

Appropriate Assessment Screening for a Proposed Large-Scale Residential Development (LRD) on lands at Forest Road, Swords, Co. Dublin.



12th June 2025

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On behalf of: Golden port Homes Limited.

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Introduction

The following Appropriate Assessment (AA) (Screening Stage) has been prepared by **Altamar Ltd.** at the request of Golden Port Homes Limited for a proposed large-scale residential development (LRD) on lands at Forest Road, Swords, Co. Dublin.

An Appropriate Assessment is an assessment of the potential effects of a proposed project or plan, on its own, or in combination with other plans or projects, on one or more Natura 2000 sites. Natura 2000 sites are those sites designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) or Special Protection Areas (SPA).

The AA Screening stage examines the likely significant effects of a plan or project, either on its own, or in combination with other plans and projects, upon a Natura 2000 site and considers whether, on the basis of objective scientific evidence, it can be concluded that there are not likely to be significant effects on any European site, in view of best scientific knowledge and the conservation objectives of the relevant European sites.

Altamar Ltd.

Since its inception in 2001, Altamar has been delivering ecological and environmental services to a broad range of clients. Operational areas include: residential; infrastructural; renewable; oil & gas; private industry; Local Authorities; EC projects; and, State/semi-State Departments. Bryan Deegan, the managing director of Altamar, is an Environmental Scientist and Marine Biologist with 30 years' experience working in Irish terrestrial and aquatic environments, providing services to the State, Semi-State and industry. He is currently contracted to Inland Fisheries Ireland as the sole "External Expert" to environmentally assess internal and external projects. He is also chair of an internal IFI working group on environmental assessment. Bryan Deegan (MCIEEM) holds a MSc in Environmental Science, BSc (Hons.) in Applied Marine Biology, NCEA National Diploma in Applied Aquatic Science and a NCEA National Certificate in Science (Aquaculture). Bryan Deegan carried out all elements of this Appropriate Assessment Screening.

Background to the Appropriate Assessment

The Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (together with the Birds Directive (2009/1477/EC)) forms the cornerstone of Europe's nature conservation policy. The Habitats Directive protects over 1000 animals and plant species and over 200 "habitat types" which are of European importance. In the Habitats Directive, Articles 3 to 9 provide the legislative means to protect habitats and species of European Community interest through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of conservation sites (NATURA, 2000). These are Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Birds Directive, Article 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 Appropriate Assessment:

"Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the [NATURA 2000] site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans and 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 implication for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the component 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."

As outlined in "Managing European sites, The provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC" (European Commission, 21 November 2018) *"The purpose of the appropriate assessment is to assess the implications of the plan or project in respect of the site's conservation objectives, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects. The conclusions should enable the competent authorities to ascertain whether the plan or project will adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned. The focus of the appropriate assessment is therefore specifically on the species and/or the habitats for which the European site is designated."*

As outlined in the EC guidance document on Article 6(4) (January 2007)¹:

“Appropriate assessments of the implications of the plan or project for the site concerned must precede its approval and take into account the cumulative effects which result from the combination of that plan or project with other plans or projects in view of the site's conservation objectives. This implies that all aspects of the plan or project which can, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, affect those objectives must be identified in the light of the best scientific knowledge in the field.

Assessment procedures of plans or projects likely to affect European sites should guarantee full consideration of all elements contributing to the site integrity and to the overall coherence of the network, both in the definition of the baseline conditions and in the stages leading to identification of potential impacts, mitigation measures and residual impacts. These determine what has to be compensated, both in quality and quantity. Regardless of whether the provisions of Article 6(3) are delivered following existing environmental impact assessment procedures or other specific methods, it must be ensured that:

- *Article 6(3) assessment results allow full traceability of the decisions eventually made, including the selection of alternatives and any imperative reasons of overriding public interest.*
- *The assessment should include all elements contributing to the site's integrity and to the overall coherence of the network as defined in the site's conservation objectives and Standard Data Form, and be based on best available scientific knowledge in the field. The information required should be updated and could include the following issues:*
 - *Structure and function, and the respective role of the site's ecological assets;*
 - *Area, representativity and conservation status of the priority and nonpriority habitats in the site;*
 - *Population size, degree of isolation, ecotype, genetic pool, age class structure, and conservation status of species under Annex II of the Habitats Directive or Annex I of the Birds Directive present in the site;*
 - *Role of the site within the biographical region and in the coherence of the European network; and,*
 - *Any other ecological assets and functions identified in the site.*
- *It should include a comprehensive identification of all the potential impacts of the plan or project likely to be significant on the site, taking into account cumulative impacts and other impacts likely to arise as a result of the combined action of the plan or project under assessment and other plans or projects.*
- *The assessment under Article 6(3) applies the best available techniques and methods, to estimate the extent of the effects of the plan or project on the biological integrity of the site(s) likely to be damaged.*
- *The assessment provides for the incorporation of the most effective mitigation measures into the plan or project concerned, in order to avoid, reduce or even cancel the negative impacts on the site.*
- *The characterisation of the biological integrity and the impact assessment should be based on the best possible indicators specific to the European assets which must also be useful to monitor the plan or project implementation.”*

¹ European Commission. (2007). Guidance document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitats Directive' 92/43/EEC – Clarification of the concepts of: alternative solutions, imperative reasons of overriding public interest, compensatory measures, overall coherence, opinion of the commission;

Stages of the Appropriate Assessment

This Appropriate Assessment screening and Natura Impact Statement was undertaken in accordance with the European Commission Methodological Guidance on the provision of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2001), Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, in addition to the December 2009 publication from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government; 'Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities' and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011. In order to comply with the above Guidelines and legislation, the Appropriate Assessment process has been structured as follows:

- 1) Screening stage:
 - Description of plan or project, and local site or plan area characteristics;
 - Identification of relevant European sites, and compilation of information on their qualifying interests and conservation objectives
 - Identification and description of individual in combination effects likely to result from the proposed project;
 - Assessment of the likely significance of the effects identified above. Exclusion of sites where it can be objectively concluded that there will be no likely significant effects; and,
Conclusions
- 2) Appropriate Assessment (Natura Impact Statement):
 - Description of the European sites that will be considered further;
 - Identification and description of potential adverse impacts on the conservation objectives of these sites likely to occur from the project or plan; and,
 - Mitigation Measures that will be implemented to avoid, reduce or remedy any such potential adverse impacts
 - Assessment as to whether, following the implementation of the proposed mitigation measures, it can be concluded, beyond all reasonable scientific doubt, that there will be no adverse impact on the integrity of the relevant European Site in light of its conservation objectives"
 - Conclusions.

If it can be demonstrated during the AA screening phase (Stage 1), that the proposed project will not have a significant effect, whether alone or in combination with other plans or projects, on the conservation objectives of a Natura 2000 site, then no further AA (Stage 2) will be required. It is important to note that there is a requirement to apply a precautionary approach to AA screening. Therefore, where effects are possible, certain or unknown at the screening stage, AA will be required.

In addition, it should be noted that Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive must be interpreted as meaning that, in order to determine whether it is necessary to carry out, subsequently, an AA of the implications, for a site concerned, of a plan or project, it is not appropriate, at the screening stage, to take account of the measures intended to avoid or reduce the harmful effects of the plan or project on that site.

Stage 1 Screening Assessment

Management of the Site

The plan or project is not directly connected with, or necessary to the management of European sites.

