

Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023



Screening for Appropriate Assessment for the Draft Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023



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1 INTRODUCTION

Fingal County is preparing a new Fingal Development Plan 2017 – 2023 (hereafter referred to as draft Fingal DP) to replace the existing Fingal Development Plan, which expires in 2017. It is being prepared under the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) to develop and improve in a sustainable manner the environmental, social, economic and cultural assets of the county. The draft Fingal DP provides a blueprint for the development of Fingal for the period 2017 to 2023. Through a series of agreed policies and objectives, the draft Fingal DP is underpinned by the principles of sustainable development, climate change adaptation, social inclusion and high quality design.

This Screening report comprises information in support of screening for an Appropriate Assessment (AA) of the draft Fingal Development Plan in line with the requirements of: Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, as transposed into Irish law, principally through Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) in relation to land use planning; and also the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations (S.I. No. 477/2011) legislation.

The Screening for the Appropriate Assessment is being undertaken by RPS on behalf of Fingal County Council.

1.1 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

The Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, better known as the “Habitats Directive” provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. Articles 3 to 9 provide the legislative means to protect habitats and species of Community interest through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of sites known as Natura 2000. These are Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (79/409/ECC) as codified by Directive 2009/147/EC.

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to affect European Sites (Annex 1.1). Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for AA:

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

Article 6(4) states:

If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the [European] site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature, Member States shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted.

The Habitats Directive has been transposed into Irish law by the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477/2011). For land use planning the governing legislation is principally Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act which requires that (s. 177S) a Competent Authority (in this case Fingal County Council) *must take appropriate steps to avoid the deterioration of natural habitats and the habitats of species as well as the disturbance of species for which the site has been designated, in so far as such disturbance could be significant in relation to the objectives of the Habitats Directive.*

Fingal County Council, in its role as the Competent Authority for the draft Fingal DP, is examining the likely significant effects, individually or in combination, of implementing the draft plan on European Sites in light of the specific qualifying interests and conservation objectives of the relevant sites.

If screening determines potential for significant effects on a European Site, then full AA must be carried out for the plan, including the compilation of a Natura Impact Report to inform the decision making.

1.2 AIMS OF THIS REPORT

The specific aims of this report are:

- To identify the European Sites (Natura 2000 site network)¹ that occur within the zone of influence of the draft Fingal DP;
- To identify possible connections or pathways between the sensitivities of the individual European Sites and the implications for the policies and objectives of the draft Fingal DP; and
- To ascertain whether the implementation of the policies and objectives of the draft Fingal DP would, alone or in combination, result in likely significant effects on the European Sites in terms of impacting on their Conservation Objectives and ultimately impairing site integrity.

¹ NATURA 2000 sites are protected habitats for flora and fauna of European importance. They comprise **Special Areas of Conservation**, designated under the Habitats Directive and **Special Protection Areas**, designated under the Birds Directive. In Ireland, they are defined under the Birds and Habitats Regulations 2011 and/or the Planning Acts variously as candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC) or a candidate Site of Community Importance (cSCI), proposed candidate Special Area of Conservation (pcSAC) Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or a site of Community Importance (SCI), a proposed Special Protection Area (pSPA), and a Special Protection Area (SPA).

1.3 OVERLAP WITH THE STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is being carried out concurrently with the AA screening process. There are undoubted overlaps and in accordance with best practice, an integrated process of sharing gathered data has occurred. In addition, issues relevant to the wider biodiversity of the county e.g. ecological stepping stones has been discussed in the SEA environmental report.

1.4 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The merits of acquiring information and/or data to inform determination of the AA process are widely recognised. The benefit of early stakeholder engagement as a tool to gather data and disseminate information is widely recognised. To date, as part of the statutory consultation for the SEA, National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) have been informed of Fingal's plan through the SEA scoping. Fingal have committed to undertaking Appropriate Assessment. Once complete, the AA screening will be forwarded to NPWS for comment and discussion in advance of full AA, if that is the conclusion of the screening process.

2 DRAFT FINGAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2017-2023 – AN OVERVIEW

2.1 OVERVIEW OF THE RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT

The administrative area of Fingal County is situated on the eastern seaboard of Ireland, in North County Dublin and covers an area of approximately 456km² (See **Figure2.1**). Bordered on the east by the Irish Sea, the north and west by Meath and on its south by the administrative areas of South Dublin and Dublin City. Its topography is largely characterised as low-lying ground though areas such as Howth provide some height differential.

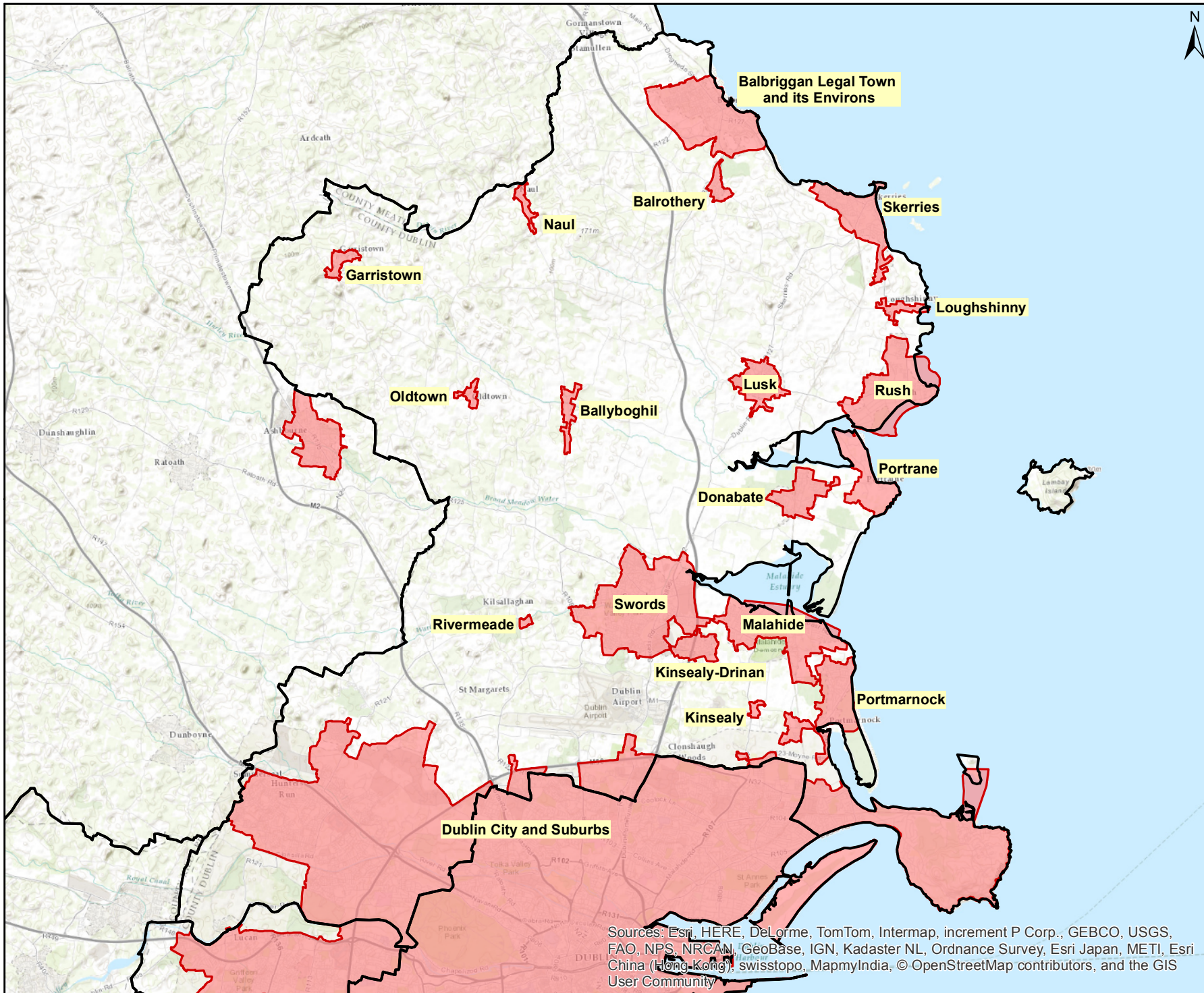
The county has undergone a rapid development over the past number of years, a fact which is underlined by provisional 2012-2013 Central Statistics Office data, which records Fingal as the third most populous Local Authority area in the country. It also supports the youngest population. There is a mix of suburban, urban and rural communities across Fingal. Population centres include the main county towns of Swords and Blanchardstown, however, a significant concentration of the populous are clustered along the coastal zone. Away from the coastal area, much of the midland and western part of the county is still rural in nature. There is a long agricultural history associated with the north of the county around Rush, Lusk and Skerries, where market gardening which is a defining activity.

