

# Proposed Housing Development at Mourne View, Skerries, Co. Dublin

EIA SCREENING REPORT IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE  
120 OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS  
2001, AS AMENDED

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## Environmental Assessment **Built Environment**

Client:

Fingal County Council

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# 1 Introduction

Fingal County Council (FCC) proposes to construct 14no. dwellings and associated infrastructure at Mourne View, Skerries, Co. Dublin. The proposed development will be carried out under Section 179A<sup>1</sup> of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2023.

## 1.1 Statement of Purpose

Brady Shipman Martin (BSM) was appointed by FCC to prepare a report to assist FCC in undertaking a Preliminary Examination and EIA Screening (for the purposes of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)) in accordance with Article 120<sup>2</sup> of the PDR 2001.

## 1.2 Qualifications

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

A technical review of this document has been completed by Senior Ecologist and Associate, Matthew Hague BSc MSc Adv. Dip. Plan. & Env. Law CEnv MCIEEM. Matthew is a highly experienced and qualified ecologist, with a master's degree in Ecosystem Conservation and Landscape Management. He has over 20 years of experience in ecological and environmental consultancy, across a wide range of sectors. Matthew is a Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv) and a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM). Matthew has also completed an Advanced Diploma in Planning and Environmental Law, at King's Inns and is a member of the Irish Environmental Law Association (IELA).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2023/si/101/made/en/print>

<sup>2</sup> Sub-threshold EIAR

## 2 Background and Methodology

### 2.1 Legislation

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

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

### 2.2 Guidelines

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

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

### 2.3 Legislative Context

The EIA Directive entered into force in 1985 (Directive 85/337/EEC). It was amended three times (in 1997, 2003 and 2009) and subsequently codified by Directive 2011/92/EU and amended by Directive 2014/52/EU. The EIA Directive is transposed into Irish legislation through the Planning and Development Act 2000-2023 and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2023.

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

Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the PDR 2001 lists the classes of development for which EIA is a mandatory requirement. Part 2 of Schedule 5 sets out specific thresholds for classes of development at or above which EIA is also a mandatory requirement. 'Sub-threshold development' refers to developments of a class listed in Part 2 of Schedule 5, which do not meet or exceed the stated threshold, and these developments are subject to screening for the requirement for 'sub-threshold EIA'.

In the case of Local Authority development (i.e. as in the case of the proposed development), this screening for the requirement for sub-threshold EIA is in accordance with Article 120 of the PDR 2001, which states that:

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

- (b) Where the local authority concludes, based on such preliminary examination, that—
- (i) there is **no real likelihood of significant effects** on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall conclude that an EIA is not required,
  - (ii) there is **significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects** on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, the information specified in Schedule 7A for the purposes of a screening determination, or
  - (iii) there is **a real likelihood of significant effects** on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall—
    - (I) conclude that the development would be likely to have such effects, and
    - (II) prepare, or cause to be prepared, an EIAR in respect of the development.

Schedule 7 of the PDR 2001 sets out the criteria that must be considered in determining whether a sub-threshold project should be subject to EIA. Schedule 7A lists the information that the applicant must submit to the competent authority for the purposes of an EIA screening determination, *i.e.* the information that must be contained in the EIA Screening Report. This is a step-by-step process known as ‘screening for EIA’ (refer to **Figure 2.1**).

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

## 2.4 Approach to EIA Screening Process

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

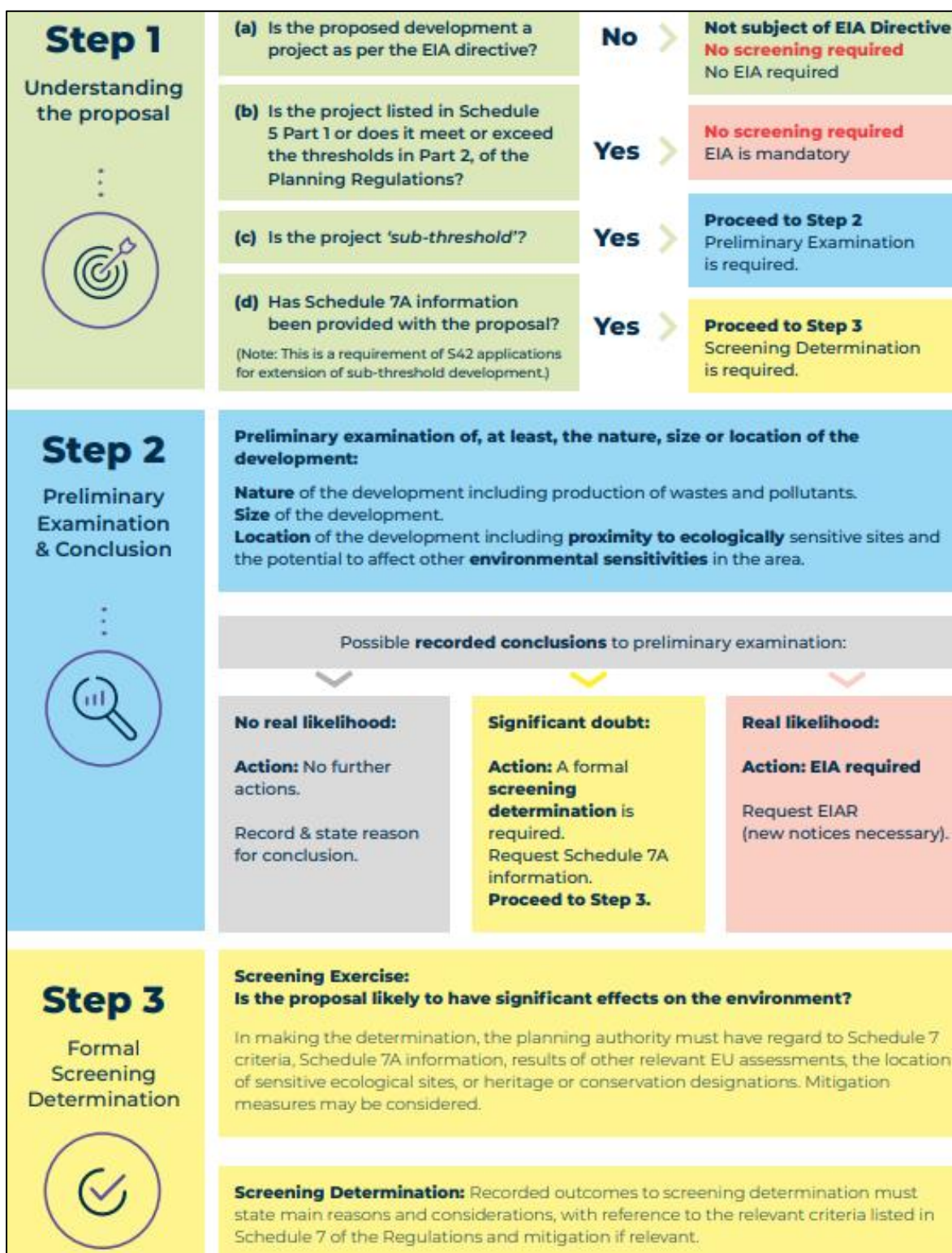
- Step 1: Pre-screening / Understanding the proposal / proposed development;
- Step 2: Preliminary examination and conclusion; and
- Step 3: Screening determination (by competent authority).

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

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



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



## 3 Pre-Screening / Understanding the Proposal / Proposed Development

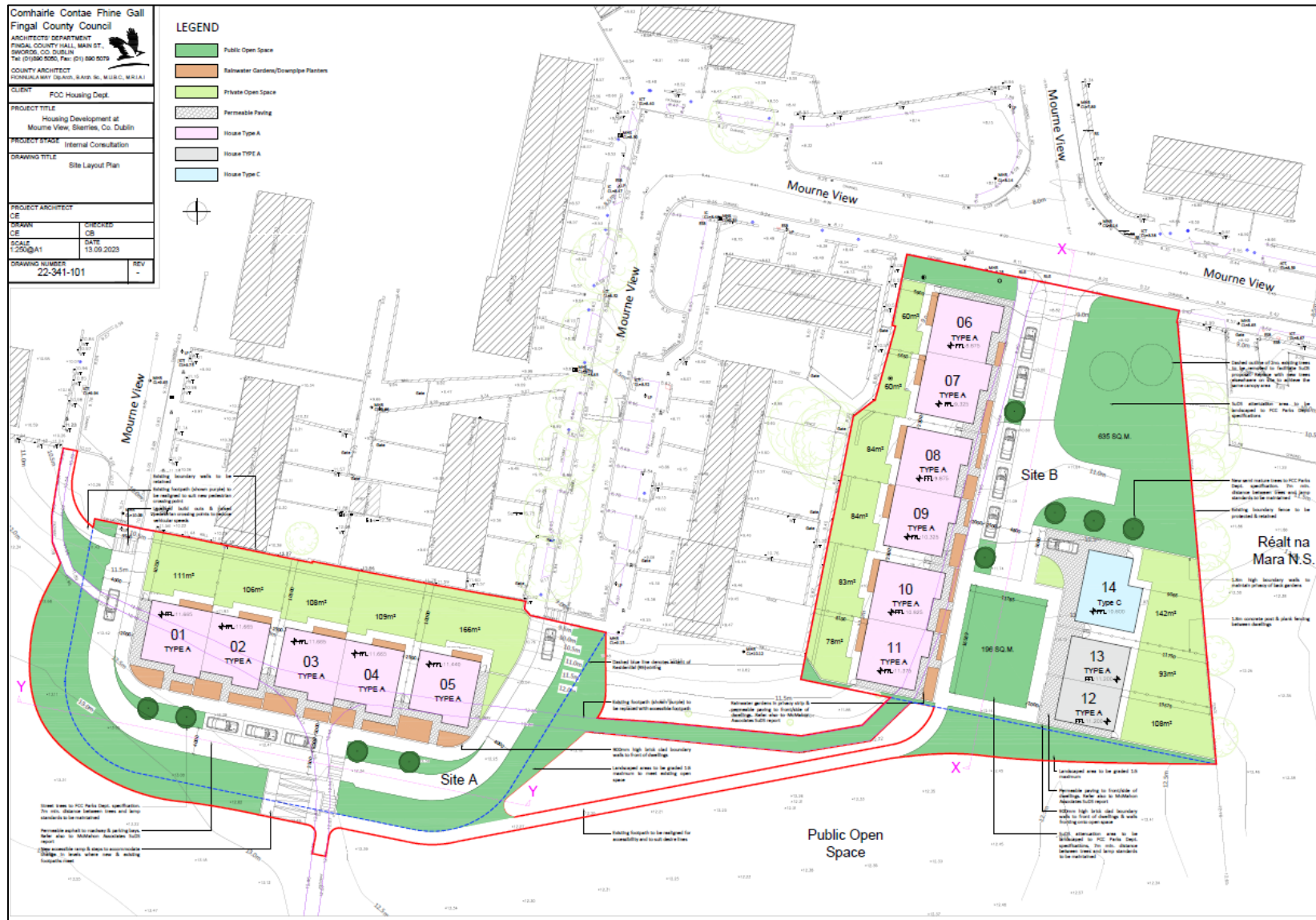
### 3.1 Overall Description of the Proposed Development

The proposed development will consist of the following (refer to **Figure 3.1** below).

