent between the 2016-2022 and 2022-28 iterations of the County Development Plan.

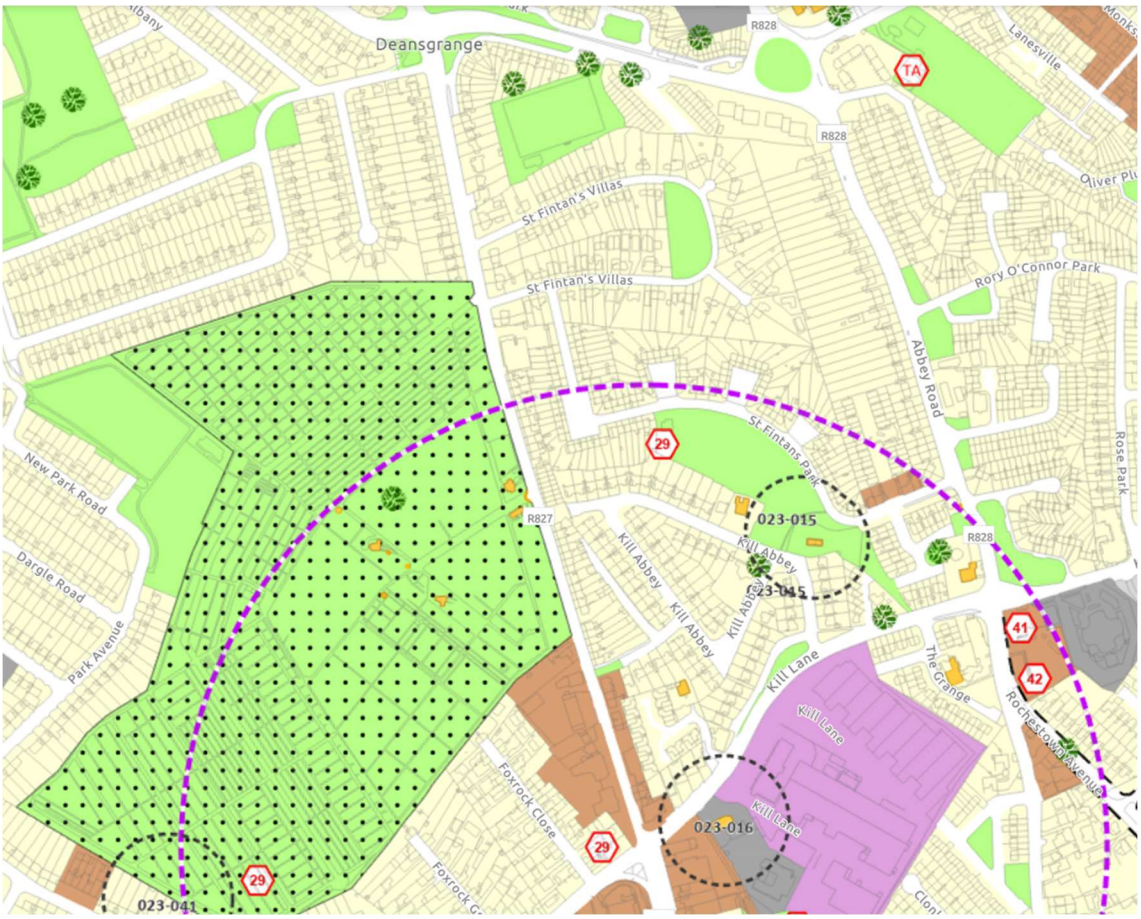

Figure 4.2 Land use zoning along project alignment under Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Draft County Development Plan 2022-28 (source: DLR Co. Co. online interactive mapping tool)

4.3 Local Area Plans and Framework Plans

The project route intersects the following Local Area Plans (LAPs)

- Deansgrange Local Area Plan

Deansgrange Local Area Plan was first adopted by the Council in June 2010. The lifetime of the Plan was subsequently extended to 2020. The designation of the 500m radius plan area is included on the current County Development Plan map.

4.4 Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan

In 2013, the National Transport Authority (NTA) published the Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan, consisting of the Urban Network, Inter-Urban Network and Green Route Network for each of the seven Local Authority areas comprising the Greater Dublin Area (GDA).

The Cycle Network Plan identified and determined in a consistent, clear and logical manner, the following cycle networks within the GDA:

- The Urban Cycle Network at the Primary, Secondary and Feeder level;
- The Inter-Urban Cycle Network, linking the relevant sections of the Urban Network and including the elements of the National Cycle Network within the GDA. The Inter-Urban Network also includes linkages to key transport locations outside of urban areas such as airports and ports; and
- The Green Route Network that are cycle routes developed predominately for tourist, recreational and leisure purposes.

Sheet 7 of the Plan shows the Project Alignment is indicated as part of Secondary route 13C (Figure 4.3).

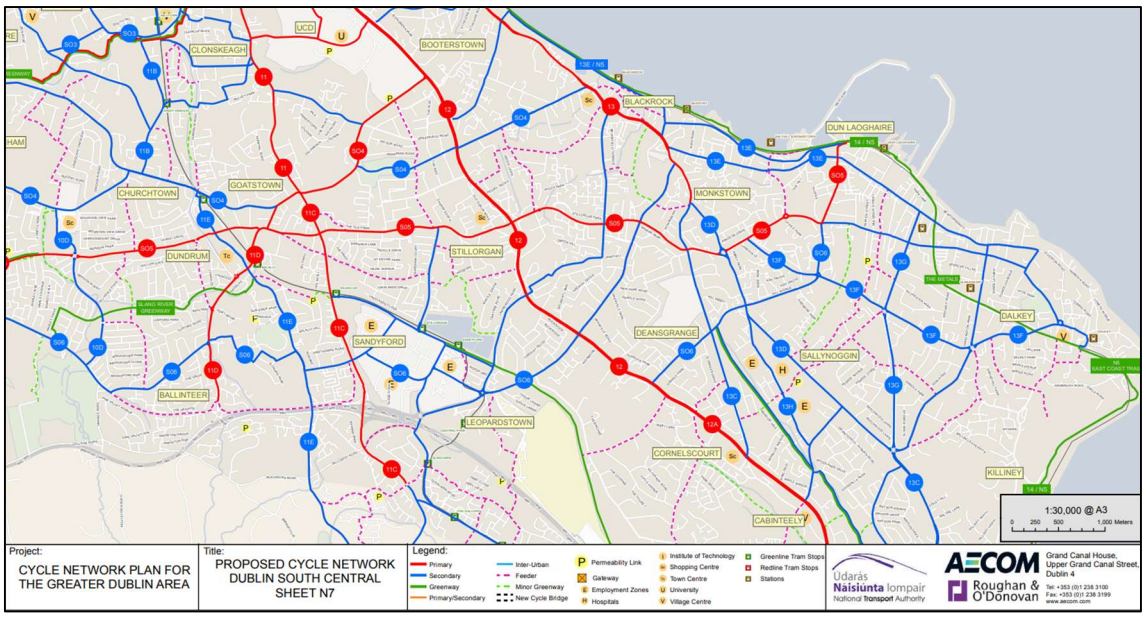

Figure 4.3 Excerpt from Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan (Sheet 7)

5 Screening

5.1 Methodology

This section sets out the legislative basis for 'Screening' so as to decide whether or not the Deansgrange Cycle Scheme project requires the preparation of Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) as part of an application.