Fingal has an impressive coastline. A number of its beaches are regular recipients of the Blue flag award. The coastal zone is characterised by 4 estuaries or transitional waterbodies and 5 distinct coastal water bodies whose quality ranges from moderate to high status.



Within the context of the eastern river basin district, Fingal has no waterbodies and 10 main rivers. The main rivers within Fingal are the Mayne River, sections of the Tolka River, the Ward River, the Broadmeadow River and the Delvin River, along with the Corduff, Ballyboughal, Liffey, Santry and the Sluice. In terms of water status, all rivers in Fingal are currently at moderate to poor status, particularly where they run through urban centres.

Strategic transport infrastructure in the county includes Dublin International Airport; Irish Rail's northern commuter mainline railway and an extensive network of roads including the M1 motorway. Much of the commercial infrastructure that has developed within the county is often found in close proximity to this strategic transport infrastructure.

There are a number of regional waste issues affecting Fingal and the greater Eastern-Midland Waste Region in general including: the assessment of historic and unregulated legacy landfill/illegal dump sites; lack of a third or fourth bin in some areas which would allow for better segregation of waste; illegal waste storage and non-compliant businesses (regionally and nationally); inconsistencies in the classification and thus inappropriate disposal of construction and demolition waste as mixed or municipal waste, given the significant potential for recycling this material; and the current over-reliance on the export of residual waste streams abroad for processing and recovery.



Legend

-  Fingal Administrative Area Boundary
-  CSO Settlement Envelope



Client



Fingal County Council
Comhairle Contae Fhine Gall

Project

SEA & AA for Fingal County Development Plan

Title

Main Population Centres in Fingal

Figure 2.1



West Pier Business Campus,
Dun Laoghaire,
Co Dublin,
Ireland.

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Issue Details	
Drawn By: NON	Project No. MDE1205
Checked By: EO	File Ref: MDE1205Arc020A01
Approved By: EO	Projection: ITM (IRENET95)
Scale: 1:175,000 @ A4	Date: 07/07/2015

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2. All levels are referred to Ordnance Datum, Mean Head.
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Water supplies in the Greater Dublin Area are under increasing pressure from population growth and associated industrial/commercial activities. The River Liffey and the Bog of the Ring (the only aquifer in the Fingal area) cannot sustain continued increasing abstraction rates.

In terms of wastewater treatment facilities (WWTP), Ringsend and Swords WWTP are operating above the design capacity. The recently completed Portrane WWTP has eased the problem in some areas, but other areas such as Rush still have untreated discharges into coastal waters. The provision of further wastewater infrastructure including upgrading of smaller facilities is considered crucial.

Climate change is likely to affect Fingal through a number of potential impacts including: increased likelihood and magnitude of precipitation levels and flooding events; disruption to urban infrastructure due to flooding; increased sea levels and loss of coastal land; potential residential and commercial water shortages; and increased vulnerability for at-risk sections of society due to changing demographic and hazards.

2.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAFT FINGAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The draft Fingal DP seeks to consolidate development and protect the identities of the settlements, while strengthening and consolidating green belts and green infrastructure. The draft Fingal DP also seeks to protect, maintain and enhance the natural heritage of the county and support sustainable transport. The economic focus is to maximise the strategic location of the county within the Dublin Region through support of the main towns, the airport, and the Metro North Economic Corridor. The manner in which the draft Fingal DP seeks to implement objectives has significant implications for the environment. Experience of planning in Ireland reflects that good sustainable policies can only be achieved when all aspects of a plan support that goal.

2.3 MAIN AIMS OF THE DRAFT FINGAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Continuing on from the previous Development Plan, the proposed draft Fingal Development Plan 2017- 2023 aims to:

- Plan for and support the sustainable long-term development of Fingal as an integrated network of vibrant socially and economically successful urban settlements and rural communities, strategic green belts and open countryside, supporting and contributing to the economic development of the Country and the Dublin City Region.
- Provide for the future well-being of the residents of the Country by:
 - Supporting economic activity and increasing employment opportunities;
 - Protecting and improving the quality of the built and natural environments;
 - Ensuring the provision of adequate housing, necessary infrastructure and community facilities;
 - Promoting and improving quality of life and public health; and
 - Building on the progress made in the County following the conclusion of the previous development plan.
- Incorporate sustainable development, climate change mitigation and adaptation, social inclusion and high quality design and the principle of resilience as fundamental values, crossing and underpinning the draft Fingal DP.

- Promote an appropriate balance of development across the County, by developing a hierarchy of high quality, vibrant urban centres and clearly delineated areas of growth, and favouring expansion in areas nearest to existing or planned public transport nodes.
- Ensure an adequate supply of zoned lands to meet forecasted and anticipated economic and social needs, while avoiding an oversupply which would lead to fragmented development, dissipated infrastructural provision and urban sprawl.
- Foster the development of socially and economically balanced sustainable communities.
- Facilitate the actions and implementation of the Local Economic and Community Plan, as appropriate.
- Facilitate the potential for growth in tourism by implementing the Fingal Tourism Strategy 2015-2018, as appropriate.
- Continue to influence regional and national planning and development policies in the interest of the County.
- Co-operate with the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly, Local Authorities and other stakeholders in meeting the needs and development requirements of the County and the Greater Dublin Area in accordance with the National Spatial Strategy and the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area and any successor policy documents.

Provide and facilitate sustainable development proposals and encourage innovation, balanced against any potential negative impact on the environment and communities.

2.4 STRATEGIC POLICY OF THE DRAFT FINGAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Strategic Policy will deliver on the main aims by seeking to:

- Promote sustainable development by providing for the integration of economic, environmental, social and cultural issues into the Development Plan policies and objectives, utilising to that end the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) processes.
- Minimise the impact of 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.
- Contribute to the creation of a more socially inclusive, equal and culturally diverse society by providing for appropriate community infrastructure, quality public realm and improving access to information and resources. Seek new innovative ways of enhancing social inclusion and ensure the Plan can facilitate initiatives arising from the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP), where appropriate.
- Add quality to the places where Fingal's people live, work and recreate by integrating high quality design into every aspect of the Plan promoting adaptable residential buildings and ensuring developments contribute to a positive sense of place and local distinctiveness of an area.
- Promote and facilitate the long-term consolidation and growth of the County town of Swords generally as provided for in the Swords Strategic Vision 2035.
- Consolidate the growth of the major centres of Blanchardstown and Balbriggan largely within their previously identified limits by encouraging infill rather than greenfield development and by intensification at appropriately identified locations.

- Consolidate the development and protect the unique identifies of the settlement of Howth, Sutton, Baldoyle, Portmarnock, Malahide, Donabate, Lusk, Rush and Skerries.
- Develop a strategy to promote and deliver an enhanced identity and link with Fingal for the wider communities of Santry, Ballymun, Meakstown/Charlestown, Finglas and Lanesborough and define them beyond the existing named South Fingal Fringe Settlement.
- Promote the vibrancy of town centres by providing for a mix of uses within these areas, including cultural and community uses and upper floor residential, as appropriate.
- Safeguard the current and future operational, safety and technical requirements of Dublin Airport and provide for its ongoing development (including the second runway and potential commercial opportunities) within a sustainable development of framework. The framework shall take account of any potential impact on local communities and shall have regard to any wider environmental issues.
- Promote enterprise and employment throughout the Country, including the Metro North Economic Corridor and Blanchardstown and work with the other Dublin Local Authorities to promote the Dublin City Region as an engine for economic growth for the Region and the County.
- Protect, maintain and enhance the natural and built heritage of the County.
- Safeguard the 'green agricultural' identity of North Fingal, promoting the rural character of the County and supporting the agricultural/horticultural production sector.
- Provide viable options for the rural community through the promotion of controlled growth of the rural villages and clusters balanced with careful restriction of residential development in the countryside, recognising the unique value of rural communities in Fingal.
- Strengthen and consolidate greenbelts around key settlements.
- Seek the development of a high quality public transport system throughout and adjoining the County, including the development of modern light rail systems integrated into the existing rail network like Metro North and Metro West, improvements to the railway infrastructure incl. the Dart Expansion Programme (DEP), the facilitation of Quality Bus Corridors (QBCs) and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) systems together with enhanced facilities for walking and cycling.
- Promote, improve and develop a well-connected modern national, regional and local roads and public transport infrastructure geared to meet the needs of the County and Region and providing for all road users, prioritising walking, cycling and public transport.
- Work with Irish Water to secure the timely provision of the water supply and drainage infrastructure necessary to facilitate the sustainable development of the County and the Region.
- Secure the timely provision of other infrastructure essential to the sustainable development of the County, in particular in areas of resource and waste management, energy supply, renewable energy generation and Information and Communications Technology (ICT).
- Ensure the timely provision of community infrastructure including schools, recreational and sports facilities, roads, waste water treatment facilities and emergency services, commensurate with the number of housing units proposed for construction on lands zoned for residential development.
- Ensure new developments have regard to the recommendations of the Flood Risk Assessment, generally avoiding development on areas liable to flooding or which would be liable to exacerbate flooding.
- Promote, drive and facilitate the transition in the future to an entirely renewable energy supply.