- A total of 14no. dwellings representing a density of 19.2 dwellings/hectare for Site A and 25.7 dwellings/hectare for Site B
- A mix of one storey and two storey dwelling types
- New carriageways designed to the standards as set out in Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS 2013)
- On street parking for 8no. and in curtilage parking for 1-2 no. vehicles
- Parking for bicycles in the back gardens of the dwellings
- Associated site development works including foul drainage, surface water, mains water, gas and telecommunications connections
- The site will be serviced by Irish Water, ESB, EIR, GNI, VM utilities which are all available
- Public lighting to pavements adjacent to and within the site will be designed and installed to the standards of the Public Lighting Section in Fingal County Council Operations Department
- Private open space is provided to all dwellings in the form of back gardens
- A 1.9-2.9m deep privacy strip between the public footpaths and the external walls of the dwellings which form part of the SuDS strategy
- Space standards within dwellings and provision of private amenity space meet the requirements stated in Fingal Development 2023-2029, Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities; and Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG, 2009) and Design Manual for Quality Housing (DoHLGH, 2022).

For further information refer to the Engineering Report (2023) prepared by McMahon Associates and Architectural Report (2023) and associated drawings prepared by Fingal County Council and submitted as part of the application.

Figure 3.1 Proposed site layout for development at Mourne View, Skerries, Co. Dublin (Fingal County Council, 2023)



### 3.2 Requirement for EIA or for Screening for ‘Sub-threshold EIA’

This stage establishes whether, with reference to Part 1 and Part 2 of Schedule 5 of PDR 2001, the proposal / proposed development, is a ‘project’ within the meaning of the EIA Directive and if it is of a type where the requirement for EIA is mandatory (Part 1 of Schedule 5), or of a type and scale that meets or exceeds a stated threshold at or above which the requirement for EIA is also mandatory (Part 2 of Schedule 5).

Classes of development listed in Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the PDR 2001 relate to major industrial and infrastructural projects (e.g. power stations, refineries, metal works, major pipelines and powerlines, and mines). The proposed development does not conform to any of the classes of development and is not a ‘project’ as set out in Part 1 of Schedule 5 of PDR 2001. Therefore, there is no requirement for mandatory EIA under this provision.

With reference to Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the PDR 2001, the proposal can be considered a ‘project’ within a class / type of development as set out in **Table 3.1**.

**Table 3.1 Applicable classes of development for the purposes of EIA (from Part 2 Schedule 5 of PDR 2001)**

Provision (Part 2 of Schedule 5 of PDR 2001)	Proposed Development	Pre-screening Assessment
Schedule 5, Part 2, paragraph 10(b)(i): <i>“Construction of more than 500 dwelling units.”</i>	14no. dwelling units	<b>Requirement for Mandatory EIA -</b> The proposed development does not meet or exceed the stated threshold. Therefore, EIA is not a mandatory requirement.  <b>Requirement for Sub-threshold EIA -</b> The proposed development is of a class / type listed in this provision but being significantly below the stated threshold is considered to be ‘sub-threshold’. The proposal should be screened for the requirement for ‘sub-threshold EIA’.
Schedule 5, Part 2, paragraph 10(b)(iv): <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>  <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>	0.69 Ha located in other parts of a built-up area	<b>Requirement for Mandatory EIA -</b> The proposed development does not meet or exceed the stated threshold. Therefore, EIA is not a mandatory requirement.  <b>Requirement for Sub-threshold EIA -</b> The proposed development is of a class / type listed in this provision but is significantly below the stated threshold. The proposal should be screened for the requirement for ‘sub-threshold EIA’.

The pre-screening exercise has concluded that the proposed development is ‘sub-threshold’ in respect of development classes 10(b)(i) and 10(b)(iv) as listed in Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the PDR 2001, and therefore should be screened for the requirement for ‘sub-threshold EIA’ in accordance with Article 120 of the PDR 2001, to determine whether there is a likelihood of significant effects and, therefore, whether EIA is required for the proposed development.



## 4 Preliminary Examination / Screening for requirement for Sub-threshold EIA

### 4.1 Preliminary Examination: Screening for 'Sub-threshold EIA'

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

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

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

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

This information is provided in the following sections.

### 4.2 Description of the Proposed Development

An overview of the description of the proposed development is provided at **Section 3.1** of this report. In addition to planning drawings and other reports, the application is also accompanied by the following specific reports:

- Architectural Report (Fingal County Council, 2023);
- Engineering Report (McMahon Associates, 2023);
- Ground Investigation (Causeway Geotech, 2023);
- Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (BSM, 2023).

Further detail on the proposal / proposed development is provided in the following sections.

#### 4.2.1 Background

The proposed development site (refer to **Figure 4.1** below) is located at Mourne View in Skerries. It comprises two separate areas (sites A and B). Site A is bounded by open space to the east, south and west and by the existing residential development of Mourne View to the north. Site B is bound by open space to the south and the existing residential development of Mourne View to the north and west. *Realt na Mara* National School is just to the east and Skerries Community College is c. 360m to the south-east.

**Figure 4.1** The location of the proposed development site at Mourne View, Skerries (red line is indicative, for full details refer to the accompanying documentation)



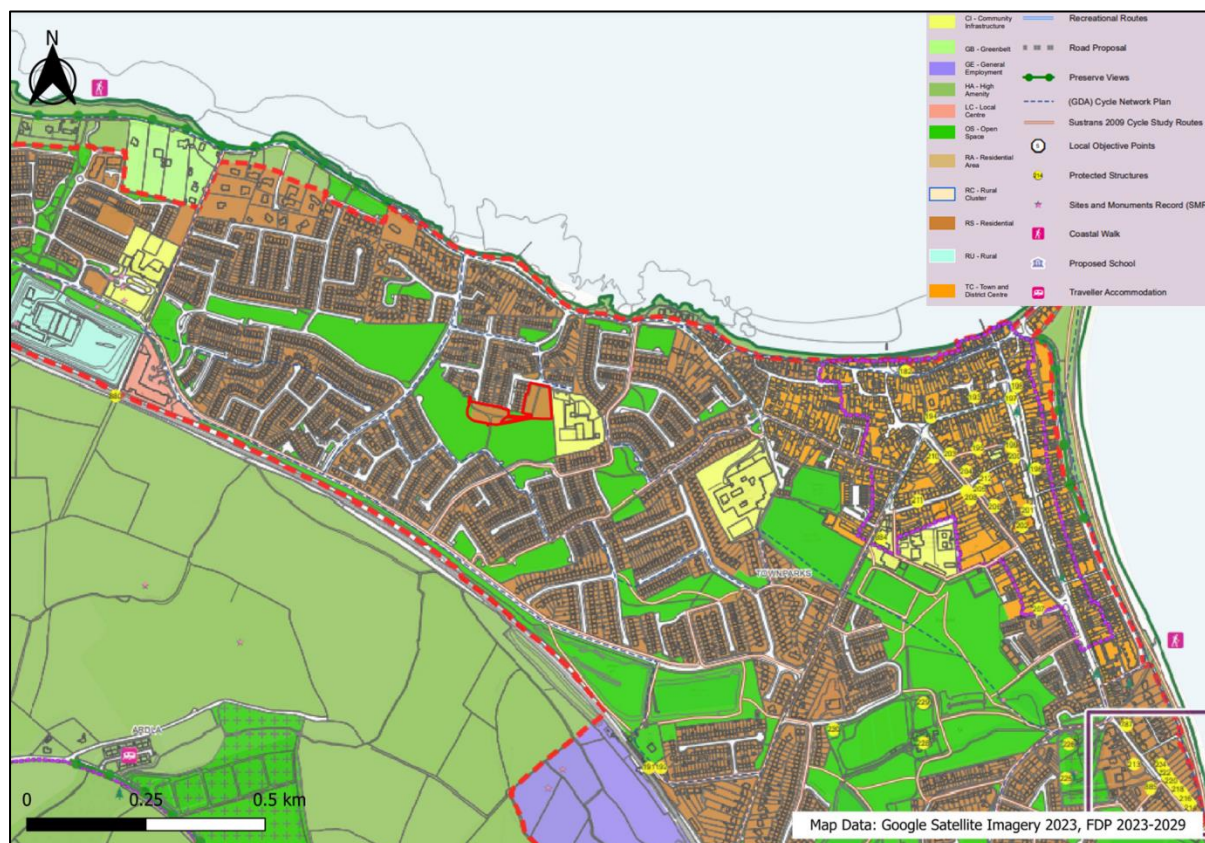
#### 4.2.2 Planning Context

The site is greenfield and comprises an area of land currently used as public open space. As per the *Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029*, the proposed development site is zoned RS-Residential – ‘Provide for residential development and protect and improve residential amenity’. The Development Plan maps show the land immediately south of the proposed development as ‘OS- Open Space’. The lands immediately to north are ‘RS- Residential’ and the lands to the east are ‘CI- Community Infrastructure’. The GDA cycle network plan 2022 shows proposed cycle network (feeder route) for Skerries in the vicinity of the proposed development. Refer to **Figure 4.2**.