The basis for this assessment is whether the proposed project exceeds mandatory "thresholds" or is considered to have a potential impact on "sub-threshold" criteria set out under legislation.

This project includes proposals on public road and therefore it is important to have regard to the Roads Act and Regulations as well Planning Acts and Regulations. The EIA Screening Report has had regard to the following:

- Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended
- Roads Act 1993, as amended
- Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended
- Directive 2014/52/EU of 16 April 2014 amending Directive 2011/92/EU
- The European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 (S.I. No. 296 of 2018)
- European Union (Roads Act 1993) (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations, 2019 (S.I. 279/2019)
- Draft EPA revised Guidelines on information to be contained in Environmental Impact Statements (2017)
- Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects: Guidance on Screening, European Commission, 2017
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment August 2018
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development 2003
- Circular Letter PL 8/2017 (DHPLG), as revised by Circular Letter 05/2018 – Implementation of Directive 2014/52/EU on the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (the EIA Directive) – Advice on Electronic Notification Requirements (Circular Letter PL 8/2017).
- Circular Letter: PL 10/2018 22 November 2018 Public notification of timeframe for application to An Bord Pleanála for screening determination in respect of local authority or State authority development
- Office of the Planning Regulator (May 2021) Environmental Impact Assessment Screening- Practice Note

5.2 Preliminary Examination in context of proposed development

The Office of the Planning Regulator has issued guidance in the form of the Environmental Impact Assessment Screening- Practice Note, May 2021 which aids Planning Authorities as the Competent Authority (CA) in this area. This report has had regard to the OPR guidance and methodology which sets out a 3 Step Process illustrated in Figure 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3.

Figure 5.1 Extract from the OPR Guidance Note (Step 1)

Project

The proposed application is a project for the purpose of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) under Stage 1 stage (a) of the OPR guidance.

5.3 Mandatory EIAR Threshold Review

A list of the types or classes of development that require EIA or screening for EIA is provided in Part 1 and Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, (Regulations) as amended. 'Sub-threshold development' comprises development of a type that is included in Part 2 of Schedule 5, but which does not equal or exceed a quantity, area or other limit (the threshold).

The specific nature of the proposed development is not stated in Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Regulations. Sub-threshold projects in Schedule 5 Part 2 require screening for EIA, except in cases where the likelihood of significant effects can be readily excluded. Schedule 5 Part 2 provides the following relevant projects/thresholds (Table 5.1)

Analysis of thresholds under the Roads Act 1993 and European Union (Roads Act 1993) (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations, 2019 (S.I. 279/2019) is outlined in Table 5.2.

Table 5.1 Mandatory EIAR requirement as per Planning Regulations 2001-2021, Schedule 5 Part 2.

Mandatory	Regulatory Reference	Response
10. Infrastructure projects (b)(i) Construction of more than 500 dwelling units. (ii) Construction of a car-park providing more than 400 spaces, other than a car-park provided as part of, and incidental to the primary purpose of, a development. (iii) Construction of a shopping centre with a gross floor space exceeding 10,000 square metres. (iv) Urban development which would involve an area greater than 2 hectares in the case of a business district, 10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 20 hectares elsewhere (In this paragraph, "business district" means a district within a city or town in which the predominant land use is retail or commercial use.)	Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2021, Schedule 5, Part 2	European Commission guidelines suggest that projects with similar characteristics are not explicitly mentioned in the EIA Directive could include: bus garages, train depots; Construction projects such as housing developments, hospitals, universities, sports stadiums, cinemas, theatres, concert halls and other cultural centres. The underlying principle is that all these project categories are of an urban nature and that they may cause similar types of environmental impact. Projects to which the terms 'urban' and 'infrastructure' can relate, such as the construction of sewerage and water supply networks, could also be included in this category. Projects for integrated urban transport schemes (e.g. parallel works at different locations to upgrade bus lanes, tramlines, bus, tram and/or metro stops), could also fall under this project category. There is no direct reference to pedestrian and cycle facility improvements and it cannot be presumed that the project is an 'urban development' that falls under this threshold definition.[1] **Mandatory Threshold Trigger not reached**.
(dd) All private roads which would exceed 2000 metres in length.		The Directive Includes: (e) Construction of roads, harbours, and port installations, including fishing harbours (projects not included in Annex I). In Case C-142/07, Ecologistas en Acción-CODA, the Court held that the concept of 'road' in the EIA Directive does not make any distinction with regard to its applicability as to whether a road is a private or a public one. The cycle scheme is under 1km. **Mandatory Threshold Trigger not reached.**

[1] European Commission (2015) Interpretation of definitions of project categories of annex I and II of the EIA Directive, pp.50-52

Table 5.2: Mandatory EIAR requirement as per the Roads Act, 1993 (as amended), and European Union (Roads Act 1993) (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations, 2019 (S.I. 279/2019)

Mandatory	Regulatory Reference	Response
(i) Construction of a Motorway	S. 50(1)(a) of the Roads Act, 1993, as amended[2]	The proposed project development is not a Motorway. **Mandatory Threshold Trigger not reached.**
(ii) Construction of a Busway	S. 50(1)(a) of the Roads Act, 1993, as amended	The project does not provide for the development of a busway **Mandatory Threshold Trigger not reached.**
(iii) Construction of a Service Area	S. 50(1)(a) of the Roads Act, 1993, as Amended	The proposed project is not a Service Area. **Mandatory Threshold Trigger not reached.**
(iv) Any prescribed type of road development consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road. - The construction of a new road of four or more lanes, or the realignment or widening of an existing road so as to provide four or more lanes, where such new, realigned or widened road would be eight kilometres or more in length in a rural area, or 500 metres or more in length in an urban area - The construction of a new bridge or tunnel which would be 100 metres or more in length	Prescribed by Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994 (Road development prescribed for the purposes of S. 50(1)(a) of the Roads Act, 1993).[3]	The proposed project provides for development to a route of c. 1km in an urban area. The road would not be realigned or widened to provide for four or more lanes. The scheme does not provide for a new bridge or tunnel. The proposed development therefore does not fall into the prescribed type of development whether it is considered to be in an urban or rural area. **Mandatory Threshold Trigger not reached.**

It is noted that Section 50(1)(b) and (c) of the Roads Act, 1993 allows for An Bord Pleanála (ABP) to direct the road authority to prepare an EIAR where it considers that a proposed road development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

In relation to proposed development none of the thresholds above are exceeded.

