

Local Authority Own Housing Development for Lands at Mooretown, Swords, Co. Dublin

EIA Screening Report in accordance with, inter alia, the requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

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**Brady Shipman
Martin**

**Built.
Environment.**

Environmental Assessment **Built Environment**

Client:

Fingal County Council

Date:

29 April 2024

DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

7089_RPMP02_EIA Screening Report in accordance with, inter alia, the requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

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Document No. RPMP02

Issue No. 02

Date: 29/04/2024

This document has been issued and amended as follows:

Issue	Status	Date	Prepared	Checked
01	Information	25 Apr 2024	NK	TB
02	Final	29 April 2024	TB	TB



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1 Introduction

Fingal County Council (FCC) proposes to undertake a new housing development at Mooretown, Swords, Co. Dublin. This proposed Local Authority Own Housing Development is pursuant to section 179A (s.179A) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (*“the 2000 Act”*), and, *inter alia*, Article 81A (art.81A) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended by the Planning and Development (Section 179A) Regulations 2023 (SI No.101/2023) (*“the 2001 Regulations”*). The latter Regulations provide the statutory criteria and processes which apply to such housing developments.

1.1 Statement of Purpose

Brady Shipman Martin (BSM) was appointed to prepare an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report in relation to the proposed Local Authority Own Housing Development in accordance with the requirements of the 2000 Act and the 2001 Regulations (as outlined hereinafter).

1.2 Qualifications

This EIA Screening Report has been prepared by Namrata Kaile, Ecologist and Environmental Consultant with Brady Shipman Martin. She holds a Bachelor’s Degree (BSc) in Life Sciences from University of Delhi and a Master’s Degree (MSc) with distinction in Environmental Sciences from Trinity College Dublin. She is an associate member of Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), member of the Irish Environmental Law Association (IELA) and has been working professionally in the field of environmental consultancy for the last four years. Namrata is experienced in drafting and reviewing EIA Screening Reports, AA Screening Reports as well as in coordination of EIARs.

A technical review of this document has been completed by Thomas Burns a Partner, Landscape Architect and Environmental Planner with Brady Shipman Martin. Thomas has a B.Agr.Sc. (Landscape) degree and a post-graduate Diploma in Environmental Impact Assessment Management from University College Dublin, and an Advanced Diploma in Planning and Environmental Law from King’s Inn. Thomas has over 30 years’ experience in EIA and is a member of the Irish Landscape Institute and the Irish Environmental Law Association.

2 Background & Methodology

2.1 Legislation

The key legislative provisions of relevance to the EIA screening exercise are as follows:

- Directive 2014/52/EU amending Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (hereinafter the 'EIA Directive');
- Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (hereinafter the '2000 Act'); and
- Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended (hereinafter the '2001 Regulations').

2.2 Guidelines

In the preparation of this document, regard has been had to the following guidance documents:

- Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DoHPLG) (2018). *Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment*.
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (2022). *Guidelines on the Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports*.
- European Commission (2017). *Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects – Guidance on Screening*.
- Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) (2021). *OPR Practice Note PN02: Environmental Impact Assessment Screening*.

2.3 Legislative Context

The EIA Directive entered into force in 1985 (Directive 85/337/EEC). It was amended three times (in 1997, 2003 and 2009) and subsequently codified by Directive 2011/92/EU and amended by Directive 2014/52/EU. The EIA Directive is transposed into Irish legislation through the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

The Directive aims to ensure a high level of protection for the environment and human health, through the establishment of minimum requirements for environmental impact assessment (EIA) for the purposes of development consent for public and private developments that are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Section 179A(1)(d) of the 2000 Act applies to housing development that is not subject to a requirement, in accordance with the EIA Directive, for an assessment with regard to its effects on the environment (i.e. an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)). Where the proposed housing development does not meet or exceed thresholds, stated in Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the 2001 Regulations, where EIA would be a mandatory requirement, a screening for EIA shall be carried out in accordance with art.81A(5) of the 2001 Regulations:

“(5) (a) Where a local authority proposes to undertake a housing development under Section 179A of the Act of a class standing specified in Part 2 of Schedule 5 and does not equal or exceed, as the case may be, the relevant quantity, area or other limit standing specified in that Part, it shall carry out in respect of the housing development a screening for environmental impact assessment.

(b) Prior to or when carrying out a screening under paragraph (a) the local authority may at its discretion request information from any person the authority considers necessary.

(c) Before making a determination on the screening for environmental impact assessment of a proposed housing development under section 179A of the Act, the local authority shall –

(i) consider the criteria for determining whether a housing development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment, as set out in Schedule 7,

(ii) take into account a description of the nature and extent of the proposed housing development, its characteristics, its likely significant effects on the environment (including the information specified in Schedule 7A) including, where relevant, information on how the available results of other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment carried out pursuant to European Union legislation other than the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive have been taken into account.

(d) A local authority shall include, or refer to, in its screening determination for environmental impact assessment made under this article the main reasons and considerations, with reference to the relevant criteria listed in Schedule 7, on which such determination is based.

(e) (i) Where the local authority screening determination for environmental impact assessment made under this article is that the proposed housing development would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment, the proposed housing development complies with the requirements of section 179A(1) of the Act,

(ii) Where the local authority screening determination for environmental impact assessment made under this article is that the proposed housing development may have significant effects on the environment, the local authority shall determine that an Environmental Impact Assessment is required and that the housing development does not comply with the requirements of section 179A(1) of the Act.”

2.4 Requirement for EIA

The proposed Housing Development comprises 274 residential units (houses, duplexes and apartments) on a site of 9.35 hectares. The requirement for a proposed development to be subject to a mandatory EIA is established under Part 1 and Part 2 Schedule 5 of the 2001 Regulations. Consideration of the requirement for EIA is a step-by-step process known as ‘Screening for EIA’ (refer

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to **Figure 2.1**). The objective of screening for EIA is to ascertain whether there is a real likelihood that a project's effects on the environment would be significant and, therefore, whether EIA (and the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR)) is required.

Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the PDR 2001 lists classes of development for which by their nature EIA is a mandatory requirement. These classes of development relate to major industries and infrastructure projects and the proposed Housing Development does not come within a class or type of development set out under Part of Schedule 5.

Part 2 of Schedule 5 sets out specific thresholds for classes of development at or above which EIA is also a mandatory requirement. Class 10 refers to Infrastructure Projects which includes:

10(b) (i) *Construction of more than 500 dwelling units.*

...and

10(b) (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.)

In this instance the proposed Housing Development is of a class listed above and therefore is a project to which the EIA Directive applies. However, the proposed development does not meet or exceed the applicable stated thresholds (*i.e.* class 10(b)(i) - 500 dwelling units or class 10(b)(iv) - 10 hectares) and therefore EIA is not a mandatory requirement.

Nevertheless, while not meeting or exceeding the stated thresholds, the proposed Housing Development is of a class listed in Part 2 of Schedule 5 and as such is subject to a screening exercise (this report) for assessment of likely significant impacts on the environment and for the requirement for 'sub-threshold EIA, where section 15 of Part 2 of Schedule would apply:

15. *Any project listed in this Part which does not exceed a quantity, area or other limit specified in this Part in respect of the relevant class of development but which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7.*

Schedule 7 of the 2001 Regulations sets out the criteria that must be considered in determining whether a sub-threshold project should be subject to EIA. Schedule 7A lists the information that must be submitted to the competent authority for the purposes of making a determination on the requirement, or not, for the project to be subject to EIA (*i.e.* A, EIA Screening Determination).