3 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

3.1 GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS ON APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

The AA requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (European Communities 2001) follow a sequential approach as outlined in the following guidance documents and memoranda, namely:

- *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities.* Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2010 revision.
- *Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities.* Circular NPWS 1/10 and PSSP 2/10.
- *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* (European Commission Environment Directorate-General, 2001).
- *Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The provisions of Article 6 of the Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC* (European Commission Environment Directorate-General, 2000).
- *Guidance Document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC. Clarification of the Concepts of Alternative Solutions, Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest, Compensatory Measures, Overall Coherence.* Opinion of the European Commission (European Commission January 2007).
- *Guidelines for Good Practice Appropriate Assessment of Plans under Article 6(3) Habitats Directive* (International Workshop on Assessment of Plans under the Habitats Directive, 2011).
- *Marine Natura Impacts Statements in Irish Special Areas of Conservation.* A working Document. National Parks and Wildlife Service at the Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht (April 2012).

3.2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND CASE LAW

The screening process is concerned with determining whether a plan or project is capable of having an effect on a European Site(s) either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. Over time legal interpretation has been sought on the practical application of the legislation as some terminology was found to be unclear. This gave rise to doubt and uncertainty for those in the role as Competent Authority in particular and applying the various instructions/memoranda were found in certain circumstances to be unclear with regards to some definitions leading to possible misinterpretations and hence gaps the information or findings that were be supplied to the competent authority and its subsequent deliberations.

European and National case law has clarified a number of issues and some aspects of the published guidance documents have been superseded by case law. The commission has notified its intent to revise its Article 6 guidance but to date, this has not occurred. A summary selection of the most relevant case law consulted in the preparation of the draft Fingal DP is included in **Table 3.1**.

Table 3.1 - Selection of Case law further clarifying aspects of the guidance documents

Year	Case	Appropriate Extract
2004	C-127/02 Waddenvereniging and Vogelbeschermingsvereniging or 'Waddenzee' Reference for a preliminary ruling	At Para 61 “ an appropriate assessment of the implications for the site concerned of the plan or project implies that, prior to its approval, all aspects of the plan or project which can by themselves or in combination with other plans or projects, affect the site’s conservation objectives must be identified in the light of the best scientific knowledge in the field. The competent national authorities, are to authorise such an activity only if they have made certain that it will not adversely affect the integrity of that site. That is the case where no reasonable scientific doubt remains as to the absence of such affects.
2006	C-239/04 Commission v Portugal Infringement Action	At para 24 – “The fact that, after its completion, the project may not have produced such effects is immaterial to that assessment. It is at the time of adoption of the decision authorising implementation of the project that there must be no reasonable scientific doubt remaining as to the absence of adverse effects on the integrity of the site in question”
2007	C-304/05 Commission v Italy Infringement Action	At para 59 – “With regard to the factors on the basis of which the competent authorities may gain the necessary level of certainty, the Court has stated that no reasonable scientific doubt may remain, those authorities having to rely on the best scientific knowledge in the field ”. At Para 69 – “It follows from all the foregoing that both the study of 2000 and the report of 2002 have gaps and lack complete, precise and definitive findings and conclusions capable of removing all reasonable scientific doubt as to the effects of the works proposed on the SPA concerned “
2007	C-418/04 Commission v Ireland Infringement Action	At para 47 – “For that purpose, the updating of scientific data is necessary to determine the situation of the most endangered species and the species constituting the common heritage of the Community in order to classify the most suitable areas as SPAs. It is therefore necessary to use the most up-to-date scientific data available ” At para 142 – “first, that SPA classification cannot be the result of an isolated study of the ornithological value of each of the areas in question but must be carried out in the light of the natural boundaries of the wetland ecosystem and, second, that the ornithological criteria which form the foundation of the classification must have a scientific basis ”.
2011	C-409/09 Commission v Spain Infringement Action	At para 100 – “An assessment made under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive cannot be regarded as appropriate if it contains gaps and lacks complete, precise and definitive findings and conclusions capable of removing all reasonable scientific doubt as to the effects of the works proposed on the SPA concerned”. At Para 106 – “It cannot therefore be maintained that,

Year	Case	Appropriate Extract
		before the authorisation of those operations, all the aspects of the plan or project capable, by themselves or in combination with other plans or projects, of affecting the conservation objectives of the 'Alto Sil' site were identified, taking into account the best scientific knowledge on the matter"
2013	C-258/11 Sweetman v An Bord Pleanála Infringement Action	At para 40 – "Authorisation for a plan or project, as referred to in Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, may therefore be given only on condition that the competent authorities – once all aspects of the plan or project have been identified which can, by themselves or in combination with other plans or projects, affect the conservation objectives of the site concerned, and in the light of the best scientific knowledge in the field – are certain that the plan or project will not have lasting adverse effects on the integrity of that site. That is so where no reasonable scientific doubt remains as to the absence of such effects".
2014	C-512/12 TC Briels and Others v Minister for Infrastructure and Environment, Netherlands	At para 27 - "The assessment carried out under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive cannot have lacunae and must contain complete, precise and definitive findings and conclusions capable of removing all reasonable scientific doubt as to the effects of the works proposed on the protected site concerned.

In addition, the interim ruling of an Irish High Court case in the matter of Kelly versus An Bord Pleanála (2014), notes that a report must contain **complete, precise and definitive findings** and conclusions and may not have **lacunae or gaps**. The requirement for precise and definitive findings and conclusions appears to require analysis, evaluation and decisions. Further, the reference to findings and conclusions in a scientific context requires both findings following analysis and conclusions following an evaluation each in light of the best scientific knowledge in the field.

3.3 STAGES OF APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

The AA process progresses through four stages. If at any stage in the process it is determined that there will be no significant effect on the integrity of a European Site in view of the sites conservation objectives, the process is effectively completed. The four stages are as follows:

- Stage 1 – Screening of the proposed plan or project for AA;
- Stage 2 – An AA of the proposed plan or project;
- Stage 3 – Assessment of alternative solutions; and
- Stage 4 – Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI)/ Derogation.

Stages 1 and 2 relate to Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive; and Stages 3 and 4 to Article 6(4).

Stage 1: Screening

The aim of screening is to assess firstly if the plan or project is directly connected with or necessary to the management of European Site(s); or in view of best scientific knowledge, if the plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, is likely to have a significant effect on a European site. This is done by examining the proposed plan or project and the conservation objectives of any European Sites that might potentially be affected. If screening determines that there is potential for significant effects or there is uncertainty regarding the significance of effects then it will be recommended that the plan is brought forward to full AA.

Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment

The aim of stage 2 of the AA process is to identify any adverse impacts that the plan or project might have on the integrity of relevant European Sites. As part of the assessment, a key consideration is 'in combination' effects with other plans or projects. Where adverse impacts are identified, mitigation measures can be proposed that would avoid, reduce or remedy any such negative impacts and the plan or project should then be amended accordingly, thereby avoiding the need to progress to Stage 3.

Stage 3: Assessment of Alternative Solutions

If it is not possible during the stage 2 to reduce impacts to acceptable, non-significant levels by avoidance and/or mitigation, stage 3 of the process must be undertaken which is to objectively assess whether alternative solutions exist by which the objectives of the plan or project can be achieved. Explicitly, this means alternative solutions that do not have negative impacts on the integrity of a European Site. It should also be noted that EU guidance on this stage of the process states that, 'other assessment criteria, such as economic criteria, cannot be seen as overruling ecological criteria' (EC, 2002). In other words, if alternative solutions exist that do not have negative impacts on European Sites; they should be adopted regardless of economic considerations.

Stage 4: Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI)/Derogation

This stage of the AA process is undertaken when it has been determined that negative impacts on the integrity of a European Site will result from a plan or project, but that no alternatives exist. At this stage of the AA process, it is the characteristics of the plan or project itself that will determine whether or not the competent authority can allow it to progress. This is the determination of 'overriding public interest'.

It is important to note that in the case of European Sites that include in their qualifying features 'priority' habitats or species, as defined in Annex I and II of the Directive, the demonstration of 'overriding public interest' is not sufficient and it must be demonstrated that the plan or project is necessary for 'human health or safety considerations'. Where plans or projects meet these criteria, they can be allowed, provided adequate compensatory measures are proposed. Stage 4 of the process defines and describes these compensation measures.

