DUBLIN MOUNTAINS DESTINATION & EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING AND NATURA IMPACT STATEMENT

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

This is the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (AASR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the *Dublin Mountains Destination & Experience Development Plan* (hereafter referred to as "Dublin Mountains DEDP").

A Destination & Experience Development Plan (DEDP) is a five-year commercial destination and experience development plan prepared for a specific area.

The Plan has identified a range of key initiatives that are designed to raise awareness of the destination, increase the length of stay in the area, expand the range and quality of visitor experiences, strengthen the value of tourism to local communities and protect the quality, character and distinctiveness of the local environment, heritage and culture. Fáilte Ireland's corporate strategy 2026-2029, the Tourism Policy Framework 2025-2030, and the Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment's *A New Era for Irish Tourism: National Tourism Policy Statement* together provide an overarching strategic framework for the Dublin Mountains DEDP.

This document comprises an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (AASR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS), prepared in order to support the Appropriate Assessment for the Dublin Mountains DEDP in line with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive and Regulation 42 of the European Communities (Birds and Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011), as amended (the Birds and Natural Habitats regulations).

The potential impacts on European sites (also known as Natura 2000 sites), both as a result of the Dublin Mountains DEDP and in-combination with other plans and projects, are appraised in this report.

This report should be read in conjunction with the Dublin Mountains DEDP itself, and the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) – Environmental Report prepared by Brady Shipman Martin (2026).

1.2 Expertise and Qualifications

This document has been prepared by Jade Schanen, Environmental Consultant at Brady Shipman Martin. She holds of BA (Mod.) in Environmental Science from Trinity College Dublin. She is a graduate member of the Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management. Jade has been working professionally in the field for over two years and has experience preparing EIA, SEA and AA screenings.

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

1.3 Legal requirement for Appropriate Assessment

European sites make up a network of sites designated for nature conservation under Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the "Habitats Directive") and Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (the "Birds Directive").

The requirements for Appropriate Assessment are set out under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, transposed into Irish law by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011) (as amended) (the "Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations") and, in respect of land use plans and development consents, by Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) (the "Planning Acts") and Part 6 of the Planning and Development Act 2024 in so far as it has commenced.

The Dublin Mountains DEDP is a plan to be adopted by Fáilte Ireland as a public authority and is not a land use plan under the Planning Acts. The appraisal in this report is therefore undertaken under Regulation 42 of the Bird and Natural Habitats regulations.

European sites are also known as Natura 2000 Sites (Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA)). As defined in section 177R of the Planning Acts "European site" means:

(a) a candidate site of Community importance,

(b) a site of Community importance,

(ba) a candidate special area of conservation,

(c) a special area of conservation,

(d) a candidate special protection area and

(e) a special protection area.

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive states that:

> *"(3) Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In the 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."*

The first test is to establish whether, in relation to a particular plan or project, appropriate assessment is required. Regulation 42(1) of the Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations requires that the AA screening test must be applied to the Plan, as follows:

> *42. (1) Subject to Regulation 42A, a screening for Appropriate Assessment of a plan or project for which an application for consent is received, or which a public authority wishes to undertake or adopt, and which is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site as a European Site, shall be carried out by the public authority to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge and in view of the conservation objectives of the site, if that plan or project,*

individually or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect on the European site.

An appropriate assessment is required if it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the development (plan or project), individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

1.3.1 Stages in the Appropriate Assessment Process

European Commission guidance (2021)[1] sets out the principles on how to undertake decision making in applying the Habitats Directive. The requirements of the Habitats Directive comprise three distinct stages":

Stage One: Screening - The first part of the procedure consists of a pre-assessment stage ('screening') to ascertain whether the plan or project is directly connected with, or necessary to, the management of a Natura 2000 site, and, if this is not the case, then whether it is likely to have a significant effect on the site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) in view of the site's conservation objectives. Stage one is governed by the first part of the first sentence of Article 6(3).

Stage Two: The Appropriate Assessment - If likely significant effects cannot be excluded, the next stage of the procedure involves assessing the impact of the plan or project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) against the site's conservation objectives and ascertaining whether it will affect the integrity of the Natura 2000 site, taking into account any mitigation measures. It will be for the competent authorities to decide whether or not to approve the plan or project in light of the findings of the appropriate assessment. Stage two is governed by the second part of the first sentence and the second sentence of Article 6(3).

Stage Three: Derogation from Article 6(3) under certain conditions - The third stage of the procedure governed by Article 6(4). It only comes into play if, despite a negative assessment, the developer considers that the plan or project should still be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest. This is only possible if there are no alternative solutions, the imperative reasons of overriding public interest are duly justified, and if suitable compensatory measures are adopted to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected.

1.4 Baseline data collection

This report takes the following guidance documents into account:

- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine, September 2018, updated in September 2019 (V1.1), April 2022 (V1.2) and September 2024 (V1.3).
- Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG) (2010a). Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities.
- DoEHLG (2010b). Circular NPW 1/10 & PSSP 2/10: Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities.

[1] *Assessment of Plans and Projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites: Methodological Guidance on the Provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (European Commission Environment Directorate-General, September 2021)*

- European Commission (2021). Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites- Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC.
- European Commission (2018). Managing Natura 2000 sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC.
- Directorate – General for Environment (European Commission), (2021). Guidance document on the strict protection of animal species of Community Interest under the Habitats Directive.
- National Roads Authority (NRA)[2] (2009). Guidelines for Assessment of Ecological Impacts of National Road Schemes.
- Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) (2021). Practice Note PN01 Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management.
- National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS) (2021). Strict Protection of Animal Species: Guidance for Public authorities on the Application of Articles 12 and 16 of the EU Habitats Directive to Development/Works undertaken by or on Behalf of a Public Authority.

Information was collated from the organisations and websites listed below:

- Data on European sites and rare and protected plant and animal species contained in the following databases:
  - The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (www.NPWS.ie).
  - The National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) (www.biodiversityireland.ie).
  - BirdWatch Ireland (www.birdwatchireland.ie).
  - Bat Conservation Ireland (www.batconservationireland.org).
- Information on land-use zoning from the online mapping of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (http://www.myplan.ie/en/index.html).
- Recent and historical OSi mapping and aerial photography, including www.geohive.ie.
- Information on local watercourses from www.catchments.ie.
- Information on water quality in the area (www.epa.ie).
- Information on soils, geology and hydrogeology in the area (www.gsi.ie).
- Information on the Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland (Article 17 report) (NPWS, 2025).
- Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030 (Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage).
- South Dublin Development Plan 2022-2028.
- Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown Development Plan 2022-2028.

The report takes full account of the details of the Dublin Mountains DEDP and a detailed examination of all relevant elements was undertaken.

A desk-based assessment of the receiving environment was undertaken and this focussed on habitats and species that are listed as Qualifying Interests (QI) (in the case of SACs) and Special Conservation Interests (SCI) (in the case of SPAs) for European sites. An assessment of habitat suitability for species with links to European sites was undertaken, in order to appraise the potential for *ex-situ* effects on European sites.

[2] Now Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII).

2 Description of the Proposed Dublin Mountain Destination Experience Development Plan

2.1 Background and Outline

The Dublin Mountains Destination and Experience Development Plan (DEDP) is a five-year sustainable tourism plan for south County Dublin. The plan is centred around the Dublin mountains and builds upon the Dublin Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023-2027.

The Dublin Mountains area is at the southernmost end of County Dublin on the boarder of County Wicklow. The Dublin Mountains are just north of the Wicklow Mountains.

Given the rocky landscape, the area is predominantly rural with key excursions and activities throughout the region. The Plan aims to improve the overall awareness of the experiences available.

The region is a sprawling combination of woodlands, hills, mountains and pastures. The Plan builds on predominantly outdoor experiences including orienteering, mountain biking, running, walking and hiking.

The Dublin Mountains region is current managed under the *Dublin Mountain Partnership's Strategic Plan 2022-2026* launched by the Dublin Mountains Partnership (DMP). The DMP is a multidisciplinary management group with members from Coillte, South Dublin County Council, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, Dublin City Council, National Parks and Wildlife Service, the Dublin Mountains Initiative and Fáilte Ireland. The principal purpose of the partnership is to *'improving the recreational experience for users of the Dublin Mountains, whilst recognising the objectives and constraints of the various landowners.'*

The area contains a range of recreational sites including the Hell Fire Club, Massy's Estate, Glenasmole, Rathmichael Wood and Ticknock among others, which lends itself well to slow adventure activities and sports tourism, in particular mountain biking and walking trails. Key attractions in the area include the Dublin Mountain Way, mountain biking trails and the Glencullen Adventure Park.

The National Tourism Policy Statement (December 2025) is structured around five objectives for tourism development which have shaped the Dublin Mountains DEDP;

1. Delivering the Best Visitor Experiences
2. Promoting a Vibrant and Creative Tourism Enterprise Sector
3. Empowering Communities
4. Growing a Sustainable Future
5. Implemention and Data

The Dublin *Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023-2027* sets a 5-year strategy for tourism development that will increase the commercial potential of Dublin and cater to visitors while conserving the natural environment and improving the lives of locals. In the context of an evolving global focus on sustainability and climate action, a regenerative approach to tourism ensures community and place are at the centre of the tourism model, collectively working towards delivering a net positive benefit for all stakeholders – Visitor, Industry, Community and the Environment. A regenerative approach encourages tourism to give back more than it takes through engaging the visitor and industry in protecting and enhancing nature and its habitats, the host communities and local places. Nature will be central to

destination development with the environment and sustainability front of mind in all future decision making.

2.2 Vision

The vision for the Dublin Mountain Destination and Experience Development Plan sets a vision for 2036:

> *"The Dublin Mountains invite visitors to experience Dublin from above, where spectacular views, rich heritage, signature trails and unforgettable outdoor adventures combine to offer a city break with a difference, revealing a side of Dublin found nowhere else.*
>
> *As a distinctive part of Dublin's City, Coast and Mountains proposition, the Dublin Mountains broaden the appeal of the destination, encouraging visitors to stay longer, explore further, connect with nature and discover experiences beyond the traditional city break. Easy access and stronger connections between Dublin City, local communities and the mountains benefit residents and visitors alike, making it easier to experience, access and enjoy more of the destination, while a growing range of unique accommodation encourages deeper engagement with its landscapes and communities.*
>
> *Through a shared commitment to stewardship, the natural, cultural and archaeological assets that make the Dublin Mountains unique are protected, celebrated and enhanced for future generations."*

2.3 Strategic Objectives

The Plan is structured around the following strategic objectives and are closely aligned to the Strategic Objectives that are set out for the wider Dublin region in the *Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023-2027*:

Strategic Objective 1: Dublin Mountains Destination
Establish the Dublin Mountains as a Leading Outdoor Destination within Dublin's City, Coast and Mountains Proposition. **Goal:** The Dublin Mountains is established as a recognised and accessible part of Dublin's city, coast and mountains proposition, supported by improved visitor access, stronger gateway hubs, enhanced visitor orientation and a growing range of overnight accommodation options.
Strategic Objective 2: Inspiring Dublin Mountains Experiences
Develop the Dublin Mountains experience base through product investment that delivers memorable outdoor experiences and epic views over the city and coast. **Goal:** The Dublin Mountains offers a distinctive portfolio of signature visitor experiences, anchored by the Dublin Mountains Way, the Dublin Mountains Visitor Centre, landmark viewpoints and outdoor adventure experiences, encouraging visitors to explore more of the destination and engage more deeply with its landscapes, heritage and culture.
Strategic Objective 3: Dublin Mountains Tourism Businesses
Support new and existing tourism businesses in the development of experiences that inspire visitors to explore the Dublin Mountains.