Accordingly, the project is sub threshold development and under Step 1(b) of the OPR guidance a preliminary examination is required under Step 2[4].

[2] Adapted into Irish regulation from Annex 1 (7)(a) of the Directive

[3] Adapted into Irish regulation from Annex 1 (7)(b) of the Directive

[4] Art 120 (1) (a) of the Planning Regulations provides that; "where the authority proposes to carry out a subthreshold development, the authority shall carry out a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the development".

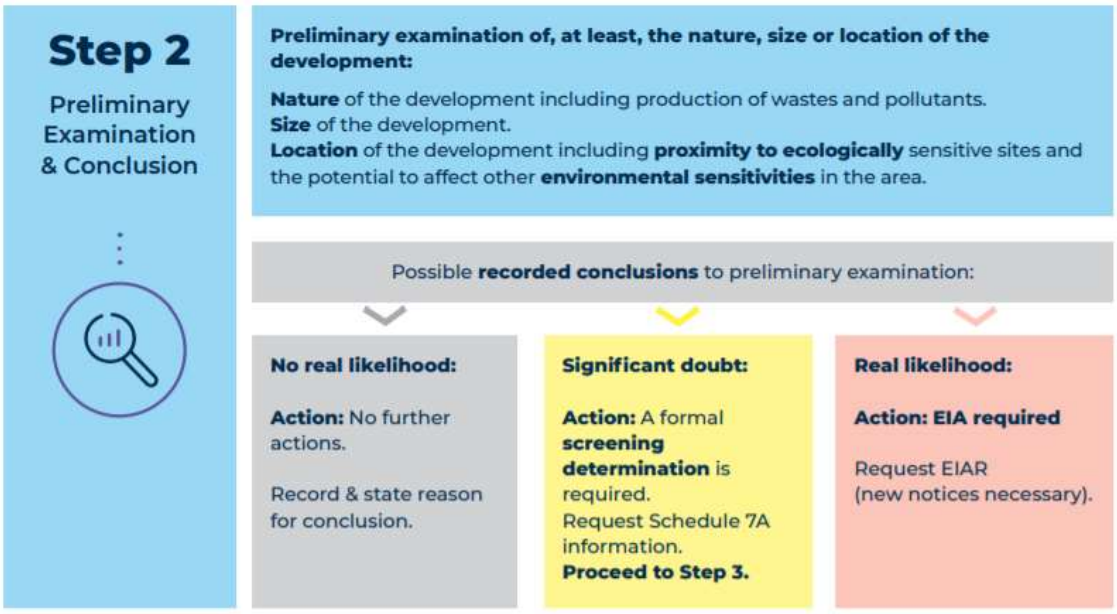

Figure 5.2 Extract from OPR Guidance Note (Step 2 of Screening Process)

5.4 Preliminary Examination considerations

Preliminary examinations must consider at least the following:

- The nature of the development including the production of wastes and pollutants;
- The size of the development; or
- The location of the development including the potential to impact on certain ecologically sensitive sites and the potential to affect other environmentally sensitive sites in the area.

The OPR guidance states a number of questions to assist the preliminary examination.

5.5 Nature of the development:

Is the nature of the proposed development exceptional in the context of the existing environment?

The project provides for works within and adjoining existing roads where active travel mobility options (particularly bicycle) already utilise the carriageways. The project also provides for works during the construction phase; and directs new activity/movement through a cemetery during the operation phase which has heritage and amenity value. The project encourages sustainable modes of transport and is unlikely to give rise to increase in pollutants. There is potential for localised production of wastes during the construction phase. The proposed development may be considered exceptional in its interaction with the cemetery within the context of the existing environment.

5.6 Size of the development:

Is the size of the proposed development exceptional in the context of the existing environment?

The size of the development is not considered exceptional in the existing environment. While the proposed project will change the nature and appearance of the carriageway it will not materially increase its size. The size of the project is not considered exceptional in its interaction with the cemetery as it is proposed to utilise an existing pathway.

Are there cumulative considerations having regard to other existing and/or permitted projects?

The project seeks to implement part of the DLRCC Active School Travel Routes Dublin and Secondary Cycling Route 13C of the Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan. While the route is already utilised for cycling activity, there are cumulative considerations having regard to other existing and/or permitted projects.

5.7 Location of the development

Is the proposed development located on, in, adjoining or does it have the potential to impact on an ecologically sensitive site or location?

The proposed project is not located on, in, adjoining or does it have the potential to impact on an ecologically sensitive site or location. The project provides for works on existing roads and paved surfaces, and will not involve any modification of the culverted stream beneath the road.

Does the proposed development have the potential to affect other significant environmental sensitivities in the area?

The proposed project traverses a developed urban area with large residential and commercial populations. The project will provide an attractive route for the population to access services, employment, education and recreation. It may potentially give rise to disturbance during the construction phase, particularly at large junctions.

5.8 Preliminary Examination Conclusion

Following preliminary examination, the planning authority is recommended to conclude that there are uncertainties regarding the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and to proceed to a Stage 3 screening determination.

6 Screening Determination

Where the requirement to carry out EIA is not excluded at preliminary examination stage, the competent authority must carry out a screening determination.