The *Fingal Development Plan 2023 - 2029* states that ‘Under Housing for All, A New Housing Plan for Ireland, the Government has ambitious plans to average over 10,000 social housing homes annually for the next five years and to continue to build social housing to 2030’.



Figure 4.2 Land use zoning at the proposed development site (*Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029*)



## 4.2.3 Water Infrastructure

### 4.2.3.1 Supply

The Engineering Report prepared for the proposed development (McMahon Associates, 2023) states that there is existing Irish Water watermain infrastructure at the entrance and exit to the Site A from Mourne View. Further to the west of Site A, there is a 150mm watermain and to the east is a 100mm diameter watermain. For Site B as well there is existing Irish Water watermain infrastructure at the entrance to the site from Mourne View.

The proposed Site A development will be connected to the 100mm diameter watermain located at the exit to the proposed housing development to the north-east of the site. The proposed Site B development will be connected to the 100mm diameter watermain located at the entrance to the proposed housing development. Further, 1 no. fire hydrants will be located within the road verge for Site A and within proposed footpath for Site B, at a minimum 6m distance from all dwellings to ensure that each dwelling is within 46m of a fire hydrant as per Irish Water requirements.

### 4.2.3.2 Drainage

#### Surface Water

The Engineering Report prepared for the proposed development (McMahon Associates, 2023) states that for Site A, there is an existing 225mm diameter storm sewer located at the proposed exit to the north-east and another existing 150mm diameter storm sewer located at the proposed entrance to the north-west, which discharges to a 300mm diameter storm sewer within Mourne View Skerries. For

Site B, there is an existing 150mm diameter storm sewer which is located north of the proposed unit no.6 and discharges to a 300mm diameter storm sewer within Mourné View Skerries.

The Engineering Report notes that the proposed development site is not located close to any watercourses or ditches. Therefore, the surface water discharge from the Site A will be to existing 225mm diameter storm sewer, located at the proposed exit to the north-east. The western portion of the site which drains a section of the road, footpath and landscape discharges to the existing 150mm diameter storm sewer located the proposed entrance to the north-west. The Site B will discharge to the existing storm manhole located north of proposed unit no. 6 which has an outgoing 150mm diameter storm pipe.

Currently, the site is greenfield and consisting of open space. Surface water attenuation storage will be provided for the 1 in 100 year event plus 20% climate change. Refer to the Engineering Report (McMahon Associates, 2023) for further details.

Sustainable urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) are a requirement of Fingal County Council. Surface water management for the proposed development will be designed to comply with the 'Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works, V6.0 2005' and the 2009 OPW Guidelines 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management', however, the infiltration testing results suggest the site is not suitable for infiltration and therefore SuDS elements will be limited and the current design reflects that. As part of the surface water drainage strategy, it is proposed to provide the surface water attenuation via the drainage stone layer of the porous asphalt/landscaped area and in underground crates for both sites. The surface water will infiltrate through various additional SuDS components such as permeable paving, porous asphalt, drainage stone layer within landscape area, filter drains, rainwater downpipe planters and rainwater gardens acting as source control and surface water treatment before entering the main storm line. The topography of the site is too steep to consider any above ground storage features such as basins, swales or wetlands.

It is proposed to utilise porous asphalt on the carriageway and parking spaces to collect, treat and store surface water runoff. Filter drains will be used within the sub-base of the porous asphalt to collect and treat surface water runoff. Sump manholes will also be provided in manholes to ensure sediment is caught and collected prior to leaving the site.

### Foul Water

The Engineering Report (McMahon Associates, 2023) states that for Site A there is an existing 150mm diameter foul sewer located c. 1.8m outside the site boundary to the north-east which runs north and discharges to a 150mm foul sewer within Mourné View. For Site B, there is an existing 225mm diameter foul sewer located across the proposed site entrance within the site boundary to the north which runs west and then north-east to a 225mm diameter foul sewer within Mourné View.

The foul water strategy for the development proposes that the foul water drainage network for the proposed development will be separated from the surface water sewers, and will comply with the latest "Technical Guidance Document H - Drainage and Waste Water Disposal". For Site A, proposed uPVC 150mm diameter foul gravity sewer will collect the wastewater via soil vent pipes and inspection chambers from the proposed dwellings and discharge into the existing foul manhole with a 150mm PVC foul sewer outgoing pipe to the north-east of the site boundary. For Site B, proposed uPVC 150mm diameter foul gravity sewer will collect the wastewater via soil vent pipes and inspection chambers from the proposed dwellings and discharge into the existing 225mm PVC foul sewer to the north at the



entrance of the site via cascade manhole. The pipes are designed with a roughness coefficient of 0.15mm and designed to achieve a minimum self-cleansing velocity of 0.75m/s.

Once operational, foul water flows from the proposed development will be directed to Barnageeragh Wastewater Treatment Plant (WwTP), operating under EPA Wastewater Discharge Licence D0023-01. The capacity available at Barnageeragh Wastewater Treatment Works is sufficient to accommodate the inflow arising from the proposed development and it will therefore be possible to maintain the unpolluted status of the waters of the Irish Sea.

#### 4.2.4 Access and Parking

The proposed development site is located in Mourne View, Skerries. The existing site consists of land used as open space and can be accessed via footpath accessed from the existing housing development of Mourne View. There is no existing traffic management infrastructure in place.

The Engineering Report (McMahon Associates, 2023) states that it is proposed to provide vehicular access to the north-west of Site A and to the north-east of Site B, from the existing housing development of Mourne View. Site A will be provided with a one-way traffic management system to increase amenity space and traffic calming. The vehicles will exit onto the existing housing development of Mourne View.

For Site A, a proposed carriageway width of 3.5-4.0m has been provided to accommodate the manoeuvring of occasional large vehicles and to allow circulation of fire and refuse vehicles. For Site B, the proposed carriageway width is 4.8m to promote lower speeds, the proposed entrance kerb radius is 4.5m and the proposed turning head kerb radius is proposed at 8.5m and 6.5m. Refer to the Engineering Report for further details.

A keep straight ahead sign will be provided at entrance of Site A and a no entry sign and road markings will be provided at the exit to minimise potential risk to oncoming drivers when leaving the site. A yield sign and road marking will be provided at the entrance of Site B to ensure drivers minimise potential risk to pedestrians/drivers when leaving the site. It is also proposed to provide pedestrian access surrounding the site via a concrete footway which connects the site to the existing development of Mourne View, to the open space to the south and also connects Site A and Site B.

The proposed Site A will provide for 15no. bicycle parking spaces and 3no. car parking spaces (1no. EV space). The proposed Site B will provide for 34no. bicycle parking spaces and 6no. car parking spaces (1no. EV space). These proposals align with the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029. The parallel parking bays within the proposed development comply with the minimum standards set out in DMURS i.e. spaces should be a minimum of 6m long x 2.4m wide.

#### 4.2.5 Waste

The proposed development is small in scale and does not give rise to any unusual construction or operational arrangements or features. Measures will be implemented during the construction phase to reduce the amount of waste produced and to manage the waste generated to minimise the effect on the environment. On-site segregation of non-hazardous and hazardous waste material into appropriate categories will be undertaken. During the operational phase, all dwellings will be provided with dedicated bins (black, brown and green) stored in the back gardens.

A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), which also addresses Resource and Waste Management, has been prepared by Brady Shipman Martin (2023). The CEMP will be a working document and will be finalised by the Contractor following appointment and prior to commencing works on site. The CEMP is a live document, and the Contractor will ensure that it remains up to date for the duration of the construction period. The CEMP may need to be altered during the lifecycle of the construction period to take account of monitoring results, legislative changes, outcomes of third party consultations etc.

### 4.2.6 Energy

The Architectural Report (Fingal County Council, 2023) states that the detailed design of the proposed development will ensure compliance with requirements expressed in current, relevant parts of the Building Regulations, Part F: Ventilation, Part J: Heat Producing Appliances and Part L: Conservation of Fuel and Energy. The requirement for nearly zero energy buildings and renewable sources of energy will be addressed in the detailed design and construction stages.

### 4.2.7 Construction Phase

The construction phase will involve the following generic sequencing:

- Pre-construction surveys;
- Site establishment (e.g. scaffolding, site hoarding, protection of adjacent structures, etc.);
- Site clearance (e.g. vegetation clearance);
- Excavations for local foundations and drainage;
- Construction of proposed building; and
- Fit-out, landscaping and finishes.

The site is small and the extent of the development is of a similar small-scale and typical of a proposed development site in a built up area.

### 4.2.8 Environmental Protection Measures

While no likely significant effects on the environment have been identified (refer to Sections 4.3, 4.4 and 5.0 of this report) the following best practice environmental protection measures will be adopted.

#### 4.2.8.1 Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP)

- The contractor will prepare a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) to be agreed with Fingal County Council prior to commencement of construction. The CTMP will designate construction traffic routes, parking and storage areas. All activity is to be limited to designated areas to ensure minimum impact on surrounding areas.
- The Contractor will be required to ensure the safe access and egress of construction traffic from the site and public road. The Contractor will be responsible for ensuring that there is no conflict between road users and vehicles entering / exiting the site.
- Road and footpath cleaning will take place to ensure that there is no negative impact on road / footpath users.