Goal: A strong and collaborative tourism industry supports a growing range of bookable experiences, strengthens local enterprise development and increases the economic and community benefits generated through tourism across the Dublin Mountains destination.
Strategic Objective 4: Dublin Mountains Stewardship & Environment
Implement a sustainable tourism development approach that is compatible with the conservation of the Dublin Mountains diverse natural, heritage, archaeological and cultural resources. **Goal:** A shared approach to destination stewardship is in place, supported by visitor capacity assessments, environmental monitoring and sustainable business practices that safeguard the biodiversity, heritage and landscape quality of the Dublin Mountains.

2.4 Destination Catalyst Overview

To achieve the above strategic objectives, the Dublin Mountains DEDP focuses on a number of 'catalyst projects' and 'supporting projects'. The progress of the DEDP will be measured against the specified 'target outcomes' The catalyst projects and their aims are as follows:

Transport and Access

The research and consultation consistently identified access as one of the most significant barriers to tourism growth within the Dublin Mountains. While the destination benefits from its position within Dublin's wider visitor offering, access to many of its key visitor experiences remains heavily dependent on private vehicles and connectivity between gateway hubs, recreation sites and visitor experiences can be challenging. Addressing these issues represents one of the most important opportunities within the DEDP. Improving sustainable transport, visitor mobility and active travel connections will help strengthen the role of the Dublin Mountains within Dublin's City, Coast and Mountains proposition while supporting greater visitor dispersal and more sustainable visitor movement throughout the destination.

Accommodation

The accommodation profile of the Dublin Mountains presents both a challenge and a significant opportunity. While the Core Experience Zone currently contains only a limited number of registered tourism bed places, substantial accommodation capacity already exists within adjoining visitor gateway hubs. The opportunity is not simply to increase accommodation supply, but to create more compelling overnight reasons to stay within and around the Dublin Mountains through alternative outdoor accommodation, farm diversification initiatives and stronger connections between accommodation providers and visitor experiences. Increasing overnight engagement will be critical to strengthening the economic contribution of tourism within the destination.

Dublin Mountains Visitor Centre: Hellfire Club & Massy's Estate Project

The Dublin Mountains Visitor Centre represents one of the most significant opportunities to enhance the overall visitor experience and create a gateway to the destination. It will provide a place of orientation and interpretation, helping visitors understand the geography, archaeology, history and heritage of Montpelier Hill, Massy's Wood, the Hell Fire Club and the wider Dublin Mountains region. By providing a café, shop, toilets, walkers' lounge, interpretive exhibition and education facilities, the Visitor Centre will significantly enhance the experience of walkers, visitors and local communities. It will showcase the natural, cultural and built heritage of the Dublin Mountains in a way that can be appreciated and protected for future generations. The wider project includes preservation works to the Hellfire Club building, improved access, enhanced walking trails and a tree-top walkway into Massy's

Wood. Together, these elements have the potential to create a compelling gateway experience that encourages visitors to explore more of the Dublin Mountains and engage more deeply with its landscapes, heritage and stories.

Core Experience Zone Development

The Dublin Mountains already contains a significant concentration of trails, forests, recreation sites, heritage assets and viewpoints. However, visitors often experience these assets as individual locations rather than as part of a connected destination. The Core Experience Zone provides a framework for improving connectivity, visitor orientation, interpretation and experience development, helping create a more coherent visitor journey and a stronger sense of destination.

Dublin Mountains Way

Walking is already one of the most popular ways visitors experience the Dublin Mountains, and the Dublin Mountains Way provides an opportunity to link many of the destination's landscapes, heritage assets, communities and outdoor experiences. The original vision for the trail identified opportunities to strengthen its appeal through enhanced infrastructure, accessibility, interpretation and visitor engagement. As a route that traverses and connects much of the destination, the Dublin Mountains Way can play an important role in creating a more connected visitor experience and strengthening the overall identity of the destination.

Monumental Mountain Viewpoints

Scenic views consistently emerged as one of the most memorable aspects of the Dublin Mountains visitor experience. The dramatic panoramas across Dublin City, Dublin Bay and the surrounding landscape are among the destination's most distinctive assets. Creating opportunities for visitors to engage more deeply with these views and the stories connected to them can transform an existing strength into a defining feature of the Dublin Mountains visitor proposition.

World-Class Mountain Biking Destination

Mountain biking is already one of the Dublin Mountains' strongest outdoor recreation assets and a key differentiator within the wider Dublin region. Building on this established reputation presents an opportunity to increase visitor engagement, strengthen the destination's adventure appeal and create stronger links with the wider Wicklow mountain biking proposition. Continued enhancement of trail quality, visitor facilities, connectivity and trail sustainability will help maintain the destination's reputation as a leading mountain biking location.

Experience Development & Market Readiness Programme

While the Dublin Mountains benefits from a strong outdoor recreation offer and growing visitor interest, there remains a limited number of visitor experiences that can be booked, promoted and sold as part of the Dublin Mountains visitor proposition. Supporting businesses to develop and package visitor experiences presents an opportunity to create more reasons to visit the destination, encourage longer stays and increase visitor spend across the area.

Dublin Mountains Stewardship Programme

The Dublin Mountains is a valued recreation landscape enjoyed by local communities, recreation users and visitors alike. Balancing increasing levels of recreation and tourism activity with the protection of its landscapes, biodiversity, heritage and community wellbeing represents one of the key long-term stewardship challenges for the destination. Through visitor management assessments, visitor monitoring and collaborative stewardship initiatives, this project will provide a coordinated framework for the sustainable management of the destination while helping safeguard the assets that underpin its long-term appeal.

The catalyst initiatives detailed above will be supported through a significant number of supporting projects and progress will be assessed using the target outcomes, which are individually listed in the DEDP Action Plan (Appendix 1).

The complete list of catalyst projects, supporting projects and target outcomes are provided and are assessed in the SEA Environmental Report in Appendix 1.

The complete list of destination catalysts and destination supporting projects from the Dublin Mountains DEDP are provided and are assessed in Appendix 1 of the Environmental Report.

3 Stage 1: Screening for Appropriate Assessment

3.1 Introduction

The first part of the Appropriate Assessment process is the Screening phase. Screening identifies the likely effects of the DMDEDP on European sites that could arise, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, and considers whether these impacts are likely to have a significant effect on the European site in view of the site's conservation objectives.

As per Section 1.3 and in accordance with Article 42 of the Habitats regulations, screening for appropriate assessment must be carried out. Screening must be undertaken without the inclusion of mitigation and it is in this context that this AA Screening Report is prepared.

Following screening therefore, if there is a possibility of there being a significant effect on a European site, this will generate the need for an appropriate assessment for the purposes of compliance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. This means that if the conclusions at the end of the screening exercise are that significant effects on any European sites, as a result of the DMDEDP, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, are likely, uncertain or unknown, then an Appropriate Assessment must be carried out. This is in accordance with case law.

3.2 Potential Zone of Influence

This assessment is based on the source-pathway-receptor model, which dictates that, for an effect to occur, there must be a 'source' (such as a construction site); a 'receptor' (such as a designated site for nature conservation); and a 'pathway' between the two (such as a watercourse). A construction site or completed development may also create a barrier to movement, for example, by preventing the migration of fauna along a river corridor, or by obstructing the migration of birds.

Identification of a potential effect means that there is a possibility of ecological or environmental damage occurring, with the level and significance of the impact depending upon the nature and exposure to the potential effect and the characteristics of the receptor. Although there may be a risk of an impact, it may not necessarily occur, and if it does occur, it may not be significant.

There are no set recommended distances for projects to consider European sites as being relevant for assessment. DoEHLG (2010a, pp. 31 – 32) states that:

"The approach to screening is likely to differ somewhat for plans and projects, depending on scale and on the likely effects, but the following should be included:

1. *Any Natura 2000 sites within or adjacent to the plan or project area*
2. *Any Natura 2000 sites within the likely zone of impact of the plan or project. A distance of 15km is currently recommended in the case of plans, and derives from UK guidance (Scott Wilson et al., 2006). For projects, the distance could be much less than 15km, and in some cases less than 100m, but this must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with reference to the nature, size and location of the project, and the sensitivities of the ecological receptors, and the potential for in combination effects*
3. *Natura 2000 sites that are more than 15km from the plan or project area depending on the likely impacts of the plan or project, and the sensitivities of the ecological receptors, bearing in mind the precautionary principle. In the cases of sites with water dependent habitats or species,*

and a plan or project that could affect water quality or quantity, for example, it may be necessary to consider the full extent of the upstream and/or downstream catchment."

The 2021 OPR guidelines, *Practice Note PN01: Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management*, state that the Zone of Influence *"should be established on a case-by-case basis using the Source-Pathway-Receptor framework and not by arbitrary distances (such as 15 km)"* (p. 8).

Therefore, considering the nature, scale and location of the Dublin Mountains DEDP, and in accordance with the source-pathway-receptor model, the potential Zone of Influence for the Dublin Mountains DEDP includes any site to which there is a potential for impacts, as set out in the following sections.

3.3 Description of the Receiving Environment and the Potential Zone of Influence

The description of the receiving environment presented in this section has been based on a desktop study of relevant available information.

The Dublin Mountains region is a predominantly rural area in southern County Dublin on the border of County Wicklow. The region contains many populous communities along the northern boundary including Tallaght, Knocklyon, Sandyford and Shankill, among others. The topography of the Dublin Mountains is the main draw for tourism, hosting many opportunities for slow adventure activities and sport tourism through features including the Hell Fire Club and Wicklow National Park. The region offers a range of several outdoor experiences including orienteering, hiking, and mountain biking.

3.3.1 Designated European Sites

Article 10 of the Habitats Directive recognises the importance of ecological networks as corridors and stepping stones for wildlife, including for migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of species of flora and fauna. Article 10 provides that Member States "shall endeavour, where they consider it necessary, in their land-use planning and development policies and, in particular, with a view to improving the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network, to encourage the management of features of the landscape which are of major importance for wild fauna and flora".

Sites designated for protection under the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) form a European network of important ecological sites known as the Natura 2000 Network. These include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), which are legally protected under the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and are selected for the conservation of Annex I habitats and Annex II species, and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), which are protected under the European Union Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds 2009/147/EC. In Ireland, SACs and SPAs are known as European sites.

Within the study area, there are a number of areas designated for protection under the Natura 2000 network. Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are legally protected under the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and are selected for the conservation of Annex I habitats and Annex II species. Special Protection Areas are protected under the European Union Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds 2009/147/EC.

All designated Natura 2000 Sites located within the study area and within the potential zone of influence are shown in Figure 3.1 and listed in Table 3.1.

Conservation objectives for SACs and SPAs have been set for the habitats and species for which the sites have been selected. Site specific detailed conservation objectives are available on the NPWS website[3].

Table 3.1 European Sites located within the DEDP area and within the potential Zone of Influence[4]

European Sites within the DEDP area			
Site Code	**Special Areas of Conservation**	**Site Code**	**Special Protection Areas**
001209	Glenasmole Valley SAC	004040	Wicklow Mountains SPA
002122	Wicklow Mountains SAC		
000725	Knocksink Wood SAC		
000713	Ballyman Glen SAC		
European Sites within the potential zone of influence of the DEDP area			
Site Code	**Special Areas of Conservation**	**Site Code**	**Special Protection Areas**
000206	North Dublin Bay SAC	004172	Dalkey Islands SPA
003000	Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC	004024	South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA
000202	Howth Head SAC	004236	North-West Irish Sea SPA
000210	South Dublin Bay SAC	004006	North Bull Island SPA
000199	Baldoyle Bay SAC	004113	Howth Head Coast SPA
001398	Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC	004117	Ireland's Eye SPA
000397	Red Bog, Kildare SAC	004016	Baldoyle Bay SPA
002193	Ireland's Eye SAC	004063	Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA
000716	Carriggower Bog SAC	004186	The Murrough SPA
002249	The Murrough Wetlands SAC	004025	Malahide Estuary SPA
000719	Glen of the Downs SAC		
000714	Bray Head SAC		
000205	Malahide Estuary SAC		
000391	Ballynafagh Bog SAC		

[3] NPWS website 2025: https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/conservation-management-planning/conservation-objectives
[4] EPA AA Maps (2026).