Description of the Proposed Project

Golden Port Homes Limited intend to apply for planning permission for a Large-Scale Residential Development (LRD) on lands at Forest Road, Swords, Co. Dublin. The proposed development will consist of a total of 109 no. residential units (42 no. duplex units; 41 no. apartments; 26 no. houses) as follows:

- (i) 42 no. duplex units within 3-storey buildings comprising 21 No. 1 bed units at ground level and 21 No. 3 bed units over first and second floor levels with balconies/terraces, private and communal open space;
- (ii) 41 no. apartments within 2 blocks. Block A will be a 4 storey building with 14 no. apartments (4 no. 1 bed units and 10 no. 2 bed units) with balconies/terraces to the north, south and west elevations, and bin, bicycle parking and plant at ground floor level and pv panels at roof level; Block B will be a 5 storey building with 27 no. apartments (13 no. 1 bed and 14 no. 2 bed units) with balconies/terraces to the east and west elevations and bin, bicycle parking and plant at ground floor level and pv panels at roof level;
- (iii) 26 no. houses (comprising 5 no. 2 bed, 2 storey terrace houses; 6 no. 3 bed, 2 storey terrace houses; 4 No. 3 bed, 2 storey semi-detached houses; and 11 no. 4 bed, 3 storey houses);
- (iv) 96 no. Surface level car parking spaces and 4 no. surface level motorcycle parking spaces as well as bike parking stores and spaces; and bin stores;
- (v) 1 no. ESB substation;
- (vi) Landscaping, including the provision of new public open spaces with play areas and a MUGA; footpaths and cycle paths, new vehicular access/egress from Forest Road; public lighting; boundary treatment and all associated site, drainage and development works necessary to facilitate the proposed development.

The site outline and site location plan are shown in Figures 1 & 2. Figures 3 & 4 demonstrate the existing and proposed site layout.

Landscape

The landscape strategy for the proposed development has been prepared by RMDA landscape architects to accompany this planning application. The proposed landscape masterplan is demonstrated in Figure 5.



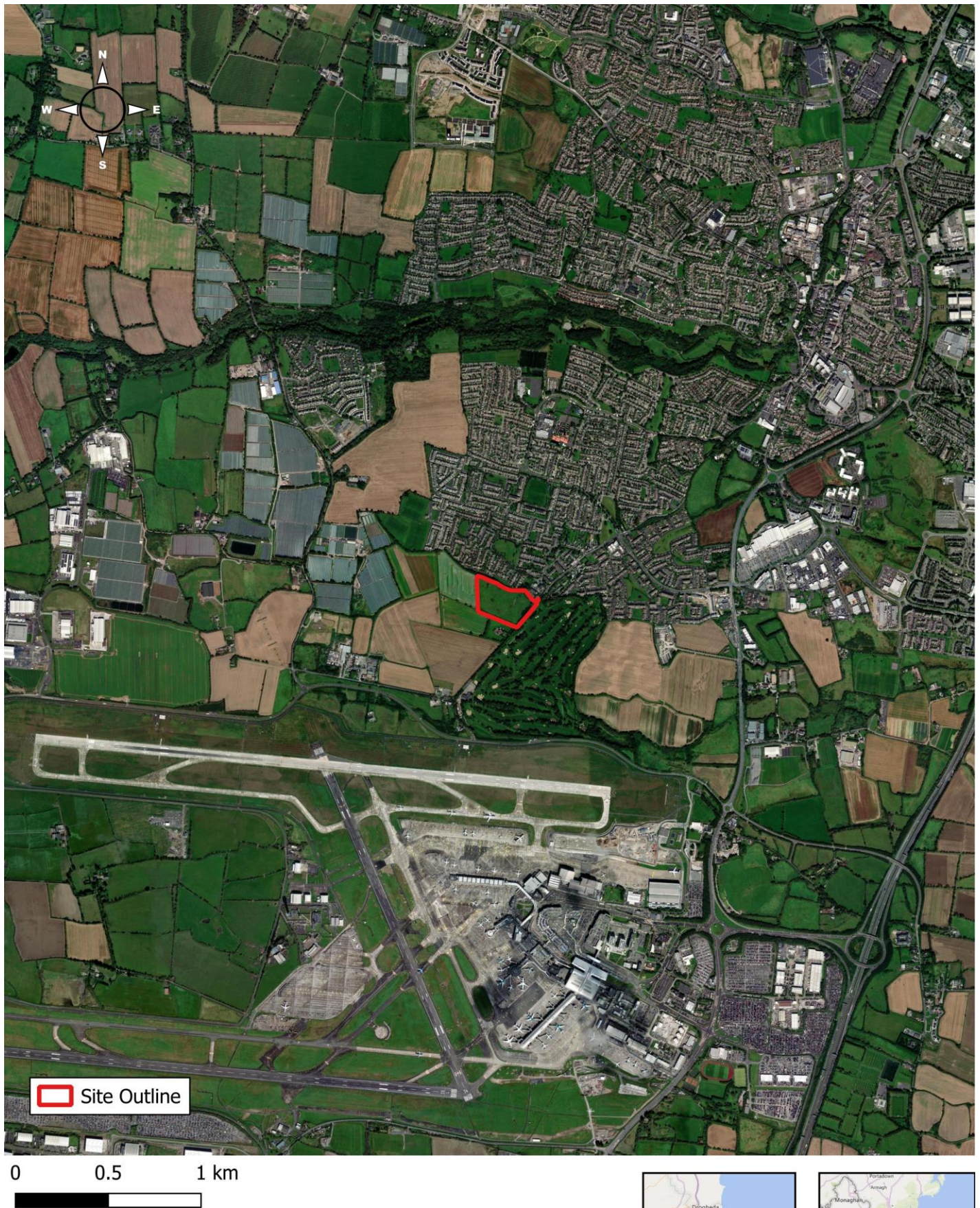
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Project: Forest Road
Location: Swords, Co. Dublin
Date: 3rd June 2025
Drawn By: Jeff Boyle (Altamar)

ALTEMAR
Marine & Environmental Consultancy



Figure 1. Site outline



Project: Forest Road
 Location: Swords, Co. Dublin
 Date: 3rd June 2025
 Drawn By: Jeff Boyle (Altermar)

ALTERMAR
 Marine & Environmental Consultancy



Figure 2. Site location



Figure 4. Proposed site layout plan



Figure 5. Proposed landscape masterplan

Drainage

A Civil Engineering Infrastructure Report has been prepared by Barrett Mahony Civil & Structural Consulting Engineers to accompany this planning application. This report details the following drainage strategy for the proposed development site:

“PROPOSED SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE

It is proposed to construct a new surface water drainage system for the development to collect runoff from roofs and paved areas and any additional runoff from landscaped areas which doesn't percolate to ground.

- *Green and Blue roofs will be used on the two apartment blocks.*
- *Permeable pavement will be used for all carpark spaces.*
- *Permeable asphalt will be used for home zone areas to minimise the impermeable areas on the site.*
- *All impermeable roads and footpaths within home zone areas will drain directly into road gullies before entering either tree pits or the main surface water network.*
- *Impermeable roofs (pitched) above residential units within homezone areas will drain into the permeable paving at the front of the residential blocks via downpipes connected to traps before discharging through diffuser boxes.*
- *Impermeable roofs (pitched) above residential units along the main roads will drain directly into the surface water drainage network.*
- *The main distributor road running along the south of the site will have a 1 in 40 fall spanning the from the north side to south side allowing all surface water to run directly to road gullies before discharging into the swale positioned to the south of the road, all surface water entering the swale will then flow into the detention basin.*
- *All surface water falling within the site will settle within the detention basin situated on the east side of the greenbelt open space. The basin has been designed to hold all water falling during the 1 in 30 year storm event within the central lower basin to a depth of 0.6m within an area of 1960m² at base level, in a 1 in 100 year flood event the water will rise to a depth of 0.76m and be held within the secondary section of the basin. The basin has been designed to increase in area gradually.*

It is proposed that surface water flows from the catchment area will outfall to the existing surface water network on Forest Road. The public surface water network discharges south to an existing watercourse through the adjacent Forest Little Golf Club. There is an existing connection from the corner of the subject site into this system.

The proposed catchment area will be designed to accommodate flows for the 1 in 100-year storm event. A hydrobrake will be fitted at the outfall manhole from the site to limit the flow exiting the site to the existing greenfield runoff rate QBAR of 16.59 l/s.

Both catchment areas have been modelled using Causeway Flow software (including a 20% increase for climate change and 10% increase for urban creep). The results indicate a storage volume of 1560m³ is required. Refer to Appendix 2 for further information.