Having regard to the process set out in **Figure 2.1**:

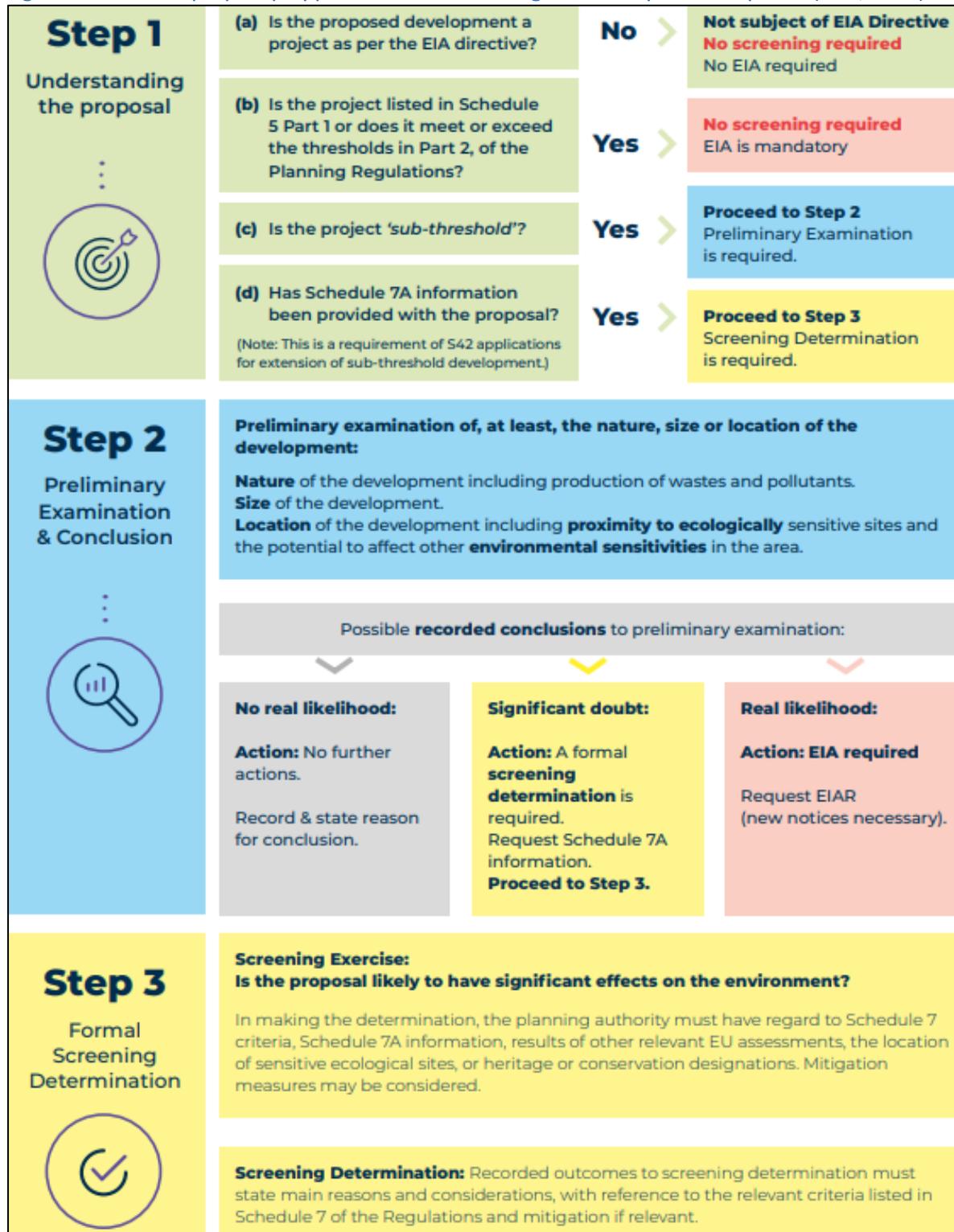
- the proposed development is a project as per the EIA Directive,
- the proposed development is not listed in Part 1 of Schedule 5, and it does not meet or exceed the thresholds for EIA in Part 2 of Schedule 5,
- the project is sub-threshold for EIA (Step 1 (c), and

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- the Schedule 7A information (this report) is being provided to allow a Screening Determination (Step 3) be made with reference to the Schedule 7 criteria, by the competent authority.

Figure 2.1 Step-by-Step Approach to EIA Screening for Development Proposals (OPR, 2021)



2.5 Approach to EIA Screening Process

EIA Screening follows a three-step process (DoHPLG, 2018; OPR, 2021) – refer to **Figure 2.1**:

Step 1: Pre-screening / Understanding the proposal / proposed development;

Step 2: Preliminary examination and conclusion; and

Step 3: Screening determination (by competent authority).

In order to assist the competent authority (Fingal County Council) to carry out the screening for EIA, this report provides the following information:

- A description of the Project for concluding, with reference to Part 1 and Part 2 of Schedule 5 of PDR 2001, if the proposal is a 'project', and if it is:
 - of a type where the requirement for EIA is mandatory, or
 - of a type and scale that meets or exceeds a stated threshold at or above which the requirement for EIA is mandatory;
- Consideration for the requirement for the proposal / proposed development to be subject to sub-threshold EIA, including the provision of information required and as set out in Schedule 7A of PDR 2001.

3 Understanding the Proposal / Proposed Development

3.1 Description of the Proposed Development

The site for the proposed development is located within an established suburban context at Mooretown, Swords, Co. Dublin. The site, which has a total gross area of 9.35 hectares (ha) and a net development area of c.7 ha is accessed off the R125 Rathbeale Road.

The proposed development, which comprises Phase 1 of a potential development on lands zoned 'RA Residential' in the *Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029*, will provide for 274 no. dwellings, in a mix of houses, own door duplexes, and apartment units, arranged in clusters varying in height from 2 to 5 storeys, with a density of c.39 units per hectare. It includes all associated road infrastructure with car parking and bicycle parking, including external covered bike stores, public open space, new pedestrian / cycle links, hard and soft landscaping, connections to existing services and all ancillary / enabling site development works.

For further information refer also to the Planning Report (BSM, 2024). The site layout is shown in **Figure 3.1**.



Figure 3.1 Proposed Landscape Masterplan (BSM, 2024)

4 Screening for requirement for Sub-threshold EIA

4.1 Screening for 'Sub-threshold EIA'

This stage considers whether the proposal / proposed development should, or should not be, subject to the requirement for 'sub-threshold EIA' and the preparation of an EIAR.

It provides the information required of the applicant, as set out in Schedule 7A of PDR 2001, to allow the Competent Authority to carry out a preliminary examination of, at least, the nature, size or location of the development, (including proximity to ecologically sensitive sites and the potential to affect other environmental sensitivities in the area) and to make a determination as to whether there is a real likelihood of significant effects on the environment, as specified in Schedule 7A of the PDR 2001, and with reference to the criteria in Schedule 7 of the PDR 2001.

Schedule 7A of the PDR 2001 requires the applicant to provide:

- “1. A description of the proposed development, including in particular—
 - (a) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole proposed development and, where relevant, of demolition works, and*
 - (b) a description of the location of the proposed development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected.**
- 2. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.*
- 3. A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the proposed development on the environment resulting from—
 - (a) the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant, and*
 - (b) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity.**
- 4. The compilation of the information at paragraphs 1 to 3 shall take into account, where relevant, the criteria set out in Schedule 7.*

This information is provided in the following sections.