European Sites within the DEDP area			
Site Code	Special Areas of Conservation	Site Code	Special Protection Areas
001387	Ballynafagh Lake SAC		
000396	Pollardstown Fen SAC		

3.3.2 Nationally Designated Sites

Nationally Designated Sites include Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) which are legally protected areas that are considered important for their habitats, or which hold species of plants and animals whose habitat needs protection, including geological/geomorphological sites in need of protection through NHA designation. While not statutorily designated proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) are also of significance for wildlife and habitats and are generally protected in the County Development plan. This network of NHAs and pNHAs provides supporting or stepping stone functions to the SAC and SPA network, in particular for species that move outside of SAC and SPA boundaries.

Under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act (2000) NHAs are legally protected from damage from the date they are formally proposed for designation[5]. The designation of these sites is the responsibility of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). Further protection can be afforded to these areas by including appropriate protective measures in the Plan.

Refer to **Table 3.2** and **Figure 3.2** below for the pNHAs located within the Plan Area and in the potential Zone of Influence.

Table 3.2 Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) located in the Plan Area and within the potential Zone of Influence of the Dublin Mountains DEDP Area

Natural Heritage Areas in the vicinity of the DEDP Area			
Site Code	Natural Heritage Areas	Site Code	Natural Heritage Areas
001393	Hodgestown Bog NHA		
Proposed Natural Heritage Areas within the DEDP Area			
Site Code	Proposed Natural Heritage Areas	Site Code	Proposed Natural Heritage Areas
001209	Glenasmole Valley	001207	Dingle Glen
001202	Ballybetagh Bog	000725	Knocksink Wood
000713	Ballyman Glen	000991	Dodder Valley
000211	Slade of Saggart and Crooksling Glen	001212	Lugmore Glen
001206	Dalkey Coastal Zone and Killiney Hill	001753	Fitzsimon's Wood
Proposed Natural Heritage Areas in the vicinity of the DEDP Area			
Site Code	Proposed Natural Heritage Areas	Site Code	Proposed Natural Heritage Areas
000128	Liffey Valley	000178	Santry Demesne

[5] NPWS (2026). *Protected Sites*.

Natural Heritage Areas in the vicinity of the DEDP Area			
000199	Baldoyle Bay	000201	Dolphins, Dublin Docks
000202	Howth Head	000203	Ireland's Eye
000205	Malahide Estuary	000206	North Dublin Bay
000210	South Dublin Bay	000391	Ballynafagh Bog
000211	Slade of Saggart and Crooksling Glen	000393	Liffey Valley Meander Belt
000395	Mouds Bog	000397	Red Bog, Kildare
000724	Kilmacanoge Marsh	000716	Carriggower Bog
000714	Bray Head	000719	Glen of the Downs
000718	Devil's Glen	000731	Poulaphouca Reservoir
000730	The Murrough	001208	Feltrim Hill
000991	Dodder Valley	001205	Booterstown Marsh
002053	Hollywood Glen	001211	Loughlinstown Woods
001387	Ballynafagh Lake	001394	Kilteel Wood
001395	Liffey at Osberstown	001391	Donadea Wood
001396	Liffey Bank Above Athgarvan	001398	Rye Water Valley/Carton
001750	Ballinagee Wood	001750	Ballinagee Wood
001754	Dargle River Valley	001755	Glencree Valley
001759	Newtown Marshes	001763	Sluice River Marsh
001767	Powerscourt Waterfall	001768	Powerscourt Woodland
001769	Great Sugar Loaf	001771	Vartry Reservoir
002103	Royal Canal	002104	Grand Canal

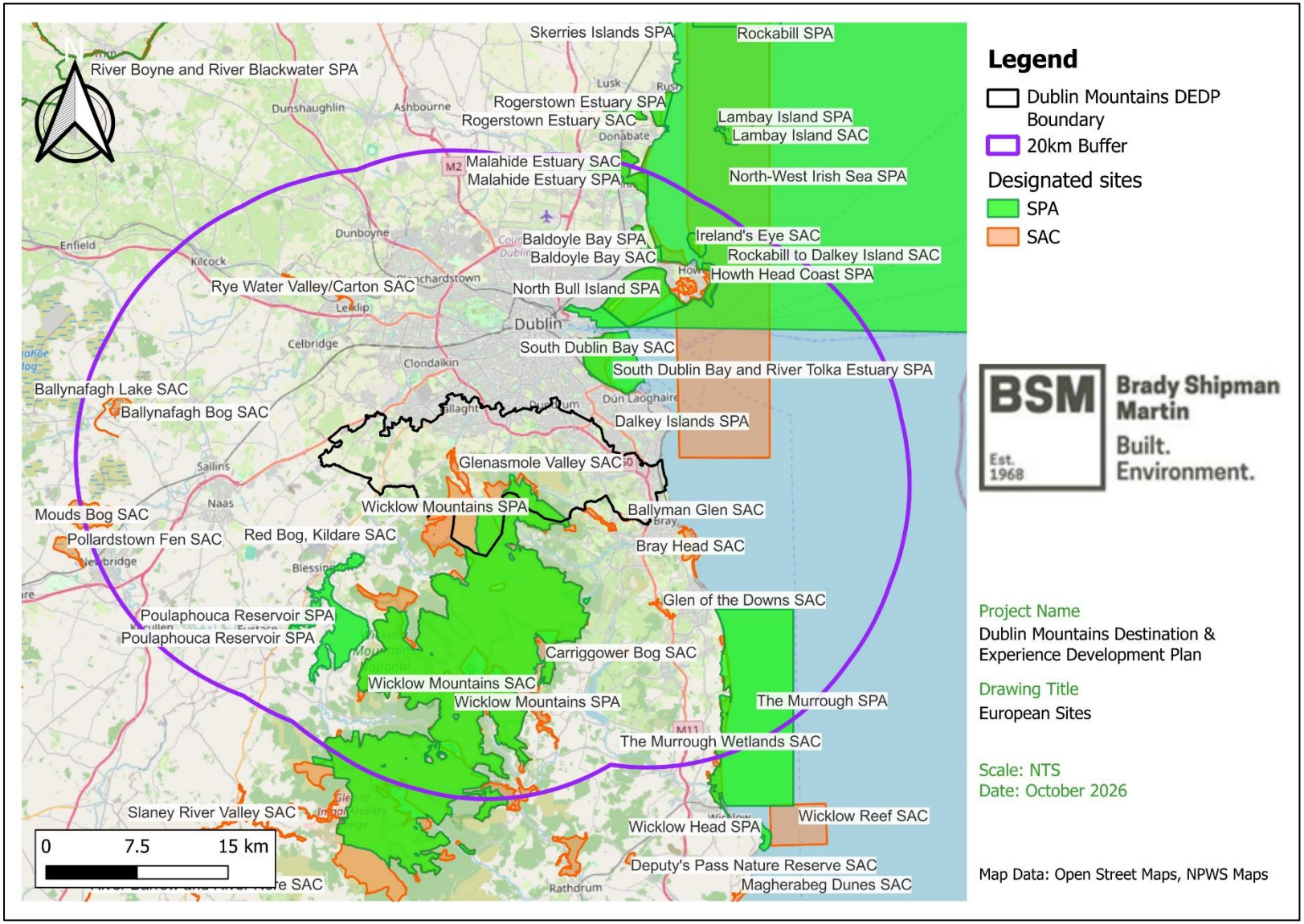

Figure 3.1 European Sites in the potential zone of influence

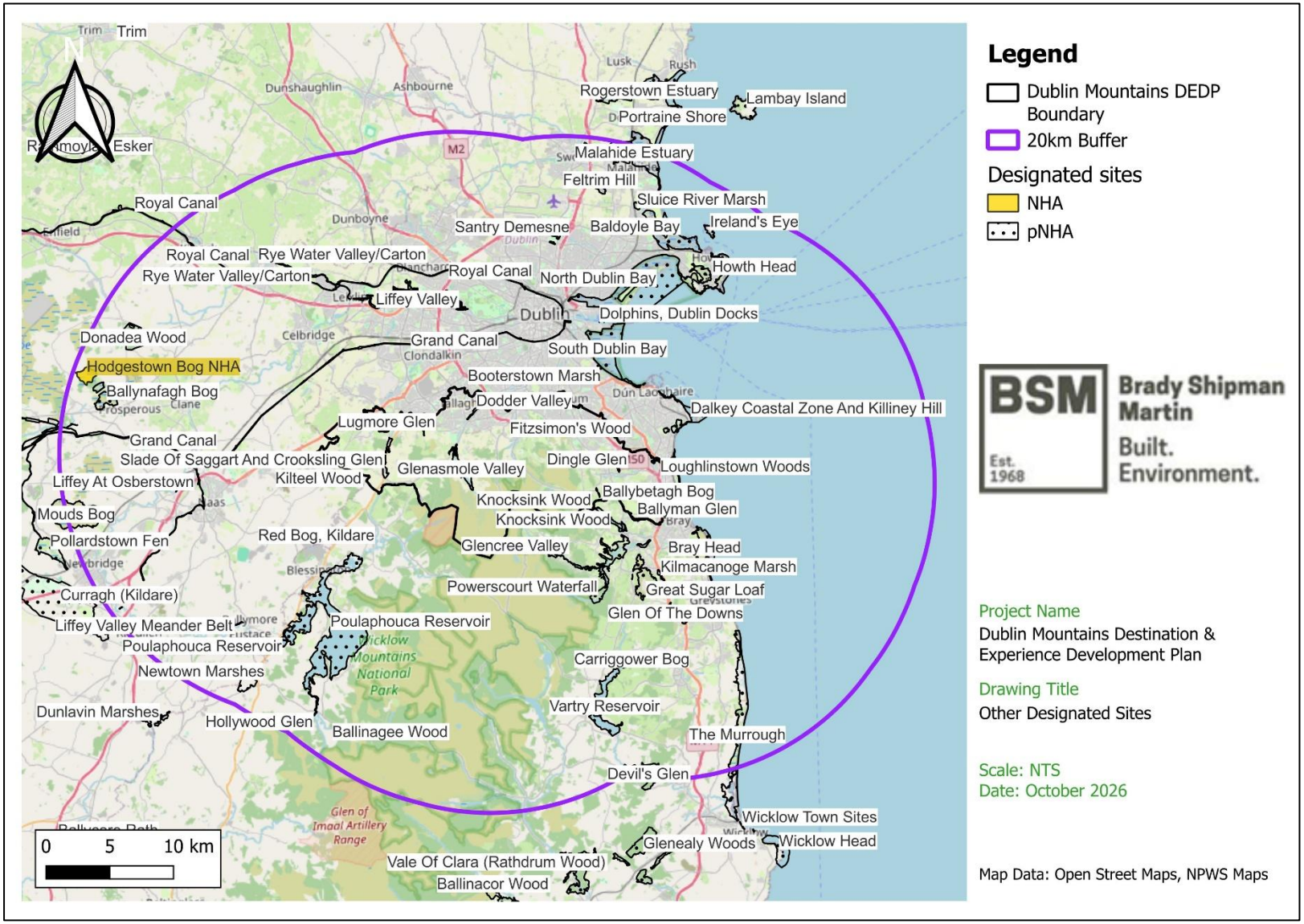

Figure 3.2 Other Designated Sites in the potential zone of influence

3.3.3 Hydrology

The latest *Water Quality in Ireland* report 2019-2024[6] was published by the EPA in October 2025. This report provides an assessment of the condition of Ireland's waters (rivers, lakes, canals, groundwaters, transitional (estuaries) and coastal waters) against the objectives and standards set out in the Water Framework Directive and Ireland's River Basin Management Plan (Water Action Plan 2024). The assessments are made using data collected from over 4000 surface water bodies and 514 ground water bodies between 2019 and 2024. Comparisons are made between the results from this period and those before to give insight into trends in the condition of our waters over time.