PROPOSED FOUL DRAINAGE SYSTEM

The most likely viable option for foul drainage will be to connect the existing 225mm diameter foul Sewer on Forest Road at the entrance to the Ridgewood Estate, subject to agreement with Uisce Éireann.”

The proposed drainage plan is demonstrated in Figure 6.

Flood Risk Assessment

A Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment was prepared by Barrett Mahony Civil & Structural Consulting Engineers to accompany this planning application. The report concludes that:

“The flood risk assessment has been carried out in accordance with the OPW publication “The Planning System and Flood Risk Assessment Guidelines for Planning Authorities”.

There is a no risk of flooding to the proposed development site or no risk of flooding to the adjacent area due to the development. Therefore, given the mitigation measures considered into the design, the development is deemed acceptable from a flood risk assessment perspective.”

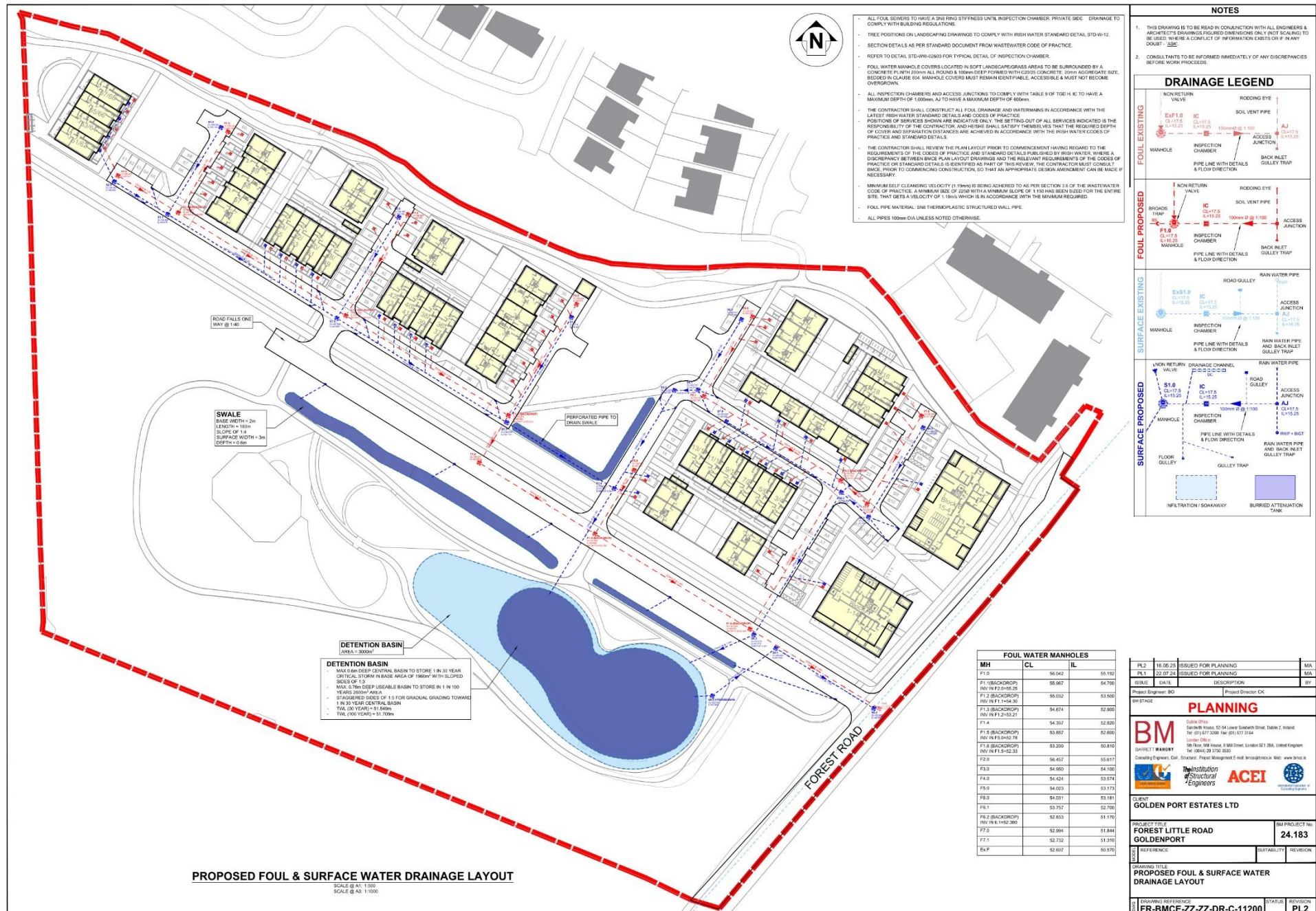


Figure 6. Proposed surface and foul water drainage layout

Identification of Relevant European sites (Natura 2000 sites)

The proposed development site is not within a European site. As outlined in Office of the Planning Regulator (2021) *“The zone of influence of a proposed development is the geographical area over which it could affect the receiving environment in a way that could have significant effects on the Qualifying Interests of a European site. This should be established on a case-by-case basis using the Source- Pathway-Receptor framework and not by arbitrary distances (such as 15 km).”*

A key factor in the consideration as to whether or not a particular European site is likely to be affected by the proposed development is its distance from the development location. It is generally, but not necessarily, the case that the greater the distance from the plan or project the smaller the likelihood of impacts. In this case, the nearest European sites to the proposed development are 3.5 km away (Malahide Estuary SAC & Malahide Estuary SPA).

Surface water drainage will be directed to an existing surface water sewer network on Forest Road. This drainage network discharges south to an existing watercourse (where the Sluice River rises) which runs through the adjacent Forest Little Golf Course. The Sluice River flows approximately 7.5km east to its outfall at Baldoyle Bay (Figures 10 & 11). It is therefore considered that there is an indirect hydrological pathway between the subject site and two Natura 2000 sites at Baldoyle Bay (Baldoyle Bay SAC & SPA). However, given the minimum distance from the proposed development site to these Natura 2000 sites (7.3km), the significant fluvial distance between sites, and the fact that surface water will be discharged into an existing surface water sewer prior to joining the Sluice River, any pollutants, dust or silt laden run off from the construction of the proposed development would be dispersed, diluted, and ultimately settle within the surface water network and the Sluice River prior to reaching downstream sites.

Foul wastewater from the subject site will be directed to the existing public network located on Forest Road and will be treated within the public foul network under licence at Ringsend WwTP. In the absence of mitigation, the foul water from the site will not significantly affect the Qualifying Interests of European Sites.

In the interest of carrying out a thorough assessment in line with both the Habitats Directive and the precautionary principle, the area of assessment was expanded beyond the ZoI to include designated sites within 15km of the proposed development site, and sites beyond 15km with the potential for a hydrological connection. This was done in the interest of ensuring that any pathways, however indirect or remote, were considered. All Natura 2000 sites within 15km, and beyond 15km with the potential for a hydrological pathway are listed in Table 1. The qualifying interests, and the potential impact of the development on each European site and qualifying interest, are screened out in Table 2. SPA's and SAC's within 15km are seen in Figures 7 & 8. Watercourses, waterbodies, SACs and SPAs proximate to the subject site are demonstrated in Figures 9- 11. Given that there are no Natura 2000 sites with a direct or indirect pathway beyond 15km of the subject site, no impacts are foreseen on Natura 2000 sites beyond 15km.