The screening determination carried out on the basis of the Schedule 7A. In making its screening determination, the competent authority must have regard to:

- Schedule 7 criteria,
- Schedule 7A information,
- Any further relevant information on the characteristics of the development and its likely significant effects on the environment submitted by the applicant,
- Any mitigation measures proposed by the applicant,
- The available results, where relevant, of preliminary verifications or assessments carried out under other relevant EU environmental legislation, including information submitted by the applicant on how the results of such assessments have been taken into account (see Box 3), and
- The likely significant effects on certain sensitive ecological sites

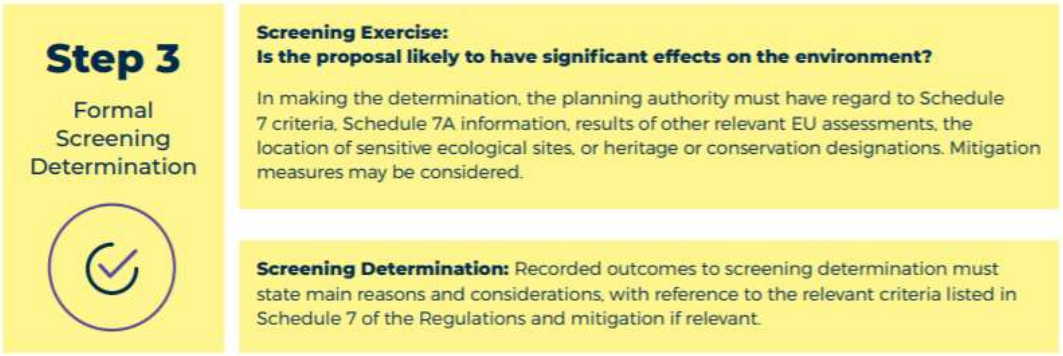

Figure 6.1 Extract OPR Guidance Note (Step 3)

6.1 Criteria for determining whether development should be subject to an environmental impact assessment

The 'Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities Regarding Sub-Threshold Development', groups criteria for deciding whether or not a proposed development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment under three headings which correspond to the updated Schedule 7.

Schedule 7 criteria for determining whether development listed in part 2 of Schedule 5 should be subject to an environmental impact assessment.

- Characteristics of the proposed development.
- Location of the proposed development.
- Characteristics of potential impacts.

Schedule 7 Criteria Commentary	Schedule 7 Criteria Commentary
1.Characteristics of proposed development The characteristics of proposed development, in particular to: -	
a) the size of the proposed development,	The scheme covers an approximate length of 1km. The extents of the scheme are highlighted red on Figure 2.1. There will be a slight reduction in on-street parking. It is not proposed to close any roads to vehicular traffic or introduce one-way systems that would potentially divert road traffic during operation.
(b) cumulation with other existing development and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment,	The Project is included in red as a Secondary route (Figure 4.3) to implement part of the DLRCC Active School Travel Routes Dublin and Secondary Cycling Route 13C of the Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan. Other parts of the route have been progressed or implemented in the DLR area. The route also interacts with a number of other radial routes and transport corridors. The GDA Cycle Network Plan was subject to an SEA, but the route has not been subject to an EIAR.
(c) the nature of any associated demolition works,	The scheme will include the demolition of a small shed beside the boundary wall inside Deansgrange Cemetery (see Plate 5). A small gateway will also be created in the Cemetery wall (at its southern end) to provide access from Deansgrange Road. The construction of the project will entail some disturbance along the alignment and at junctions. The final design and construction methodology is not finalised.
(d) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity,	No significant natural resources will be used.
(e) the production of waste,	No significant waste streams will be generated.
(f) pollution and nuisances,	The proposed scheme is likely to have a neutral impact on pollution. The construction phase is likely to introduce nuisance to local residential populations and those accessing services, employment and amenities along the alignment.
(g) the risk of major accidents, and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in	The proposal will provide improved and separated facilities for cyclists and reduce the risk of major accidents, and/or disasters in the area.

Schedule 7 Criteria Commentary	Schedule 7 Criteria Commentary
accordance with scientific knowledge, and	
h) the risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution).	Active travel measures are likely to be beneficial to human health. The project is unlikely to give rise to risks to human health arising from contamination or pollution.

2. Location of proposed development The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by proposed development, having regard in particular to:	
a) the existing and approved land use,	The land-uses of the surrounding area are mainly residential, commercial, transportation with some educational, office, recreation and amenity/open space. The project is located in the road corridor and an existing cemetery within an existing pathway reservation. The scheme does not materially impact any existing or permitted land uses or developments.
(b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground,	The project is located within an urban area on public road ways and on made ground. Due to the nature of the proposed scheme, i.e. upgrading existing infrastructure within the existing road/footpath footprint to accommodate more active and sustainable modes of transport, the completed works are not expected to result in significant increased surface water runoff to the connected drainage network or waterways.
c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:	
(i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;	Not applicable due to location of scheme
(ii) coastal zones and the marine environment;	Not applicable due to location of scheme
(iii) mountain and forest areas;	Not applicable due to location of scheme
(iv) nature reserves and parks;	Not applicable due to location of scheme
(v) areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive and;	The AA Screening confirms that proposed project is not likely to have any direct impact on, or provide a pathway for pollutants to a Natura 2000 site.
(vi) in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental	The project will not have any impact on an area which there has already been a failure to meet the

quality standards laid down in legislation of the European Union and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure;	environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the European Union.
(vii) densely populated areas;	The project is located within a densely populated area in the south of Dublin City. The cycleway scheme will provide a significant and positive recreational amenity for resident and visitor populations, that encourages healthy travel options. It is likely that the populations will experience disturbance during the construction phase and those utilising the routes in vehicles will experience temporary inconvenience.
(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance	The project does not have any negative impact on landscapes or views, material assets or cultural/ heritage artefacts of significance.

3. Characteristics of potential impacts The likely significant effects on the environment of proposed development in relation to criteria set out under paragraphs 1 and 2, with regard to the impact of the project on the factors specified in paragraph (b)(i)(I) to (V) of the definition of 'environmental impact assessment report' in section 171A of the Act, taking into account—	
a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example, geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	The project will directly affect an existing roadway and cemetery along a route of c.1 km. It is likely that the impact of the project will extend beyond the project area during construction (particularly on the road network).
(b) the nature of the impact	In general, construction work for the project will be undertaken on existing built surfaces as all of the site area is a built urban area. The project provides for the long-term development of segregated cycleways. Works along the route will be relatively minor with the project generally affecting the edge of the carriageway cross-section or off-road pathways. Significant works for realignment of large junctions are not proposed.
c) the transboundary nature of the impact	Not applicable due to scale and location of scheme.

(d) the intensity and complexity of the impact,	Construction impacts will be temporary and of typically low intensity. All elements of the project will take place within the road corridor or off-road pathways. Complexity arises from the interaction of the project with a number of properties along the route and movement of populations across or over the alignment.
(e) the probability of the impact,	The project's design is subject to refinement and decisions on the design of various details. The project is set to be developed within a defined road corridor and off-road pathway through the cemetery. The impacts of the project during construction phase and operation are comprehended as probable.
(f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the	Temporary environmental impacts will occur. These are not likely to be significant, within the meaning of the Directive.
(g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment, and	As noted at 1(b) earlier in this table, the project is proposed as part of a strategic cycle. There are a number of radial routes that being progressed or constructed. While, it is possible that these have potential to contribute to significant effects within the meaning of the Directive when considered in-combination with the effects of the proposed scheme, it is considered that the potential impacts of the scheme are largely confined to the defined Project area.
(h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact	It is likely that the operation of the scheme will be significant and positive, with benefits for local and visiting populations. There is potential to reduce the impact of the project at construction stage with a detailed construction management plan.