The Plan area covers the WFD catchments Liffey and Dublin Bay (09) and Ovoca-Vartry (10), and the WFD sub catchments Liffey_SC_070 (09_14), Liffey_SC_090 (09_15), Liffey_SC_010 (09_13), Dodder_SC_010 (09_16) and Dodder_SC_010 (10_05).

The status of the **river waterbodies** within the study area ranges from '*poor*' to '*high*'. The WFD water quality status of the river waterbodies in the study area is shown in **Figure 3.3** below. There are two lake waterbodies of *'poor'* and *'good'* quality respectively, and the **coastal waterbody** quality is also *'good'* as shown in **Figure 3.4** below. There are no canal or transitional waterbodies within the Plan area. The rivers in the Plan area drain into the River Dodder and subsequently the Dublin Bay area. Potential impacts arising from this are further discussed below in Section 3.4 and 4.2.

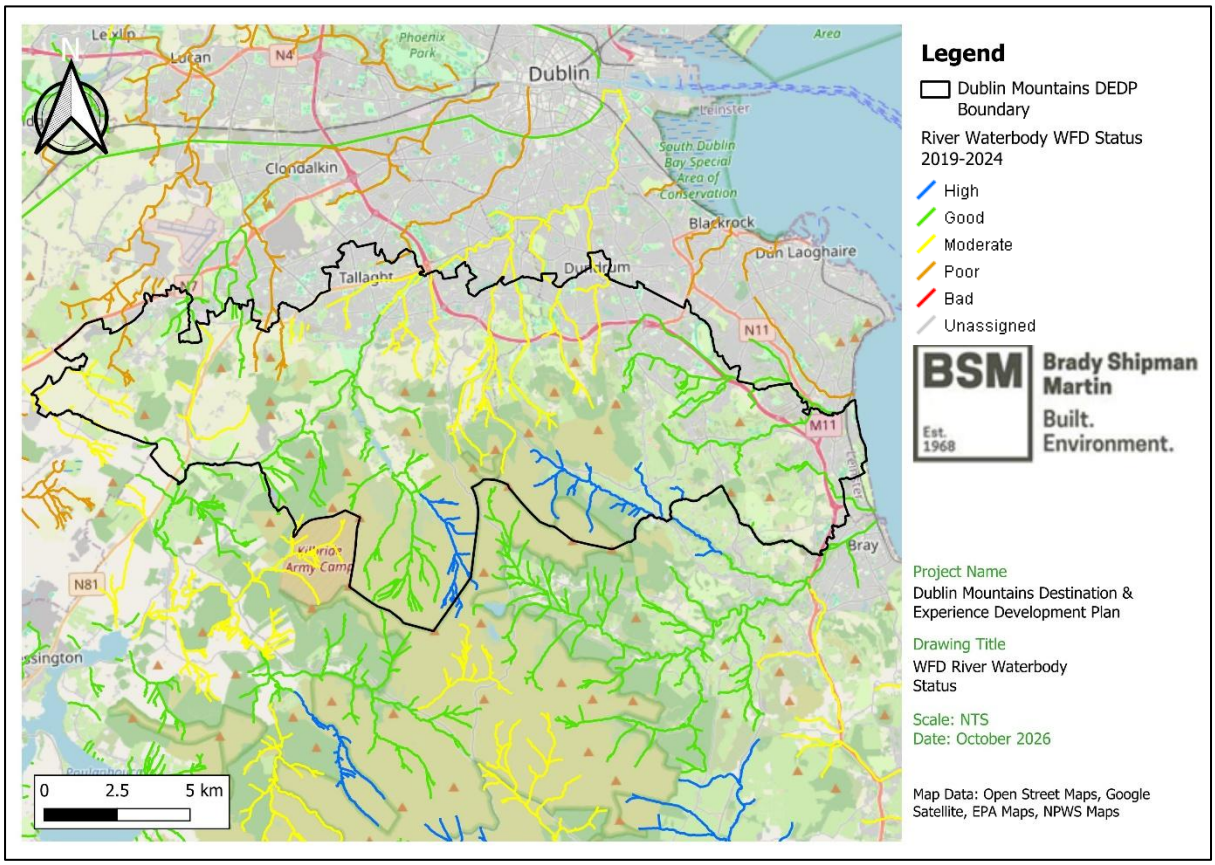

Figure 3.3 WFD River Waterbody Status 2019-2024[7]

[6] Water Quality In Ireland 2019-2024 - https://www.epa.ie/publications/monitoring--assessment/freshwater--marine/water-quality-in-ireland-2019-2024.php

[7] https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/

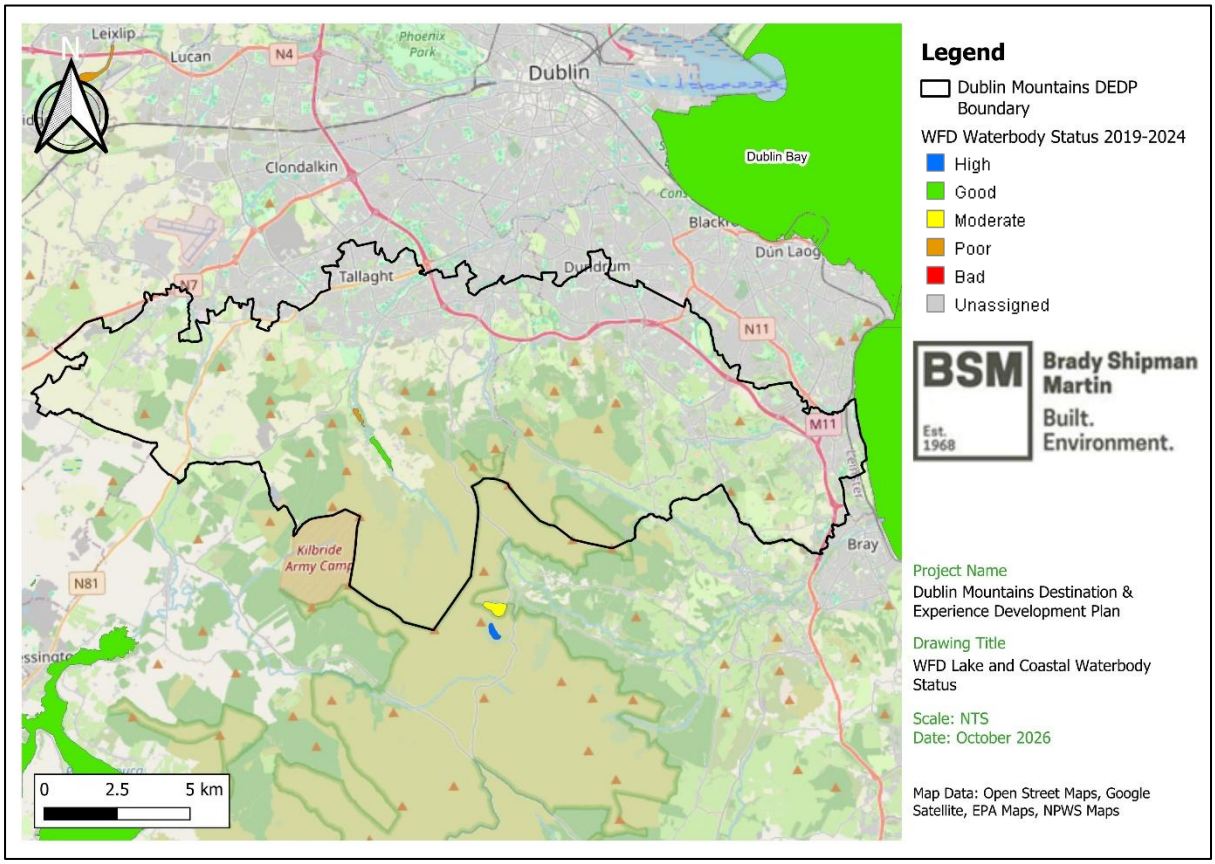

Figure 3.4 WFD Lake and Transitional Waterbody Status 2019-2024[8]

3.3.3.1 Designated Shellfish Waters

The *EU Shellfish Waters Directive* (2006/113/EC) Was repealed by the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC). Designated shellfish waters are now protected areas under the WFD and the Europea Communities (Quality of Shellfish Waters) Regulations 2006 (S.I. No. 268 of2006) as amended.

Pollution reduction programmes are in operation for these areas. The identified pressures on these designated waters include urban wastewater systems, on-site wastewater treatment systems and port activities. The coastal waters provide an important resource, supporting and generating employment and recreational activities and must be protected.

There is no area of Shellfish waters within the study area. The closest one is off the coast of Malahide, c. 16.8km north of the Plan area.

3.3.4 Salmonid Waters

The *Salmonid Regulations* (European Communities (Quality of Salmonid Waters) Regulations 1988, S.I. No. 293 of 1988) designate the waters capable of supporting salmon (*Salmo salar*), trout (*Salmo trutta*), char *(Salvelinus* sp.) and whitefish (*Coregonu*s sp.) as protected. Thirty-four rivers, tributaries and lakes are listed and protected under these Regulations that prescribe quality standards for salmonid waters, sampling programmes and methods of analysis and inspection to be used by local authorities to determine compliance with the standards.

[8] https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/

There is one designated Salmonid Water under the Salmonid Refulations, on the border of the Plan area near Bray, the Dargle River (IE_EA_10D10010).

3.3.5 Invasive Species

Invasive species constitute a threat to biodiversity and ecosystems and can have economic costs. In Ireland, there are currently 377 no. recorded non-native species and 342 no. non-native '*potential Invaders*', 66% are considered to have a low impact risk, 21% to have a medium impact risk and 13% have a high impact risk. Most invasive species in Ireland are plants, however, there is potential for rising trends of invasive vertebrate and invertebrate species[9].

Invasive alien species can negatively impact on native species, transform habitats and threaten whole ecosystems causing serious problems to the environment and the economy. They may in certain cases pose a threat to human safety. There is potential for the spread of invasive species during excavation and construction works.

3.3.6 Other Designations

3.3.6.1 RAMSAR Sites

Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention. Wetlands are important ecosystems, which improve water quality, provide storm protection, flood mitigation, stabilise shorelines, maintain biodiversity, and provide natural products such as fish and shellfish. Ireland presently has 45no. RAMSAR sites. Relevant authorities are expected to manage their Ramsar Sites so as to maintain their ecological character and retain their essential functions and values for future generations. There are no Ramsar sites within the Plan area.

3.3.6.2 Wildfowl Sanctuaries

Wildfowl sanctuaries are areas that have been excluded from the 'Open Season Order' so that game birds can rest and feed undisturbed. There are 68no. sanctuaries in the State[10]. Shooting of game birds is not allowed in these sanctuaries. County Dublin has three wildfowl sanctuaries; (1) WFS-18 Brittas Ponds, (2) WFS-19 The North Bull Island and (3) WFS-20 Rogerstown Estuary.

3.3.6.3 Nature Reserves

Other nature conservation designations are *Statutory Nature Reserves*, which are protected under Ministerial order. The Knocksink Wood Nature Reserve is located on the border of the Dublin Mountains DEDP area, see **Figure 3.5.**

3.3.6.4 *Margaritifera* Sensitive Area

Freshwater pearl mussel is a globally threatened, long-lived and extremely sensitive species that can be impacted by many forms of pollution, particularly sediment and nutrient pollution and by hydrological and morphological changes, which may arise from developments, activities or changes in any part of the catchment. There are two species of freshwater pearl mussel in Ireland (*Margaritifera margaritifera* and *Margaritifera durrovensis*) and both are protected under Annex II and Annex V of the EU Habitats Directive.