Table 1. Proximity to NATURA 2000 sites within 15km

European Site	Code	Distance	Direct Hydrological / Biodiversity Connection
Special Areas of Conservation			
Malahide Estuary SAC	IE000205	3.5 km	No
Rogerstown Estuary SAC	IE000208	6.9 km	No
Baldoyle Bay SAC	IE000199	7.3 km	No
North Dublin Bay SAC	IE000206	9.2 km	No
Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC	IE003000	11.5 km	No
South Dublin Bay SAC	IE000210	12.2 km	No
Ireland's Eye SAC	IE002193	12.2 km	No
Howth Head SAC	IE000202	12.7 km	No
Lambay Island SAC	IE000204	14.7 km	No
Special Protection Areas			
Malahide Estuary SPA	IE004025	3.5 km	No
North Bull Island SPA	IE004006	6.5 km	No
Baldoyle Bay SPA	IE004016	7.3 km	No
Rogerstown Estuary SPA	IE004015	7.4 km	No
North-West Irish Sea SPA	IE004236	8 km	No
South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA	IE004024	9.2 km	No
Ireland's Eye SPA	IE004117	12 km	No
Howth Head Coast SPA	IE004113	14 km	No
Lambay Island SPA	IE004069	14.8 km	No

Table 2. Initial screening of European sites within 15km and European sites beyond 15km with potential of hydrological connection to the proposed development

European Site Code	Name	Screened IN/OUT	Details/Reason
Special Areas of Conservation			
IE000205	Malahide Estuary SAC	OUT	<p>Conservation Objectives To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.</p> <p>Qualifying Interests Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia 14etanus14</i>) [1410] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]</p> <p>Potential Impact The proposed development site is located 3.5 km from this SAC. There is no 'direct' or 'indirect' Source-Pathway linkage between the proposed development site and the SAC. No potential impact is foreseen. There is no direct or indirect pathway from this site to the SAC. The construction and operation of the proposed development will not impact on the conservation interests of the site.</p> <p>No significant effects are likely.</p>

European Site Code	Name	Screened IN/OUT	Details/Reason
IE000208	Rogerstown Estuary SAC	OUT	<p>Conservation Objectives</p> <p>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.</p> <p>Qualifying Interests</p> <p>Estuaries [1130] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia 15etanus15</i>) [1410] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]</p> <p>Potential Impact</p> <p>The proposed development site is located 6.9 km from this SAC. There is no 'direct' or 'indirect' Source-Pathway linkage between the proposed development site and the SAC.</p> <p>No potential impact is foreseen. There is no direct or indirect pathway from this site to the SAC. The construction and operation of the proposed development will not impact on the conservation interests of the site.</p> <p>No significant effects are likely.</p>
IE000199	Baldoyle Bay SAC	OUT	<p>Conservation Objectives</p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within European sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p>Qualifying Interests</p> <p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia 15etanus15</i>) [1410]</p> <p>Potential Impact</p> <p>The proposed development is located 7.3 km from Baldoyle Bay SAC. There is no direct hydrological pathway from the subject site to this SAC.</p> <p>There is an indirect hydrological pathway to this SAC via surface water drainage. Surface water drainage from the subject site will be directed to an existing drainage network located along Forest Road. This drainage network discharges south to an existing watercourse (where the Sluice River rises) which runs through the adjacent Forest Little Golf Course. The Sluice River flows approximately 7.5km east to its outfall at Baldoyle Bay where this SAC is located.</p>

European Site Code	Name	Screened IN/OUT	Details/Reason
			<p>It is therefore considered that there is an indirect hydrological pathway between the subject site and this SAC. However, given the minimum distance from the proposed development site to this SAC (7.3km), the significant fluvial distance between sites, and the fact that surface water will be discharged into an existing surface water sewer prior to joining the Sluice River, any pollutants, dust or silt laden run off from the construction of the proposed development would be dispersed, diluted, and ultimately settle within the surface water network and the Sluice River prior to reaching this SAC.</p> <p>Foul wastewater will be directed to the existing public network located on Forest Road and will be treated within the public foul network under license at Ringsend WwTP.</p> <p>In the absence of mitigation, no significant effects on the qualifying interests of this SAC are likely from the construction and operation of the proposed development. No potential impact is foreseen. There is no direct pathway from this site to the SAC.</p> <p>No significant effects are likely.</p>
IE000206	North Dublin Bay SAC	OUT	<p>Conservation Objectives</p> <p>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.</p> <p>Qualifying Interest</p> <p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia 16etanus16</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) [2130] Humid dune slacks [2190] Petalwort (<i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>) [1395]</p> <p>Potential Impact</p> <p>The proposed development site is located 9.2 km from this SAC. There is no 'direct' or 'indirect' Source-Pathway linkage between the proposed development site and the SAC.</p> <p>No potential impact is foreseen. There is no direct or indirect pathway from this site to the SAC. The construction and operation of the proposed development will not impact on the conservation interests of the site.</p> <p>No significant effects are likely.</p>
IE003000	Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC	OUT	<p>Conservation Objectives</p> <p>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.</p>

European Site Code	Name	Screened IN/OUT	Details/Reason
			<p>Qualifying Interests</p> <p>1170 Reefs 1351 Harbour porpoise <i>Phocoena Phocoena</i></p> <p>Potential Impact</p> <p>The proposed development site is located 11.5 km from this SAC. There is no 'direct' or 'indirect' Source-Pathway linkage between the proposed development site and the SAC.</p> <p>No potential impact is foreseen. There is no direct or indirect pathway from this site to the SAC. The construction and operation of the proposed development will not impact on the conservation interests of the site.</p> <p>No significant effects are likely.</p>
IE000210	South Dublin Bay SAC	OUT	<p>Conservation Objectives</p> <p>To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide in South Dublin Bay SAC, which is defined by the following list of targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The permanent habitat area is stable or increasing, subject to natural processes. • Maintain the extent of the <i>Zostera</i> –dominated community, subject to natural processes. • Conserve the high quality of the <i>Zostera</i> –dominated community, subject to natural processes • Conserve the following community type in a natural condition: Fine sands with <i>Angulus tenuis</i> community complex. <p>Qualifying Interest</p> <p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]</p> <p>Potential Impact</p> <p>The proposed development site is located 12.2 km from this SAC. There is no 'direct' or 'indirect' Source-Pathway linkage between the proposed development site and the SAC.</p> <p>No potential impact is foreseen. There is no direct or indirect pathway from this site to the SAC. The construction and operation of the proposed development will not impact on the conservation interests of the site.</p> <p>No significant effects are likely.</p>
IE002193	Ireland's Eye SAC	OUT	<p>Conservation Objectives</p> <p>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.</p> <p>Qualifying Interest</p>

European Site Code	Name	Screened IN/OUT	Details/Reason
			<p>1220 Perennial vegetation of stony banks. 1230 Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts.</p> <p>Potential Impact</p> <p>The proposed development site is located 12.2 km from this SAC. There is no 'direct' or 'indirect' Source-Pathway linkage between the proposed development site and the SAC.</p> <p>No potential impact is foreseen. There is no direct or indirect pathway from this site to the SAC. The construction and operation of the proposed development will not impact on the conservation interests of the site.</p> <p>No significant effects are likely.</p>
IE000202	Howth Head SAC	OUT	<p>Conservation Objectives</p> <p>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.</p> <p>Qualifying Interests</p> <p>(1230) Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts (4030) European dry heaths</p> <p>Potential Impact</p> <p>The proposed development site is located 12.7 km from this SAC. There is no 'direct' or 'indirect' Source-Pathway linkage between the proposed development site and the SAC.</p> <p>No potential impact is foreseen. There is no direct or indirect pathway from this site to the SAC. The construction and operation of the proposed development will not impact on the conservation interests of the site.</p> <p>No significant effects are likely.</p>
IE000204	Lambay Island SAC	OUT	<p>Conservation Objectives</p> <p>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitat(s) and/or the Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected.</p> <p>Qualifying Interests</p> <p>Reefs [1170] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] <i>Phocoena phocoena</i> (Harbour Porpoise) [1351] <i>Halichoerus grypus</i> (Grey Seal) [1364] <i>Phoca vitulina</i> (Harbour Seal) [1365]</p> <p>Potential Impact</p> <p>The proposed development site is located 14.7 km from this SAC. There is no 'direct' or 'indirect' Source-Pathway linkage between the proposed development site and the SAC.</p> <p>No potential impact is foreseen. There is no direct or indirect pathway from this site to the SAC. The construction and operation of the proposed development will not impact on the conservation interests of the site.</p> <p>No significant effects are likely.</p>

