

# SECTION 177AE PLANNING REPORT

for

## R132 CONNECTIVITY PROJECT

on

### THE R132, SWORDS, CO. DUBLIN

prepared for



on behalf of

Comhairle Contae  
Fhine Gall  
Fingal County  
Council



by

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**April 2021**

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<b>Document Control</b>	<b>Author/Reviewer</b>	<b>Date</b>
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<b>Reviewed by</b>	Conor Skehan & Paul Fingleton	27 April 2021
<b>Status of this version</b>	Final	

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

CAAS have been commissioned by the National Transport Authority (hereafter referred to as the NTA) on behalf of Fingal County Council (hereafter referred to as FCC) to prepare this Planning Report for submission to An Bord Pleanála (hereafter referred to as ABP) as part of the Section 177AE planning application documents for alterations to existing intersections on the R132 at Swords, County Dublin.

This Planning Report has been formulated in accordance with the provisions of Section 177AE of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended), which requires certain development carried out by a Local Planning Authority requiring Appropriate Assessment (AA) to be approved by An Bord Pleanála.

## 1.2 OUTLINE DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

A full development description is included in Section 4 of this Planning Report. A copy of the Newspaper Notice wording is included in Appendix 4. In summary, the proposed development consists of:

- Conversion of three existing intersections along the R132 (Estuary, Seatown and Malahide Road Roundabouts) to signalised intersections.
- Installation of signalised toucan crossings at three separate points along the R132.
- Installations of turning areas at two separate points along the R132.
- Bus stops on Malahide Road.
- Pedestrian linkages.
- Carriageway alterations and reconfigurations.
- Landscaping and other ancillary works.

The overall length of the proposed development is approximately 2.6km, and is expected to take approximately 2 years to construct.

No compulsory purchase orders are proposed as part of this application.

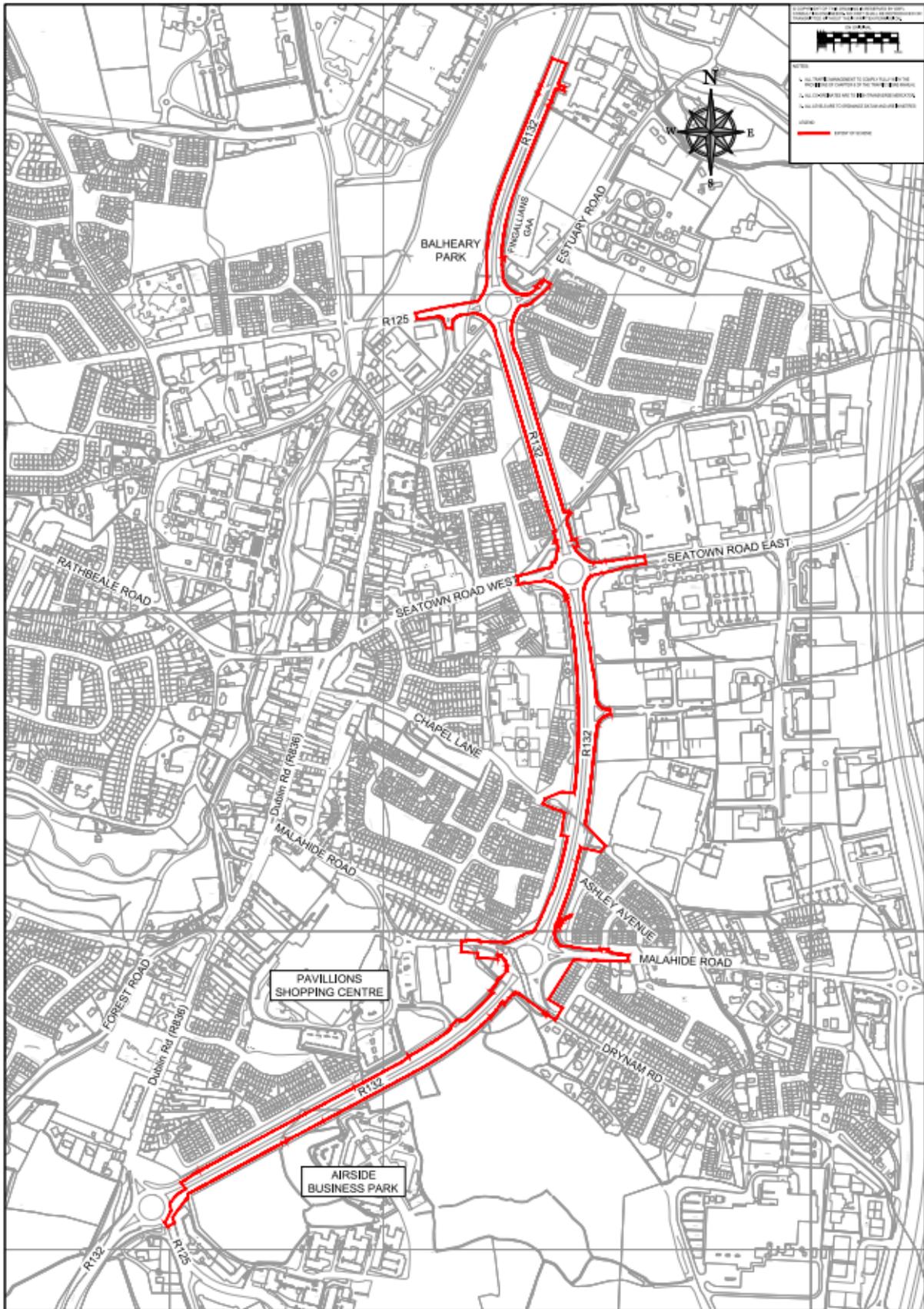


Figure 1.1 Site location plan illustrating the project extent

## 1.3 STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

The R132 is a regional road running in a north-south direction parallel to the M1 commencing at the border with Northern Ireland, and terminating at the interchange between the R132 and the N1/ Swords Road at Shantalla Road. The section of the R132 the subject of this application runs from between the Lissenhall Interchange and Estuary Roundabout, through Swords and terminates between Malahide Road and Pinnock Hill Roundabouts. This particular section formerly functioned as a bypass of Swords Town Centre and has now become a part of the urban fabric of Swords functioning as a local distributor road.

There are three roundabouts on the R132 within the red line boundary of the proposed development, namely Estuary, Seatown and Malahide Road roundabouts. These junctions provide access from the R132 to areas to the east and west of this road, in addition to connections across the road. The first two of these roundabouts, Estuary and Seatown are priority controlled, whereas the Malahide Road Roundabout is signal controlled.

The Malahide roundabout represents the most common crossing point of the R132 for traffic travelling directly between Malahide and Swords. This roundabout also acts as the central access point from the R132 to the Pavillions Shopping Centre and Swords Town Centre. As a result, the roundabout carries substantial volumes of traffic crossing the R132. The Swords Quality Bus Corridor along the R132, enjoys significant levels of bus priority along the R132 to the south of the Malahide Road roundabout.

Pedestrian bridges are currently located along this section of the R132 in four different locations linking residential areas and employment centres east of the R132 to the town centre west of the R132. The pedestrian bridges also function as pedestrian linkages to the Pavillions Shopping Centre and to St Colmcille's Boys & Girls National School. Pedestrian footpaths along the R132 are predominantly located on the southbound (eastern) side of the carriageway, with minimal footpath provision on the northbound (western) side of the carriageway linking to existing bus stops.

The National Planning Framework and accompanying National Development Plan, the Regional & Spatial Economic Strategy for the Eastern & Midlands Regional Assembly, Fingal County Development Plan (2017-2023) policies and objectives provide a clear spatial framework for the implementation of measures that support and encourage active travel and sustainable modes of transport, such as those included in the subject proposal.

The above planning framework sets a clear and unambiguous context for the support of development such as the subject proposal, to occur within the area in a co-ordinated, sustainable and planned manner.

A review of the spatial and policy context highlights the need to undertake a modal shift towards sustainable transport modes whilst also facilitating increased connectivity and compact growth in the surrounding area. The policy context also shows the pressing need to address climate change, including through the implementation of sustainable transport measures.

## 1.4 NEED FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The application submitted for approval is part of a strategic connectivity project initiated by Fingal County Council to enhance facilities at key intersections along the R132 south of Lissenhall Interchange to Pinnockhill junction, and to improve connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists travelling across and along the R132 at Swords.

The objective of the R132 Connectivity Project is, to improve the connectivity and safety of pedestrians and cyclists moving along and across the R132 and enhance facilities for all road users with particular benefits for sustainable modes of transportation (bus users, cyclists and pedestrians). Fingal County Council, in recent times, have published a number of masterplans and policies, which together with schemes such as MetroLink and BusConnects, propose changing the nature of the R132, from a fast-moving distributor road to one which functions as an urban street with defined crossing points, which are

safe and convenient for all road users. This scheme aligns with these national and local plans and is the first step in improving access across and along the R132 for all.

In general, the existing road network along this section of the R132 reflects its previous role as a national primary route, designed for that function with wide carriageways in both directions separated by a wide landscaped median. The environment along the R132 corridor and at each of the intersections is heavily car dominated with speed limits of either 60km/h or 80km/h. There are currently no dedicated cyclist facilities at the Malahide Road, Seatown or Estuary intersections or in the intervening sections of road. At Malahide Road cyclists are required to travel on-road through the roundabout with some cyclists using the overbridge to cross in an east-west direction. Pedestrian facilities are also limited along this stretch of the R132.

The Traffic & Transport Assessment (TTA) and the Road Safety Audit (RSA) accompanying this application clearly document occurrences of dangerous pedestrian and cyclist activity along this stretch of the R132 due to the inadequate existing facilities provided. Clear desire lines are identified along the carriageway where pedestrian walkways are not provided. This demonstrates the need for a cycle and pedestrian friendly carriageway that provides a safe environment for both traversing and travelling along the R132. The TTA also details the frequency of accidents along this section of the R132, and it demonstrates that accidents are most common at the intersections. Thus, the need for the proposed development is clearly demonstrated. In addition, the RSA also identified problems with regard to road safety and has influenced the design of the subject proposal, in this regard.

## **1.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING**

This proposal has been screened in line with the relevant legislation and guidance to establish whether or not it requires Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and as a result, if an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) should be prepared in respect of it. The EIA Screening report is included as Appendix 5 to this report. Based on an objective review of the proposed project, including its characteristics, location and the likelihood of it causing significant environmental impacts the report finds that the project does not need to be subject to EIA and no EIAR is required for it.

In keeping with good practice, the project was screened before the project details were finalised. Changes to design details since the screening was carried out have not affected the validity of its findings.

Notwithstanding and in keeping with good practice, it was decided to provide an Environmental Report (ER) to assess any environmental impacts that may be caused by the proposed project and, where applicable, propose measures to avoid, reduce or remedy them. The ER is provided as a separate document supporting the planning application.

## **1.6 APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT**

An Appropriate Assessment (AA) has been carried out under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive (2009/147/EC) to determine whether the proposed development is likely to have a significant adverse effect on European Sites.

An Appropriate Assessment screening (Stage one AA) was carried out at an early stage, in keeping with good practice. This screening found that it could not be excluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt, in view of best scientific knowledge, on the basis of objective information and in light of the conservation objectives of the identified European sites, that the proposed development (individually or in combination with other plans and projects) could have likely significant effects on the following European sites:

- Malahide Estuary SAC; and,
- Malahide Estuary SPA

In keeping with the requirements of the AA process, ability to mitigate potential effects was not taken into account at the screening stage. As a result, a stage two AA (a.k.a. Natura Impact Statement or NIS) in line with Article 6(3) of the European Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) was found to be required. The Appropriate Assessment screening report is included as Appendix 6 to this report.

As a result of the conclusion of the screening stage, an NIS has been prepared. The NIS conclusions are as follows.

*The implementation of the proposed project would have the potential to result in adverse effects to the integrity of any European sites, if unmitigated.*

*The risks to the safeguarding and integrity of the qualifying interests, special conservation interests and conservation objectives of the European sites have been addressed by the inclusion of mitigation measures that will prioritise the avoidance of effects in the first place and mitigate effects where these cannot be avoided.*

*In-combination effects from interactions with other plans and projects have been considered in the assessment. The mitigation measures incorporated into the design of the proposed project allow a conclusion to be arrived at that there will be no significant adverse effects as a result of the proposed project either alone or in-combination with other plans/projects.*

*Having incorporated mitigation measures, it is concluded that the proposed project will not give rise to any effect on the ecological integrity of any European sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects<sup>1</sup>. This evaluation is made in view of the conservation objectives of the habitats or species for which these sites have been designated.*

The NIS is provided as a separate document supporting the planning application.

## **1.7 LIST OF DOCUMENTS ACCOMPANYING THE APPLICATION**

A number of supporting documents are being submitted to An Bord Pleanála as part of the S177AE planning application process. These documents include the standard documents required by law for applications which are subject to Appropriate Assessment, and are based on analysis of precedent S177AE applications and ABP Guidelines for Local Authorities relating to S177AE applications<sup>2</sup>:

- Planning Report (this document).
- Cover Letter.
- Planning Drawings (Drawing List included in Appendix 2).
- Copy of the site notice (Appendix 3).
- Copy of the newspaper advertisements (wording included in Appendix 4).
- Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report (Appendix 5).
- Environmental Report.
- Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (Appendix 6).
- Natura Impact Statement.
- Flood Risk Assessment.
- Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan.
- Traffic and Transport Assessment.
- Road Safety Audit.
- List of prescribed authorities consulted (including copies of notices sent to prescribed authorities).
- Infrastructure Design Report (including drainage).
- Landscape Drawings

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.pleanala.ie/publications/2013/aaenglish.pdf>

- Arborist's Report.
- Non-statutory public consultation report on submissions received.

In accordance with Article 249 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended, three copies of the Natura Impact Statement and accompanying documents and drawings are submitted (including 1 electronic copy). One copy of the site notice and one copy of each of the newspaper notices as placed in two different newspapers are also supplied.

After a brief description of the site location and context of the development, this planning report outlines the relevant planning history for the subject site and in the vicinity before demonstrating, with reference to the reports listed above, how the proposed development is in full compliance with all relevant planning and development guidance, policies and standards.

## **1.8 PLANNING FEE**

The planning fee will be paid as directed by An Bord Pleanála, in accordance with Section 177AE(9) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended).

## 2 SUBJECT SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT

### 2.1 SITE LOCATION

The R132 is a primary regional road that extends from Dublin to the border with Northern Ireland where it becomes the Dublin Road. The parallel M1 motorway has superseded the R132 as a national primary route. The stretch of the R132 affected by the proposed development is located to the west of the M1 motorway and to the east of the town centre of Swords. Immediately to the south of the proposed development is the continuation of the R132 and Airside Retail Park, and immediately to the north is the continuation of the R132.



Figure 2.1 Spatial Context of Subject Site

### 2.2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The R132, as shown in Figure 2.2 below, is characterised by north/south dual carriageway dissected by roundabouts on an east/west axis. The carriageway is heavily car dominated with limited dedicated bus lane provision. Speed limits along this stretch of the carriageway currently range from 60-80 km/h. Overhead pedestrian walkways are dispersed along the carriageway, supported by pedestrian walkways mainly along the southbound (eastern) side of the carriageway. There is no existing cycle provision along the carriageway. The surrounding area mainly consists of the built footprint of Swords, characterised by housing, commercial, retail, warehouse and educational uses. Large retail centres such as the Pavilions Shopping Centre and Airside Retail Park are located within the immediate vicinity of the R132 (see Figure 2.2. below).



Figure 2.2 Site Context (site area outlined in red)

## 2.3 ZONING AND LAND USES IN AND AROUND THE R132

Fingal County Council is responsible for land use zoning, as part of its functions as a plan-making Local Planning Authority, for the area within its boundaries. This is commonly detailed in the Development Plan (see Figure 2.3 below).

The R132 itself is designated as a road of primary regional importance and, as such, is not zoned for land use in the Development Plan. The land uses and zonings in the immediate vicinity of the R132 consist of the following mixture of land use zonings:

- **ME - Metro Economic Corridor** (*Facilitate opportunities for high density mixed use employment generating activity and commercial development, and support the provision of an appropriate quantum of residential development within the Metro Economic Corridor*);
- **RS – Residential** (*Provide for residential development and protect and improve residential amenity*);
- **HT – High Technology** (*Provide for office, research and development and high technology/high technology manufacturing type employment in a high quality built and landscaped environment*);
- **OS - Open Space** (*Preserve and provide for open space and recreational amenities*);
- **MC - Major Town Centre** (*Protect, provide for and/or improve major town centre facilities*), and;
- **CI - Community Infrastructure** (*Provide for and protect civic, religious, community, education, health care and social infrastructure*).

This is largely reflective of the diverse mix of land uses surrounding the R132, and demonstrates the distinctly urban nature of the R132, in that, it dissects the built environment of Swords. In addition to this, there are a number of specific objectives covering this stretch of the R132, including:



## **3 SUBJECT SITE PLANNING HISTORY**

This section of the planning report provides a brief description of all relevant planning applications made both on the site itself, and within the immediate vicinity of the site.

### **3.1 SUMMARY PLANNING HISTORY FOR THE R132**

The proposed development relates to a road of regional importance which comes within the remit of Fingal County Council, as the local planning authority. This road was originally constructed to function as a national primary route linking Dublin to Belfast, but has since been downgraded to a regional route, with the construction of the M1 motorway to the immediate east superseding the R132 as the national primary road linking Dublin to Belfast. Whilst a number of junctions, intersections and signage alterations have been developed along the R132 over the years, the roundabouts at Estuary Road, Seatown Road and Malahide Road have been in existence for some time.

### **3.2 SUMMARY PLANNING HISTORY FOR THE SURROUNDING AREA**

A review of all relevant planning applications lodged (between the years 2011 - Present) for development in the vicinity of the subject site, was conducted using Fingal County Council's online planning enquiry systems, along with the National Planning Database. Outline details of relevant planning applications are set out in Appendix 1 of this report.

Historical and proposed developments in the immediate vicinity such as the Dublin Metro North, Hertz, IDA, Woodies, National Learning Network (Swords), Fujitsu Ireland, Tulsa Child and Family Agency and Fingallians CLG are not included as the permissions for these developments pre-date 2011. It is also noted that a planning application is due to be submitted to An Bord Pleanála for the BusConnects programme, which relates to the R132, in the immediate future. In addition, a Railway Order application is expected to be submitted to An Bord Pleanála in the near future in relation to the MetroLink project.

Whilst the proposed development will alter the appearance of the R132, the nature of the proposed development will be consistent in character with the existing carriageway and will generally remain within the existing confines of the carriageway. Neither the planning history of the site itself, nor that of the surrounding area, includes applications which would preclude the granting of planning permission for the subject development proposal.

## 4 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The development as described in the public notices is as follows:

Fingal County Council intends to apply for permission, under the provisions of Section 177AE of the Planning & Development Act 200, as amended, for development on the R132, Swords, County Dublin.

The development consists of:

- a) Conversion of three existing intersections along the R132 (Estuary, Seatown and Malahide Road Roundabouts) to signalised intersections with 'at-grade' pedestrian and cyclist crossing points;
- b) Installation of signalised toucan crossings at three separate points along the R132;
- c) Pedestrian linkages to Chapel Lane and Ashley Avenue at the proposed Chapel Lane toucan crossing;
- d) Installation of turning areas at two separate points along the R132;
- e) Carriageway alterations including the establishment of designated 3m wide bus lanes and 2m wide cycleways and 2m wide pedestrian walkways along each side of the carriageway;
- f) Reconfiguration of the Drynam Road arm of the Malahide Road Roundabout to link directly to Malahide Road as a one-way road;
- g) Construction of new bus stops on Malahide Road;
- h) Installation of a sub-surface attenuation system; and
- i) Landscaping and other ancillary works.

A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) accompanies this application, and will be available for inspection or purchase at the office of the Planning Authority.

A copy of the full Site Notice is included in Appendix 3 of this Report.

Sections of existing carriageway linking the project junctions will be modified to provide continuous facilities between junctions. The typical cross section proposed along the link sections on R132 will include one general traffic lane and one bus lane in both directions. Footpaths and cycle lanes will also be provided on both sides with the cycle lanes segregated from the bus lanes via pencil bollards and a kerb.

It is expected that the works will be carried out in a number of phases over an expected 2-year construction period.

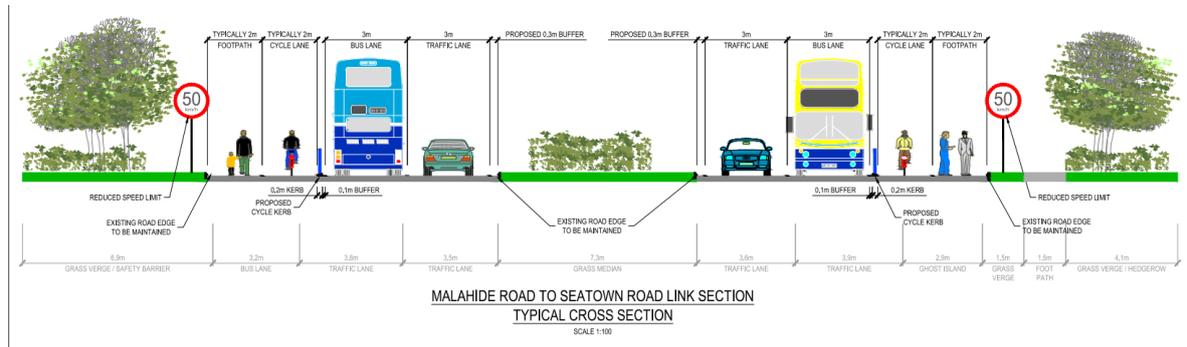
### 4.1 DESIGN OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The subject application is accompanied by an Infrastructure Design Report, Landscape Drawings and a Traffic & Transport Assessment detailing the various design options considered and the merits of choosing the design approach proposed as part of this development.

In addition, the non-statutory public consultation on the R132 Connectivity Project undertaken by Fingal County Council in December 2020 resulted in refinement of the design in order to address concerns raised with various aspects of the project, particularly the proposed closure of Drynam Road. This has now been amended to link directly to the Malahide Road as a one-way road (see Figure 4.2 below). A summary of responses to this non-statutory public consultation accompanies this application, and can be found within the Non-statutory public consultation report on submissions received.

The proposed development represents both a physical and functional design alteration to an existing carriageway which more appropriately reflects its function as a road of primary regional importance,

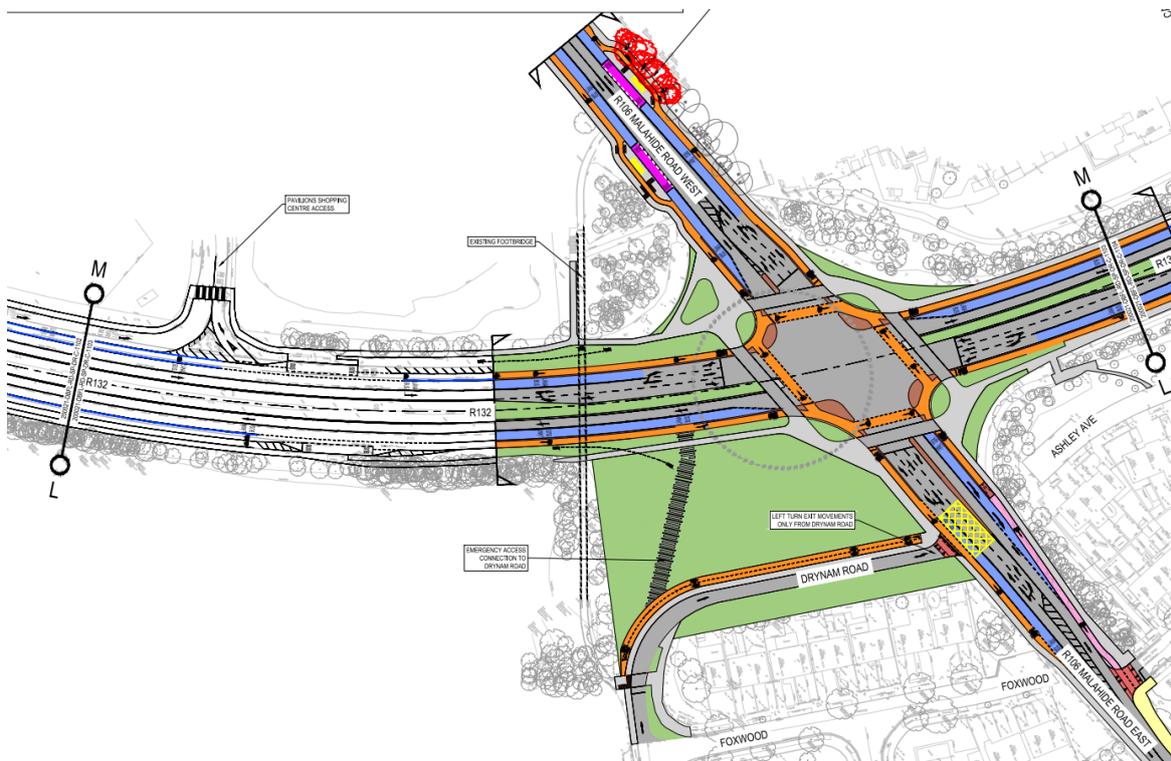
whilst facilitating increased connectivity within the built environment of Swords. Thus, the proposed development design represents a sustainable approach that complements the surrounding environment and facilitates greater sustainable transport movements along the R132 (see Figure 4.1 below).



**Figure 4.1 Typical Road Cross Section between Junctions<sup>4</sup>**

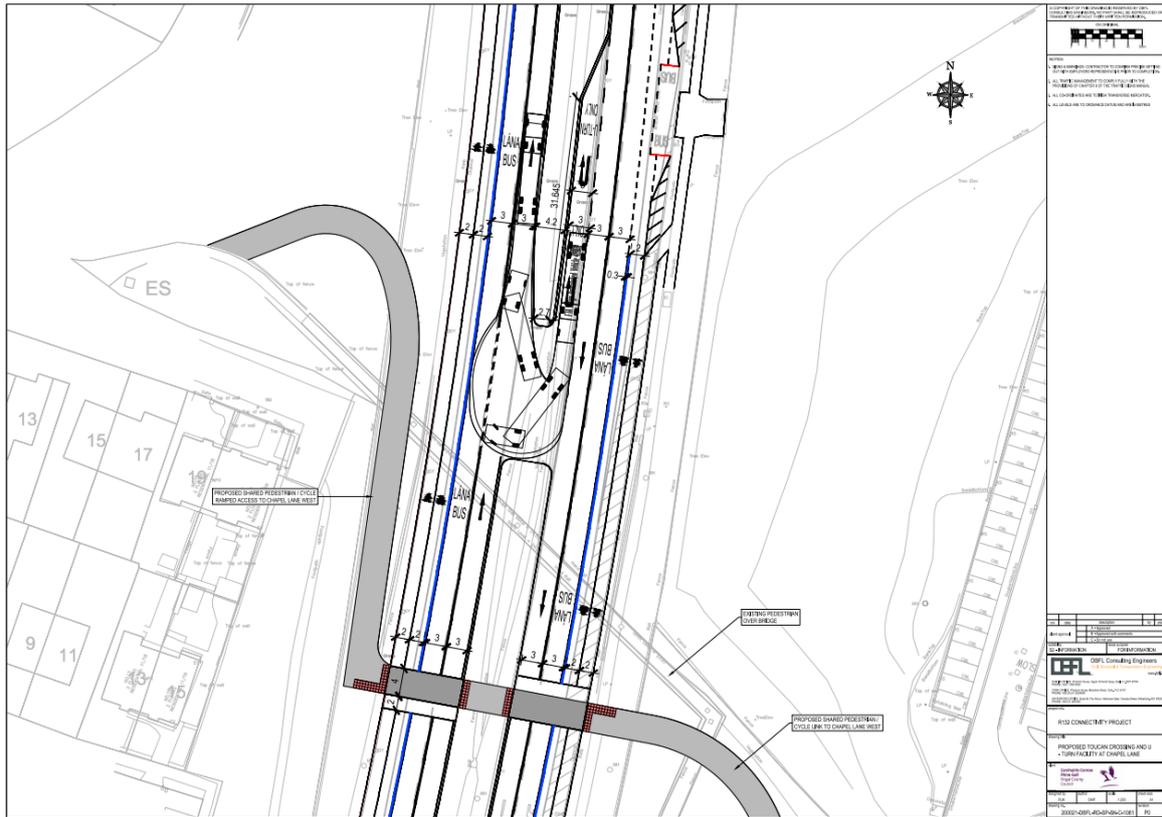
The design of the proposed development also makes an allowance for the future construction of MetroLink in the immediate vicinity, and will also be readily linked into the BusConnects plans for the area.

The design of the junctions and the toucan crossings included within the subject proposal have been informed by the Road Safety Audit (RSA) and the Design Options Assessment appended to the Traffic & Transport Assessment. The junctions will generally consist of a four-arm signalised junction with clear prioritisation for sustainable transport modes (see Figure 4.2 below). The accompanying documentation provides further detail as to the exact design of each junction.



**Figure 4.2 Sample Junction Design of Malahide Road Intersection**

<sup>4</sup> A full scale drawing is provided as part of the suite of drawings accompanying this application



**Figure 4.3 Sample Toucan Crossing and Turning Area Design at Chapel Lane**

The toucan crossings have been designed to provide at-grade pedestrian crossing points along the R132 which will facilitate access to future developments along the R132, ensuring adequate permeability and links from Swords Town Centre and the existing and future developments in the vicinity of the R132. Two of the toucan crossings will be located adjacent to turning areas, facilitating vehicle speed reduction in these areas which allows for a safer pedestrian crossing environment (see Figure 4.3 above).

## 5 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Sections 5 and 6 of this report demonstrate that the proposed development complies with the requirements of all relevant statutory County and Local Plans and Policies, which in turn comply with national and regional planning and infrastructural development strategies. The specific planning policy documents highlighted in brief in this section include:

- Project Ireland 2040 - The National Planning Framework;
- Project Ireland 2040 - The National Development Plan (2018-2027);
- Regional & Spatial Economic Strategy for the Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly (2019-2031);
- Fingal County Council Development Plan (2017-2023);
- Fingal County Council Development Plan 2023 – 2029;
- Your Swords an Emerging City - Strategic Vision 2035, and;
- Relevant Local Area Plans and Master Plans in the immediate vicinity.

### 5.1 NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK (PROJECT IRELAND 2040)

The National Planning Framework (NPF) is a 20-year planning framework which combines with the National Development Plan (NDP) to form Project Ireland 2040 – the government’s long-term overarching national planning strategy. This replaces both the old National Spatial Strategy (NSS) and NDP. It aims to guide population and jobs growth over the next 20 years across all parts of Ireland, supported by a flexible and sustainable planning framework. The NPF informs all other planning policy documents including the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, and County Development Plans.

A number of key policy priorities are outlined in the NPF for the Eastern and Midland Region, within which the subject proposal is situated. One of these policy priorities specifically references the need for *"a focussed approach to compact, sequential and sustainable development of the larger urban areas along the Dublin – Belfast economic and transport corridor"*. Added to this, another policy priority recommends *"More emphasis on consolidating the development of places that grew rapidly in the past decade or so with large scale commuter driven housing development"*.

#### **Project Response:**

Considering the functionality of the R132 and the proximity of the subject proposal to both Swords Town Centre (traditionally regarded as a commuter town of Dublin City) and the M1 motorway, it is clear that the proposed development will help to achieve compact and sustainable development within a large urban area along the Dublin-Belfast transport corridor.

The NPF also identifies a number of key future growth enablers for Dublin, including *"The development of an improved bus-based system, with better orbital connectivity and integration with other transport networks"* and *"Improving access to Dublin Airport, to include improved public transport access, connections from the road network from the west and north"*.

#### **Project Response:**

A key element of the subject proposal is to increase connectivity and to improve conditions for sustainable transport modes along and across the R132. This, in turn, will lead to greater integration with other transport networks both linking to and traversing the R132. This includes Dublin Airport which is located approximately 2km south of the subject proposal.

Any future public transport proposals such as MetroLink and BusConnects will stand to benefit from the subject proposal as it will create linkages between various sustainable transport modes.

The Framework includes a number of National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs), of which consists of the themes 'Compact Growth' (NSO 1) and 'Sustainable Mobility' (NSO 4), amongst others. These NSOs are supported by a number of Strategic Investment Priorities (SIPs), of which includes sustainable urban development, the national road network, environmentally sustainable public transport and climate action, all of which are core elements of the subject proposal.

NSO 4 notes that *"major urban areas are too heavily dependent on road and private, mainly car based, transport with the result that our roads are becoming more and more congested. The National Development Plan makes provision for investment in public transport and sustainable mobility solutions to progressively put in place a more sustainable alternative"*. MetroLink and BusConnects are both referenced as such solutions and the subject proposal will appropriately complement both projects through facilitating greater bus, cycle and pedestrian access along and across the R132.

At the core of the NPF is sustainability and more environmentally-friendly development, which is implemented through the NSOs, SIPs and accompanying National Policy Objectives (NPOs). In addition to the NSOs referenced above, there are a number of NPOs pertaining to the subject proposal such as:

- **NPO 27** – *"Ensure the integration of safe and convenient alternatives to the car into the design of our communities, by prioritising walking and cycling accessibility to both existing and proposed developments"*
- **NPO 52** – *"The planning system will be responsive to our national environmental challenges and ensure that development occurs within environmental limits, having regard to the requirements of all relevant environmental legislation and the sustainable management of our natural capital"*
- **NPO 64** – *"Improve air quality and help prevent people being exposed to unacceptable levels of pollution in our urban and rural areas through integrated land use and spatial planning that supports public transport, walking and cycling as more favourable modes of transport to the private car"*
- **NPO 75** – *"Ensure that all plans, projects and activities requiring consent arising from the National Planning Framework are subject to the relevant environmental assessment requirements including SEA, EIA and AA as appropriate"*

The NPF also highlights the importance of the public realm and improving access to public transport in order to improve the 'liveability' of urban areas.

#### **Project Response:**

Given that the proposed development represents a Section 177AE application, the requirement for a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) is the legally binding trigger for the application. Notwithstanding this, the proposed development satisfies the NPO requirements to undertake the relevant environmental assessments as it is also accompanied by an environmental report detailing various environmental considerations.

The proposed development also supports the NPO requirements to prioritise walking, cycling and public transport which, in turn, helps to improve air quality. In this regard, the Environmental Report accompanying this application concludes that positive impacts on air quality during the operational phase of the subject proposal will be long term and imperceptible.

The landscape drawings submitted in support of this application demonstrate how the public realm area will be increased at each intersection. The infrastructure design report accompanying this application details the design of the proposed development and how this will improve access to public transport through increased pedestrian facilities along the R132.

## 5.2 PROJECT IRELAND 2040 - NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2018-2027)

This Development Plan replaces the previous plan and identifies strategic infrastructural investment to support the NPF over the ten years from 2018-2027. The Plan outlines Strategic Investment Priorities (SIP) which relate to NSOs from the National Planning Framework (NPF), as part of the wider Project Ireland 2040 strategy.

The Infrastructure Demand and Capacity Analysis supporting this plan identifies transport as a priority area for future public capital investment including *'maintenance and upgrading of the road network and public transport to protect asset quality and value, meet demand forecast, ease congestion and to meet climate action objectives'*.

Within the SIPs to support sustainable urban development, it is recognised that compact growth *'will be supported through investment in high quality integrated public and sustainable transport systems and supporting amenities'*. Notwithstanding this, the key SIPs in the NDP of relevance to this proposal relate to NSO 4 (Sustainable Mobility). The SIPs related to this NSO clearly identify the MetroLink and BusConnects programmes as priority elements of the SIPs, and the subject proposal will be supporting and linking to both, once constructed. Moreover, within these SIPs it is acknowledged that *'the provision of safe alternative active travel options such as segregated cycling and walking facilities can also help alleviate congestion and meet climate action objectives by providing viable alternatives and connectivity with existing public transport infrastructure'*.

### **Project Response:**

The proposed development represents a connectivity project by Fingal County Council to improve connectivity across and along the R132. The project includes segregated cycle lanes and dedicated bus lanes, along with segregated pedestrian walkways, representing a significant improvement on the current walking, cycling and public transport facilities across and along the R132. This clearly aligns with the approach of the NDP above to provide viable connectivity and safe alternative active travel options.