[9] O'Flynn, C., Kelly,J. and Lysaght,L. (2014).
[10] NPWS (2021).

There are no Margaritifera Sensitive Areas within the Plan area. There are some sensitive areas, however these sites are south of the Plan area and separated by Mountains with no hydrological connection. Refer to Figure 3.5.

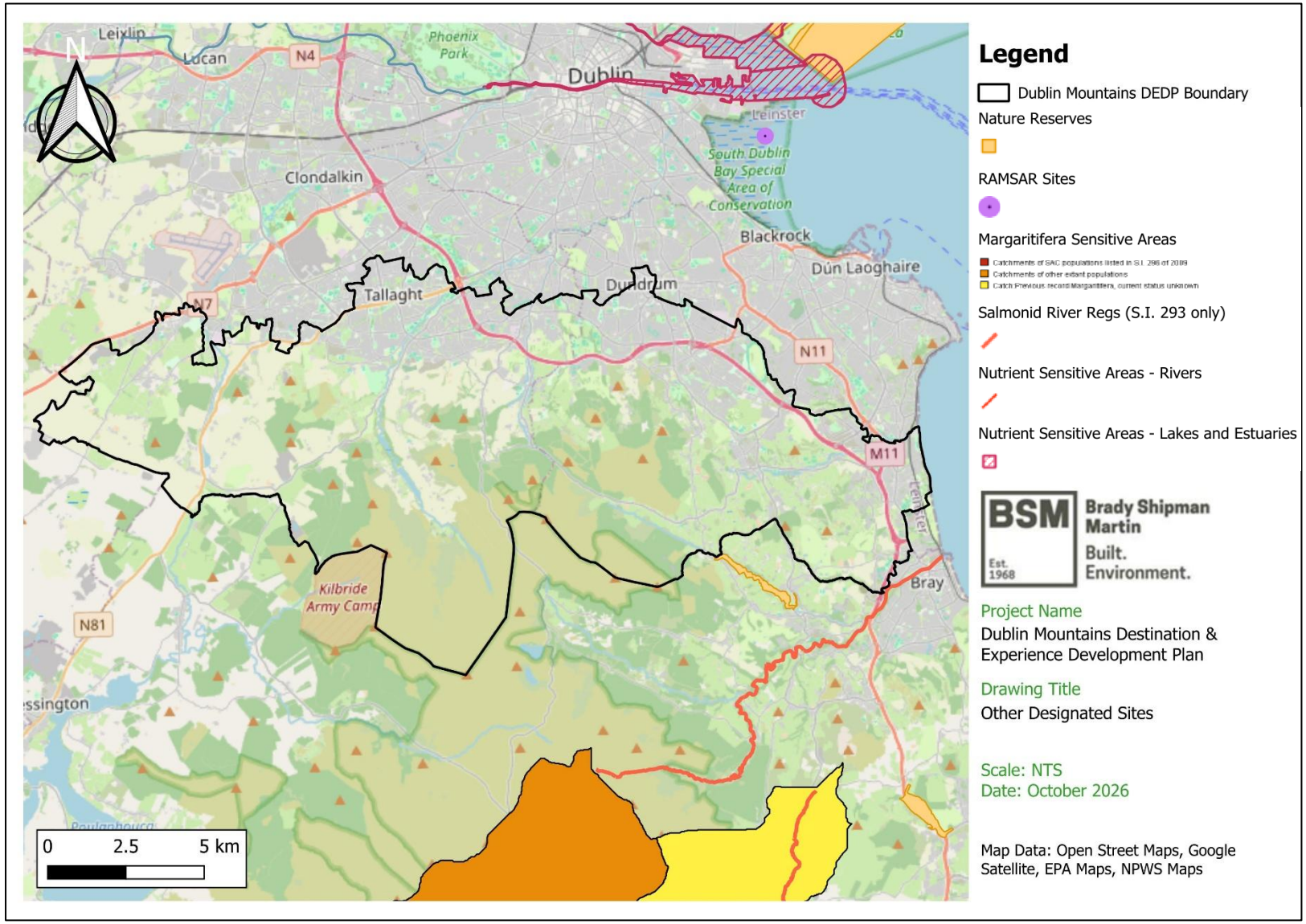

Figure 3.5 Other Designated Sites within study area and in the surrounding area

3.4 Potential for likely significant effects on European sites

While the DEDP has been developed with sustainability as core elements its purpose is to deliver and promote enhanced tourism experience within the Dublin Mountains. The elements and actions of the DEDP have potential to give rise to significant effects on European sites during the construction and operational phases.

The effects that could arise from the implementation of the Dublin Mountains DEDP have been examined in the context of several factors that could potentially result in a likely significant effect on any European site, see Table 3.4 below.

A series of Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) have been prepared in line with current guidance and also with specific reference to the SEA for the Dublin Mountains DEDP (refer to Table 3.3). Those of primary relevance to this report are those related to Biodiversity (Flora & Fauna), Population and Water Quality.

Table 3.3 Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) for the Dublin Mountains DEDP

Theme	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective
Biodiversity (Flora & Fauna) (B)	B_1	Ensure compliance with the Habitats and Birds Directives with regard to the protection of Natura 2000 Sites and Annex habitats and species[11] and no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site, with regard to its qualifying interests, associated conservation status, structure and function.
	B_2	Preserve, protect, maintain and where appropriate enhance the terrestrial, aquatic and soil biodiversity, including internationally, EU and nationally designated sites, habitats and protected species.
	B_3	Ensure the Dublin Mountains DEDP does not contradict biodiversity protection, restoration and rehabilitation objectives in the *South Dublin Development Plan 2022-2028* and *Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown Development Plan 2022-2028.*
Population & Human Health (PHH)	PHH_1	Promote sustainable high-quality tourism within the area that supports economic development and maximises potential for employment and investment.
	PHH_2	Improve health and wellbeing by provision of recreational and tourism-related activities.
Land, Soils & Geology (LSG)	LSG_1	Minimise green field development and protect land and soil resources from pollution and degradation.
Water Quality (WQ)	WQ_1	Protect, maintain and where necessary improve water quality and the management of watercourses, groundwater and the marine environment, in compliance with the requirements of the WFD objectives and measures.
	WQ_2	Implement and comply with the provisions of the Flood Risk Management and Sustainable Drainage Systems Guidelines to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding.
Air Quality, Noise & Climate (ANC)	ANC_1	Maintain and promote continuing improvement in air quality and noise emissions through the reduction of emissions.

[11] 'Annexed habitats and species' refer to those listed under Annex I, II & IV of the EU Habitats Directive and Annex I of the EU Birds Directive.

Theme	SEO Code	Strategic Environmental Objective
	ANC_2	Contribute towards climate adaptation and mitigation and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in line with National targets, including Ireland's commitment to realising a climate neutral economy by 2050.
Material Assets (MA)	MA_1	To contribute towards the protection of public assets and infrastructure, ensure new developments are served with adequate and appropriate critical infrastructure with sufficient capacity (drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) that does not present a danger to human health.
	MA_2	Promote sustainable waste management, minimisation and recovery.
	MA_3	Promote sustainable transportation including increased use of public transport and active travel measures.
Cultural Heritage (CH)	CH_1	Protect, conserve and avoid impact on places, features and landscapes of cultural and archaeological importance, including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and Sites and Monuments Record (SMR).
	CH_2	Protect, conserve and avoid impact on places, features, buildings and landscapes of architectural heritage, (including entries to the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) and National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAHs)).
Landscape & Visual (LV)	LV_1	To protect landscape character, minimise the loss of historic landscape features such as mature trees and hedgerows and scenic views.
	LV_2	Avoid impacts on the statutory landscape & visual designations as identified in the *South Dublin Development Plan 2022-2028* and *Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown Development Plan 2022-2028.*

Table 3.4 Potential for significant effects on designated sites in the potential Zone of Influence

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of October 2026) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
European sites *within* the Dublin Mountains Destination Experience Development Plan Area			
Glenasmole Valley SAC (001209)	▪ Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites) [6210] ▪ Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae) [6410] ▪ Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 10 December 2021), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via demolition and construction, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potentially disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is within the Dublin Mountains DEDP area and there is therefore potential for significant effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	Yes
Wicklow Mountains SAC (002122)	▪ Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae) [3110] ▪ Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160] ▪ Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix* [4010] ▪ European dry heaths [4030] ▪ Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060]	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via demolition and construction, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potentially disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is within the Dublin Mountains DEDP area and there is therefore potential for significant effects on this	Yes

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of October 2026) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	▪ Calaminarian grasslands of the Violetalia calaminariae [6130] ▪ Species-rich Nardus grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe) [6230] ▪ Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130] ▪ Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (Androsacetalia alpinae and Galeopsietalia ladani) [8110] ▪ Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210] ▪ Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220] ▪ Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles [91A0] ▪ *Lutra lutra* (Otter) [1355] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 31 July 2017), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	
Knocksink Wood SAC (000725)	▪ Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220] ▪ Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles [91A0]	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via demolition and construction, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent),	Yes

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of October 2026) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	▪ Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 13 December 2021), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potentially disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is within the Dublin Mountains DEDP area and there is therefore potential for significant effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	
Ballyman Glen SAC (000713)	▪ Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220] ▪ Alkaline fens [7230] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 17 July 2019), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via demolition and construction, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potentially disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is within the Dublin Mountains DEDP area and there is therefore potential for significant effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	**Yes**
Wicklow Mountains SPA (004040)	▪ Merlin (*Falco columbarius*) [A098] ▪ Peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*) [A103] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 16 July 2024) for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via demolition and construction, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potentially	**Yes**

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of October 2026) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is within the Dublin Mountains DEDP area and there is therefore potential for significant effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	
European sites *within* the proposed zone of influence of the Dublin Mountains Destination Experience Development Plan area			
North Dublin Bay SAC (000206)	▪ 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 (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae) [1330] ▪ Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi) [1410] ▪ Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] ▪ Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* (white dunes) [2120] ▪ Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] ▪ Humid dune slacks [2190] ▪ *Petalophyllum ralfsii* (Petalwort) [1395]	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is c. 8.1km to the north of the Plan area, however there is hydrological connection via the River Dodder. Therefore, there is potential for significant effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	**Yes**

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of October 2026) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 06 November 2013) for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.		
Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC (003000)	▪ Reefs [1170] ▪ *Phocoena phocoena* (Harbour Porpoise) [1351] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 07 May 2013), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is c. 1.4 km to the northeast of the Plan area, however there is hydrological connection via the River Dodder. Therefore, there is potential for significant effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	Yes
Howth Head SAC (000202)	▪ Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] ▪ European dry heaths [4030] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 06 December 2016), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites.	No

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of October 2026) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	This Natura 2000 Site is c. 12.3 km to the northeast of the Plan area and there is no hydrological or other connectivity. Therefore, due to the lack of pathways there is no potential for effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	
South Dublin Bay SAC (000210)	▪ 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] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 24 April 2026), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is c. 3.0 km to the north of the Plan area however there is hydrological connection via the River Dodder. Therefore, there is potential for significant effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	Yes
Baldoyle Bay SAC (000199)	▪ Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] ▪ Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] ▪ Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae) [1330]	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites.	No

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of October 2026) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	▪ Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi) [1410] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 19 November 2012), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	This Natura 2000 Site is c. 13.7 km to the northeast of the Plan area and there is no hydrological or other connectivity. Therefore, due to the lack of pathways there is no potential for effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	
Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC (001398)	▪ Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220] ▪ *Vertigo angustior* (Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail) [1014] ▪ *Vertigo moulinsiana* (Desmoulin's Whorl Snail) [1016] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 22 December 2021), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is c. 8.7 km to the north of the Plan area and there is no hydrological or other connectivity. Therefore, due to the lack of pathways there is no potential for effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	No
Red Bog, Kildare SAC (000397)	▪ Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 17 July 2019 for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance	No