European Site Code	Name	Screened IN/OUT	Details/Reason
Special Protection Areas			
IE004025	Malahide Estuary SPA	OUT	<p>Conservation Objectives</p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within European sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p>Qualifying Interests</p> <p>Great Crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>) [A005] Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054] Goldeneye (<i>Bucephala clangula</i>) [A067] 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] Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</p> <p>Potential Impacts</p> <p>The proposed development site is located 3.5 km from this SPA. There is no 'direct' or 'indirect' Source-Pathway linkage between the proposed development site and the SPA.</p> <p>Given the minimum distance to this SPA, no significant effects on the qualifying interests of this SPA from noise and vibration are foreseen. No potential impact is foreseen. There is no direct or indirect pathway from this site to the SPA. The construction and operation of the development will not impact on the conservation interests of the site.</p> <p>No significant effects are likely.</p>
IE004006	North Bull Island SPA	OUT	<p>Conservation Objectives</p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within European sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p>Qualifying Interests</p> <p>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]</p>

European Site Code	Name	Screened IN/OUT	Details/Reason
			<p>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]</p> <p>Potential Impacts</p> <p>The proposed development site is located 6.5 km from this SPA. There is no 'direct' or 'indirect' Source-Pathway linkage between the proposed development site and the SPA.</p> <p>Given the minimum distance to this SPA, no significant effects on the qualifying interests of this SPA from noise and vibration are foreseen. No potential impact is foreseen. There is no direct or indirect pathway from this site to the SPA. The construction and operation of the development will not impact on the conservation interests of the site.</p> <p>No significant effects are likely.</p>
IE0004016	Baldoye Bay SPA	OUT	<p>Conservation Objectives</p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within European sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p>Qualifying Interests</p> <p>Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</p> <p>Potential Impact</p> <p>The proposed development site is 7.3 km from this SPA. There is no direct hydrological pathway from the subject site to this SPA.</p> <p>There is an indirect hydrological pathway to this SPA via surface water drainage. Surface water drainage from the subject site will be directed to an existing drainage network located along Forest Road. This drainage network discharges south to an existing watercourse (where the Sluice River rises) which runs through the adjacent Forest Little Golf Course. The Sluice River flows approximately 7.5km east to its outfall at Baldoye Bay where this SPA is located.</p> <p>It is therefore considered that there is an indirect hydrological pathway between the subject site and this SPA. However, given the minimum distance from the proposed development site to this SPA (7.3km), the significant fluvial distance between sites, and the fact that surface water will be discharged into an existing surface water sewer prior to joining the Sluice River, any pollutants, dust or silt laden run off from the construction of the proposed development would be dispersed, diluted, and ultimately</p>

European Site Code	Name	Screened IN/OUT	Details/Reason
			<p>settle within the surface water network and the Sluice River prior to reaching this SPA.</p> <p>Foul wastewater will be directed to the existing public network located on Forest Road and will be treated within the public foul network under license at Ringsend WwTP.</p> <p>Given the minimum distance to this SPA (7.3 km) across a substantial agricultural and suburban environment, it is considered that no significant noise or vibration impacts on the qualifying interests of this SPA will occur during the construction and operational phases of development.</p> <p>In the absence of mitigation, no significant effects on the qualifying interests of this SPA are likely from the construction and operation of the proposed development. No potential impact is foreseen.</p> <p>No significant effects are likely.</p>
IE004015	Rogerstown Estuary SPA	OUT	<p>Conservation Objectives</p> <p>The maintenance of habitats and species within European sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p>Qualifying Interests</p> <p>Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>) [A043] Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056] Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</p> <p>Potential Impact</p> <p>The proposed development site is located 7.4 km from this SPA. There is no 'direct' or 'indirect' Source-Pathway linkage between the proposed development site and the SPA.</p> <p>Given the minimum distance to this SPA (7.4 km) across a substantial agricultural and suburban environment, it is considered that no significant noise or vibration impacts on the qualifying interests of this SPA will occur during the construction and operational phases of development.</p> <p>No potential impact is foreseen. There is no direct or indirect pathway from this site to the SPA. The construction and operation of the proposed development will not impact on the conservation interests of the site.</p> <p>No significant effects are likely.</p>
IE004236	North-West Irish Sea SPA	OUT	<p>Conservation Objectives</p>

European Site Code	Name	Screened IN/OUT	Details/Reason
			<p>The maintenance of habitats and species within European sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.</p> <p>Qualifying Interests</p> <p>Red-throated Diver (<i>Gavia stellata</i>) [A001] Great Northern Diver (<i>Gavia immer</i>) [A003] Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) [A009] Manx Shearwater (<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>) [A013] Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017] Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) [A018] Common Scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>) [A065] Little Gull (<i>Larus minutus</i>) [A177] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182] Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>) [A183] Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184] Great Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus marinus</i>) [A187] Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188] Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) [A192] Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194] Little Tern (<i>Sterna albifrons</i>) [A195] Guillemot (<i>Uria aalge</i>) [A199] Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>) [A200] Puffin (<i>Fratercula arctica</i>) [A204]</p> <p>Potential Impact</p> <p>The proposed development site is located 8 km from this SPA. There is no 'direct' or 'indirect' Source-Pathway linkage between the proposed development site and the SPA.</p> <p>Given the minimum distance to this SPA (8 km) across a substantial agricultural and suburban environment, it is considered that no significant noise or vibration impacts on the qualifying interests of this SPA will occur during the construction and operational phases of development.</p> <p>No potential impact is foreseen. There is no direct or indirect pathway from this site to the SPA. The construction and operation of the proposed development will not impact on the conservation interests of the site.</p> <p>No significant effects are likely.</p>
IE004024	South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA	OUT	<p>Conservation Objectives</p> <p>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.</p> <p>Qualifying Interests</p> <p>Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143] Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144]</p>

European Site Code	Name	Screened IN/OUT	Details/Reason
			<p>Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) [A192] Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</p> <p>Potential Impact</p> <p>The proposed development site is located 9.2 km from this SPA. There is no 'direct' or 'indirect' Source-Pathway linkage between the proposed development site and the SPA.</p> <p>Given the minimum distance to this SPA (9.2 km) across a substantial agricultural and suburban environment, it is considered that no significant noise or vibration impacts on the qualifying interests of this SPA will occur during the construction and operational phases of development.</p> <p>No potential impact is foreseen. There is no direct or indirect pathway from this site to the SPA. The construction and operation of the proposed development will not impact on the conservation interests of the site.</p> <p>No significant effects are likely.</p>
IE004117	Ireland's Eye SPA	OUT	<p>Conservation Objectives</p> <p>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA:</p> <p>Qualifying Interests</p> <p>A017 Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) A184 Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) A188 Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) A199 Guillemot (<i>Uria aalge</i>) A200 Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>)</p> <p>Potential Impact</p> <p>The proposed development site is located 12 km from this SPA. There is no 'direct' or 'indirect' Source-Pathway linkage between the proposed development site and the SPA.</p> <p>Given the minimum distance to this SPA (12 km) across a substantial agricultural and suburban environment, it is considered that no significant noise or vibration impacts on the qualifying interests of this SPA will occur during the construction and operational phases of development.</p> <p>No potential impact is foreseen. There is no direct or indirect pathway from this site to the SPA. The construction and operation of the proposed development will not impact on the conservation interests of the site.</p> <p>No significant effects are likely.</p>

European Site Code	Name	Screened IN/OUT	Details/Reason
IE004113	Howth Head Coast SPA	OUT	<p>Conservation Objectives</p> <p>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.</p> <p>Qualifying Interests</p> <p>A188 Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>)</p> <p>Potential Impact</p> <p>The proposed development site is located 14 km from this SPA. There is no 'direct' or 'indirect' Source-Pathway linkage between the proposed development site and the SPA.</p> <p>Given the minimum distance to this SPA (14 km) across a substantial agricultural and suburban environment, it is considered that no significant noise or vibration impacts on the qualifying interests of this SPA will occur during the construction and operational phases of development.</p> <p>No potential impact is foreseen. There is no direct or indirect pathway from this site to the SPA. The construction and operation of the proposed development will not impact on the conservation interests of the site.</p> <p>No significant effects are likely.</p>
IE004069	Lambay Island SPA	OUT	<p>Conservation Objectives</p> <p>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.</p> <p>Qualifying Interests</p> <p>Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) [A009] Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017] 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]</p> <p>Potential Impact</p> <p>The proposed development site is located 14.8 km from this SPA. There is no 'direct' or 'indirect' Source-Pathway linkage between the proposed development site and the SPA.</p> <p>Given the minimum distance to this SPA (14.8 km) across a substantial agricultural and suburban environment, it is considered that no significant noise or vibration impacts on the qualifying interests of this SPA will occur during the construction and operational phases of development.</p> <p>No potential impact is foreseen. There is no direct or indirect pathway from this site to the SPA. The construction and operation of the proposed development will not impact on the conservation interests of the site.</p> <p>No significant effects are likely.</p>