In addition to this, the NDP identifies a number of investment actions to be undertaken in order to achieve the aspirations of the plan. Transport investment actions specifically identify the need to encourage *'a significant modal shift through greater levels of investment and further development of meaningful alternatives to private car uses'*, which includes:

- *'new urban cycling and walking routes which will provide additional sustainable travel options to complement increased capacity and faster, higher quality public transport'*; and
- *'traffic management, bus priority and other smarter travel projects'*.

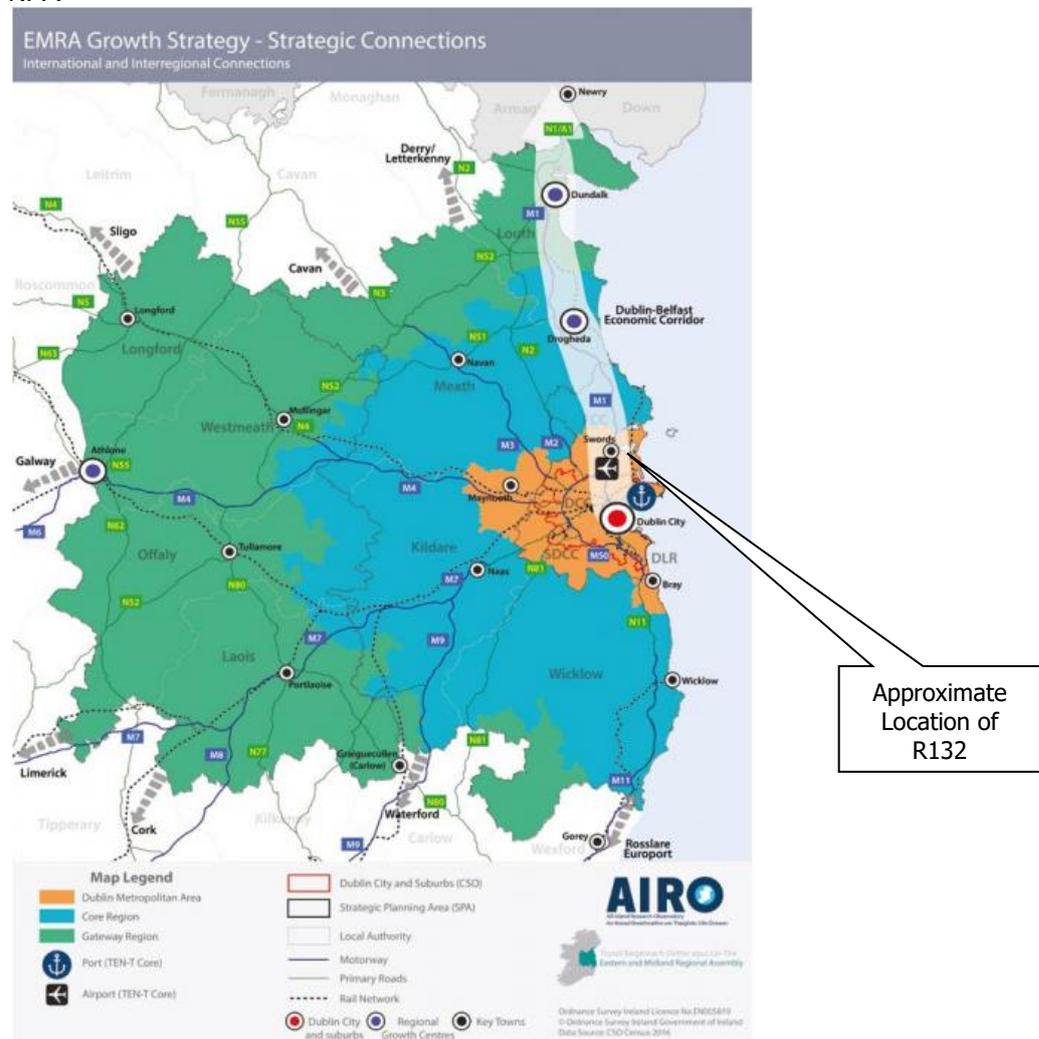
### **Project Response:**

The Transport investment actions of the NDP are reflected in the subject proposal which will create new cycling routes and dedicated bus lanes along the R132 and will complement existing pedestrian accessibility with greater pedestrian infrastructure. This will help to create meaningful alternatives to private car use by providing equal space across and along the carriageway for public transport, cycling and walking.

## 5.3 REGIONAL SPATIAL & ECONOMIC STRATEGY FOR THE EASTERN & MIDLANDS REGIONAL ASSEMBLY (2019-2031)

The Eastern & Midlands Regional Assembly (EMRA) adopted the Regional & Spatial Economic Strategy (RSES) for the region in June 2019. The strategy covers the majority of the province of Leinster, bar the counties of Kilkenny, Carlow and Wexford. A key deliverable of Project Ireland 2040

is the imposition of Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans (MASP). The sole MASP within this region is the Dublin MASP, and the RSES guides the policy approach for this MASP and the development and growth of the wider region (see Figure 5.1). As part of the vision for this MASP it is envisaged that the population of this area will expand to an additional 250,000 people by 2031, which will require greater investment in transport and infrastructure in order to achieve sustainable compact growth, as outlined in the NPF.



**Figure 5.1 EMRA Growth Strategy**

Source: RSES for the EMRA (2019-2031)

As can be seen in Figure 5.1 above the subject proposal falls within the boundary of the Dublin MASP. Within the Dublin MASP a number of strategic development areas and corridors are identified including the infrastructure required to enable their development. Swords-Lissenhall is identified as a strategic development corridor and the enabling infrastructure for this corridor is identified as "improved bus connections, MetroLink, roads improvements and expanded internal road network". This is reflective of the proposed development which facilitates improved bus connections, links to the MetroLink and involves road layout improvements through alteration to existing intersections along the Swords-Lissenhall stretch of the R132.

#### **Project Response:**

The proposed development will support the development of an identified strategic development corridor within the Dublin MASP. The proximity of the proposed development to both Swords and Lissenhall will evidently lead to the unlocking of further growth in this identified strategic development corridor and will complement future identified enabling infrastructure such as MetroLink.

The wider regional vision of the RSES mimics the NPF objectives, priorities and outcomes with references to *"a move away from car dependency towards more sustainable modes of transport"* as a key priority, and the integration of transport and land use through the Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area as a key principle. In addition to this, the RSES also includes a growth strategy which seeks to *"make the best use of infrastructure including public transport to reduce emissions and to strengthen the Region's strategic connectivity as part of an integrated land use and transportation strategy"*. In this respect, the RSES commits to achieving a modal shift towards public transport, walking and cycling as part of its climate strategy.

**Project Response:**

Central to the proposed development is improved connectivity along and across the R132, with the residual effect of improving access to public transport. The Infrastructure Design Report accompanying this application clearly shows how the proposed development will be designed, not only to improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity but also to provide increased access to public transport through dedicated bus lanes and segregated cycle lanes and pedestrian walkways, transforming the current car-dominated design of the R132.

This, in turn, will help to encourage a move away from car dependency towards sustainable modes of transport whilst simultaneously helping to reduce emissions by minimising the dominance of the car along the R132.

The RSES includes a number of Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs), the following of which are relevant to the subject proposal:

- **RPO 3.7** – *"In order to recognise the potential for impacts on the environment, Local authorities shall address the proper site/route selection of any new development and examine environmental constraints including but not limited to biodiversity, flooding, landscape, cultural heritage, material assets, including the capacity of services to serve any new development"*
- **RPO 4.28** – *"Support the continued development of Swords as a vibrant Key Town with a thriving economy; an integrated public transport network; an attractive and highly accessible built environment"*
- **RPO 4.32** – *"Encourage transition towards sustainable and low carbon transport modes in Swords through the provision of high quality walking and cycling permeability offering direct routes to local destination and public transportation hubs"*
- **RPO 5.2** – *"Support the delivery of key sustainable transport projects including MetroLink, DART and Luas expansion programmes, BusConnects and the Greater Dublin Metropolitan cycle Network and ensure that future development maximises the efficiency and protects the strategic capacity of the metropolitan area transport network, existing and planned"*
- **RPO 5.3** – *"Future development in the Dublin Metropolitan area shall be planned and designed in a manner that facilitates sustainable travel patterns, with a particular focus on increasing the share of active modes (walking and cycling) and public transport use and creating a safe attractive street environment for pedestrians and cyclists"*
- **RPO 7.9** – *"Local authorities shall consider measures to minimise the harmful effects of light pollution in the future provision of outdoor lighting, including improving their approach to street lighting and ensuring that new developments are lit appropriately and to ensure that environmentally sensitive areas are protected"*
- **RPO 10.16** – *"Implement policies contained in the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GDSDS), including SuDS"*

**Project Response:**

A comprehensive suite of documents are submitted in support of this application, demonstrating how the environmental impacts of the proposed development have been assessed and considered; how the proposed development will support key sustainable transport projects; how the design of the proposed development has been selected and how the detailed operations of the proposed development will function.

The proposed development will not only improve the safe operability of the R132, it will also greatly improve sustainable connectivity and accessibility to Swords and the future MetroLink through the provision of 'at grade' pedestrian facilities and dedicated bus and cycle lanes. This will particularly help to support the vibrancy of Swords Town Centre which is identified as a key town in the Dublin Metropolitan Area.

## 5.4 FINGAL COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2017-2023)

The Fingal Development Plan, henceforth referred to as 'the plan' includes a vision and a number of main aims for Fingal that are supported by strategic policy relating to social inclusion, high quality design, vibrancy, enterprise and employment, natural and built heritage, high quality public transport system and climate change, amongst others.

Since adoption in March 2017, the plan has been varied 3 no. times. These variations will be incorporated into the analysis of relevant policy within the plan, as relevant to the subject proposal.

The plan contains 12 chapters, the following of which are most relevant to this proposal:

- Chapter 1 – Introduction & Strategic Context
- Chapter 2 – Core Strategy & Settlement Strategy
- Chapter 3 – Placemaking
- Chapter 4 – Urban Fingal
- Chapter 7 – Movement & Infrastructure
- Chapter 8 – Green Infrastructure
- Chapter 9 – Natural Heritage
- Chapter 11 – Land Use Zoning Objectives
- Chapter 12 – Development Management Standards

The Plan sets out the development management guidelines and standards to be applied to future development proposals in the county.

The following sections will provide a summary of how the proposed R132 connectivity project fully accords with the pertinent policies and objectives set out in each of these chapters.

### 5.4.1 CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION & STRATEGIC CONTEXT

This chapter of the plan sets out the overarching strategic vision, aims and policy of the plan. The vision, as it relates to the subject proposal, details the following:

1. *Consolidate urban areas to provide a vibrant, attractive environment for living and working, facilitating efficient movement by sustainable modes of transport throughout the County.*
2. *Make better use of key resources such as land, water, energy, waste and transportation infrastructure.*
3. *Reduce climate change through settlement and travel patterns and reduced use of non-renewable resources.*
4. *Promote active and healthy lifestyles through increased opportunities for walking, cycling and active sport and recreation.*

#### **Project Response:**

These four elements of the vision are facilitated by the subject proposal which seeks to achieve sustainable transport modes, which in turn will help to reduce climate change by altering travel patterns and promoting active modes of transport such as walking and cycling.

The vision of the plan is supplemented by a number of main aims which are delivered through strategic policy, of which the following policy points are most relevant to the subject proposal:

- **(4)** *Promote and facilitate the long-term consolidation and growth of the County town of Swords as provided for in the Swords Strategic Vision 2035*
- **(15)** *Seek the development of a high quality public transport system throughout the County and linking to adjoining counties, including the development of the indicative route for New Metro North and Light Rail Corridor, improvements to railway infrastructure including the DART Expansion Programme, Quality Bus Corridors (QBCs) and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) systems, together with enhanced facilities for walking and cycling.*
- **(16)** *Promote, improve and develop a well-connected national, regional and local road and public transport infrastructure system, geared to meet the needs of the County and the Region, and providing for all road users, prioritising walking, cycling and public transport.*
- **(20)** *Ensure new developments have regard to the requirements of the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines.*
- **(22)** *Minimise the County's contribution to climate change, and adapt to the effects of climate change, with particular reference to the areas of land use, energy, transport, water resources, flooding, waste management and biodiversity, and maximising the provision of green infrastructure including the provision of trees and soft landscaping solutions.*
- **(23)** *Promote and maximise the benefits of quality of life, public health and biodiversity arising from implementation of policies promoting climate change adaptation and mitigation.*

#### **Project Response:**

The subject proposal, as shown in preceding section, is located adjacent to Swords Town Centre. The construction of the proposed development will help to facilitate the growth of Swords Town Centre by increasing connectivity to the town itself. As previously mentioned, the subject proposal will link into other planned public transport programmes such as BusConnects and MetroLink, and will also provide enhanced walking and cycling facilities.

The subject proposal alters the focus of the R132 carriageway to prioritise cycling, walking and public transport over the car by reducing the carriageway to one lane of traffic for cars and providing dedicated bus lanes and segregated cycle lanes and pedestrian walkways. The subject proposal will also provide at-grade access to future developments along the R132, ensuring adequate permeability and links from Swords Town Centre and the existing and future developments in the vicinity of the R132.

A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) is submitted with this application which determines that no detailed Site-specific FRA is required (see Section 8.1).

The subject proposal will support and encourage a modal shift towards more active forms of sustainable transport such as walking and cycling, and the general vicinity will become more accessible as a result of the increased connectivity facilitated by this application. This will help to improve the quality of life and public health of local residents and road users who currently experience a car dominated environment in this area.

Although there will be a small amount of tree removal associated with the subject proposal, the Arborist's Report accompanying this application outlines a clear breakdown of the proposed replacement trees to be planted as part of the proposal. The breakdown shows that almost double the number of trees removed will be replaced.

## **5.4.2 CHAPTER 2 – CORE STRATEGY & SETTLEMENT STRATEGY**

The majority of this chapter was subject to Variation no. 2 in June 2020 in order to incorporate the provisions of the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial Economic Strategy into the plan.

The core strategy identifies Swords as a 'Key Town' within a 'Metropolitan Area', as identified in the RSES. The strategy outlines the potential for compact growth to occur in Swords due to its proximity to high capacity planned and existing public transport corridors.

**Project Response:**

The subject proposal will consolidate the existing public transport corridor and will directly link into planned public transport programmes such as MetroLink and BusConnects, therefore helping to maintain a high-capacity public transport corridor proximate to Swords, as set out in the Development Plan.

**5.4.3 CHAPTER 3 – PLACEMAKING**

This chapter focusses on the concept of placemaking and identifies a number of key characteristics of good quality placemaking:



Source: Adapted 'Egan Wheel', Egan 2004

**Figure 5.1.2 Placemaking characteristics**

As can be seen in Figure 5.2, transport and connectivity is identified as one of eight characteristics of good quality placemaking. This is further consolidated by the fact that the plan identifies the following as a characteristic of a sustainable community:

- *'Are easily accessible by a range of transport modes including cycling and walking'*
- *'Present an attractive amenity in terms of the built environment and streetscape, streets and public spaces which are considered clean and safe'*

**Project Response:**

The junctions within this proposal play an important place-making role as entry points to Swords. The subject proposal facilitates improved local placemaking in areas that are currently dissected by a car dominated carriageway in the form of the R132.

One of the main purposes of the subject proposal is to improve connectivity across and along the R132, particularly at the intersections, for pedestrians and cyclists. The Traffic & Transport Assessment and Road Safety Audit accompanying this proposal clearly demonstrate the current connectivity issues in this respect, and the difficulties for pedestrians and cyclists navigating this section of the R132. The subject proposal, therefore seeks to improve connectivity and road user safety along this section of the R132.

In respect of placemaking, this chapter also discusses the importance of trees in visually enhancing places and improving air quality. As such, **Policy PM64** states the following *'Protect, preserve and ensure the effective management of trees and groups of trees'*

**Project Response:**

The Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) accompanying this proposal takes into account the Arborist's Report which has been specifically undertaken to identify trees to be removed and replaced. The EcIA concludes that there will be no net loss of biodiversity as a result of the subject proposal.

Furthermore, the Arborist's Report proposes a Tree Protection Strategy which seeks to retain trees free from adverse construction impacts for the duration of the construction period.

#### 5.4.4 CHAPTER 4 – URBAN FINGAL

This chapter has been significantly altered by Variation no. 2 undertaken in June 2020 in order to incorporate the provisions of the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial Economic Strategy into the plan.

This chapter provides the policy backdrop for the significant urban conurbations across Fingal. Given that Swords is effectively identified as the administrative capital of Fingal and one of three 'key towns' in the MASP with significant growth potential, a number of policies are detailed in order to encourage growth and development specifically in Swords. The policies of relevance to the subject proposal are the following:

- **Objective SWORDS 5** – *'Actively promote and support the early development of the indicative route for new Metro North linking Swords with Dublin Airport and Dublin City Centre'*
- **Objective SWORDS 7** – *'Promote the development of Swords as a multi-modal transportation hub'*
- **Objective SWORDS 9** – *'Maintain the operational capacity of the Swords Bypass, the R132'*
- **Objective SWORDS 10** – *'Promote the early development of a town wide bus service within Swords linking residential areas to each other, to Metro stops, to the town centre and to the industrial/employment areas'*
- **Objective SWORDS 11** – *'Provide for a comprehensive network of pedestrian and cycle ways, linking housing to commercial areas, to the town centre and to Metro stops and linking the three water bodies'*

In addition to the above, there is also a number of policy commitments to develop masterplans in various areas along the R132. The masterplans of relevance will be addressed in following sections.

**Project Response:**

The subject proposal will provide at-grade pedestrian access which will facilitate access to future developments along the R132, ensuring adequate permeability and links from Swords Town Centre and the existing and future developments in the vicinity of the R132.

As detailed in the Traffic & Transport Assessment accompanying this application, there is no existing cycle network along the R132 and the pedestrian network is generally not fit for purpose. The subject proposal will not only facilitate a segregated cycle network along the R132, it will also implement dedicated bus lanes and segregated pedestrian walkways along the R132, providing for a truly multi-

modal carriageway. This aligns with Objective 5 above to promote Swords as a multi-modal transportation hub given the proximity of Swords Town Centre to the R132.

Although the subject proposal will reduce this section of the R132 to one lane of car traffic on each side, the operational capacity of the R132 will not be compromised as user's priorities will be redistributed, since pedestrians and cyclist will be prioritised from cars. The barrier effect created by the current R132 will be diminished, and greater permeability between East and West of the corridor will be achieved. Connectivity between Swords Town Centre and the new developments western lands such as Barrysparks and Crowcastle will be highly improved, as well as the important links with MetroLink and onwards to Dublin City. This is evidenced in the accompanying Traffic & Transport Assessment.

## 5.4.5 CHAPTER 7 – MOVEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE

This chapter of the plan is most relevant to the subject proposal given its focus on movement and sustainable transport. The statement of policy at the beginning of this chapter clearly demonstrates the relevancy of this chapter to the subject proposal, as it states the following:

- *Promote and facilitate movement to, from, and within the County of Fingal, by integrating land use with a high quality, sustainable transport system that prioritises walking, cycling and public transport.*
- *Provide an appropriate level of safe road infrastructure and traffic management, in particular to support commercial and industrial activity and new development.*
- *Work with all relevant stakeholders to seek a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from transport.*

This statement of policy involves key aspects of the subject proposal such as:

- Integrating land uses;
- Creating a sustainable transport system that prioritises cycling, walking and public transport;
- Providing safe road infrastructure, and;
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

All of the above are clearly exhibited within the subject proposal, and ultimately help to achieve the overall aim of improving connectivity along and around the R132.

In addition to the statement of policy, this chapter includes the following transport policy objectives of relevance to the subject proposal:

- **Objective MT13** – *'Promote walking and cycling as efficient, healthy, and environmentally-friendly modes of transport by securing the development of a network of direct, comfortable, convenient and safe cycle routes and footpaths, particularly in urban areas'*
- **Objective MT15** – *'Investigate and avail of the opportunities provided by new Metro North and any other public transport infrastructure to provide new cycle and pedestrian links'*
- **Objective MT17** – *'Improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity to schools and third level colleges and identify and minimise barriers to children walking and cycling to primary and secondary schools'*
- **Objective MT18** – *'Review existing cycle infrastructure which was not designed in line with the Principles of Sustainable Safety in a manner consistent with the National Cycle Manual and the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets and undertake appropriate remedial works'*
- **Objective MT19** – *'Design roads and promote the design of roads, including cycle infrastructure, in line with the Principles of Sustainable Safety in a manner consistent with the National Cycle Manual and the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets'*
- **Objective MT22** – *'Improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity to stations and other public transport interchanges'*

- **Objective MT24** – *'Support and advise the NTA and TII on the planning and implementation of public transport infrastructure, in particular by providing an understanding of Fingal's policies, objectives and requirements, including environmental sensitivities'*
- **Objective MT28** – *'Facilitate, encourage and promote high quality interchange facilities at public transport nodes throughout the County'*
- **Objective MT40** – *'Implement a programme of road construction and improvement works closely integrated with existing and planned land uses, taking into account both car and non-car modes of transport whilst promoting road safety as a high priority. Major road construction and improvement works will include an appraisal of environmental impacts'*

#### **Project Response:**

The subject proposal involves the addition of cycling to the transport network along the R132 through the provision of segregated cycle lanes, making it safe and convenient for cyclists to travel through and along the R132, in line with the principles of sustainable safety. The cycle lanes and pedestrian walkways incorporated within the subject proposal will facilitate access to future developments along the R132, ensuring adequate permeability and links from Swords Town Centre and the existing and future developments in the vicinity of the R132 through 'at-grade' toucan crossings.

Although the subject proposal does not specifically aim to improve connectivity to schools, the St Colmcilles National School located to the west of the R132 will benefit from increased connectivity provided by the subject proposal. Currently, the school benefits from a pedestrian bridge across the R132. This will be extinguished as part of the MetroLink project, if approved, and the subject proposal will provide an 'at-grade' toucan crossing for pedestrians linking to Chapel Lane. The introduction of segregated cycle lanes as part of the subject proposal will also provide the opportunity for students to access this school via cycling.

This Section 177AE application has been undertaken by Fingal County Council in liaison with the National Transport Authority (NTA) and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII).

The subject proposal will complement and link into future public transport programmes such as MetroLink and BusConnects, providing high quality facilities at a public transport node. At the heart of the subject proposal is improvements to road safety and connectivity. The subject proposal aims to achieve this by providing segregated access to both car and non-car modes of transport along the R132, reflecting the urbanised form of the surrounding environment and connecting developed and proposed development areas to the east of the R132 to Swords Town Centre.

This chapter also addresses a range of infrastructural requirements, the following of which are most relevant to the subject proposal:

- **Objective SW04** – *'Require the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to minimise and limit the extent of hard surfacing and paving and require the use of sustainable drainage techniques where appropriate, for new development or for extensions to existing developments, in order to reduce the potential impact of existing and predicted flooding risks'*
- **Objective WQ04** – *'Protect existing riverine wetland and coastal habitats and where possible create new habitats to maintain naturally functioning ecosystems whilst ensuring they do not impact negatively on the conservation objectives of any European Sites'*
- **Objective AQ01** – *'Implement the provisions of EU and National legislation on air, light and noise and other relevant legislative requirements, as appropriate and in conjunction with all relevant stakeholders'*
- **Objective LP01** – *'Require that the design of lighting schemes minimises the incidence of light spillage or pollution into the surrounding environment'*
- **Objective NP05** – *'Ensure that development complies with the NRA's design goal for sensitive receptors exposed to road traffic noise or as updated by any subsequent guidelines published by Transport Infrastructure Ireland'*

#### **Project Response:**

The Landscape details and Environmental Report accompanying this application show that various SuDS measures are included as part of the proposed development including at-source interceptors and attenuation treatment systems.

The Malahide Estuary Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Natural Heritage Area (NHA) and Special Protection Area (SPA) are located close to the subject proposal. The Natura Impact Statement accompanying this application demonstrates how these existing habitats will be protected and not impacted negatively.

The Environmental Report accompanying this application assesses the impacts of the proposed development on air and noise. The report determines that any impact during the construction and operational phases will be imperceptible, subject to mitigation measures. Changes to lighting to accommodate the proposed junction layouts will not significantly change the intensity or abundance of light within the project area and will comply with normal road lighting standards. Light spillage and pollution effects will be less than present. Lights will be dimmed during the hours of 12:00-06:00 and luminaire lenses will focus lights on the roadways.

## 5.4.6 CHAPTER 8 – GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

This chapter of the plan is principally focussed on the protection and creation of green infrastructure across Fingal which, due to its size and location, includes a diverse range of settlements and environments. Notwithstanding this, there are a number of policy objectives in this chapter of relevance to the subject proposal that pertain to transport proposals:

- **Objective GI07** – *'Ensure green infrastructure protection and provision promotes pedestrian access, cycling, and public transport in preference to the car, as appropriate'*
- **Objective GI08** – *'Integrate the provision of green infrastructure with infrastructure provision and replacement, including walking and cycling routes, as appropriate, while protecting biodiversity and other landscape resources'*
- **Objective GI22** – *'Require all proposals for large scale development such as road or drainage schemes, wind farms, housing estates, industrial parks or shopping centres to submit a Green Infrastructure Plan as an integral part of a planning application.'*
- **Objective GI24** – *'Ensure biodiversity conservation and/or enhancement measures, as appropriate, are included in all proposals for large scale development such as road or drainage schemes, wind farms, housing estates, industrial parks or shopping centres.'*
- **Objective GI36** – *'Ensure green infrastructure provision responds to and reflects landscape character including historic landscape character, conserving, enhancing and augmenting the existing landscapes and townscapes of Fingal which contribute to a distinctive sense of place'*

### **Project Response:**

The subject proposal will principally involve the alteration of three existing roundabouts to signalised junctions at three intersections along the R132. This will result in the creation of roadside green infrastructure which will enlarge the public realm of the surrounding environment. The landscape drawings accompanying this application demonstrate how this public realm will be landscaped and protected, as part of the proposal.

The Infrastructure Design Report, Landscape Drawings and the Arborist's Report accompanying this application demonstrate how green infrastructure will be integrated and accounted for in the subject proposal. In the context of road schemes, this is not considered to be a large-scale development requiring a standalone Green Infrastructure Plan as an integral part of the application. The proposed development consists of alterations to an existing road and does not exhibit the features of a large-scale road scheme.

An Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA), included as part of the Environmental Report, was undertaken to assess potential impacts that may arise from the subject proposal on biodiversity

within the receiving environment. The EcIA includes a number of biodiversity conservation measures to mitigate identified impacts.

The landscape details accompanying this application demonstrate how the subject proposal will reflect and respect the landscape character area within which it is situated.

## 5.4.7 CHAPTER 9 – NATURAL HERITAGE

This chapter of the plan covers biodiversity, geology, landscape and the coast. The reasoning for this application is mainly due to biodiversity concerns related to the proposed development that require further assessment in the form of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS). In this respect the biodiversity policy objectives of relevance are the following:

- **Objective NH10** – *'Ensure that the Council takes full account of the requirements of the Habitats and Birds Directives, as they apply both within and without European Sites in the performance of its functions'*
- **Objective NH13** – *'Ensure that proposals for development do not lead to the spread or introduction of invasive species'*
- **Objective NH15** - *'Strictly protect areas designated or proposed to be designated as Natura 2000 sites (i.e. Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs); also known as European sites) including any areas that may be proposed for designation or designated during the period of this Plan'*
- **Objective NH16** - *'Protect the ecological integrity of proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs), Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), Statutory Nature Reserves, Refuges for Fauna, and Habitat Directive Annex I sites'*
- **Objective NH17** - *'Ensure that development does not have a significant adverse impact on proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs), Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), Statutory Nature Reserves, Refuges for Fauna, Habitat Directive Annex I sites and Annex II species contained therein, and on rare and threatened species including those protected by law and their habitats'*
- **Objective NH18** - *'Protect the functions of the ecological buffer zones and ensure proposals for development have no significant adverse impact on the habitats and species of interest located therein'*
- **Objective NH27** - *'Protect existing woodlands, trees and hedgerows which are of amenity or biodiversity value and/or contribute to landscape character and ensure that proper provision is made for their protection and management'*

### Project Response:

The NIS and the EcIA accompanying this application have taken full account of the impacts of the subject proposal on the Malahide Estuary Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Natural Heritage Area (NHA) and Special Protection Area (SPA), which are located close by. In addition, the impacts on the ecological buffer zone around Malahide Estuary and the potential for the introduction of invasive species were examined in these documents. In summary, it is determined that the subject proposal will not lead to the introduction of invasive species and will not have a significant adverse impact, subject to the implementation of mitigation measures detailed in the NIS and Environmental Report.

Minimal tree removal is proposed as part of the subject proposal and replacement planting, within the areas outlined on the accompanying Landscape Drawings, is proposed as part of the development, to account for any tree loss as result of the subject proposal. The Arborist's Report accompanying this application details the proposed replanting measures which will fulfil a zero net loss goal for tree impacts.

With regard to landscape, the subject proposal is located within the 'Low Lying Character Area' which is identified as having 'modest value'. In support of the 'Low Lying Character Type' with low landscape sensitivity, the plan outlines the following principles for development of relevance to the subject proposal:

*"Existing tree belts should be retained and managed and older stands of trees restocked. Roadside hedging should be retained and managed. Proposals necessitating the removal of extensive field and roadside hedgerows or trees should not be permitted. Strong planting schemes using native species, to integrate development into these open landscapes, will be required"*

In addition to this, the following landscape objectives apply to the subject proposal:

- **Objective NH33** - *'Ensure the preservation of the uniqueness of a landscape character type by having regard to the character, value and sensitivity of a landscape when determining a planning application'*
- **Objective NH34** - *'Ensure development reflects and, where possible, reinforces the distinctiveness and sense of place of the landscape character types, including the retention of important features or characteristics, taking into account the various elements which contribute to their distinctiveness such as geology and landform, habitats, scenic quality, settlement pattern, historic heritage, local vernacular heritage, land-use and tranquility'*
- **Objective NH40** – *'Protect views and prospects that contribute to the character of the landscape, particularly those identified in the Development Plan, from inappropriate development'*

#### **Project Response:**

The subject proposal will involve the permanent removal of a small number of roadside trees and trees within the Longlands housing estate, in mitigation, the planting of replacement native trees elsewhere will be undertaken, as detailed in the Landscape Drawings. The impact of the subject proposal on the views, prospects and landscape character of the area were assessed in the Environmental Report accompanying this application. The report confirms that the views, prospects and landscape character of the area will not be significantly adversely impacted by the subject proposal.

### **5.4.8 CHAPTER 11 – LAND USE ZONING OBJECTIVES**

The subject proposal is a road of regional importance and, as such, does not benefit from zoning objectives. The land use zoning objectives of the immediate vicinity are detailed in Section 2.3 of this report.

### **5.4.9 CHAPTER 12 – DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT STANDARDS**

This chapter sets out the broad standards and criteria, by which, proposed developments are expected to adhere to. The policy objectives in this chapter supplement the policy objectives of previous chapters. The following policy objectives are of notable relevance to the subject proposal:

- **Objective DMS83** – *'Ensure roadside verges have a minimum width of 2.4 metres at locations where large trees are proposed and where necessary provide for constructed tree pits as part of the landscape specification. Road verges shall be a minimum of 1.2 metres wide at locations where small canopy trees are proposed.'*
- **Objective DMS119** – *'Support public transport improvements by reserving the corridors of planned routes free from development. Provide setbacks along public transport corridors to allow for future improvement to enable the provision of a safe and efficient network of public transport infrastructure'*
- **Objective DMS120** – *'Ensure that the indicative route for new Metro North and its stops are kept free from development. Require that all development alongside the route of the indicative route for New Metro North includes permeability for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport so as to maximise its accessibility'*
- **Objective DMS129** – *'Promote road safety measures in conjunction with the relevant stakeholders and avoid the creation of traffic hazards'*

#### **Project Response:**

In respect of the proposed MetroLink, the subject proposal includes lighter landscaping measures to the east of the R132 where the MetroLink line is proposed. This will allow for any future works to be easily undertaken. The landscape drawings accompanying this application details the landscaping measures in this respect and in respect of roadside verges.

The subject proposal will involve dedicated bus lanes and segregated cycle lanes and pedestrian walkways, therefore facilitating safe passage for a variety of transport modes. The Road Safety Audit accompanying this application provides further detail with respect to road safety measures.

The following policy objectives within this chapter pertain specifically to biodiversity conservation and are considered in conjunction with the policy objectives discussed in Section 5.4.6 and 5.4.7 above:

- **Objective DMS02** – *'Ensure Local Authority development proposals are subject to environmental assessment, as appropriate, including Screening for Appropriate Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment'*
- **Objective DMS77** – *'Protect, preserve and ensure the effective management of trees and groups of trees'*
- **Objective DMS162** – *'Ensure all development proposals include measures to protect and enhance biodiversity'*
- **Objective DMS163** – *'Ensure Screening for Appropriate Assessment and, where required, full Appropriate Assessment is carried out for all plans and projects in the County which, individually, or in combination with other plans and projects, are likely to have a significant direct or indirect impact on any European site or sites'*
- **Objective DMS164** – *'Ensure that sufficient information is provided as part of development proposals to enable Screening for Appropriate Assessment to be undertaken and to enable a fully informed assessment of impacts on biodiversity to be made'*
- **Objective DMS165** – *'Ensure that Natura Impact Statements (NIS) and any other ecological impact assessments submitted in support of proposals for development are carried out by appropriately qualified professionals and that any necessary survey work takes place in an appropriate season'*
- **Objective DMS166** – *'Ensure planning applications for proposed developments likely to have significant direct or indirect impacts on any European Site or sites are accompanied by a Natura Impact Statement prepared in accordance with the Guidance issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities, 2009)'*
- **Objective DMS167** – *'Ensure ecological impact assessment is carried out for any proposed development likely to have a significant impact on proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs), Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), Statutory Nature Reserves, Refuges for Fauna, Habitat Directive Annex I sites and Annex II species contained therein, or rare and threatened species including those species protected by law and their habitats. Ensure appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures are incorporated into development proposals as part of any ecological impact assessment'*

In addition to the above, it is expected that all applications submit a landscape plan clearly illustrating *'how existing green infrastructure and opportunities to create new natural amenities, open space and linkages have informed and are incorporated into development management layout and proposals'*.

#### **Project Response:**

In respect of the policy objectives above, the application is accompanied by an Appropriate Assessment (AA) Report (including an AA Screening and NIS), an Environmental Impact Assessment Screening and an Environmental Report (including an Ecological Impact Assessment). All of the aforementioned have been carried out by appropriately qualified professionals and in accordance with the relevant guidance.

The subject proposal will result in the expansion of the public realm adjacent to the R132. The Design Options Report, appended to the Traffic & Transport Assessment, and Infrastructure Design Report accompanying this application details how this has informed the landscaping layout of the subject proposal.

## 5.5 FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2023 – 2029

Fingal County Council has commenced the review of the current Fingal Development Plan and preparing the new Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029. The beginning of an eight-week public consultation on the Strategic Issues Paper, was launched on 12th March 2021.

The Strategic Issues Paper features seven themes. These are: People and Place, Climate Action, Connectivity and Movement, Employment, Economy & Dublin Airport, Cultural Heritage, Green Infrastructure & Natural Heritage and Infrastructure & Utilities.

Four online consultation seminars were held in April for members of the public:

- Webinar 1 – People and Place
- Webinar 2 – Heritage & Green Infrastructure
- Webinar 3 – Employment & Economy
- Webinar 4 - Connectivity and Climate Action

These were well attended and featuring eight presentation and questions and answers on the topics raised in the Strategic Issues Paper.

Information sessions with prescribed bodies are also ongoing.

The Development Plan process is scheduled to run for the next two years and will involve three public consultation stages before the final plan is adopted by Councillors in February 2023. The current stage, which is known as the pre-draft, sets out the strategic direction for the Plan and will form the framework into which objectives and policies at the subsequent stages will sit.

Submissions can be made until the 12th May via Fingal County Council's Consultation Portal, [www.consult.fingal.ie](http://www.consult.fingal.ie).