3.4 INFORMATION CONSULTED FOR THIS PLAN

A considerable amount of the information (maps, ecological data and water quality etc.) was relied upon in the preparation and assessment of the threats to the draft Fingal DP including:

- Department of Environment, Community and Local Government – online land use mapping www.myplan.ie/en/index.html;
- Environmental Protection Agency – Water Quality www.epa.ie;
- ESRI Ireland - Mapping Themes www.esri-ireland.ie;
- Fingal County Development Plan 2011-2017;
- Fingal County Development Plan 2011-2017 Natura Impact Statement;
- Geological Survey of Ireland – Geology, soils and Hydrogeology www.gsi.ie;
- Information on the conservation status of birds in Ireland (Colhoun & Cummins 2014);
- Information on the eastern river basin district www.erbd.ie;
- National Parks and Wildlife Service – online Natura 2000 site network information www.npws.ie;
- National Parks and Wildlife Service – Information on the status of EU protected habitats in Ireland (NPWS 2013a, 2013b);
- National Biodiversity Data Centre – www.biodiversityireland.ie; and
- Ordnance Survey of Ireland – Mapping and Aerial photography www.osi.ie.

3.5 SCREENING PROTOCOL

3.5.1 Screening Sequence

- Definition of the zone of influence for the draft Fingal DP;
- Identification of the European Sites that are situated (in their entirety or partially) within the zone of influence of the draft Fingal DP;
- Identification of the most up-to-date Qualifying Interests (QIs) for each European Site occurring either wholly or partially within the zone of influence;
- Identification of the environmental conditions that maintain the QIs at the desired target of Favourable Conservation Status;
- Identification of the threats/impacts – actual or potential that could negatively impact the environmental conditions of the QIs within the European Sites;
- Highlighting objectives or policies of the draft Fingal DP that, if implemented, could give rise to significant negative impacts; and
- Identification of other plans or projects, for which In-combination impacts would likely have significant effects.

3.5.2 Timeframe for Screening

It is a statutory obligation that the plan should only be permitted, if through the AA process it cannot be determined that there will no significant effect on a European Site or that there are imperative reasons for overriding public interest (IROPI) to proceed. Therefore an AA assessment must be completed before any plan can be adopted.

4 SCREENING OF EUROPEAN SITES

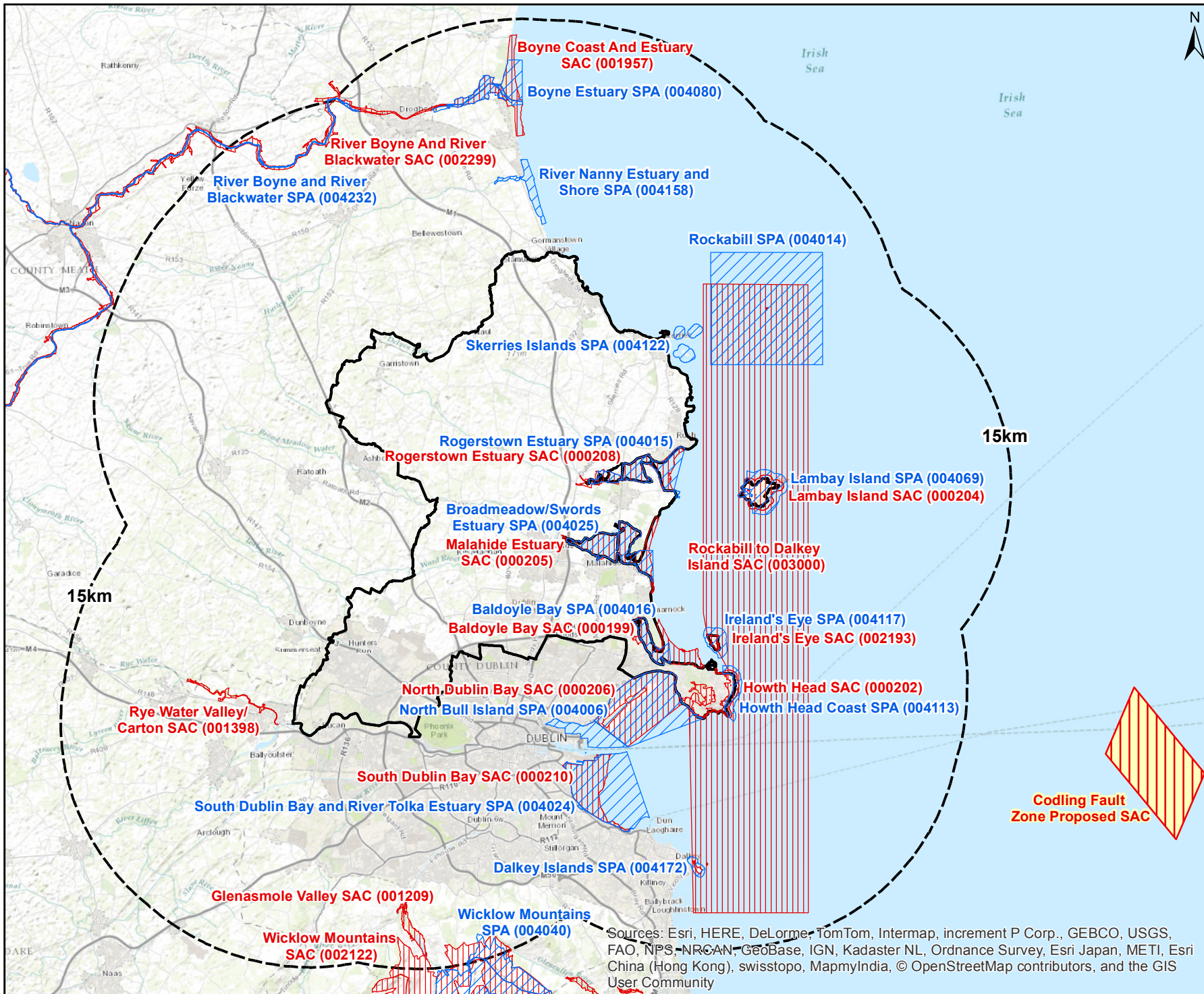
4.1 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE EUROPEAN SITES

A buffer of 15km is typically taken as the initial zone of influence (Zoi) extending beyond the reach of the footprint of a plan or project, as per Ministerial guidance (DoEHLG 2009). The zone of influence will depend on the pathway for any potential impacts, as well as the specific nature of different habitats/species for which a site is protected; and for this reason must be scientifically defined based upon further information. In certain situations, it would be scientifically appropriate, based on the published information, to extend the distance of the Zoi further afield. In regard of the objectives and potential impacts arising from the implementation of the draft Fingal DP, the 15 kilometre distance was considered to be acceptable to screen all likely significant effects that might arise as a result of the implementation of the plan.

The European Sites that occurred within the zone of influence of the draft Fingal DP are shown in **Table 4.1**, whilst **Figure 4.1** is a cartographic representation of the same data. The spatial boundary data for the European Sites shown in **Figure 4.1** was the most recent available (January 2015). There exists the potential for a site located approximately 24.5km east of Fingal to become designated in the near future as an SAC for the protection of the Annex I habitat, 'Submarine Structures made by leaking gas [1180]'. This site is currently called the Codling Fault Zone pcSAC and the site has yet to receive formal acceptance, although this is likely in early 2016 (NPWS pers. comm.). While the site is not an SAC, it should be noted that any marine development e.g. in relation to shipping or sub-sea infrastructure could have the potential to disturb the site. As there are currently no conservation objectives for this site, objectives for similar designated sites should be borne in mind.

Although not a formal requirement in the AA process, the guidance documents make reference to the importance of the Total National resource including Natural Heritage Area's (NHAs) and proposed NHA's (pNHAs), along with other National designations including nature reserves, wildfowl sanctuaries and RAMSAR sites. These sites may provide refuges for fauna and/or flora of European Sites by virtue of corridors or linkage to another or between another European Sites. The overlap, either partial or in whole with European Sites is marked in **Table 4.1**.

Whilst the European Sites within the zone of influence have been identified, the assessment cannot be carried out without an idea for the ecological conditions and hence scientific parameters that led to its designation. In this regard the Qualifying Interests (QIs) and Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) for Special Protection Areas are described further.



Legend

- Fingal Administrative Area Boundary
- Buffer of Administrative Boundary, 15km
- Special Protection Area (SPA)
- Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Proposed SAC

Notes: Data source - National Parks and Wildlife Service, SAC/SPA data revised 15/01/2015. The 'proposed SAC' currently is not recognised by the Minister of the DAHG and is under no legislative protection.



Client
 Fingal County Council
 Comhairle Contae Fhine Gall

Project
SEA & AA for Fingal County Development Plan

Title
European Sites within 15km
Figure 4.1

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Issue Details	
Drawn By: NON	Project No. MDE1205
Checked By: TR	File Ref: MDE1205Arc0021A01
Approved By: EO	
Scale: 1:330,000 @ A4	Projection: ITM (IRENET95)
Date: 24/09/2015	

NOTE: 1. This drawing is the property of RPS Group Ltd. It is a confidential document and must not be copied, used, or its contents divulged without prior written consent.
 2. All levels are referred to Ordnance Datum, Malin Head.
 3. Ordnance Survey Ireland License EN 000515 ©Copyright Government of Ireland.

Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, TomTom, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), swisstopo, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Table 4.1 – European Sites of Conservation Importance within Fingal County and a buffer zone extending 15km* beyond its administrative boundary

Site Code	(candidate) Special Area of Conservation (cSAC/SAC)	Site Code	Special Protection Areas SPA
Sites within the County Boundary			
000199	Baldoyle Bay **	004015	Rogerstown Estuary**
000202	Howth Head**	004016	Baldoyle Bay**
000204	Lambay Island	004025	Malahide Estuary** (or Broadmeadow/Swords Estuary)
000205	Malahide Estuary**	004069	Lambay Island
000208	Rogerstown Estuary**	004113	Howth Head Coast*8
002193	Ireland's Eye**	004117	Ireland's Eye**
		004122	Skerries Islands
Sites Beyond the County Boundary within the expected zone of influence			
000206	North Dublin Bay**	004006	North Bull Island**
000210	South Dublin Bay**	004014	Rockabill
001209	Glenasmole Valley**	004024	South Dublin Bay and Rive Tolka Estuary**
001398	Rye Water Valley/Carton**	004040	Wicklow Mountains
001957	Boyne Coast and Estuary**	004080	Boyne Estuary**
002122	Wicklow Mountains	004158	River Nanny Estuary and Shore**
002299	River Boyne and River Blackwater	004172	Dalkey Islands
003000	Rockabill to Dalkey Island**	004232	River Boyne and River Blackwater
NA	Codling Fault Zone pcSAC*		

*Zone of influence is extended to take account of pcSAC

**Sites marked thus have one or more associated Natural Heritage Areas

4.1.1 Qualifying Interests

Under the Habitats Directive, a number of species and habitats have been 'prioritised' for conservation purposes. For an SAC, the specific Annex I Habitats and Annex II species for which a specific site has been formally designated for are referred to as Qualifying Interests (QIs), whilst the selected Annex I bird species of SPA are known as Special Conservation Interests (SCIs).

The Qualifying Interest for SACs and Special Conservation Interests for SPAs of the European Sites potentially impacted by the plan were downloaded from NPWS website (September 2015). The data is shown in **Table 4.3** and **Table 4.4**.

4.1.2 Conservation Objectives

The integrity of a European Site (referred to in Article 6.3 of the Habitat's Directive) whether it be a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or Special Protection Area (SPA) is determined based on the conservation status of the individual qualifying features (QIs or SCIs) of the designated site.

The overarching aim of the Natura 2000 network is to achieve *Favourable Conservation Status* of conservation worthy habitats listed in Annex I and the habitats of species listed in Annex II of the Habitats Directive and/or of regularly occurring migratory bird species as well as those species defined in Annex I of the Birds Directive. It should be noted that in some situations that there is overlap in extent between certain SACs and SPAs and indeed SAC and SAC. In that regard, the CO's should be jointly used as appropriate.

The qualifying features for each site have been obtained through a review of the Conservation Objectives available from the NPWS: <http://www.npws.ie/protected-sites>. The dates of the latest Conservation Objectives (COs) are included in **Appendix A & B**. Given the number of European Sites that could potentially be impacted by the implementation of draft Fingal DP, there is a considerable amount of data contained therein. For this reason, the draft Fingal DP has been developed with a summarised guidance of them that encompasses the spirit of the site specific CO's.

- To maintain Annex I habitats and Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected at favourable conservation status;
- To maintain the extent of species richness and diversity of the entire SAC and for SPAs; and
- To maintain the bird species of special conservation interest for which the SPA has been listed at favourable conservation status.

4.1.3 Documented Threats to European Sites

The threats and pressures for the various QIs have been extracted primarily from a number of NPWS authored reports, namely Natura 2000 site datasheets and Site synopses (<http://www.npws.ie>). Other key source material is from the recently available statutory assessments on the conservation status of habitats and Species in Ireland namely; *The status of EU protected Habitats and Species in Ireland* (NPWS 2013 a, b &c) and on information contained in Ireland's most recent Article 12 submission to the EU on *the Status and trends of Birds species (2008-2012)*. A summary list of the threats is included in **Table 4.2** (Note that these headings do not reflect the developing draft Fingal DP chapter headings) while all documented threats for the European Sites potentially affected by the implementation of the draft plan are shown **Table 4.3** and **Table 4.4**.

The main aspects of the plan which could rise to direct or indirect impacts to European Sites as a result of the implementation of the draft Fingal DP are principally related to land zoning, settlement strategy, enterprise and built heritage and recreational policy including activities associated with the marine environment. The majority of these policies and the services that arise from them are largely required to meet the infrastructural and recreational needs of the community rather than the management of the European Sites. At the outset, it is important to realise that many of the identified threats may not represent activities that occur within the boundary of the European Sites.

Table 4.2 – Key Aspects of draft Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023 and potential negative impacts on the environment

Headings	Potential Impacts
Population	<p>Direct impacts a result of intensification and urbanisation and associated disturbance of rural areas including coalescing of two or more communities over time within or in close proximity to European Sites.</p> <p>Indirect effects, typically from outside or in close proximity to European Sites include impacts on water quality or resource abstraction, waste disposal due to overcapacity, introduction of non-native, alien species.</p>
Water	<p>Direct impacts in terms of habitat loss, effects on surface and ground water resources and coastal water quality.</p> <p>Indirect effects could include accidental spillage and impacts of eutrophication continuing downstream and entering the marine environment, introduction of non-native and invasive species.</p>
Waste	<p>Direct impacts in terms overloading and lack of capacity at infrastructure leading to loss or change of habitat (including marine), species disturbance, resource eutrophication.</p> <p>Indirect impacts as a result of pollutants entering surface and ground water resource, emissions from burning.</p>
Land Use	<p>Direct impacts include impacts to surface waters through inappropriate zoning, management, eutrophication, impacts of quality and extent of Species territory (breeding/nesting/feeding) sites and habitats (particularly coastal squeeze) and termination of interconnecting wildlife corridors.</p> <p>Indirect impacts are typically located outside of European Site boundaries but pressures may be experienced within. Pressures are potentially varied but can include impacts on water resources e.g. during construction.</p>
Climate Change	<p>Direct impacts in terms of habitat loss, species distribution and habitation/nesting sites along coastal zones but also possibly inland along riparian sites as a result of management and/or development of coastal/river defences.</p> <p>Indirect impacts due to geomorphological changes in upstream riverine habitats resulting in downstream erosion and/or deposition of sediment.</p>
Material Assets	<p>Direct impacts in terms of increased disturbance in sensitive locations, habitat fragmentation or loss or interference of flight paths as a result of infrastructural developments, linear or otherwise (above and below ground) e.g. expansion of road network, communications network, water and waste infrastructure and expansion of other facilities required in support of increased human population.</p> <p>Indirect impacts are likely to occur in areas outside of the European Sites boundaries and include surface water deterioration, waste disposal, introduction of non-native or alien species.</p>
Cultural Heritage	<p>Potential for direct impacts e.g. on Bat roosting/hibernation as a result of improvements to old buildings or increased pedestrian access</p> <p>Indirect impacts due to increased pedestrian access leading to disturbance or fragmentation</p>
Promotion and development of tourism, leisure and Amenity facilities	<p>Direct impacts caused by disturbance to sensitive habitats and species due to increasing human presence, particularly in coastal areas including watercourses, dunes and marine environment.</p> <p>Indirect effects could include disturbance or mortality of marine species as a result of terrestrial developments or expansion, increased noise.</p>

Table 4.3 - Qualifying Interest (Habitats and /or Species) and Documented Threats/Pressures to SACs within draft Fingal Development Plan zone of influence

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Features - Habitats	Qualifying Features - Species	Documented Threats and Pressures
000199	Baldoyle Bay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] 	—	The SAC is under pressure/threat from: Aquaculture, professional fishing, bait digging, removal of fauna, hunting, aggregate extraction, removal of beach material, industrialisation, port/marina, golfcourse, urbanised areas/habitation, natural sources of eutrophication, discharges, communications networks, water pollution, land reclamation from sea, estuary or marsh, coastal protection works, invasion by a species, erosion and accretion, grazing, overgrazing, infilling, reclamation, horse-riding, amenity use, camping, tracks and roads and motorway, electricity poles, invasive non-native species and walking, horse-riding and non-motorised vehicles.
000202	Howth Head	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] European dry Heaths [4030] 	—	The SAC is under pressure/threat from: urbanised areas/human habitation, walking, horse-riding and non-motorised vehicles, .grazing, under grazing, fertilisation, restructuring land holdings, sand and gravel quarrying, forestry, leisure, fishing, hunting, disposal of household waste, nautical sports, water pollution, drainage and invasive species.
000204	Lambay Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reefs [1170] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Halichoerus grypus</i> (Grey Seal) [1364] <i>Phoca vitulina</i> (Common Seal) [1365] 	The SAC is under threat from nautical sports, urbanised areas/human habitation, leisure fishing, hunting, grazing, mowing/cutting of grassland, noise nuisance/noise pollution, industrial or commercial areas (shipping lanes).