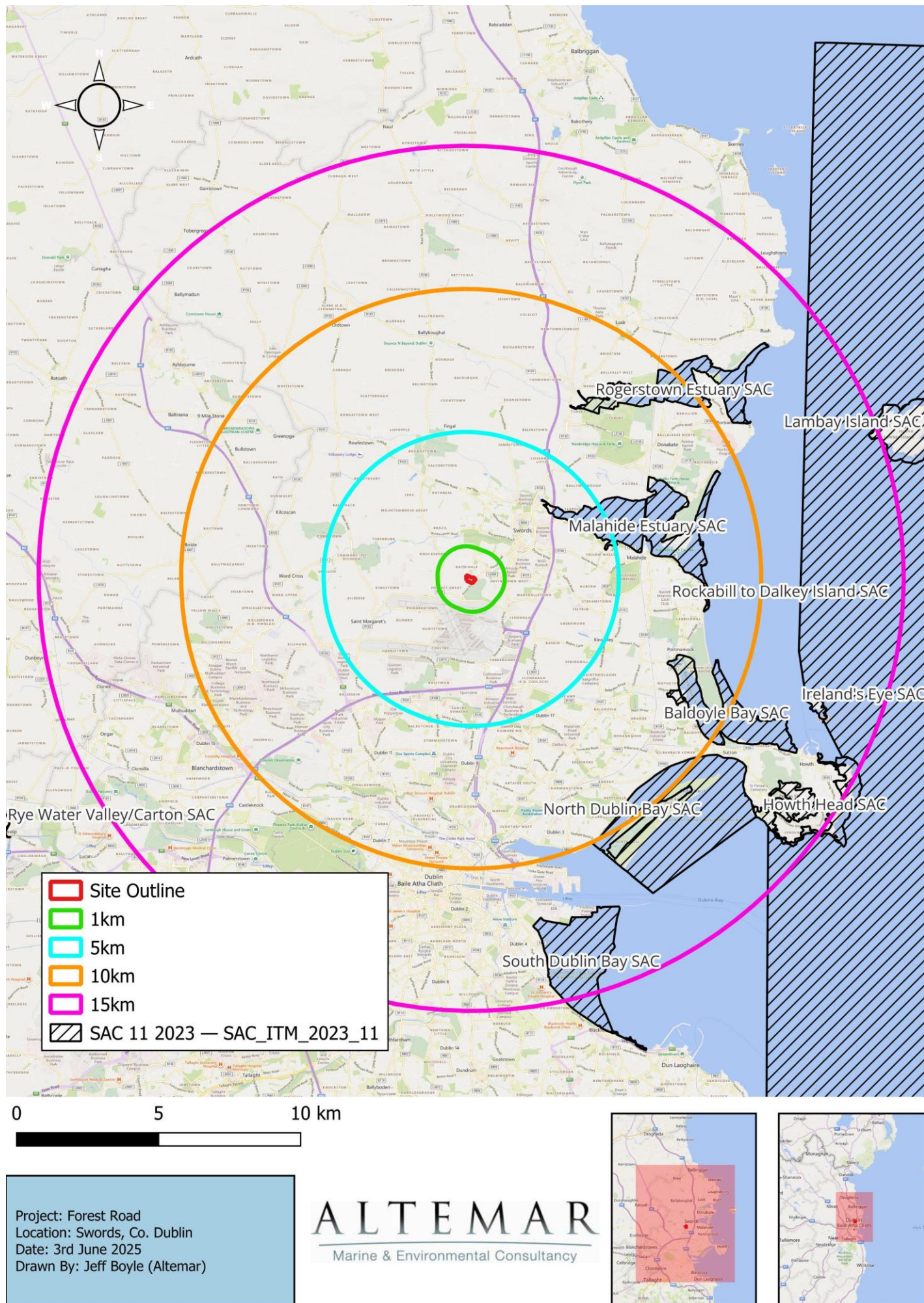
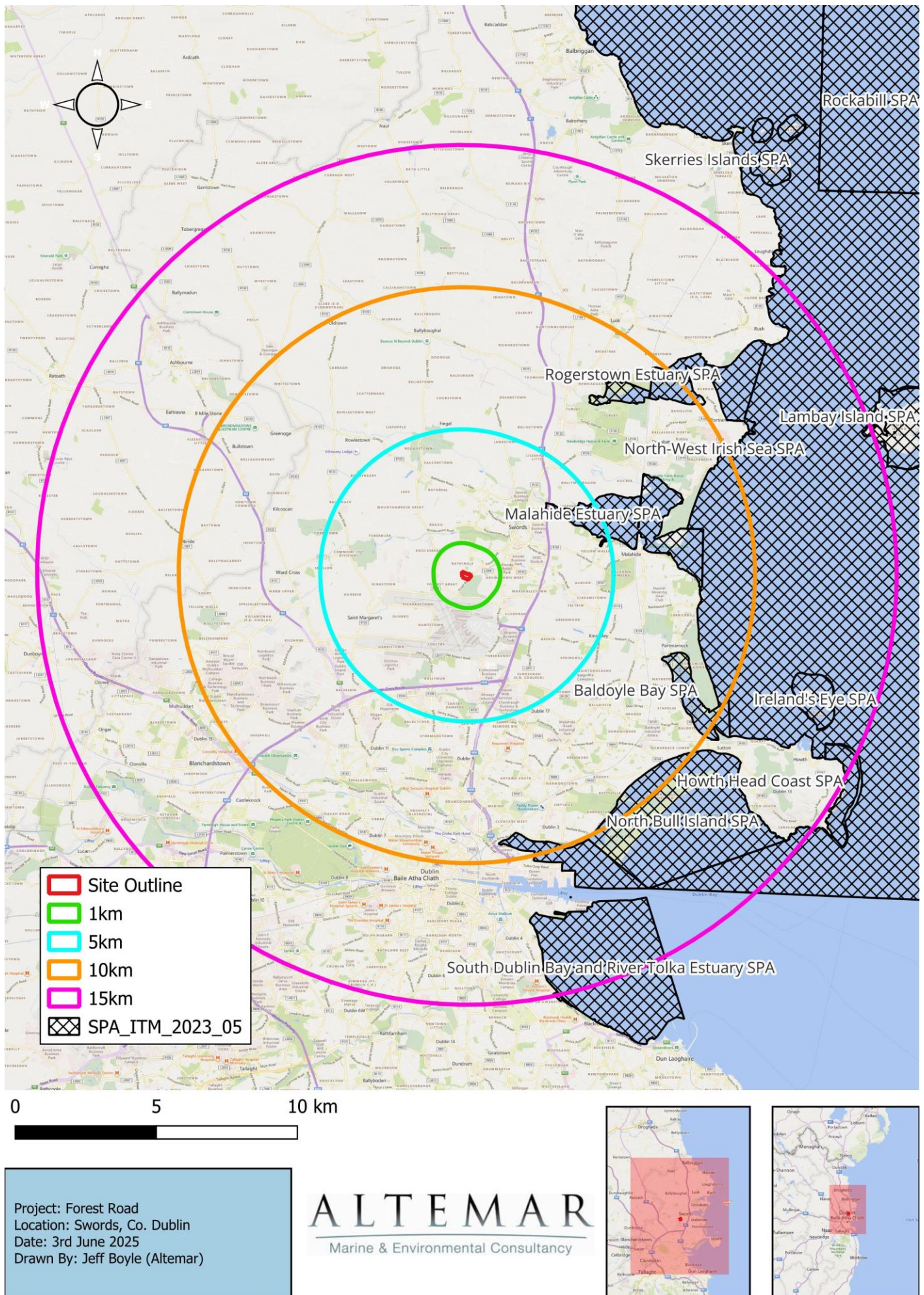