## 5.6 YOUR SWORDS AN EMERGING CITY - STRATEGIC VISION 2035

Although this development strategy for Swords was published in 2008, it still remains in effect. The vision of the strategy seeks to ensure that the future development of Swords incorporates an integrated transport strategy, comprising significant public transport services as well as strategically important road infrastructure. The MetroLink is considered to be a central element of this strategy. Notwithstanding this, retention of the carrying capacity of the R132 is identified as a major road improvement to be subject to further detailed assessment.

With regard to green transport routes, the strategy states that *'the landscaped setting along the R132 (formerly Swords by-pass) will be retained and enhanced'*. This is reflected in the design of the subject proposal which seeks to retain, where possible, the landscaped areas adjacent to and along the R132.

The majority of the strategic vision outlined in this document relies upon the development of MetroLink, but also recognises the importance of the R132 in providing connectivity across Swords. In this respect, the subject proposal seeks to enhance the connectivity of the R132 by providing a

safe 'integrated movement network' to improve accessibility to lands to the east of Swords Town Centre.

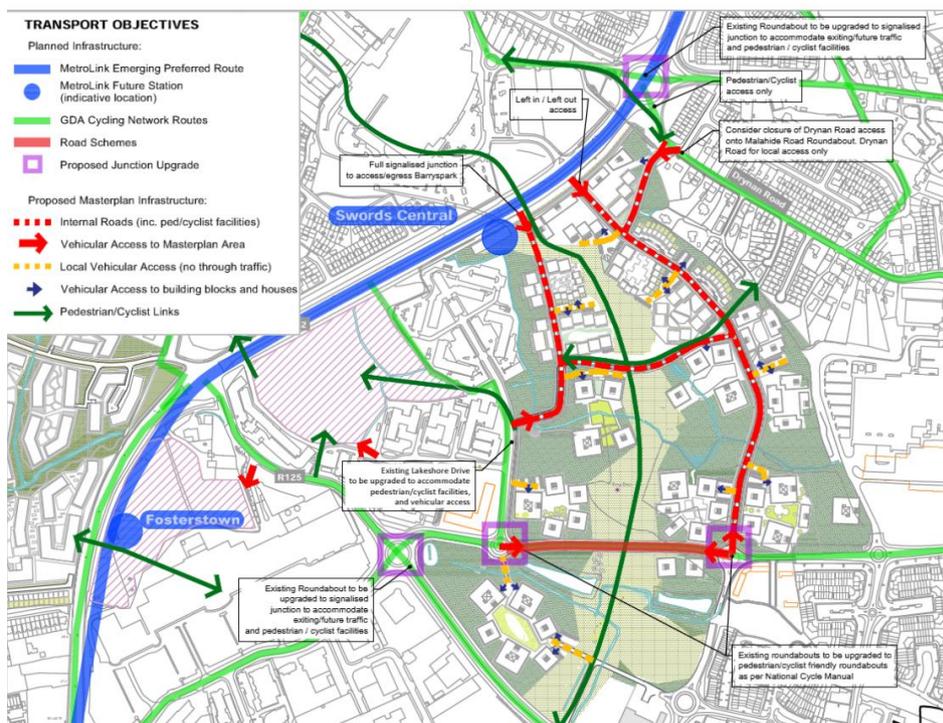
The strategy identifies a number of strategic development areas, some of which have since been the subject of Masterplans and Local Area Plans by Fingal County Council, and will be discussed in further detail below.

### Project Response:

A Traffic & Transport Assessment (TTA) is submitted in support of this application which considers the redistribution of traffic from the R132 as a result of transport initiatives proposed for the area including the subject proposal. The TTA concludes that the R132 capacity will be partially reallocated for the active modes, and this will be followed by a reduction of traffic demand.

## 5.7 BARRYSARKS & CROWCASTLE MASTER PLAN (2019)

In addition to the above LAP, Fingal County Council have developed a masterplan for the Barrysparks & Crowcastle area which takes into account the LAP lands and lands to the south referred to as Crowcastle (see Figure 5.4 below).



**Figure 5.4 Barrysparks & Crowcastle Masterplan Area**

This masterplan considers the development of the area in the context of the policies of the current Fingal County Development Plan. As such, it is considered the most up to date local planning policy for this area.

In line with the Barrysparks LAP, this masterplan emphasises the importance of increasing connectivity across the R132 and integration with the MetroLink proposals. In particular, the masterplan seeks to ensure that pedestrian and cycle linkages are provided across the R132 to improve accessibility to the Pavillions Shopping Centre and Swords Town Centre.

The following key transport and movement objectives seek to achieve greater connectivity to and across the R132:

- *'to connect the R132 to the north of the lands to the proposed Airside-Feltrim Link Road to the south'*
- *'Ensure that the Masterplan lands are highly accessible by providing direct pedestrian/cyclist connectivity to the proposed Swords Central Metro Station and the surrounding area, 2 no. new vehicular access points to the R132 (one full signalised controlled junction to the west and a left in/left out to the east)'*
- *'Ensure that the Masterplan lands are connected to the Pavilions Shopping Centre and Swords Main Street by providing pedestrian/ cyclist access across the R132'*

In respect of strategic infrastructure required to support the development of the lands, upgrades *'to the R132 in the form of footpaths, segregated cycle paths'* are identified in Phase 1 of the masterplan, and replacement of *'existing roundabouts with signalised junctions (or similar)'* and installation of *'segregated cycle lanes'* in Phase 2. Phase 2 includes essential infrastructure, whereas the upgrades identified in Phase 1 are considered non-essential.

**Project Response:**

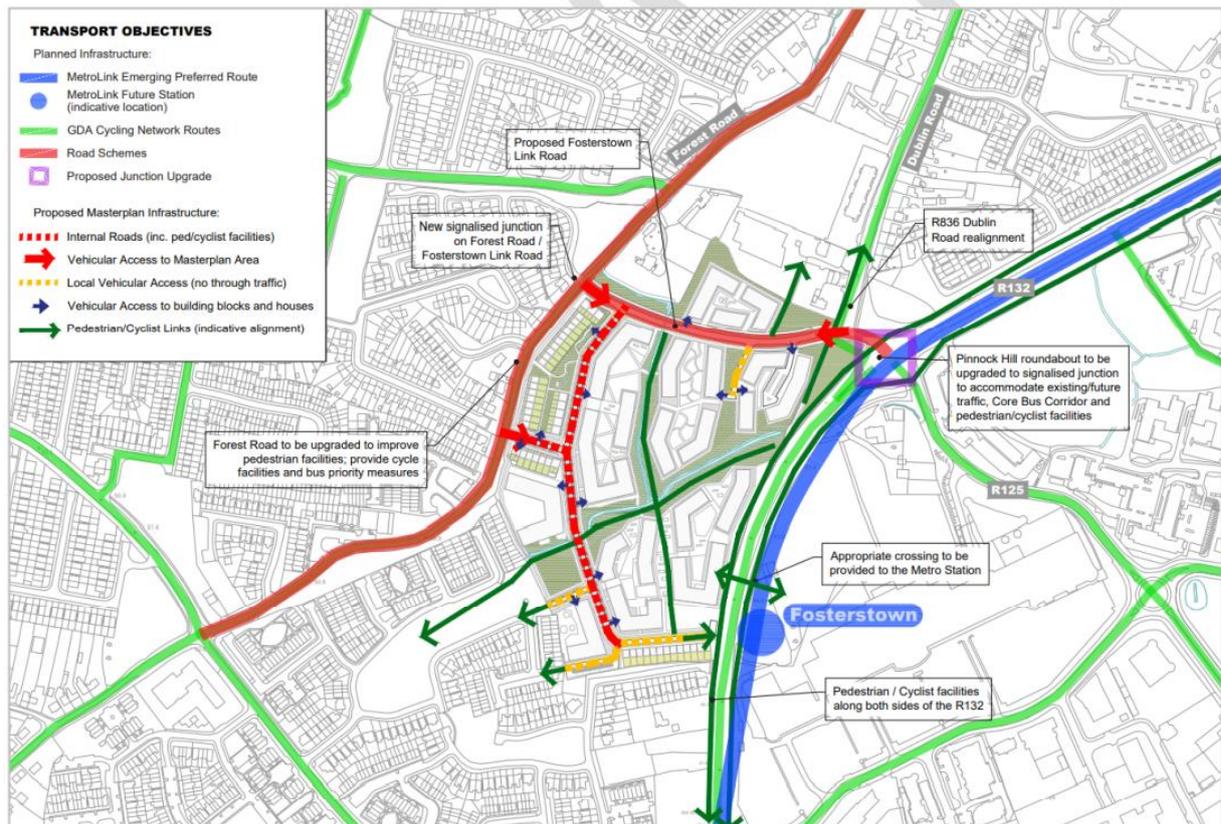
The proposal will facilitate the phased development of the Barrysparks & Crowcastle lands and increased connectivity across the R132, because the proposal consists of alterations of three existing roundabouts to signalised junctions at three separate intersections along the R132, at-grade pedestrian and cyclist crossings and the introduction of segregated cycle lanes and pedestrian walkways to the R132,

## 5.8 FOSTERSTOWN MASTER PLAN (2019)

The Fosterstown Masterplan area pertains to a portion of land located to the southwest of the subject proposal, adjacent to the Pinnock Hill roundabout (see Figure 5.6 below).

It is recognised within the masterplan that there is a unique opportunity to develop the lands in question due to *'the new connections that will emerge in Swords via the MetroLink station and Core Bus Corridor on the R132'*. This refers to the future MetroLink and BusConnects programmes. Although the subject proposal will not directly impact this masterplan area, it will be designed to link into both the future MetroLink and BusConnects programmes if and when they are developed. Therefore, the subject proposal will indirectly facilitate the development of this masterplan area.

Like the Barrysparks & Crowcastle masterplan above, this masterplan identifies the same strategic infrastructural requirements in Phases 1 and 2, which the subject proposal will help to deliver.



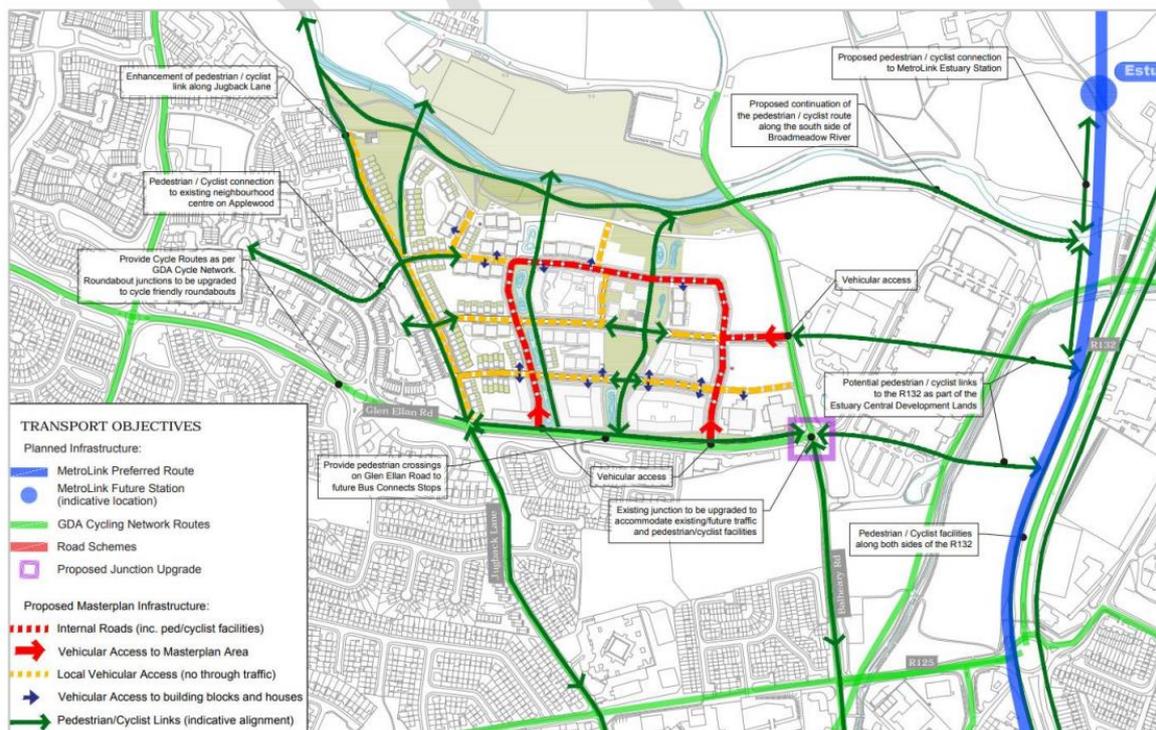
**Figure 5.6 Fosterstown Masterplan Area**

## 5.9 ESTUARY WEST MASTER PLAN (2019)

The Estuary West Masterplan area pertains to land to the west of the Estuary intersection of the R132 (See Figure 5.7 below).

This masterplan area is slightly more removed from the R132 and, as such, does not rely as heavily on improvements to the R132. Notwithstanding this masterplan, like the others above, identifies the same strategic infrastructural requirements in Phases 1 and 2, which the subject proposal will help to deliver.

As can be seen in Figure 5.6 below, the masterplan will seek to create pedestrian and cycle linkages to the R132 and to the proposed Estuary MetroLink station. The subject proposal will help to facilitate these linkages through the imposition of segregated pedestrian walkways and cycle lanes along the R132.



**Figure 5.7 Estuary West Masterplan Area**

## 5.10 OVERALL COMPLIANCE WITH PLANNING POLICY

In conclusion, it can be seen that the proposed development accords with the overall development principles, policies and objectives set out in the relevant planning policy documents.

The subject development proposal will ensure that the R132 will serve its purpose as a regional road.

The proposed development:

- Is in accordance with the NPF National Strategic Outcomes of Compact Growth and Sustainable Mobility, and supports the Strategic Investment Priorities for Sustainable Mobility, as detailed in the NDP.
- Aligns with the approach in the RSES to facilitate compact growth across the Dublin MASP and to transition to sustainable and lower carbon forms of transport.
- Is supported by the policies and objectives of the Fingal County Development Plan and relevant Local Area Plans which support sustainable transport modes and active travel.
- Is in compliance with specific policies within county and local development plans as they relate to sustainable transport, active travel and reducing the impact of climate change.
- Conforms with policy and objectives promoting and supporting the protection of the environment and green infrastructure.
- Does not bare any significant unmitigable consequences for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

The following section considers other relevant sectoral policies and objectives, as they pertain to sustainable transport, and demonstrates not only how the subject proposal fully complies with all of these policies and objectives, but also how many of these in turn support the development proposal.

## 6 OTHER RELEVANT AND SECTORAL POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

This section of the report demonstrates how the proposed development accords with other relevant sectoral policies and objectives pertaining to this type of development.

It should be noted that only those policies and objectives which are of greatest relevance to the proposed development, have been identified within this section.

### 6.1 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN 2019

Ireland's Climate Action Plan lays out the government's approach to reducing carbon emissions and to transition to a low carbon economy. The transport sector, as a high-emitting sector, will play a critical role in reducing carbon emissions. The Climate Action Plan makes a commitment to delivering an additional 500,000 public transport and active travel journeys daily by 2035.

Amongst the measures outlined in the plan related to the subject proposal, are the following:

- *'Expansion of walking, cycling and public transport to promote modal shift'*
- *'Implement major sustainable-mobility projects such as DART Expansion, Metro Link, and the BusConnects Programme'*
- *'Promote compact growth and greater integration of policies for land use and transport planning, which will reduce the demand for commuter travel and support more efficient patterns of development and travel'*

#### 6.1.1 FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL CLIMATE ACTION PLAN 2019-2024

This Climate Action Plan was undertaken in tandem with the other Dublin Local Authorities in order to reduce the impact of Climate Change across the Dublin Region. The plan includes a number of actions to reduce carbon emissions and to close the gap between the current baselines and the targets set out within the plan. The plan follows on from a strategy published in 2017 'A Strategy towards Climate Change Action Plans for the Dublin Local Authorities', and is further necessitated on foot of the national Climate Action Plan published in 2019 and Dáil Éireann's declaration of a Climate Emergency.

The plan includes the following actions of relevance to the subject proposal:

- *'Re-organisation of allocation of space to pedestrians in the public realm'*
- *'Promoting a modal shift to active travel'*
- *'Working with stakeholders to build out public transport routes'*
- *'Support the Greater Dublin Cycling Network Plan'*
- *'Implement traffic calming programme including provision of new signalised pedestrian crossings'*
- *'Regular maintenance of regional and local roads to encourage modal shift to cycling'*
- *'Support the development and expansion of existing public transport services including MetroLink, BusConnects'*

#### **Project Response:**

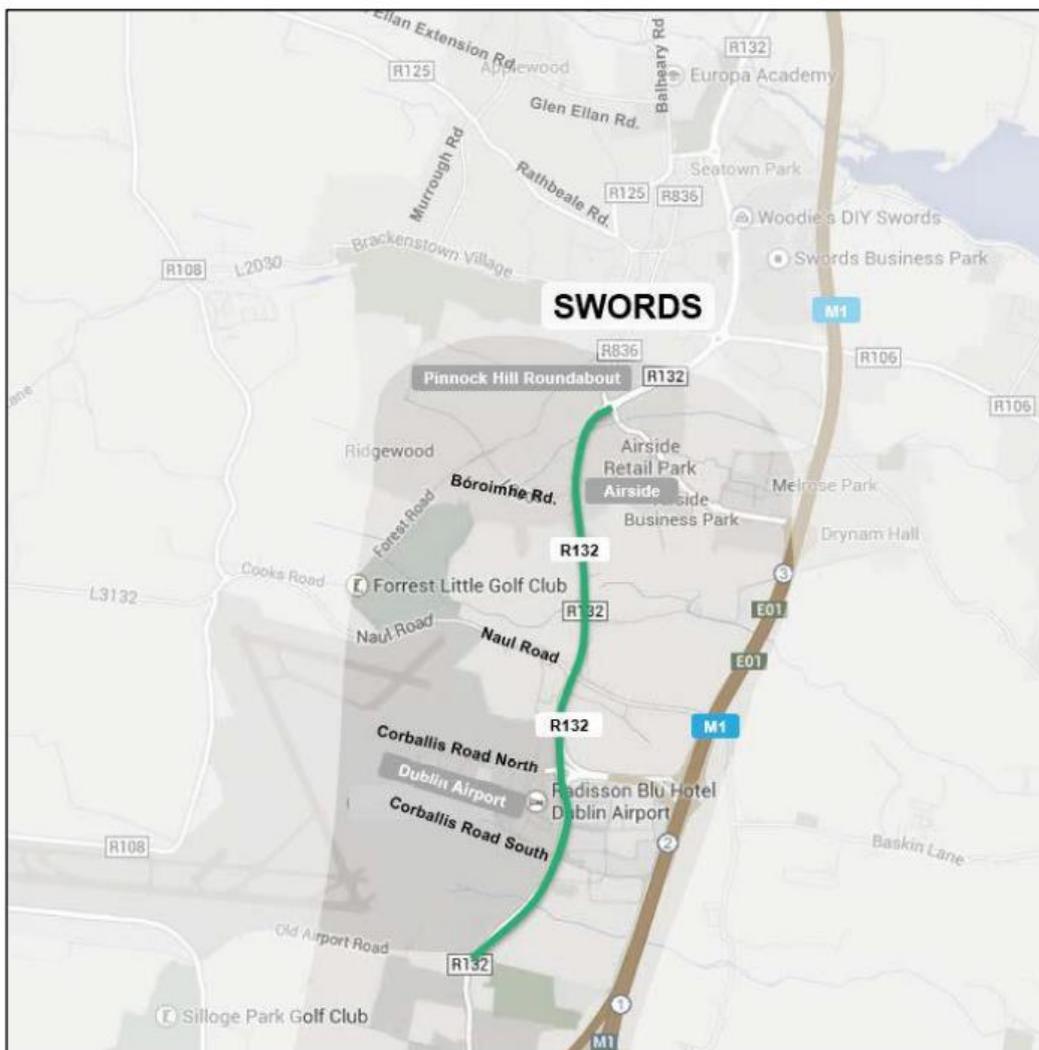
The premise of the subject proposal is to increase connectivity across and along the R132 through prioritisation of sustainable transport modes creating a safe integrated sustainable transport network allowing for greater accessibility. This will encourage a modal shift towards more sustainable modes of transport such as public transport, cycling and walking.

As previously mentioned, the subject proposal will complement the proposed MetroLink and BusConnects programmes as it will be designed to link into both.

## 6.2 BUSCONNECTS (2020)

BusConnects is the National Transport Authority's programme to greatly improve bus services in Irish cities. It is a key part of the Government's policy to improve public transport and address climate change in Dublin and other cities across Ireland. BusConnects Dublin includes the Network Redesign and the Core Bus Corridors. The project has recently finished its final round of public consultation before being submitted to An Bord Pleanála for consideration in 2021.

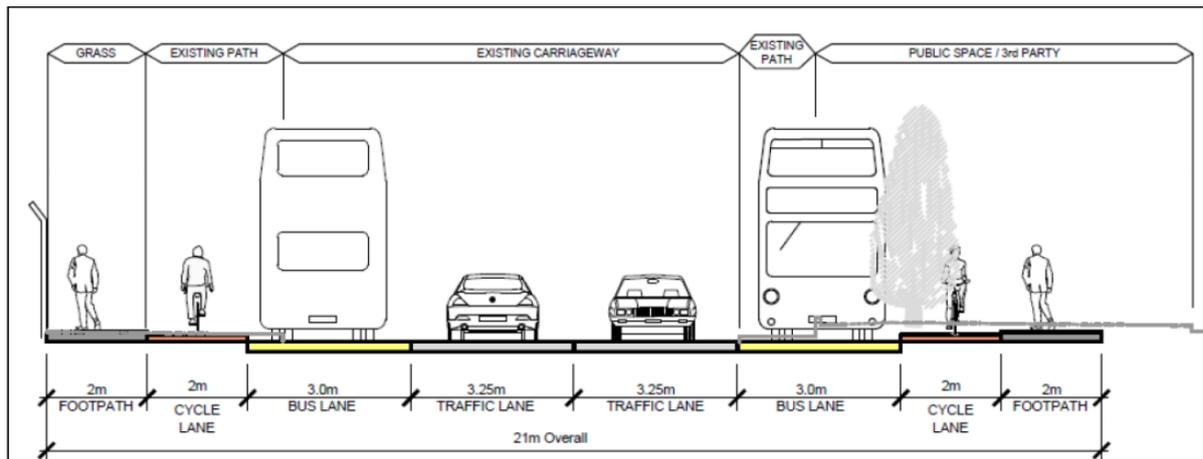
The project includes a number of core bus corridors, of which, the Swords to City Centre Bus Corridor is of most relevance to the subject proposal. The emerging preferred route for this bus corridor commences at the Pinnock Hill roundabout (see Figure 6.1 below) and will link into local routes to the north (including along the R132).



**Figure 6.2.1 Preferred Emerging Swords to City Centre Bus Corridor<sup>5</sup>**

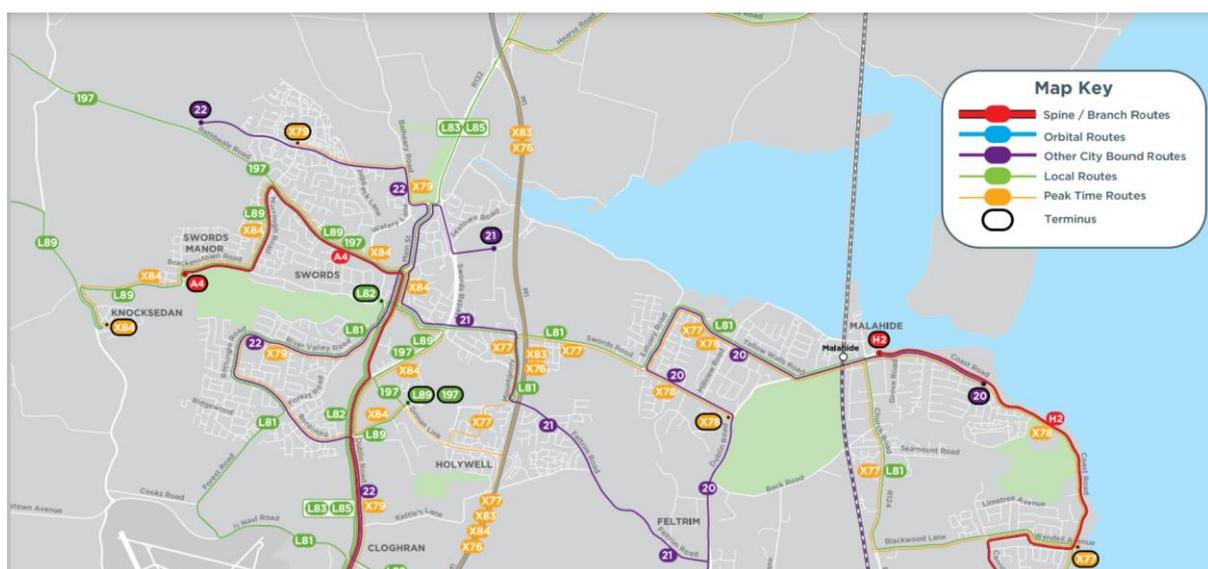
The following road layout is proposed along this bus corridor which corresponds with the road layout for the subject proposal (see Section 4.2 of this report):

<sup>5</sup> Swords South to Dublin Airport Section



**Figure 6.2.2 Swords to City Centre Bus Corridor road layout**

This will require the Pinnock Hill roundabout to be converted to a signalised junction, which also aligns with the subject proposal. Alterations to the carriageway south of Pinnock Hill will also require upgrades to pedestrian walkways and the introduction of segregated cycle lanes, akin to the subject proposal.



**Figure 2.2.3 BusConnects Network Redesign Proposals**

#### **Project Response:**

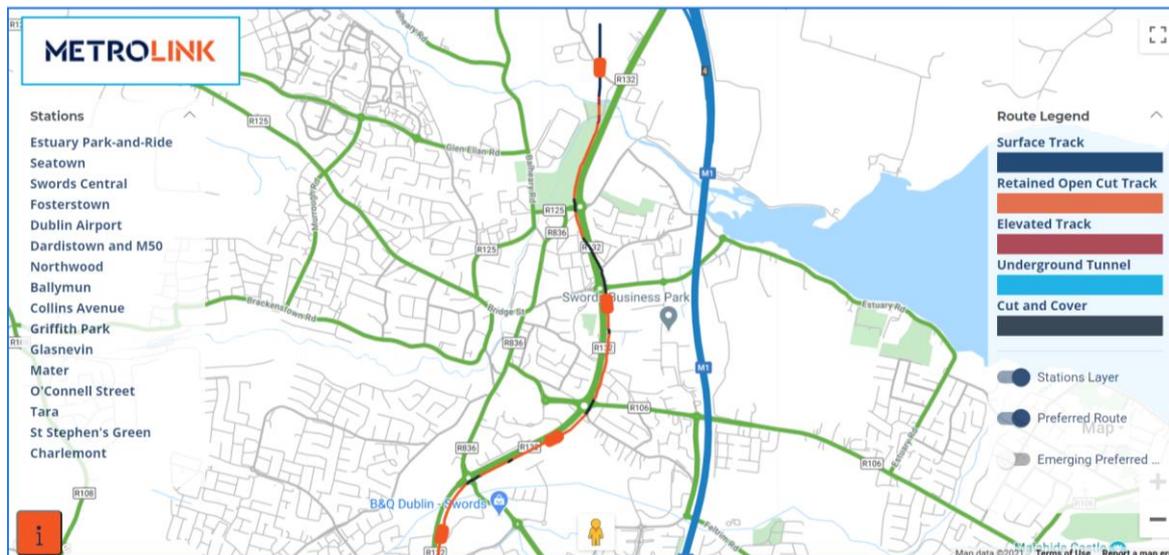
Given the stage at which the BusConnects programme is currently at, it is highly likely that the abovementioned preferred emerging route design will be submitted for permission to An Bord Pleanála in 2021. This will result in the subject proposal directly aligning with the BusConnects design allowing for a smooth transition to the core bus corridor.

## **6.3 METROLINK – INTEGRATED TRANSPORT, INTEGRATED LIFE (2019)**

Another key part of the government's policy to improve public transport and address climate change is the MetroLink. This project has been earmarked for development for some time and is identified in the National Development Plan as a key public transport investment action with a completion date

of 2027. Similar to BusConnects, the MetroLink project is due to be submitted to An Bord Pleanála for consideration in 2021, having undertaken various public consultations on emerging routes and preferred routes.

As previously highlighted, MetroLink will cover the area of the subject proposal, primarily located immediately to the east of the R132, and to the west of the R132 in and around the Estuary intersection. The preferred route for the section relevant to the subject proposal currently involves 2 no. proposed stations, namely Swords Central and Seatown, located to the south of the Malahide Road and Seatown intersections respectively. The track will be predominantly 'retained open cut', with cut and cover undertaken at the intersections and north of the Seatown station where the track traverses from the east to the west of the R132 (see Figure 6.3 below).



**Figure 6.3 Preferred R132 Route**

#### **Project Response:**

The Design Options Report appended to the Traffic & Transport Assessment accompanying this application shows how the preferred route of MetroLink was considered in the design of the subject proposal. The landscape drawings and Design Options Report appended to the Traffic & Transport Assessment submitted in support of this application shows how the landscaping has been designed to facilitate removal of vegetation in the event of the construction of the proposed MetroLink.

## **6.4 SOUTH FINGAL TRANSPORT STUDY (2019)**

This study of the transport infrastructure in South Fingal was commissioned by Fingal County Council in 2017 and was completed and published in 2019. The study identifies the R132 as a part of the strategic road network of Swords, functioning as *'a local traffic distributor for the town's population to access places of work and commerce'*.

The study considers that the *'R132 Swords Road provides an opportunity for Swords to rebalance the provision of road space on Main Street towards pedestrians, cyclists and bus users. On the R132 in Swords, there are deficiencies with respect to the pedestrian and cycle networks. However, it is not part of the GDA Cycle Network plan, nor are any BusConnects services planned to run along it.'*

*Whilst the road primarily performs the role of a town bypass for vehicular traffic, in the context of the delivery of MetroLink and the planned expansion of Swords to the east of the corridor, the R132 Swords Road will need to provide a multi modal function, balancing the needs of through and local movements.'*

In order to realise this opportunity, the study proposes the following design recommendations for the R132:

- **SFTS Recommendation 11:** *Improve connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists travelling across the R132 Swords Road from existing and proposed development lands to the town centre. This will be achieved by replacing the existing roundabouts with signalised junctions and incorporating controlled Toucan crossings. This will replace or supplement the existing footbridges.*
- **SFTS Recommendation 12:** *Creation of a more active frontage along the R132 Swords Road by providing footpaths, segregated cycle facilities and encouraging new developments to face onto the street.*
- **SFTS Recommendation 13:** *Encourage higher density mixed use developments adjacent to the MetroLink stations with improved connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists and provide a controlled level of access to future developments along the R132 Swords Road.*
- **SFTS Recommendation 14:** *Safeguard the vehicular capacity of the road by retaining the number of trafficked lanes, while implementing measures to reduce the speed and dominance of traffic.*
- **SFTS Recommendation 15:** *Junctions on R132 Swords Road should be improved from a pedestrian and cyclist point of view. The Council should engage with the NTA and TII on preliminary designs with a view to developing a complementary scheme that achieves the required improvements and prepares for the Metro alignment.*

In addition to the above recommendations, the study states that *'whether undertaken as part of the MetroLink design, or as part of a pre-Metro reconfiguration, the main junctions along the R132 Swords Road should be signalised, with improved accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists, whilst accommodating the forecast needs of vehicular traffic.'*

#### **Project Response:**

The subject proposal is essentially a culmination of the abovementioned recommendations and is supported by a suite of studies and documentation justifying the modal split, reduced speed limit and design of the proposal.

## **6.5 TRANSPORT STRATEGY FOR THE GREATER DUBLIN AREA (2016-2035)**

This strategy was developed to provide a framework for the delivery of transport infrastructure and services in the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) and to support regional planning policies.

The strategy recognises the importance of the MetroLink project to the GDA and discusses the various routes involved. For the Swords to City Centre route, the strategy highlights the need *'to provide a higher level of public transport capacity than the existing provision'* along this corridor, in advance of MetroLink. It is expected that this capacity will take the form of a Bus Rapid Transport (BRT) service or a conventional bus corridor upgrade. It is recognised, however, that this strategy was devised before the creation of the BusConnects programme.

The strategy proposed *'to expand the urban cycle network to over 1,485 kilometres in length'* in order to attract new cyclists to the network. Indeed, *'it is intended that many of the key cycling routes will be developed as segregated facilities, with cyclists separated from vehicular traffic through the use of kerb separators or by having the cycleway at a higher level than the road carriageway'*, allowing for a safe cycling network.

In order to address a number of pedestrian provision issues, the strategy recommends the following:

- *'Enhance pedestrian movement along the strategic pedestrian routes by widening footpaths where appropriate, providing better surfacing and by removing unnecessary poles, signs, street cabinets, advertising and other street clutter';*

- *'Revise road junction layouts, where appropriate, to provide dedicated pedestrian crossings, reduce pedestrian crossing distances, provide more direct pedestrian routes, and reduce the speed of turning traffic';*
- *'Ensure that permeability and accessibility of public transport stops and stations for local communities is maintained and enhanced'.*

Given the function of the R132 as a regional road, the following recommendations of the strategy in relation to regional and local roads applies:

- *'Implement necessary upgrades to the regional and local road network in line with the "Principles of Road Development" set out in Section 5.8.3'*
- *'Enhance pedestrian and cycle safety through the provision of safer road junctions, improved pedestrian crossing facilities and the incorporation of appropriate cycle measures including signalised crossings where necessary'*
- *'Implement various junction improvements and local reconfigurations on the regional and local road network'*

The strategy stresses the need for regional and local road schemes to adhere to principles of road development as set out in Section 5.8.3 of the document. The principles of relevance to the subject proposal are as follows:

- *'That each proposed road scheme is consistent with this Strategy and with Government policies related to transport;'*
- *'That the road scheme, other than a motorway or an express road proposal, will be designed to provide safe and appropriate arrangements to facilitate walking, cycling and public transport provision; and'*
- *'That alternative solutions, such as public transport provision, traffic management or demand management measures, cannot effectively and satisfactorily address the particular circumstances prompting the road proposal or are not applicable or appropriate'*

#### **Project Response:**

The subject proposal is being proposed in advance of both the MetroLink and BusConnects programmes, providing a higher level of public transport capacity in line with the Transport Strategy for the GDA.

Pedestrian and cycle facilities along the R132 will be enhanced by the subject proposal, providing both a safe cycle and walking network. The imposition of segregated cycle lanes and pedestrian walkways as part of the proposal will create a more cycle and pedestrian friendly environment along the R132. Whereas, currently no cycle lane exists along the R132 and pedestrian facilities are limited to bus stops. In addition, the proposal includes three toucan crossings at three separate points along the R132, providing dedicated pedestrian crossings. Speed limits along this section of the R132 are proposed to be reduced to 50km/h, as part of a separate process undertaken in tandem with this application. This aligns with the principles of road development, as detailed above.

The Design Options report appended to the Traffic & Transport Assessment accompanying this application shows how alternative solutions were investigated and that the subject proposal was the optimal solution. The subject proposal also specifically aligns with the recommendations of the South Fingal Transport Study and the wider national, regional and local planning policy frameworks.

## **6.6 GREATER DUBLIN AREA CYCLE NETWORK PLAN (2013)**

This Cycle Network Plan was commissioned by the National Transport Authority in order to identify and determine the following:

- *'The Urban Cycle Network at the Primary, Secondary and Feeder level;*

- *The Inter-Urban Cycle Network linking the relevant sections of the Urban Network and including the elements of the National Cycle Network within the GDA. It shall also include linkages to key transport locations outside of urban areas such as airports and ports; and*
- *The Green Route Network being cycle routes developed predominately for tourist, recreational and leisure purposes.*

Although the cycle network does not identify routes along the section of the R132 pertaining to the subject proposal, it does identify a number of primary/secondary routes that traverse the R132 at each intersection within the proposal and north of the Estuary intersection (see Figure 6.4 below).



**Figure 6.4 GDA Cycle Network Plan for Swords (subject proposal area outlined in black)**

#### **Project Response:**

The subject proposal will introduce segregated cycle lanes to the R132 along this section, where no cycle lanes currently exist, and will also provide protected cycle provision at junctions. This will appropriately complement and link to the identified primary/secondary routes in the GDA Cycle Network Plan.