4.2 Description of the Proposed Development

An overview of the description of the proposed development is provided at **Section 3.1** of this report, and is also detailed in the following specific reports prepared for the proposed development:

- Architecture and Landscape
 - Architectural Design Statement (O'Briain Beary Architects, 2024)
 - Universal Design Statement (O'Briain Beary Architects, 2024)
 - Building Lifecycle Report (O'Briain Beary Architects, 2024)
 - Landscape and Biodiversity Statement (BSM, 2024)
- Planning
 - Planning Report (Brady Shipman Martin, 2024)

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- Social Infrastructure & Childcare Demand Report (BSM, 2024)
- Engineering and Infrastructure
 - Engineering Infrastructure Assessment Report (Waterman Moylan, 2024)
 - Infrastructure Design Report (Waterman Moylan, 2024)
 - Surface Water Management Plan (Waterman Moylan, 2024)
 - DMURS Design Statement (Waterman Moylan, 2024)
 - Traffic and Transport Assessment Report (Waterman Moylan, 2024)
 - Travel Plan (Waterman Moylan, 2024)
 - Utilities and Public Lighting Report (Waterman Moylan, 2024)
- Environmental
 - Flood Risk Assessment (Waterman Moylan, 2024)
 - Energy Statement and Climate Action Plan (Waterman Moylan, 2024)
 - Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (BSM, 2024)
 - Resource and Waste Management Plan (AWN Consulting, 2024)
 - Operational Waste Management Plan (AWN Consulting, 2024)
 - Daylight and Sunlight Assessment Report (3D Design Bureau, 2024)
 - Archaeological Impact Assessment (Courtney Deery, 2024)
 - Tree Survey Report (Independent Tree Surveys, 2024)
 - Preliminary Construction, Environmental Management Plan (BSM & WM, 2024)

4.2.1 Location of the Proposed Development

The site for the proposed development is located within an established suburban context at Mooretown, to the northwest of Swords town centre, Co. Dublin. The Phase 1 site is part of a larger area of undeveloped lands at Mooretown, refer to **Figure 4.1**.

The overall landholding of c.23.9ha is located between the established residential estates of Cianlea and Lioscian off Murrough Road to the east; Ormond Crescent and Swords Manor Crescent to the south and the new Cronan's Well Brook, Swords Community College and emerging residential development (under construction / permitted) to the west. The lands are accessed from the north off Rathbeale Road. Dublin Airport is over 3km to the south of the site.

The Phase 1 site, which has a total gross area of 9.35ha and a net development area of c.7ha, is located within the northern portion of the overall landholding and is accessed off Rathbeale Road, refer to **Figure 4.1**. The site is not particularly sensitive to the environmental effects of development. There are no designated environmental areas on the site or in the immediate vicinity. However, the site is adjacent to existing / emerging residential developments and associated open space, and a network of small streams with riparian vegetation traverses the lands.

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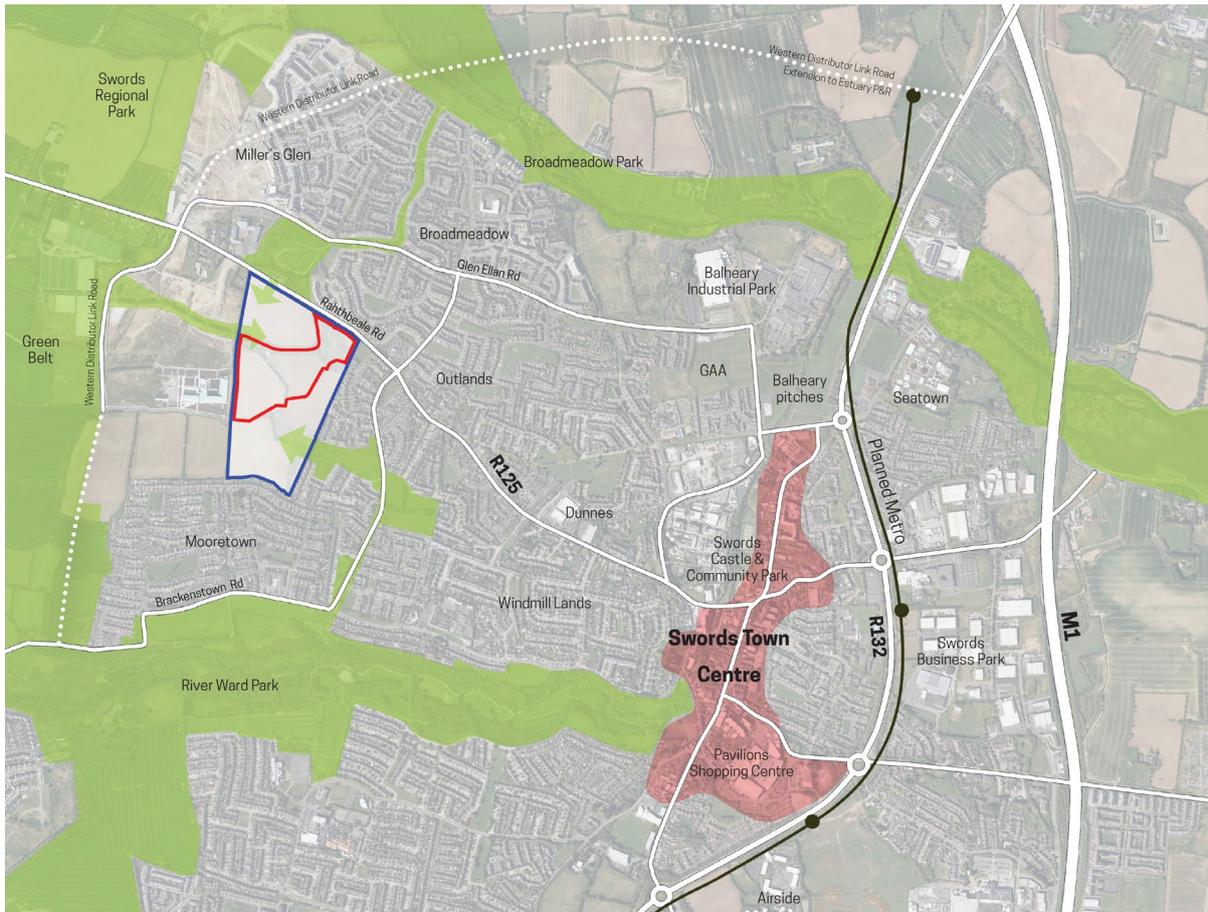


Figure 4.1 Site Context. (Phase 1 Site outlined in Red. Overall landholding outlined in Blue.)

4.2.2 Planning Context

The Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 zones the site, the wider land holding and lands to the west as *Residential Area (RA)* – ‘Provide for new residential communities subject to the provision of the necessary social and physical infrastructure.’ Swords Community School to the west of the site is zoned *Community Infrastructure (CI)* – ‘Provide for and protect civic, religious, community, education, health care and social infrastructure.’

Established residential areas to the northeast, east and south are zoned as *Residential (RS)* – ‘Provide for residential development and protect and improve residential amenity’ and *Open Space (OS)* – ‘Preserve and provide for open space and recreational amenities.’ There is a specific objective to ‘Preserve Views’ along Rathbeale Road to the north of the site, refer to **Figure 4.2**.