Figure 7. Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) within 15km of proposed development



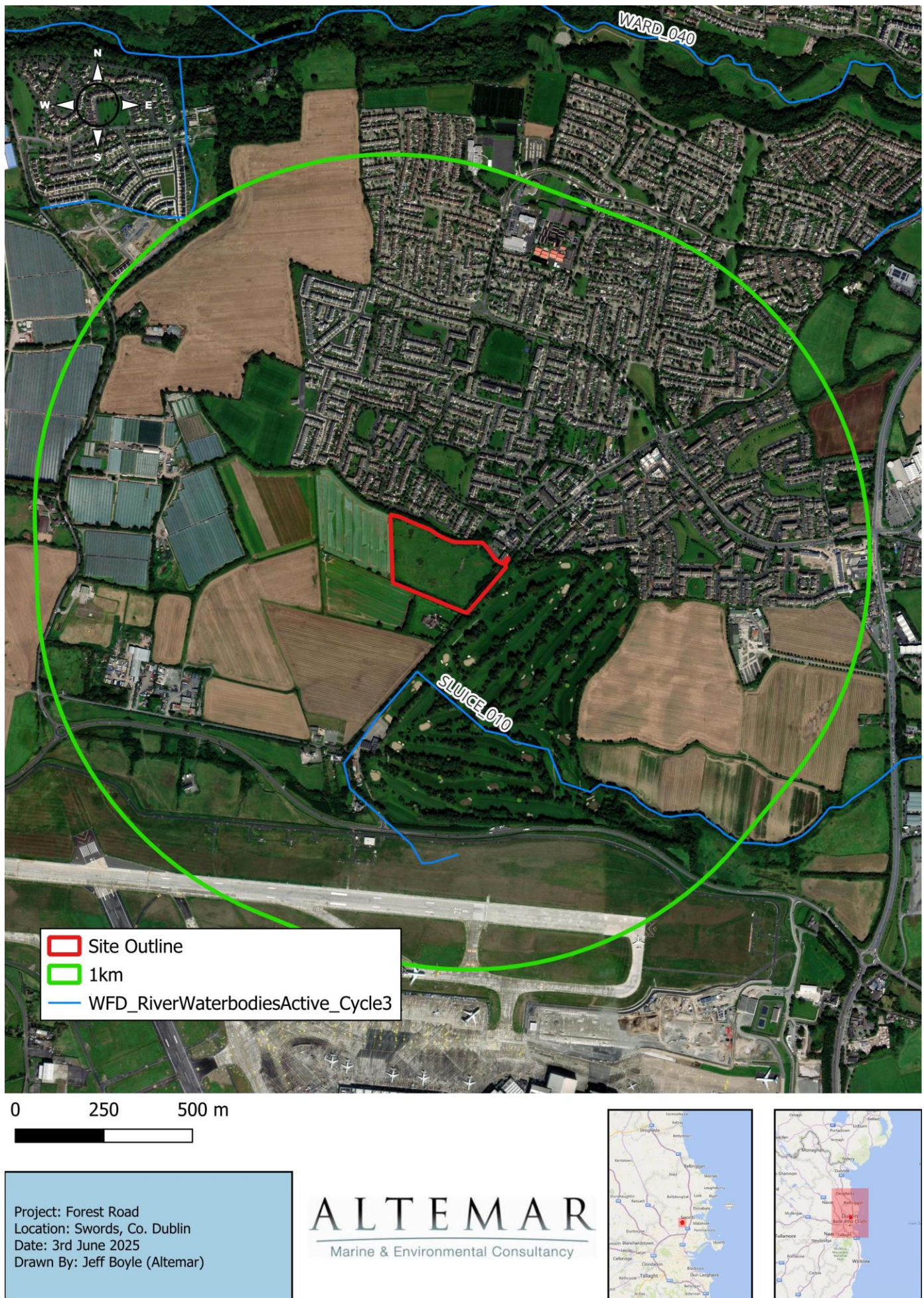
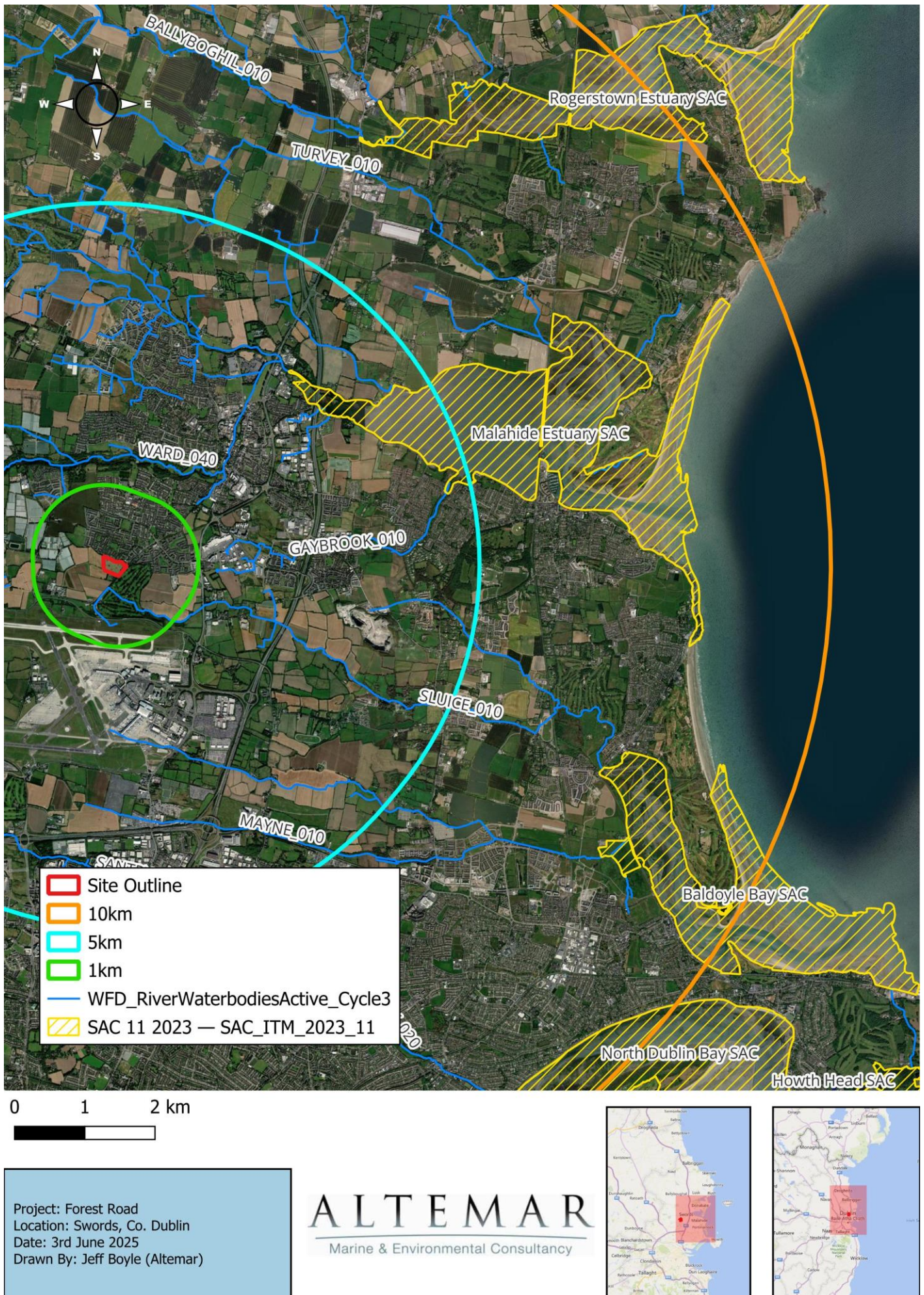