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of October 2026) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is c. 5.3 km to the southwest of the Plan area and there is no hydrological or other connectivity. Therefore, due to the lack of pathways there is no potential for effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	
Ireland's Eye SAC (002193)	▪ Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] ▪ Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 27 January 2017) for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is c. 16.6 km to the northeast of the Plan area and there is no hydrological or other connectivity. Therefore, due to the lack of pathways there is no potential for effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	No
Carriggower Bog SAC (000716)	▪ Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 13 December 2019), for each of the listed SCIs, the	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance	No

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of October 2026) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is c. 11.4 km to the south of the Plan area and there is no hydrological or other connectivity. Therefore, due to the lack of pathways there is no potential for effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	
The Murrough Wetlands SAC (002249)	▪ Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] ▪ Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] ▪ Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae) [1330] ▪ Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi) [1410] ▪ Calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the Caricion davallianae [7210] ▪ Alkaline fens [7230] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 22 December 2021), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is c. 11.0 km to the southeast of the Plan area and there is no hydrological or other connectivity. Therefore, due to the lack of pathways there is no potential for effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	No

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of October 2026) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
Glen of the Downs SAC (000719)	▪ Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles [91A0] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 10 December 2020), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is c. 6.2km to the south of the Plan area and there is no hydrological or other connectivity. Therefore, due to the lack of pathways there is no potential for effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	No
Bray Head SAC (000714)	▪ Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] ▪ European dry heaths [4030] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 11 April 2017), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is c. 2.4 km to the southeast of the Plan area and there is no hydrological or other connectivity. Therefore, due to the lack of pathways there is no potential for effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	No

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of October 2026) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
Malahide Estuary SAC (000205)	▪ Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] ▪ *Salicornia* and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] ▪ Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae) [1330] ▪ Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi) [1410] ▪ Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes) [2120] ▪ Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 27 May 2013), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is c. 17.4 km to the north of the Plan area and there is no hydrological or other connectivity. Therefore, due to the lack of pathways there is no potential for effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	No
Ballynafagh Bog SAC (000391)	▪ Active raised bogs [7110] ▪ Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] ▪ Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 10 November 2015), for each of the listed SCIs, the	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites.	No

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of October 2026) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	This Natura 2000 Site is c. 16.1 km to the west of the Plan area and there is no hydrological or other connectivity. Therefore, due to the lack of pathways there is no potential for effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	
Ballynafagh Lake SAC (001387)	▪ Alkaline fens [7230] ▪ *Vertigo moulinsiana* (Desmoulin's Whorl Snail) [1016] ▪ *Euphydryas aurinia* (Marsh Fritillary) [1065] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 10 December 2021), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is c. 18.1 km to the west of the Plan area and there is no hydrological or other connectivity. Therefore, due to the lack of pathways there is no potential for effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	No
Dalkey Islands SPA (004172)	▪ Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*) [A192] ▪ Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) [A193] ▪ Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) [A194] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 29 October 2024), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites.	No

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of October 2026) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	This Natura 2000 Site is c. 3.0 km to the northeast of the Plan area and there is no hydrological or other connectivity. Therefore, due to the lack of pathways there is no potential for effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	
South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (004024)	▪ Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) [A046] ▪ Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*) [A130] ▪ Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*) [A137] ▪ Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) [A141] ▪ Knot (*Calidris canutus*) [A143] ▪ Sanderling (*Calidris alba*) [A144] ▪ Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) [A149] ▪ Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) [A157] ▪ Redshank (*Tringa totanus*) [A162] ▪ Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) [A179] ▪ Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*) [A192] ▪ Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) [A193] ▪ Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) [A194] ▪ Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is c. 3.1 km to the north of the Plan area however there is hydrological connection via the River Dodder. Therefore, there is potential for significant effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	**Yes**

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of October 2026) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 09 March 2015), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.		
North-West Irish Sea SPA (004236)	▪ Red-throated Diver (*Gavia stellata*) [A001] ▪ Great Northern Diver (*Gavia immer*) [A003] ▪ Fulmar (*Fulmarus glacialis*) [A009] ▪ Manx Shearwater (*Puffinus puffinus*) [A013] ▪ Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) [A017] ▪ Shag (*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*) [A018] ▪ Common Scoter (*Melanitta nigra*) [A065] ▪ Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) [A179] ▪ Common Gull (*Larus canus*) [A182] ▪ Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*) [A183] ▪ Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*) [A184] ▪ Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*) [A187] ▪ Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) [A188]	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is c. 8.3 km to the northeast of the Plan area however there is hydrological connection via the River Dodder. Therefore, there is potential for significant effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	**Yes**

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of October 2026) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	▪ Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*) [A192] ▪ Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) [A193] ▪ Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) [A194] ▪ Guillemot (*Uria aalge*) [A199] ▪ Razorbill (*Alca torda*) [A200] ▪ Puffin (*Fratercula arctica*) [A204] ▪ Little Gull (*Hydrocoloeus minutus*) [A862] ▪ Little Tern (*Sternula albifrons*) [A885] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 19 September 2023), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.		
North Bull Island SPA (004006)	▪ Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) [A046] ▪ Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*) [A048] ▪ Teal (*Anas crecca*) [A052] ▪ Pintail (*Anas acuta*) [A054] ▪ Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*) [A130] ▪ Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) [A140]	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is c. 8.3 km to the north of the Plan area however there is hydrological connection via the River Dodder. Therefore, there is potential for significant effects on this site as	Yes

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of October 2026) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	▪ Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) [A141] ▪ Knot (*Calidris canutus*) [A143] ▪ Sanderling (*Calidris alba*) [A144] ▪ Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) [A149] ▪ Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*) [A156] ▪ Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) [A157] ▪ Curlew (*Numenius arquata*) [A160] ▪ Redshank (*Tringa totanus*) [A162] ▪ Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*) [A169] ▪ Black-headed Gull (Chroicocephalus ridibundus) [A179] ▪ Shoveler (Spatula clypeata) [A857] ▪ Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 09 March 2015), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	
Howth Head Coast SPA (004113)	▪ Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) [A188] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 29 October 2024), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance	No

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of October 2026) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is c. 13.5 km to the north of the Plan area and there is no hydrological or other connectivity. Therefore, due to the lack of pathways there is no potential for effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	
Ireland's Eye SPA (004117)	▪ Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) [A017] ▪ Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*) [A184] ▪ Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) [A188] ▪ Guillemot (*Uria aalge*) [A199] ▪ Razorbill (*Alca torda*) [A200] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 12 November 2024), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is c. 16.0 km to the northeast of the Plan area and there is no hydrological or other connectivity. Therefore, due to the lack of pathways there is no potential for effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	No
Baldoyle Bay SPA (004016)	▪ Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) [A046] ▪ Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*) [A048] ▪ Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*) [A137]	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance	No

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of October 2026) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	▪ Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) [A140] ▪ Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) [A141] ▪ Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) [A157] ▪ Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 27 February 2013), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is c. 13.8 km to the north of the Plan area and there is no hydrological or other connectivity. Therefore, due to the lack of pathways there is no potential for effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	
Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA (004063)	▪ Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*) [A043] ▪ Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*) [A183] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 11 June 2024), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is c. 5.2 km to the south of the Plan area and there is no hydrological or other connectivity. Therefore, due to the lack of pathways there is no potential for effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	No

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of October 2026) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
The Murrough SPA (004186)	▪ Red-throated Diver (*Gavia stellata*) [A001] ▪ Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*) [A043] ▪ Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) [A046] ▪ Teal (*Anas crecca*) [A052] ▪ Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) [A179] ▪ Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*) [A184] ▪ Wigeon (*Mareca penelope*) [A855] ▪ Little Tern (*Sternula albifrons*) [A885] ▪ Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 08 October 2024), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is c. 8.9 km to the southeast of the Plan area and there is no hydrological or other connectivity. Therefore, due to the lack of pathways there is no potential for effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	No
Malahide Estuary SPA (004025)	▪ Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*) [A005] ▪ Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) [A046] ▪ Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*) [A048] ▪ Pintail (*Anas acuta*) [A054] ▪ Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*) [A067]	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites.	No

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of October 2026) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	▪ Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*) [A069] ▪ Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*) [A130] ▪ Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) [A140] ▪ Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) [A141] ▪ Knot (*Calidris canutus*) [A143] ▪ Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) [A149] ▪ Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*) [A156] ▪ Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) [A157] ▪ Redshank (*Tringa totanus*) [A162] ▪ Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 16 August 2013), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	This Natura 2000 Site is c. 18.1 km to the north of the Plan area and there is no hydrological or other connectivity. Therefore, due to the lack of pathways there is no potential for effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	
Pollardstown Fen SAC (000396)	▪ Calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the *Caricion davallianae* [7210] ▪ Petrifying springs with tufa formation (*Cratoneurion*) [7220]	Any development or refurbishment works proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP could have the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, via construction works, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water, air and, potential disturbance	No

European Site (Site Code)	Reasons for designation (information correct as of October 2026) (*denotes a priority habitat)	Discussion of Source-Pathway-Receptor Link and potential effects	Likely Significant Effect? (If yes, the site is Screened In)
	▪ Alkaline fens [7230] ▪ *Vertigo geyeri* (Geyer's Whorl Snail) [1013] ▪ *Vertigo angustior* (Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail) [1014] ▪ *Vertigo moulinsiana* (Desmoulin's Whorl Snail) [1016] According to the site-specific Conservation Objectives for the SAC (dated 14 Jan 2022), for each of the listed SCIs, the Conservation Objective is to maintain the favourable conservation condition of the bird species or habitat listed.	due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. This Natura 2000 Site is c. 18.1 km to the north of the Plan area and there is no hydrological or other connectivity. Therefore, due to the lack of pathways there is no potential for effects on this site as a result of the strategic objectives, destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives proposed under the Dublin Mountains DEDP.	

3.5 Screening for Appropriate Assessment - Summary

According to the European Commission Notice C(2018) 7261 (*Managing Natura 2000 sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*) the "*integrity of a site*" relates to the site's conservation objectives. In this case, if the proposed Plan undermines an objective, the Plan will be considered to have a negative impact on a site's integrity. For example, it is possible that a plan or project will adversely affect the site only in a visual sense or only affect habitat types or species other than those listed in Annex I or Annex II. In such cases, the effects do not amount to an adverse effect for the purposes of Article 6(3).

As per the CJEU judgement in C-127/02 (Waddenzee), and C-258/11 (Sweetman) AA is required where a significant effect cannot be excluded on the basis of objective information.

In other words, if, following Screening, there is a possibility of there being a significant effect on a European site, this will generate the need for an appropriate assessment for the purposes of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.

European sites with no connection/pathway to the Dublin Mountains DEDP area can be screened out (Appropriate Assessment Screening) and they are not considered any further in this report. By virtue of their locations, and the presence of potential pathways, of the 31 European sites listed in Table 3.1 there is the possibility of there being a significant effect on a total of 5 no. sites (these are described in Table 3.4) as a result of the implementation of the Dublin Mountains DEDP. This results in a requirement for an appropriate assessment for the purposes of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. The sites screened in are:

- Glenasmole Valley SAC
- Wicklow Mountains SAC
- Knocksink Wood SAC
- Ballyman Glen SAC
- Wicklow Mountains SPA
- North Bull Island SPA
- Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC
- South Dublin Bay SAC
- South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA
- North-West Irish Sea SPA
- North Bull Island SPA

There is potential for significant effects (at least, the potential for significant effects cannot be excluded) as a result of:

- Habitat loss and/or fragmentation.
- Impacts to habitat structure.
- Disturbance to species of conservation concern due to increased visitor numbers.
- Emissions to air.
- Emissions to water/reduction in water quality.

Despite its positive intent there is the possibility that the implementation the Dublin Mountains Destination Experience Development Plan could result in significant effects on 11 no. European sites.

Applying the precautionary principle therefore, and in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is required.

4 Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment

4.1 Introduction

As set out in Section 3.5, the implementation of the Dublin Mountains DEDP has the potential to impact on 5 no. European sites. Given this conclusion, which is based on the Precautionary Principle, it is necessary to undertake Appropriate Assessment.