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Features - Habitats	Qualifying Features - Species	Documented Threats and Pressures
000205	Malahide Estuary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] <i>Spartina</i> swards (<i>Spartinion maritimae</i>) [1320] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] {Priority Habitat} 	—	The SAC is under threat from hunting, fertilisation, roads and motorways, reclamation of the land from sea, estuary or marsh, golf courses, nautical sports and walking, horse-riding and non-motorised vehicles.
000206	North Dublin Bay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimae</i>) [1410] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (Petalwort) 	The SAC is under pressure/threat from: urbanised areas/human habitation, dispersed habitation, golf courses, bait digging/collection, leisure fishing, walking, horse-riding and non-motorised vehicles, trampling, overuse, camping and caravanning, nautical sports, agricultural improvement, stock feeding, grazing, undergrazing, fertilisation, erosion, competition, invasive non-native species, motorised vehicles, paths, tracks, restructuring, coastal protection works, disposal of household waste, sand and gravel extraction, other pollution, sports pitches, burning, routes, autoroutes and industrial/commercial areas

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Features - Habitats	Qualifying Features - Species	Documented Threats and Pressures
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] {priority} Humid dune slacks [2190] 		
000208	Rogerstown Estuary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estuaries [1130] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] {priority} 	—	The SAC is under threat from fertilisation, grazing, invasive non-native species, golf courses, walking, horse-riding and non-motorised vehicles, bait digging/collection, reclamation of land from sea, estuary or marsh, dispersed habitation patterns, roads and motorways, erosion, discharges and use of biocides, hormones or chemicals.
000210	South Dublin Bay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] 	—	The SAC is under pressure/threat from: accumulation of organic material, urbanised areas/human habitation, industrial/commercial areas, bait digging/collection, walking, horse-riding and non-motorised vehicles, natural sources of eutrophication, roads/motorways, reclamation of land from sea, coastal protection works, estuary or marsh, discharges and nautical sports, invasion by a species.

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Features - Habitats	Qualifying Features - Species	Documented Threats and Pressures
001209	Glenasmole Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (* important orchid sites) [6210] <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410] Petrifying springs with tufa formation (<i>Cratoneurion</i>) [7220] 	—	The SAC is under pressure/threat from: silviculture/forestry, fertilisation, agricultural improvement, cultivation, grazing (over- and under grazing), abandonment of pastoral systems, encroachment, leisure fishing, extraction of sand and gravel, Burning, human-induced changes in hydraulic conditions and invasive non-native species.
001398	Rye Water Valley/Carton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Petrifying springs with tufa formation (<i>Cratoneurion</i>) [7220] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Vertigo angustior</i> (Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail) [1014] <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> (Desmoulin's Whorl Snail) [1016] 	The SAC is under pressure/threat from: grazing, fertilisation, modifying structures of inland water courses, continuous urbanisation and also one-off housing patterns, silviculture/forestry, roads, motorways and removal of hedges and copses or scrub.
001957	Boyne Coast and Estuary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estuaries [1130] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) 	—	The SAC is under threat/pressure from: golf courses, leisure fishing, walking, horse-riding and use of non-motorised vehicles, marine and freshwater aquaculture, urbanised areas/human habitation, grazing, removal of sediments (mud etc.), reclamation of the land from sea/estuary/marsh, disposal of household/recreational facility waste, disposal of industrial waste, pollution and invasive non-native species.

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Features - Habitats	Qualifying Features - Species	Documented Threats and Pressures
		[2130] {priority}		
002122	Wicklow Mountains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or <i>Isoeto-Nanojuncetea</i> [3130] • Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160] • Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010] • European dry heaths [4030] • Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] • Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and sub-mountain areas, in Continental Europe) [6230] • Blanket bogs (* Priority, if active bog) [7130] • Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladani</i>) [8110] • Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210] • Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220] • Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0] 	<i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter)	The site is under threat/pressures from: grazing (over- and under grazing), dispersed habitation patterns, walking, horse-riding and use of non-motorised vehicles, peat extraction, fire and fire suppression, burning, air pollution (acidification), mining and extraction (removal of scree) invasive non-native species, silviculture/forestry, roads and motorways, windfarm development, leisure fishing and outdoor recreation (erosion of habitat).
002193	Ireland's Eye	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] • Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] 	—	The SAC is under threat/pressure from leisure activities such as walking, horse-riding and non-motorised vehicles paths, tracks and cycling routes, trampling, overuse, as well as invasion of species, removal of fauna, coastal protection

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Features - Habitats	Qualifying Features - Species	Documented Threats and Pressures
				works, burning, competition, reclamation of land, drainage.
002299	River Boyne and River Blackwater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alkaline fens [7230] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> (River Lamprey) [1099] <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106] <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355] 	The SAC is under pressure/threat from: grazing, silviculture and forestry, cultivation and fertilisation, as well as human-induced changes in hydraulic conditions. Recreational activities are also a pressure and specifically include: leisure fishing, nautical sports, walking, horse-riding and use of non-motorised vehicles. Urbanised areas/human habitation is a pressure, particularly dispersed habitation and discharges, as well as roads and motorways.
003000	Rockabill to Dalkey Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reefs [1170] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Phocoena phocoena</i> (Harbour Porpoise) [1351] 	The SAC is under pressure/threat from: noise nuisance/noise pollution, utility and service lines, shipping lanes, siltation rate changes as well as marine dumping and depositing of dredged deposits, urbanised areas/human habitation, discharges, fishing/harvesting aquatic resources and removal of sediments (mud substrates etc.) as well as coastal protection works, active acoustic surveys introduction of invasive species and pollution.
NA	Codling Fault Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submarine structures made by leaking gases [1180] 	—	Not currently drafted as the structures are located in shallow waters (50-120m) are likely to include (based on adjacent Crocker Carbonate Slabs in UK are considered as outstanding examples of the habitat. Likely threats are listed as Demersal and Pelagic fishing and the presence of and management of telecommunications cables.

* Information primarily based on NPWS Data Sheets & Site Synopses; and Status of EU protected Habitats and Species in Ireland (NPWS 2013a, b & c) and Ireland's Article 12 submission to EU commission on the Status and trends of bird species 2008-2012 (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/knowledge/rep_birds/index_en.htm)

Table 4.4 - Qualifying Interests and Documented Threats/Pressures of SPAs within draft Fingal Development Plan zone of influence

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Feature - Species	Documented Threats and Pressures
004006	North Bull Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] • Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] • Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052] • Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054] • Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056] • Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] • Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] • Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] • Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143] • Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144] • Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] • Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] • Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] • Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160] • Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] • Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) [A169] • Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] • Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] 	North Bull Island SPA, given its location on the southern border of Fingal adjacent to Dublin City Bay, pressures arise on the site from shipping lanes, proximity to industrial or commercial areas, presence of roads, bridges and viaducts and discharges to the marine environment. Pressures also arise from recreational uses in the area such as golf courses, digging/collection, walking, horse-riding and non-motorised vehicles and nautical sports. The presence of continuous urbanisation of the city suburbs is also a pressure on the site.
004014	Rockabill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purple Sandpiper (<i>Calidris maritima</i>) [A148] • Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) [A192] • Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] • Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194] 	The main threats to Rockabill SPA are other forms of transportation and communication and nautical sports.
004015	Rogerstown Estuary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Light-bellied, Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] • Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] • Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] 	The inner part of Rogerstown Estuary SPA has been damaged by the refuse tip, which covers 40 hectares of mudflat and associated pressures of disposal of industrial, household and recreational facility waste. The estuary is

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Feature - Species	Documented Threats and Pressures
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A157] • Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143] • Additional Special Conservation Interests include: • Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>) [A043] • Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056] • Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] • Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] • Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] • Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] • Wetland & Waterbirds [A999] 	popular for sports and recreation and so nautical sports, golf courses, bait digging/collection and hunting are pressures. Pressures from agriculture arise through grazing and fertilisation. Dispersed habitation patterns and invasive non-native species and land reclamation/drying-out have also been identified as threats to the site.
004016	Baldoyle Bay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Light-bellied, Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] • Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] • Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] • Additional Special Conservation Interests include: • Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] • Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] • Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] • Wetland & Waterbirds [A999] 	The main threats identified for the SPA are land reclamation, the presence of urbanised areas in close proximity, discharges, hunting, golf courses, roads/motorways, bait digging/collection, invasive non-native species, walking/horse-riding and non-motorised vehicles, and eutrophication from natural sources.
004024	South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] • Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143] • Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144] • Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] • Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] • Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) [A192] • Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] • Artic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194] • Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] 	The main threats identified for this site include urbanised areas/human habitation, reclamation of the land from sea/estuary/marsh, industrial or commercial areas, roads and motorways, discharges, eutrophication from natural sources, recreational activities such as nautical sports, leisure fishing and bait digging/collection and from walking, horse-riding and use of non-motorised vehicles.