## **6.7 OVERALL COMPLIANCE WITH RELEVANT & SECTORAL POLICIES**

The comprehensive review of relevant sectoral objectives and policies outlined in the preceding sections clearly demonstrates that the proposed development is in full compliance with the provisions of the relevant and sectoral plans and strategies.

Importantly, the subject proposal has been designed to complement future transport proposals in the area and aligns with various local, regional and national strategies to transition to low carbon transport modes and to facilitate active travel.

As detailed in this review, as well as the following sections of this report, this high level of compliance can be linked to the comprehensive reports produced as part of the environmental report and appropriate assessment of the proposed development.

# **7 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS**

## **7.1 EIA SCREENING**

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening is appended to this report in accordance with the relevant guidance and legislation, and an Environmental Report in keeping with good practice. The screening concludes that an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) is not required. However, in keeping with good practice, an Environmental Report has been prepared and accompanies this application.

## **7.2 ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT**

The Environmental Report enclosed with the planning application assesses potential effects under a range of environmental topics:

1. Introduction
2. Proposed Development
3. Population & Human Health
4. Biodiversity
5. Air Quality
6. Noise and Vibration
7. Soils, Water & Hydrology
8. Landscape & Visual
9. Archaeology & Cultural Heritage

Under each of the specialist topics (3 to 9) mitigation measures are included, where appropriate, to reduce or avoid predicted environmental impacts.

The Environmental Report has been referenced in Sections 5 and 6 of this report above to clearly demonstrate that this proposal is in full compliance with the various sectoral policies and objectives of the County Development Plan.

## **7.3 NATURA IMPACT STATEMENT**

A Stage 1 Appropriate Assessment (Screening Report) is appended to this report, and a stage two Appropriate Assessment (Natura Impact Statement) accompanies this application. Having assessed the subject site, its surrounding environs, and available existing data for the area the Screening Report found that the proposed development would have the potential to result in effects to the integrity of any European sites, if unmitigated, and a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) was required.

The accompanying NIS finds that, with the implementation of proposed mitigation measures, it is considered that the proposed development will not give rise to any effect on the ecological integrity of any European sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

## 8 OTHER SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

A number of other Reports accompany this Application including a Traffic and Transport Assessment, a Surface Water Drainage Strategy and a Report on the Flood Risk Assessment (Stage 3). These reports aim to address particular issues associated with the subject proposal. In addition, the issue of speed limits will also be addressed in this section.

### 8.1 FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT

A detailed stage three flood risk assessment (FRA) of the proposed development has been undertaken (p200021-DBFL-Rep-004). This is included as a separate report with the planning application documentation.

The FRA sets out the flood risk assessment of the application, in accordance with the Flood Risk Management guidelines. The assessment is based on the best data available in the public domain at the time of writing.

The assessment concludes that most of the proposed development is located within Flood Zones B and C which are both compatible with the type of development proposed. A small part of the southern section of the proposed development located close to Pinnock Hill roundabout falls within Flood Zone A which is not compatible with local transport infrastructure. However, given the pre-existence of the R132 and the fact that the proposed development represents a reallocation of existing space that must align with the existing road, it is not considered feasible to mitigate the flood risk in this area.

The assessment estimates a lifespan of 40 no. years for the proposed development and recommends a re-assessment of flood risk after 20 years. The assessment determines that no further detailed Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment is required.

### 8.2 TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT ASSESSMENT

A Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) Report is included with this Planning Application to support the subject proposal.

The following elements are detailed as part of the study:

- Policy Context;
- Review of the Receiving Environment;
- Characteristics of Proposals;
- Traffic Impact Assessment;
- Pedestrian & Cyclist Impacts, and;
- Network Analysis.

The TTA concludes from the active modes' perspective, the new arrangement will produce a safer and high-quality environment for pedestrians and cyclists. The R132 Connectivity Project is aiming for an enhancement in the mobility for the active modes at the expense of a significant reduction in traffic capacity of the R132. This means that user's priorities will be redistributed, since pedestrians and cyclist will be prioritised from cars.

Accessibility is highly improved from the current arrangement, since the proposed project also considers mobility impaired users. The barrier effect created by the current R132 will be diminished, and greater permeability between East and West of the corridor will be achieved. Connectivity

between Swords Town Centre and the new developments such as Barrysparks and Crowcastle is highly improved, as well as with MetroLink and Dublin City.

### **8.3 SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE STRATEGY**

A Surface Water Drainage Strategy is submitted in support of this application, as part of the Infrastructure Design Report. The Strategy shows that surface water from the altered intersections will be attenuated to a runoff rate of 2l/s, in line with best practice and recommendations made in the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GSDSDS).

The proposed development will increase the impermeable area over the existing intersections, and this will be accounted for through a mixture of at-source and site-wide surface water attenuation measures including tree pits, infiltration trenches, sub-surface attenuation systems etc. Further measures are proposed during the construction phase of development to ensure that surface water is discharged at a controlled rate.

### **8.4 SPEED LIMITS**

A reduction in the speed limit to 50km/h is proposed, but will be facilitated through a separate process. The reduced speed limit, in conjunction with the infrastructural proposals, will increase safety along the corridor particularly for vulnerable road users.

The reduction of the speed limit is required to facilitate this project, but will be delivered in tandem with this project, through a separate process.

## 9 PLANNING ASSESSMENT AND OVERALL CONCLUSION

This Planning Application is part of a strategic initiative by Fingal County Council (FCC) to improve connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists across and along the R132.

As already highlighted, the application submitted for approval primarily provides for:

- Conversion of three existing intersections along the R132 (Estuary, Seatown and Malahide Road Roundabouts) to signalised intersections with 'at-grade' pedestrian and cyclist crossing points;
- Installation of signalised toucan crossings at three separate points along the R132;
- Pedestrian linkages to Chapel Lane and Ashley Avenue at the proposed Chapel Lane toucan crossing;
- Installation of turning areas at two separate points along the R132;
- Carriageway alterations including the establishment of designated 3m wide bus lanes and 2m wide cycleways and 2m wide pedestrian walkways along each side of the carriageway;
- Reconfiguration of the Drynam Road arm of the Malahide Road Roundabout to link directly to Malahide Road as a one-way road;
- Construction of new bus stops on Malahide Road;
- Installation of a sub-surface attenuation system; and
- Landscaping and other ancillary works.

This is proposed to assist the prioritisation of sustainable transport modes along the R132 and increased connectivity across and along the R132.

A full Appropriate Assessment Screening and Natura Impact Statement has been carried out and concludes that the subject proposal will not give rise to any effect on the ecological integrity of any European sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

In addition, a number of other Reports accompany this application, including a Traffic & Transport Assessment (including a Design Options Report), Environmental Report, a Flood Risk Assessment, an Infrastructure Design Report, a Road Safety Audit and an Arborist's Report.

As highlighted in Section 5 and Section 6 above, this proposal is fully in compliance with the land use zoning and policies of the suite of relevant national, regional and local plans and strategies, along with the policies and provisions of relevant sectoral plans and strategies.

To summarise, the proposed development is considered to comply with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, with benefits including those listed below:

- It complies with the policies and objectives set out in all tiers of the relevant planning documentation.
- The landscape setting will reflect existing planting, and will provide a high-quality physical environment.
- Sustainable urban drainage is included within the integrated landscape design.
- Due consideration has been given to any potential impacts to the environment, through the design, drainage, transportation and environmental assessment processes.

Therefore, we would respectfully request that An Bord Pleanála grant permission for the subject application as it is in full compliance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and does not create any significant residual effects on the environment or a European Site.

## APPENDIX 1 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Applicant	REG. NO.	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION	Grant Date
Dwelling Application	F10B/0294	To build new single storey extension to rear to incorporate alterations to granny flat, and also to include internal alterations to existing dwelling unit.	03/05/2011
Dwelling Application	F10B/0292	Construct a second storey extension over existing single storey structure to side of dwelling, 2 storey extension to the rear and relocate site entrance.	12/05/2011
Dwelling Application	F11B/0186	The construction of a single storey garage/workshop to the side of the existing dwelling all with associated siteworks and the replacement of a window with a patio door arrangement to the front elevation of the existing dwelling.	23/11/2011
Salix Trust Limited	F11A/0398	2.4 metre high pallisade fence to the north and east boundary of the existing rear service yard.	31/01/2012
Dwelling Application	F12B/0046	Retention of previously approved application Reg. Ref: F10B/0292 for the replacement of a two storey side extension to a single storey extension and minor fenestration revisions to rear.	15/06/2012
Dwelling Application	F12A/0174	A single storey extension to the front and side of the dwelling, an additional bedroom above the existing single storey extension at the side of the house and all associated internal site and drainage works.	28/08/2012
Dwelling Application	F12A/0196	Change of use of part of the existing house to a playschool, new pedestrian entrance at boundary wall, concrete footpath (to link the site to the existing footpath on Barrys Park Road), and associated site works.	25/09/2012
The Board of Mngt, St Colmcilles Boys NS	F12A/0226	A development consisting of removal of two temporary classroom units and for replacement with a permanent single storey detached four classroom block with covered access way and for all necessary ancillary works.	16/10/2012
Dwelling Application	F12A/0219 ABP Ref - PL06F.24115 7	Sub-division and modifications to reduce to a two-storey, 2 bedroom dwelling and one additional two-storey, 2 bedroom with vehicular access.	07/01/2013
The Board of Mngt, St Colmcilles Boys NS	F12A/0395	Alterations to a previously approved detached permanent single story four classroom block and all necessary ancillary works (Ref.F12A/0226) consisting of a reduction to three classrooms.	20/03/2013
Dwelling Application	F13B/0027	The development will consist of a first floor extension to the side of the existing house and a single storey sun room extension to the rear.	11/06/2013
Frank McGowan & Co Ltd	F13A/0112	Permission for closing the existing vehicular access and the provision of 3 no. additional surface level car parking spaces; the	25/06/2013

Applicant	REG. NO.	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION	Grant Date
		construction of a new vehicular access c.70 metres west of the existing access with the loss of 7 no. existing car parking spaces and all ancillary site development works.	
Dunnes Stores	F13A/0252, F13A/0252/E 1	Ground floor extension of 321m <sup>2</sup> to the grocery area.	18/11/2013 03/10/2018
Lasatel Ltd	F13A/0372	New single storey extension (116sqm) to front of existing workshop to contain new service ramp, reception area & ancillary services.	14/01/2014
Dwelling Application	F14B/0058	Construction of a ground and first floor extension to the south, west and east of the existing house to accommodate 2 no. bedrooms, bathroom, sitting room, dining room, garage, lobby and associated ancillary site works.	17/06/2014
Dwelling Application	F14B/0135	Granny flat extension at ground floor level to side/rear, first floor domestic extension to side and single storey extension to rear.	10/11/2014
Dwelling Application	F14B/0262	Dormer attic conversion to rear of existing house.	14/01/2015
Dwelling Application	F14A/0292	Demolish existing single storey shed to side of existing dwelling and to build new two storey 'granny flat' extension to side/rear of existing dwelling with single storey element to rear. Also for new two storey extension to rear of existing dwelling and to widen existing vehicular entrance to provide for 1 no. additional off street car park space.	23/02/2015
Residential Application	F14A/0218	28 no. residential units comprising 4 no. duplex units (1 no. apartment on ground floor and 2 no. duplexes on first and second floor providing for a total of 12 no. units); 8 no. two storey semi-detached units and 8 no. two storey terraced units, all with associated car parking spaces. Permission is also sought for widening and utilisation of existing entrance, upgrades to existing access road and footpath to include 1 no. new pedestrian crossing, removal of the site's existing palisade boundary fence, landscaping and all ancillary works necessary to facilitate the development.	02/03/2015
Rhonellan Properties Ltd	F14A/0443 ABP Ref - PL06F.24449 8	Proposed retail development comprising a single storey licensed convenience foodstore, including an off licence, 67 no. car parking spaces, loading bay, new vehicular and pedestrian access from Seatown Road, widening and improvements including the provision of a right hand turn on Seatown Road, landscaping including new pocket park fronting onto Seatown Road, ESB Substation, boundary treatments, lighting, elevational signage and all ancillary site and engineering works necessary to facilitate the development.	03/03/2015
Dwelling Application	F15A/0081	New single storey family unit to the side of the existing house and associated site works.	02/06/2015

Applicant	REG. NO.	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION	Grant Date
Dwelling Application	F14A/0516	Ground floor extension to rear, Roofing of entire ground floor area, Attic conversion to entire (new & existing) incorporating dormer extension to rear and balcony to same, Two no. velux roof lights to front elevation. Single storey porch extension to front. Single storey garage/workshop to side. Widening of existing vehicular entrance and all associated site works.	08/06/2015
Dwelling Application	F14B/0165	Demolition of existing garage to side of existing dwelling, Construction of a two storey extension to the side of the existing dwelling, Two storey and single storey extension to rear of existing dwelling, Construction of a replacement front porch and all ancillary site development works.	10/06/2015
Board of Management Coláiste Choilm CBS	F15A/0043	Single storey extension to existing school including a Special Educational Needs Unit and associated site works.	22/06/2015
LIDL Ireland GmbH	F14A/0492 ABP Ref - PL06F:244562 F14A/0492/E1	Construction of a two storey, licensed discount food store with ancillary off-license sales, a single storey café and two storey medical centre; the provision of external and undercroft car parking and cycle parking; the provision of a vehicular and pedestrian access via the Dublin Road; and the provision of boundary treatments, retaining wall, hard and soft landscaping, lighting, connections to drainage and water services and all other ancillary site and associated works including demolition of four existing houses and associated building	13/07/2015 10/07/2020
Dwelling Application	F15B/0099	Alterations and additions to the existing semi-detached house comprising of demolition of existing side garage, front porch, rear conservatory and sheds and construction of a new two-storey rear extension, construction of a new front porch, reconfiguration/addition of windows to elevations, external insulation of walls and provision of 3 no. new roof lights.	13/07/2015
Tempore	F15A/0179	Continued use on a permanent basis of the existing access and exit roadway off the western carriageway of the R132 regional route, south of the existing Malahide Road Roundabout. The existing access road serves internal circulation and car parking areas with Swords Pavilions Shopping Centre. the access road and associated site development and landscape works and lighting exist as previously permitted under register reference no.s F03A/1331, F05A/1201, F06A/1693, F07A/1195 and F10A/0392, but is subject to a Condition restricting the period of its use.	20/07/2015
Dublin & Dun Laoghaire Education & Training	F15A/0233	Temporary permission for a 2-storey temporary building on existing ball-court area to front of main school building, comprising 7 general classrooms, 1 home economics room, 1 DCG/TG room, 1 Group room/office, toilets etc &	18/08/2015

Applicant	REG. NO.	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION	Grant Date
		ancillary works including a steel storage container to rear of site, 12 additional temporary carparking spaces accessed from North Street and connections to existing foul drain and new surface water soakway all to be constructed in either a single phase or in 3 phases over a period of 2 years.	
Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics Manufacturing	F15A/0270	Construction of new first floor office mezzanine within the existing manufacturing building to include three new windows to the south elevation, three new windows to the east elevation, new internal staircase and walkway, new passenger lift and all associated site works.	31/08/2015
Electricity Supply Board	F15A/0067	New 110 kV GIS electrical transformer station consisting of two storey control building, 2 no. 110 kV transformers surrounded by 5metre high metal acoustic screens, 1 no lightning mast 18 metre high, 3 metre high concrete boundary wall with 1.8 metre high chain link fence to western boundary, new vehicular entrance off existing estate road in Airside Business Park with new entrance gates to match existing fence. Associated site drainage and site works.	07/09/2015
Dwelling Application	F14A/0415 ABP Ref - PL06F.245067 F14A/0415/E1	Change of use from existing workshop to new childcare facility (Crèche). Alterations to existing building include new mono-pitch roof with new glazing to front, sides and rear and velux roof lights over. Together with new ramp and handrail to front and off street staff parking for up to 5 no. vehicles (total). Outdoor play area to rear and new signage to front of building.	18/09/2015  03/09/2020
Dwelling Application	F15A/0323	Permission for continued use of part of the existing house as a playschool. Temporary permission for a playschool was granted under Register Reference F12A/0196.	05/10/2015
Board of Management Colaiste Choilm CBS	F15A/0343	Extension to existing school building in addition to development granted under Planning Ref. F15A/0043. The extension will include a single storey activity area for Special Educational Unit.	13/10/2015
Dwelling Application	F15B/0194	Single storey extension to the side and front of existing house and all associated site works.	09/11/2015
Dublin Bus	F15A/0406	Installation of a stainless steel and glass bus shelter with 2 no. internally illuminated advertising panels.	30/11/2015
Dwelling Application	F15B/0261	Build new first floor extension to rear over existing single storey extension to rear.	29/02/2016
Rohan Estate Management Ltd	F15A/0548	Construction of a temporary site identification sign (duration of 2 years) to be in the centre of the site at the entrance to the business park (western boundary).	29/02/2016
Rhonellen Properties Ltd	F15A/0495	Permission for a proposed community development on lands at and adjoining the Parochial House, for a proposed community development. Permission is sought for 1 no. single storey community hall/building, associated car parking, landscaping and all	04/04/2016

Applicant	REG. NO.	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION	Grant Date
		ancillary site and engineering works to facilitate the development.	
Dwelling Application	F16A/0127  F16A/0127/E 1	Ground floor extension of the existing playschool (Register Ref. F15A/0323), to the side of the existing house, and all associated site works.	28/06/2016  Extension of duration of permission currently live.
Dwelling Application	F16A/0011	New single storey rear extension; refurbishment and alterations to existing dwelling; widening of the existing entrance gate and all associated site works.	25/07/2016
Dwelling Application	F16A/0207	Permission to remove condition no. 5 of register reference F15A/0323 requiring the operator of the playschool to reside at this location and permission for continuation of use of the existing operation.	08/08/2016
Conor O'Scanaill	F16A/0248	Demolition of existing Veterinary building and replacement with similar size modern building height 7m. and similar veterinary uses, using existing vehicular access, parking and services at existing veterinary building adjoining veterinary clinic at Milton Fields.	29/08/2016
Aldi Stores (Ireland) Ltd.	F16A/0104	The amendment of the number of car park spaces from 67 to 77; the amendment of delivery times and opening hours	18/10/2016
LIDL Ireland GmbH	F16A/0324	Amendments to ABP Ref. PL06F.244562 (and Fingal County Council Ref. F14A/0492) (1) retention permission of works to create and completion of an ESB substation building, (2) Planning permission for amendments to the permitted development including elevations - additional glazing and finishes; change to finishes and new car park entrance portico with safety signage; and inclusion of concrete wall. Adjustments to lift core extends above the level roof at the rear of the store. Reconfiguration of space within the premises offices and storage areas. Replacement of the permitted concrete acoustic wall to the west of the foodstore to a timber acoustic fence. All other site development works and any other associated ancillary works.	18/10/2016
Dwelling Application	F16A/0368	Two storey extension at rear with porch, vehicular access and off street parking to front and all associated site works.	21/11/2016
Dwelling Application	F16B/0240	Single storey extension to rear.	13/12/2016
The Hammerson ICAV	F16A/0440	Proposed development comprises the continued use on a permanent basis of the existing access and exit roadway off the western carriageway of the R132 regional route, south of the existing Malahide Road Roundabout. The existing access road serves internal circulation and car parking areas within Swords Pavilions Shopping Centre. The access road and associated site	11/01/2017

Applicant	REG. NO.	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION	Grant Date
		development and landscape works and lighting exist as previously permitted under Register Reference Nos. F03A/1331, F05A/1201, F06A/1693, F07A1195, F10A/0392 and F15A/0179, but is subject to a Condition restricting the period of its use.	
Board of Management	F16A/0436	Single storey extension to the north of the existing Special Educational Unit at Colaiste Choilm CBS, Dublin Road, Swords, Co. Dublin. The extension will include additional teaching space with ancillary accommodation.	18/01/2017
Dwelling Application	F16B/0292	Construct a new single storey extension to the rear.	21/02/2017
Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics Manufacturing	F17A/0171	The demolition of the existing two fire sprinkler water storage tanks and construction of a new single fire sprinkler water storage tank of 57 square metres, height 9.7 metres and all associated site works.	27/06/2017
Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics Manufacturing	F17A/0276	Permission for the construction of a new storage shed to rear of existing factory building and construction of new emergency exit to West side of existing factory and all associated site works.	14/08/2017
IPUT plc	F17A/0416	Amalgamation of Retail Unit G20 & G21-G22 to provide a single retail unit at the Pavilions Shopping Centre	11/10/2017
Dwelling Application	F16B/0278	Single and two storey extensions to rear and velux roof window to front and all associated site works.	23/10/2017
Dwelling Application	F17A/0520	Permission for the construction of a two storey style dwelling in the existing side garden	28/11/2017
Mantua Development Ltd.	F17A/0591	The change of unit type from 4 no. three storey duplex units (a total of 12 no. units each with duplex unit comprising 2 no. two storey maisonettes over 1 no. ground floor apartment) granted planning permission under ref. F14A/0218 to 12 no. three storey terraced 4 bedroom houses including minor amendments to communal parking areas.	22/12/2017
Dwelling Application	F17A/0624	Retention of attached side/rear single storey link extension use as ancillary family apartment/granny flat with own door access, altered widened front pedestrian/vehicular access, raised high side boundary walling (approximately 3.5m high) with metal fencing, all with associated site development works to existing dwelling house.	15/01/2018
Dwelling Application	F17B/0299 ABP Ref - ABP-301106-18	A two storey pitched roof extension to the side to accommodate additional living space together with all onsite utilities and services.	27/03/2018
Dwelling Application	F17A/0770	Construction of a two-storey house, new boundary wall and entrance with associated site works.	04/04/2018

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>REG. NO.</b>	<b>BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION</b>	<b>Grant Date</b>
Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics Man. Ltd.	F18A/0070	The construction of new first floor mezzanine within the existing manufacturing building to include one new window to the east elevation, two new windows to the south elevation, two new windows to the west elevation, new external signage to replace existing signage in same location and all associated site works.	16/05/2018
Devonmill Limited	F17A/0756	Construction of a four-storey hotel extension (to the front of the existing hotel building; demolition and reinstatement of existing hotel floorspace, removal of 3 no. hotel bedrooms and relocation of existing ESB sub-station in order to facilitate the physical connection of the proposed extension; installation of plant room and reorientation of hotel lobby at ground floor level; and hotel accommodation (55 no. new hotel bedrooms) at ground 1st, 2nd and 3rd floor levels, resulting in a combined overall total of 182 no. bedrooms. The development will also include: a wall-mounted, internally-illuminated hotel signage panel at third floor level affixed to the southeast and northwest elevations of the proposed hotel extension (2 no. in total); reduction in car parking spaces (from 116 no. to 95 no. spaces); new bicycle parking (18 no. spaces); boundary treatments; changes in level; drainage works; piped infrastructure and ducting, roof plant; and all associated site excavation works above and below ground all on a site of 0.93ha. approximately.	28/05/2018
Dwelling Application	F18B/0060	The demolition of an existing garage within the rear garden, alterations to an existing dwelling including the construction of a new ground floor entrance porch, alterations to an existing dormer window to the front elevation, a two storey extension comprising of a new ground floor pitched roof extension to the rear and side elevations with rooflights, and a first floor pitched roof extension to the rear elevation, internal alterations at ground and first floor levels; alterations to the front, rear and side elevations and all associated works to facilitate the development.	26/06/2018
Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics Manufacturing Limited	F18A/0405	Retention Planning Permission for existing temporary office accommodation in a single storey "Portakabin", the retention of 24 existing temporary car parking spaces and all associated site works.	09/10/2018
World Courier (Ireland) Ltd.	F18A/0518	The provision of a new storage mezzanine within the existing warehouse.	12/12/2018
Dwelling Application	F18B/0292	The construction of a single storey rear extension and the indefinite retention of 7m <sup>2</sup> area of previously built side and front extension,	30/01/2019

Applicant	REG. NO.	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION	Grant Date
		planning reg. refs: F10B/0401 & F02B/0225 along with the associated site works.	
Board of Management of Colaiste Choilm	F19A/0103	Alterations to existing school building including removal of the existing roofs, raising walls as necessary and construction of a new roof and associated site works.	29/05/2019
The Royal Bank of Scotland	F19A/0258	Shopfront alterations.	11/09/2019
Dwelling Application	F19B/0165	Incorporation of the existing family flat (Reg. Ref. F15A/0081) into the original house, and a new single storey extension to the rear of the existing house and all associated site works.	17/09/2019
Dwelling Application	F19B/0216	Demolish existing detached garage to side of dwelling, construct a new two storey extension to side & part 2 storey part single storey to rear of existing dwelling including internal modifications, replace existing front porch & all associated site development works.	19/11/2019
Hammerson ICAV	F19A/0409	The development comprises the change of use on site to a seasonal event area, to be managed by the Pavilions Shopping Centre, and associated works.	03/12/2019
North St. Yoga Ltd.	F19A/0457	Convert existing retail unit to yoga studio with changing rooms and toilets.	21/01/2020
EPUT Property Trust Nominees Ltd.	F19A/0545	The demolition of the existing entry porch to the front of the building, Provide a new entry porch, Provide a new shower block and bike shelter to the rear of the building, Provide 3 new air handling units on the existing roof, Provide 5 new parking spaces to the north of the site and all associated site works.	15/07/2020
LDC Developments Ltd	F20A/0098	The demolition and removal of 4 no single storey sheds/ancillary residential buildings and 1 no. glass house, all located to the rear of the existing property.	15/07/2020
Hammerson ICAV	F20A/0180	Continued use on a permanent basis of the existing access and exit roadway off the western carriageway of the R132 regional route, south of the existing Malahide Road roundabout. The existing access road serves internal circulation and car parking areas within Swords Pavilions Shopping Centre. The access road and associated site development and landscape works and lighting exist as previously permitted under register reference nos. F03A/1331, F05A/1201, F06A/1693, F07A/1195, F10A/0392, F15A/0179 and F16A/0440, but is subject to a condition restricting the period of its use.	25/08/2020
Dwelling Application	F20B/0018 ABP Ref - ABP- 307140-20	The retention of construction amendments to dwelling. Amendments consist of increase in height of flat roof over single storey attached building with napp plaster wall finish and provision of additional extension to side of dwelling and other modifications.	08/09/2020

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>REG. NO.</b>	<b>BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION</b>	<b>Grant Date</b>
Dwelling Application	F20B/0153	Conversion of existing attic to study/store and ensuite measuring 37.2sq.m with new velux window to the rear, the change of roof profile from a hip roof to a gable along with associated site works associated with the development.	29/09/2020
Hammerson ICAV	F20A/0481	Change of use from current previously approved retail unit to a Financial Services institution with associated meeting rooms, toilet facilities and canteen with associated drainage.	22/12/2020
Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics Manufacturing Ltd.	F20A/0505	The development will consist of the retention of the existing temporary office accommodation in a single storey Portakabin, the retention of existing 24 temporary car parking spaces and all associated site works previously permitted for a 2 year period under Reg. Ref. F18A/0405.	14/01/2021
MKN Developments Ltd	SHD ABP App - 308366-20	278 no. apartments, childcare facility and associated site works at Fosterstown, Swords.	03/02/2021

## APPENDIX 2 LIST OF DRAWINGS

Document number	Titles
200021-DBFL-RD-SP-DR-C-1100	Site Location Plan
200021-DBFL-RD-SP-DR-C-1101	General Arrangements Sheet 1
200021-DBFL-RD-SP-DR-C-1102	General Arrangements Sheet 2
200021-DBFL-RD-SP-DR-C-1103	General Arrangements Sheet 3
200021-DBFL-RD-SP-DR-C-1104	General Arrangements Sheet 4
200021-DBFL-RD-SP-DR-C-1105	General Arrangements Sheet 5
200021-DBFL-RD-SP-DR-C-1106	General Arrangements Sheet 6
200021-DBFL-RD-SP-DR-C-1107	General Arrangements Sheet 7
200021-DBFL-RD-SP-DR-C-1108	General Arrangements Sheet 8
200021-DBFL-RD-SP-DR-C-1111	Site Extents Layout Sheet 1 of 4
200021-DBFL-RD-SP-DR-C-1112	Site Extents Layout Sheet 2 of 4
200021-DBFL-RD-SP-DR-C-1113	Site Extents Layout Sheet 3 of 4
200021-DBFL-RD-SP-DR-C-1114	Site Extents Layout Sheet 4 of 4
200021-DBFL-CS-SP-DR-C-1011	Drainage Layout Sheet 1 of 3
200021-DBFL-CS-SP-DR-C-1021	Drainage Layout Sheet 2 of 3
200021-DBFL-CS-SP-DR-C-1031	Drainage Layout Sheet 3 of 3
SES 18620 Rev B	<b>Public Lighting Layout</b> Malahide Road Roundabout
SES 18320 Rev D	Seatown Roundabout
SES 18520 Rev B	Estuary Roundabout
	<b>Landscaping Layout</b>
21FG01_DR-201	Malahide Road Roundabout
21FG01_DR-202	Seatown Roundabout
21FG01_DR-203	Estuary Roundabout

# **APPENDIX 3      SITE NOTICE**

## **SITE NOTICE**

**NOTICE UNDER SECTION 177AE OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 (AS INSERTED BY SECTION 57 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT (AMENDMENT) ACT 2010) AND THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS 2001 (AS AMENDED)**

### **APPLICATION TO AN BORD PLEANALA**

### **COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL**

### **FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **R132 CONNECTIVITY PROJECT**

**Fingal County Council hereby publishes this notice of its intention to carry out road alteration works along the R132 at Swords, Co. Dublin.**

#### **R132 CONNECTIVITY PROJECT**

The proposed works are to be carried out along the existing R132 situated between Lissenhall Interchange and Pinnockhill junction, to the east of Swords Town Centre. The section of road the subject of the proposed development is approximately 2.6km long.

The works will involve the following:

- j) Conversion of three existing intersections along the R132 (Estuary, Seatown and Malahide Road Roundabouts) to signalised intersections with 'at-grade' pedestrian and cyclist crossing points;
- k) Installation of signalised toucan crossings at three separate points along the R132;
- l) Pedestrian linkages to Chapel Lane and Ashley Avenue at the proposed Chapel Lane toucan crossing;
- m) Installation of turning areas at two separate points along the R132;
- n) Carriageway alterations including the establishment of designated 3m wide bus lanes and 2m wide cycleways and 2m wide pedestrian walkways along each side of the carriageway;
- o) Reconfiguration of the Drynam Road arm of the Malahide Road Roundabout to link directly to Malahide Road as a one-way road;
- p) Construction of new bus stops on Malahide Road;

- q) Installation of a sub-surface attenuation system; and
- r) Landscaping and other ancillary works.

Fingal County Council proposes to seek approval of An Bord Pleanála for the proposed works under Section 177AE of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as inserted by Section 57 of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010). A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) has been prepared in respect of the proposed works. An Bord Pleanála may give approval to the application with or without conditions or may refuse the application for development.

The Plans and particulars, including the Natura Impact Statement are available to view and download from the Council's online consultation portal which is available at <https://consult.fingal.ie/en/browse>

In addition to being available for inspection on the Council's online consultation portal at <https://consult.fingal.ie/en/browse> from Tuesday 4th May 2021 to Wednesday 16th June 2021 inclusive, a copy of the Plans and particulars, including the Natura Impact Statement may be inspected for a period from Tuesday 4th May 2021 to Wednesday 16th June 2021 inclusive (excluding weekends and bank holidays) during public opening hours at the following locations, by appointment only.

Fingal County Council Offices:

- Civic Offices, Grove Road, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15, D15 W638 (Monday to Thursday 9.00a.m.-5.00p.m. and Friday 9.00a.m.- 4.30p.m.)
- County Hall, Main Street, Swords, Co. Dublin, K67 X8Y2 (Monday to Thursday 9.00a.m.-5.00p.m. and Friday 9.00a.m.- 4.30p.m.)

To make an appointment, please contact the Customer Care Unit at [customercareunit@fingal.ie](mailto:customercareunit@fingal.ie) or Phone 01 8905000 from Monday to Friday (excluding weekends and Bank Holidays).

The plans and particulars, including the Natura Impact Statement, will be available to purchase at a reasonable cost of making a copy, or can be downloaded free of charge at <https://consult.fingal.ie/en/browse>

The plans and particulars, including the Natura Impact Statement, will also be available to view at:

- The Offices of An Bord Pleanála, 64 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1, between the hours of 9.15 am and 5.30 pm. Note: Due to COVID-19, it is recommended that persons contacting the Office to arrange viewing of the application in advance (Phone: (01) 858 8100 or Lo-call 1890 275 175).

Submissions and observations with respect to the proposed works, if carried out, may be made in writing to

**An Bord Pleanála, 64 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1 before Wednesday 16th June 2021 at 12.30pm** relating to:

- (i) The implications of the proposed development for proper planning and sustainable development in the areas concerned,
- (ii) The likely effects on the environment of the proposed development, and

(iii) The likely significant effects of the proposed development on the European sites.

A person may question the validity of any such decision by the Board by way of an application for judicial review under Order 84 of the Rules of the Superior Courts (S.I. No. 15 of 1986) in accordance with Section 50 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

Practical information on the review mechanism can be accessed under the heading Publications – Judicial Review Notice on the Board’s website [www.pleanala.ie](http://www.pleanala.ie) or on the Citizens information Service website [www.citizensinformation.ie](http://www.citizensinformation.ie)

**Signed:**

Director of Services

Planning & Strategic Infrastructure Department

Fingal County Council

**Date: 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

## **APPENDIX 4 NEWSPAPER NOTICE WORDING**

**NOTICE UNDER SECTION 177AE (4)(a) OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 (AS INSERTED BY SECTION 57 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT (AMENDMENT) ACT 2010) AND THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS 2001 (AS AMENDED)**

### **APPLICATION TO AN BORD PLEANALA**

### **COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL**

### **FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL**

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The works will involve the conversion of three existing intersections along the R132 (Estuary, Seatown and Malahide Road Roundabouts) to signalised intersections with 'at-grade' pedestrian and cyclist crossing points; Installation of signalised toucan crossings at three separate points along the R132; Pedestrian linkages to Chapel Lane and Ashley Avenue at the proposed Chapel Lane toucan crossing; Installation of turning areas at two separate points along the R132; Carriageway alterations including the establishment of designated 3m wide bus lanes and 2m wide cycleways and 2m wide pedestrian walkways along each side of the carriageway; Reconfiguration of the Drynam Road arm of the Malahide Road Roundabout to link directly to Malahide Road as a one-way road; Construction of new bus stops on Malahide Road; Installation of a sub-surface attenuation system; and landscaping and other ancillary works.

Fingal County Council proposes to seek approval of An Bord Pleanála for the proposed works under Section 177AE (4)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as inserted by Section 57 of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010). A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) has been prepared in respect of the proposed works. An Bord Pleanála may give approval to the application with or without conditions or may refuse the application for development.

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- Civic Offices, Grove Road, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15, D15 W638 (Monday to Thursday 9.00a.m.-5.00p.m. and Friday 9.00a.m.- 4.30p.m.)
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Submissions and observations with respect to the proposed works, if carried out, may be made in writing to **An Bord Pleanála, 64 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1 before Wednesday 16th June 2021 at 12.30pm** relating to:

- (i) The implications of the proposed development for proper planning and sustainable development in the areas concerned,
- (ii) The likely effects on the environment of the proposed development, and
- (iii) The likely significant effects of the proposed development on the European sites.

