Comhairle Contae County Council

Parks & Landscape Services Section, Municipal Services Department

Proposed Development of a Running Track & Associated Facilities at St. Thomas Estate, Tibradden Road, Rathfarnam, Dublin 16 in Proximity to a Protected Structure (St. Thomas House)
PC/PKS/01/19

Appendix 1 - Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT

for

Running track & associated facilities at St. Thomas Estate

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF ARTICLE 6(3) OF THE EU HABITATS DIRECTIVE

for: **Parks, Municipal Services Department**

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

CAAS has been appointed by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council to prepare this Screening Report in support of the Appropriate Assessment (AA) of the St. Thomas proposed sports facility and associated facilities in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (as amended) (hereafter referred to as the "Habitats Directive").

1.2 Legislative Context

The Habitats Directive provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the "favourable conservation status" of habitats and species of European Community Interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives (Habitats Directive as above and Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds) with Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as European sites. Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to affect such sites. Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for AA. These requirements are implemented in the Republic of Ireland by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended) and the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive States:

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

The AA process relates to the protection of species listed in Annex I and Annex II of the Habitats Directive which form the Natura 2000 network (Article 3(1)). Species breeding and resting places of species listed in Annex IV of the Habitats Directive are nationally protected in Ireland as per Articles 15 and 16 of the Habitats Directive. The species listed in Annex IV do not form part of the Natura 2000 network as they are not mentioned in Article 3(1) of the Directive which defines the Natura 2000 network.

Article 3(1) of the Habitats Directive States:

> *'A coherent European ecological network of special areas of conservation shall be set up under the title Natura 2000. This network, composed of sites hosting the natural habitat types listed in Annex I and habitats of the species listed in Annex II, shall enable the natural habitat types and the species' habitats concerned to be maintained or, where appropriate, restored at a favourable conservation status in their natural range'.*

AA is an assessment of the potential for adverse or negative effects of a plan or project, in combination with other plans or projects, on the conservation objectives of a European site. These sites consist of SACs and SPAs and provide for the protection and long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats.

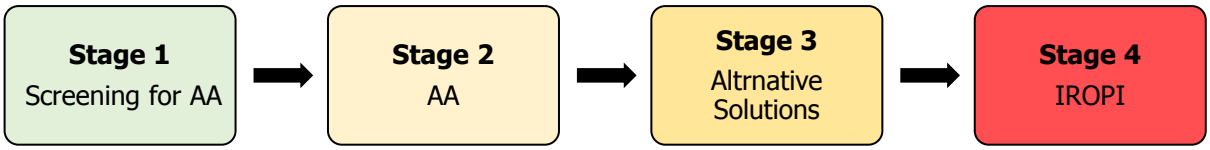
1.3 Approach

This AA screening is based on best scientific knowledge and has utilised ecological and hydrological expertise. In addition, a detailed online review of published scientific literature and 'grey' literature was conducted. This included a detailed review of the National Parks and Wildlife Website including mapping and available reports for relevant sites and in particular sensitive qualifying interests/special conservation interests described and their conservation objectives. The EPA Envision map viewer (www.epa.ie) and available reports were also reviewed, as was the NPWS (2013) publication *"The Status of Protected EU Habitats and Species in Ireland"*.

The ecological desktop study completed for the AA screening of the proposed sports facility comprised the following elements:

- Identification of European sites within 15km of the proposed project boundary with identification of potential pathways links for specific sites (if relevant) greater than 15km from the proposed project boundary;
- Review of the NPWS site synopses and conservation objectives for European sites within 15km and for which potential pathways from the proposed site have been identified; and
- Examination of available information on protected species.

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



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

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

Stage Three: Assessment of Alternative Solutions
The process that examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that avoids adverse impacts on the integrity of the European site.

Stage Four: Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain
An assessment of compensatory measures where, in the light of an assessment of imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI), it is deemed that the project or plan should proceed.

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

overriding public interest, then compensation measures are required for any remaining adverse effects.

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

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

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

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

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

2 Description of the St. Thomas Proposed Sports Facility & Associated Works

2.1 Receiving Environment

The site is located on the south side of Tibradden Road (R113) in Rathfarnham, Dublin 16, adjacent to the roundabout junction with Whitechurch Road and Kilmashogue Lane. The site is in within 500m of Marlay Park. The site comprises the estate known as St. Thomas which is approximately 25 Acres in size and includes St. Thomas House and outbuilding, woodlands and agricultural lands. The proposed development is for a multi-sports facility. The components of the facility are described is s2.2 below.

An Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) report has been prepared by NM Ecology Ltd on behalf of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council which characterises the existing condition of the site. This report identifies that *'the underlying bedrock is granite, which is a poor aquifer. Subsoils are granite till, although there is a pocket of limestone gravels underlying St Thomas' house and parts of the southern fields. Soils are deep and well-drained, derived mainly from acidic material. Overall, it is expected that most rainfall on the site would percolate to ground rather than flowing into surface water drainage features.*

The closest surface water feature is the Whitechurch/Kilmashogue Stream, which runs along the eastern boundary of the site. It is located approx. 40 m from both the proposed sports building and the running track, and 25m from the pedestrian paths. The river is located in a wooded valley, and is approx. 10 – 15 m below the level of the southern fields. The stream is currently of moderate status (Water Framework Directive Status Assessments 2010-2015), due to poor biological and invertebrate status.

The stream flows north and meets the River Dodder at Rathfarnham, approx. 4km north of the proposed development site. The River Dodder then flows north-east and meets the River Liffey at Grand Canal Dock a further 8.5km downstream. The River Dodder is also of moderate status downstream of its confluence with the Whitechurch/Kilmashogue Stream' (Figure 3.2).

The habitats identified on site, as per the Fossitt classification system[1], include mixed broadleaved woodland (WD1), broadleaved/conifer woodland (WD2), improved grassland (GA1), dry meadow (GS2), ornamental shrubs/flower beds (WS3), hedgerows (WL1), treelines (WL2), lowland rivers (FW2) and artificial ponds (FL8). There were no Annex I habitats identified on site, further details can be found in the Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) report. The important ecological features identified on the proposed development site are: woodland, treelines, hedgerows, birds, badgers, woodland mammals (pine martens, red squirrels and pygmy shrews) and bats. No Annex I or Annex II species were identified on site.

[1] Give Fossit classification system details as a reference – i.e. title, author and year

2.2 Proposed Sports Facility & Associated Facilities

The site is to be developed as a regional multi-use sports facility to include new pedestrian entrances, a vehicular entrance with adequate sightlines, car parking, 8 lane synthetic running track including field events with floodlights, a multisport building including an indoor hall, jogging and walking routes, natural mounding, tree planting and all ancillary civil, building and landscaping in proximity to a Protected Structure (St. Thomas House).

The key elements of the project design relate to the development of facilities and features including:

- Pedestrian & Cycle Entrances;
- Pedestrian & Cycle Access & Links;
- Vehicular Entrance;
- Car Parking;
- Bicycle Parking;
- Running Track & Field Facilities;
- External Floodlighting;
- Multi-Use Building;
- Jogging & Amenity Walking Routes; and
- Natural Mounding & Play.

The operational phase of the project will be an active sports complex and amenity area for recreation. The nature and extent of the proposed development is outlined in the associated Part 8 Planning Report. This AA Screening Report should be read in conjunction with the supporting drawings and reports.

3 Screening for Appropriate Assessment

3.1 Introduction

This stage of the process identifies any likely significant effects on European sites from a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans. The screening phase was progressed in the following stages. A series of questions are asked during the screening stage of the AA process in order to determine:

- Whether a plan or project can be excluded from AA requirements because it is directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site.
- Whether the project will have a potentially significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, in view of the site's conservation objectives or if residual uncertainty exists regarding potential impacts.

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

Site-Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs) have been designed to define favourable conservation status for a particular habitat or species at that site. According to the European Commission interpretation document 'Managing Natura 2000 sites: The provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC', paragraph 4.6(3):

> "The integrity of a site involves its ecological functions. The decision as to whether it is adversely affected should focus on and be limited to the site's conservation objectives."

Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing;
- the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future; and
- the conservation status of its typical species is favourable.

The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

- population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats;
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future; and
- there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

3.2 Identification of Relevant European Sites

This section of the screening process describes the European sites which exist within the Zone of Influence (ZOI) of the site. The Department of the Environment (2009) Guidance on AA recommends a 15km buffer zone to be considered. A review of all sites within the ZOI has allowed a determination to be made that in the absence of significant hydrological links the characteristics of the proposed sports facility will not impose effects beyond the 15km ZOI.

European sites that occur within 15km of the proposed sports facility are listed in Table 3.1 and illustrated in

Figure 3.1 below. Details on the specific QIs and SCIs of each European site are also identified in Table 3.1 as well as site-specific threats and vulnerabilities of each of the sites.

In order to determine the potential for effects from the proposal, information on the qualifying features, known vulnerabilities and threats to site integrity pertaining to any potentially affected European sites was reviewed. Background information on threats to individual sites and vulnerability of habitats and species that was used during this assessment included the following:

- Ireland's Article 17 Report to the European Commission "Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland" (NPWS, 2013);
- Site Synopses[2]; and
- NATURA 2000 Standard Data Forms[2].

The assessment takes consideration of the SSCOs of each of the sites within the ZOI. Since the conservation objectives for the European sites focus on maintaining the favourable conservation condition of the QIs/SCIs of each site, the screening process concentrated on assessing the potential effects of the proposed sports facility against the QIs/SCIs of each site. The conservation objectives for each site were consulted throughout the assessment process.

[2] NPWS (2019); NPWS Database of protected site data and associated documents for each European site; available at https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites

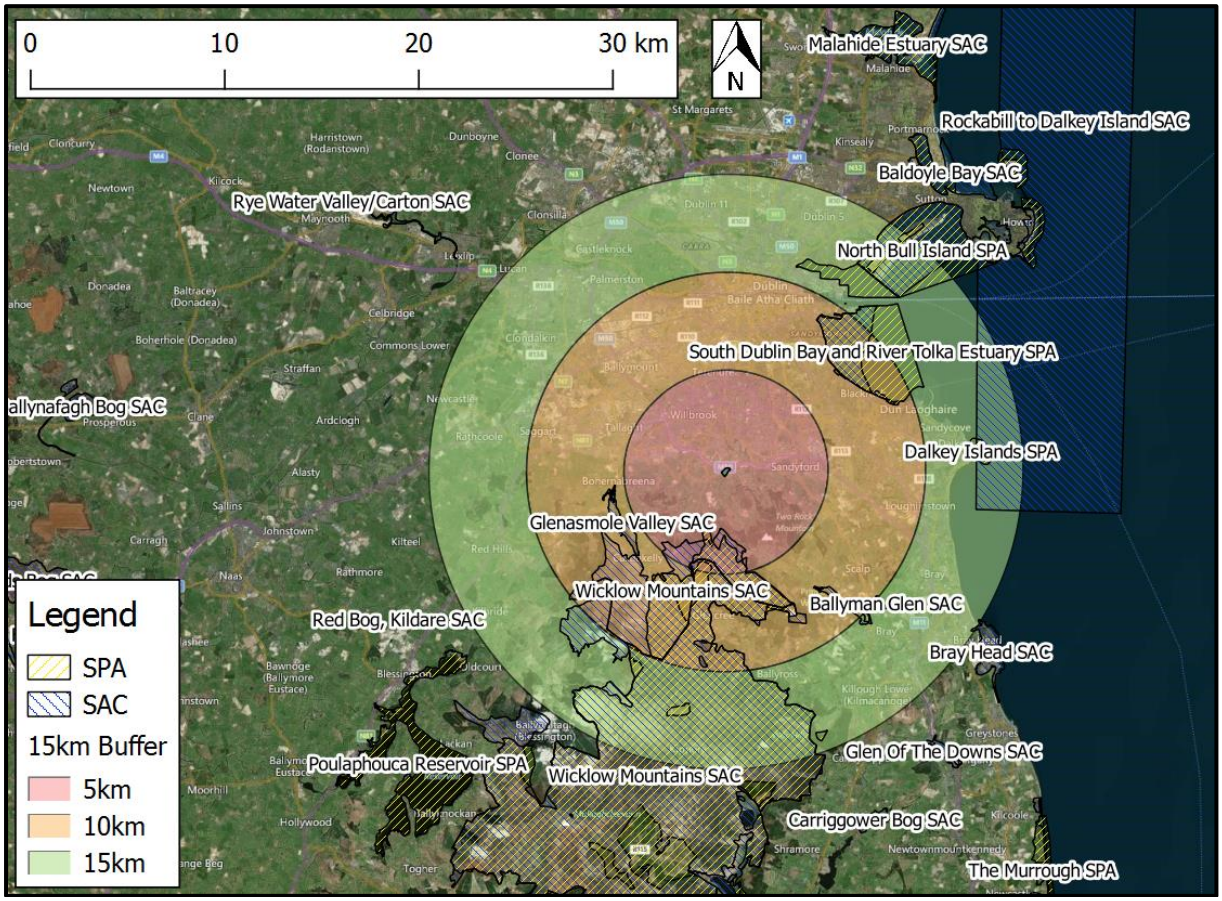


Figure 3.1 European sites within 15km of the proposed sports facility boundary

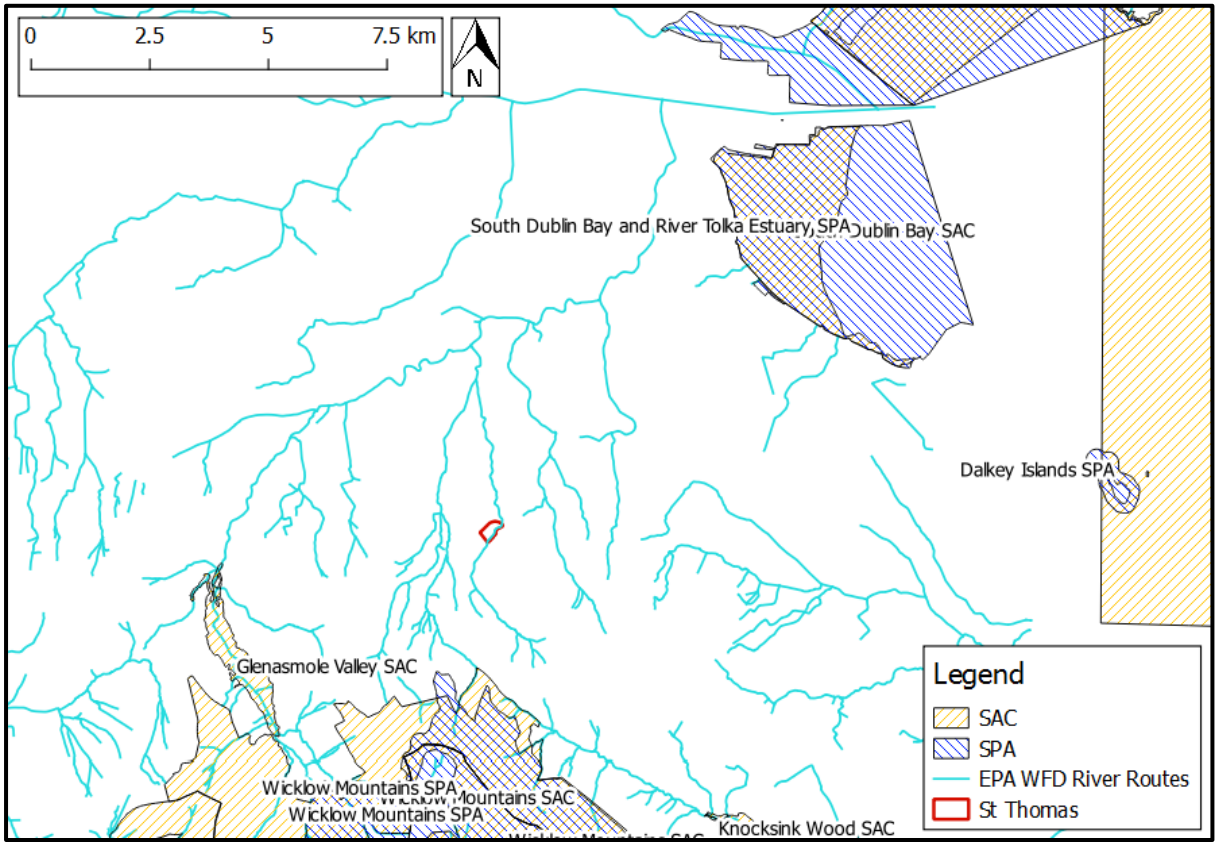


Figure 3.2 EPA river route data showing the hydrological pathways from the site

Table 3.1 European sites within 15km of the proposed sports facility boundary (listed according to distance)

Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Sensitive Receptors (Qualifying Interests & Special Conservation Interests) [including the relevant code for the qualifying feature]	Site Synopsis and Existing Threats or Sensitivities
002122	Wicklow Mountains SAC	2.69	Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (*Littorelletalia uniflorae*) [3110] Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160] Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix* [4010] European dry heaths [4030] Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] Calaminarian grasslands of the *Violetalia calaminariae* [6130] Species-rich Nardus grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe) [6230] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130] Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (*Androsacetalia alpinae* and *Galeopsietalia ladani*) [8110] Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210] Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220] Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0] *Lutra lutra* (Otter) [1355]	Wicklow Mountains SAC is a complex of upland areas in Counties Wicklow and Dublin, flanked by the Blessington reservoir to the west and Vartry reservoir in the east, Cruagh Mountain in the north and Lybagh Mountain in the south. Most of the site is over 300 m, with much ground over 600 m. Large areas of the site are owned by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and are managed for nature conservation based on traditional land uses of upland areas. The most common land use is traditional sheep grazing, but others include turf cutting, mostly hand-cutting but some machine-cutting also occurs. These activities are largely confined to the Military Road, where there is easy access. Large areas which had been previously hand-cut and are now abandoned are regenerating. In the last 40 years, forestry has become an important land use in the uplands, and has affected both the wildlife and the hydrology of the area. Amenity use is very high, with Dublin city close to the site. Peat erosion is frequent on the peaks. This may be a natural process, but is likely to be accelerated by activities such as grazing. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.
004040	Wicklow Mountains SPA	2.95	Merlin (Falco columbarius) [A098] Peregrine (Falco peregrinus) [A103]	This is an extensive upland site, comprising a substantial part of the Wicklow Mountains. The underlying geology of the site is mainly of Leinster granites, flanked by Ordovician schists, mudstones and volcanics. The area was subject to glaciation and features fine examples of glacial lakes, deep valleys and moraines. Most of site is over 300 m, with much ground over 600 m and the highest peak of Lugnaquillia at 925 m. The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats for the site such as: grazing, peat extraction, recreational activities and paths/cycleways. All of these pressures are identified within the site boundary the site synopsis identifies forestry as being a threat outside the boundary. No other threats have been identified by the NPWS.
001209	Glenasmole Valley SAC	5.58	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]	Glenasmole Valley in south Co. Dublin lies on the edge of the Wicklow uplands, approximately 5km from Tallaght. The River Dodder flows through the valley and has been impounded here to form two reservoirs which supply water to south Dublin. The non-calcareous bedrock of the Glenasmole Valley has been overlain by deep drift deposits which now line the valley sides. They are partly covered by scrub and woodland, and on the less precipitous parts, by a herb-rich grassland. There is much seepage through the deposits, which brings to the surface water rich in bases, which induces local patches of calcareous fen and, in places, petrifying springs.

Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Sensitive Receptors (Qualifying Interests & Special Conservation Interests) [including the relevant code for the qualifying feature]	Site Synopsis and Existing Threats or Sensitivities
				The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats for the site such as: leisure fishing, invasive species, roads/paths/railroads. All of these pressures are identified within the boundary. The NPWS have identified pressures outside the site boundary these include: forest replanting, peat extraction, non-intensive grazing, pollution, forest planting (native trees), car parks and parking areas, artificial planting. No other pressures have been identified by the NPWS.
000725	Knocksink Wood SAC	7.26	Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220] Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae*) [91E0]	Knocksink Wood is situated in the valley of the Glencullen River, just north-west of Enniskerry in Co. Wicklow. The fast flowing Glencullen River winds its way over granite boulders along the valley floor. The steep sides of the valley are mostly covered with calcareous drift, and support extensive areas of woodland. The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats for the site such as: Recreational activities, paths/tracks, artificial planting, missing or wrongly directed conservation measures, removal of forest undergrowth and camping/caravans. All of these pressures are identified within the boundary, the site synopsis has identified pressures that occur both outside and within the boundary including: improved access to site, grazing and invasive species. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.
004024	South Dublin Bay and River Tolka SPA	7.32	Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) [A046] Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*) [A130] Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*) [A137] Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) [A141] Knot (*Calidris canutus*) [A143] Sanderling (*Calidris alba*) [A144] Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) [A149] Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) [A157] Redshank (*Tringa totanus*) [A162] Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) [A179] Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*) [A192] Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) [A193] Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) [A194] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	The South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA comprises a substantial part of Dublin Bay. It includes the intertidal area between the River Liffey and Dun Laoghaire, and the estuary of the River Tolka to the north of the River Liffey, as well as Booterstown Marsh. A portion of the shallow marine waters of the bay is also included. The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats for the site such as fishing, recreational activities, bait digging and disposal of waste resulting in discharges. All of these pressures are identified within the boundary. Pressures identified by the NPWS outside the boundary include roads and motorways and industrial urbanisation. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.
000210	South Dublin Bay SAC	7.53	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]	This site lies south of the River Liffey in Co. Dublin, and extends from the South Wall to the west pier at Dun Laoghaire. It is an intertidal site with extensive areas of sand and mudflats. The sediments are predominantly sands but grade to sandy muds near the shore at Merrion Gates. The main channel which drains the area is Cockle Lake. The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats such as recreational activities, paths, tracks and cycling paths and bait digging/collection. All of these threats have been identified within the site boundary. The NPWS have identified threats beyond the boundary including, urbanisation and roads and motorways.

Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Sensitive Receptors (Qualifying Interests & Special Conservation Interests) [including the relevant code for the qualifying feature]	Site Synopsis and Existing Threats or Sensitivities
				No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.
000713	Ballyman Glen SAC	9.95	Petrifying springs with tufa formation (*Cratoneurion*) [7220] Alkaline fens [7230]	Ballyman Glen is situated approximately 3km north of Enniskerry and straddles the County boundary between Dublin and Wicklow. It is orientated in an east-west direction with a stream running through the centre. The glen is bounded mostly by steeply sloping pasture with Gorse (Ulex europaeus) and areas of wood and scrub. An area of land that slopes towards the fen has been used as a landfill site for domestic refuse. The site is also used for a clay pigeon shoot and shattered clay pigeons are scattered throughout the area. The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats for the site such as: Disposal of household/ recreational facility waste and grazing. All of these pressures are identified within the boundary, the site synopsis identifies a list of threats outside the boundary including: pollution to surface water, urbanisations, roads/motorways, grazing, removal of hedges, forest planting and fertilisation. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.
004006	North Bull Island SPA	11.01	Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) [A046] Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*) [A048] Teal (*Anas crecca*) [A052] Pintail (*Anas acuta*) [A054] Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*) [A056] Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*) [A130] Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) [A140] Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) [A141] Knot (*Calidris canutus*) [A143] Sanderling (*Calidris alba*) [A144] Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) [A149] Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*) [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) [A157] Curlew (*Numenius arquata*) [A160] Redshank (*Tringa totanus*) [A162] Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*) [A169] Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) [A179] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	This site covers all of the inner part of north Dublin Bay, with the seaward boundary extending from the Bull Wall lighthouse across to Drumleck Point at Howth Head. The North Bull Island sand spit is a relatively recent depositional feature, formed as a result of improvements to Dublin Port during the 18th and 19th centuries. It is almost 5km long and 1km wide and runs parallel to the coast between Clontarf and Sutton. Part of the interior of the island has been converted to golf courses. The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats for the site including, recreational activities, bait digging, transportation (bridge, viaduct), discharges and urbanisation. Pressures identified by the NPWS outside the boundary include urbanisation, shipping lanes, paths/tracks and continuous urbanisation. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.
000206	North Dublin Bay SAC	12.38	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] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila*	This site covers the inner part of north Dublin Bay, the seaward boundary extending from the Bull Wall lighthouse across to the Martello Tower at Howth Head. The North Bull Island is the focal point of this site. The main land uses of this site are amenity activities and nature conservation. The North Bull Island is the main recreational beach in Co. Dublin and is used throughout the year. Much of the land surface of the island is taken up by two golf courses. Two separate Statutory Nature Reserves cover much of the island east of the Bull Wall and the surrounding intertidal flats. The site is used regularly for educational purposes. North Bull Island has been designated a Special Protection Area under the E.U. Birds Directive and it is also a statutory Wildfowl Sanctuary, a Ramsar Convention site, a Biogenetic Reserve, a Biosphere Reserve and a Special Area Amenity Order site.

Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Sensitive Receptors (Qualifying Interests & Special Conservation Interests) [including the relevant code for the qualifying feature]	Site Synopsis and Existing Threats or Sensitivities
			arenaria (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] Humid dune slacks [2190] *Petalophyllum ralfsii* (Petalwort) [1395]	The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats for the site such as: pollution to surface ater, urbanisation, agricultural activities, intensive maintenance, recreational activities, bait digging/collection, invasive species. All of these pressures are identified within the boundary. The site synopsis identifies pressures beyond the site boundary including: urbanisation and a golf course. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.
004172	Dalkey Islands SPA	12.75	Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*) [A192] Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) [A193] Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) [A194]	The site comprises Dalkey Island, Lamb Island and Maiden Rock, the intervening rocks and reefs, and the surrounding sea to a distance of 200 m. Dalkey Island, which is the largest in the group, lies c. 400 m off Sorrento Point on the Co. Dublin mainland from which it is separated by a deep channel. The island is low-lying, the highest point of which (c. 15 m) is marked by a Martello Tower. The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats for the site including Agricultural activities (grazing by feral sheep), recreational activities (walking, horse-riding, non-motorised vehicles, nautical sports). All of these pressures are identified within the SPA boundary. Urbanisation is identified as a threat by the NPWS outside the site boundary. No other threats have been identified.
003000	Rockabill to Dalkey Islands SAC	12.81	Reefs [1170] *Phocoena phocoena* (Harbour Porpoise) [1351]	This site includes a range of dynamic inshore and coastal waters in the western Irish Sea. These include sandy and muddy seabed, reefs, sandbanks and islands. This site extends southwards, in a strip approximately 7km wide and 40km in length, from Rockabill, running adjacent to Howth Head, and crosses Dublin Bay to Frazer Bank in south Co. Dublin. The site encompasses Dalkey, Muglins and Rockabill islands. The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats for the site such as: Shipping lanes, professional active fishing, noise nuisance and noise pollution, discharge and utility & service lines. All of these pressures occur within and outside the boundary. No other site-specific pressures have been identified by the NPWS.
000714	Bray Head SAC	14.85	Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] European dry heaths [4030]	This coastal site is situated in the north-east of Co. Wicklow between the towns of Bray and Greystones. The bedrock geology is Cambrian quartzites and shales (with mudstones and greywackes). Bray Head consists of a plateau of high ground, with five prominent quartzite knolls and has a maximum height of 241 m. The more exposed higher ground has a covering of shallow acidic soils, with protruding bedrock and scree. Elsewhere, deeper soils are formed by drift deposits and are calcareous in character. The heath and grassland habitats at this site are threatened by reclamation for agriculture and also by frequent burning. The site is a popular recreational area and is especially used by walkers. The standard data form for the site details a list of potential threats for the site such as: removal of hedges, motorised vehicles, paths/tracks and vandalism. All of these pressures are identified within the boundary. The NPWS have identified pressures outside of the boundary including urbanisation. No other site-specific threats have been identified by the NPWS.

3.3 Assessment Criteria

3.3.1 Is the Plan Necessary to the Management of European Sites?

Under the Habitats Directive, plans or projects that are directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site do not require AA. For this exception to apply, management is required to be interpreted narrowly as nature conservation management in the sense of Article 6(1) of the Habitats Directive. This refers to specific measures to address the ecological requirements of annexed habitats and species (and their habitats) present on a site(s). The relationship should be shown to be direct and not a by-product of the plan/project, even if this might result in positive or beneficial effects for a site(s).

The primary purpose of the proposed sports facility is not the nature conservation management of the sites, but to provide streetscaping development in the St. Thomas area. Therefore, the proposed sports facility is not considered by the Habitats Directive to be directly connected with or necessary to the management of European designated sites.

3.3.2 Elements of the Proposed Sports Facility with Potential to Give Rise to Effects

The proposed sports facility provides for development of infrastructure including carparks, indoor sports facilities and outdoor running tracks, walkways etc. Therefore, construction phase elements of the proposed sports facility have potential to introduce effects such as alteration to hydrological characterises, air quality and/or indirect disturbance effects due to noise/vibrations. These effects are examined below in relation to the sensitive receptors of each of the European sites identified with regard to their conservation objectives and the potential pathways for effects. The operational phase elements of the proposed project will introduce low levels of disturbance effects such as noise, however light pollution from the floodlight areas is a long terms source for effects to the local area.

3.3.3 Identification of Potential Effects and Screening of Sites

This section documents the final stage of the screening process. It has used the information collected on the sensitivity of each European site and describes any potential effects to the integrity of European sites resulting from the proposed sports facility. This assumes the absence of any controls, conditions, or mitigation measures. In determining the potential for effects, a number of factors have been taken into account. Firstly, the sensitivity and reported threats to the European site. Secondly, the individual elements of the proposed sports facility and the potential effect they may cause to the site were considered. The elements of the proposed sports facility with potential to cause effect to the integrity of European sites are presented in Table 3.2 below.

Sites are screened out based on one or a combination of the following criteria:

- Where it can be shown that there are significant pathways such as hydrological links between activities of the proposed sports facility, and the site to be screened;
- Where the site is located at such a distance from proposed sports facility that effects are not foreseen; and
- Where it is that known threats or vulnerabilities at a site cannot be linked to potential impacts that may arise from the proposed sports facility.

3.4 Characterising Potential Significant Effects

The following parameters are described when characterising impacts (following guidance from the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Environmental Protection Agency and National Roads Authority):

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management guidelines for ecological impact assessment (2016) define: an ecologically significant impact as an impact (negative or positive) on the integrity of a defined site or ecosystem and/or the conservation status of habitats or species within a given geographic area; and the integrity of a site as the coherence of its ecological structure and function, across its whole area, which enables it to sustain the habitat, complex of habitats and/or the levels of populations of the species for which it was classified.

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

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

> ***Favourable conservation status*** *of a* ***species*** *can be described as being achieved when: 'population data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself, and the natural range of the species is neither being reduced or likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.'*
>
> ***Favourable conservation status*** *of a* ***habitat*** *can be described as being achieved when: 'its natural range, and area it covers within that range, is stable or increasing, and the ecological factors that are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and the conservation status of its typical species is favourable'.*

Generic Conservation Objectives for cSACs have been provided as follows:

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

One generic Conservation Objective has been provided for SPAs as follows:

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

EC guidance[3] outlines the types of effects that may affect European sites. These include effects from the following activities:

- Land take
- Resource Requirements (Drinking Water Abstraction Etc.)
- Emissions (Disposal to Land, Water or Air)
- Excavation Requirements
- Transportation Requirements
- Duration of Construction, Operation, Decommissioning

In addition, the guidance outlines the following likely changes that may occur at a designated site, which may result in effects on the integrity and function of that site:

- Reduction of Habitat Area
- Disturbance to Key Species
- Habitat or Species Fragmentation
- Reduction in Species Density
- Changes in Key Indicators of Conservation Value (Water Quality Etc.)
- Climate Change

The elements detailed above were considered with specific reference to each of the European sites identified in Section 3.3.2.

3.4.1 Land Take

The nearest European site is 2.69km from the site of the proposed development. No Annex I habitats or Annex II species were identified on site; therefore, there will be no effects posed to European sites in this respect.

3.4.2 Resource Requirements (Drinking Water Abstraction Etc.)

The sports facility will have very low resource requirements beyond the materials for construction and therefore effects in this regard will be negligible. The electricity supply will be met through existing 38kv and 10kv lines running through and across the site. Overhead lines will be undergrounded in ducts. Galvanised steel poles are required at the boundaries where the 10kv lines enter the site. Mini galvanised steel pylons may be required at the boundaries where the 38kv line enters the site. A new sub-station will be located within the site close to the car park. This will be powder coated steel and can be screened from direct view using tree/hedge planting. Therefore, there will be no interactions with resources necessary for the maintenance of the ecological integrity of any European sites.

3.4.3 Emissions (Disposal to Land, Water or Air)

There is no foul sewer system available in the local network. Foul drainage will be accommodated within the site via a treatment plant and percolation area. This will be located above the car park in close proximity to the proposed new sports building. The percolation area will be in excess of 100m from the stream.

The surface drainage for the running track will consist of a drainage channel adjacent to the inside lanes where it will be then directed into a soakaway in the field area or into the permeable stone below the track. Excess surface water drainage from the building will be directed into a naturalised attenuation wetland/depression which will infiltrate into ground. The car park surface water drainage will retain its existing fall and be directed into the bank of mature trees along the boundary of the site. All car parking spaces will be permeable reinforced grass. The drainage has been designed in

[3] *Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*, European Commission Environment DG, 2001

accordance with the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Strategy (GDSDS) with attenuation in soft areas where possible. Surface water design has been undertaken using best practice and integrated Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems in order to replicate the natural characteristics of rainfall run-off from the proposed development. As well as attenuating the water on site, the quality of the surface water will be improved while also providing an amenity through good quality integrated design. All surface water drainage will naturally infiltrate into the ground and it will be designed so that attenuation will be provided for the 1.0% AEP (1:100 year) storm event.

Construction phase elements of the plan may give rise to increased temporary site effects such as noise or contamination due to dust. Given the distance between the closest European site and the development, combined with the relatively small scale of the development, these effects are determined to be negligible.

3.4.4 Excavation Requirements

There are no major excavation works proposed by the project. There will be small scale temporary excavations in relation to artificial surfaces and the infrastructure elements such as the sports facility building. The site is directly adjacent to the Kilmashogue Stream which has been identified to have indirect connectivity to Dublin bay over 13km downstream of the site. The proposed sports facility will be 40 m from the stream and the pathways/running track will be 25 m from the stream edge. The distance from the stream, indirect pathway to Dublin Bay and the small-scale temporary nature of the development ensure that there are no significant risks to the water quality of Dublin bay. The projects identified in the surrounding area are also small scale and were subject to their own AA processes (see below for details). In addition to this the surface water drainage will be managed in accordance with the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Strategy (GDSDS) with attenuation in soft areas where possible (as per the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan). Therefore, these effects are determined to be negligible.

3.4.5 Transportation Requirements

There will be a minor temporary increase in traffic during the construction phase and increased operational traffic. However, these effects are considered to be negligible with regard to European sites due to the distances observed and indirect hydrological connectivity identified. The site is directly adjacent to the Kilmashogue Stream which has been identified to have indirect connectivity to Dublin bay over 13km downstream of the site. In addition to this the surface water drainage will be managed in accordance with the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Strategy (GDSDS) with attenuation in soft areas where possible (as per the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan. Therefore, these effects are determined to be negligible.

3.4.6 Duration of Construction, Operation, Decommissioning

The construction of the proposed project is estimated to take 12 months, with all works to be completed within this time. The development will be a permanent feature with no decommissioning phase. The duration of the construction and operational phases will have no effects on European sites given the distances observed and indirect hydrological connectivity identified. The site is directly adjacent to the Kilmashogue Stream which has been identified to have indirect connectivity to Dublin bay over 13km downstream of the site. In addition to this the surface water drainage will be managed in accordance with the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Strategy (GDSDS) with attenuation in soft areas where possible (as per the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan). Therefore, these effects are determined to be negligible.

3.4.7 Reduction of Habitat Area

The nearest European sites is 2.69km from the site and no Annex I habitats or Annex II species were identified on site; therefore, there will be no effects posed to European sites in this respect.

3.4.8 Disturbance to Key Species

None of the species and/or habitats identified in Table 3.1 were recorded on site. Disturbance effects due to noise or lighting etc. are localised to the receiving environment/surrounding area. There are no pathways for disturbance effects identified due to the distances between the proposed development and the nearest European site.

3.4.9 Habitat or Species Fragmentation or Reduction in Species Density

The existing site has moderate to high ecological value comprised of woodlands, grasslands and treelines (see Section 2.1). No existing habitat corridors from any European sites were identified within the associated EcIA. Therefore, the proposal is considered to have no potential effects on any European site in this regard.

3.4.10 Changes in Key Indicators of Conservation Value (Water Quality Etc.)

The project is small scale and temporary with indirect hydrological connectivity. The site is directly adjacent to the Kilmashogue Stream which has been identified to have indirect connectivity to Dublin bay over 13km downstream of the site. The proposed sports facility will be 40 m from the stream and the pathways/running track will be 25 m from the stream edge. The distance from the stream, indirect pathway to Dublin bay and the small-scale temporary nature of the development ensure that there are no significant risks to the water quality of Dublin bay. The projects identified in the surrounding area are also small scale and were subject to their own AA processes (see below for details). In addition to this the surface water drainage will be managed in accordance with the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Strategy (GDSDS) with attenuation in soft areas where possible (as per the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan. Therefore, these effects are determined to be negligible.

3.4.11 Climate Change

Due to the nature and scale of the proposed development, its effects of the proposed development on climate and Ireland's obligations under the Kyoto Protocol are not anticipated to be significant.

Table 3.2 Screening assessment of the potential effects arising from the proposed sports facility

Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying features (QIs/SCIs)	Characterization of Potential Effects[4]	Potential Significant Effects	Potential In-Combination Effects
002122	Wicklow Mountains SAC	2.69	Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (*Littorelletalia uniflorae*) [3110] Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160] Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix* [4010] European dry heaths [4030] Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] Calaminarian grasslands of the *Violetalia calaminariae* [6130] Species-rich Nardus grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe) [6230] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130] Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (*Androsacetalia alpinae* and *Galeopsietalia ladani*) [8110] Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210] Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220] Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0] *Lutra lutra* (Otter) [1355]	There are no site-specific threats identified by the NPWS. The QIs for this site are sensitive to hydrological interactions and direct land use management actions and localised effects such as trampling. Atmospheric deposition is also a sensitivity of peatland systems. Construction phase effects such as dust are known to persist over a short distance (less than 1km), all other effects from the site are identified to be localised and there are no hydrological pathways between the site and the SAC. Therefore. there are no sources with pathways for effects to the sensitive receptors of the SAC.	No	No
004040	Wicklow Mountains SPA	2.95	Merlin (Falco columbarius) [A098] Peregrine (Falco peregrinus) [A103]	The threats to the site identified by the NPWS in the standard data form relate to peat extraction grazing, recreational pressures and pathways/walking trails. The species are sensitive to direct disturbance through noise pollution and prey availability/trophic structure. This project will project will provide walking trails and public amenity outside the SPA and therefore there are no sources for effects to contribute to the known threats. The habitats found on site are consistent with the surrounding environment and the footprint of the hard infrastructure with the associated	No	No

[4] NPWS (2013). The Status of Protected EU Habitats and Species in Ireland. Overview Volume 1. Unpublished Report, National Parks & Wildlife Services. Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Dublin, Ireland.

Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying features (QIs/SCIs)	Characterization of Potential Effects[4]	Potential Significant Effects	Potential In-Combination Effects
				habitat loss are small in scale. Given the distances between the SPA and the site and the small-scale nature of the habitat loss, the will be no significant effects to prey availability or trophic structure. Therefore. there are no sources with pathways for effects to the sensitive receptors of the SPA.		
001209	Glenasmole Valley SAC	5.58	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]	The standard data form identified local effects such as invasive species and fishing to be the threats/pressures for the site. The QIs for this site are sensitive to hydrological interactions including groundwater and direct land use management actions and localised effects. Construction phase effects such as dust are known to persist over a short distance (less than 1km), all other effects from the site are identified to be localised and there are no hydrological pathways between the site and the SAC. Due to the small-scale nature of the works, there are no groundwater interactions identified. Therefore. there are no sources with pathways for effects to the sensitive receptors of the SAC.	No	No
000725	Knocksink Wood SAC	7.26	Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220] Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae*) [91E0]	The standard data form identifies the threats and pressures to the site relate to camping, recreational activities and mismanagement etc. The QIs for this site are sensitive to hydrological interactions including groundwater and direct land use management actions and localised effects. Construction phase effects such as dust are known to persist over a short distance (less than 1km), all other effects from the site are identified to be localised and there are no hydrological pathways between the site and the SAC. Due to the small-scale nature of the works, there are no groundwater interactions identified. Therefore. there are no sources with pathways for effects to the sensitive receptors of the SAC.	No	No
004024	South Dublin Bay and River Tolka SPA	7.32	Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) [A046] Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*) [A130] Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*) [A137] Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) [A141] Knot (*Calidris canutus*) [A143] Sanderling (*Calidris alba*) [A144] Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) [A149] Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) [A157] Redshank (*Tringa totanus*)	The standard data form identifies the threats and pressures to the site relate to recreational use, bait digging and pathways/walking trail development. The species are sensitive to direct disturbance through noise pollution, hydrological condition and prey availability/trophic structure. Construction phase effects such as dust are known to persist over a short distance (less than 1km), all other effects from the site are identified to be localised. However, there are indirect hydrological pathways for effects. The site is directly adjacent to the Kilmashogue Stream which has been identified to have indirect connectivity to Dublin bay over 13km downstream of the site. The proposed sports facility will be 40 m from the stream and the pathways/running track will be 25 m from the stream edge. The distance from the stream, indirect pathway to Dublin bay and the small-scale temporary nature of the development ensure that there are no significant risks to the water quality of Dublin bay. The projects identified	No	No

Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying features (QIs/SCIs)	Characterization of Potential Effects[4]	Potential Significant Effects	Potential In-Combination Effects
			[A162] Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) [A179] Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*) [A192] Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) [A193] Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) [A194] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	in the surrounding area are also small scale and were subject to their own AA processes (see below for details). In addition to this the surface water drainage will be managed in accordance with the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Strategy (GDSDS) with attenuation in soft areas where possible (as per the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan. Therefore, these effects are determined to be negligible. The small-scale temporary nature of the development combined with the indirect hydrological pathway and significant dilution potential of the system ensure that there will be no significant effect to the trophic structure or water quality of the SPA. All of the developments within the receiving environment are also small in scale with negligible effects to water quality and therefore there are no in combination effects observed.		
000210	South Dublin Bay SAC	7.53	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]	The standard data form identifies the threats and pressures to the site relate to refuse discharge, fishing, recreational use, bait digging and pathways/walking trail development etc. The terrestrial habitats are sensitive to direct land use management and the intertidal habitats are sensitive to changes in hydrological conditions. There are no sources for effect to the terrestrial habitats of the SAC. Construction phase effects such as dust are known to persist over a short distance (less than 1km), all other effects from the site are identified to be localised. However, there are indirect hydrological pathways for effects. The site is directly adjacent to the Kilmashogue Stream which has been identified to have indirect connectivity to Dublin bay over 13km downstream of the site. The proposed sports facility will be 40 m from the stream and the pathways/running track will be 25 m from the stream edge. The distance from the stream, indirect pathway to Dublin bay and the small-scale temporary nature of the development ensure that there are no significant risks to the water quality of Dublin bay. The projects identified in the surrounding area are also small scale and were subject to their own AA processes (see below for details). In addition to this the surface water drainage will be managed in accordance with the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Strategy (GDSDS) with attenuation in soft areas where possible (as per the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan. Therefore, these effects are determined to be negligible. The small-scale temporary nature of the development combined with the indirect hydrological pathway and significant dilution potential of the system ensure that there will be no significant effect to the trophic structure or water quality of the SAC. All of the developments within the receiving environment are also small in scale with negligible effects to water quality and therefore there are no in combination effects observed.	No	No
000713	Ballyman Glen SAC	9.95	Petrifying springs with tufa formation (*Cratoneurion*) [7220]	The standard data form identifies the threats and pressures to the site relate to waste management issues and grazing. The QIs for this site are sensitive to	No	No

Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying features (QIs/SCIs)	Characterization of Potential Effects[4]	Potential Significant Effects	Potential In-Combination Effects
			Alkaline fens [7230]	hydrological interactions including groundwater and direct land use management actions and localised effects. Construction phase effects such as dust are known to persist over a short distance (less than 1km), all other effects from the site are identified to be localised and there are no hydrological pathways between the site and the SAC. Due to the small-scale nature of the works, there are no groundwater interactions identified. Therefore. there are no sources with pathways for effects to the sensitive receptors of the SAC.		
004006	North Bull Island SPA	11.01	Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) [A046] Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*) [A048] Teal (*Anas crecca*) [A052] Pintail (*Anas acuta*) [A054] Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*) [A056] Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*) [A130] Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) [A140] Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) [A141] Knot (*Calidris canutus*) [A143] Sanderling (*Calidris alba*) [A144] Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) [A149] Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*) [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) [A157] Curlew (*Numenius arquata*) [A160] Redshank (*Tringa totanus*) [A162] Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*) [A169] Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) [A179] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	The standard data form identifies the threats and pressures to the site relate to recreational use, bait digging and pathways/walking trail development. The species are sensitive to direct disturbance through noise pollution, hydrological condition and prey availability/trophic structure. Construction phase effects such as dust are known to persist over a short distance (less than 1km), all other effects from the site are identified to be localised. However, there are indirect hydrological pathways for effects. The site is directly adjacent to the Kilmashogue Stream which has been identified to have indirect connectivity to Dublin bay over 13km downstream of the site. The proposed sports facility will be 40 m from the stream and the pathways/running track will be 25 m from the stream edge. The distance from the stream, indirect pathway to Dublin bay and the small-scale temporary nature of the development ensure that there are no significant risks to the water quality of Dublin bay. The projects identified in the surrounding area are also small scale and were subject to their own AA processes (see below for details). In addition to this the surface water drainage will be managed in accordance with the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Strategy (GDSDS) with attenuation in soft areas where possible (as per the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan. Therefore, these effects are determined to be negligible. The small-scale temporary nature of the development combined with the indirect hydrological pathway and significant dilution potential of the system ensure that there will be no significant effect to the trophic structure or water quality of the SPA. All of the developments within the receiving environment are also small in scale with negligible effects to water quality and therefore there are no in combination effects observed.	No	No
000206	North Dublin Bay SAC	12.38	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Annual vegetation of drift lines	The standard data form identifies the threats and pressures to the site relate to pollution to surface water, urbanisation, recreational use, bait digging and pathways/walking trail development etc. The terrestrial habitats are sensitive to direct land use management and the intertidal habitats are sensitive to changes in	No	No

Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying features (QIs/SCIs)	Characterization of Potential Effects[4]	Potential Significant Effects	Potential In-Combination Effects
			[1210] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (*Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae*) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (*Juncetalia maritimi*) [1410] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] Humid dune slacks [2190] *Petalophyllum ralfsii* (Petalwort) [1395]	hydrological conditions. There are no sources for effect to the terrestrial habitats of the SAC. Construction phase effects such as dust are known to persist over a short distance (less than 1km), all other effects from the site are identified to be localised. However, there are indirect hydrological pathways for effects. The site is directly adjacent to the Kilmashogue Stream which has been identified to have indirect connectivity to Dublin bay over 13km downstream of the site. The proposed sports facility will be 40 m from the stream and the pathways/running track will be 25 m from the stream edge. The distance from the stream, indirect pathway to Dublin bay and the small-scale temporary nature of the development ensure that there are no significant risks to the water quality of Dublin bay. The projects identified in the surrounding area are also small scale and were subject to their own AA processes (see below for details). In addition to this the surface water drainage will be managed in accordance with the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Strategy (GDSDS) with attenuation in soft areas where possible (as per the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan. Therefore, these effects are determined to be negligible. The small-scale temporary nature of the development combined with the indirect hydrological pathway and significant dilution potential of the system ensure that there will be no significant effect to the trophic structure or water quality of the SAC. All of the developments within the receiving environment are also small in scale with negligible effects to water quality and therefore there are no in combination effects observed.		
004172	Dalkey Islands SPA	12.75	Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*) [A192] Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) [A193] Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) [A194]	The standard data form identifies the threats and pressures to the site relate to recreational use, bait digging and pathways/walking trail development. The species are sensitive to direct disturbance through noise pollution, hydrological condition and prey availability/trophic structure. Construction phase effects such as dust are known to persist over a short distance (less than 1km), all other effects from the site are identified to be localised. However, there are indirect hydrological pathways for effects. The site is directly adjacent to the Kilmashogue Stream which has been identified to have indirect connectivity to Dublin bay over 13km downstream of the site. The proposed sports facility will be 40 m from the stream and the pathways/running track will be 25 m from the stream edge. The distance from the stream, indirect pathway to Dublin bay and the small-scale temporary nature of the development ensure that there are no significant risks to the water quality of Dublin bay. The projects identified in the surrounding area are also small scale and were subject to their own AA processes (see below for details). In addition to this the surface water drainage will be managed in accordance with the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Strategy (GDSDS) with attenuation in soft areas where possible (as per the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan. Therefore, these effects are	No	No