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Feature - Species	Documented Threats and Pressures
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] • Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] • Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] • Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] • Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] • Wetland & waterbirds [A999] 	
004025	Malahide Estuary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] • Goldeneye (<i>Bucephala clangula</i>) [A067] • Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] • Great Crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>) [A005] • Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] • Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054] • Red Breasted Merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>) [A069] • Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] • Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] • Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] • Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143] • Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] • Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] • Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] • Wetland & Waterbirds [A999] 	The Natura Form for Malahide Estuary SPA identified it as a substantial river, which drains a mainly agricultural, though increasingly urbanised, catchment. The inner part of the estuary is heavily used for water sports, which causes disturbance to bird populations. Paths, tracks and cycle tracks as well as through-walking, horse-riding and non-motorised vehicles can impact the site through disturbance of habitat. A section of the outer estuary has been in-filled for a marina and housing development (land reclamation/urbanisation/human habitation). Aquatic flora and fauna are vulnerable to invasive non-native species and all forms of pollution such as that which can occur as a result of agricultural run-off and industrial and municipal effluents. The bridge viaduct and railway have also been identified as pressures.
004040	Wicklow Mountains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>) [A098] • Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>) [A103] 	Threats/pressures to the sites include: paths, tracks and cycling tracks, Sylviculture/forestry, peat extraction, walking, horse-riding and use of non-motorised vehicles, grazing.
004069	Lambay Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) [A009] • Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017] 	This SPA has essentially been maintained as a wildlife sanctuary by its owners since the early 20 th century and the policy of preservation of wildlife continues. The main

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Feature - Species	Documented Threats and Pressures
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) [A018] • Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>) [A043] • Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>) [A183] • Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184] • Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188] • Guillemot (<i>Uria aalge</i>) [A199] • Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>) [A200] • Puffin (<i>Fratercula arctica</i>) [A204] 	threats and pressures to the site are mowing/cutting of grassland, grazing, hunting, proximity of shipping lanes, nautical sports, leisure fishing, hunting and human habitation on the island.
004080	Boyne Estuary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] • Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] • Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] • Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] • Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142] • Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143] • Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144] • Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] • Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] • Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) [A169] • Little Tern (<i>Sterna albifrons</i>) [A195] • Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] 	The main threats and pressures are urbanised areas/human habitation, marine and freshwater aquaculture, siltation rate changes/dumping/depositing of dredged deposits, reclamation of the land from sea/estuary/marsh, modification of hydrographic functioning in general, recreational activities such as walking, horse-riding, use of non-motorised vehicles and leisure fishing, golf courses, and invasive non-native species.
004113	Howth Head Coast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188] 	The main land use within Howth Head Coast SPA is recreation, mostly walking and horse riding, and this has led to some erosion within the site. Fires also pose a danger to the site.
004117	Ireland's Eye	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017] • Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184] • Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188] 	The principal direct threat to the nesting birds on Ireland's Eye SPA is potential disturbance from visitors to the island, e.g. through walking, horse-riding and use of non-motorised vehicles.

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Feature - Species	Documented Threats and Pressures
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guillemot (<i>Uria aalge</i>) [A199] • Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>) [A200] 	
004122	Skerries Islands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017] • Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) [A018] • Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] • Purple Sandpiper (<i>Calidris maritima</i>) [A148] • Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) [A169] • Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184] 	The main threats to the Skerries Islands SPA are from recreational uses, such as walking, horse-riding or non-motorised vehicles.
004158	River Nanny Estuary and Shore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] • Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] • Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] • Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143] • Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144] • Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184] • Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] 	Pressures to this site include discontinuous urbanisation, and recreational activities such as walking, horse-riding and use of non-motorised vehicles.
004172	Dalkey Islands SPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) [A192] • Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirunda</i>) [A193] • Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194] 	The pressures on this small island site are largely due grazing, nautical sports and walking and disturbance from adjacent urbanisation/commercial areas
004232	River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kingfisher (<i>Alcedo atthis</i>) [A229] 	Pressures to this site include walking, horse-riding and use of non-motorised vehicles, discontinuous urbanisation, changes in agricultural management, grazing, undergrazing, human precipitated changes in hydrological conditions, pollution, roads and encroachment from commercial/industrial developments

* Information primarily based on NPWS Data Sheets & Site Synopses; and Status of EU protected Habitats and Species in Ireland (NPWS 2013a, b & c) and Ireland's Article 12 submission to EU commission on the Status and trends of bird species 2008-2012 (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/knowledge/rep_birds/index_en.htm)

5 IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS ON EUROPEAN SITES

This section documents the policy areas of the draft Fingal DP, which could by their implementation have a potential impact upon European Sites within the zone of influence of the plan. Given that considerable population clusters within Fingal are located along its coastline within close proximity to the main European Sites, it is inevitable that impacts and pressures will be experienced along its coastal zone. As the plan covers the entire county, however, the potential for significant impact is no less significant with pressure from a number of sources or planned activities. For example, there are a number of watercourses intersecting with European Sites that provide direct linkage from the interior towards the coast. And while the risk of a potential impact does not necessarily mean that it will occur, however its omission from the Appropriate Assessment screening is contrary to the precautionary principle and so cannot be ruled out.

5.1 ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY AFFECTS IN ISOLATION

At the outset, it must be appreciated that many of the policies and objectives of the draft Fingal DP are intended to be beneficial in terms of the nature conservation and provide positive impacts for the European sites. Notwithstanding this fact, the AA must address all known negative impacts.

Table 5.1 and **Table 5.2** present a summary of the findings of this exercise. Those sites for which potential effects and impacts have been identified will be taken forward to Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment. Those for which no potential impacts are anticipated as a result of implementation of the draft plan do not require Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment and are ‘screened-out’ at this stage of the assessment.

Table 5.1 – Possible Impacts on SACs

Site Name	Reduction of Habitat Area	Disturbance to Key Species	Habitat or Species Fragmentation	Reduction in Species Density	Changes in Key Indicators of Conservation Value (Water Quality Etc.)
Baldoyle Bay (000199)	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Howth Head (000202)	Potential Impacts	N/A	Potential Impacts	N/A	Potential Impacts
Lambay Island (000204)	None	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Malahide Estuary (000205)	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	N/A	Potential Impacts
North Dublin Bay (000206)	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Rogerstown Estuary (000208)	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts

Site Name	Reduction of Habitat Area	Disturbance to Key Species	Habitat or Species Fragmentation	Reduction in Species Density	Changes in Key Indicators of Conservation Value (Water Quality Etc.)
South Dublin Bay (000210)	None	N/A	None	N/A	Potential Impacts
Glensamole Valley (001209)	None	N/A	None	N/A	None
Rye Water Valley/Carton (001398)	None	None	None	None	None
Boyne Coast and Estuary (001957)	None	N/A	None	N/A	None
Wicklow Mountains (002122)	None	None	None	None	None
Ireland's Eye (002193)	Potential Impacts	N/A	Potential Impacts	N/A	Potential Impacts
River Boyne and River Blackwater (002299)	None	N/A	None	N/A	None
Rockabill to Dalkey Island (003000)	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Codling Fault Zone pcSAC	Potential Impacts	N/A	Potential Impacts	N/A	Potential Impacts

Table 5.2 – Possible Impacts on SPAs

Site Name	Reduction of Habitat Area	Disturbance to Key Species	Habitat or Species Fragmentation	Reduction in Species Density	Changes in Key Indicators of Conservation Value (Water Quality Etc.)
North Bull Island (004006)	None	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Rockabill (004014)	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Rogerstown Estuary (004015)	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Baldoyle Bay (004016)	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
South Dublin Bay And River Tolka Estuary	None	Potential Impacts	None	None	Potential Impacts

Site Name	Reduction of Habitat Area	Disturbance to Key Species	Habitat or Species Fragmentation	Reduction in Species Density	Changes in Key Indicators of Conservation Value (Water Quality Etc.)
(004024)					
Malahide Estuary (004025)	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA (004232)	None	None	None	None	None
Wicklow Mountains (004040)	None	None	None	None	None
Lambay Island (004069)	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Boyne Estuary (004080)	None	None	None	None	None
Howth Head Coast (004113)	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Ireland's Eye (004117)	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Skerries Islands (004122)	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
River Nanny Estuary and Shore (004158)	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts	Potential Impacts
Dalkey Islands SPA (004172)	None	None	None	None	None

5.2 ELEMENTS OF THE PLAN WITH POTENTIAL FOR SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The potential impacts from the draft Fingal DP have been examined in the context of a number of factors that could potentially affect the integrity of the European Sites. In the absence of mitigation, the implementation of the plan has the potential for significant negative direct impacts arising from development along the coast, and potential indirect impacts arising from water quality issues, water supply and wastewater issues, transport development and leisure facilities (see **Table 4.2**).