A number of archaeological / heritage features in the area surrounding the site are listed on the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). These include a Field System (SMR No. DU011-144004) to the northwest of the site; and a Settlement Cluster (SMR No. DU011-149), Holy Well (SMR No. DU011-018) and Fulacht Fia (SMR No. DU011-148) to the south of the site. These features are located on the wider land holding. The remains of a further Structure (‘Glasmole Abbey’) (SMR No. DU011-019) is located on open space in Cianlea to the west of the lands. A Ringfort site (SMR No. DU011-147) is located on lands southwest of site. An Ecclesiastical Enclosure (SMR No. DU011-144001) and Field System (SMR No. DU011-144003) are located north of Rathbeale Road. Refer to **Figure 4.2**.

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The Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029 contains policies and objectives relevant to Screening for EIA, including Objective DMSO3, Local Authority Development, which states: “[e]nsure Local Authority development proposals are subject to environmental assessment, as appropriate, including... Screening for Environmental Impact Assessment...”.



Figure 4.2 Extract from Land Use Zoning Plan for Swords (Sheet 8 Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029). (Phase 1 Site outlined in Red. Overall landholding outlined in Blue.)

4.2.3 Water infrastructure

4.2.3.1 Water Supply

As noted in the Engineering Infrastructure Assessment Report, (Waterman Moylan, 2024) a pre-connection enquiry was submitted to Uisce Éireann and a Confirmation of Feasibility (CoF) letter (CDS23007520) was issued on 6 February 2024. The letter, included as Appendix A of the Engineering Report that the development is feasible without upgrades to the water supply.

The average demand for the proposed development is calculated to be 1.77l/s with a peak demand of 8.83l/s.

4.2.3.2 Surface Water Drainage

As noted in the Engineering Infrastructure Assessment Report (Waterman Moylan, 2024) the site drains towards the Mill Stream (named on the EPA database as the Newtown Stream) that traverses the northern portion of the site west to east. This stream ultimately discharges to the Broadmeadow R, c. 1km to the north. The Broadmeadow River in turn flows into Malahide Estuary.

Surface water runoff arising at the proposed development will be managed using appropriate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) techniques as required in the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029. As set out in the Engineering Infrastructure Assessment Report the SuDS treatment train at the site includes open green spaces and permeable paving to slow and intercept rainwater. Tree pits will further slow and reduce the runoff rate, while providing treatment of runoff, particularly from the roads. The use of these SuDS measures will encourage infiltration of surface water into the ground, with rainwater from roads will be directed towards tree pits. During large storm events, there is a high-level overflow from these tree pits into an adjacent gully, which discharges to the below-ground sewer network.

After these SuDS devices, rainwater will make its way into the below ground sewer network. The runoff is restricted to the greenfield equivalent rate, and excess storm water above this rate is directed to the proposed below and above attenuation.

In summary, surface water will be attenuated on site and will discharge to the stream via a hydrobrake or similar approved flow control device. Flow will be restricted to greenfield run-off rates.

4.2.3.3 Foul Water Drainage

As noted in the Consulting Engineers Ltd (Waterman Moylan, 2024), the majority of the subject Phase 1 site drains in a northerly and westerly direction to an existing 450mmØ sewer which drains north and ultimately connects to 500mmØ foul sewer that crosses the Rathbeale Road. This public sewer flows northwards through Oldtown, to the Glen Ellan Road, from where it flows in an easterly direction to Swords Wastewater Treatment Plant (WwTP). A small portion of the site in the northeastern of the site is proposed to drain to the eastern existing Cianlea development (and from there to Swords WwTP).

A pre-connection enquiry was submitted to Uisce Éireann and a Confirmation of Feasibility letter (CDS23007520) was issued on 6 February 2024. The letter, included as Appendix A of the Engineering Report that the development is feasible subject to wastewater upgrades. In addition to the CoF, Uisce Éireann has issued a Statement of Design Acceptance (SoDA) for the proposed development and this is included in Appendix B of the Engineering Report. The letter states that Uisce Éireann has no objection to the proposals.

The predicted total daily wastewater discharge volume for the development is 122,100 litres per day and the predicted design peak flow is 8.48 litres per second.

4.2.3.4 Flood Risk Assessment

A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been prepared in accordance with the OPW 2009 publication “*The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities*” (Waterman Moylan, 2024).

The proposed residential development is classified as highly vulnerable. Vulnerable or highly vulnerable developments located within areas classified as Zone A or Zone B flooding require a justification test. However, the subject site is located within Flood Zone C, and therefore no justification test is required for the development, and development is considered appropriate (in terms of flood risk). As noted in the conclusions of the FRA, the residual risks from flooding (tidal, fluvial, pluvial, ground water or human/mechanical error) range from low to extremely low.

4.2.3.5 Water Framework Directive

The Engineering Infrastructure Assessment Report (Waterman Moylan, 2024) notes that while “*Neither the Oldtown/Mooretown Lands nor the adjacent Broadmeadow River are part of the SPA or SAC site, however, any development immediately upstream is required to maintain, or improve the quality of surface water to status objectives, as set out in the Water Framework Directive (WFD). These requirements are in place in order to protect and enhance the status of the aquatic ecosystems of the SAC or SPA site. This will require the implementation of SuDS, which are intended to be utilised as part of the development.*”

The site is within the Nanny-Delvin catchment (WFD catchment ID 08), Broadmeadow_SC_010 sub catchment (WFD sub-catchment ID 08_3), Broadmeadow_040 river sub basin and Nanny-Delvin hydrometric area (08). As per the WFD Status 2016-2021, Broadmeadow_040 stream (IE_EA_08B020800, EPA Name – Newtown 08) is classified as ‘Moderate’ and is at ‘risk’ to achieve its WFD objectives by 2027. The third cycle draft Nanny Delvin Catchment Report (2021) identifies that there is pressure on Broadmeadow_040 river due to agriculture and hydromorphology.

The WFD status for Broadmeadow_040 stream in 2013-2018 cycle was ‘Poor’ – so there is an improvement in the status of the water.

The third cycle draft Nanny Delvin Catchment Report (2021) states that: *Based on the 1st and 2nd RBMPs there is currently 1 designated heavily modified water body (HMWB) in the Nanny - Delvin Catchment (Broadmeadow Water) due to public transport infrastructure. It is classified as having Poor Ecological Potential in 2013-2018 (Cycle 3). There will be a consultation period on HMWBs for the 3rd Cycle RBMP and this will be completed for inclusion in the 3rd Cycle Final RBMP¹.*

The WFD Cycle 2 report (2018) for sub catchment Broadmeadow_SC_010 identifies that Broadmeadow_040 river is failing on dissolved oxygen levels. There is also pressure on the waterbody due to changes to hydromorphology due to channelisation and agricultural pressures due to

¹ <https://catchments.ie/wp-content/files/catchmentassessments/08%20Nanny-Delvin%20Catchment%20Summary%20WFD%20Cycle%203.pdf>

farmyards². Two pedestrian / cycle bridges and two road culverts are proposed to cross the streams, however, otherwise the streams and their associated riparian corridors / vegetation are retained, augmented and enhanced in the landscape scheme for the site. The proposed development will have no adverse impact on the water quality of the streams on site or downstream of the site.