#### 4.2.8.2 Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)

Prior to commencement, the contractor will prepare a detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to be agreed with Fingal County Council prior to commencement of

construction (Refer to the Construction and Environmental Management Plan/Resource and Waste Management Plan prepared by Brady Shipman Martin and issued separately). The CEMP will address the following aspects:

- Establishing channels of communication between the contractor, Local Authority and local residents.
- Avoiding, reducing and / or remediating any environmental effects arising from construction activities.
- Site operating hours will be as per the standard construction hours as permitted by Fingal County Council.
- A site compound will be established and maintained in good condition throughout the construction period. The compound will be decommissioned and fully reinstated at the end of the contract.
- The construction site will be fully enclosed and secured with solid hoarding minimum 2.4m high.
- Site lighting will not be directed towards the adjoining residential area.
- Noise, Dust Minimisation, Surface Water Management & Resource & Waste Management will be addressed prior to construction.

### 4.2.9 Environmental Enhancement Measures Proposed

The development will include the provision of nesting boxes to maximise nesting opportunities for Swift, House Sparrow, House Martin, Swallow, Bats and insects. The quantity, type and location of these nesting boxes will be determined in consultation with specialists during detail design.

Gardens and public open space areas will be landscaped and planted in accordance with the landscaping proposals for the scheme to be agreed with Fingal County Councils Parks Department at detailed design stage. The landscaping design where appropriate will include biodiverse and pollinator friendly planting.

## 4.3 Description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected

This section provides a description of the location of the proposed development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected. The compilation of the information in this section has had regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the PDR 2001.

A site visit was carried out at the location of the proposed development by BSM personnel on 18 October 2023, with a view to identifying any environmental sensitivities or potential pathways to same.

The proposed development site (refer to **Figure 4.1** below) is located at Mourne View In Skerries. The proposed development is a greenfield site and comprises of 'Site A' and 'Site B'. Site A is bounded by open space to the east, south and west and by existing residential development of Mourne View to the north. Site B is bound by open space to the south and the existing residential development of Mourne View to the north and west and *Realt na Mara* National School to the east. Skerries Community College is c. 360m to the south-east.

The topography of Site A is steep with levels rising from north-east to south-west c. 4.2m, rising at a gradient of c. 1:18. The topography of Site B is also steep with levels rising from north-west to south-east c. 4.2m, rising at a gradient of c. 1:19.

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The proposed development will consist of construction of two blocks containing 14no. dwellings in total. Site A measures 0.31 hectares, contains 5no. dwellings and represents a density of 16.1 dwellings/hectare. Site B measures 0.38 hectares, contains 9 no. dwellings and represents a density of 23.7 dwellings/hectare.

The site of the proposed development is situated in the Local Electoral Area (LEA) of 'Balbriggan' and the Electoral Division (ED) of 'Skerries'. The CSO provides data on population and socio-economic aspects of the population at different levels from the State, county level, Local Electoral Area (LEA), individual Electoral Districts (ED) to Small Areas (SA) within each County. The 2016 Census undertaken by CSO provides detailed results and reports. The most recent census was undertaken in April 2022. CSO published preliminary results for 'Census of Population 2022' on 23 June 2022 (updated September 2022) which have been superseded by the summary results published on 30 May 2023. A series of themed reports, Small Area Population Statistics (SAPS) and Place of Work, School, College - Census of Anonymised Records (POWSCAR) and their detailed statistical tables will be provided as per the schedule set by CSO for May 2023 to December 2023.

The CSO data illustrates that the population of the Irish State increased between 2011 and 2016 by 3.8%, and further increased by 8.1% between 2016 and 2022, bringing the total population of the Irish State to c. 5.1 million in April 2022 (see **Table 4.1**, below), which is the highest population recorded in a census since 1841. In the period between 2016 and 2022, the population in the administrative area of Fingal County Council (FCC) increased by 11.6% as compared to the previous increase of 8% between 2011 and 2016. The population statistics indicate that growth at the level of the ED between 2016 and 2022 was more than the growth between 2011 and 2016.

**Table 4.1 Population change: State, LA and ED level: 2011 – 2022 (CSO, 2012; 2017; 2022)**

Area	Number of persons			
	2011	2016	2022	Change
Ireland (State)	4,588,252	4,761,865	5,149,139	+3.8% (2011-2016) +8.1% (2016-2022)
Fingal County Council Administrative Area	273,991	296,020	330,506	+8.0% (2011-2016) +11.6% (2016-2022)
Skerries ED	8,333	8,501	8,879	+2.1% (2011-2016) +4.4% (2016-2022)

The site of the proposed development is situated adjacent to the existing road network, namely the Balbriggan Road (R127). The area is served by public transport infrastructure or services, including bus services, providing access to-and-from Dublin city centre and Dublin Airport and the Skerries train station is c. 10 minutes walking distance from the site. The subject site is c. 14.5km north-east (linear distance) to the nearest SEVESO III site SK Biotek Ireland Ltd, Watery Lane, Swords (lower tier) and is outside the Seveso site consultation distance.

Skerries Community College is c. 360m to the south-east. There are retail and health care facilities, schools, GAA clubs and other services in close proximity to the proposed development.

Owing to the urban context, the site of the proposed development and the majority of the surrounding areas are on hardstanding underlain by artificial surfaces. The bedrock geology in the area is of the Skerries Formation and comprises of laminated blue-grey siltstone and sandstone, with no karst

features present. The site is underlain by ‘poor aquifer’ that is ‘*bedrock which is generally unproductive except for local zones*’. The groundwater vulnerability is classed as ‘high’ (GS1, 2023).

A review of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) web-tool indicates that the Northwestern Irish Sea (IE\_EA\_020\_0000) is c. 175m to the north of the proposed development. Further, the Margaretstown River (IE\_EA\_08M030500) runs c. 320m to the south of the proposed development. The river flows south-east and merges with Mill Stream (Skerries) before entering the Northwestern Irish Sea c. 2.2km downstream. There is therefore a potential surface water link between the proposed development site and the Northwestern Irish Sea, should surface water arising at the site discharge to the rivers or directly to the coastal waters. Refer to **Figure 4.3**. The proposed development site is located within the Nanny-Delvin catchment (08), Palmerstown\_SC\_010 sub-catchment (08\_2) and Mill stream (Skerries)\_010 river sub-basin.

Given the location of the site in relation to the Northwestern Irish Sea and Margaretstown River there is a theoretical surface water pathway between the proposed development site and the European sites associated with Northwestern Irish Sea (i.e. North-West Irish Sea SPA, Skerries Island SPA, Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC, Rockabill SPA). Considering the distance to the Northwestern Irish Sea and Margaretstown River, there is no possibility that polluted surface water could be emitted directly to it. There is a possibility that contaminated surface water from the site could enter the municipal surface water drainage network adjacent to the site and be indirectly discharged to surface waters via the drainage network (e.g. during extreme rainfall events and / or high tides), thereby creating an indirect hydrological pathway linking the proposed development site with European Sites downstream. There is also a potential groundwater pathway between the proposed development site and these European sites should indirect discharges (i.e. spillages to ground) occur, or should any contamination on the site enter the ground water.

A second potential link to coastal European sites is via the emission point of the Barnageeragh Wastewater Treatment Plant (WwTP) which will receive foul water flows from the proposed development during its operation.

As per the WFD 2016-2021 status, the Margaretstown River and Mill stream (IE\_EA\_08M030500) (WFD name: Mill stream (Skerries\_010)) are of ‘Poor’ status and are ‘At risk’ for river waterbodies risk. As per the WFD 2016-2021 status, the Northwestern Irish Sea (IE\_EA\_020\_0000) is ‘Good’, however, it is ‘At risk’ of failing to achieve its WFD objective / good status by 2027. The WFD ground waterbody (GWB) status of Balrothery GWB (IE\_EA\_G\_043) is rated as ‘good’ and the risk status is ‘not at risk’ (2016 – 2021 cycle).

There are no European sites within the immediate vicinity of the proposed development site at Mourne View, Skerries, Co. Dublin. The nearest European site is the North-West Irish Sea SPA, c. 175m to the north. There are 16no. European sites located within the potential Zone of Influence (**Figure 4.4**):

- North-West Irish Sea SPA (site code 004236), c. 175m to the north;
- Skerries Island SPA (site code 004122), c. 1.8km to the east;
- Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC (site code 003000), c. 3.6km to the east;
- Rockabill SPA (site code 004014), c. 4.2km to the east;
- Rogerstown Estuary SPA (site code 004015), c. 7.3km to the south;
- Rogerstown Estuary SAC (site code 000208), c. 7.4km to the south;
- River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA (site code 004158), c. 10km to the north-west;
- Lambay Island SPA (site code 004069), c. 10.7km to the south-east;

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- Lambay Island SAC (site code 000204), c. 11.2km to the south-east;
- Malahide Estuary SAC (site code 000205), c. 11.4km to the south;
- Malahide Estuary SPA (site code 004025), c. 11.8km to the south;
- Boyne Coast and Estuary SAC (site code 001957), c. 15.5km to the north-west;
- Boyne Estuary SPA (site code 004080), c. 17.4km to the north-west;
- Baldoyle Bay SAC (site code 000199), c. 18.2km to the south;
- Baldoyle Bay SPA (site code 004016), c. 18.2km to the south;
- Ireland's Eye SPA (site code 004117), c. 19km to the south-east;
- Ireland's Eye SAC (site code 002193), c. 19.5km to the south-east;
- Howth Head Coast SPA (site code 004113), c. 21.5km to the south-east;
- Howth Head SAC (site code 000202), c. 22km to the south-east.

Note that the above-listed distances are linear (i.e. 'as the crow flies'). The conservation objectives of these sites are to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the Qualifying Interests / Special Conservation Interests in question. For further information, refer to the standalone AA Screening Report.

The NHA and pNHAs within the ZoI are as follows:

- Natural Heritage Area (NHA):
  - Skerries Island NHA (site code 001218), c. 1.8km to the east;
- Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA):
  - Loughshinny Coast pNHA (site code 002000), c. 3.1km south-east;
  - Knock Lane pNHA (site code 001203), c. 5km west;
  - Bog of the Ring pNHA (site code 001204), c. 5.7km south-west;
  - Rogerstown Estuary pNHA (site code 000208), c. 7.3km to the south;
  - Rockabill Island pNHA (site code 000207), c. 7.8km north-east;
  - Portraine Shore pNHA (site code 001215), c. 9.8km south;
  - Lambay Island pNHA (site code 000204), c. 11km south-east;
  - Malahide Estuary pNHA (site code 000205), c. 11.4km south;
  - Laytown Dunes/Nanny Estuary pNHA (site code 000554) c. 11.8km north-west.