Site Code	Site Name	Distance (km)	Qualifying features (QIs/SCIs)	Characterization of Potential Effects[4]	Potential Significant Effects	Potential In-Combination Effects
				determined to be negligible. The small-scale temporary nature of the development combined with the indirect hydrological pathway and significant dilution potential of the system ensure that there will be no significant effect to the trophic structure or water quality of the SPA. All of the developments within the receiving environment are also small in scale with negligible effects to water quality and therefore there are no in combination effects observed.		
003000	Rockabill to Dalkey Islands SAC	12.81	Reefs [1170] *Phocoena phocoena* (Harbour Porpoise) [1351]	There are no site-specific threats identified by the NPWS. Reef systems and harbour porpoise are sensitive to hydrological condition, fishing and effects to trophic structures The only pathways for effect to the sensitive receptors of the SAC are indirect hydrological links. Construction phase effects such as dust are known to persist over a short distance (less than 1km), all other effects from the site are identified to be localised. However, there are indirect hydrological pathways for effects. The site is directly adjacent to the Kilmashogue Stream which has been identified to have indirect connectivity to Dublin bay over 13km downstream of the site. The proposed sports facility will be 40 m from the stream and the pathways/running track will be 25 m from the stream edge. The distance from the stream, indirect pathway to Dublin bay and the small-scale temporary nature of the development ensure that there are no significant risks to the water quality of Dublin bay. The projects identified in the surrounding area are also small scale and were subject to their own AA processes (see below for details). In addition to this the surface water drainage will be managed in accordance with the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Strategy (GDSDS) with attenuation in soft areas where possible (as per the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan. Therefore, these effects are determined to be negligible. The small-scale temporary nature of the development combined with the indirect hydrological pathway and significant dilution potential of the system ensure that there will be no significant effect to the trophic structure or water quality of the SAC. All of the developments within the receiving environment are also small in scale with negligible effects to water quality and therefore there are no in combination effects observed.	No	No
000714	Bray Head SAC	14.85	Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] European dry heaths [4030]	The standard data form identifies the threats and pressures to the site relate to motor vehicles, hedgerow removal, vandalism etc. The QIs for this site are sensitive to hydrological interactions and direct land use management actions and localised effects such as trampling. Construction phase effects such as dust are known to persist over a short distance (less than 1km), all other effects from the site are identified to be localised and there are no hydrological pathways between the site and the SAC.	No	No

Site Code	**Site Name**	**Distance** (km)	**Qualifying features** (QIs/SCIs)	**Characterization of Potential Effects**[4]	**Potential Significant Effects**	**Potential In-Combination Effects**
				Therefore. there are no sources with pathways for effects to the sensitive receptors of the SAC.		

3.5 Other Plans and Programmes

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires an assessment of a plan or project to consider other plans or programmes that might, in combinations with the plan or project, have the potential to adversely impact upon European sites. The characteristics of the proposed project are foreseen to have very low effects to any European sites. Therefore, the in-combination effects do not need to be considered, as per the CIEEM 2016 guidelines. However, following a precautionary approach relevant projects within the receiving environment have been assessed. All plans and projects are subject to their own AA processes and therefore the assessment of in combination effects at a local level is undertaken to ensure the small-scale nature of the effects to the adjacent stream are not contributing to higher levels of effects. Table 3.3 outlines projects within the surrounding area of the proposed site that were considered to have potential to interact with the proposed project to cause in-combination effects to European sites.

Table 3.3 Plans or projects within the ZOI of the proposed sports facility that may have in-combination effects

Plan or project	Status	Overview	Possible significant effects from plan or project	Is there a risk of in-combination effects	Possible significant in-combination effects
D16A/0955	Permission Granted (20/11/2017)	Construction of a new club facility.	This is a small-scale project with a temporary construction phase and the operational phase will have localised effects that have negligible interactions with the environment.	No	No
D17B/0261	Permission Granted (19/07/2017)	Construction of a ground floor extension to the rear and side.	This is a small-scale project with a temporary construction phase and the operational phase will have localised effects that have negligible interactions with the environment.	No	No
D18B/0123	Permission Granted (09/05/2018)	Permission for the demolition of a front porch, relocation of the front door, construction of a ground floor extension to the side, a new pitched roof with roof lights on the existing rear extension, to convert the attic to storage space with provision of a shower room, roof lights to the front, dormer roofs to the rear and internal alterations.	This is a small-scale project with a temporary construction phase and the operational phase will have localised effects that have negligible interactions with the environment.	No	No
D18A/0720	Request additional information (14/09/2018)	Permission for the construction of 7 no. Sleeping Pod Structures, 1 no. communal building located in existing Field; together with a new interpretive centre/office building adjacent to the existing national headquarters/campus offices and all associated site development works.	This is a small-scale project with a temporary construction phase and the operational phase will have localised effects that have negligible interactions with the environment.	No	No
D17A/0984	Permission Granted (05/03/2018)	Permission for Retention of 1 no. single storey split level timber storage shed.	This is a small-scale project with a temporary construction phase and the operational phase will have localised effects that have negligible interactions with the environment.	No	No
SD18A/0124	Refuse Permission (11/06/2018)	Construction of 1-part single storey, part 2 storey, split level 4 bedroom detached residential dwelling, the relocation of the existing entrance to 'Elsemere' to provide a new shared entrance for 'Elsemere' and the proposed dwelling and all associated site works necessary to facilitate the development including a proprietary effluent treatment system.	This is a small-scale project with a temporary construction phase and the operational phase will have localised effects that have negligible interactions with the environment.	No	No
SD17A/0189	Refuse Permission (31/07/2017)	Construction of a split-level, part 2 storey, part 3 storey dwelling (380sq.m), the relocation of the existing entrance to 'Elsemere' to provide a new shared entrance for 'Elsemere' and the proposed dwelling and all associated site works including a proprietary effluent treatment system.	This is a small-scale project with a temporary construction phase and the operational phase will have localised effects that have negligible interactions with the environment.	No	No

4 Conclusion

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

The project 2.69km from the nearest European site. The AA screening process has considered potential effects which may arise during the construction and operational phases as a result of the implementation of the project. There are no direct hydrological pathways to any European sites. Therefore, given the scale of the development and its distance from European sites, the effects arising from these works will be negligible. Through an assessment of the pathways for effects and an evaluation of the project characteristics, taking account of the processes involved and the distance of separation from European sites, it has been evaluated that significant adverse effects on the qualifying interests, special conservation interest or the conservation objectives of any designated European site are unlikely. The ecological integrity of the European sites is not foreseen to be significantly affected by the project.

Given the nature of the development, it's scale, the existing localised and temporary nature of the construction effects identified as potential sources as well as the environmental controls, the proposed development will not lead to a significant in-combination effect with any other plans or projects.

It is concluded that the project is not foreseen to give rise to any significant adverse effects on any designated European sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects[5]. This evaluation is made in view of the conservation objectives of the habitats or species for which these sites have been designated. Consequently, a Stage Two AA is not required for the project.

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