A person may question the validity of any such decision by the Board by way of an application for judicial review under Order 84 of the Rules of the Superior Courts (S.I. No. 15 of 1986) in accordance with Section 50 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

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MATTHEW MCALEESE  
DIRECTOR OF SERVICES  
PLANNING & STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE DEPARTMENT  
FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

# **APPENDIX 5      EIA SCREENING REPORT**

# **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING**

for

## **ALTERATIONS TO THREE ROUNDABOUTS TO SIGNALISED INTERSECTIONS AND ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING CARRIAGEWAYS, WITH POTENTIAL CONTROLLED TOUCAN CROSSINGS**

on

### **THE R132, SWORDS, Co. DUBLIN**

**for: The National Transport Authority**

Dún Scéine,  
Iveagh Court,  
Harcourt Lane,  
Dublin 2



**by: CAAS Ltd.**

1<sup>st</sup> Floor,  
24-26 Ormond Quay,  
Dublin 7



**NOVEMBER 2020**

## Document Control

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	<b>Author/Reviewer</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Prepared by</b>	Clare O'Doherty & Paul Fingleton	various dates to 16 <sup>th</sup> November 2020
<b>Reviewed by</b>	Conor Skehan	16 <sup>th</sup> November 2020
<b>Status of this version</b>	Final, subject to any comments from NTA	

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# 1 Introduction

CAAS Ltd. have been engaged by the National Transport Authority to carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment screening for the proposed conversion of three roundabouts to signalised intersections and installation of toucan crossings with additional carriageway works along the R132 at Swords, County Dublin, to establish whether or not the scheme requires Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and as a result, if an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) should be prepared in respect of it.

This screening takes account of:

- The relevant legislation (ref s.4)
- The plans and other information on the proposal which were provided to CAAS.

It also has regard to relevant EU Guidance including *Interpretation of definitions of project categories of annex I and II of the EIA Directive*, EU, 2015 and *Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects Guidance on Screening*, EU, 2017.

It covers:

- Outline Project Description including Options (s.2)
- EIA Screening (s.3)
- Conclusion (s.4)

It is based on the information provided to CAAS by the NTA which comprised:

- Location map
- Scheme drawings
- Scheme metrics

An overview of the author's competency is provided at the end of the report.

## 2 Project Description

### 2.1 Site Location

The scheme is located along the R132, located between the M1 and the Ward River, as shown on Figure 1 below, starting North of Pinnock Hill roundabout and extending approximately 750m North of Estuary Roundabout, an approx. total of 2.2km.

### 2.2 Brief Description of Scheme

The principal aim of the proposed scheme is to improve connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists travelling across each of the key intersections along the R132 by upgrading the existing roundabouts to signalised junctions. The scheme may also include alterations to existing R132 carriageways and may include controlled toucan crossings.

The main scheme elements are:

- Alteration of existing roundabouts to signalised junctions. These alterations will be largely on existing hard surfaced areas.
- Alterations to approximately 2 km of existing road surfaces between Pinnockhill and Estuary Roundabouts which are currently dual carriageway with hard shoulder to include (ref Figure 3):
  - o Reduction of the width of existing traffic lanes to 3m wide and provision of continuous routes for buses (3m wide).
  - o Footpaths (1.85m wide) and cycle lanes (1.85m wide) will be located on both sides of the carriageway, with cycle lanes segregated from bus lanes via pencil bollards and kerbs.
- Changes to private entrances along whole scheme length (ref Figures 2 and 3)
- Potential inclusion of 3 controlled toucan crossings.
- Reduction in speed limits of 60km/h and 80km/h to 50 km/h along the entire extent of the scheme.
- Total scheme area, as shown in red-line in Figure 2 is approx. 8.4 ha.
- The total road length including the length north of Estuary Roundabout where changes will be limited to private entrances is approx. 2.5 km.

Construction is anticipated to be carried out in phases over a 2 year period, commencing in 2021/2022.



Figure 1 Location Map

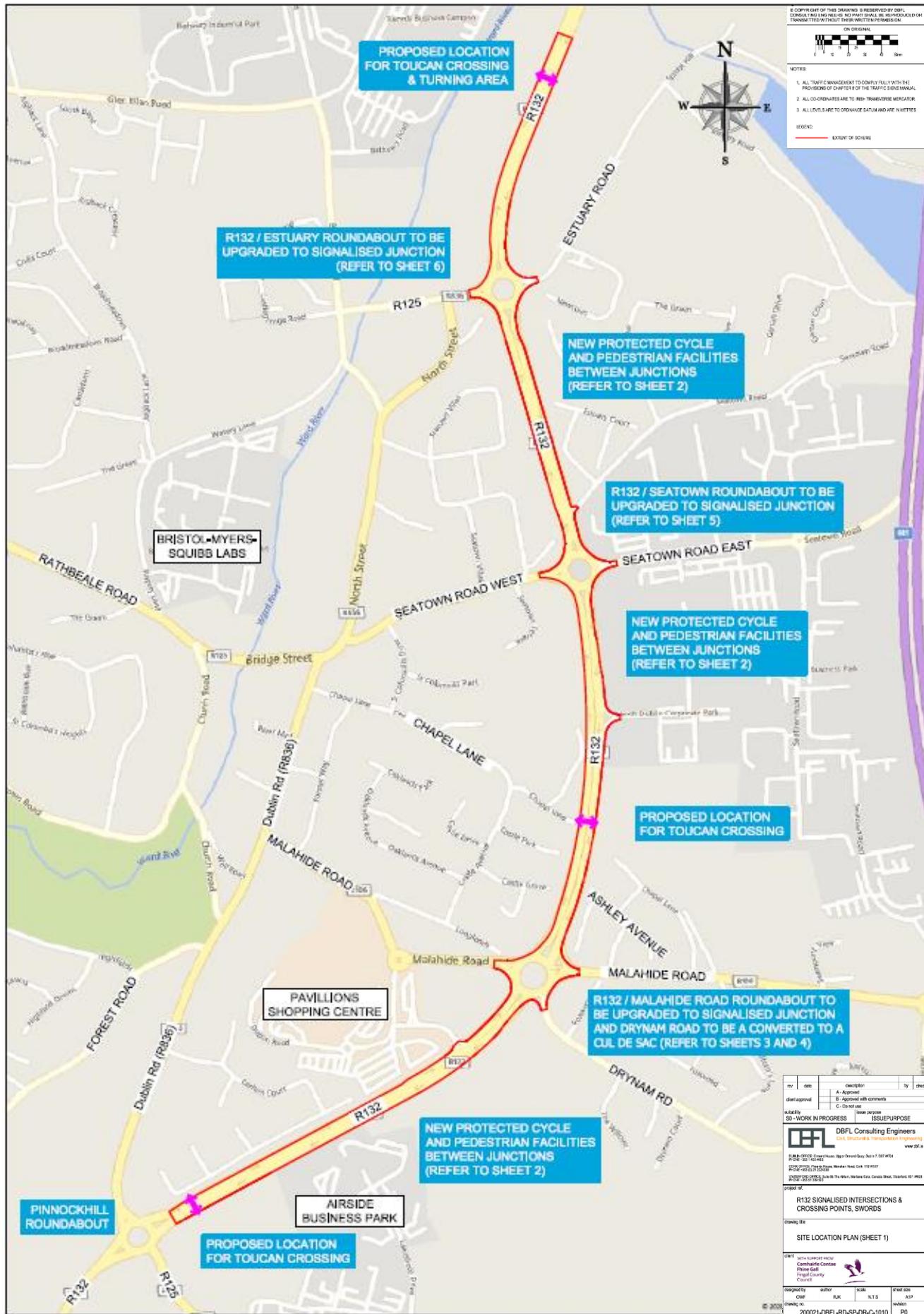


Figure 2 Map of scheme<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See drawing no. 200021-DBFL-RD-SP-DR-C1010



Figure 3 Typical section of the scheme and carriageway and plan of private entrance along the scheme<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See drawing no. 200021-DBFL-RD-SP-DR-C-1011

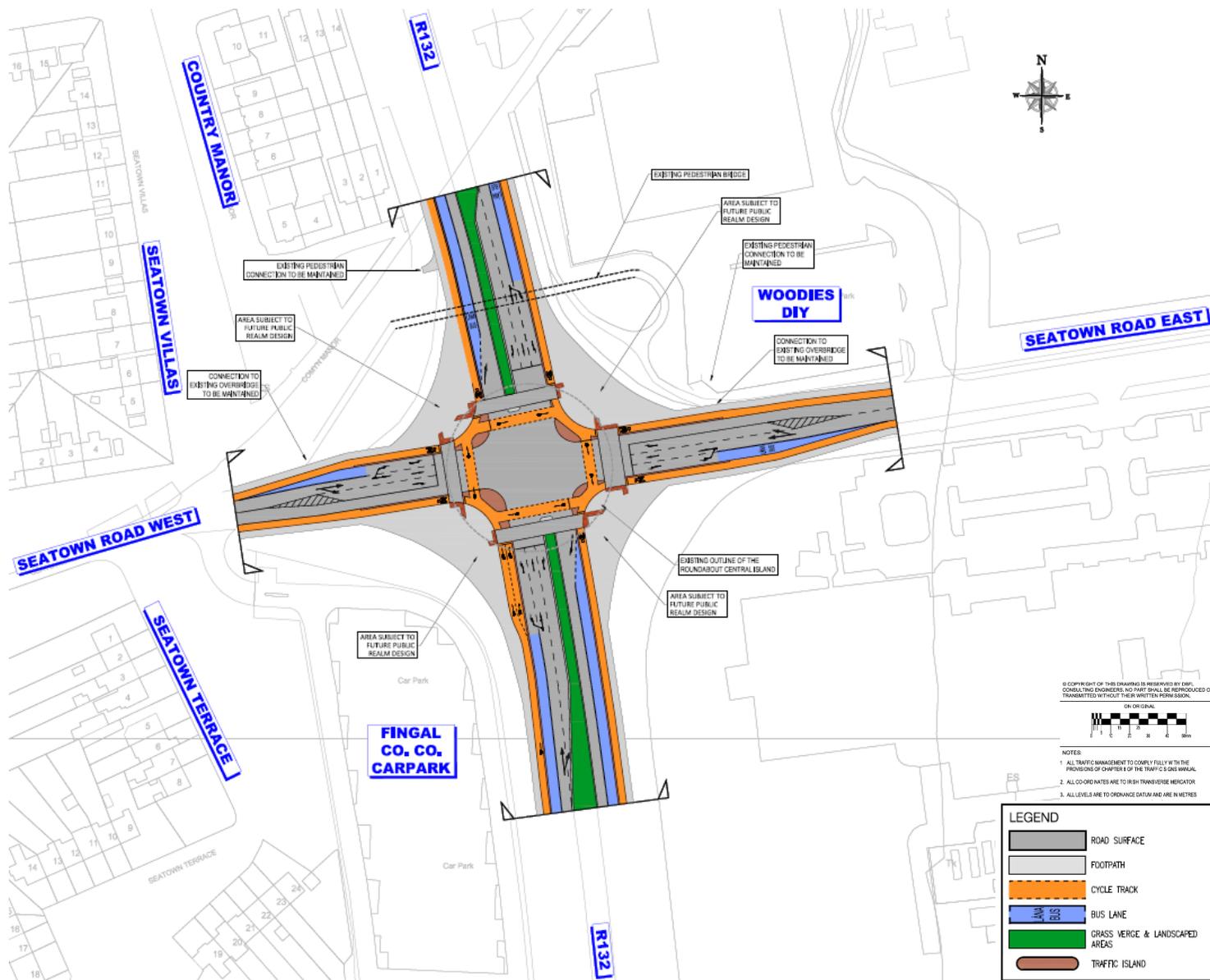


Figure 4 Proposed design at Seatown Roundabout<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See drawing no. 200021-DBFL-RD-SP-DR-C-1023

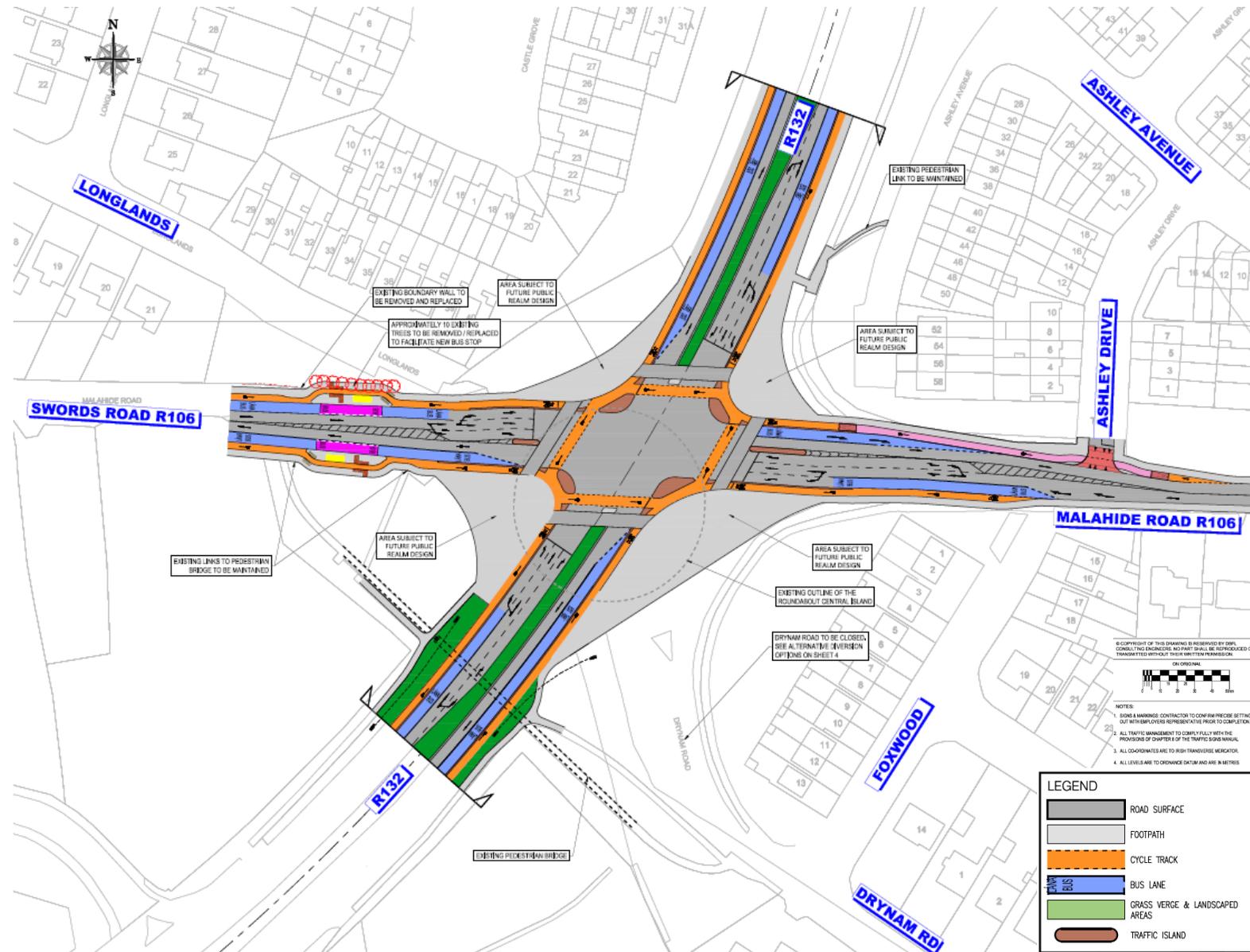


Figure 5 Proposed design at Malahide Roundabout<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> See drawing no. 200021-DBFL-RD-SP-DR-C-1013

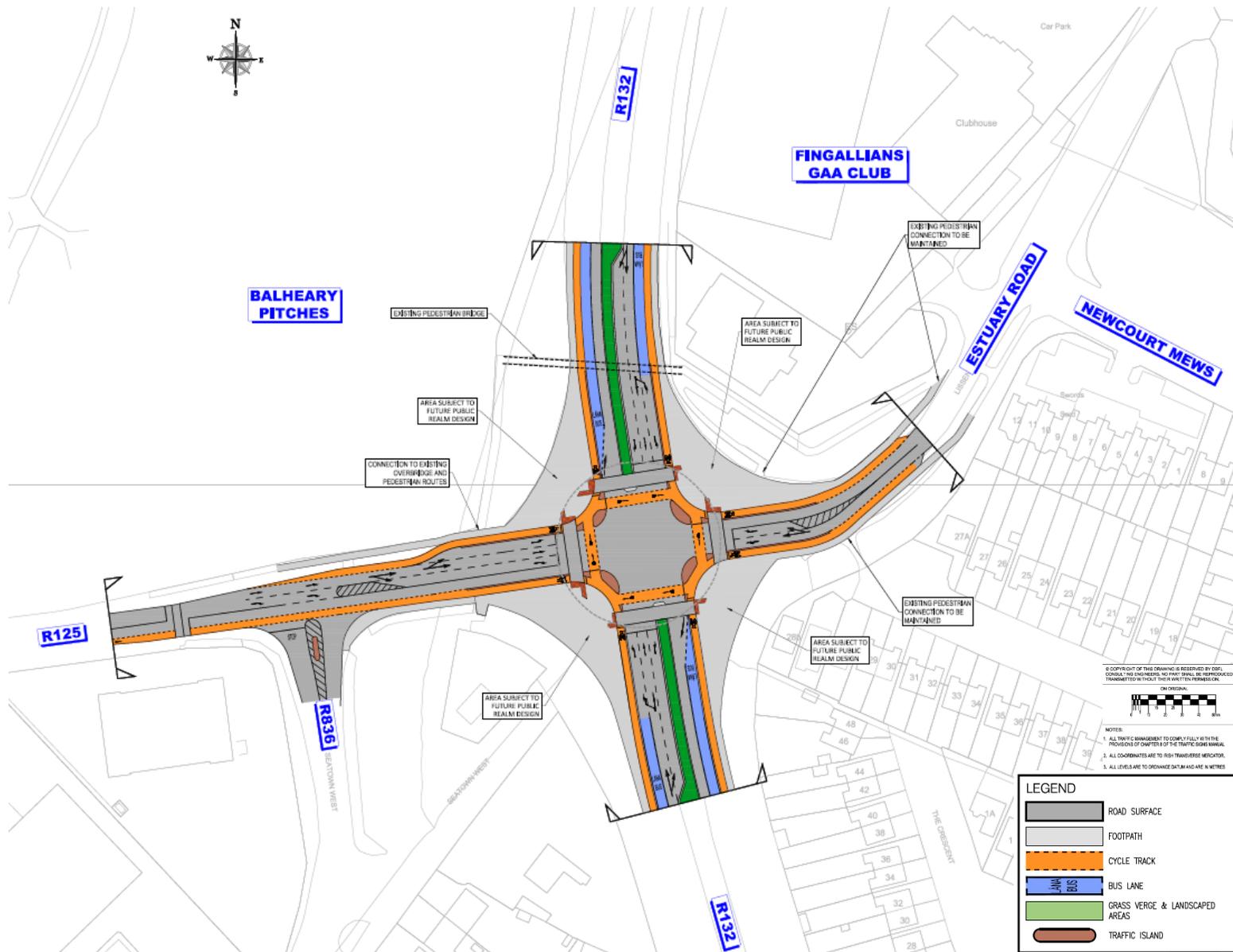


Figure 6 Proposed design at Estuary Roundabout <sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> See drawing no. 200021-DBFL-RD-SP-DR-C-1033

## 3 EIA Screening

### 3.1 Project type

EIA requirements derive from the EIA Directive (Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended)). These requirements have been transposed into National legislation by the Roads Act 1993 (as amended by, *inter alia*, the European Union (Roads Act 1993) (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2019), also by the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2010 and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended<sup>6</sup>).

For the purposes of this report the relevant mandatory EIA screening criteria are summarised as follows:

Project type	Comment	Is EIA required on this basis?
<b>Roads Legislation</b> SI 279/2019 (s.5, amending section 50 of the Roads Act)		
<i>(1) (a) A road development that is proposed that comprises any of the following shall be subject to an environmental impact assessment:</i>		
<i>(i) the construction of a motorway</i>	The proposed scheme is not a motorway	No
<i>(ii) the construction of a busway</i>	The proposed scheme includes rearrangement of existing road surfaces which will include provision of dedicated bus lanes. This will be done by means of changes to road markings and lane divisions. It does not require any construction of new surfaces.	No
<i>(iii) the construction of a service area</i>	The proposed scheme does not include any Service Area.	No
The prescribed types are given in section 8 of S.I. 119/1994 as:		
<i>(a) The construction of a new road of four or more lanes, or the realignment or widening of an existing road so as to provide four or more lanes, where such new, realigned or widened road would be eight kilometres or more in length in a rural area, or 500 metres or more in length in an urban area</i>	The proposed scheme does not include construction of any new road or tunnel.	No
<i>(b) the construction of a new bridge or tunnel which would be 100 metres or more in length</i>		

<sup>6</sup> Amendments include SI 296 of 2018, the European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018.

<p>50 (1) (b) to (d) of the Roads Act as amended by S.I. 279/2019 require that any road development or road improvement project which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, including projects located on ecologically protected sites, shall be subject to EIA.</p>	<p>The measures included in the proposed scheme are largely restricted to existing roadways. They have no real likelihood of causing significant environmental effects. Section 3.3 of this report examines this more closely.</p> <p>The scheme area is not located on any designated ecological sites.</p> <p>Potential effects on nearby Natura 2000 sites (Malahide Estuary SAC (270 m at closest point) and Malahide Estuary SPA (600 m)) are assessed in the separate Natura Impact Statement.</p>	No
<p><b>Planning and Development legislation</b> S.I. 600/2001, Schedule 5, Pt 2</p>		
<p>project type 10. <i>Infrastructure projects (b) (iv)</i></p>		
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p><i>(In this paragraph, "business district" means a district within a city or town in which the predominant land use is retail or commercial use.)</i></p>	<p>Commission guidance<sup>7</sup> lists a range of projects, stating that these or other projects with similar characteristics can be considered to be 'urban development'. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shopping centres</li> <li>• Bus garages</li> <li>• Train depots</li> <li>• Hospitals</li> <li>• Universities</li> <li>• Sports stadiums</li> <li>• Cinemas</li> <li>• Theatres</li> <li>• Concert halls</li> <li>• Other cultural centres</li> <li>• Sewerage or water supply networks</li> </ul> <p>The proposed intervention measures do not correspond to or have similar characteristics to any of these types of projects.</p> <p>Furthermore, the proposed measures do not comprise any significant changes to surfaces or any other works which could be considered to be 'development' for EIA screening purposes.</p>	No

<sup>7</sup> Interpretation of definitions of project categories of annex I and II of the EIA Directive, 2015, EU

<i>Project type 13. Changes, extensions, development and testing</i>		
<p><i>(a) Any change or extension of development which would:</i></p> <p><i>(i) result in the development being of a class listed in Part 1 or paragraphs 1 to 12 of Part 2 of this Schedule, and</i></p> <p><i>(ii) result in an increase in size greater than</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>o 25 per cent, or</i></li> <li><i>o an amount equal to 50 per cent of the appropriate threshold, whichever is the greater</i></li> </ul>	<p>The changes covered by the proposal will not result in the road being of a class listed in the Planning and Development regulations.</p> <p>The changes covered by the proposal will not result in any significant change in size.</p>	No

## 3.2 Sub-threshold development

Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations specifies the criteria for determining whether or not a sub-threshold development is required to be subject to EIA. As the project does not correspond to any project type listed in the Roads or Planning and Development legislation above it is not considered to be 'sub-threshold development'.

Notwithstanding, given the requirement of 50 (1) (b) to (d) of the Roads Act (as above) that any road development or road improvement project which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment should be subject to EIA, the next section of this report provides a review of the project against the criteria for determining whether or not a sub-threshold development is required to be subject to EIA.

These criteria are given in Annex III of the EIA Directive and are also set out in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations. They are all set out in section 3.3 of this report, below.

## 3.3 Review against Annex III criteria

These criteria cover:

1. Characteristics of the proposed development
2. Location of the proposed development
3. Types and characteristics of potential impacts

The comments provided in relation to criteria 1 and 2 in the table below are factual and do not comment on the types or characteristics of impacts. In keeping with the intent of Annex III, commentary on impacts is provided in response to the items covered by criterion 3 (in the third part of the table below). Cross references are included where useful.

<b>Annex III Criteria</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
<p><b>1. Characteristics of Proposed Development</b></p> <p>The characteristics of proposed development, in particular:</p>	
(a) the size and design of the whole of the proposed development	The project is approximately 8.4 ha in area and approximately 2.5 km in length.
(b) cumulation with other existing development and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment	The proposed project will interact with the wider transportation network including improvements to adjacent rail line under the Metrolink project which is currently at advanced design stage.
(c) the nature of any associated demolition works	No significant demolition works are required.
(d) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity	No significant natural resources will be used.
(e) the production of waste,	No significant waste streams will be generated.
(f) pollution and nuisances,	The proposed scheme may give rise to reduction in air pollution, noise and other traffic related nuisance.
(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	The proposal is likely to have a calming effect on traffic and will provide improved and separated facilities for cyclists and reduce the risk of major accidents, and/or disasters in the area.

<p><b>2. Location of proposed development</b></p> <p>The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development, with particular regard to—</p>	
(a) the existing and approved land use	The land-uses of the surrounding area are sensitive to changes in traffic and transportation.
(b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground	There are no significant natural resource sensitivities in the area.
(c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:	
(i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths	-
(ii) coastal zones and the marine environment	-
(iii) mountain and forest areas	-
(iv) nature reserves and parks	-
(v) areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive	Malahide Estuary SAC and pNHA (270 m at closest point) and Malahide Estuary SPA (600 m)) are hydrologically connected to the scheme area.

(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.	Levels of nitrogen oxide, one of the main pollutants that affects people's health in Ireland and which is emitted from vehicle exhausts is within EU ambient air quality standards <sup>8</sup> .
(vii) densely populated areas	There are suburban residential areas on both sides of the scheme area, also retail and light industrial areas.
(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance	there are no preserved views, protected structures or national monuments in the scheme area

<b>3. Types and characteristics of potential impacts</b> The likely significant effects on the environment of proposed development in relation to criteria set out under paragraphs 1 and 2, with regard to the impact of the project on the factors specified in paragraph (b)(i)(I) to (V) of the definition of 'environmental impact assessment report' in section 171A of the Act, taking into account—	
(a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example, geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	The project will affect an area of 8.4 ha of existing roadway
(b) the nature of the impact	Construction is likely to cause localised temporary impacts on noise, pedestrian and cycle permeability and traffic. These temporary impacts will affect high numbers of road users and may affect residential areas adjacent to the roundabouts. These effects can be expected to be commensurate with those arising from other road works on a similar scale, such as resurfacing of major roadways or replacement of footpaths/kerbing, as carried routinely in the course of the management of roads infrastructure.  After construction there are likely to be effects on noise, air quality and on traffic. These effects can be expected to be in keeping with those arising from other traffic management and calming interventions and can be largely expected to be insignificant in the context of EIA screening.
(c) the transboundary nature of the impact	-
(d) the intensity and complexity of the impact	Construction impacts are likely to be temporary and of low intensity and complexity.  Post-construction impacts are likely to be of insignificant in the context of EIA screening.

<sup>8</sup> *Air Quality in Ireland*, EPA, 2019

(e) the probability of the impact	It is likely that insignificant impacts will occur as a result of the development.
(f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact	Insignificant temporary and long-term impacts are likely.
(g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment	As the impacts can be anticipated to be insignificant, any cumulation with impacts of other development, including the proposed Metrolink rail improvement project, can be anticipated to also be insignificant for EIA screening purposes.
(h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact	<p>Potential construction impacts will be managed through a construction environmental management plan. This plan is likely to include provisions to ensure that impacts on relevant environmental receptors (including, air quality, noise, pedestrian and cycle permeability, traffic and waste management) are avoided, or managed to be within acceptable levels.</p> <p>Notwithstanding the findings of this EIA screening report, an environmental report will be prepared for the scheme to provide assessment of any potential impacts such as localised impacts on archaeology, water quality or landscape. If required, this report will recommend mitigation measures to ensure avoidance of impacts and these measures will be implemented during the construction and operation of the scheme.</p>

## 4 Conclusion

It is considered that the proposed scheme comprising alterations to three roundabouts to signalised intersections and alterations to existing carriageways, with potential controlled toucan crossings along the R132 does not require need to be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment and no Environmental Impact Assessment Report is required to be prepared for it. This conclusion is based on an objective review of the proposed scheme, including its characteristics, location and the likelihood of it causing significant environmental impacts. The screening has followed the legislation and has had regard to the relevant guidance.

## Competency of Author

The author, Paul Fingleton, has an MSc in Rural and Regional Resources Planning (with specialisation in EIA) from the University of Aberdeen. Paul is a member of the International Association for Impact Assessment as well as the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment. Paul has over twenty-five years' experience working in the area of Environmental Assessment. Paul has been involved in a diverse range of projects including contributions to, and co-ordination of, numerous complex EIARs and EIA screening reports. He has also contributed to and supervised the preparation of numerous AAs and AA screenings.

Paul is the lead author of the current EPA Guidelines<sup>9</sup> and accompanying Advice Notes<sup>10</sup> on EIARs. He has been involved in all previous editions of these statutory guidelines. He also provides various EIA related consultancy services to the EPA. Paul has been engaged by numerous consent authorities to assist at various stages of EIA and AA processes, particularly in reviewing EIARs and AAs.

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<sup>9</sup> *Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports*, EPA, 2017 (Draft)

<sup>10</sup> *Advice notes on current practice in the preparation of Environmental Impact Assessment Reports*, EPA, 2003

# **APPENDIX 6      AA SCREENING REPORT**

# APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING

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IN SUPPORT OF THE  
**APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT**

for

**ALTERATIONS TO THREE ROUNDABOUTS TO  
SIGNALISED INTERSECTIONS AND ALTERATIONS TO  
EXISTING CARRIAGEWAYS, WITH POTENTIAL  
CONTROLLED TOUCAN CROSSINGS**

on

**THE R132, SWORDS, Co. DUBLIN**

**for: National Transport Authority**

Dún Scéine,  
Iveagh Court,  
Harcourt Lane,  
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**NOVEMBER 2020**

## Document Control

<b>Document Control</b>	<b>Author/Reviewer</b>	<b>Date</b>
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<b>Checked by</b>	Paul Fingleton	16 November 2020
<b>Status</b>	Final	

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# Section 1 Introduction

CAAS Ltd. were commissioned by the National Transport Authority (NTA) to produce this Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening report for the conversion of three existing roundabouts to traffic signal controlled intersections, the potential provision of three additional controlled toucan crossings; and additional carriageway works along the R132 Swords Road, Co. Dublin. This report specifically assesses the potential for the proposed development to impact on European sites (formerly known as "Natura 2000" sites). The European Communities Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC ("the Habitats Directive") provides, in Article 6(3), the legal basis for Appropriate Assessment (AA) at European level.

## 1.1 Legislative context for Appropriate Assessment

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 (Council 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. SACs and SPAs are collectively known as European sites. Articles 3 to 9 provide the legislative means to protect habitats and species of Community interest through the establishment and conservation of a European Union (EU)-wide network of sites known as the Natura 2000 network (hereafter referred to as "European sites").

AA is required by the Habitats Directive, as transposed into Irish legislation by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended) and the Planning and Development Act (as amended). AA is an assessment of the potential for significant or adverse effects of a plan or project, in combination with other plans or projects, on the conservation objectives of a European site.

## 1.2 Screening for Appropriate Assessment

Screening is the process of determining whether an AA is required for a plan or project. In order to ensure the protection of European sites in the context of land use planning and development, Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires that:

*"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."*

The Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU)<sup>1</sup> has interpreted this requirement as:

*'Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site is to be subject to an appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives if it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that it will have a significant effect on that site, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects'.*

In accordance with the Precautionary Principle, the ECJ interpreted the term "likely" as meaning that as long as it cannot be conclusively demonstrated that a given effect will not occur, that effect is considered "likely" to occur. A likely effect considered to be "significant" only if it interrupts or causes delays in progress towards achieving the Conservation Objectives of the relevant European site(s).

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<sup>1</sup> Landelijke Vereniging tot Behoud van de Waddenzee, Nederlandse vereniging tot Bescherming van Vogels v. Staatssecretaris van Landbouw, Natuurbeheer en Visserij (Waddenzee) [2004] C-127/02 ECR I-7405.

In the Republic of Ireland, this requirement is transposed into national law by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011; and Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and associated planning regulations (2001-2019), and the process are termed "Appropriate Assessment". Stage 1 of the process, i.e. determining whether or not a plan or project meets the above criteria for requiring a full AA is referred to as "AA Screening".

Information contained within the AA Screening is underpinned by best scientific knowledge, objective information and takes cognisance of CJEU rulings for AA.

### 1.3 Appropriate Assessment (Natura Impact Statement)

AA is the process that sets out to determine whether a project or plan could 'adversely affect the integrity' of any European site. Under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, any plan or project which is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site, but likely to have a significant effect on such a site, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, must be subject to an 'AA (Stage 2) of its implications for the European site and its nature conservation objectives. AA is informed by a "Natura Impact Statement" in the case of projects.

Under Section 177T of the Planning Acts (177T), NIS is defined as:

*"A statement, for the purposes of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, of the implications of a Proposed Development, on its own or in combination with other plans or projects, for one or more than one European site, in view of the conservation objectives of the site or sites".*

The NIS must *"include a report of a scientific examination of evidence and data, carried out by competent persons to identify and classify any implications for one or more than one European site in view of the conservation objectives of the site or sites"*.

Information contained within the NIS is underpinned by best scientific knowledge, objective information and takes cognisance of CJEU rulings for AA.

Under Section 177U (5) of the Planning Acts, the competent authority shall determine that an AA of a proposed development is required if it cannot be excluded on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site(s).

### 1.4 Role of the Competent Authority

Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive requires the competent authority to carry out the assessment and to apply the Precautionary Principle to European designated sites. In the Republic of Ireland, the competent authority is the relevant planning authority for each plan or project. The AA Screening Report provides the competent authority with the necessary information it requires to carry out its AA Screening. The competent authority can only grant consent for a plan or project once it has been ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned. Whilst the various steps involved in the assessment process must be carried out by a competent authority, consultants or project proponent may undertake a form of screening to establish if an Appropriate Assessment is required and provide advice or may submit the information necessary to allow the Competent Authority to conduct a screening with an application for consent. This Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been prepared having regarded to best scientific knowledge and an examination of potential sources of impacts and effects of the project on the receiving environment with respect to European sites.

## 1.5 Key definitions

### 1.5.1 European sites

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are sites designated under European Communities Directive 92/43/EEC (known as the Habitats Directive). This requires the conservation of important, rare or threatened habitats and species (excludes birds, refer to Special Protection Areas (SPAs)) across Europe. Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are sites designated under the European Communities Directive 79/409/EEC, (known as the Birds Directive), to conserve the habitats of certain migratory or rare birds.

A European site refers to any of the following:

- candidate site of community importance;
- site of community importance;
- candidate SAC;
- SAC;
- candidate SPA; or
- SPA

The process of designating cSACs (candidate Special Areas of Conservation) as SACs is ongoing in Ireland. The term SAC is used throughout this report for both SACs and cSACs, given they are subject to equal protection. The designation features of SACs are referred to as Qualifying Interests (QIs), and comprise both species (excluding birds), and habitats. The designation features of SPAs are referred to as Special Conservation Interests (SCIs), and comprise bird species, as well as wetland bird habitats. The designation features of European sites are identified in the Statutory Instruments (SIs) for European sites where such sites have completed the designation process. In all cases, designation features are also identified in Conservation Objectives published by the NPWS. Any Conservation Objectives referred to in this AA Screening report are referenced to identify the date of publication and version number.

Conservation Objectives (in relation to a European site), refers to the maintenance and restoration of the habitat and species (including birds) in respect of which the site has been identified as a European site at "favourable conservation status" or their restoration to such favourable status, and shall include such particular objectives as the Minister may from time to time establish for those purposes under Regulation 26.

### 1.6 The Precautionary Principle

The Precautionary Principle, which is referenced in Article 191 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, has been defined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO, 2005) as:

*"When human activities may lead to morally unacceptable harm [to the environment] that is scientifically plausible but uncertain, actions shall be taken to avoid or diminish that harm. The judgment of plausibility should be grounded in scientific analysis".*

The precautionary principle, derived from the EU Treaty and developed in the case law of the ECJ, is one of the foundations of the high level of protection pursued by EU Community policy on the environment, and underpins the Habitats Directive. Where doubt exists about the risk of a significant effect, an AA must be carried out. In assessing the risk of such effects, the significance must be established in light of, among other things, the characteristics and specific environmental conditions of the site concerned, and the likely effects of the plan or project.