Rogerstown Estuary Ramsar site (412) is located c. 7.3km to the south of the site. The site includes a small tidal embayment sheltered from the sea by a broad sand and shingle spit. Extensive areas of mud, sand and gravel are exposed at low tide. The mudflats support beds of green algae (*Enteromorpha*) and *Spartina anglica* (common cordgrass). Numerous species of large numbers of wintering waterbirds use the tidal flats and the site is internationally important for Brent Geese. Rogerstown Estuary is also classified as a Nature Reserve and Wildfowl Sanctuary.

Balbriggan/Skerries Shellfish area is c. 800m to the north of the site and 'All Beds' are classified for bivalve mollusc and species of interest include razor clams. The site is classified as Class A. Further, Malahide Shellfish area is c. 10.2km to the south-east of the site and 'All Beds' are classified for bivalve mollusc and species of interest include razor clams. The site has seasonal classification and is classified as Class A (September to January) and then reverts to Class B at other times.



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Figure 4.3 EPA waterbodies in the proximity of the proposed development (red lines are indicative – refer to the associated engineering drawings for full details)

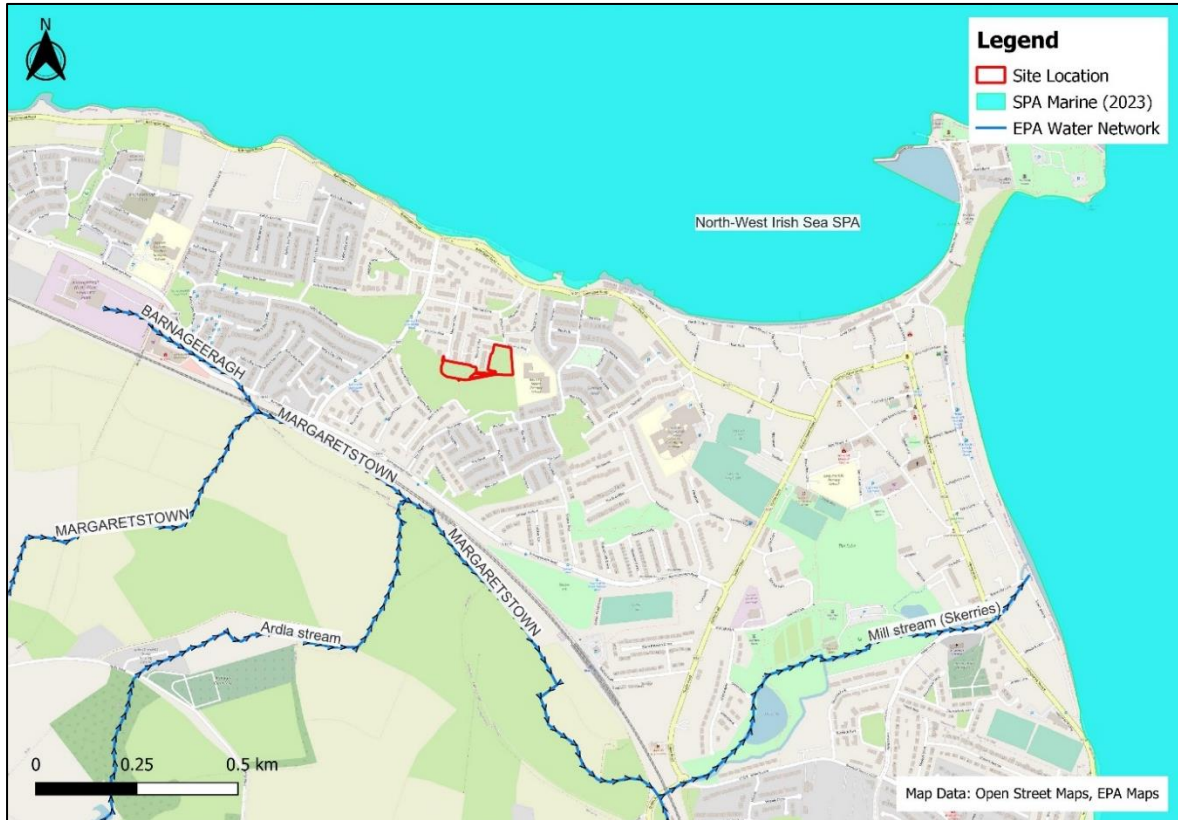
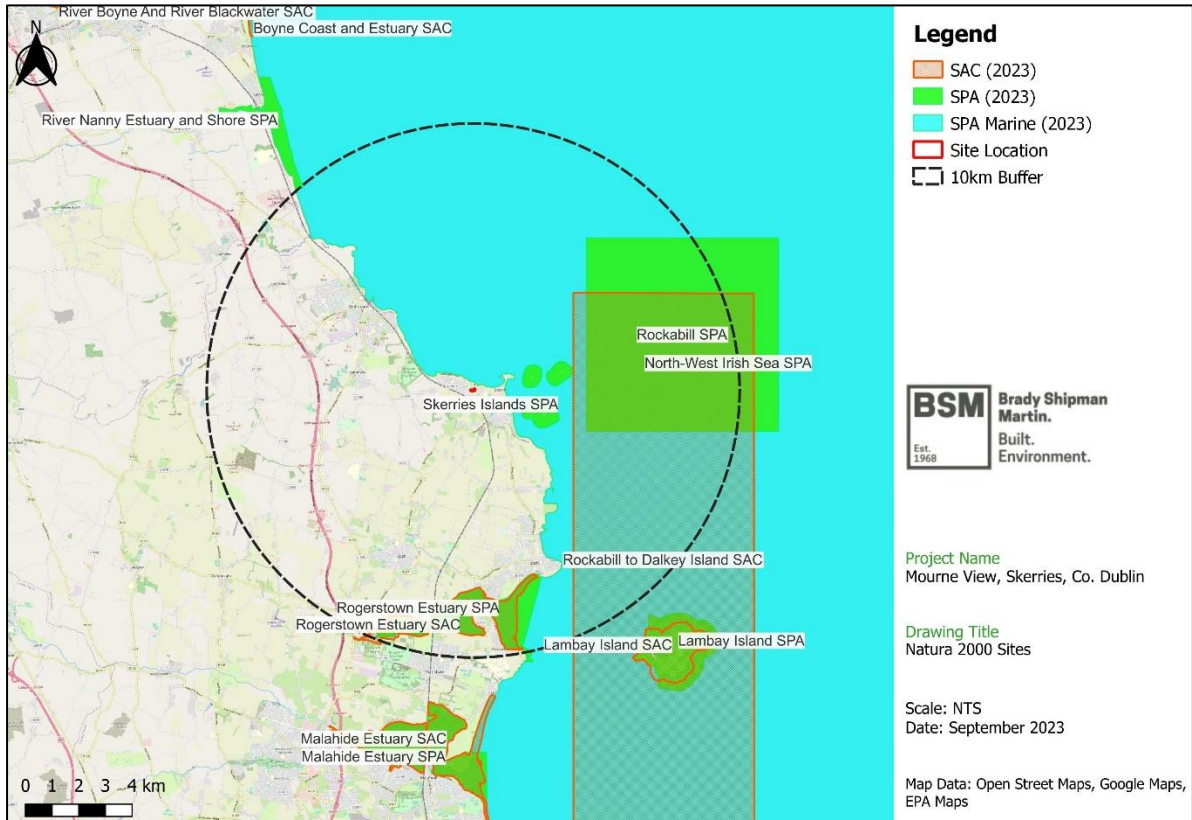


Figure 4.4 European sites within zone of influence of the proposed development. A 10km radius is shown for scale.



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No ecologically significant habitats are present on the proposed development site, which comprises of grassland used as public open space (Fossitt code **GA2** amenity grassland (improved)). The overall site is bounded by open space to the south and west and by existing residential development of Mourne View to the north and *Realt na Mara* National School to the east. Two existing public footpaths (Fossitt code **BL3** building and artificial surfaces) traverse the site. On the eastern side of the subject site there are 3no. small trees planted adjacent to the footpaths.

The site is entirely unsuitable for use by badgers or otters (protected under Article 12 of the Habitats Directive) and no evidence of such species has been recorded in the immediate vicinity.

There are no features on or in the immediate vicinity of the site suitable for use by roosting, foraging or commuting bats, or by breeding birds. The site, given the slope and location adjacent to the existing housing is also entirely unsuitable for use by SCI bird species associated with the coastal SPAs, such as light-bellied Brent goose.

No species listed on the Third Schedule of the Habitats Regulations, such as giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*), Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*), Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) or three-cornered leek (*Allium triquetrum*) were recorded at the proposed development site.

The proposed development site is not under any wildlife or conservation designation. The National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) database was consulted with regard to rare species (Curtis & McGough, 1988) and species protected under the *Flora Protection Order* (2022). There are no records of any protected plant species within the 2km grid square (O26K) that covers the proposed development area.

Overall the development site has **no ecological value** as defined by the ecological resource valuations presented in the National Roads Authority / Transport Infrastructure Ireland Guidelines for Assessment of Ecological Impacts of National Road Schemes (NRA/TII, 2009 (Rev. 2)).

No evidence of any habitats or species with links to European sites was recorded during either the field survey or desk study undertaken and no 'reservoir' type habitats (habitats which have the potential to support Qualifying Interest / Special Conservation Interest species in any European site) are present. The site is entirely unsuited to use by any bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests in any of the European sites within the potential Zone of Influence.

Owing to the urban context, the site of the proposed scheme and the majority of the surrounding areas are on hardstanding underlain by artificial surfaces. The bedrock geology in the area is of the Skerries Formation and comprises of laminated blue-grey siltstone and sandstone, with no karst features present. The site is underlain by 'poor aquifer' that is 'bedrock which is generally unproductive except for local zones'. The groundwater vulnerability is classed as High.