4.2.3.6 Appropriate Assessment

The Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report (BSM, 2024) has concluded that the proposed development, individually or in combination with another plan or project, will not have a significant effect on any European sites. This assessment has also taken account of the potential for significant effects on nationally designated sites (NHA / pNHA).

4.3 Schedule 7A Information and Schedule 7 Criteria

The information required for the purposes of screening for EIA as set out in Schedule 7A of the PDR 2001 is provided in **Table 4.1**. The criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the PDR 2001 have also been considered in **Table 4.2**.

Table 4.1: Provision of Information as required from Schedule 7A of PDR 2001

1.	A description of the proposed development, including in particular—
(a)	a description of the physical characteristics of the whole proposed development and, where relevant, of demolition works
	<p>The proposed local authority own development is located on a site of c.9.35 ha. at Mooretown, Swords, Co. Dublin. The development, which represents Phase 1 of a potentially larger residential development within the overall c.23.9 ha. landholding, will provide much needed housing in an area of established and developing residential neighbourhoods to the northwest of Swords town centre.</p> <p>The proposed development provides for a total of 274 no. residential units including 187 no. houses, 37 no. duplex units and 50 no. apartments varying in height from 2 to 5 storeys in a mixed tenure development. The apartments are arranged within 2 no. blocks (Block 2A and 2B) connected by a shared core. The houses and own door duplex units are arranged within compact clusters comprising terraces of 11 to 24 no. residential units and private rear gardens. The overall layout has been designed to provide an active frontage to the new link street / road and to the access streets within the individual clusters.</p> <p>The proposed development includes the provision of Class 2 Open Space of c.18,065 sq.m. including existing riparian corridors, 8 no. pocket parks with a total area of c.2,950 sq.m., and new pedestrian and cycle connections into neighbouring residential lands to the west and connecting to the existing school access road along at the southwest boundary of the site.</p> <p>The proposed development includes the provision of long-stay resident and short-stay and visitor car parking spaces together with long-stay resident and short-stay visitor bike parking spaces.</p>

²https://catchments.ie/wp-content/files/subcatchmentassessments/08_3%20Broadmeadow_SC_010%20Subcatchment%20Assessment%20WFD%20Cycle%202.pdf

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The proposed development includes for provision of associated site and infrastructural works including the provision of foul and surface water drainage and associated connections, Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) including permeable paving, greens roofs, bio-retention planting and below ground tank storage.

The proposed development also includes for all site enabling and development works, landscaping works, plant, PV panels, storage, boundary treatments, ESB substations, lighting, servicing, signage, and all site development works above and below ground.

The site is accessed via a new Link Road connecting from Rathbeale Road to the north to the existing road at Swords Community College & Broadmeadow National School to the southwest of the site. The Link Road is located along the southern boundary of the subject site and will provide vehicular and pedestrian access to existing public transport and local amenities. A two way cycling path will be provided on the northern side of the Link Road and will tie into the existing cycle network on Rathbeale Road and surrounding area.

Other than normal site clearance and development, no demolition works are required.

(b) a description of the location of the proposed development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected

Refer also to Section 4.2 of this report.

The c.9.35ha site comprises part of a larger c.23.9ha land holding at Mooretown to the northwest of Swords town centre. The lands are located between the established residential estates of Cianlea and Lioscian off Murrough Road to the east; Ormond Crescent and Swords Manor Crescent to the south and the new Cronan's Well Brook, Swords Community College and emerging residential development (under construction / permitted) to the west. The lands are accessed from the north off Rathbeale Road. Dublin Airport is over 3km to the south of the site.

The c.9.35ha Phase 1 site is located to the north of the overall landholding and adjoins Rathbeale road. The lands have previously been in agricultural use, mainly arable with an area of rough pasture in the northeast, but are currently unmanaged. The lands are drained by a series of small streams with associated riparian hedgerows and vegetation with some trees.

The Engineering Infrastructure Assessment Report (Waterman Moylan, 2024) notes that the *"subject site is greenfield in nature and slopes from a height of 34.5m in the southwest corner to 24.0m in the north. The site lies within the catchment of the Broadmeadow River which outfalls to the Malahide estuary. The estuary is a Special Protection Area (SPA), a candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC) a proposed National heritage Area (pNHA) and a RAMSAR site.*

The site drains towards the Mill Stream that traverses the northern portion of the site west to east and exits the eastern border of the Mooretown LAP lands. This Mill Stream flows north to the Rathbeale Road where it is culverted by 1200mmØ pipes which traverses the eastern boundary of the oldtown lands before ultimately discharging to the Broadmeadow River.

Neither the Oldtown/Mooretown Lands nor the adjacent Broadmeadow River are part of the SPA or SAC site, however, any development immediately upstream is required to maintain, or improve the quality of surface water to status objectives, as set out in the Water Framework Directive (WFD). These requirements are in place in order to protect and enhance the status of the aquatic ecosystems of the SAC or SPA site. This will require the implementation of SuDS, which are intended to be utilised as part of the development."

The Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report (BSM, 2024) concludes that *"The proposed development, individually or in combination with another plan or project, will not have a significant effect on any European sites. This conclusion was reached without considering or taking into account mitigation measures or measures intended to avoid or reduce any impact on European sites."*

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The tree survey (Independent Tree Surveys, 2024) states that: *“Hedge condition is variable, with the effects of lapsed management, adjacent development activity, and disease all having detrimental effects on many of the hedgerow trees and bushes. The most significant impact is from disease, with both Ash Dieback disease and Dutch Elm disease causing significant mortality and physiological decline amongst the Ash and Elm trees present.”*

The lands are zoned *Residential Area (RA)* – ‘Provide for new residential communities subject to the provision of the necessary social and physical infrastructure’ in the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029. Swords Community School to the west of the site is zoned *Community Infrastructure (CI)* – ‘Provide for and protect civic, religious, community, education, health care and social infrastructure.’ Established residential areas to the northeast, east and south are zoned as Residential (RS) – ‘Provide for residential development and protect and improve residential amenity’ and Open Space (OS) – ‘Preserve and provide for open space and recreational amenities.’

A number of archaeological / heritage features in the area surrounding the site are listed on the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). These include a Field System (SMR No. DU011-144004) to the northwest of the site; and a Settlement Cluster (SMR No. DU011-149), Holy Well (SMR No. DU011-018) and Fulacht Fia (SMR No. DU011-148) to the south of the site. These features are located on the wider land holding. The remains of a further Structure (‘Glasmore Abbey’) (SMR No. DU011-019) is located on open space in Cianlea to the west of the lands. A Ringfort site (SMR No. DU011-147) is located on lands southwest of site. An Ecclesiastical Enclosure (SMR No. DU011-144001) and Field System (SMR No. DU011-144003) are located north of Rathbeale Road. However, the Archaeological Impact Assessment Report (Courtney Deery, 2024) notes that there *“are no recorded archaeological sites (RMP sites) or features of cultural heritage significance within the Mooretown Phase 1 lands.”*

There is a specific objective to ‘Preserve Views’ along Rathbeale Road to the north of the site – however, the context of this view is to broadly similar emerging residential neighbourhoods and associated public open spaces.

2. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.

The proposed development is located towards the northwest fringe of Swords in an area of established, emerging and planned residential development. Similar residential development is under construction and permitted / planned on lands to the west and southwest of the site.

While the following aspects of the environment have potential to be impacted – any potential impacts will be managed and mitigated as set out in detail in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (BSM & Waterman Moylan, 2024), and no significant environmental impacts will occur.