At this stage it is necessary to determine whether the implementation of the Dublin Mountains DEDP would result in *significant adverse impacts on the integrity of any European site* with respect to the site's structure, function, and/or conservation objectives.

These potential adverse effects may arise either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects.

The Dublin Mountains DEDP is a five-year sustainable tourism plan for the mountains in the northern end of Wicklow National Park in south County Dublin up until the County Wicklow border. The plan aims to identify a range of key initiatives that are designed to raise awareness of the destination, increase the length of stay in the area, expand the range and quality of visitor experiences, strengthen the value of tourism to local communities and protect the quality, character and distinctiveness of the local environment, heritage and culture.

As set out in the preceding sections, there is the potential that the implementation of certain elements of the Dublin Mountains DEDP could lead to impacts on 11 no. European sites within the Plan area. This is particularly the case for actions that will result in construction or other development, increased visitor numbers, and/or their ancillary infrastructure.

Albeit unlikely, there is the possibility of a reduction of habitat area, or a loss of habitat within European sites in the potential Zone of Influence as a result of the implementation of certain actions within the Dublin Mountains DEDP. Any development works, no matter how minor, adjacent to watercourses have the potential to cause habitat loss or a reduction in habitat / water quality, with indirect effects on the European sites themselves. Similarly works within any European sites could lead to fragmentation (breakup) of habitats, resulting in impacts on site integrity or cause degradation to, any habitats associated with any European site.

There is the possibility of disturbance to key species arising as a result of the implementation of certain actions within the Dublin Mountains DEDP. The Qualifying Interests (QIs) and Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of the European sites are sensitive to disturbance from noise, light, vibration and other construction activities including inappropriately timed works, as well as from recreational and amenity activity (human disturbance). Rivers, lakes and coastal sites are prone to contamination risk due to surface water runoff during construction. Any works near or within these sensitive sites could lead to disturbance of these species.

There is the possibility of changes to key indicators of conservation value arising as a result of the implementation of the Dublin Mountains DEDP. This could arise via pollution, siltation or other run-off to watercourses that could ultimately discharge to the European sites. Any pollution-related impacts on the QIs/SCIs of any European site could adversely affect the integrity of the sites.

4.2 Potential impacts from the implementation of the Dublin Mountains DEDP, including in-combinations effects

4.2.1 Is the Dublin Mountains DEDP necessary for the management of European sites?

As set out in the Habitats Directive (Article 6(3)), plans that are directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site do not require Appropriate Assessment. Management in this context means management for nature conservation and the qualifying interests of the European site, specifically the conservation objectives – to maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the habitats and species for which the site has been selected.

While the Dublin Mountains DEDP has been developed with sustainability as core elements its purpose is to deliver and promote enhanced tourism experience within the counties of South Dublin and Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown. Therefore, the Dublin Mountains DEDP is not considered to be directly connected with or necessary to the management of European designated sites.

4.2.2 Are there elements of the Dublin Mountains DEDP with potential to give rise to significant effects on European sites

Elements/actions of the Dublin Mountains DEDP have potential to give rise to significant effects on European sites. Any development of existing and new infrastructure located within the potential zone of influence of any European site has the potential to give rise to impacts on European sites, for example via demolition and construction, habitat loss/replacement (both temporary and permanent), increased risk of pollution of surface water and, potentially, disturbance due to an increase in human activity in the vicinity of European sites. During the operational phase, there is potential for uncertain effects due to the new developments and their ancillary infrastructure and increase in human activity and visitor numbers in the vicinity of European sites.

The Dublin Mountains DEDP, once implemented, is expected to enhance the visitor experience, promote tourism and support economic growth. Despite its positive intent, the Dublin Mountains DEDP has the potential to give rise to effects on European sites within its potential zone of influence under the following scenarios:

- Any Action that could directly or indirectly affect water quality, flow and/or morphology and potentially affect the European sites, protected habitats and species.
- Any Action that could directly or indirectly increase risk of flooding and potentially affect the European sites, protected habitats and species.
- Any Action that could directly or indirectly affect groundwater quality or supply and potentially affect the European sites, protected habitats and species.
- Any Action that could directly or indirectly affect air quality due to emissions and affect the European sites, protected habitats and species.
- Any risk of habitat loss, fragmentation or degradation to European sites or network supporting European sites, protected habitats and species, including via increased visitor numbers and human activity.
- Any potential for a risk of direct or indirect disturbance to European site habitats and/or species, e.g. development at coastal sites /along rivers/within bogs, noise disturbance due to construction, light pollution etc.

- Any Action that could risk a reduction in ecological connectivity between European sites and/or the ecological networks supporting them.

4.2.3 Appraisal of the Strategic Objectives of the Dublin Mountains Destination Experience Development Plan

The finding of the environmental assessment of the overall Vision and Strategic Objectives of the Dublin Mountains DEDP is presented in Table 4.1

Table 4.1 Appraisal of the Strategic Objectives of the Dublin Mountains DEDP

Strategic Objectives	Potential to negatively impact on any of the European sites within the Zone of Influence?	Mitigation Required? Yes / No
Vision The vision for the Dublin Mountains DEDP is as follows: *"The Dublin Mountains invite visitors to experience Dublin from above, where spectacular views, rich heritage, signature trails and unforgettable outdoor adventures combine to offer a city break with a difference, revealing a side of Dublin found nowhere else.* *As a distinctive part of Dublin's City, Coast and Mountains proposition, the Dublin Mountains broaden the appeal of the destination, encouraging visitors to stay longer, explore further, connect with nature and discover experiences beyond the traditional city break. Easy access and stronger connections between Dublin City, local communities and the mountains benefit residents and visitors alike, making it easier to experience, access and enjoy more of the destination, while a growing range of unique accommodation encourages deeper engagement with its landscapes and communities.* *Through a shared commitment to stewardship, the natural, cultural and archaeological assets that make the Dublin Mountains unique are protected, celebrated and enhanced for future generations."*	The vision statement sets an overall context for destination experience and tourism in the Dublin Mountains area. This will support and underpin the local tourism economy, industry and associated workers. The vision statement encourages the growth of accommodation and tourism offerings in the region, which have the potential to give rise to uncertain or negative impacts on European Sites within the Zone of Influence.	Yes

Strategic Objectives	Potential to negatively impact on any of the European sites within the Zone of Influence?	Mitigation Required? Yes / No
Strategic Objective 1 – Dublin Mountains Destination Establish the Dublin Mountains as a Leading Outdoor Destination within Dublin's City, Coast and Mountains Proposition	This Strategic Objective aims to secure the reputation of the Dublin Mountains for outdoor recreation and tourism, but does not propose any projects. As such, no environmental impacts are anticipated. However, increased visitor number may have adverse impacts on sensitive habitats and species in European sites.	Yes
Strategic Objective 2 – Inspiring Dublin Mountains Experiences Develop the Dublin Mountains experience base through product investment that delivers memorable outdoor experiences and epic views over the city and coast.	This objective is focused on the visitor experience in the Dublin mountains but does not propose any projects. As such, no environmental impacts are anticipated.	No
Strategic Objective 3 – Dublin Mountains Tourism Businesses Support new and existing tourism businesses in the development of experiences that inspire visitors to explore the Dublin Mountains.	This objective will result in positive effects on population and human health, and material assets. However, in the absence of mitigation, both the construction and operation of new experiences could have the potential to result in uncertain environmental effect for biodiversity and Natura 2000 Sites. Increased tourism in these sensitive locations would also require provision of welfare facilities, wastewater and waste management.	Yes
Strategic Objective 4 – Dublin Mountains Stewardship & Environment Implement a sustainable tourism development approach that is compatible with the conservation of the Dublin Mountains diverse natural, heritage, archaeological and cultural resources.	This objective would result in positive effects for tourism industry and for the environmental objectives.	No

4.2.4 Appraisal of the Dublin Mountains Destination & Experience Development Plan Action Plan

The Dublin Mountains DEDP includes a list of destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives which will be delivered to support the above strategic objectives of the DEDP. The environmental assessment of the effects of the destination catalysts and destination enabling initiatives is detailed in **Table 4.2** below.

There are 19no. destination catalysts initiatives and 22no. supporting projects and in total. Projects where there is a requirement for development of existing and new infrastructure might give rise to uncertain effects on European sites within the potential Zone of Influence that would, if unmitigated, have the potential to arise from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure.

Where potential negative or uncertain effects on European sites have been identified appropriate mitigation has been provided. See Section 4.4 of this Report.

Table 4.2 Appraisal of the Dublin Mountains DEDP Action Plan

No.	Project	Action	Potential to negatively impact on any of the European sites within the Zone of Influence?	Mitigation Required Yes / No.
Strategic Objective 1 - Dublin Mountains Destination				
1	**Objective 1: Establish the Dublin Mountains as a Leading Outdoor Destination within Dublin's City, Coast and Mountains Proposition**		These catalyst projects will contribute to improving the access to the Dublin Mountains through transport, connectivity and accommodation. While some of the projects do not propose any new development, others support further trails, active travel networks, expanded parking or additional accommodation, where feasible. However, in the absence of mitigation, upgrades to transport, accommodation and other tourist facilities may have uncertain or negative effects on other environmental SEOs from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. These types of infrastructure have potential to be located in ecologically and visually sensitive areas and could also result in increased visitor numbers and pressure in the vicinity of European sites. These works can also potentially result in the spread of invasive species.	Yes
Catalyst Projects				
1.1	**Public Transport & Visitor Mobility**	Improve public transport and visitor mobility throughout the Dublin Mountains, strengthening connectivity between visitor gateway hubs, the Core Experience Zone and key visitor experiences		
1.2	**Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan**	Examine the creation and funding of a new route serviced by a schedule of each way journeys between Dundrum and Tallaght via Glencullen, Tibradden, and the Hell Fire Club under the Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan.		
1.3	**Sustainable Access & Cycling Infrastructure**	Support the development of cycling infrastructure, e-bike connectivity and active travel initiatives that strengthen access to the Dublin Mountains and improve visitor movement throughout the destination.		
1.4	**Car Parking & Visitor Facilities**	Enhance visitor facilities and assess opportunities to improve or extend visitor parking capacity where appropriate and subject to planning requirements, while supporting visitor management and sustainable access objectives.		
1.5	**Active Travel Connectivity**	Leverage existing and planned active travel investment to strengthen connections between visitor gateway hubs, accommodation locations, trailheads, visitor attractions and key outdoor recreation experiences.		
1.6	**Low-impact Outdoor Accommodation**	Continue to monitor accommodation supply and pipeline activity and identify opportunities for appropriate small-scale, low-impact outdoor accommodation within or adjoining the Dublin Mountains Core Experience Zone,		

No.	Project	Action	Potential to negatively impact on any of the European sites within the Zone of Influence?	Mitigation Required Yes / No.
		where proposals align with the character, environmental sensitivities and visitor experience proposition of the destination.		
1.7	**Farm Diversification and Rural Enterprise Accommodation**	Work with local authorities, rural enterprises, landowners and relevant support bodies to explore farm diversification, agritourism and small-scale accommodation opportunities that can support the Dublin Mountains visitor proposition where feasible.		
Supporting Projects			These actions will enhance visitor experience and promote tourism resulting in overall positive on population and human health objectives. However, in the absence of mitigation these developments may have uncertain or negative effects on other environmental SEOs from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. These types of infrastructure have potential to be located in ecologically and visually sensitive areas adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams or along the coast and could also result in increased visitor numbers and pressure in the vicinity of European sites. These works can also potentially result in the spread of invasive species.	Yes
1.8	**Visitor Gateway Hub Development**	Develop and deliver projects that strengthen the role of Tallaght, Dundrum, Kilternan and Shankill as visitor gateway hubs through enhanced visitor services, accommodation, wayfinding, visitor orientation, destination connectivity and visitor experiences.		
1.9	**Destination Narrative**	Establish the Dublin Mountains as a recognised outdoor destination within Dublin's City, Coast and Mountains proposition through a shared destination position, stakeholder adoption of a common narrative and coordinated destination storytelling that increases awareness among priority visitor markets.		
1.10	**Coast to Mountains Activity Corridor**	Strengthen connectivity between the Dublin Coast, Dublin Mountains and Wicklow Mountains through linked visitor experiences, outdoor recreation opportunities and collaborative destination development initiatives.		
Strategic Objective 2 – *Inspiring Dublin Mountains Experiences*				
2	**Objective 2: Re-imagine how the Dublin Mountains story is told through product investment that delivers memorable outdoor experiences and epic views over the city and coast**		The development of a new visitor centre and improves visitor signage, viewpoints and other facilities will enhance the visitor experience and	Yes
Catalyst Projects				