The Balrothery (IE\_EA\_G\_043) ground waterbody (GWB) underlies the proposed scheme. The WFD ground water status of the Dublin GWB is rated as 'good' (2016 – 2021 cycle) and the risk status is 'not at risk'.

The EPA Air Zone designation is 'Zone D'-Rural Ireland. The Air Quality Index Regions indicate that Air Quality is 'Good'.



There are no recorded archaeological or architectural heritage sites on the site of the proposed development. DU005-053001 archaeological record is c. 170m to the east. The subject site is located c. 475m to the south-west of the Skerries Architectural Conservation Area.

The *Fingal Development Plan 2023 – 2029* provides a Landscape Character Assessment of the Local Authority administrative area. It classifies six 'Landscape Character Types'. The site of the proposed development is located within Highly Sensitive Landscape and within the 'Coastal Character Type', which is categorised as having exceptional landscape value. There are no protected views identified in the Development Plan in the vicinity of the proposed development or that could be affected by the proposed development.

### 4.4 Description of Likely Effects

This section provides a description of the likely effects of the proposed development, with reference to the above-listed environmental aspects, and under the headings of the environmental factors as specified in paragraph (b)(i)(I) to (V) of Section 171A of the PDA 2000:

- Population and human health;
- Biodiversity, with particular attention to species and habitats protected under the Habitats and Birds Directives;
- Land, soil, water, air and climate;
- Material assets, cultural heritage and the landscape; and
- The interaction between the foregoing factors.

#### 4.4.1 Overview

The proposed development is a public residential project. It will consist of the construction of 14no. residential units and associated infrastructure.

The subject site is situated in the urbanised surrounds of Skerries and is not an area with a high sensitivity to the environmental effects of development of this nature and scale. The site of the proposed development predominantly comprises existing buildings and artificial surfaces. The site of the proposed development is not under any ecological designation. There are no significant ecological sensitivities in the immediate environs.

As part of the proposed works, the 3no. small trees located adjacent to the footpaths on the eastern side of the site will be removed. The loss of these trees will not constitute a significant ecological impact. In any case, these trees will be replaced with 4no. street trees. Refer to the accompanying Architectural Report and drawings for further information.

During the construction phase, typical environmental effects associated with urban construction of this nature and scale are predicted, including elevated levels of noise, emissions of dust, direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions, impacts on visual amenity, effects associated with construction traffic, etc. These effects will be short-term in duration, at most, and reversible. There will also be environmental risks associated with the presence of potential pollutants (e.g. hydrocarbons, solvents, cementitious materials) and human health risks associated with typical site safety risks.

During the operational phase, typical environmental effects associated with the presence and operation of houses are also predicted, including water consumption, surface and foul water loading to the

municipal network, additional traffic volumes and direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions. Operational phase effects are expected to be permanent in duration.

The following sections present the results of an assessment of potential impacts, specifically with regard to the environmental factors as specified in paragraph (b)(i)(I) to (V) of Section 171A of the PDA 2000, identifying in each case, the types and characteristics of potential impacts.

### 4.4.2 Population & Human Health

As stated above, the construction phase of the proposed development may be expected to give rise to typical environmental effects associated with urban construction activities of this nature and scale, including generation of dust, noise and vibration effects associated with construction traffic, and negative impacts on visual amenity.

The proposed development site is situated in the built up area of Skerries. It is surrounded by existing residential development that may be affected by the environmental aspects of the proposed construction works. All such effects are predicted to be localised, short-term in duration and reversible. Nevertheless, best practice measures will be implemented during the proposed works (as detailed in **Section 4.2.8**, above), in order to avoid and minimise impacts on local residents insofar as possible.

The proposed development will replace the existing greenfield site with 14no. residential units, open space, parking and associated infrastructure. The proposed development presents an opportunity to provide additional residential units in a strategic location, utilising existing services and infrastructure, and providing sustainable places to live, close to work and public transport link. The *Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029* as part of the Housing note the increased demand for social housing.

The proposed development comprises of two blocks (Site A and Site B) and due to the site topography single storey dwellings are proposed for Site A in order to respect the ridge line of the existing dwellings to the north and to avoid any overlooking issues of the private rear gardens of these dwellings. The dwellings are dual fronted to avoid expanses of blank walls and provide passive supervision over the existing open space to the east and west. The front walls of the dwellings are set back 2.9m from the public footpath to provide a privacy strip.

Site A fronts onto existing public open space to the south and all the dwellings are within 70m walking distance of this local park. Site B contains two areas of public open space which form part of the SuDS strategy for the site. All 2 and 3-bedroom dwellings have private gardens in excess of 60sq.m. and the 4-bedroom dwellings has a rear garden in excess of 75sq.m.

The front and side elevations of the habitable rooms within the development provide passive surveillance of external areas within the curtilage of both sites and parking areas. A site lighting scheme will be included in the detailed design to ensure safety and security at night. The development will also provide for 9no. car parking and 49no. bicycle parking.

The development complies with Part M, Access and Use, of the Building Regulations as well as FCC's age friendly policies. The 11no. single storey dwellings and 1no. specially adapted dwelling are fully accessible and have been designed to universal design standards. All dwellings comply with the minimum floor area standards set out in *Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities* (2007) and the *Design Manual for Quality Housing* (2022). All single storey dwellings have a ground floor ceiling height of minimum 2.5m and the upper floors are minimum 2.4m. All dwellings are dual aspect with some having fenestration on three elevations. All living areas are orientated to ensure adequate indoor light

quality during the day. The proposed dwellings will provide acoustic privacy and will be in accordance with Part E, Sound, of the Building Regulations.

Currently, the feasibility of a number of options to evaluate the development's Nearly Zero Energy Building (NZEB) requirements are being considered and a detailed proposal will be submitted at detail design stage. The proposed development will fully be in compliance with Building Regulations Part F: Ventilation, Part J: Heat Producing Appliances and Part L: Conservation of Fuel and Energy.

Also, given the site's proximity to a variety of retail, educational, recreational, and healthcare facilities located close-by and to Public Transport, the development of the site for social housing would contribute to the creation of sustainable mixed communities in accordance with national and local statutory planning policy.

***Hence, no likely significant effects are predicted in relation to population and human health.***

### 4.4.3 Biodiversity<sup>3</sup>

There are no European sites within the immediate vicinity of the proposed development site at Mourne View, Skerries, Co. Dublin.

Overall the development site has **no ecological value** as defined by the ecological resource valuations presented in the National Roads Authority / Transport Infrastructure Ireland Guidelines for Assessment of Ecological Impacts of National Road Schemes (NRA/TII, 2009 (Rev. 2)). The subject site comprises of existing public open space (Fossitt code **GA2** amenity grassland (improved)). The overall site is bounded by open space to the south and west and by existing residential development of Mourne View to the north and *Realt na Mara* National School to the east. Two existing public footpaths (Fossitt code **BL3** building and artificial surfaces) traverse the site. There are three small trees on the site.

There is no potential for bat roosts anywhere on the site. The site is entirely unsuited to use by nesting birds, badgers, otters (protected under Article 12 of the Habitats Directive).

No species listed on the Third Schedule of the Habitats Regulations, such as giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*), Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*), Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) or three-cornered leek (*Allium triquetrum*) are present at the site.

Biosecurity measures will be implemented during the proposed works to prevent the introduction of invasive species. To avoid the introduction of invasive species any material imported to the site should be screened for invasive species and all machinery should be thoroughly cleaned down prior to arriving on site.

The construction phase of the proposed development will result in typical construction phase effects such as elevated noise levels and lighting that could potentially result in disturbance of wildlife in the surrounding environment. However, considering the high urbanised and disturbed context at present, the proposed works are only expected to result in marginal change in this regard – with no significant ecological impacts likely to occur.

The AA Screening Report for the proposed development, submitted as part of the planning application under separate cover, has arrived at the following conclusion:

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<sup>3</sup> With particular attention to species and habitats protected under the Habitats and the Birds Directives

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*'In view of best scientific knowledge, this report concludes that the proposed residential development at Mourne View, Skerries, Co. Dublin; individually or in combination with another plan or project, will not have a significant effect on any European sites. This conclusion was reached without considering or taking into account mitigation measures or measures intended to avoid or reduce any impact on European sites.'*

Therefore, for the purposes of this EIA screening determination, significant effects on European sites can also be excluded. This conclusion has been arrived at having consideration of the nature, scale and location of the proposed development, and the potential for significant effects on the qualifying interests and the special conservation interests of the above-listed European sites, with regard to their conservation objectives, and in accordance with the source-pathway-receptor model for impact assessment. For further detail, please refer to the separate AA Screening Report.

***No likely significant effects are predicted in relation to biodiversity, including to species and habitats protected under the Habitats and Birds Directives.***

### 4.4.4 Land, Soil, Water, Air & Climate

The site of the proposed development is greenfield, surrounded by buildings and hardstanding. There are no watercourses on the site of the proposed development or in the immediate vicinity, and it is not feasible that pollutants could be directly discharged from the site of the proposed development to the surface water network. The proposed development includes appropriate surface water drainage infrastructure through which the rate of discharge of surface water will be carefully controlled.

During the construction phase, standard good practice pollution control measures will be implemented, preventing the emissions of pollutants to the municipal drainage network. During its operation, the proposed development will feature segregated foul and surface water drainage networks. Both systems will discharge to the existing Irish Water surface and foul water infrastructure underlying the adjacent roads.

The proposed development is not expected to increase flood risk on the site or elsewhere. The inclusion of on-site surface water attenuation measures and soft landscaping is expected to attenuate surface water run-off and, therefore, reduce overall flood risk.