## 1.7 Zone of Influence

Irish departmental guidance on AA Screening and AA (DoEHLG, 2010) requires European sites within the “zone of impact” of a plan or project to be identified. In relation to the Zone of Impact, the guidance states:

*“For projects, the distance could be much less than 15 km, and in some cases less than 100m, but this must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with reference to the nature, size and location of the project, and the sensitivities of the ecological receptors, and the potential for in combination effects” (DoEHLG, 2010).*

In this AA screening report, the term “Zone of Influence” (ZoI) is used in lieu of “Zone of Impact”. The detailed method used to identify and establish the ZoI is outlined in Section 3.3.2.

## 1.8 Stages of the Appropriate Assessment

There are four main stages in the AA process as follows (DoEHLG, 2010):

### **Stage one: Screening**

The process which 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 effects, an assessment of the potential mitigation of offset adverse effects. If adequate mitigation is proposed to ensure no significant adverse effects 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**

This process examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project that avoid adverse effects on the integrity of the European sites. If no alternatives exist or all alternatives would result in negative effects with respect to the integrity of European sites, then the process either proceeds to Stage 4 or the project is abandoned.

### **Stage four: Imperative Reasons Overriding Public Interest (IROPI)**

If the plan is still likely to result in adverse effects on European sites, and no further practicable mitigation is possible, then it must be rejected. If no alternative solutions are identified and the plan is required for imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) under Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, then compensation measures are required for any remaining adverse effect.

## Section 2 Description of the proposed development

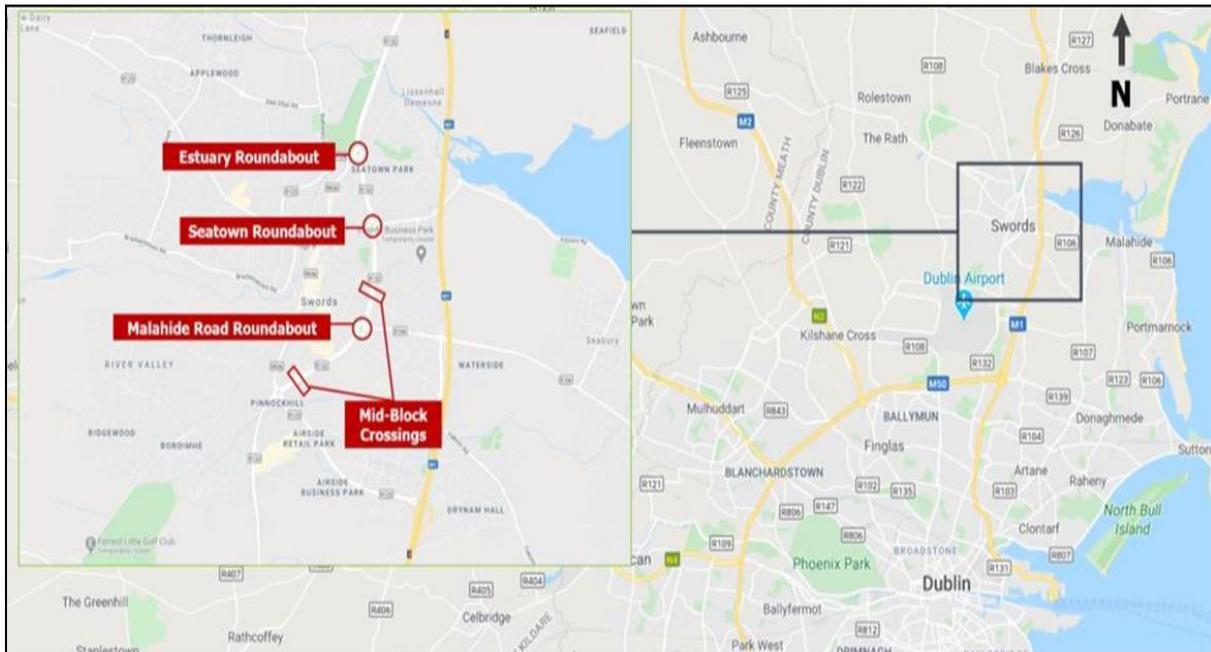
### 2.1 Overview of the proposed scheme

The principal requirement of the scheme (hereafter referred to as “proposed development” or “proposed scheme”) is to enhance facilities at key intersections and crossing points along the R132 Swords Road, improving connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists travelling across the R132 Swords Road from existing and proposed development lands to town centres. This will be achieved by replacing the existing roundabouts with signalised junctions and potentially incorporating controlled toucan crossings. The scheme also includes for upgrades to the sections of road in between each of the principle intersections in order to calm traffic and provide a more hospitable environment for pedestrians and cyclists. These changes, which include reducing the width of existing traffic lanes and the provision of continuous routes for buses, pedestrians and cyclists, will commence just north of the Pinnockhill Roundabout and extending to approximately 750m north of the Estuary Junction. The scheme will also involve a reduction of speed limits from 60 km/h and 80 km/h to 50 km/h. The overall scheme aims to change the character and function of the R132 from a higher speed distributor road focused on the movement of vehicles to one which functions as an urban street which deliver enhanced facilities for all road users at key intersections and crossing points with particular benefits for sustainable modes of transportation (bus users, cyclists, and pedestrians), whilst aligning with the MetroLink, Bus Connects and development proposals in the Swords area.

The proposed study area comprises the following three junctions located along an approximate 2.2 km section of the R132:

- Estuary Roundabout: Four arm roundabout junction comprising R132 northern and southern arms, R125 (Castlegrange Road) western arm and L2141 (Estuary Road) eastern arm;
- Seatown Roundabout: Four arm roundabout junction comprising R132 northern and southern arms, L2143 (Seatown Road) western arm and L6310 (Seatown Road) eastern arm; and,
- Malahide Road Roundabout: Five arm roundabout junction comprising R132 northern and southern arms, R106 (Malahide Road) eastern arm, L2065 (Drynam Road) south eastern arm and Malahide Road western arm.

The location of the subject junctions, crossings, and scheme extents in relation to the surrounding road network is illustrated in Figure 2.1 and Figure 2.2. The formal scheme extents are presented on Drawing No 20021 – DBFL – RD-SP-DR-C-1010 in Appendix 1.



**Figure 1 Location of the proposed development and study area in relation to wider environs<sup>2</sup>**



**Figure 2 Location of proposed development along R132 in a local context<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>2</sup> Source basemap: Google Maps

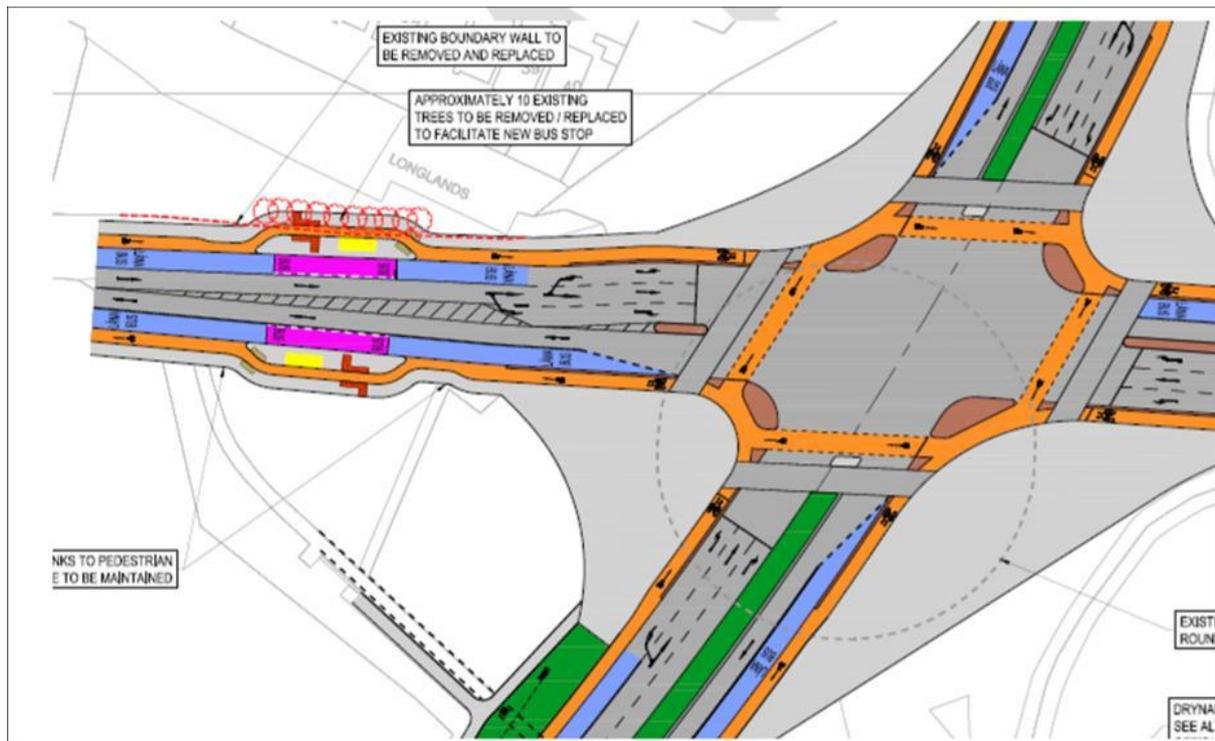
<sup>3</sup> Source basemap: Google Maps

## 2.2 Proposed development

The scheme will involve the conversion of three existing roundabouts to traffic signal controlled intersections with the potential provision of three additional controlled crossing points on the R132 between the area north of Pinnockhill Roundabout in the south and the Estuary Roundabout in the north. The preferred layout for each of the intersections can be found in Appendix 2 (Estuary Roundabout (Drawing No. 200021-DBFL-RD-SP-DR-C-1033)); Seatown Roundabout (Drawing No: 200021-DBFL-RD-SP-DR-C-1023)) and Malahide Road Roundabout (Drawing No: 200021-DBFL-RD-SP-DR-C-1013)). The scheme also includes for upgrade works to the R132 between north of Pinnock Hill and north Estuary Roundabout as indicated within the scheme extent shown on Drawing No 20021 – DBFL – RDSP-DR-C-101 in Appendix 1. The upgraded junctions will include lanes for motor vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians and will be lit throughout. A number of surface water attenuation storage tanks/ponds (confined to existing footprint of roundabouts) will be constructed to receive rain run-off. The main works comprise:

- Site clearance and preparation works;
- Construction/conversion of three traffic signal controlled intersections (at Estuary, Seatown and Malahide Road roundabouts), three crossing points using standard building materials and upgrades to the sections of road in between each of the principle intersections;
- Construction of new surface water drainage and modifications to existing underground services such as telecommunications ducting, water mains and upgrading of existing public lighting to accommodate the proposed junction layouts;
- Landscaping works (following construction);
- And accommodation works to provide new access arrangements for private properties affected by the proposed junction layouts
- An operation phase whereby the roads will be used by vehicular, pedestrian and cycle traffic.

The majority of the proposed works are confined within the existing road reservation. The principle exception to this are the accommodation works proposed to construct a bus stop at the Malahide Road Intersection (removal of boundary wall and removal and replacement of approximately ten trees to facilitate new bus stop). This is illustrated in Figure 3 (refer to Appendix 2; Drawing No: 200021-DBFL-RD-SP-DR-C-1013).



**Figure 3 Off-road elements proposed as part of Malahide Road intersection upgrade**

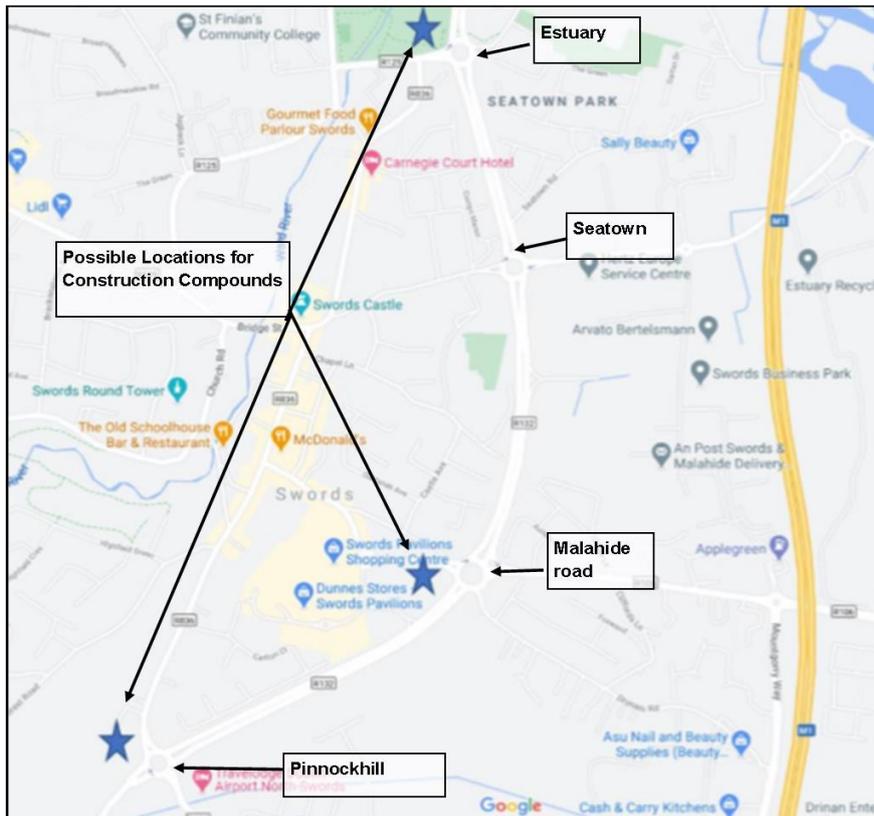
## 2.3 Earthworks

The scheme involves the removal and replacement of roundabouts with more compact signalised junctions with the majority of works to be undertaken within the footprint of the existing R132 cross section. The conversion of the roundabouts to signalised junctions will require a slight increase in road levels compared to existing levels at the centre of the junction while approach arms will tie in with existing R132. As such, the scheme is not expected to result in a significant level of excavation. General excavation of material required for installation of underground services such as drainage and ducting will be reinstated or where possible with any excess material stockpiled for reuse on site. Any hazardous material will be disposed of at a licenced facility in accordance with EPA guidelines.

## 2.4 Construction compounds

The final construction compound locations will be determined at construction stage by the Contractor, a number of potential locations have been identified to inform the screening process. It is possible that up to 2 compounds may be required given the separation distance between the northern and southern extent of the scheme along the R132 and possible phasing of the works. The potential locations, which are presented in Figure 2.4, are as follows:

- Balheary Park to the south of the playing pitches;
- Fingal County Council Lands adjacent to the Pavilions Shopping Centre; and,
- Fosterstown Lands adjacent to Pinnock Hill roundabout



**Figure 4 Possible construction compound locations<sup>4</sup>**

## 2.5 Surface water

Surface water sewers will be constructed to collect and convey all runoff from the proposed junction upgrades and crossings and connect to the existing drainage infrastructure running North on R132, which discharges at a number of points along the route. The Estuary, Seatown and Malahide roundabouts as well as the R132 link sections lie within the Broadmeadow River catchment. The existing drainage infrastructure conveys surface water from Estuary and Seatown Roundabouts to outfalls at the intersection of Ward River and Broadmeadow River. Surface water from the Malahide Road Roundabout is conveyed to an outfall at Greenfields River. Ward river, Broadmeadow River and Greenfields River discharge into Malahide Estuary.

Plans of catchments, existing drainage networks and discharge points can be found in Appendix 3 (Figure 1 and 2) and Figure 6.

## 2.6 Landscaping

The proposed scheme will include hard and soft landscaping primarily in areas reclaimed from the conversion of the roundabout to the more compact signalised junction arrangements. These areas would generally be to the rear of proposed footpaths and in open spaces.

<sup>4</sup> Source basemap: Google Maps

## Section 3 Methodology

### 3.1 Methodological approach to AA Screening

This AA Screening has been prepared in accordance with EC (2001 & 2018) and DoEHLG (2010) guidance detailed in Section 3.2.1 and are applied as the basis for this assessment: The following sections for AA broadly follow those adopted by guidelines outlined in Section 3.2.1 and are used as the basis for this AA Screening report:

- Methodology (e.g. guidance, criteria to identify European sites establishing ZoI, desk studies, field surveys and consultation (Section 3)
- Determination of Baseline Environment (Section 4)
- AA Screening (Section 5)

### 3.2 Sources of guidance

#### 3.2.1 European and national guidance

This Report has been prepared in accordance with the European Commission guidance document 'Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological Guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC' (EC, 2001) and the Department of the Environment's Guidance 'Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland' (December 2009, amended February 2010). In addition to the guidelines referenced above, the following relevant guidance was considered during the preparation of this report:

- European Communities (2018) Managing Natura 2000 Sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg. European Commission;
- Directive 92/43/EEC, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg. European Commission; and,
- NPWS (2010) Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities. Circular Letter NPWS 1/10 & PSSP 2/10. National Parks & Wildlife Service, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin

The European Commission (EC) has published guidance on the provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, including AA (EC, 2018). This updates the original EC guidance on Article 6 (EC, 2000), but should be read in conjunction with this and other EC guidance available online. As stated in EC (2018), the updated guidance "incorporates the large body of rulings that have been issued by the CJEU over the years on Article 6".

### 3.3 Criteria to identify relevant European sites

The 'source-pathway-receptor' model is used to identify a list of preliminary European sites and their QIs/SCIs potentially at risk of likely significant effects. 'Relevant' QIs/SCIs are those that occur within the Zone of Influence (ZoI) of likely significant effects.

#### 3.3.1 The Source-Pathway-Receptor model

The assessment of impacts on European sites is carried out using a standard 'Source-Pathway-Receptor' model, where, for an impact 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 enough to conclude that a potential effect is not of any relevance or significance. This assessment determines if direct, indirect and cumulative effects will arise from the proposed development. The model focuses on the QIs/SCIs for which European sites have been designated and identified within the ZoI. An example of this model is provided below:

- Source(s): e.g. excavations; earthworks
- Pathway(s): e.g. surface water pollution (i.e. suspended solids and sediment release)
- Receptor(s): e.g. pollution to aquatic environments downstream designated for QI habitats

The model is focused solely on relevant QIs/SCIs for which European sites are designated. Any Conservation Objectives referred to in this report are referenced to identify the date of publication and version number.

### 3.3.2 Establishing the Zone of Influence (ZoI)

The proposed development has the potential to result in a range of environmental effects. The analysis of these effects, using scientific knowledge and professional judgement, leads to the identification of a ZoI. The proximity of the proposed works to European sites, and more importantly their QI/SCI, can be critical in identifying source-pathway-receptor models which could result in significant effects. Habitats and plants are not mobile; however, fauna species are and their predicted mobility outside European sites (i.e. range) will affect whether they occur within the ZoI. Establishing a ZoI takes into consideration mobile species core foraging, roosting and breeding ranges.

The Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government's "*Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities*" (DEHLG, 2010) was consulted to determine the approach for selecting European sites to be considered in AA Screening. It states that European sites with potential to be affected by the project should be identified taking into consideration the potential for direct, indirect and/or cumulative effects. It also states that the specific approach in each case is likely to differ depending on the scale and likely effects of the plan or project. However, it advises that the following sites should generally be included:

- All European sites within or immediately adjacent to the plan or project area;
- All European sites within the likely zone of impact of the plan or project; and,
- Adopting the Precautionary Principle, all European sites for which there is doubt as to whether or not such sites might be significantly affected.

The "likely zone of impact" (or sometimes referred to as 'likely zone of influence') of a plan or project is the geographic extent over which significant ecological effects are likely to occur. The department's guidance document prescribes a 15 km distance threshold for plans for the boundary of a plan area only. In the case of projects, the guidance acknowledges that the zone of influence must be devised on a case by case basis with reference to the following criteria: The nature, size/scale and location of the project, sensitivity of ecological receptors under consideration; and cumulative effects. The favourable reference range is the total geographical area within which all significant ecological variations of the habitat or species are included, and which is sufficiently large to allow the long-term survival of the habitat or species (NPWS, 2019a). The most up to date GIS spatial datasets for European sites were downloaded from the NPWS website ([www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie)) and potential pathways within the ZoI were identified. This assessment considers the ecological characteristics and requirements of the QIs/SCIs of European sites that have been identified within the ZoI.

## 3.4 Criteria for assessment of likely significant effects

The following parameters are described when characterising impacts<sup>5</sup>:

**Direct and Indirect Impacts** - An impact can be caused either as a direct or as an indirect consequence of a Plan/Project.

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

<sup>5</sup> These descriptions are informed by publications including: Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2018) "Guidelines for ecological impact assessment"; Environmental Protection Agency (2017) "Draft Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Statements"; and National Roads Authority (2009) "Guidelines for Assessment of Ecological Impacts of National Roads Schemes".

**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.

## Section 4 Determination of baseline environment

This section of the report provides an overview of the methods and description of findings to inform the baseline environment of the proposed development and surrounding environs. The information provided places an emphasis on QIs of Malahide Estuary SAC and the SCIs of Malahide Estuary SPA identified within the ZoI of the proposed development (refer to Table 5.1; Section 5). Scientific data to inform the assessment has been collated from a combination of desktop studies and field surveys with regard to best scientific knowledge.

### 4.1 Desk study

The following key sources of information (emphasis on best scientific knowledge) were reviewed to inform the assessment with reference to the distribution and range of QIs/SCIs of European sites within the ZoI of the proposed development:

- Information on “favourable reference ranges”<sup>6</sup> of QI mobile species in Volume 1 and Volume 3 of NPWS’ ‘Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland’ (NPWS, 2019a and NPWS, 2019c);
- Information on threats to, conservation condition, and habitat characteristics of Annex I habitats in Volume 2 of NPWS’ ‘Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland’ and species assessments (NPWS, 2019b);
- Distribution of mobile QI and SCI populations of European sites held online by the National Biodiversity Data Centre<sup>7</sup>, Irish Wetland Bird Survey (IWeBS) (BirdWatch Ireland) and Irish Bird Atlas (Balmer et al. 2013);
- Data from Natura Standard Data Forms on the conservation status of, and threats to European sites;
- Data including surface water features, catchments and water quality status, available from Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)<sup>8</sup> online database;
- Data on the extent and vulnerability of local groundwater bodies<sup>9</sup>;
- Boundaries for catchments with confirmed or potential freshwater pearl mussel (FWPM) *Margaritifera margaritifera* populations available online from the NPWS
- Estimates of waterbird numbers wintering in Ireland, 2011/12-2015/16 (Burke et al., 2018)
- Irish Wetland Bird Survey: Waterbird Status and Distribution 2009/10-2015/16 (Lewis et al., 2019);
- Review of *Irish Wetland Bird Survey: Waterbird Status and Distribution 2009/10-2015/16* (Lewis et al., (2019);
- National survey of native woodlands 2003-2008’ report (Perrin et al., 2008);
- The Irish semi-natural grasslands survey 2007-2012 (O’Neill et al. (2013));
- Fingal Biodiversity Action Plan 2010-2015
- Review of Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023;
- Interpretation Manual of European Union Habitats (EC, 2013);
- Map of Irish Wetlands<sup>10</sup> (Wetland Surveys Ireland);
- Assessing Connectivity with Special Protection Areas (SPAs) (SNH, 2016);
- Documentation and datasets available from NPWS online<sup>11</sup> (NPWS Map Viewer, site synopsis reports, conservation objective documents, supporting documents, Natura 2000 Standard Data forms and Species Action Plans); and,
- Review of online planning applications<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> The favourable reference range is the total geographical area within which all significant ecological variations of the habitat or species are included, and which is sufficiently large to allow the long-term survival of the habitat or species (NPWS, 2019a). This is assumed to equate to the known range of the species, unless other evidence (e.g. desktop records) indicates the contrary

<sup>7</sup> <https://maps.biodiversityireland.ie/> Accessed October 2020

<sup>8</sup> <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/> Accessed October 2020

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gsi.ie/en-ie/data-and-maps/Pages/default.aspx> Accessed October 2020

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.wetland-surveysireland.com/> Accessed October 2020

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.npws.ie/> Accessed October 2020

<sup>12</sup> My Plan [www.myplan.ie](http://www.myplan.ie) Accessed October 2020

## 4.2 Baseline Environment

This section of the report provides an inventory and a description of the baseline environment collated from various desktop information studies and the project design team to inform the assessment.

### 4.2.1 Hydrology

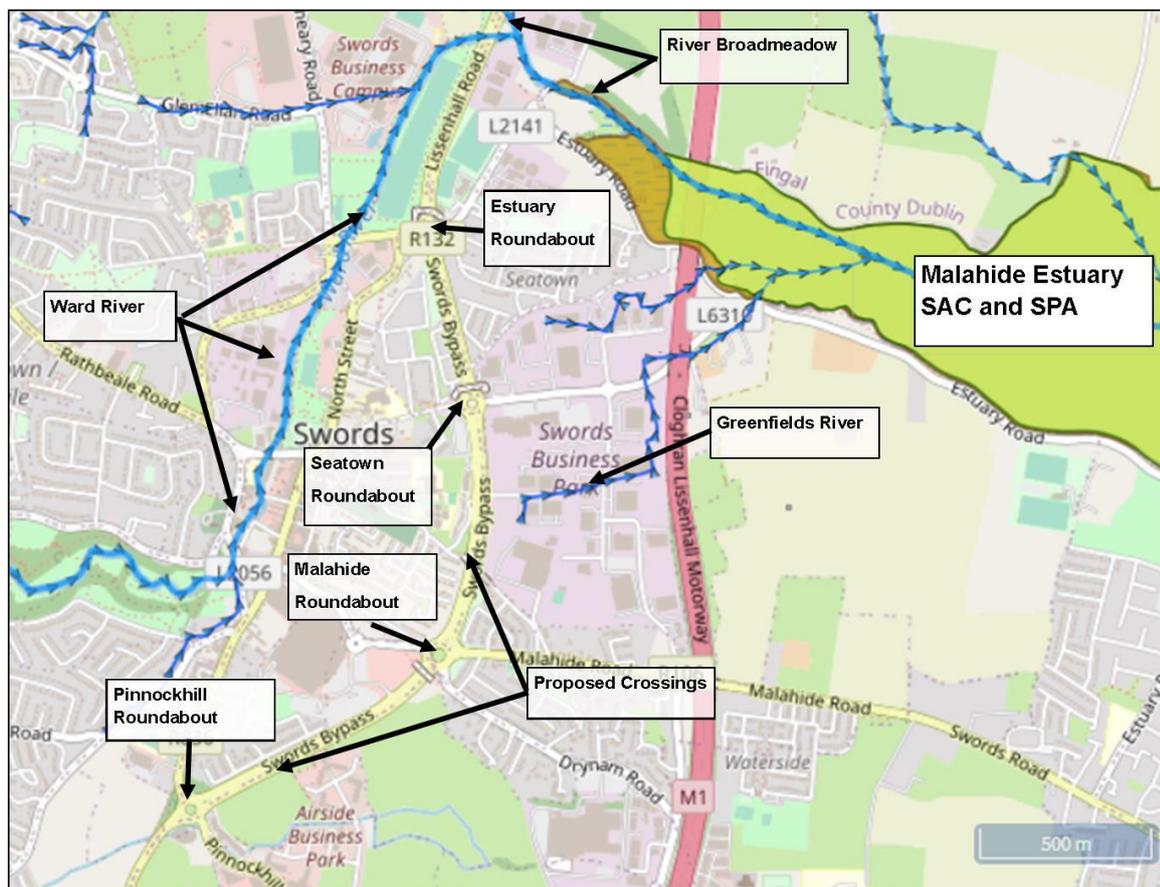
The study area is set on Tournaisian limestone bedrock. The proposed development is located in a Locally Important (LI) GSI bedrock aquifer (Bedrock which is Moderately Productive only in Local Zones). The aquifer vulnerability rating is classed as "low". The proposed development is bisected by two WFD (Water Framework Directive) catchments, the "Nanny-Delvin" and the "Liffey and Dublin Bay". Estuary roundabout is located within the "Nanny-Delvin" WFD catchment while Seatown and Malahide Road roundabouts are located within the "Liffey and Dublin Bay". The main watercourses within the receiving environment include the Ward River, River Broadmeadow and Greenfields River (refer to Figure 4.1).

The water quality status (River Water Quality Status: 2010-2012 dataset) for natural watercourses (where assigned by the EPA) in the surroundings such as the Ward River and River Broadmeadow are of "poor" status. The Transitional Waterbody WFD Status 2013-2018 for the Malahide Estuary SAC and SPA is classed as "poor" and has been identified as being "at risk" (EPA map viewer <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>). The EPA's online mapping portal for river catchments identify Estuary, Seatown and Malahide roundabouts within the Broadmeadow River catchment. The hydrological features and drainage patterns associated with the proposed works and corresponding water quality status are summarised and presented in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1 Summary of hydrological (drainage) features with respect to the proposed development and Malahide Estuary**

Location	Description	Water Quality
<b>Estuary roundabout</b>	The existing drainage infrastructure conveys surface water from Estuary Roundabout to outfalls at the intersection of Ward River and Broadmeadow River (EPA code: 08B02). The proposed works are located in the "Nanny-Delvin" WFD catchment. This in turn merges with the River Broadmeadow and drains to the Malahide Estuary SAC and SPA located a total distance of 0.9 km downstream from Estuary roundabout (refer to Figure 6). There is indirect hydrological connectivity where drainage features link to watercourses downstream.	A review of the "River Water Quality Status 2010-2012" and "River Waterbody WFD Status 2010-2015" EPA datasets for the Ward River and the River Broadmeadow indicates that the water quality and river waterbody is of "poor status" (EPA map viewer <a href="https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/">https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/</a> ). The "Rivers Waterbodies Risk" dataset identifies the Ward River and the River Broadmeadow as "at risk". The Transitional Waterbody WFD Status 2013-2018 for the Malahide Estuary SAC and SPA is classed as "poor" and has been identified as being "at risk" (EPA map viewer <a href="https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/">https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/</a> ).
<b>Seatown roundabout</b>	The proposed works are located within the "Liffey and Dublin Bay" WFD catchment. The existing drainage infrastructure conveys surface water from Seatown Roundabout to outfalls at the intersection of the Ward River and Broadmeadow River (located 1 km to the north). This watercourse drains to the Malahide Estuary SAC and SPA located a total distance of 1.3 km downstream from Seatown Roundabout (refer to Figure 6). There is indirect hydrological connectivity where drainage features link to watercourses downstream.	A review of the "River Water Quality Status 2010-2012" and "River Waterbody WFD Status 2010-2015" EPA datasets for the Ward River and the River Broadmeadow indicates that the water quality and river waterbody is of "poor status" (EPA map viewer <a href="https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/">https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/</a> ). The "Rivers Waterbodies Risk" dataset identifies the Ward River and the River Broadmeadow as "at risk".
<b>Malahide Road roundabout</b>	The proposed works are located within the "Liffey and Dublin Bay" WFD catchment. There are no natural watercourses within the immediate surrounding environs of the works location. Surface water from Malahide roundabout is conveyed to an	A review of the "River Water Quality Status 2010-2012" and "River Waterbody WFD Status 2010-2015" EPA datasets for the Greenfields River identifies the water quality and river waterbody status as "unassigned" (EPA

Location	Description	Water Quality
	<p>outfall at Greenfields River (EPA code: 08G16) (located approximately 400 m north of the roundabout). This watercourse drains to the Malahide Estuary SAC and SPA located a total distance of 1.6 km downstream of Malahide Road roundabout. There is indirect hydrological connectivity where drainage features link to watercourses downstream (refer to Figure 6).</p>	<p>map viewer <a href="https://qis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/">https://qis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/</a>). Similarly, there is no status classified for the river associated with the EPA dataset "Rivers Waterbodies Risk".</p>
<b>Toucan Crossings</b>	<p>The proposed works are located within the "Liffey and Dublin Bay" WFD catchment. Surface water is conveyed to an outfall at Greenfields River (EPA code: 08G16) (located approximately 1 km of proposed crossing north of Pinnockhill roundabout). This watercourse drains to the Malahide Estuary SAC and SPA located a total distance of 2.4 km downstream of the proposed southern toucan crossing. Similarly, the proposed crossing north of Malahide Roundabout drains to the Greenfields River. There is indirect hydrological connectivity where drainage features link to watercourses downstream (refer to Figure 6).</p> <p>The existing drainage infrastructure at the proposed pedestrian crossing and turning facility north of Estuary Roundabout conveys surface water from Estuary Roundabout to outfalls at the intersection of Ward River and Broadmeadow River (EPA code: 08B02). The proposed works are located in the "Nanny-Delvin" WFD catchment. This in turn merges with the River Broadmeadow and drains to the Malahide Estuary SAC and SPA located a total distance of ca. 0.9 km downstream from Estuary roundabout and proposed pedestrian crossing (refer to Figure 6).</p>	<p>A review of the "River Water Quality Status 2010-2012" and "River Waterbody WFD Status 2010-2015" EPA datasets for the Greenfields River identifies the water quality and river waterbody status as "unassigned" (EPA map viewer <a href="https://qis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/">https://qis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/</a>). Similarly, there is no status classified for the river associated with the EPA dataset "Rivers Waterbodies Risk".</p> <p>A review of the "River Water Quality Status 2010-2012" and "River Waterbody WFD Status 2010-2015" EPA datasets for the Ward River and the River Broadmeadow indicates that the water quality and river waterbody is of "poor status" (EPA map viewer <a href="https://qis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/">https://qis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/</a>). The "Rivers Waterbodies Risk" dataset identifies the Ward River and the River Broadmeadow as "at risk". The Transitional Waterbody WFD Status 2013-2018 for the Malahide Estuary SAC and SPA is classed as "poor" and has been identified as being "at risk" (EPA map viewer <a href="https://qis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/">https://qis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/</a>).</p>



**Figure 5 Surface drainage features within the wider study area<sup>13</sup>**

#### 4.2.2 Flood Risk

A review of flood hazard maps (<http://www.floodmaps.ie/> (Accessed October 2020)) and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment prepared for Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023 aimed to identify any flood risk zones that could potentially overlap the proposed works locations. The use of historical records, model outputs and Flood Risk Management Plan Mapping identified areas that are susceptible to flood risk, predominantly as a result of the exceedance of the river channel. With the exception of Estuary roundabout, the proposed development and associated works (including three toucan crossing points) lie outside fluvial flood risk zones. The proposed signalised intersection at Estuary partially lies within "Flood Zone C". Flood Zone C is defined as where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is low (less than 0.1% or 1 in 1000 for both river and coastal flooding). This infers that the annual exceedance probability associated with this category (fluvial 0.1%) will have a "low" probability of occurring or a 1 in 1000 year event. The most recent previous flood events at Estuary roundabout date back to November 2002 (<http://www.floodmaps.ie/> (Accessed October 2020)).

#### 4.2.3 Invasive Species

No scheduled invasive species (including plants and animals) listed on the 'Third Schedule' of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2015) were returned from the 1 km NBDC grid squares (Q1847, Q1846, Q1745 and Q1845) in which the proposed development works overlap.

#### 4.2.4 Habitats

Habitats associated with the proposed development have been classified in accordance with Fossitt (2000) and are denoted with a corresponding habitat code.

<sup>13</sup> Source: EPA base maps

#### **4.2.4.1 Estuary Roundabout/Intersection**

The habitats at the proposed works location at Estuary Roundabout/Intersection (refer to Figures 1 and 2) are highly modified in nature comprising buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3), amenity grassland (GA1), dry meadows and grassy verges (GS2) and treelines (WL2) (refer to Appendix 4; Plate 1). With the exception of treelines (local importance; higher value), the habitats onsite are of low ecological value with limited potential to support biodiversity. In addition, the habitats are unsuitable in terms of offering suitable supporting habitat for species associated with European sites located in the wider surroundings (e.g. SCI birds of Malahide Estuary SPA). The proposed works footprint is surrounded by hedgerows (WL1), treelines (WL2) and amenity grassland (GA2) (Balheary park/pitches occurs adjacent to the north-west) and is managed for recreational activities (e.g. sports, walkers)). The Ward River occurs approximately 180 m to the west.

#### **4.2.4.2 Seatown Roundabout/Intersection**

The habitats at the proposed works location at Seatown Roundabout/Intersection (refer to Figures 1 and 2) are highly modified in nature comprising buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3), amenity grassland (GA1), dry meadows and grassy verges (GS2), flower beds and borders (BC4) and treelines (WL2) (refer to Appendix 4; Plate 2). With the exception of treelines (local importance; higher value), the habitats onsite are of low ecological value with limited potential to support biodiversity. In addition, the habitats are unsuitable in terms of offering suitable supporting habitat for species associated with European sites located in the wider surroundings. The proposed works footprint is surrounded by treelines (WL2) and buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3) comprising road infrastructure, retail and industrial estates, residential developments and car parks. There are no watercourses within the immediate surrounding environs of the proposed works.