Figure 9. Watercourses and drainage ditches within close proximity to the proposed development



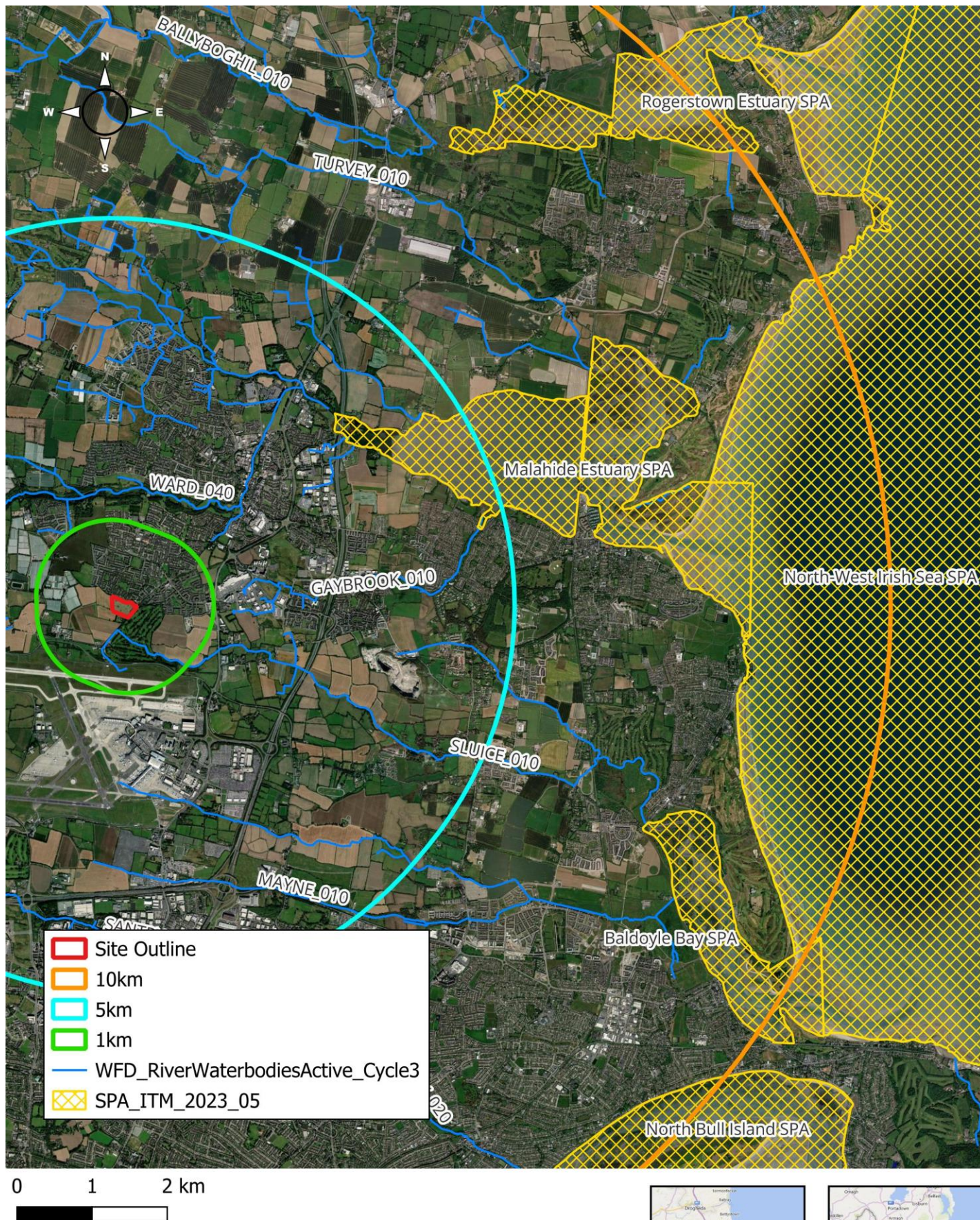


Figure 11. Watercourses, drainage ditches and SPAs proximate to the proposed development

In-Combination Effects

There are no recent significant development applications in the immediate vicinity of the site. The following is a list of planning applications in the broader area as identified on the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage's 'National Planning Application Map' portal:

Table 4. In-combination effects considered

Ref. No.	Address	Proposal
F24A/0530	25 Boroimhe Aspen, Swords, Co.Dublin	The development will consist of removing the roof hip and building up the gable wall and making a small hip, converting the enlarged attic space to a home office with stair access from the landing, building a flat roof dormer window in the rear roof and all associated internal site and drainage work.
F21B/0326	Forest Fields, Swords, Co Dublin, K67 P827	Development will consist of a proposed new extension to the side of the existing house with 2No. new Velux's to the front of the proposed roof & 1no. dormer roof to the rear. 2No. new dormer roofs to the rear of the existing house roof converting the attic space into office/storage & play area. A proposed new ground floor only detached garage to the side of the existing & proposed works and all ancillary works.
F19B/0017	Forest Fields, Rathingle, Swords, Co. Dublin.	A new single storey extension to side of existing bungalow, internal modifications, together with all associated development and site works.

It is considered that in combination effects with other existing and proposed developments in proximity to the application area would be unlikely, neutral, not significant and localised. It is concluded that no significant effects on Natura 2000 sites will be seen as a result of the proposed development alone or combination with other projects.

From a review of the above, it is concluded that no projects in the vicinity of the proposed development would be seen to have a significant in combination effect on Natura 2000 sites.

Conclusions

The proposed development site is located within a populated urban environment. The nearest European sites to the proposed development are 3.5 km away (Malahide Estuary SAC & Malahide Estuary SPA).

Surface water drainage will be directed to an existing surface water sewer network on Forest Road. This drainage network discharges south to an existing watercourse (where the Sluice River rises) which runs through the adjacent Forest Little Golf Course. The Sluice River flows approximately 7.5km east to its outfall at Baldoyle Bay (Figures 10 & 11). It is therefore considered that there is an indirect hydrological pathway between the subject site and two Natura 2000 sites at Baldoyle Bay (Baldoyle Bay SAC & SPA). However, given the minimum distance from the proposed development site to these Natura 2000 sites (7.3km), the significant fluvial distance between sites, and the fact that surface water will be discharged into an existing surface water sewer prior to joining the Sluice River, any pollutants, dust or silt laden run off from the construction of the proposed development would be dispersed, diluted, and ultimately settle within the surface water network and the Sluice River prior to reaching downstream sites.

Foul wastewater from the subject site will be directed to the existing public network located on Forest Road and will be treated within the public foul network under licence at Ringsend WwTP. In the absence of mitigation, no significant effects on European sites are likely. No specific mitigation is required to prevent impacts on European sites.

Having taken into consideration foul and surface water drainage from the proposed development, the distance between the proposed development to designated conservation sites, lack of direct hydrological pathway or biodiversity corridor link to conservation sites, and the dilution effect with other effluent and surface runoff, it is concluded that the proposed development would not give rise to any significant effects to designated sites. The construction and operation of the proposed development will not impact on the conservation objectives of qualifying interests of European sites.

This report presents a Stage 1 Appropriate Assessment Screening for the Proposed Development, outlining the information required for the competent authority to screen for appropriate assessment and to determine whether or not the Proposed Development, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, in view of best scientific knowledge, is likely to have a significant effect on any European or European site.

On the basis of the content of this report, the competent authority is enabled to conduct a Stage 1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment and consider whether, in view of best scientific knowledge and in view of the conservation objectives of the relevant European sites, the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect on any European site.

Data Used for AA Screening

NPWS site synopses and Conservation objectives of sites within 15km were assessed. The most recent SAC and SPA boundary shapefiles were downloaded and overlaid on Bing Road maps and ERSI/Google satellite imagery. An Ecological Impact Assessment accompanies this AA Screening.

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11. NPWS (2013) Conservation Objectives: Malahide Estuary SAC 000205. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
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14. NPWS (2017) Conservation Objectives: Ireland's Eye SAC 002193. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.
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