The Engineering Report prepared by McMahon Associates and submitted separately, has considered the flood risk associated with the proposed development, including under future climate change scenarios. It has concluded that-

*'Given the extensive modelling completed in the area and referenced in the regional and local area development plans, and that there is no historical flooding at the site identified on the OPW website, the flood risk is therefore considered to be minimal.'*

Groundworks are likely to be required (e.g. to facilitate the construction of foundations and drainage services) and it may be required to export of excavated material for off-site disposal (in accordance with the applicable legislation). Approximately, 2,200m<sup>3</sup> of soil will be excavated from Site A and 2,500 m<sup>3</sup> from Site B. Given the topography of both sites nearly all material would be disposed off site with no material retained for infill. Some topsoil may be retained for overlaying onto back gardens, open space etc.

Significant impacts on land, soil or groundwater are not likely to occur as a result of these works, which will be carried out in accordance with best practice measures.

The Ground Investigation Report (Causeway Geotech, 2023) states that the site investigation works were undertaken in May and June 2023 and comprised of five boreholes, eight trial pits, an infiltration test performed in two trial pits, one follow on dynamic probe and plate load tests at three locations. The general ground type at the proposed development site includes a topsoil layer (300mm thick) followed by made ground (reworked sandy gravelly clay fill and sandy gravelly with fragments of tarmac), further followed by fluvioglacial deposits consisting of medium dense sands and gravels interspersed with layers of firm to stiff sandy gravelly clay or slit and bedrock at c. depth of 2.1 and 2.7m. Groundwater was encountered during percussion boring and pit excavation. The ground investigation works noted that based on the presence of medium dense sand/gravel of firm clay at relatively shallow depths across the footprint of the proposed building, the implementation of traditional shallow foundations shall be considered suitable.

The Waste Classification Report (Causeway Geotech, 2023, Appendix J) noted that the material tested as part of the works could be classified as non-hazardous material. Following waste classification, a Waste Acceptance Criteria (WAC) of the samples was completed. The soil sampling results indicated that soils from the site are suitable for disposal as inert waste to an appropriate licensed facility. Any potential contamination identified during site development works by visual or olfactory means shall be further investigated, including further laboratory testing and appropriate health and safety, waste disposal and remediation measures adopted. The waste will then be sent to appropriate licensed facility for disposal.

In relation to air quality, minor emissions of dust may be expected to occur during the proposed works. Dust management measures will be implemented under the scope of the CEMP. No significant impacts are anticipated in this regard.

As noted in **Section 4.2.6**, the detailed design of the proposed development will ensure compliance with requirements expressed in current, relevant parts of the Building Regulations. Further, the requirement for nearly zero energy buildings and renewable sources of energy will be addressed in the detailed design and construction stages.

The proposed reduced numbers of on-site car parking, coupled with the generous provision of on-site bicycle parking, is consistent with national and municipal objectives to promote a modal shift away from private car use in favour of low-carbon and active alternatives.

***No likely significant effects are predicted in relation to land, soil, water, air or climate.***

#### **4.4.5 Material Assets, Cultural Heritage & the Landscape**

The proposed development is not expected to give rise to any significant effects in relation to material assets, i.e. roads or other built services / infrastructure. As discussed in **Section 4.2.4**, it is proposed to provide vehicular access to the north-west of the Site A and to the north-east of Site B, from the existing housing development of Mourne View. The proposed works will provide opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists and promote sustainable modes of transport.

During construction, the proposed development has the potential for significant (both temporary and permanent) negative effects on major public utilities due to the requirement to divert or modify existing infrastructure. During the operational phase, the proposed development is unlikely to have a significant effect on material assets such as major public utilities.

There are no recorded archaeological or architectural heritage sites on the site of the proposed development. DU005-053001 archaeological record is c. 170m to the east. The subject site is located c. 475m to the south-west of the Skerries Architectural Conservation Area. If any subsurface archaeological remains are to be encountered during groundworks, these elements of the works will be supervised by a competent and suitably qualified archaeologist, in order to ensure that no significant impacts arise in relation to subsurface archaeological remains. Impacts on architectural or archaeological heritage outside of the site are not expected to occur.

The nearest preserved views to the site is c. 450m to the north-east. There is the potential for temporary significant negative townscape and visual effects during construction due to general construction activity, impacts on property boundaries, traffic diversions and streetscape disturbance. Indirect impacts include the visible and landscape impact of construction activities and hoarding, changes to traffic patterns and diversions and the increased movement of HGV.

During the operational phase, the proposed development may alter visual amenity due to the new features within the streetscape, changes in traffic flows, lighting, signage, new boundaries and landscape planting treatments.

***No likely significant effects are predicted in relation to material assets, cultural heritage or the landscape.***

#### 4.4.6 Interactions

The key interactions may be summarised as follows:

- Negative water quality effects have the potential to negatively affect aquatic ecology;
- Negative effects in relation to noise, air quality, traffic, visual effects and material assets have the potential to negatively affect population and human health.

Interactions between environmental topics have been comprehensively addressed herein.

***No likely significant effects are predicted in relation to the interaction between environmental topics.***

#### 4.4.7 Indirect and secondary effects

Indirect and/or secondary effects could arise as a result of the proposed project due to a complex pathway. There is potential for greenhouse gas emissions due to the indirect construction and operational phase traffic impacts of the proposed development. There is also potential for indirect impacts on water bodies downstream during site clearance and construction activities. Furthermore site activities during the construction phase have the potential to result in water pollution and have indirect effects such as deterioration of habitat quality on the flora and fauna that are within the catchment of the affected waterbodies.

***However, with the scale and nature of the proposed works do no result in likely significant indirect and/or significant effects.***

#### 4.4.8 Cumulative Impacts

The following sources were consulted to identify relevant other plans or projects:

- Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 (FCC, 2023);
- The National Planning Application database ([www.myplan.ie](http://www.myplan.ie) - accessed September 2023);
- An Board Pleanála database ([www.pleanala.ie](http://www.pleanala.ie) – accessed September 2023); and

- EIA Portal ([www.housinggovie.maps.arcgis.com](http://www.housinggovie.maps.arcgis.com) – accessed September 2023).

No developments are proposed within the immediate vicinity of the site that would, in combination with the development under appraisal in this report, give rise to significant effects. This includes projects that are currently under construction, have recently been granted planning permission or are awaiting a decision.

The Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029 has a series of objectives intended to protect and enhance the natural environment. For example the plan includes policies for the protection of the county’s flood plains, to prevent development in flood plains without satisfying the appropriate justification test and to require the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to minimise and limit the extent of hard surfacing and paving in order to reduce the potential impact of existing and predicted flooding risks.

The proposed development will not impact on the flow of water through the area, nor increase potential flood impacts. It is in compliance with all of the relevant Plan objectives.

A number of other plans were considered when assessing in-combination effects, but it was determined that there would be no in-combination effects with these:

- National Planning Framework;
- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy;
- Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study;
- Greater Dublin Transport Strategy 2022-2042;
- Climate Action and Mitigation Plan;
- National Biodiversity Plan; and
- River Basin Management Plan.

It is considered that significant in-combination effects on European sites are not likely to occur as a result of the proposed development in combination with other plans or projects.

As concluded in the Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report (BSM, 2023), the proposed development, individually or in combination with another plan or project, will not have a significant effect on any European sites.

## 4.5 Schedule 7 Criteria

Schedule 7A of the PDR 2001 requires the Applicant to have regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the PDR 2001. These criteria have been considered as set out in **Table 4.2**.

**Table 4.2 Criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the PDR 2001 and corresponding information in respect of the proposed development**

Criteria	Information in respect of the proposed development
<b>1. Characteristics of proposed development</b> <i>The characteristics of proposed development, in particular—</i>	
<i>(a) the size and design of the whole of the proposed development,</i>	The proposed development comprises 14 social housing units on a site of c. 0.61 Ha. The size and design of the proposed development are detailed in <b>Section 3.1 and Section 4.2</b> , above.
<i>(b) cumulation with other existing development and/or development the</i>	



## Proposed Housing Development at Mourne View, Skerries, Co. Dublin

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Criteria	Information in respect of the proposed development
<p><i>subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the [PDA 2000] and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment,</i></p>	<p>As per <b>Section 4.4.8</b> above, it is considered that significant in-combination effects on European sites are not likely to occur as a result of the proposed development in combination with other plans or projects.</p>
<p><i>(c) the nature of any associated demolition works,</i></p>	<p>As part of the proposed works, the existing greenfield site will be cleared for construction of the proposed residential complex. No demolition works are proposed as part of the development.</p>
<p><i>(d) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity,</i></p>	<p>The site of the proposed development in Skerries is dominated by buildings and hardstanding. The subject site is a greenfield site. Therefore, there will be new consumption of 'land' required to facilitate the build. Local excavations for foundations and services are envisaged, and it may be necessary to export excavated material for off-site disposal. This will be executed in accordance with the relevant legislative provisions.</p> <p>During the operational phase, potable water from the municipal supply network will be consumed by residents. In this regard, the proposed development is not expected to be significantly different to the existing operational scenario.</p> <p>The site of the proposed development comprises of existing greenfield site and is currently used as public open space. The proposed works will result in the removal of all existing habitats on the site. The loss of these features will not constitute a significant ecological impact.</p> <p>There are no unusual aspects of the proposed development in this regard. Use of natural resources will be limited to standard / typical levels for development of this nature, scale and location.</p>
<p><i>(e) the production of waste,</i></p>	<p>During the construction phase, waste material will be generated, requiring off-site disposal. Waste materials are likely to include construction waste and excavated material. Waste material will be managed in accordance with the applicable legislative provisions.</p> <p>As detailed in <b>Section 4.2.8</b>, a CEMP, which will address Resource &amp; Waste Management, has been prepared (BSM, 2023) for the construction phase of the proposed development, in accordance with the EPA <i>Best Practice Guidelines for the Preparation of Resource &amp; Waste</i></p>