Biodiversity: While the majority of the development is to be provided on former arable lands / rough pasture, the site also includes a network of small streams with associated riparian vegetation. However, with the exception of two pedestrian / cycle bridges and two road culverts required to cross the streams, all of the streams and their associated riparian corridors / vegetation are retained, augmented and enhanced in the landscape scheme for the site. The loss of existing features will not constitute a significant impact, and the landscape proposals will provide additional biodiversity value to the site.

Water: As noted above a network of small streams traverse the site. These existing features are protected by fringing riparian vegetation. With the exception of the crossings noted above these features are retained and protected. During construction no site run off will be directed to existing streams and all such run off will be managed and discharges controlled via temporary settlement and attenuation ponds. A series of SUDS features, including swales, permeable paving, attenuation tanks and a large attenuation pond wetland will be installed to manage operation surface water and to maintain water quality in the streams.

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Heritage: There are a number of archaeological / heritage features in the area surrounding the site are listed on the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). However, the Archaeological Impact Assessment Report (Courtney Deery, 2024) notes that there “are no recorded archaeological sites (RMP sites) or features of cultural heritage significance within the Mooretown Phase 1 lands.” In addition the report details the required measures for the avoidance and / or mitigation of impacts on any features, currently unknown, which may be discovered during the works.

Adjoining Residential Areas: Established and emerging residential areas are located to the east and west of the site as well as to the north of Rathbeale Road. The immediately areas will experience visual impacts from site development as well as have potential for impacts from dust and noise. Residential and related development of this nature is commonplace in the surrounding area and any potential impacts arising will be managed and mitigated as set out in detail in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (BSM & Waterman Moylan, 2024).

3. A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the proposed development on the environment resulting from—

(a) the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant

During the construction phase, residues, emissions and waste material will be generated. Waste materials are likely to include waste concrete and excavated material. Waste material will be managed in accordance with the applicable legislative provisions.

A Resource & Waste Management Plan (AWN Consulting, 2024) has been prepared for the construction and demolition phase of the proposed development, in accordance with the EPA *Best Practice Guidelines for the Preparation of Resource & Waste Management Plans for Construction & Demolition Projects* (2021).

However, there are no unusual aspects of the proposed development and no demolition works are required. Volumes of residues and waste generated during the construction and operational phases will be commensurate of development of this nature, scale and location and these will be managed and mitigated as set out in detail in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (BSM & Waterman Moylan, 2024), and no significant environmental impacts will occur.

(b) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity

The site is zoned for residential development in the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 and as such residential development of the type proposed is envisaged for the lands and this zoning has been subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment as part of the making of the development plan process.

The lands are currently undeveloped and local excavations will be required for infrastructure, foundations and services from which it may be necessary to export some excavated material for off-site disposal. This will be executed in accordance with the relevant legislative provisions. A Resource and Waste Management Plan (AWN Consulting, 2024) and an Operational Waste Management Plan (AWN Consulting, 2024) have been prepared for the proposed development.

During the operational phase, potable water from the public supply network will be consumed by residents. Confirmation of ability to provide both potable water and waste water services to the proposed development have been received from Uisce Éireann.

The majority of the development is to be provided on former arable lands / rough pasture. With the exception of two pedestrian / cycle bridges and two road culverts required to cross the streams, all of the streams and their associated riparian corridors / vegetation are retained, augmented and enhanced in the landscape scheme

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for the site. The loss of existing features will not constitute a significant ecological impact, and the landscape proposals will provide additional biodiversity value to the site.

There are no unusual aspects of the proposed development in this regard. Use of natural resources will be limited to standard / typical levels for development of this nature, scale and location and no significant environmental effects will arise as a result.

4. The compilation of the information at paragraphs 1 to 3 shall take into account, where relevant, the criteria set out in Schedule 7

The information provided above has taken account of the criteria in Schedule 7 – refer to Table 4.2.

Table 4.1 Criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the PDR 2001 and corresponding information in respect of the proposed development

1. <i>Characteristics of proposed development</i> <i>The characteristics of proposed development, in particular—</i>
<i>(a) the size and design of the whole of the proposed development,</i>
The proposed development provides for 274 residential units (houses, duplexes and apartments) together with associated site infrastructure, landscaping and open space and associated and ancillary development on a residential zoned site of c. 9.35ha.
The size and design of the proposed development are detailed in Section 4.2 and Table 4.1 above.
<i>(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 [PDA 2000] and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment,</i>
The proposed development is located towards the northwest fringe of Swords in an area of established, emerging and planned residential development. Similar residential development is under construction and permitted / planned on lands to the west and southwest of the site. Likewise potential exists for a Phase 2 development on the wider land holding around this Phase 1 development.
Permission has been granted for a Strategic Housing Development (SHD) for 650no. residential units on lands southwest of the site (ABP Ref. 313362-22). As the number of properties exceeded 500, the application was subject to EIA. In assessing the application and referencing potential cumulative impacts, the ABP Inspector stated (paragraph 11.17.4 of Inspector’s Report):
<i>“The proposed development could occur in tandem with the development of other sites that are zoned in the area. Such development would be unlikely to differ from that envisaged under the county development and local area plans which have been subject to Strategic Environment Assessment. Its scale may be limited by the provisions of those plans and its form and character would be similar to the development proposed in this application. The actual nature and scale of the proposed development is in keeping with the zoning of the site and the other provisions of the relevant plans and national policy. The proposed development is not likely to give rise to environmental effects that were not envisaged in the plans that were subject to SEA. It is, therefore, concluded that the cumulation of effects from the planned and permitted development and that currently proposed would not be likely to give rise to significant effects on the environment other than those that have been described in the EIAR and considered in this EIA.”</i>
This assessment of no likely significant environmental effects is also applicable to the subject Phase 1 development, which is in keeping with the nature and planned zoning for residential development in the area.
<i>(c) the nature of any associated demolition works,</i>

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The proposed development does not require demolition as per Paragraphs 13(c) and 14 of Schedule 5. It will require typical site clearance and development works.

(d) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity,

The site is zoned for residential development in the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 and as such residential development of the type proposed is envisaged for the lands and this zoning has been subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment as part of the making of the development plan process.

The lands are currently undeveloped and local excavations will be required for infrastructure, foundations and services from which it may be necessary to export some excavated material for off-site disposal. This will be executed in accordance with the relevant legislative provisions. A Resource and Waste Management Plan (AWN Consulting, 2024) and an Operational Waste Management Plan (AWN Consulting, 2024) have been prepared for the proposed development.

During the operational phase, potable water from the public supply network will be consumed by residents. Confirmation of ability to provide both potable water and waste water services to the proposed development have been received from Uisce Éireann.

The majority of the development is to be provided on former arable lands / rough pasture. With the exception of two pedestrian / cycle bridges and two road culverts required to cross the streams, all of the streams and their associated riparian corridors / vegetation are retained, augmented and enhanced in the landscape scheme for the site. The loss of existing features will not constitute a significant ecological impact, and the landscape proposals will provide additional biodiversity value to the site.

There are no unusual aspects of the proposed development in this regard. Use of natural resources will be limited to standard / typical levels for development of this nature, scale and location and no significant environmental effects will arise as a result.

(e) the production of waste,

During the construction phase, waste material will be generated, requiring off-site disposal. Waste materials are likely to include waste concrete and excavated material. Waste material will be managed in accordance with the applicable legislative provisions.

A Resource & Waste Management Plan (AWN Consulting, 2024) has been prepared for the construction and demolition phase of the proposed development, in accordance with the EPA *Best Practice Guidelines for the Preparation of Resource & Waste Management Plans for Construction & Demolition Projects* (2021).

However, there are no unusual aspects of the proposed development and no demolition works are required. Volumes of waste generated during the construction and operational phases will be commensurate of development of this nature, scale and location and no significant environmental effects will arise as a result.

(f) pollution and nuisances,

Effects arising from the construction phase will be typical of construction and site clearance-related pollution risks and effects, e.g. generation of dust, elevated levels of noise, potential pollution risk, etc. These impacts will be managed and mitigated as set out in detail in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (BSM & Waterman Moylan, 2024), and no significant environmental impacts will occur.

(g) the risk of major accidents, and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge, and

The proposed development is neither especially susceptible to the risk of major accidents and / or disasters, nor is it likely to cause or exacerbate such an event. No particular risks have been identified in this regard.

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There are no Seveso sites in the vicinity of the proposed development. As detailed in **Section 4.2** above, a Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared in respect of the proposed development. It has concluded that the proposed development satisfies the flood risk requirements set out in the OPW guidelines, and may be regarded as ‘appropriate’ (as per the OPW criteria) in the context of flood risk.

(h) the risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution).

The site of the proposed development has residential receptors present in the immediate vicinity. However, having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development, no likely significant effects are predicted in this regard. Construction phase impacts will be managed and mitigated as set out in detail in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (BSM & Waterman Moylan, 2024), and no significant environmental impacts will occur.

2. Location of proposed development

The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development, with particular regard to—

(a) the existing and approved land use,

Under the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 the site and its surround are zoned as *Residential – ‘Provide for residential development and protect and improve residential amenity.’* For further details in relation to existing and approved land use, refer to **Section 4.2**, above.

(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 site is zoned for residential development in the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 and as such residential development of the type proposed is envisaged for the lands and this zoning has been subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment as part of the making of the development plan process.

The proposed development is located on the northwest fringe of Swords town and greenbelt areas lie further west. The proposed development includes for the provision of c.2ha of public open space and additional Class 1 open space will be provided in further phases of development of the lands. Large area of public open space – including heritage parkland – is also provided in the surrounding areas.

The proposed development also includes for protection and enhancement of the existing Riparian corridors and their associated vegetation. No major excavation works are proposed and no basements are required for the proposed development. As such soil excavation and removal is minimised.

(c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:

(i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;

The majority of the development is to be provided on former arable lands / rough pasture. With the exception of two pedestrian / cycle bridges and two road culverts required to cross the streams, all of the streams and their associated riparian corridors / vegetation are retained, augmented and enhanced in the landscape scheme for the site. The loss of existing features will not constitute a significant ecological impact, and the landscape proposals will provide additional biodiversity value to the site.

(ii) coastal zones and the marine environment;

The site of the proposed development is situated over 2.5km (linear distance) from the coast and no impacts will arise on the coastal zone or the marine environment.

(iii) mountain and forest areas;

There are no mountains or forest areas on the site or in the vicinity of the site.

(iv) nature reserves and parks;

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The nearest relevant statutory Nature Reserve to the proposed development site is at North Bull Island in Dublin Bay. There is no real likelihood of significant effects on any Nature Reserve or park resulting from the proposed development.

(v) areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive and;

An Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report has been prepared (BSM, 2024) in respect of the proposed development. The screening has concluded that the proposed development, individually or in combination with another plan or project, will not have a significant effect on any European sites. This assessment has also taken account of the potential for significant effects on nationally designated sites (NHA / pNHA).

(vi) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental 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;

There are no such areas connected to the site that could be significantly affected by the proposed development.

(vii) densely populated areas;

The site is zoned for residential development in the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 and as such residential development of the type proposed is envisaged for the lands and this zoning has been subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment as part of the making of the development plan process.

The proposed development is located towards the northwest fringe of Swords in an area of established, emerging and planned residential areas - located to the east and west of the site as well as to the north of Rathbeale Road. Similar residential development is also under construction and permitted / planned on lands to the west and southwest of the site.

Therefore residential and related development of this nature is commonplace in the surrounding area and any potential impacts arising will be managed and mitigated as set out in detail in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (BSM & Waterman Moylan, 2024).

(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.

A number of archaeological / heritage features in the area surrounding the site are listed on the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). These include a Field System (SMR No. DU011-144004) to the northwest of the site; and a Settlement Cluster (SMR No. DU011-149), Holy Well (SMR No. DU011-018) and Fulacht Fia (SMR No. DU011-148) to the south of the site. These features are located on the wider land holding. The remains of a further Structure ('Glasmore Abbey') (SMR No. DU011-019) is located on open space in Cianlea to the west of the lands. A Ringfort site (SMR No. DU011-147) is located on lands southwest of site. An Ecclesiastical Enclosure (SMR No. DU011-144001) and Field System (SMR No. DU011-144003) are located north of Rathbeale Road.

An Archaeological Impact Assessment Report (Courtney Deery, 2024) notes that there "are no recorded archaeological sites (RMP sites) or features of cultural heritage significance within the Mooretown Phase 1 lands." In addition the report details the required measures for the avoidance and / or mitigation of impacts on any features, currently unknown, which may be discovered during the works.

3. Types and 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)(l) to (v) of the definition of 'environmental impact assessment report' in section 171A of the [PDA 2000], taking into account—

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(a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example, geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),

The development relates to a typical residential development of houses, duplexes and apartments to be provided in a populated suburban area where provision of new residential development, similar to that proposed in Phase 1, is an ongoing feature of the area. No unusual aspects arise in the provision of the proposed development. The spatial extent of the direct impacts of the proposed development (e.g. habitat loss, dust generation, elevated noise, etc.) will be limited to the site and / or the immediate environs.

The magnitude and spatial extent of any impacts will be minor and localised to the site and immediately adjoining areas.

(b) the nature of the impact,

The development relates to a typical residential development of houses, duplexes and apartments to be provided in an area where provision of broadly similar residential development is an ongoing feature of the area. No unusual aspects arise in the provision of the proposed development and impacts arising are expected to be typical of the nature of impacts associated with normal suburban residential development. These potential impacts will be managed and mitigated as set out in detail in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (BSM & Waterman Moylan, 2024).

The nature of impacts of the proposed development will not be unusual in any aspect.

(c) the transboundary nature of the impact,

The site of the proposed development is not proximate to any a county boundary or to the boundary with Northern Ireland. Given the nature and location of the proposed development no transboundary impacts are likely to arise.

(d) the intensity and complexity of the impact,

The development relates to a typical residential development of houses, duplexes and apartments. No demolition works other than site clearance is associated with the development. No unusual aspects arise and no impacts of unusual intensity or complexity are likely to arise.

(e) the probability of the impact,

The development relates to a typical residential development of houses, duplexes and apartments and no unusual aspects or impacts of unusual intensity or complexity are likely to arise. Impacts arising are expected to be typical of the nature of impacts associated with normal suburban residential development.

It is probable that normal impacts associated with suburban residential development will arise, however, these will be managed and mitigated as set out in detail in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (BSM & Waterman Moylan, 2024), and no significant environmental impacts will occur.