The threats to the integrity of the European Sites can be summarised thus:

- Direct habitat loss within a European Site – infrastructure development and coastal construction;
- Indirect effects on ecological corridors linking European Sites – infrastructural developments creating barriers or severing links of mobile species for feeding, traversing etc.;
- Indirect threat to quality of European Site – Air emissions, water/wastewater plant, changes in agricultural drainage or landuse;

- Direct and Indirect disturbance of sensitive habitats or species – particularly development of tourism and recreation facilities and amenities at coastal sites; and
- Direct and Indirect threats to a European Sites – landscape management, development and urbanisation.

However, it should be noted that the draft Fingal DP contains numerous general and specific policies and objectives focussed on the protection of European Sites, which will contribute to the conservation of these sites in accordance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive. The council will have regard to its responsibilities in relation to the requirements of the Habitats Directive, and any development proposal within the vicinity of, or potentially having an effect on the designated site, will be subject to an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive.

5.3 IN-COMBINATION IMPACTS WITH OTHER PLANS OR PROJECTS

It is a requirement of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive that the in-combination effects with other plans or projects are considered. In that regard a number of other plans listed below were considered in terms of their potential to have in-combination effects with the draft Fingal DP. The likely significant effects in combination with known plans include:-

- Fingal County Development Plan 2011-2017;
- Fingal Heritage Plan 2011-2017;
- Fingal Biodiversity Action Plan 2010-2015;
- Fingal County Council Wind Energy Strategy (2009);
- Fingal Tourism Strategy 2015-2018;
- Fingal Local Community and Economic Plan 2015-2021 (Draft);
- Your Swords, An Emerging City, Strategic Vision 2035;
- Fingal/North Dublin Transport Study (NTA & Aecom, 2014);
- Fingal-East Meath Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study (FEMFRAMS) 2012;
- Greater Dublin Area Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022;
- Draft Water Services Strategic Plan;
- Eastern River Basin Management Plan (ERBD) 2015-2021 (In press);
- Catchment Flood Risk and Management Studies (CFRAMS) 2011 (In press);
- Eastern-Midlands Regional Waste Management Plan 2015-2021;
- Water Supply Project for the Eastern-Midlands Region;
- National Biodiversity Plan 2011 – 2016;
- Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study 2002-2031;
- Bus rapid Transport (BRT) - Core Dublin Network Report, prepared in conjunction with the NTA by the RPA (2012);
- Draft Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan;
- Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy 2011-2030 (currently being revised);
- National Transport Authority Integrated Implementation Plan 2013-2018;
- National Hazardous Waste Management Plan 2014-2020; and
- National Landscape Strategy 2015-2025.

In addition to the listed strategic plans that have been identified as likely having an in-combination effect upon the integrity of the European sites within the zone of influence, the actions and objectives of the various plans of neighbouring counties Meath, Kildare, South Dublin and Dublin City would potentially have an effect.

6 SCREENING CONCLUSION AND STATEMENT

The Screening process described herein identified 14 SACs, 1 pcSAC and 15 SPAs from within the boundary of the area covered by the draft Fingal DP and extending 15km beyond the county boundary (24.5km offshore in the case of the pcSAC), collectively referred to as the zone of influence. The likely impacts that might arise from the draft Fingal DP have been examined in the context of the key environmental factors that could potentially affect the integrity of the European Sites network e.g. disturbance, habitat loss etc. and the results of the Screening Assessment, as presented in **Table 5.1** and **Table 5.2**. These tables indicate “None” for sites where no negative impact is anticipated to impact upon the Conservation Objectives/Special Conservation Interests of European sites or its overall ecological and physical integrity and “Potential Impact” for those sites where it is certain, likely or uncertain at this stage that impacts on the site may arise as a result of implementation of the draft Fingal DP.

A number of sites have been screened out from further assessment owing to the following reasons:

- By virtue of their distance from the proposed works;
- The lack of habitat or hydrological connectivity between the designated sites and the site of the proposed works; or
- The nature of their qualifying interests and/or their occurrence within the study area.

In light of the information provided above and in conjunction with exercising the precautionary principle, it was determined that it is not possible to rule out likely significant impacts on the European Sites (9 SAC's, 1 pcSAC and 11 SPAs), listed in **Table 6.1**, it is been concluded that the draft Fingal DP should be brought forward to Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment which will result in the preparation of a Natura Impact Report (NIR).

Table 6.1 – Summary of the European Sites Requiring Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment

Code	Site Name	Stage 2 AA	Code	Site Name	Stage 2 AA
000199	Baldoyle Bay SAC	Required	004006	North Bull Island SPA *	Required
000202	Howth Head SAC	Required	004014	Rockabill SPA *	Required
000204	Lambay Island SAC	Required	004015	Rogerstown Estuary SPA	Required
000205	Malahide Estuary SAC	Required	004016	Baldoyle Bay SPA	Required
000208	Rogerstown Estuary SAC	Required	004024	South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA *	Required
000206	South Dublin SAC *	Required	004025	Malahide Estuary SPA	Required
000210	North Dublin Bay SAC *	Required	004069	Lambay Island SPA	Required

Code	Site Name	Stage 2 AA	Code	Site Name	Stage 2 AA
002193	Ireland's Eye SAC	Required	004113	Howth Head Coast SPA	Required
003000	Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC	Required	004117	Ireland's Eye SPA	Required
N/A	Codling Fault Zone pcSAC	Required	004122	Skerries Islands SPA	Required
			004158	River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA *	Required

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APPENDIX A

SAC Conservation Objectives

SAC Conservation Objectives

It is a requirement of the Habitats Directive to maintain or restore the favourable condition of a specified habitat or species (as defined in the Habitats Directive and Birds Directive) within a Site of Community interest (either SAC or SPA). Where site specific objectives have not been defined and individual targets set as yet, then a set of generic objectives are valid. The status and date of issue of the various objectives and targets within the various designated sites which might be impacted by this draft plan are listed below. It should be noted that in some situations that there may be overlap between certain SAC and SPA and indeed SAC and SAC. In that regard, the conservation objectives should be jointly used as appropriate. Full details of the Conservation Objectives are available on the NPWS website at www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites

Date of SAC Conservation Objectives consulted in preparation of draft Fingal DP

Site Code	Site Name	Specific or Generic Conservation Objectives	Version No.	Date of Issue
0001999	Baldoyle Bay SAC	Site specific	1.0	19 th November 2012
000202	Howth Head SAC	Generic	4.0	13 th February 2015
000204	Lambay Island SAC	Site Specific	1.0	22 nd July 2013
000205	Malahide Estuary SAC	Site Specific	1.0	27 th May 2013
000206	North Dublin Bay SAC	Site Specific	1.0	6 th November 2013
000208	Rogerstown Estuary SAC	Site Specific	1.0	14 th August 2013
000210	South Dublin Bay	Site Specific	1.0	22 nd August 2013
001209	Glenasmole Valley	Generic	4.0	13 th February 2015
001398	Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC	Generic	4.0	13 th February 2015
001957	Boyne Coast and Estuary SAC	Site Specific	1.0	31 st October 2012
002122	Wicklow Mountains SAC	Generic	4.0	13 th February 2015
002193	Ireland's Eye SAC	Generic	4.0	13 th February 2015
002299	River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC	Generic	4.0	13 th February 2015
003000	Rockabill to Dalkey SAC	Site Specific	1.0	7 th May 2013
NA	Codling Fault Zone pcSAC			N/A

Full Details of the Conservation Objectives are available on the NPWS website at www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites

APPENDIX B

SPA Special Conservation Interests

SPA Special Conservation Interests

Date of SPA Special Conservation Interests consulted in preparation of draft Fingal DP

Site Code	Site Name	Specific or Generic Conservation Objectives	Version No.	Date of Issue
004006	North Bull Island SPA	Site specific	1.0	9 th March 2015
004014	Rockabill SPA	Site specific	1.0	8 th May 2013
004015	Rogerstown Estuary SPA	Site Specific	1.0	20 th May 2013
004016	Baldoyle Bay SPA	Site Specific	1.0	27 th February 2013
004113	Howth Head SPA	Generic	4.0	13 th February 2013
004069	Lambay Island SPA	Generic	4.0	13 th February 2013
004024	South Dublin Bay and River Tolka SPA	Site Specific	1.0	9 th March 2015
004025	Malahide Estuary	Site Specific	1.0	16 th August 2013
004040	Wicklow Mountains SPA	Generic	4.0	13 th February 2015
004080	Boyne Estuary SPA	Site Specific	1.0	26 th February 2013
004117	Ireland's Eye SPA	Generic	4.0	13 th February 2015
004122	Skerries Islands SPA	Generic	4.0	13 th February 2015
004158	River Nanny Estuary and Shore SPA	Site Specific	1.0	21 st September 2012
004172	Dalkey Islands SPA	Generic	4.0	13 th February 2015
004232	River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA	Generic	4.0	13 th February 2015

Full Details of the Conservation Objectives are available on the NPWS website at www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites