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Criteria	Information in respect of the proposed development
	<p><i>Management Plans for Construction &amp; Demolition Projects</i> (2021).</p> <p>During the operational phase, municipal solid waste will be generated by residents. The proposed development provides all dwellings all dwellings will be provided with dedicated bins (black, brown and green) stored in the back gardens.</p> <p>There are no unusual aspects of the proposed development in this regard. Volumes of waste generated during the construction and operational phases will be commensurate of development of this nature, scale and location.</p>
(f) <i>pollution and nuisances,</i>	<p>As detailed above, during the construction phase, there will be typical construction related pollution risks and effects, e.g. generation of dust, elevated levels of noise, potential pollution risk associated with presence of hazardous substances (hydrocarbons, cementitious material, etc.). Standard good practice construction pollution control measures will be implemented (as detailed in <b>Section 4.2.8</b>), and no significant environmental effects are predicted in this regard. Works will be limited to normal working hours in order to avoid / minimise potential nuisance.</p> <p>During the operational phase, potential sources of pollution associated with the proposed development are principally (i) generation of municipal solid waste (addressed above) and (ii) generation of foul water. As detailed above, foul water will be discharged to the municipal wastewater drainage network, which contains overflow arrangements and which conveys wastewater to Barnageeragh WwTP for treatment prior to discharge at Irish Sea. For the reasons detailed, no significant environmental effects are predicted in this regard.</p>
(g) <i>the risk of major accidents, and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge, and</i>	<p>The proposed development is neither especially susceptible to the risk of major accidents and / or disasters, nor is it likely to cause or exacerbate such an event. No particular risks have been identified in this regard.</p> <p>The subject site is c. 14.5 km north-east (linear distance) to the nearest SEVESO III site SK Biotek Ireland Ltd, Watery Lane, Swords (lower tier) and is outside the Seveso site consultation distance.</p> <p>As detailed in <b>Section 4.4</b>, above, a flood risk assessment has been carried out as part of the Engineering Report prepared by McMahon Associates, which has considered the flood risk associated with the proposed development, including under future climate change scenarios. It has concluded that- <i>'Given the extensive modelling completed in the area and referenced in the regional and local area development plans, and that</i></p>

## Proposed Housing Development at Mourne View, Skerries, Co. Dublin

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Criteria	Information in respect of the proposed development
	<i>there is no historical flooding at the site identified on the OPW website, the flood risk is therefore considered to be minimal.'</i>
(h) <i>the risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution).</i>	The potential impacts of the proposed development in relation to human health have been assessed above (refer to <b>Section 4.4.2</b> , above). The site of the proposed development is situated in a densely populated urban area, with numerous residential receptors present in the immediate vicinity. However, having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development, no likely significant effects are predicted in this regard. A range of best practice environmental protection measures will be implemented (refer to <b>Section 4.2.8</b> ) in order to avoid / minimise impacts on the local population insofar as possible.
<b>2. Location of proposed development</b> <i>The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development, with particular regard to—</i>	
(a) <i>the existing and approved land use,</i>	The development site consist of greenfield site at Mourne View, Skerries, Co. Dublin and is currently used as public open space. As per the <i>Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029</i> , the subject site is zoned as <i>RS-Residential – ‘Provide for residential development and protect and improve residential amenity’</i> . For further details in relation to existing and approved land use, refer to <b>Section 4.3</b> , above.
(b) <i>the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground,</i>	The site of the proposed development is a greenfield site and currently used as public open space. Overall the development site has no ecological importance as defined by the ecological resource valuations presented in the NRA Guidelines. There are no protected habitats or rare / protected species of flora present on the site. There are no surface water bodies or designated sites on the site or in the immediate vicinity. For further details, refer to <b>Sections 4.3</b> and <b>4.4.3</b> , above. The site of the proposed development and wider area is developed and urban in nature, having low sensitivity to the effects of development, and a relatively high regenerative capacity (given the absence of sensitive habitats).
(c) <i>the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:</i>	
a. <i>wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;</i>	There are no wetlands, riparian areas or river mouths at the site of the proposed development or in the immediate vicinity that could be directly affected by the proposed development. At closest, Rogerstown Estuary Ramsar site (412) is located c. 7.3km to the south of the site. Indirect hydrological connections, e.g. via the wastewater drainage and treatment system, are detailed in <b>Section 4.4.4</b> , above.
b. <i>coastal zones and the marine environment;</i>	The site of the proposed development is situated a c. 175m linear distance from the coast (Northwestern Irish Sea). There are no direct impact pathways between the proposed development site and coastal zones or the marine

## Proposed Housing Development at Mourne View, Skerries, Co. Dublin

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Criteria	Information in respect of the proposed development
	environment. Indirect hydrological connections, e.g. via the wastewater drainage and treatment system, are detailed in <b>Section 4.4.4</b> , above.
<i>c. mountain and forest areas;</i>	There are no mountains or forest areas at the proposed development site or in the immediate vicinity that could be affected.
<i>d. nature reserves and parks;</i>	The nearest statutory Nature Reserve to the proposed development site is at Rogerstown Estuary, 7.3km to the south. There is Floraville Public Park, c. 1km to the east. The Site A fronts onto existing public open space to the south. There is no real likelihood of significant effects on any Nature Reserve or park resulting from the proposed development.
<i>e. areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive and;</i>	An Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report has been prepared by Brady Shipman Martin in respect of the proposed development (refer to document submitted under separate cover). It has concluded that the proposed development, individually or in combination with another plan or project, will not have a significant effect on any European sites. This assessment was reached without considering or taking into account mitigation measures or measures intended to avoid or reduce any impact on European sites. This assessment has also taken account of the potential for significant effects on nationally designated sites (NHA / pNHA). For details, refer to the AA Screening Report, submitted under separate cover. Refer also to <b>Sections 4.3</b> and <b>4.4.3</b> , above.
<i>f. 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;</i>	There are no such areas connected to the site that could be significantly affected by the proposed development.
<i>g. densely populated areas;</i>	As discussed above (refer to <b>Sections 4.3</b> and <b>4.4.2</b> ), the proposed development is situated in populated centre of Skerries, and there are numerous residential receptors in the immediate area that could be affected by the environmental aspects of the proposed development. However, having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development, it is considered that there is no real likelihood of significant effects in this regard. A schedule of good practice environmental protection measures, has been proposed, in order to avoid / minimise impacts on the local population insofar as possible.
<i>h. landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.</i>	There are no recorded archaeological or architectural heritage sites on the site of the proposed development. DU005-053001 archaeological record is c. 170m to the east. The subject site is

Criteria	Information in respect of the proposed development
	located c. 475m to the south-west of the Skerries Architectural Conservation Area.
<p><b>3. Types and characteristics of potential impacts</b>  <i>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 [PDA 2000], taking into account—</i></p>	
<p>(a) <i>the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example, geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),</i></p>	<p>Regard has been had, in the preparation of this report, to the likely magnitude and spatial extent of impacts arising from the proposed development during the construction and operational phases. The likely impacts of the proposed development will not be unusual in these respects.</p> <p>The spatial extent of the direct impacts of the proposed development (e.g. habitat loss, dust generation, elevated noise, etc.) will be limited to the site and / or the immediate environs (i.e. typically within 50 m). This is a densely populated area, with numerous residential receptors in the immediate area.</p> <p>Additionally, as detailed above, there is the potential for indirect impacts further afield, e.g. due to the generation of greenhouse gas emissions, waste materials, wastewater and surface water.</p> <p>This is a small sized development that, during the operational phase, will entail only a marginal change, in terms of environmental aspects and impacts, relative to the baseline.</p>
<p>(b) <i>the nature of the impact,</i></p>	<p>Regard has been had, in the preparation of this report, to the likely nature of impacts arising from the proposed development during the construction and operational phases. The likely impacts of the proposed development will not be unusual in this respect.</p>
<p>(c) <i>the transboundary nature of the impact,</i></p>	<p>The site of the proposed development is not proximate to any boundaries of relevance (e.g. Local Authority administrative areas, County boundaries or the boundary with Northern Ireland), and no transboundary impacts are likely to arise.</p>
<p>(d) <i>the intensity and complexity of the impact,</i></p>	<p>Regard has been had, in the preparation of this report, to the likely intensity and complexity of impacts arising from the proposed development during the construction and operational phases. No impacts of unusual intensity or complexity are likely to arise.</p>
<p>(e) <i>the probability of the impact,</i></p>	<p>In accordance with the EPA (2022) criteria, regard has been had to the probability of impacts arising from the proposed development.</p>
<p>(f) <i>the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact,</i></p>	<p>In accordance with the EPA (2022) criteria, regard has been had to the likely onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of impacts arising from the proposed development. Generally</p>

Criteria	Information in respect of the proposed development
	speaking, construction phase impacts are predicted to be short-term in duration (lasting as long as the proposed works) and reversible; while effects of the operational phase are assumed to be permanent in duration.
<i>(g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the [PDA 2000] and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment, and</i>	Cumulative impacts addressed above in <b>Section 4.4.8</b> relation to paragraph 1(b). No likely significant cumulative impacts are predicted to occur.
<i>(h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.</i>	A schedule of environmental protection measures are proposed in order to avoid / minimise potential environmental impacts, where appropriate. Refer to <b>Section 4.2.8</b> .

## 5 Conclusion

It is considered that the proposed development would not be likely to have significant negative effects on the environment. The main reasons for this conclusion are as follows:

- The size of the site and the extent of the proposed development are of a small scale and significantly below the stated thresholds of Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended at or above which there is a mandatory requirement for EIA.
- The nature of the proposed construction works and of the proposed development itself are not unusual in the context of the receiving environment. The construction phase of the proposed development is expected to give rise to minor, localised environmental effects that are typical of urban construction projects of this nature;
- The location of the proposed development is a previously developed site in an existing urbanised location, which is not particularly sensitive to the environmental effects of development of this nature and scale. There are no designated sites or surface water bodies on the site or in the immediate vicinity. The receiving environment is densely populated, with residential and commercial receptors situated in close proximity; however, appropriate best practise environmental protection measures have been incorporated into the proposal in order to avoid / minimise impacts insofar as possible;
- The provision of landscaping on-site, in the form of open space, the inclusion of tree planting and shrub planting, bat and bird boxes will result in a positive biodiversity impact.

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

## 6 References

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