6.2 Available results under other relevant EU environmental legislation,

All list of the references/data used in the preparation of the AA Screening report prepared by NM Ecology is set out on pages 9- 10 of the AA Screening report.

Other relevant EU environmental legislation may include:

- SEA Directive [2001/42/EC]
- Birds and Habitats Directives [79/409/EEC, 2009/147/EC & 92/43/EEC]
- Water Framework Directive [2000/60/EC]
- Marine Strategy Framework Directive
- Ambient Air Quality Directive and Heavy Metals in the Ambient Air Directive
- Industrial Emissions Directive

- Seveso Directive
- Trans-European Networks in Transport, Energy and Telecommunication
- EU Floods Directive 2007/60/EC

Table 6.1: Other relevant EU environnemental legislation

Directive	Results
SEA Directive [2001/42/EC]	The proposed development is located on lands which have been zoned within the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2016-22) and the Draft Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-28. These have been subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment.
Birds and Habitats Directives [79/409/EEC, 2009/147/EC & 92/43/EEC]	An appropriate assessment (AA) screening report prepared by NM Ecology has been prepared: **Conclusion of Stage 1 – Screening Statement:** In Section 3.2.5 of *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland* (NPWS 2010), it is stated that the first stage of the AA process can have three possible conclusions: **1. AA is not required** Screening, followed by consultation and agreement with the NPWS, establishes that the plan or project is directly connected with or necessary to the nature conservation management of the site. **2. No potential for significant effects / AA is not required** Screening establishes that there is no potential for significant effects and the project or plan can proceed as proposed. **3. Significant effects are certain, likely or uncertain**

Directive	Results
	The project must either proceed to the second stage of the AA process, or be rejected. Having considered the particulars of the proposed development, we conclude that this application meets the second conclusion, because there is no risk of direct or indirect impacts on any Natura 2000 sites. Therefore, with regard to Article 42 (7) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, it can be excluded on the basis of objective scientific information following screening, that the plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site. Therefore, we conclude that Appropriate Assessment is not required.
Water Framework Directive [2000/60/EC]	The AA Screening report (p.5) states that: *The Deansgrange Stream flows south-east and meets the coast of Dublin Bay at Ballybrack / Shankill, approximately 5 km downstream of the Site. Under the Water Framework Directive Status Assessments 2013-2018, the Deansgrange Stream is of Poor status, and the coastal waters at the mouth of the stream are of High Status.*
Marine Strategy Framework Directive	The site is located inland, away from the coast, there is no likely impact given the distance.
Ambient Air Quality Directive and Heavy Metals in the Ambient Air Directive	n/a to proposed development
Industrial Emissions Directive	n/a to proposed development
Seveso Directive	There are no Seveso sites within the site nor in the vicinity of the subject site
Trans-European Networks in Transport, Energy and Telecommunication	n/a to proposed development
EU Floods Directive 2007/60/EC	No flood risk arises.

6.3 Conclusions

Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development which is below the thresholds set out in Class 10 of Part 2 of Schedule 5, the criteria in Schedule 7, the information provided in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, and the following:

- The scale, nature and location of the proposed impacts
- The potential impacts and proposed mitigation measures
- The results of the any other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment

It is considered that the proposed development would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment and it is recommended that environmental impact assessment report is not required.

7 Appendix A Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

Screening for Appropriate Assessment

Deansgrange Cycle Scheme

30 March 2022

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Executive Summary

This *Screening for Appropriate Assessment* report has been prepared by NM Ecology Ltd on behalf of Dun Laoghaire – Rathdown County Council (DLRCC, the applicant), regarding the Deansgrange Cycle Scheme. The proposed development will involve the creation of cycle lanes, pedestrian facilities and junction improvements along existing roads.

In accordance with their obligations under the *European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011* (SI 477/2011), the competent authority must assess whether the proposed development could have 'likely significant effects' on any Natura 2000 sites. This document provides supporting information to assist the local authority with an Appropriate Assessment screening exercise, including: a description of the proposed development, details of its environmental setting, a map and list of Natura 2000 sites within the potential zone of impact, and consideration of potential source-pathway-receptor links.

There is no risk of direct impacts on Natura 2000 sites. Potential pathways for indirect impacts were considered, but none were found to be feasible. Therefore, we conclude that the proposed development will not cause direct or indirect impacts on any Natura 2000 sites, and thus that Appropriate Assessment is not required.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to Appropriate Assessment

Approximately 10% of the land area of Ireland is included in the European Network of Natura 2000 sites, which includes Special Protection Areas (SPAs) to protect important areas for birds, and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) to protect a range of habitats and species. Legislative protection for these sites is provided by the *European Council Birds Directive* (79/409/EEC) and *E.C. Habitats Directive* (92/43/EEC, as amended), which are jointly transposed into Irish law by the *European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011* (SI 477/2011, as amended).

Regulation 42 (1) states that: "*Screening for Appropriate Assessment of a plan or project for which an application for consent is received* […] *shall be carried out by the public authority to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge and in view of the conservation objectives of the site, if that plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect on* [any Natura 2000 sites]." To ensure compliance with this regulation, planning authorities must screen all planning applications for potential impacts on Natura 2000 sites. Supporting information may be requested from the applicant to assist with this process.

This document provides background information to assist the planning authority with a *Screening for Appropriate Assessment* exercise for the proposed development. It includes a description of the proposed development, a review of the Site's environmental setting, details of Natura 2000 sites within the potential zone of impact, an appraisal of *source-pathway-receptor* relationships, and an assessment of potential impacts.

1.2 Statement of authority

This report was written by Nick Marchant, the principal ecologist of NM Ecology Ltd. He has an MSc in Ecosystem Conservation and Landscape Management from NUI Galway and a BSc in Environmental Science from Queens University Belfast. He is a member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, and operates in accordance with their code of professional conduct.

He has fourteen years of professional experience, including eleven years as an ecological consultant, one year as a local authority biodiversity officer, and two years managing an NGO in Indonesia. He provides ecological assessments for developments throughout Ireland and Northern Ireland, including wind farms, infrastructural projects (roads, water pipelines, greenways, etc.), and a range of residential and commercial developments.

1.3 Methods

This report has been prepared with reference to the following guidelines:

- *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland* (Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2009)
- *OPR Practice Note PN01: Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management* (Office of the Planning Regulator 2021)
- *Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4)*, E.C., 2002
- *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater and Coastal* (Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, 2018)

In accordance with Section 3.2 of *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland*, a screening exercise comprises the following steps:

1. Description of the project and local site characteristics
2. Identification of relevant Natura 2000 sites, and compilation of information on their qualifying interests and conservation objectives
3. Assessment of potential impacts upon Natura 2000 sites, including:
    - Direct impacts (e.g. loss of habitat area, fragmentation)
    - Indirect impacts (e.g. disturbance of fauna, pollution of surface water)
    - Cumulative / 'in-combination' effects associated with other concurrent projects
4. Screening Statement with conclusions

A desk-based study was carried out using data from the following sources:

- Plans and specifications for the proposed development
- Qualifying interests / conservation objectives of Natura 2000 sites from www.npws.ie
- Bedrock, soil, subsoil, surface water and ground water maps from the Geological Survey of Ireland webmapping service (dcenr.maps.arcgis.com), the National Biodiversity Data Centre (http://maps.biodiversityireland.ie/), and the Environmental Protection Agency web viewer (gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/)
- The *Dun Laoghaire - Rathdown County Development Plan* 2016 – 2022, and details of permitted or proposed developments from the local authority's online planning records

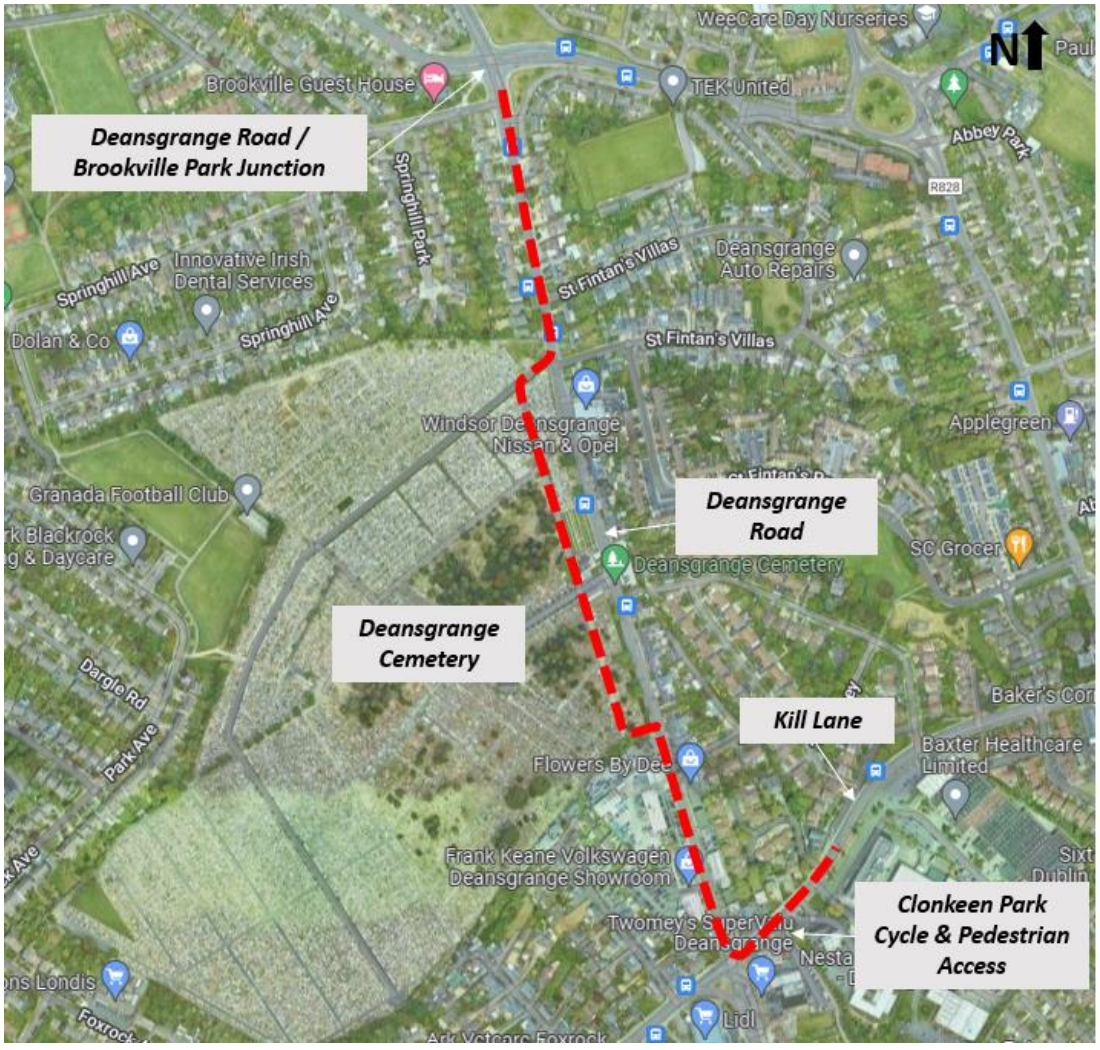
Desktop data from internet resources was accessed in March 2022.

2 Description of the Project

2.1 Environmental setting

Site location and surroundings

The proposed development site (hereafter referred to as the Site) covers a linear route of approx. 1km between the Deansgrange Road / Brookville Park junction and Kill Lane (refer to Figure 1). Part of the route will pass through Deansgrange Cemetery. The route will be located almost entirely on existing public roads and paved surfaces, with some additional works on amenity grasslands.



The surrounding area is characterised by suburban housing estates and Deansgrange Cemetery. There are also some commercial premises, sports facilities, a church (Kill o' the Grange Anglican Church) and a school (Kill o' The Grange National School).

Geology and soils

The underlying bedrock is granite (with microcline phenocrysts), which is a poor aquifer. Subsoils and soils are made ground.

Hydrology

Rivers and streams (those included on the EPA-MAPS database) were reviewed in the vicinity of the proposed development.

The northern end of the proposed development will cross a culverted section of the Monkstown Stream (also known as the Stradbrook Stream). It appears to be a small, highly-modified watercourse that has been culverted for almost all of its length, with only a small above-ground section in the vicinity of Dalguise House and Richmond House in Monkstown. As the proposed development will take place on existing roads and paved surfaces, and will not involve any modification of the culverted stream beneath the road, the Monkstown stream is not considered to be of relevance to this assessment.

The southern end of the proposed development will cross the Deansgrange Stream in the vicinity of the Kill o' the Grange church. The stream appears to originate at Kill Lane, as there is no evidence of a river to the north of the road. It should be noted that the proposed development will not involve any modification of the stream or its banks, as the cycle and pedestrian facilities will be on existing roads and pavements that cross above the stream.

The Deansgrange Stream flows south-east and meets the coast of Dublin Bay at Ballybrack / Shankill, approximately 5 km downstream of the Site. Under the Water Framework Directive Status Assessments 2013-2018, the Deansgrange Stream is of Poor status, and the coastal waters at the mouth of the stream are of High Status.

2.2 Description of the proposed development

The proposed development will comprise a range of modifications to existing roads and paved surfaces that will provide a safe walking and cycling route that meets the current school and commuting demand within the Deansgrange area. It will provide a connection between two of the proposed routes within the Active School Travel project, the "Park to Park" route and the "Mountains to Metals" route.

The general scope of work is as follows:

- Provision of segregated cycle lanes alongside the carriageway, and a new off-road cycle path through Deansgrange Cemetery
- Junction improvements including traffic signal upgrades / installation
- Remodelling of a number of major junctions

Detailed drawings and descriptions can be found elsewhere in the planning documentation. The majority of works will be on existing road surfaces and paved surfaces. Some works will require the removal of narrow strips of amenity grassland on roadside verges.

2.3 Other nearby developments (potential in-combination effects)

The existing public roads, paved surfaces and roadside verges are not specifically zoned for development under the *Dun Laoghaire – Rathdown County Development Plan* 2016 – 2022. Other areas adjoining the scheme are zoned for existing residential, commercial uses (e.g. neighbourhood centre, employment) and open space (Deansgrange Cemetery). It is a mature, settled area that is unlikely to be under development pressure in the short to medium term.

Planning applications in the vicinity of the proposed development were reviewed on the online database of Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council. There have been several applications for small-scale works such as changes-of-use, installation of signage or residential extensions; none of these applications are considered likely to cause in-combination effects.

A mixed-use development comprising 151 apartments and a number of commercial units was granted permission alongside Deansgrange Road in 2020 under the Strategic Housing Development scheme (planning reference ABP30733220). It was accompanied by a Screening for Appropriate Assessment report prepared by Openfield Ecological Services Ltd, which concluded that the proposed development posed no risk of likely significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites.

3 Description of Natura 2000 sites

3.1 Identification of Natura 2000 sites within the zone of influence

The Site is not within or adjacent to any Natura 2000 sites. Potential indirect impacts on other Natura 2000 sites were considered within a potential zone of influence of 5km[1]. The locations of relevant sites are shown in Figure 1, and details are provided in Table 1.

[1] We consider a potential zone of influence of 5km to be proportionate for the Site due to the small scale of the proposed development and its suburban setting.

Figure 2	Natura 2000 sites
Project	Deansgrange Cycle Scheme
Applicant	DLRCC
Date	21 Mar 2022

NM Ecology Ltd - Ecological Consultants
Website: www.nmecology.com
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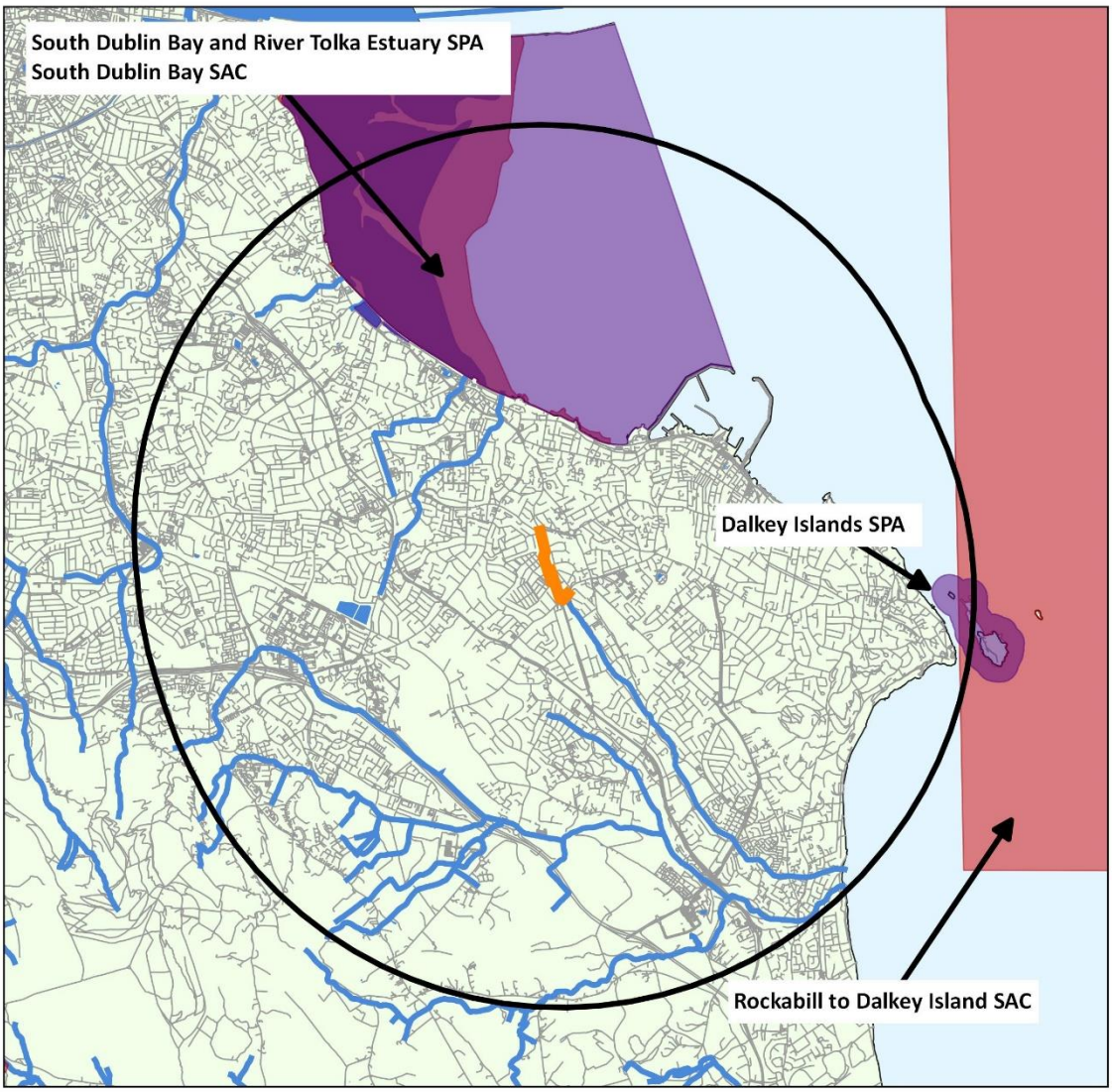
Site location
- Route of proposed scheme
- Buffer zone (5km)
- Roads
- Watercourses

Designated sites
- Special Areas of Conservation
- Special Protection Areas



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0 1 2 3 4 5 km

Table 1: Natura 2000 sites within 5 km of the Site

Site Name	Distance	Qualifying Interests
South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (site code 4024)	1.3 km north	**Key habitats:** coastal wetlands **Special conservation interests:** light-bellied brent goose, oystercatcher, ringed plover, grey plover, knot, sanderling, dunlin, bar-tailed godwit, redshank, black-headed gull (wintering populations), arctic tern, roseate tern (passage), and common tern (breeding and passage)
South Dublin Bay SAC (210)	1.3 km north	**Annex I habitats:** inter-tidal mudflats / sandflats **Annex II species:** none
Dalkey Islands SPA (4172)	4.5 km east	**Key habitats:** offshore islands, rocky shores **Special conservation interests:** breeding populations of common tern, roseate tern, Arctic tern
Rockabill to Dalkey Islands SAC (3000)	4.8 km east	**Annex I habitats:** reefs **Annex II species:** harbour porpoise

3.2 Conservation objectives

The standard conservation objective for all SACs and SPAs in Ireland is "*to maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the qualifying interests for which the SAC / SPA has been selected*". In addition, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has produced detailed conservation objectives for the Natura 2000 sites listed in Table 1. They can be viewed on the website of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (http://www.npws.ie/protected-sites), but are not reproduced here in the interests of brevity.

3.3 Identification of potential pathways for indirect impacts

Indirect impacts can occur if there is a viable pathway between the source (the Site) and the receptor (the habitats and species for which a Natura 2000 site has been designated). The most common pathway for impacts is surface water, e.g. if a pollutant is washed into a river and carried downstream into a Natura 2000 site. Other potential pathways are groundwater, air (e.g. airborne dust or sound waves), or land (e.g. flow of liquids, vibration). The zone of effect for hydrological impacts can be several kilometres, but for air and land it is rarely more than one hundred metres. An appraisal of potential pathways to Natura 2000 sites is provided below.

The *South Dublin Bay* SAC and the *South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary* SPA are both located approx. 1.3 km north of the Site. There is substantial overlap between these Natura 2000 sites, so they are considered here in combination. The SAC has been designated to protect extensive sandflats and mudflats that are exposed at low tide, and the SPA has been designated to protect a range of overwintering birds that feed and roost in these tidal habitats, as well as tern species

that breed in the area during summer months. There are no watercourses linking the Site with either the SAC or SPA. Groundwater would not provide a feasible pathway due to the filtration provided by 1.3 km of intervening soils. Pathways via land and air can be ruled out due to the distances involved.

The *Dalkey Islands* SPA and *Rockabill to Dalkey Island* SAC are located 4.5 and 4.8 km (respectively) from the eastern end of the Site. The SPA has been designated to protect breeding populations of common tern, roseate tern and Arctic tern on the Dalkey Islands, and the SAC to protect offshore reefs and harbour porpoise between Rockabill Lighthouse and the Dalkey Islands. Although there could theoretically be a surface water pathway between the Site and coastal waters via the Deansgrange Stream and coastal waters (see Figure 2), the coastal waters of Dublin Bay would dilute any waterborne pollutants to negligible levels before they could reach the SAC or SPA. Therefore, surface water pathways to both sites can be ruled out. Pathways via groundwater, land and air can be ruled out due to the distances involved.

In summary, no potential pathways were identified between the Site and any of the Natura 2000 sites listed in Table 1. Nonetheless, potential impacts will be considered in the impact assessment in Section 4. All other Natura 2000 sites are screened out of the assessment.

4 Assessment of potential impacts

4.1 Direct impacts

The Site is not located within or adjacent to any Natura 2000 sites, so there is no risk of habitat loss, fragmentation or any other direct impacts.

4.2 Indirect impacts

Potential changes in water quality (construction phase)

Construction works typically generate fine sediments, and may occasionally cause accidental spills of oil or other toxic chemicals. If pollutants reach watercourses in significant quantities, they can cause impacts on riparian habitats and species downstream of the Site. However, no pathways were identified between the Site and any Natura 2000 sites. Therefore, there is no risk of any indirect impacts on Natura 2000 sites during the construction of the proposed development.

Potential changes in water quality (operational phase)

All roads within the Site have roadside drainage networks, which collect rainwater and convey it to discharge points at local watercourses. The scheme will not involve any substantial changes to the roadside drainage network, so there will be no change from the baseline scenario.

The scheme will not generate any foul water, so this can be screened out of the assessment.

4.3 Potential in-combination effects

As noted in the Section 2.3, the majority of the Site is not zoned for development. One large-scale mixed-use development was identified adjacent to the proposed development, but impacts on Natura 2000 sites from that development were screened out (when considered in isolation), and the proposed development will not cause any direct or indirect impacts on Natura 2000 sites, so there is no risk of in-combination effects.

5 Conclusion of Stage 1: Screening Statement

In Section 3.2.5 of *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland* (NPWS 2010), it is stated that the first stage of the AA process can have three possible conclusions:

1. **AA is not required**
   Screening, followed by consultation and agreement with the NPWS, establishes that the plan or project is directly connected with or necessary to the nature conservation management of the site.

2. **No potential for significant effects / AA is not required**
   Screening establishes that there is no potential for significant effects and the project or plan can proceed as proposed.

3. **Significant effects are certain, likely or uncertain**
   The project must either proceed to the second stage of the AA process, or be rejected.

Having considered the particulars of the proposed development, we conclude that this application meets the second conclusion, because there is no risk of direct or indirect impacts on any Natura 2000 sites. Therefore, with regard to Article 42 (7) of the *European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011*, it can be excluded on the basis of objective scientific information following screening, that the plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site. Therefore, we conclude that Appropriate Assessment is not required.

In accordance with the OPR 2021 guidance, we note that no mitigation measures have been considered when reaching this conclusion.

References

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, 2018. *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the U.K and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater and Coastal* (2nd Edition). C.I.E.E.M., Hampshire, England.

Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2009. *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland.* National Parks and Wildlife Service, DAHG, Dublin, Ireland.

European Commission. 2002. *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*. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.

Office of the Planning Regulator 2021. *Practice Note PN01: Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management*. Available online at opr.ie