(f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact,

The development relates to a typical residential development of houses, duplexes and apartments and no unusual aspects or impacts of unusual intensity or complexity are likely to arise. Impacts arising are expected to be typical of the nature of impacts associated with the temporary and short-terms aspects of the construction phase as for any suburban residential development.

Any construction phase impacts will be managed and mitigated as set out in detail in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (BSM & Waterman Moylan, 2024), and no significant environmental impacts will occur.

(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 [PDA 2000] 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

The proposed development is located towards the northwest fringe of Swords in an area of established, emerging and planned residential development. Similar residential development is under construction and permitted / planned on lands to the west and southwest of the site. Likewise potential exists for a Phase 2 development on the wider land holding around this Phase 1 development.

Permission has been granted for a Strategic Housing Development (SHD) for 650no. residential units on lands southwest of the site (ABP Ref. 313362-22). As the number of properties exceeded 500, the application was subject to EIA. In assessing the application and referencing potential cumulative impacts, the ABP Inspector stated (paragraph 11.17.4 of Inspector's Report):

"The proposed development could occur in tandem with the development of other sites that are zoned in the area. Such development would be unlikely to differ from that envisaged under the county development and local area plans which have been subject to Strategic Environment Assessment. Its scale may be limited by the provisions of those plans and its form and character would be similar to the development proposed in this application. The actual nature and scale of the proposed development is in keeping with the zoning of the site and the other provisions of the relevant plans and national policy. The proposed development is not likely to give rise to environmental effects that were not envisaged in the plans that were subject to SEA. It is, therefore, concluded that the cumulation of effects from the planned and permitted development and that currently proposed would not be likely to give rise to significant effects on the environment other than those that have been described in the EIAR and considered in this EIA."

This assessment of no likely significant environmental effects is also applicable to the subject Phase 1 development, which is in keeping with the nature and planned zoning for residential development in the area.

(h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

No likely significant environmental impacts will arise, however, potential impacts associated with normal construction activities will arise. These potential impacts will be managed and reduced as set out in detail in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (BSM & Waterman Moylan, 2024). Implementation of the mitigation measures and adherence to the Construction and Environmental Management Plan prepared for the project will ensure that any potential residual impacts will be short term and negligible.

4.4 Article 81A.(5)(c)(ii) Statement

In addition to the requirements of Schedule 7A (above), Article 81A.(5)(c)(ii) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended requires any further relevant information on the characteristics of the proposed development and its likely significant effects on the environment, including, where relevant, information on how the available results of other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment carried out pursuant to European Union legislation other than the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive have been taken into account.

All relevant assessments, including those pursuant to European Union legislation in relation to the environment have been addressed in Sections 4.2 and 4.3 of this report. This includes, where relevant, assessments arising from the following:

- The Habitats Directive, The Birds Directive, the Ramsar Convention, the Bern Convention, and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals;
- The Landfill Directive, the Waste Framework Directive, the Urban Waste Water Collection and Treatment Directive;
- The Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Directive, the Industrial Emissions Directive, the Seveso III Directive;
- The Environmental Noise Directive, Directive on Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe;

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- The Drinking Water Directive; Water Framework Directive;
- The Landscape Convention, and the Protocol amending the European Landscape Convention;
- Directive on the Promotion of the Use of Energy from Renewable Sources, the Regulation on the inclusion of greenhouse gas emissions and removals from land use, land use change and forestry in the 2030 climate and energy framework, and the Regulation on binding annual greenhouse gas emission reductions by Member States from 2021 to 2030 contributing to climate action to meet commitments under the Paris Agreement;
- The Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage, the Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Revised), the Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society; and
- The Directive on Public Access to Environmental Information.

5 Conclusion

It is concluded that the proposed local authority own housing development would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment. The main reasons for this conclusion are as follows:

- The nature and scale of the site and the of the proposed residential development are below the stated thresholds of Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2023 at or above which there is a mandatory requirement for EIA;
- The residential development is to be located on lands zoned for residential land use in the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029, which itself has been the subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA);
- The nature of the proposed development is not unusual in the context of the receiving environment and is in keeping with the character of established and emerging residential surrounding the site.
- The operational use of the proposed development is to provide 274 much-needed residential units and will comprise an improvement to the baseline in terms of residential amenity;
- The site clearance and construction phase is expected to give rise to slight to moderate, localised environmental effects that are typical of urban redevelopment projects of this nature;
- The scale of the proposed development is consistent with the prevailing / permitted building height, profile and typology in the receiving environment;
- The availability of surface water services to serve the proposed scheme;
- Uisce Éireann confirmation of acceptance for connection to the potable water network;
- Uisce Éireann confirmation of acceptance for connection to the foul network;
- The location of the proposed scheme outside of any sensitive location specified in Article 299(C)(1)(v) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended);
- The measures proposed to avoid and prevent potential effects on the environment, including the measures identified in the Construction and Environmental Management Plan (BSM & WM, 2024);
- The measures proposed in the Archaeological Impact Assessment Report (Courtney Deery, 2024) to mitigate any potential adverse impacts on potential / unknown heritage features;
- The likelihood of no significant environment effects arising as noted under Schedule 5, Part 2, paragraph 10(b)(i) and 10(b)(iv) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended;
- The information on the proposed scheme provided in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2023; and
- Having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2023.

It is therefore recommended that having regard to the information set out above, the Competent Authority (Fingal County Council) may reach a screening determination that ***there is no real likelihood of significant effects arising as a result of the proposed development; and, therefore, that environmental impact assessment and the preparation of an environmental impact assessment report is not required.***

6 References

- Bat Conservation Ireland (2010). *Bats & Lighting: Guidance Notes for Planners, Engineers, Architects and Developers*.
- CIEEM (2022). *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland (Version 1.2)*.
- CIEEM (2023). *UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines A guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for development affecting bats*.
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Appendix 1: EPA Environmental Impact Assessment Criteria

Table A1.1 Criteria for characterising environmental effects (adapted from EPA, 2022)

Criterion	Definition
Quality	
Positive	A change which improves the quality of the environment
Neutral	No effects or effects that are imperceptible, within normal bounds of variation or within the margin of forecasting error
Negative	A change which reduces the quality of the environment
Significance	
Imperceptible	An effect capable of measurement but without significant consequences
Not significant	An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment but without significant consequences
Slight	An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities
Moderate	An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends
Significant	An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment
Very significant	An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity significantly alters most of a sensitive aspect of the environment
Profound	An effect which obliterates sensitive characteristics
Extent and Context	
Extent	Describe the size of the area, the number of sites, and the proportion of a population affected by an effect
Context	Describe whether the extent, duration, or frequency will conform or contrast with established (baseline) conditions
Probability	
Likely	Effects that can reasonably be expected to occur because of the planned project
Unlikely	The effects that can reasonably be expected not to occur because of the planned project
Duration	
Momentary	Effects lasting from seconds to minutes
Brief	Effects lasting less than a day
Temporary	Effects lasting less than a year
Short-term	Effects lasting one to seven years.
Medium-term	Effects lasting seven to fifteen years
Long-term	Effects lasting fifteen to sixty years
Permanent	Effects lasting over sixty years
Reversibility and Frequency	
Reversible	Effects that can be undone, for example through remediation or restoration
Frequency	Describe how often the effect will occur. (once, rarely, occasionally, frequently, constantly – or hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, annually)

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