#### **4.2.4.3 Malahide Road Roundabout/Intersection**

The habitats at the proposed works location at Malahide Roundabout/Intersection (refer to Figures 1 and 2) are highly modified in nature comprising buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3), amenity grassland (GA1), dry meadows and grassy verges (GS2), flower beds and borders (BC4) and treelines (WL2) (refer to Appendix 4; Plate 3). With the exception of treelines (local importance; higher value), the habitats onsite are of low ecological value with limited potential to support biodiversity. In addition, the habitats are unsuitable in terms of offering suitable supporting habitat for species associated with European sites located in the wider surroundings. The proposed works footprint is surrounded by treelines (WL2), dry meadows and grassy verges (GS2) and buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3) comprising road infrastructure, retail park (Swords Pavillons Shopping Centre) and residential developments. There are no watercourses within the immediate surrounding environs of the proposed works. The proposed bus stop located to the west of Malahide Roundabout occurs in habitats dominated by buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3) and treelines (WL2) (refer to Figure 2.1; and Plate 4; Appendix 4; Plate 4). With the exception of treelines (WL2) (habitats of local importance; higher value), the habitats associated with the proposed development are considered to be of low of low ecological value with limited potential to support biodiversity. In addition, the habitats are unsuitable in terms of offering suitable supporting habitat for species associated with European sites located in the wider surroundings.

#### **4.2.4.4 Locations of (three additional) controlled toucan crossing points**

The locations of proposed controlled crossing points (refer to Figure 1) occur in habitats comprising buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3) (existing R132 road), amenity grassland (GA2), hedgerows (WL1) and surrounded by treelines (WL2) (along R132 road margin). With the exception of hedgerows (WL1) and treelines (WL2) (habitats of local importance; higher value), the habitats associated with the proposed development are considered to be of low of low ecological value with limited potential to support biodiversity. In addition, the habitats are unsuitable in terms of offering suitable supporting habitat for species associated with European sites located in the wider surroundings.

#### **4.2.4.5 SCI waterbirds**

There were no records of any SCI's of SPAs in the surroundings returned from the 1 km NBDC grid squares (Q1847, Q1846, Q1745 and Q1845) in which the proposed development works overlap.

# Section 5 Screening for Appropriate Assessment

## 5.1 Introduction to screening

This stage of the process identifies any potential significant effects on European sites from a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans.

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. Known threats and pressures to the ecological / environmental conditions that are required to support QIs and SCIs are considered as part of the assessment.

Where available, Site-Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs) designed to define favourable conservation status (e.g. attributes and targets) for a particular habitat<sup>14</sup> or species<sup>15</sup> at the relevant European site have been considered in the preparation of this assessment.

## 5.2 Identification of relevant European sites

European sites within the ZoI were identified using relevant datasets (e.g. European designated site boundaries available from [www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie), hydrological features such as rivers and streams available from [www.epa.ie](http://www.epa.ie), groundwater features available from [www.gsi.ie](http://www.gsi.ie)) and were overlain on GIS software application work packages (QGIS). Furthermore, various desktop records and online databases were consulted to identify sites within the ZoI.

Based on the nature and scale of the proposed development and potential impacts for effects, both alone and in-combination with other plans and projects, relevant European sites are those that include the following: features within the site, features with hydrological connectivity, water catchments (in this case, Barrow catchment), proximal distance to European sites and those with mobile SCIs and QIs that may be present within or that could be impacted by the proposed development. The following criteria were also taken into consideration: size and scale, land-take, distance from the European site or key features of the site, resource requirements, emissions, excavation requirements, transportation requirements and duration of construction and operation. It should be noted that other European sites deemed to be outside of the ZoI were considered as part of this review but were discounted on the basis of a lack of a source-pathway-receptor linkage (e.g. absence of hydrological connectivity, located upstream, outside core foraging, breeding and distribution ranges for mobile species and absence of suitable habitat) (refer to Table 5.1)). The relevant European sites are discussed within this section and summarised in Table 5.1. The distribution of European sites in relation to the ZoI of the project is presented in Figure 5.1.

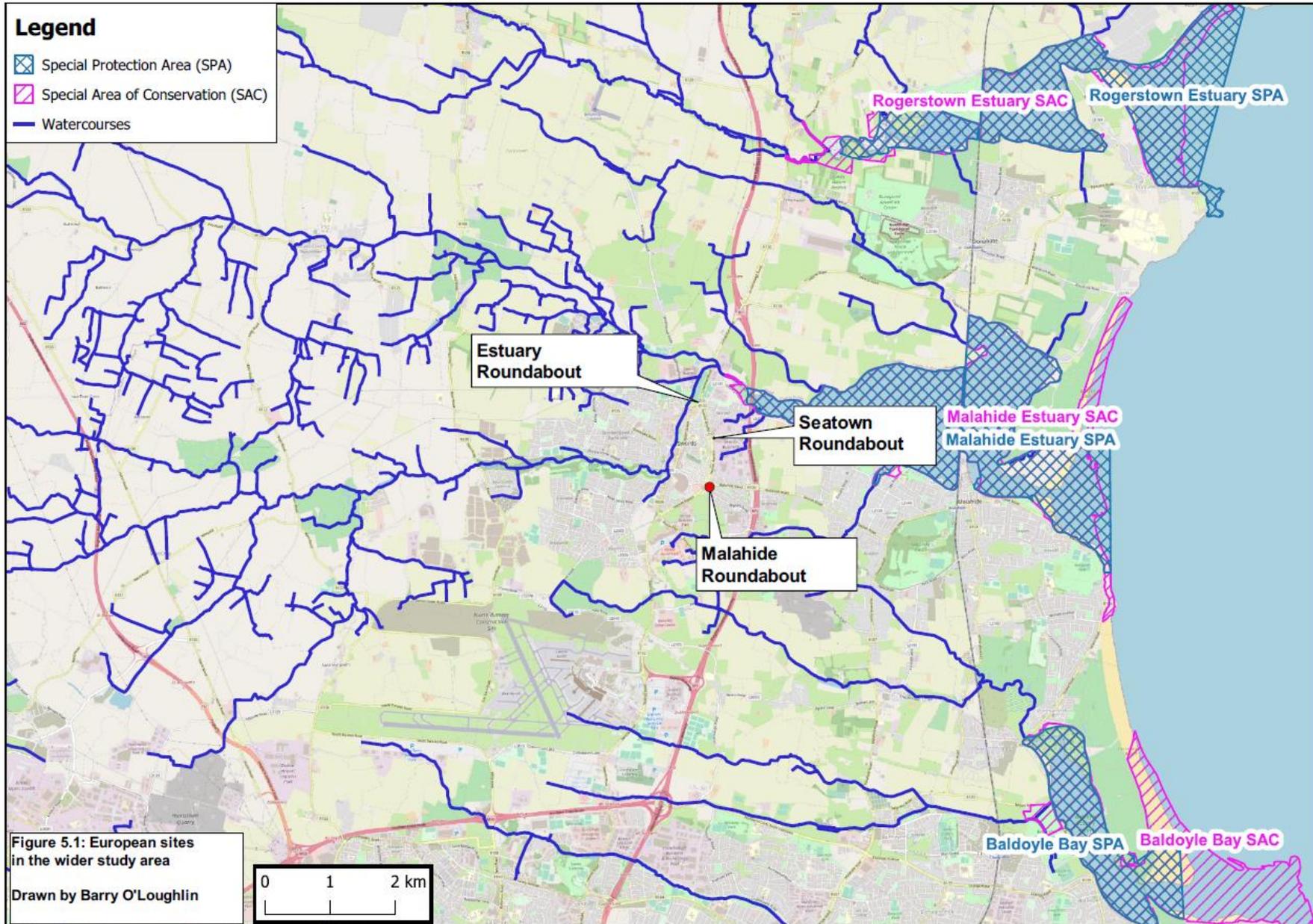
In relation to screening of Special Protection Areas, in the absence of any specific European or Irish guidance in relation to such sites, the Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) Guidance, ‘Assessing Connectivity with Special Protection Areas’ (SNH, 2016) and other scientific publications (e.g. Thaxter et al., (2012)) were consulted. SNH (2016) assesses connectivity between development proposals and SPAs. The guidance takes into consideration the core foraging distance ranges for a number of bird species from roost sites both within and outside SPAs. The guidance document and scientific

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<sup>14</sup> 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.

<sup>15</sup> 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.

publications also outlines information on dispersal and foraging ranges of bird species which are frequently encountered when considering plans and projects.



**Figure 6 European sites in the wider study area**

**Table 5.1 European sites identified within the ZoI of the proposed development.**

Site Code	Site Name	Distance	Qualifying Features (QIs/SCIs)	Conservation Objectives	Connectivity to the Proposed Development / ZoI Determination	Potential Likely Significant Effects
000205	Malahide Estuary SAC	450 m east	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]</li> <li><i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]</li> <li>Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae) [1330]</li> <li>Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]</li> <li>Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120]</li> <li>Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]</li> </ul>	To restore or maintain the favourable conservation status of the qualifying interests (QIs) for which the SAC is designated (NPWS, 2013a). Detailed conservation objectives have been prepared for the European site and are available at www.npws.ie.	<p>There will be no land take associated with the proposed development within the boundary of any European site. No direct impacts are foreseen.</p> <p>The proposed development has the potential to give rise to significant effects where the proposed works occur within proximity to natural watercourses that are hydrologically connected to the SAC located downstream (refer to Table 4.1).</p> <p>Potential indirect effects exist where source-pathway-receptors have been identified in relation to the receiving environment of the SAC (i.e. hydrological linkages). All QI's of the SAC are considered further in this assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]</li> <li><i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]</li> <li>Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae) [1330]</li> <li>Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]</li> <li>Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120]</li> <li>Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]</li> </ul> <p>Consequently, the SAC is considered to be <b>within the Likely ZoI</b> with potential for significant effects and further assessment is required with regard to QIs of the SAC.</p>	<p>There is no potential for direct effects as the proposed development is located entirely outside of the SAC boundary. Therefore, direct effects on the SAC can be excluded.</p> <p>Potential indirect effects during the proposed works on QIs of the SAC identified within the ZoI of the project include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water pollution</li> <li>Potential introduction of scheduled invasive species</li> </ul>
004025	Malahide Estuary SPA	630 m east (nearest point)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Great Crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>) [A005]</li> </ul>	To restore or maintain the favourable conservation status of the qualifying	There is no potential for direct impact on the SPA as the proposed works are located entirely outside the SPA boundary.	There is no potential for direct effects as the proposed development is located entirely outside of the SPA

Site Code	Site Name	Distance	Qualifying Features (QIs/SCIs)	Conservation Objectives	Connectivity to the Proposed Development / ZoI Determination	Potential Likely Significant Effects
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046]</li> <li>Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048]</li> <li>Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054]</li> <li>Goldeneye (<i>Bucephala clangula</i>) [A067]</li> <li>Red-breasted Merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>) [A069]</li> <li>Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130]</li> <li>Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140]</li> <li>Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141]</li> <li>Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143]</li> <li>Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149]</li> <li>Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156]</li> <li>Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157]</li> <li>Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162]</li> <li>Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</li> </ul>	interests (QIs) for which the SPA is designated. (NPWS, 2013b)	<p>Taking into consideration the location of the proposed works within the built environment of Swords and confined to existing road infrastructure together with separation distance (630 m from the SPA), no disturbance related effects on SCI birds of the SPA are anticipated. Potential for indirect pathways have been identified with respect to water pollution. The proposed works concentrated at Estuary, Malahide Road, Seatown and associated works (including toucan crossing points) has the potential to give rise to water pollution on the SCI "wetlands and waterbirds [A999]" where hydrological pathways have been identified (refer to Table 4.1 and Figure 5.1). Indirect effects associated with water pollution could result in potential significant effects on the estuarine habitats and benthic and macro-invertebrate communities used by waterbirds associated with Malahide Estuary. As water pollution has the potential to result in significant effects on water quality of the downstream catchment, The following SCIs are considered further in the assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Great Crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>) [A005]</li> <li>Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046]</li> <li>Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048]</li> <li>Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054]</li> <li>Goldeneye (<i>Bucephala clangula</i>) [A067]</li> <li>Red-breasted Merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>) [A069]</li> <li>Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130]</li> <li>Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140]</li> <li>Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141]</li> <li>Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143]</li> </ul>	<p>boundary. Therefore, direct effects on the SPA can be excluded.</p> <p>In relation to water quality and pressures, the conservation objectives supporting document for the SPA states that "<i>the largest contributory factor identified is wastewater. Physical modifications and dangerous substances (physico-chemical) such as run-off are also identified as pressures on the system</i>" (NPWS, 2013c).</p> <p>As indirect hydrological connectivity with respect to the proposed works (refer to Table 4.1) has been identified, potential indirect effects associated with the project on SCIs of the SPA (i.e. Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]) include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water pollution (deterioration in water quality of the SPA)</li> </ul>

Site Code	Site Name	Distance	Qualifying Features (QIs/SCIs)	Conservation Objectives	Connectivity to the Proposed Development / ZoI Determination	Potential Likely Significant Effects
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149]</li> <li>• Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156]</li> <li>• Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157]</li> <li>• Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162]</li> <li>• Wetlands and waterbirds [A999]</li> </ul> <p>Consequently, the SPA is considered to be <b>within the Likely ZoI of the proposed development</b> and further assessment is required with regard to the SCIs of the SPA.</p>	

European sites located in the wider surroundings (refer to Figure 6) were also considered as part of the screening exercise but have been screened out on the basis of an absence of a source-pathway-receptor chain. This encompasses sites that are located upstream or in a separate river catchment to the proposed development, lack of hydrological and hydrogeological pathways; unsuitable habitat or sites whose species core foraging and breeding ranges occur outside the ZoI of the proposed development:

- Rogerstown Estuary SAC (000208) (3.9 km north-east)
- Rogerstown Estuary SPA (Site Code: 004015) (5 km north).
- Baldoyle Bay SPA (Site Code: 004016) (6 km south-east).
- Baldoyle Bay SAC (Site Code: 000199) (6.5 km south-east)
- North Bull Island SPA (Site Code: 004006) (9 km south-east).
- South-Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (Site Code: 004024) (9.7 km south).
- Ireland's Eye SPA (Site Code: 004117) (10.9 km south-east).
- Lambay Island SPA (Site Code: 004069) (12.1 km east)

A rationale for European sites that have been screened out is presented in Table 5.2.

**Table 5.2 European sites considered in the wider surroundings that have been screened out**

Site Name (Code)	Distance from proposed Development (km)	Qualifying Features (QIs/SCIs)	Rationale for European Sites Scoped Out at Screening Stage
Rogerstown Estuary SPA (Site Code: 004015)	5 km north	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>) [A043]</li> <li>• Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046]</li> <li>• Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048]</li> <li>• Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056]</li> <li>• Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130]</li> <li>• Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137]</li> <li>• Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141]</li> <li>• Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143]</li> <li>• Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149]</li> <li>• Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156]</li> <li>• Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162]</li> <li>• Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</li> </ul>	No source-pathway-receptor chain that could give rise to potential significant effects on the SCIs of the SPA's were identified. The proposed development is not hydrologically connected to any of the SPA's under consideration. The proposed development works occur within the foraging range for some of the SCI's of the SPA's; however taking into consideration the nature of the proposed works confined to existing road infrastructure in the urban environs of Swords, there is no suitable supporting foraging or roosting habitat onsite to result in any potential disturbance displacement effects. A review of BirdWatch Ireland's IWeBS database indicates that the nearest IWeBS site ("Broadmeadow (Malahide) Estuary (IWeBS code: 0U408)" located within Malahide Estuary SPA) is located 630 m to the east (from "Estuary" works location). The proposed works are buffered from the IWeBS site by buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3) comprising road infrastructure, industrial and retail parks and residential development in an artificially lit environment. There were no records of any SCI's of the SPA returned from the 1 km NBDC grid squares (Q1847, Q1846, Q1745 and Q1845) in which the proposed development works overlap.
Baldoye Bay SPA (Site Code: 004016)	6 km south-east	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046]</li> <li>• Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048]</li> <li>• Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137]</li> <li>• Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140]</li> <li>• Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141]</li> <li>• Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157]</li> <li>• Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</li> </ul>	The proposed development is significantly removed from the SPA's under consideration (nearest located 5 km to the north) that no potential disturbance effects (e.g. construction noise, artificial light and increased human presence) on the SPA's population is foreseen. Therefore, no potential for significant effects are predicted due to separation distance and absence of suitable supporting habitat (existing roads and urban environs of Swords). Potential significant effects on the SCI's of the SPA can be discounted and scoped out of the assessment.
North Bull Island SPA (Site Code: 004006)	9 km south-east	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046]</li> <li>• Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048]</li> <li>• Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052]</li> <li>• Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054]</li> <li>• Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056]</li> <li>• Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130]</li> <li>• Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140]</li> <li>• Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141]</li> <li>• Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143]</li> <li>• Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144]</li> <li>• Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149]</li> <li>• Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156]</li> <li>• Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157]</li> <li>• Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160]</li> <li>• Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162]</li> <li>• Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) [A169]</li> </ul>	

Site Name (Code)	Distance from proposed Development (km)	Qualifying Features (QIs/SCIs)	Rationale for European Sites Scoped Out at Screening Stage
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179]</li> <li>Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</li> </ul>	
South-Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (Site Code: 004024)	9.7 km south	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046]</li> <li>Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130]</li> <li>Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137]</li> <li>Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141]</li> <li>Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143]</li> <li>Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144]</li> <li>Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149]</li> <li>Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157]</li> <li>Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162]</li> <li>Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179]</li> <li>Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) [A192]</li> <li>Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193]</li> <li>Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194]</li> <li>Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</li> </ul>	
Ireland's Eye SPA (Site Code: 004117)	10.9 km south-east	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017]</li> <li>Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184]</li> <li>Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188]</li> <li>Guillemot (<i>Uria aalge</i>) [A199]</li> <li>Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>) [A200]</li> </ul>	
Lambay Island SPA (Site Code: 004069)	12.1 km east	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) [A009]</li> <li>Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017]</li> <li>Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) [A018]</li> <li>Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>) [A043]</li> <li>Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>) [A183]</li> <li>Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184]</li> <li>Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188]</li> <li>Guillemot (<i>Uria aalge</i>) [A199]</li> <li>Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>) [A200]</li> <li>Puffin (<i>Fratercula arctica</i>) [A204]</li> </ul>	
Rogerstown Estuary SAC (000208)	3.9 km north-east	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Estuaries [1130]</li> <li>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]</li> </ul>	No source-pathway-receptor chain that could give rise to potential significant effects on the QIs of the SAC was identified. There is no hydrological connectivity or otherwise linking the proposed development to the SAC, no impacts on water quality are foreseen. No

Site Name (Code)	Distance from proposed Development (km)	Qualifying Features (QIs/SCIs)	Rationale for European Sites Scoped Out at Screening Stage
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]</li> <li>• Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330]</li> <li>• Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]</li> <li>• Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120]</li> <li>• Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]</li> </ul>	potential for significant effects are predicted due to separation distance, absence of hydrological linkages; and absence of sensitive features. Potential significant effects on the SAC can be discounted and scoped out of the assessment.
Baldoyle Bay SAC (Site Code: 000199)	6.5 km south-east	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]</li> <li>• Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]</li> <li>• Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330]</li> <li>• Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]</li> </ul>	No source-pathway-receptor chain that could give rise to potential significant effects on the QIs of the SAC was identified. There is no hydrological connectivity or otherwise linking the proposed development to the SAC, no impacts on water quality are foreseen. No potential for significant effects are predicted due to separation distance, absence of hydrological linkages; and absence of sensitive features. Potential significant effects on the SAC can be discounted and scoped out of the assessment.

## 5.3 Conservation objectives

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.

Site-specific conservation objectives have been prepared for a number of European sites. These detailed conservation objectives 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 and/or species. 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 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.'*

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.'*

The NPWS site synopsis for Malahide Estuary SAC (000205) and Malahide Estuary SPA (004025) is presented in Appendix 5. A review of site-specific conservation objectives (NPWS, 2013a and NPWS, 2013b) of Malahide Estuary SAC (000205) and Malahide Estuary SPA (004025) was conducted to inform the assessment.

## 5.4 Potential significant effects on European sites

### 5.4.1 Potential sources of impact with potential to give rise to effects

The construction and operational phase elements of the project also introduce potential sources for effects to ecological processes such as:

- Deterioration in water quality (water pollution); and,
- Potential introduction of scheduled invasive species (subject to legal provisions under the EU Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011).

Given the relatively small-scale nature of the proposed works along existing built infrastructure, operational phase sources of effects are limited to potential increased road users and run-off of hydrocarbons and oils. The proposed project is relatively small and localised in scale and it is expected that the works will be carried out in a number of phases (to be determined) over an expected 2-year construction period commencing in 2021/2022. Therefore, the construction and operational phase effects identified are considered in the context of European sites identified above, including their sensitivities and conservation objectives.

## 5.5 Screening for Appropriate Assessment matrix

### 5.5.1 Article 6(3) Assessment Criteria

The Screening Assessment criteria examined in the impact assessment section of this document follows the recommended screening matrix structure detailed in the European Commission's Guidance Document "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" (EC, 2001). This section provides a Screening for AA for the proposed development. Table 5.3 provides a matrix assessing potential significant effects, direct and indirect, to European sites within the project ZoI.

### 5.5.2 Is the proposed project necessary to the management of European sites?

The proposed works are not directly connected with or necessary to the management of any European site. The overarching objective of the proposed project will involve the conversion of three existing roundabouts to traffic signal controlled intersections and associated works whilst three additional controlled crossing points will also be provided on the R132 between Pinnockhill Roundabout in the south and Estuary Roundabout in the north. The proposed works are located outside the boundary of any European site.

### 5.5.3 Description of individual elements of the project with potential to give rise to effects on the European site

The project will involve the conversion of three existing roundabouts to traffic signal controlled intersections and the provision of three additional controlled crossing points and a new bus stop along the R132.

Elements of the project that could give rise to potential significant effects on European sites include:

- Site clearance and preparation works;
- Construction/conversion of three traffic signal controlled intersections (at Estuary, Seatown and Malahide Road roundabouts) and three crossing points using standard building materials (refer to Figure 1);
- Construction of new surface water drainage and modifications to existing underground services such as telecommunications ducting, water mains and upgrading of existing public lighting to accommodate the proposed junction layouts;
- Landscaping works (following construction);
- And accommodation works to provide new access arrangements for private properties affected by the proposed junction layouts
- An operation phase whereby the roads will be used by vehicular, pedestrian and cycle traffic.

### 5.5.4 Description of any likely direct, indirect or secondary effects of the project on European sites

Any likely direct, indirect or secondary effects of the proposed development, both alone and in combination with other plans and projects, on the identified European sites in light of their conservation objectives by virtue of the following criteria: size and scale, land-take, distance from the European site or key features of the site, resource requirements (such as water abstraction), emissions (disposal to land, water or air), excavation requirements, transportation requirements and duration of construction, operation or decommissioning are presented in Table 5.3.

**Table 5.3 Likely significant effects of the proposed development on European sites**

Likely direct, indirect or secondary effects of the project on European sites	
<b>Size and Scale</b>	There will be no potential for significant effects as a result of the size and scale of the proposed works. The project is of a nature, type, size and scale such that any changes are unlikely to result in any negative effects on any European site. Given that the proposed works are short-term in duration; and restricted outside the boundary of any European site, no potential for significant effects with respect to size and scale are anticipated.

Likely direct, indirect or secondary effects of the project on European sites	
<b>Land-take</b>	There will be no land take associated with the proposed development works within any European site. All works will be confined within the proposed development footprint and no potential for significant effects on European sites associated with land-take are anticipated.
<b>Distance from European Sites or Key Features of the Site</b>	<p>The proposed development is not located within the boundary of any European site and potential direct effects are not anticipated.</p> <p>Hydrological pathways to Malahide Estuary SAC and Malahide Estuary SPA have been identified (refer to Tables 4.1 and 5.1). Consequently, potential exists for indirect effects associated with pollution (water quality) from the proposed development site to Malahide Estuary SAC and Malahide Estuary SPA. Other potential indirect effects on European sites include habitat deterioration associated with the introduction and spread of scheduled invasive species to the downstream catchment that could potentially result in significant effects on the QI habitats of Malahide Estuary SAC.</p>
<b>Resource Requirements</b>	There will be no exploitation of any resources within any European site as part of the proposed development works and therefore effects in this regard on any of the European sites (Malahide Estuary SAC and SPA) identified within the ZoI of the proposed development can be discounted at this stage.
<b>Emissions</b>	<p>No direct effects on any European sites are predicted.</p> <p>Potential indirect effects associated with emissions on European sites within the ZoI of the project are assessed as follows:</p> <p><b>Malahide Estuary SAC and SPA</b></p> <p><b>Surface Water</b> – There is potential for emissions associated with the construction and operational phase of the project to result in indirect effects via surface water pathways on the QIs of Malahide Estuary SAC and SCIs of Malahide Estuary SPA located in the downstream catchment. A review of EPA online portal reveals that the water quality A review of the River Water Quality Status 2010-2012 for the Ward River and the River Broadmeadow indicates that the water quality is of “poor status” (EPA map viewer <a href="https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/">https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/</a>). The Transitional Waterbody WFD Status 2013-2018 for the Malahide Estuary SAC and SPA is classed as “poor” and has been identified as being “at risk” (EPA map viewer <a href="https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/">https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/</a>) (Accessed October 2020). Potential significant effects associated with potential siltation and sediment release and infiltration of pollutants (e.g. oils and hydrocarbons) into the surface water network in surrounding watercourses could have potential impacts on the aquatic receiving environment. In the absence of mitigation, any construction related activities carried out in proximity to natural watercourses involves a risk of pollution due to accidental spillage, leaks and sediment release during construction works. Pollution as a result of accidental spillage could potentially affect the QI habitats of Malahide Estuary SAC (indirect hydrological connectivity) that could affect structures and functions for achieving favourable conservation status. In addition, pollution as a result of accidental spillage could potentially affect the SCIs of Malahide Estuary SPA such as prey availability including fish and benthic/macro-invertebrate communities. The potential risk associated with the transport and mobilization of sediment due to excavation of soil and run-off of pollutants (associated with oils, paints and hydrocarbon spills) could potentially impact on freshwater ecosystems and natural processes of watercourses in the downstream catchment. The potential for the proposed development to result in indirect effects on the QIs of Malahide Estuary SAC and SCIs of Malahide Estuary SPA in the form of deterioration of surface water quality resulting from pollution (e.g. silt, fine sediment, hydrocarbons, and oils) cannot be discounted at this stage of the assessment process.</p> <p><b>Groundwater</b> – source-pathway-receptors to ground water systems were considered during the assessment for potential significant effects. The proposed works are located in a Locally Important (LI) Aquifer (Bedrock which is Moderately Productive only in Local Zones). The aquifer vulnerability rating is classed as “low” while the groundwater subsoil permeability is classed as ‘low’ (<a href="https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/">https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/</a> and <a href="https://www.qsi.ie/">https://www.qsi.ie/</a> (Accessed October 2020)). Taking into account the nature of the proposed works, potential impacts and resultant effects on groundwater systems is considered to be an unlikely occurrence. No significant effects associated with hydro-geological pathways on European sites within the ZoI of the project are anticipated.</p> <p><b>Flood Risk</b> – a review of flood hazard maps (<a href="http://www.floodmaps.ie/">http://www.floodmaps.ie/</a> (Accessed October 2020)) and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023 aimed to identify any flood risk zones that could potentially overlap the proposed works locations. The review aims to identify any potential source-pathway-receptor linkages associated with flood events with potential for sediment and pollutants (construction phase) to become entrained and mobilised to Malahide Estuary SAC and</p>

Likely direct, indirect or secondary effects of the project on European sites	
	<p>SPA. With the exception of Estuary roundabout, the proposed development and associated works lie outside fluvial flood risk zones. The proposed signalised intersection at Estuary partially lies within "Flood Zone C". This infers that the annual exceedance probability associated with this category (fluvial 0.1%) will have a "low" probability of occurring or a 1 in 1000 year event.</p> <p>The most recent previous flood events at Estuary roundabout date back to November 2002 (<a href="http://www.floodmaps.ie/">http://www.floodmaps.ie/</a> (Accessed October 2020)). In the absence of mitigation and applying the precautionary principle, potential exists for emissions during a potential flood event.</p> <p><b>Emissions Summary</b> In the case of Malahide Estuary SAC and SPA, pathways with the potential for the proposed development to result in indirect effects on QIs and SCIs in the form of deterioration of surface water quality cannot be discounted at this stage of the assessment process.</p>
<b>Excavation Requirements</b>	<p>There is no requirement for excavations within the boundary of any European site, therefore, no direct impacts relating to site excavations are predicted.</p> <p>Potential indirect effects associated with excavation requirements on European sites within the ZoI of the project are assessed below.</p> <p><b>Malahide Estuary SAC and SPA</b> The conversion of the roundabouts to signalised junctions will require a slight increase in road levels compared to existing levels at the centre of the junction while approach arms will tie in with existing R132. As such, the scheme is not expected to result in a significant level of excavation. General excavation of material required for installation of underground services such as drainage and ducting will be reinstated or where possible with any excess material stockpiled for reuse on site. There will be no requirement for instream works or interference with any watercourse. In the absence of mitigation, such excavation requirements could impact on surrounding watercourses (linked through the drainage road network) through the continued and sustained release of sediment, accidental spills (oils and hydrocarbons) that could result in significant effects on Malahide Estuary SAC and SPA in the downstream catchment.</p> <p>There is also the potential for the introduction and/or spread of scheduled invasive species during excavation works to affect the QIs of Malahide Estuary SAC. Works located within proximity to riparian areas (the interface between land and a river or stream) during high water flows could carry introduced and disturbed fragments (scheduled invasive plants) downstream where new colonies could quickly form and establish. In relation to QI habitats, the conservation objectives supporting document for Malahide SAC states "<i>the invasion of non-native species compromises the typical plant community structure</i>" (NPWS, 2013d). Problematic invasive species such as common cord-grass <i>Spartina anglica</i> and sea buckthorn <i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i> have been reported within the habitats of Malahide Estuary SAC. The introduction of invasive species may result in negative effects should disturbed fragments establish within the Malahide Estuary SAC further downstream and affect QI habitats of the SAC. Adopting a precautionary approach and based on hydrological pathways to European sites located in the downstream catchment, the potential for excavations associated with the proposed development to result in significant effects on Malahide Estuary SAC and SPA cannot be discounted at this stage of the assessment process.</p>
<b>Transportation Requirements</b>	<p>There is no requirement for transportation within the boundary of any European site, therefore, no direct effects associated with the proposed works is anticipated.</p> <p>As part of the proposed works, transport of site materials will be required throughout the construction phase of the project. In the absence of best practice, ongoing and sustained transport during the proposed development works could result in the release of hydrocarbon spillages, oils, paints and other harmful pollutants to receiving watercourses (i.e. Ward River, Greenfields River and River Broadmeadow) and result in deterioration of water quality (pollution) to Malahide Estuary SAC and SPA. The potential for excavations associated with transportation requirements to result in indirect negative effects on Malahide Estuary SAC and SPA cannot be discounted at this stage of the assessment process.</p>
<b>Duration of Construction, Operation, Decommissioning</b>	<p>The programme for the proposed scheme is scheduled to be undertaken on a phased basis over an expected two year construction period commencing in 2021/2022 (subject to planning consents). The proposed works will be short-term in duration. No additional potential for effects arising specifically as a result of the duration of each phase of the project have been identified.</p>

### 5.5.5 Description of any likely changes to European sites

Any potential changes to the European sites are described in Table 5.4 with reference to the following criteria: reduction of habitat area, disturbance to key species, habitat or species fragmentation, reduction in species density, changes in key indicators of conservation value (e.g. water quality and disturbance) and climate change.

**Table 5.4 Likely changes to European sites**

Likely changes to European sites	
<b>Reduction of Habitat Area</b>	<p>The proposed scheme will not result in the direct loss of habitat to any European site and no potential significant effects are foreseen.</p> <p>In the absence of mitigation, potential for reduction in habitat area of QI Annex I habitats of Malahide Estuary SAC and SCIs of Malahide Estuary SPA could arise should any deleterious pollutant substances (associated with construction and operational phases) discharge to the Malahide Estuary SAC and SPA via surface water pathways (natural watercourses and drainage features). Potential impacts may result in reduction in habitat area on water dependent habitats and species of the SAC and SPA. Indirect effects with reduction of habitat area on Malahide Estuary SPA and SAC cannot be discounted at this stage of the assessment.</p>
<b>Disturbance to Key Species</b>	<p><b><u>Malahide Estuary SAC</u></b> Malahide Estuary SAC is designated for qualifying interest habitats only. Therefore, there will be no disturbance of any key species as a result of the proposed works with respect to this European site.</p> <p><b><u>Malahide Estuary SPA</u></b> There will be no requirement for works within the boundary of any European site; therefore, direct effects associated with disturbance on key species including SCI birds associated with Malahide Estuary SPA is not anticipated.</p> <p>In addition, there will be no indirect disturbance related effects on SCI wintering birds of the SPA as a result of the proposed development. The proposed development works occur within the foraging range for some of the SCI's of the SPA; however taking into consideration the nature of the proposed works confined to existing road infrastructure within the urban environs of Swords, there is no suitable supporting foraging or roosting habitat onsite (or immediate surrounding environs) to result in any potential disturbance displacement effects. A review of BirdWatch Ireland's IWeBS database indicates that the nearest IWeBS site ("Broadmeadow (Malahide) Estuary (IWeBS code: 0U408)" located within Malahide Estuary SPA) is located 630 m to the east (from "Estuary" works location). The proposed works are buffered from the IWeBS site by buildings and artificial surfaces. There were no records of any SCI's of the SPA returned from the 1 km NBDC grid squares (Q1847, Q1846, Q1745 and Q1845) in which the proposed development works overlap.</p> <p>Madsen (1985); Smit &amp; Visser (1993) and Rees et al., (2005)) report wintering bird responses to disturbances to human activity and associated works up to as far as 500 m. The proposed development works are located 630 m (nearest works location) from Malahide Estuary SPA. In addition, the estuarine habitats of Malahide Estuary SPA form a significant food resource for wintering birds. The benthic and marine communities present within the estuary offer feeding opportunities for waterbirds and waders (NPWS, 2013c). Based on the feeding and dietary requirements of the SCIs under consideration, waterbirds are considered to be restricted to the estuarine habitats of Malahide Estuary SPA (630m to the east) and no potential disturbance as a result of the proposed development works is foreseen given the lack of suitable supporting habitat within and surrounding the proposed works locations.</p> <p>As reported by Cutts et al., (2009), visual stimuli tend to have greater disturbance effects on birds than noise stimuli alone. Significant disturbance effects associated with the visual disturbance and displacement of construction personnel and operating machinery (i.e. demolition of buildings and remediation of waste) on avian receptors is not anticipated. The conservation objectives supporting document for Malahide Estuary SPA has identified recreational disturbance (particularly walkers with dogs) as the primary activity with potential to disturb waterbirds at locations where footpaths occur directly adjacent to the estuary (NPWS, 2013a). The proposed development is buffered from the SPA by industrial parks, retail parks, residential development and road infrastructure (including the M1 motorway) which support the movement of vehicular traffic and other anthropogenic factors (e.g. cyclists and pedestrians associated with the wider urban environs, artificial lighting associated with urban areas) on a daily basis. Dooling &amp; Popper (2007) and Beason (2004) report that hearing in birds is not as well developed to the same extent as humans, in that most birds cannot register high or low frequencies to the same level as humans. The</p>

Likely changes to European sites	
	waterbirds associated with Malahide Estuary are considered to have habituated to traffic associated with the wider urban environs. The proposed development will not result in significant noise emissions above legal thresholds. No disturbance related impacts on key SCI species of Malahide Estuary SPA are foreseen and can be discounted at this stage of the assessment process.
<b>Habitat or Species Fragmentation</b>	There will be no direct habitat or species fragmentation within any European site associated with the proposed development as no works are proposed within the boundary of any European site. Taking into consideration the separation distance of the proposed development in relation to Malahide Estuary SAC and SPA (630 m) and the sub-optimal nature of the habitats located within the footprint of the proposed development (urban environs of Swords) for SCI birds of the SPA, no significant effects with regard to habitat or species fragmentation is anticipated.
<b>Reduction in Species Density</b>	Where pathways (hydrological) for impacts on European sites have been identified in the preceding sections (refer to "emissions" sections), the potential for reduction in species density on the identified European Sites (i.e. Malahide Estuary SPA) cannot be excluded at this stage in the assessment process.
<b>Changes in Key Indicators of Conservation Value</b>	Where pathways for effects on a European sites has been identified in the preceding sections, the potential for changes in key indicators of conservation value at the identified European site cannot be discounted without further assessment of effects i.e. Malahide Estuary SAC and Malahide Estuary SPA. No other European sites are considered to be at any risk from impact given the nature and scale of the proposed development, separation distance and/or lack of connectivity.
<b>Climate Change</b>	The proposed development will involve replacing the existing roundabouts with signalised junctions and incorporating controlled toucan crossings, while also providing pedestrian/cycle access to (at-grade) proposed MetroLink stations along the R132. In doing so, the proposed development works will provide sustainable travel patterns within Swords which will have knock on positive effects in terms of achieving a lower carbon footprint. The provision of pedestrian and cycle facilities will reduce the dependency on diesel powered vehicles and consequently lower greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. It is not anticipated that the proposed development will have any significant effect on the European sites or qualifying features with respect to climate change.

