



**Appropriate Assessment
Screening Determination**

under

Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended,
for the

Draft Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029

In order to comply with the requirements of Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, this determination has been made by Fingal County Council relating to the potential for the Draft Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 to have significant effects on European sites.

In making the determination that Appropriate Assessment (AA) is required, the information on the likely significant effects on European sites arising from the draft Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 Plan have been taken into account. The process of screening for AA began at an early stage in the drafting of the Plan. The screening processes assessed whether the Pre-Draft Plan had the potential to have significant effects on any European sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

The screening process concluded that an AA of the pre-Draft Plan would be required, as the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of European sites, and may, on the basis of objective information, individually, or in combination with other plans or projects, if unmitigated have adverse effects on thirty (30) no. European sites (fifteen (15) no Special Areas of Conservation and fifteen (15) no. Special Protection Areas (SPAs)) namely:

Special Areas of Conservation	Special Protection Areas
European sites within the Fingal Administrative Boundary	
Malahide Estuary [000205]	Malahide Estuary [004025]
Rogerstown Estuary [000208]	Rogerstown Estuary [004015]
Baldoyle Bay [000199]	Baldoyle Bay [004016]
Lambay Island [000204]	Lambay Island [004069]
Ireland's Eye [002193]	Ireland's Eye [004117]
Howth Head [000202]	Howth Head Coast [004113]
	Skerries Islands [004122]
European sites within 15km (and beyond ZOI) of the Fingal Administrative Boundary	
North Dublin Bay [000206]	North Bull Island [004006]
South Dublin Bay [000210]	South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary [004024]
Rockabill to Dalkey Island [003000]	Rockabill [004014]
River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC [002299]	River Boyne and River Blackwater [004232]

Wicklow Mountains SAC [002122]	Wicklow Mountains [004040]
Boyne Coast and Estuary SAC [001957]	Boyne Estuary [004080]
Rye Water Valley / Carton [001398]	
Codling Fault Zone SAC [003015]	
Glenasmole Valley SAC [001209]	
	River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA [004158]
	Dalkey Islands SPA [004172]

The detail of the Pre-Draft Plan was not known at the time of its Screening; therefore, the Pre-draft Plan elements / factors that could potentially adversely affect these European sites were assessed based on reviewing the existing Fingal DP 2017-2023 as well as the pre-Draft Plan Public Consultation Strategic Issues Paper. These include:

- People and Place;
- Climate Action;
- Connectivity and Movement;
- Employment, Economy & Dublin Airport;
- Cultural Heritage;
- Green infrastructure & Natural Heritage; and
- Infrastructure & Utilities
- Land-use zoning

The process of Screening for AA considers the likely significant effects potentially arising from the Pre-Draft Plan on a precautionary basis and in the absence of any mitigating policies or objectives. In this regard, key elements of the Draft Plan include delivering new development, in particular the development of housing and linear infrastructure such as transport corridors (roads, public transport, cycleways etc), greenways and coastal routes. The Draft Plan also seeks to provide for the consolidation, modification or reuse of developed lands, including lands in and around Dublin Airport, safeguarding of strategic land banks for future development as well as the provision of recreational and other green infrastructure. The Draft Plan also includes measures, such as improvements to water and wastewater services, which in themselves seek to improve the overall environmental condition of the County.

Implementation of these objectives could result in a number of potential impacts on the conservation objectives of European site(s) including:

- Habitat loss, where there could potentially be either complete removal or partial loss / fragmentation of a qualifying interest (QI) habitat type or of a habitat type supporting QI species or Special Conservation Interest (SCI) bird species. Habitat loss could negatively affect QI or SCI species through a loss of resource and /or displacement of a species or population outside of their local, natural range.
- Habitat degradation, where pressures associated with increased development and population increases could negatively affect a QI habitat type or habitat type supporting QI / SCI species. Habitat degradation can arise as result of negative effects on water quality and hydrological processes, from effects on groundwater quality and flows or by accidentally introducing non-native invasive species.
- Disturbance and displacement of species, where pressures associated with increased development and population increases negatively affect the use of important

supporting habitat by QI / SCI species that can result in population level abundance and distribution effects. Disturbance can arise as a result of such sources as increased noise, artificial light or recreational pressures and can result in displacement of a species or population outside of their local, natural range.

As for the above potential impacts, the proposed rezoning of lands in support of policies and objectives such as additional land for strategic housing needs, linear transport requirements or coastal infrastructure / recreation and river flood protection or support for renewables energy supply sources could also result in habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation as well as resulting in disturbance and /or displacement of QI / SCI species

At the strategic stage of the plan making process, with no development of policies or objectives, the potential for in-combination effects with all or some of the plans or projects identified in the AA Screening cannot be ruled out.

Therefore, adopting the precautionary principle, a Stage 2 AA (including the preparation of a Natura Impact Report) is required for the Draft Plan, as it cannot be concluded, on the basis of objective information, that the proposed Draft Plan, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not have a significant effect on a range of European site(s). The undersigned, having carefully considered the information referred to above agrees with, and adopts, the reasoning and conclusions presented above. The undersigned hereby determines pursuant to Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and for the purposes of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive that it could not be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the Draft Plan, individually or in combination with other plans or projects would have a likely significant effect on a European site, and therefore an AA is required.



Róisín Burke
Senior Planner
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