### 5.5.6 Description of any likely impacts on the European site as a whole in terms of interference with key relationships that define the structure and function of the site

The scheme will involve the conversion of three existing roundabouts to traffic signal controlled intersections whilst three additional controlled crossing points will also be provided on the R132 between the area north of Pinnockhill Roundabout in the south and the Estuary Roundabout in the north. Other additional works will include the provision of new surface water drainage and modifications to existing underground services such as telecommunications ducting, water mains and upgrading of existing public lighting to accommodate the proposed junction layouts; and landscaping. Water quality and the extent and quality of habitats of Malahide Estuary SAC; in addition to feeding and roosting habitat for SCI bird species of Malahide Estuary SPA are considered to be key environmental conditions that support the integrity of the SAC and SPA. The risks associated with proposed scheme include a possible reduction in water quality of watercourses hydrologically connected to Malahide Estuary SAC and SPA and introduction of negative indicator species in the form of scheduled invasives to QI habitats of Malahide Estuary SAC.

### 5.5.7 Indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects

Indicators of significance are provided in Table 5.5 for any effects identified above in terms of loss, fragmentation, disruption, disturbance and changes to key elements of the European sites, such as water quality.

**Table 5.5 Indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects**

Likely direct, indirect or secondary effects of the project on European sites	
<b>Loss</b>	There will be no direct loss of habitats within any European site as a result of the proposed development as all works are restricted outside the boundary of any European site. In the absence of mitigation, potential for reduction in habitat area (wetlands) associated with water pollution (indirect effects) on Malahide Estuary SPA could result in a reduction in the function of estuarine habitats for feeding and/or roosting for the SCIs of the SPA as a result of habitat deterioration. Habitat loss of wetlands as a result of deterioration of water quality cannot be discounted.

<b>Likely direct, indirect or secondary effects of the project on European sites</b>	
<b>Fragmentation</b>	There will be no fragmentation of habitats within any European sites identified in the ZoI as a result of the proposed development. Potential effects with respect to fragmentation of European sites are assessed in Table 5.4 under and "habitat or species fragmentation".
<b>Disruption</b>	Disruption to ecological processes of European sites where pathways for potential significant effects have been identified cannot be discounted at this stage of the assessment process.
<b>Disturbance</b>	There will be no disturbance to key species of any European sites identified within the ZoI of the project. Potential effects with respect to disturbance of SCI species of European sites are assessed in Table 5.4 under "Disturbance to Key Species".
<b>Changes to Key Elements of the Site</b>	The potential for changes to key elements of European sites where pathways for potential significant effects have been identified and cannot be discounted at this stage of the development. In the absence of mitigation and appropriate control measures, key elements with potential to result in changes include water quality and potential introduction of negative indicator species.

## 5.6 In-combination effects

Where potential pathways for significant effects have been identified on a European Site within the likely ZoI of the proposed development, it cannot be excluded that there will be no potential for in-combination effects when assessed alongside other plans and projects. The following sites are 'Screened In':

- Malahide Estuary SAC; and,
- Malahide Estuary SPA

No other European Sites were considered to be at risk from in-combination effects given the nature and scale of the proposed developments, their distance and/or lack of connectivity.

## 5.7 AA Screening Conclusion

It cannot be excluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt, in view of best scientific knowledge, on the basis of objective information and in light of the conservation objectives of the identified European sites, that the proposed development (individually or in combination with other plans and projects) could have likely significant effects on the following European sites:

- Malahide Estuary SAC; and,
- Malahide Estuary SPA

For the avoidance of doubt, it is confirmed that measures intended to avoid or reduce impacts on any European site were not considered as part of the screening assessment carried out. As a result, an Appropriate Assessment in line with Article 6(3) of the European Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) is required. A screening summary of European sites scoped in for further assessment is presented in Table 5.6.

**Table 5.6 Screening summary for European sites scoped in for Appropriate Assessment**

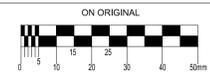
Site Name (Code)	Distance from proposed Development	Screening Summary
Malahide Estuary SAC (000205)	450 m east (nearest point from works location – Estuary roundabout)	<p>There is no potential for direct impacts as the proposed works footprint will be restricted outside the SAC boundary.</p> <p>Potential pathways for indirect effects on the QIs of the SAC were identified in the form of deterioration of surface water quality via emissions of polluting material and/or sediment (uncontrolled discharges or release of pollutants to the aquatic environment) with potential for significant effects on aquatic QI habitats in the downstream catchment. Other sources of impacts with potential for significant effects include habitat deterioration such as potential introduction and spread of scheduled invasive species which could compromise the vegetation structure of QI habitats of the SAC. Adopting the precautionary principle and taking into account works adjacent to drainage features with surface water connectivity to the SAC, the potential for significant effects on this European site cannot be excluded at this stage of the Appropriate Assessment process and the site is 'Screened In' with an emphasis on the following QIs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]</li> <li>• Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]</li> <li>• Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330]</li> <li>• Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]</li> <li>• Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120]</li> <li>• Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]</li> </ul>
Malahide Estuary SPA (004025)	630 m east (nearest point from works location – Estuary roundabout)	<p>There is no potential for direct impacts as the proposed works footprint will be restricted outside the SPA boundary.</p> <p>Potential pathways for indirect effects on the SCIs of the SPA were identified in the form of deterioration of surface water quality via emissions of polluting material and/or sediment (uncontrolled discharges or release of pollutants to the aquatic environment) with potential for significant effects on SCI habitats (e.g. wetlands and waterbirds [A999]) and secondary habitats SCI birds depend on. Adopting the precautionary principle and in the absence of mitigation, the potential for significant effects on this European site cannot be excluded at this stage of the Appropriate Assessment process and the site is 'Screened In' with regard to all SCIs of the SPA including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great Crested Grebe [A005]</li> <li>• Light-bellied Brent Goose [A046]</li> <li>• Shelduck [A048]</li> <li>• Pintail [A054]</li> <li>• Goldeneye [A067]</li> <li>• Red-breasted Merganser [A069]</li> <li>• Oystercatcher [A130]</li> <li>• Golden Plover [A140]</li> <li>• Grey Plover [A141]</li> <li>• Knot [A143]</li> <li>• Dunlin [A149]</li> <li>• Black-tailed Godwit [A156]</li> <li>• Bar-tailed Godwit [A157]</li> <li>• Redshank [A162]</li> <li>• Wetlands and waterbirds [A999]</li> </ul>

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# **Appendix 1: Drawings - Site Location Plan & Scheme Extents**



- NOTES:
1. ALL TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT TO COMPLY FULLY WITH THE PROVISIONS OF CHAPTER 8 OF THE TRAFFIC SIGNS MANUAL.
  2. ALL CO-ORDINATES ARE TO IRISH TRANSVERSE MERCATOR.
  3. ALL LEVELS ARE TO ORDNANCE DATUM AND ARE IN METRES.
- LEGEND:
- EXTENT OF SCHEME

**PROPOSED LOCATION FOR TOUCAN CROSSING & TURNING AREA**

**R132 / ESTUARY ROUNDABOUT TO BE UPGRADED TO SIGNALISED JUNCTION (REFER TO SHEET 6)**

**NEW PROTECTED CYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES BETWEEN JUNCTIONS (REFER TO SHEET 2)**

**R132 / SEATOWN ROUNDABOUT TO BE UPGRADED TO SIGNALISED JUNCTION (REFER TO SHEET 5)**

**NEW PROTECTED CYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES BETWEEN JUNCTIONS (REFER TO SHEET 2)**

**PROPOSED LOCATION FOR TOUCAN CROSSING**

**R132 / MALAHIDE ROAD ROUNDABOUT TO BE UPGRADED TO SIGNALISED JUNCTION AND DRYNAM ROAD TO BE A CONVERTED TO A CUL DE SAC (REFER TO SHEETS 3 AND 4)**

**NEW PROTECTED CYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES BETWEEN JUNCTIONS (REFER TO SHEET 2)**

**PINNOCKHILL ROUNDABOUT**

**PROPOSED LOCATION FOR TOUCAN CROSSING**

**BRISTOL-MYERS-SQUIBB LABS**

**PAVILLIONS SHOPPING CENTRE**

**AIRSIDE BUSINESS PARK**

rev	date	description	OWF	RJK
P01	12-11-2020	ISSUED FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION		
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		B - Approved with comments		
		C - Do not use		

client approval

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project ref. **R132 CONNECTIVITY PROJECT**

drawing title **SITE LOCATION PLAN (SHEET 1)**

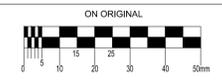


client **Comhairle Contae Fingh County Council**

designed by RJK author OWF scale N.T.S. sheet size A1P drawing no. 200021-DBFL-RD-SP-DR-C-1010 revision P01

## **Appendix 2: Drawings - Preferred Option Layout Drawings**

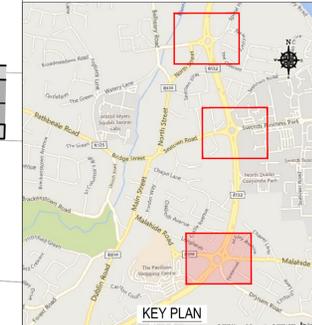
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- NOTES:
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  2. ALL TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT TO COMPLY FULLY WITH THE PROVISIONS OF CHAPTER 8 OF THE TRAFFIC SIGNS MANUAL.
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**LEGEND**

- ROAD SURFACE
- FOOTPATH
- CYCLE TRACK
- BUS LANE
- GRASS VERGE & LANDSCAPED AREAS
- TRAFFIC ISLAND



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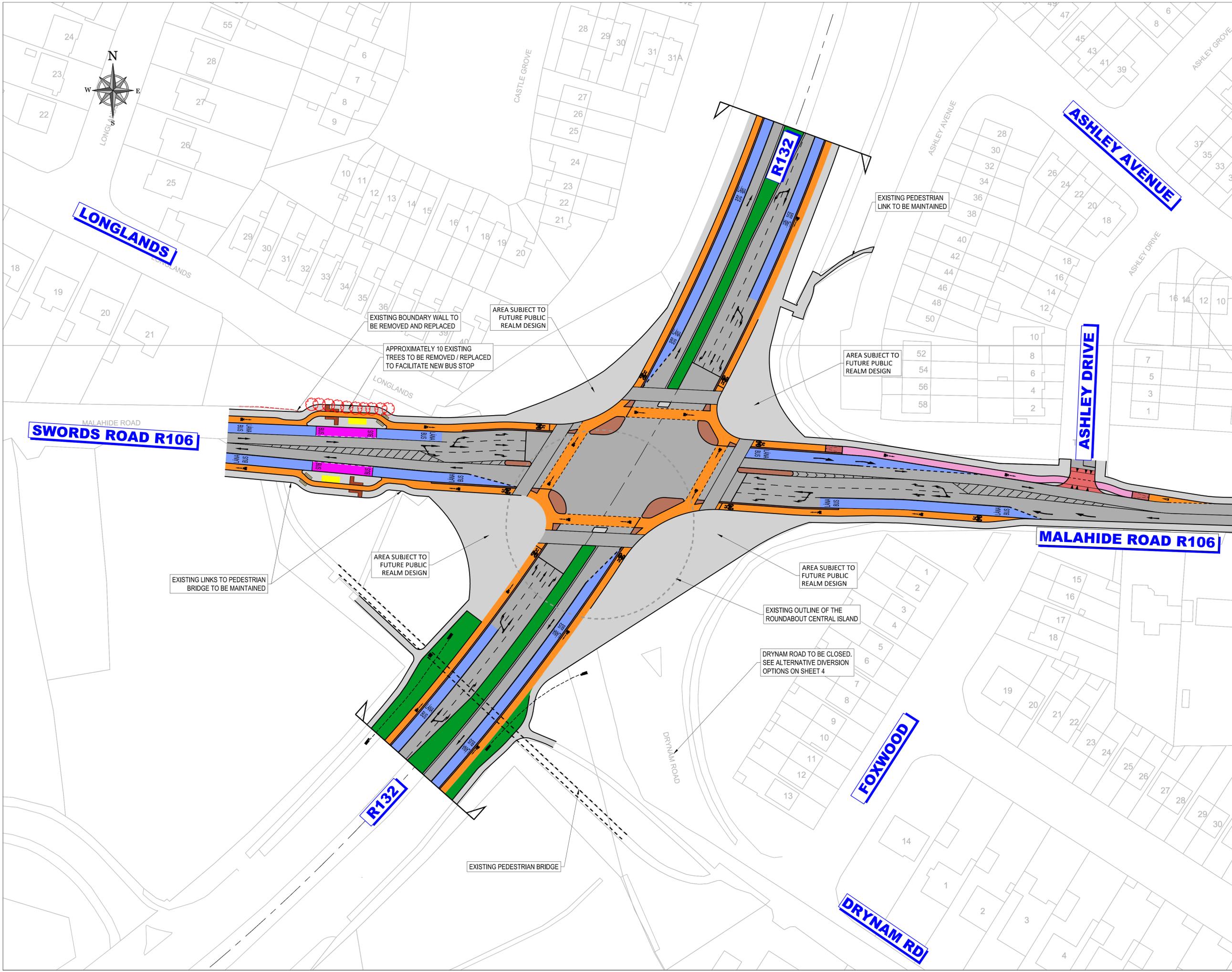
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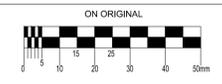
drawing title **MALAHIDE ROAD ROUNDABOUT EMERGING PREFERRED OPTION (SHEET 3)**

client **Comhairle Contae Finghail Finghail County Council**

designed by RJK author OWF scale 1:500 sheet size A1

drawing no. 200021-DBFL-RD-SP-DR-C-1013 P01



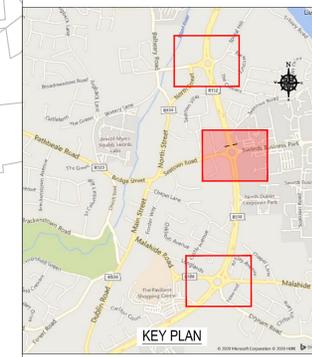


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**LEGEND**

- ROAD SURFACE
- FOOTPATH
- CYCLE TRACK
- BUS LANE
- GRASS VERGE & LANDSCAPED AREAS
- TRAFFIC ISLAND



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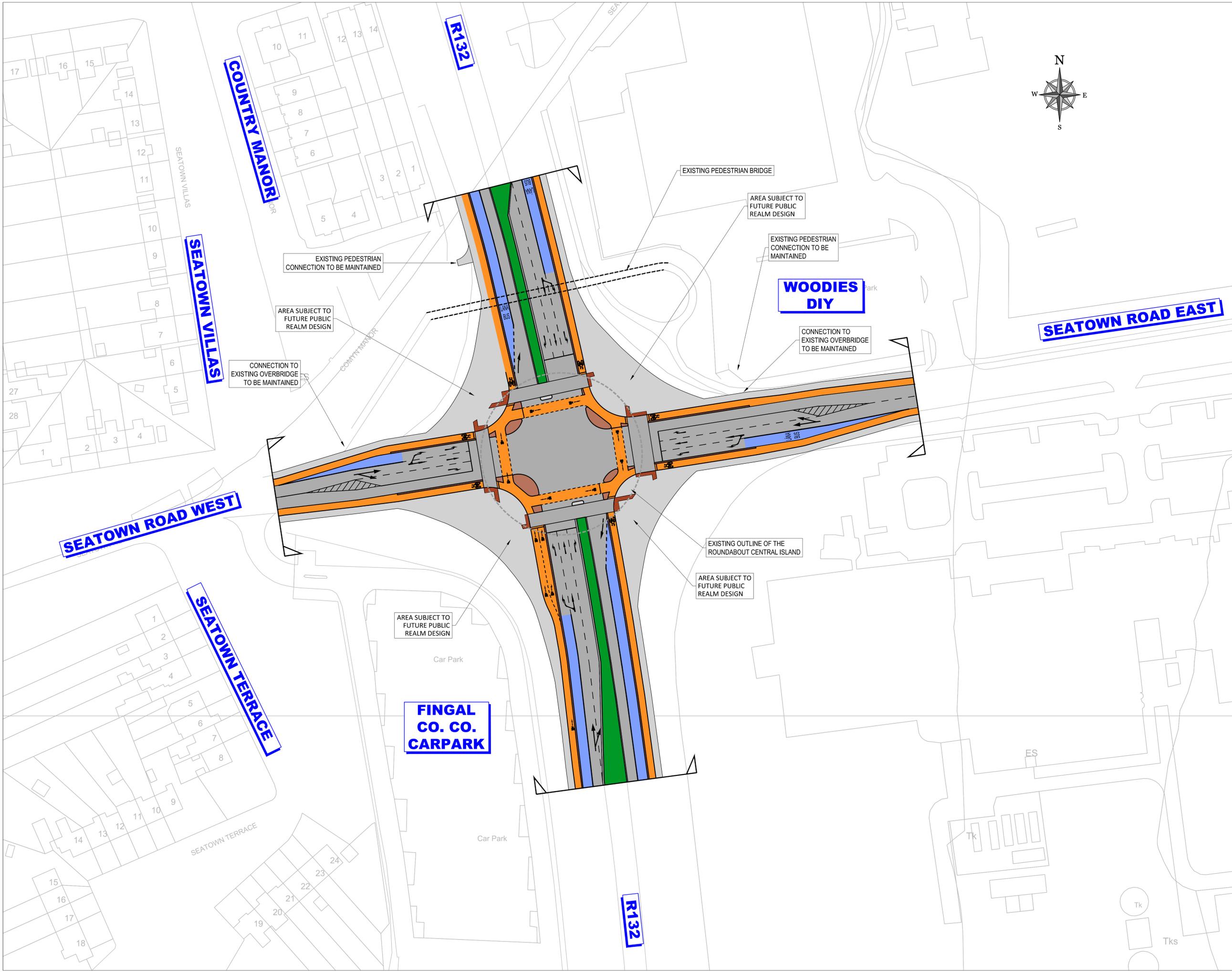
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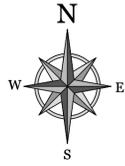
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**SEATOWN ROUNDABOUT EMERGING PREFERRED OPTION (SHEET 5)**

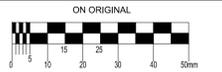
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LEGEND

[Grey Box]	ROAD SURFACE
[Light Grey Box]	FOOTPATH
[Orange Box]	CYCLE TRACK
[Blue Box]	BUS LANE
[Green Box]	GRASS VERGE & LANDSCAPED AREAS
[Red Circle]	TRAFFIC ISLAND



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suitability S2 - INFORMATION issue purpose PUBLIC CONSULTATION

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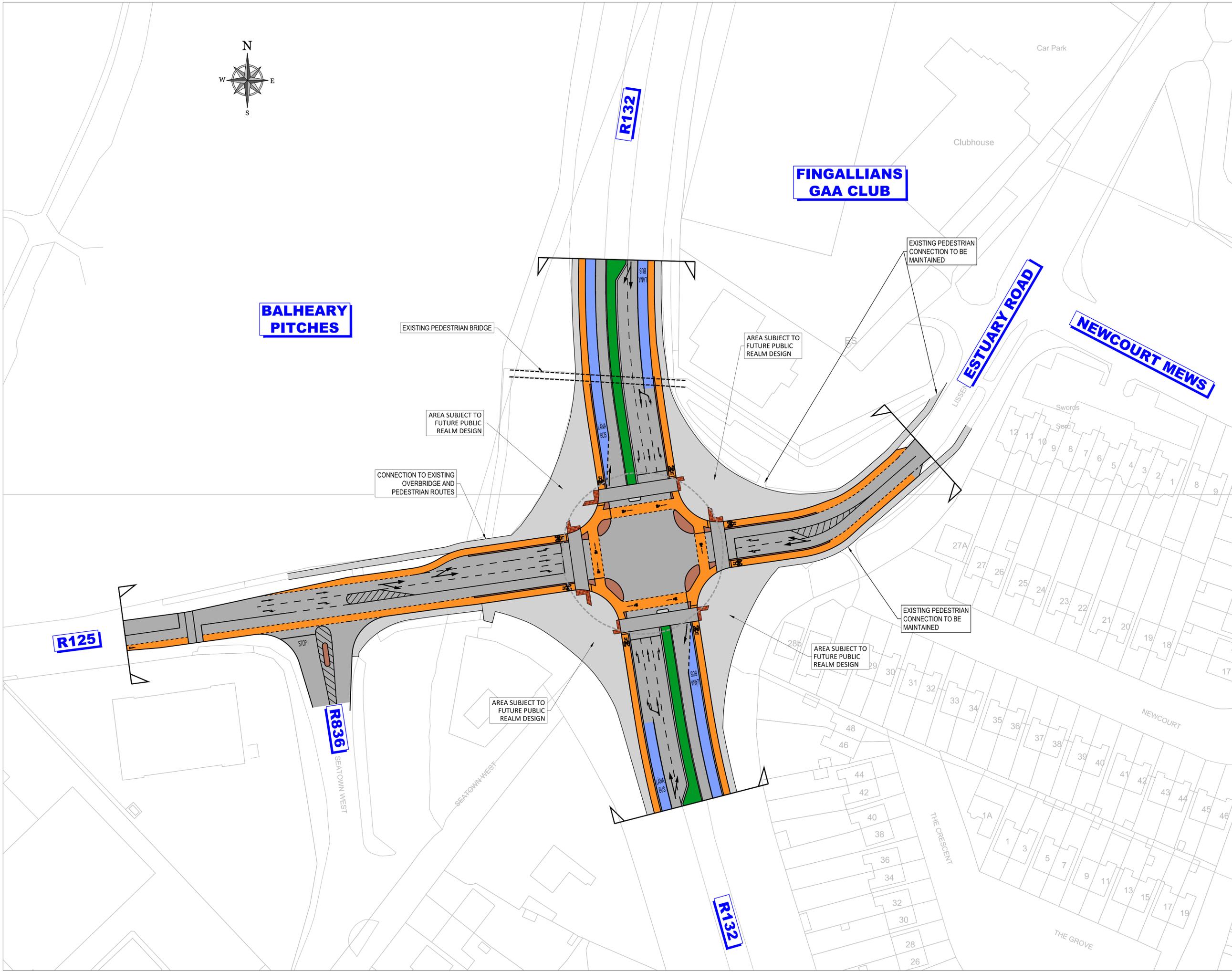
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drawing title  
ESTUARY ROUNDABOUT EMERGING PREFERRED OPTION (SHEET 6)

client  
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drawing no.			revision
200021-DBFL-RD-SP-DR-C-1033			P01



# Appendix 3 Existing Drainage Network



Figure 1 Existing drainage network from Seatown and Estuary Roundabouts

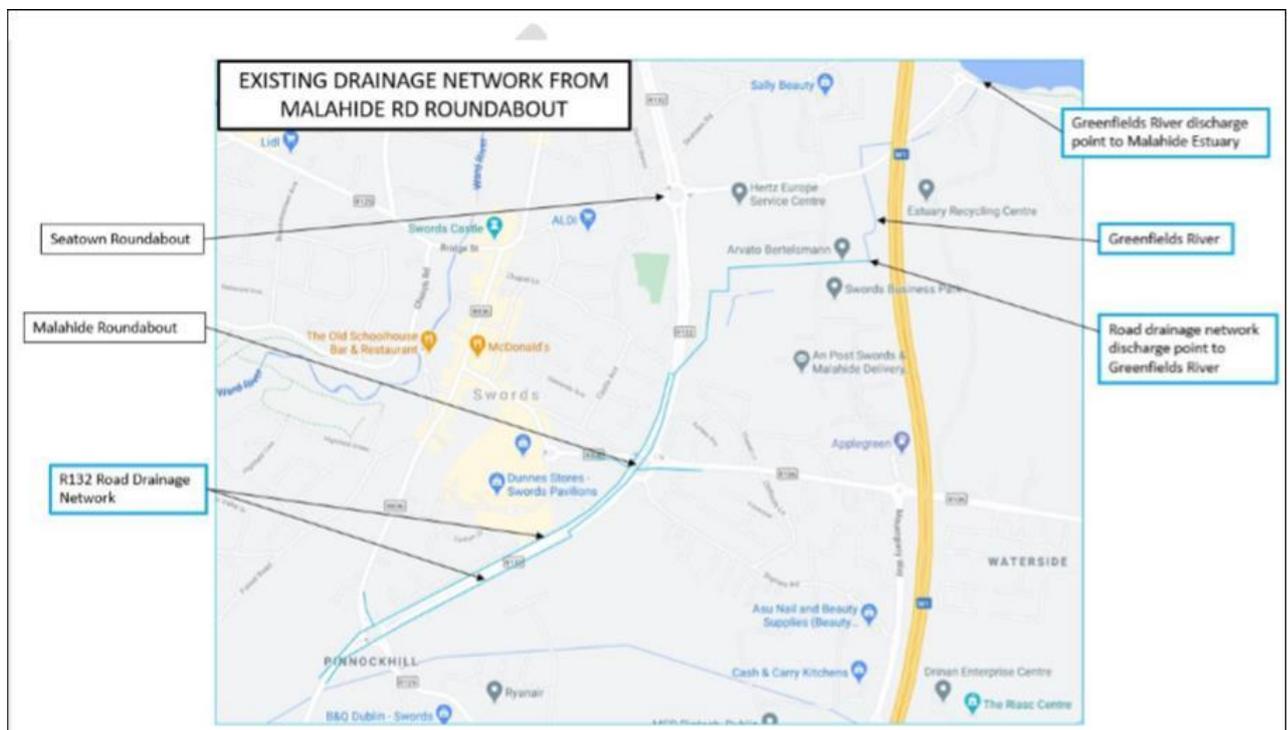


Figure 2 Existing drainage network from Malahide Roundabout

## Appendix 4 Plates



**Plate 1: View of Estuary roundabout. The proposed works will comprise the conversion of a roundabout at this location to a signalised intersection. The habitats onsite are highly modified considered to be of low ecological value (Source: Google Street View 2019).**



**Plate 2: View of Seatown roundabout. The proposed works will comprise the conversion of a roundabout at this location to a signalised intersection. The habitats onsite are highly modified considered to be of low ecological value (Source: Google Street View 2019).**



**Plate 3: View of Malahide Road roundabout. The proposed works will comprise the conversion of a roundabout at this location to a signalised intersection. The habitats onsite are highly modified considered to be of low ecological value (Source: Google Street View 2019).**



**Plate 4: It is proposed to construct a bus stop at the Malahide Road Intersection (removal of boundary wall and removal and replacement of approximately ten trees to facilitate new bus stop).**

## **Appendix 5 NPWS Site Synopsis: Malahide Estuary SAC and Malahide Estuary SPA**



**Site Name: Malahide Estuary SAC**

**Site Code: 000205**

Malahide Estuary is situated immediately north of Malahide and east of Swords in Co. Dublin. It is the estuary of the River Broadmeadow. The site is divided by a railway viaduct which was built in the 1800s.

The site is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) selected for the following habitats and/or species listed on Annex I / II of the E.U. Habitats Directive (\* = priority; numbers in brackets are Natura 2000 codes):

- |                                     |
|-------------------------------------|
| [1140] Tidal Mudflats and Sandflats |
| [1310] <i>Salicornia</i> Mud        |
| [1330] Atlantic Salt Meadows        |
| [1410] Mediterranean Salt Meadows   |
| [2120] Marram Dunes (White Dunes)   |
| [2130] Fixed Dunes (Grey Dunes)*    |

The outer part of the estuary is mostly cut off from the sea by a large sand spit, known as 'the island'. The outer estuary drains almost completely at low tide, exposing sand and mud flats. There is a large bed of Eelgrass (Dwarf Eelgrass, *Zostera noltii*, and Narrow-leaved Eelgrass, *Z. angustifolia*) in the north section of the outer estuary, along with Beaked Tasselweed (*Ruppia maritima*) and extensive mats of green algae (*Enteromorpha* spp., *Ulva lactuca*). Common Cord-grass (*Spartina anglica*) is also widespread in this sheltered part of the estuary.

The dune spit has a well developed outer dune ridge dominated by Marram Grass (*Ammophila arenaria*). The dry areas of the stabilised dunes have a dense covering of Burnet Rose (*Rosa pimpinellifolia*), Red Fescue (*Festuca rubra*) and species such as Yellow-wort (*Blackstonia perfoliata*), Autumn Gentian (*Gentianella amarella*), Hound's-tongue (*Cynoglossum officinale*), Carlina Thistle (*Carlina vulgaris*) and Pyramidal Orchid (*Anacamptis pyramidalis*). Much of the interior of the spit is taken up by a golf course. The inner stony shore has frequent Sea-holly (*Eryngium maritimum*). Well-developed saltmarshes occur at the tip of the spit. Atlantic salt meadow is the principle type and is characterised by species such as Sea-purslane (*Halimolobos portulacoides*), Sea Aster (*Aster tripolium*), Thrift (*Armeria maritima*), Sea Arrowgrass (*Triglochin maritima*) and Common Saltmarsh-grass (*Puccinellia maritima*). Elsewhere in the outer estuary, a small area of Mediterranean salt meadow occurs which is characterised by the presence of Sea Rush (*Juncus maritimus*). Below the salt marshes there are good examples of pioneering glasswort (*Salicornia* spp.) swards and other annual species, typified by *S. dolichostachya* and Annual Sea-blite (*Suaeda maritima*).

The inner estuary does not drain at low tide apart from the extreme inner part. Here, patches of saltmarsh and salt meadows occur, with Sea Aster, Sea Plantain (*Plantago maritima*) and Sea Club-rush (*Scirpus maritimus*). Beaked Tasselweed occurs in one of the channels.

The site includes a fine area of rocky shore south-east of Malahide and extending towards Portmarnock. This represents the only continuous section through the fossiliferous Lower Carboniferous rocks in the Dublin Basin, and is the type locality for several species of fossil coral.

The estuary is an important wintering bird site and holds an internationally important population of Brent Goose and nationally important populations of a further 15 species. Average maximum counts during the 1995/96-1997/98 period were: Brent Goose 1217; Great Crested Grebe 52; Mute Swan 106; Shelduck 471; Pochard 200; Goldeneye 333; Red-breasted Merganser 116; Oystercatcher 1228; Golden Plover 2123; Grey Plover 190; Redshank 454; Wigeon 50; Teal 78; Ringed Plover 106; Knot 858; Dunlin 1474; Greenshank 38; Pintail 53; Black-tailed Godwit 345; Bar-tailed Godwit 99. The high numbers of diving birds reflects the lagoon-type nature of the inner estuary.

The estuary also attracts migrant species such as Ruff, Curlew Sandpiper, Spotted Redshank and Little Stint. Breeding birds of the site include Ringed Plover, Shelduck and Mallard. Up to the 1950s there was a major tern colony at the southern end of the island and the habitat remains suitable for these birds.

The inner part of the estuary is heavily used for water sports. A section of the outer estuary has recently been infilled for a marina and housing development.

This site is a fine example of an estuarine system with all the main habitats represented. The site is important ornithologically, with a population of Brent Goose of international significance.

## SITE SYNOPSIS

**SITE NAME: MALAHIDE ESTUARY SPA**

**SITE CODE: 004025**

Malahide Estuary is situated in north Co. Dublin, between the towns of Malahide and Swords. The site encompasses the estuary, saltmarsh habitats and shallow subtidal areas at the mouth of the estuary. A railway viaduct, built in the 1800s, crosses the site and has led to the inner estuary becoming lagoonal in character and only partly tidal. Much of the outer part of the estuary is well-sheltered from the sea by a large sand spit, known as "The Island". This spit is now mostly converted to golf-course. The outer part empties almost completely at low tide and there are extensive intertidal flats exposed. Substantial stands of eelgrass (both *Zostera noltii* and *Z. angustifolia*) occur in the sheltered part of the outer estuary, along with Tasselweed (*Ruppia maritima*). Green algae, mostly *Ulva* spp., are frequent on the sheltered flats. Common Cord-grass (*Spartina anglica*) is well established in the outer estuary and also in the innermost part of the site. The intertidal flats support a typical macro-invertebrate fauna, with polychaete worms (*Arenicola marina* and *Hediste diversicolor*), bivalves such as *Cerastoderma edule*, *Macoma balthica* and *Scrobicularia plana*, the small gastropod *Hydrobia ulvae* and the crustacean *Corophium volutator*. Salt marshes, which provide important roosts during high tide, occur in parts of the outer estuary and in the extreme inner part of the inner estuary. These are characterised by such species as Sea Purslane (*Halimione portulacoides*), Sea Aster (*Aster tripolium*), Thrift (*Armeria maritima*), Sea Arrowgrass (*Triglochin maritima*) and Common Saltmarsh-grass (*Puccinellia maritima*).

The site is a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the E.U. Birds Directive, of special conservation interest for the following species: Great Crested Grebe, Light-bellied Brent Goose, Shelduck, Pintail, Goldeneye, Red-breasted Merganser, Oystercatcher, Golden Plover, Grey Plover, Knot, Dunlin, Black-tailed Godwit, Bar-tailed Godwit and Redshank. The E.U. Birds Directive pays particular attention to wetlands and, as these form part of this SPA, the site and its associated waterbirds are of special conservation interest for Wetland & Waterbirds.

This site is of high importance for wintering waterfowl and supports a particularly good diversity of species. It has internationally important populations of Light-bellied Brent Goose (1,104 individuals or 5% of the all-Ireland total) and Black-tailed Godwit (409 individuals or 2.9% of the all-Ireland total) - figures given here and below are mean peaks for the five winters 1995/96-1999/2000. Furthermore, the site supports nationally important populations of an additional 12 species: Great Crested Grebe (63), Shelduck (439), Pintail (58), Goldeneye (215), Red-breasted Merganser (99), Oystercatcher (1,360), Golden Plover (1,843), Grey Plover (201), Knot (915), Dunlin (1,594), Bar-tailed Godwit (156) and Redshank (581). The high numbers of diving ducks reflects the lagoon-type nature of the inner estuary, and this is one of the few sites in eastern Ireland where substantial numbers of Goldeneye can be found.

A range of other species occurs, including Mute Swan (37), Pochard (36), Ringed Plover (86), Lapwing (1,542), Curlew (548), Greenshank (38) and Turnstone (112).

The estuary also attracts other migrant wader species such as Ruff, Curlew Sandpiper, Spotted Redshank and Little Stint. These occur mainly in autumn, though occasionally in spring and winter.

Breeding birds of the site include Ringed Plover, Shelduck and Mallard. Up to the 1950s there was a major tern colony at the southern end of Malahide Island. Grey Herons breed nearby and feed regularly within the site.

Malahide Estuary SPA is a fine example of an estuarine system, providing both feeding and roosting areas for a range of wintering waterfowl. The lagoonal nature of the inner estuary is of particular value as it increases the diversity of birds which occur. The site is of high conservation importance, with internationally important populations of Light-bellied Brent Goose and Black-tailed Godwit, and nationally important populations of a further 12 species. Two of the species which occur regularly (Golden Plover and Bar-tailed Godwit) are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive. Malahide Estuary (also known as Broadmeadow Estuary) is a Ramsar Convention site.

23.8.2013