No.	Project	Action	Potential to negatively impact on any of the European sites within the Zone of Influence?	Mitigation Required Yes / No.
2.1	**Core Experience Zone Development**	Enhance connectivity, wayfinding, visitor orientation, interpretation and visitor experiences within the Core Experience Zone through the development of linked trails, looped walks, viewpoints, recreation facilities and heritage experiences.	promote tourism resulting in overall positive on population and human health objectives. However, in the absence of mitigation, such developments may have uncertain or negative effects on other environmental SEOs from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. These types of infrastructure have potential to be located in ecologically and visually sensitive areas adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams or along the coast and could also result in increased visitor numbers and pressure in the vicinity of European sites. These works can also potentially result in the spread of invasive species.	
2.2	**Dublin Mountains Way Enhancement**	Enhance the Dublin Mountains Way through targeted improvements to trail infrastructure, wayfinding, interpretation, accessibility and connections with visitor experiences, communities and neighbouring outdoor recreation destinations.		
2.3	**Visitor Centre Development**	Undertake the phased delivery of the Dublin Mountains Visitor Centre Project.		
2.4	**Visitor Centre Interpretation & Storytelling**	Develop interpretation, storytelling and educational experiences that enhance visitor understanding of the natural, cultural and heritage significance of the Dublin Mountains		
2.5	**Monumental Mountain Views - Elevated Viewing Points**	Develop a network of landmark viewpoints that enhance visitor engagement with the landscapes, heritage and stories of the Dublin Mountains.		
2.6	**Mountain Biking Destination Experience**	Enhance the Dublin Mountains mountain biking experience through investment in trails, visitor facilities, wayfinding, destination connectivity and supporting visitor experiences.		
2.7	**Dublin & Wicklow Mountain Biking Proposition**	Strengthen linkages between the Dublin and Wicklow Mountains to create a compelling mountain biking proposition of scale for domestic and international visitors.		
2.8	**Trail Maintenance Programme**	Enhance the quality, sustainability and accessibility of the mountain biking experience through coordinated trail maintenance, wayfinding and visitor infrastructure improvements.		
Supporting Projects				Yes

No.	Project	Action	Potential to negatively impact on any of the European sites within the Zone of Influence?	Mitigation Required Yes / No.
2.9	**Cable Car Feasibility Study**	Undertake a feasibility study for the development of a cable car style visitor attraction in the Dublin Mountains.	The development of a new visitor amenities and opportunities will enhance the visitor experience and promote tourism resulting in overall positive on population and human health objectives. However, in the absence of mitigation, such developments may have uncertain or negative effects on other environmental SEOs from both the construction and operation of such developments and/or their ancillary infrastructure. These types of infrastructure have potential to be located in ecologically and visually sensitive areas adjacent to the banks of rivers and streams or along the coast and could also result in increased visitor numbers and pressure in the vicinity of European sites. These works can also potentially result in the spread of invasive species.	
2.10	**Accessible Visitor Experiences**	Identify and implement opportunities to improve the accessibility and inclusivity of visitor experiences across the Dublin Mountains, including trails, viewpoints, interpretation, visitor facilities and recreation experiences, enabling a wider range of visitors to engage with the destination.		
2.11	**Dodder Greenway**	Deliver the Dodder Greenway as a strategic recreational and active travel corridor that enhances access to the Dublin Mountains and strengthens connectivity between visitor experiences, communities and gateway hubs across the wider region.		
2.12	**Old Bawn to Ballyboden Greenway**	Complete Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the Old Bawn to Ballyboden Greenway and strengthen its connections with the Dublin Mountains through interpretation and wayfinding.		
2.13	**Dún Laoghaire Rathdown Active Travel Proposal 2020 (Planned Mobility Hub)**	Support the Mountains to Metal, Sea to Mountains and Park to Park proposed Active Travel cycling routes as part of the DLR Active Travel Proposal.		
2.14	**Bohernabreena Reservoir**	Identify and progress opportunities to enhance recreation, interpretation and visitor facilities at Bohernabreena Reservoir.		
2.15	**Kiltipper Park**	Identify and progress opportunities to enhance visitor engagement, recreation and interpretation opportunities.		
2.16	**Innovative Visitor Experience Development**	Explore opportunities for innovative visitor experiences and infrastructure that enhance the appeal, accessibility and distinctiveness of the Dublin Mountains destination.		
Strategic Objective 3 – *Dublin Mountains Tourism Businesses*				

No.	Project	Action	Potential to negatively impact on any of the European sites within the Zone of Influence?	Mitigation Required Yes / No.
3	**Objective 3: Support new and existing tourism businesses in the development of experiences that inspire visitors to explore the Dublin Mountains**		No negative or uncertain environmental effects on European Sites arise and therefore, mitigation is not required	**No**
Catalyst Projects				
3.1	**Experience Development**	Deliver a programme to develop, package and enhance visitor experiences aligned with the Dublin Mountains destination proposition, with a focus on increasing the number of saleable experiences, improving visitor dispersal and increasing visitor spend within the destination.		
3.2	**Digital Capability & Distribution Programme**	Strengthen the digital, social commerce, online booking and AI-driven search capabilities of tourism businesses and visitor experiences across the destination.		
3.3	**Demand Generation & Market Readiness Programme**	Develop the marketing, sales and distribution capabilities of tourism businesses to increase B2C and B2B opportunities, improve market readiness and expand market reach.		
Supporting Projects			No negative or uncertain environmental effects on European Sites arise and therefore, mitigation is not required	**No**
3.4	**Dublin Mountains Tourism Network**	Establish and support the development of the Dublin Mountains Tourism Network as the focal point for industry collaboration, capability building, and destination-led initiatives.		
3.5	**Alignment of Capability Building**	Work with the ETB, LEADER and LEO to align all capability building (training, mentoring and financial supports) with opportunities identified in the Dublin Mountains DEDP.		
3.6	**Food, Agritourism & Producer Experiences**	Support the development of food tourism, agritourism and producer-led visitor experiences that strengthen the distinctiveness of the Dublin Mountains visitor proposition.		
3.7	**Evening Time & Special Interest Experiences**	Develop market-ready evening-time and special interest experiences, including wellness, heritage, nature-based and Dublin Skies experiences.		

No.	Project	Action	Potential to negatively impact on any of the European sites within the Zone of Influence?	Mitigation Required Yes / No.
3.8	**Events Programme Development**	Establish a working group and implement a coordinated events programme for the Dublin Mountains, including enhancement of existing festivals, development of signature participation events and opportunities to leverage major event infrastructure and venues within the wider destination.		
Strategic Objective 4 – *Dublin Mountains Stewardship & Environment*				
4	**OBJECTIVE 4: Implement a sustainable tourism development approach for the Dublin Mountains that is compatible with the conservation of the area's diverse natural, heritage, archaeological and cultural resources**		No negative or uncertain environmental effects on European Sites arise and therefore, mitigation is not required	**No**
Catalyst Projects				
4.1	**Stewardship Programme**	Develop and implement a coordinated stewardship programme for the Dublin Mountains, including visitor management assessments at priority locations, visitor monitoring and collaborative initiatives that support the sustainable management of the destination.		
Supporting Projects			No negative or uncertain environmental effects on European Sites arise and therefore, mitigation is not required	**No**
4.2	**Responsible Recreation**	Promote responsible recreation, Leave No Trace principles and visitor awareness initiatives that encourage positive visitor behaviour and protect the landscapes, trails, forests and heritage assets of the Dublin Mountains.		
4.3	**Biodiversity & Landscape Conservation**	Progress the implementation of the Dublin Mountains Integrated Ecological Management Plan Strategy (IEMPS) and associated initiatives to protect and enhance biodiversity, habitat quality, landscape character and environmental resilience, ensuring recreation and tourism growth is balanced with conservation objectives.		
4.4	**Heritage Conservation & Interpretation**	Protect, conserve and improve engagement with the archaeological, cultural and built heritage assets of the Dublin Mountains through conservation, interpretation and		

No.	Project	Action	Potential to negatively impact on any of the European sites within the Zone of Influence?	Mitigation Required Yes / No.
		storytelling initiatives, including the Dublin Mountains Visitor Centre, helping visitors better understand the landscapes, places and stories that define the destination.		
4.5	**Sustainable Tourism & Climate Action**	Increase participation in sustainability, climate action and environmental certification programmes, encouraging tourism businesses to adopt more sustainable approaches to energy, water, waste and resource management.		
4.6	**Sustainable Access & Visitor Mobility**	Promote sustainable transport, active travel and environmentally responsible visitor movement throughout the destination, reducing dependence on private vehicles and supporting wider visitor management objectives.		
4.7	**Sustainable Infrastructure & Resource Management**	Work with key stakeholders to evaluate environmental and visitor infrastructure requirements, including water, wastewater, waste management, transport and accommodation capacity, ensuring tourism growth is supported in a sustainable manner.		

4.2.5 Direct, indirect or secondary effects?

None of the Actions of the Dublin Mountains DEDP have any resource requirements from any European site as a result of any of the actions contained therein.

Any pollution could adversely affect the habitats and species listed as qualifying interests in any of the European sites, many of which rely on good water quality. Also, during construction works there is potential for an increase in run-off, for example due to compaction of the soil which will in turn reduce the infiltration capacity and increase the rate and volume of surface water run-off. This can increase surface water run-off and sediment loading which has potential to impact the local drainage and in turn on the European sites.

In addition to the habitats and species associated with the European sites, bird species may be sensitive to disturbances arising as a result of any proposed development. Construction works have the potential for indirect impacts on the Natura 2000 sites and their qualifying features of interest. Potential impacts include habitat degradation as well as disturbance to habitats, species and ecosystem dynamics due to noise, vibration, air quality, and disturbance due to human activities. In addition there is a potential risk to flora and fauna arising from dust deposition, which in extreme cases can inhibit photosynthesis in plants and can increase turbidity in watercourses.

During the operational phase, there is potential for uncertain effects due to any new development and its ancillary infrastructure and increase in human activity and visitor numbers in the vicinity of European sites.

4.2.6 In-combination / Cumulative effects with other plans and programmes

It is a requirement of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive that when considering whether a plan or project will adversely affect the integrity of a European site the assessment must take into account in-combination effects with other current or reasonably foreseeable plans and projects.

Article 6(3) requires plans and projects to be considered both individually and in-combination with other plans or projects. Where any effect arising from the plan or project is identified, even one that is perceived as minor and not likely to affect the integrity of a European site alone, it must be considered 'in-combination' with the effects arising from other plans or projects..

The Actions listed within the Dublin Mountains DEDP will be required to comply with the relevant international, national and regional policies, plans and programmes and also undertaken individual environmental assessments for Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and any other relevant processes as appropriate.

The Dublin Mountains DEDP could have a relationship with other plans and programmes. However, these plans and programmes will also been subject to environmental assessment, including SEA and AA, for the purpose of preventing and mitigating potential negative environmental effects. Table 4.3 lists the relevant plans and programmes that have potential for cumulative effects with the Dublin Mountains DEDP.

The assessment of cumulative effects above focused on national, regional and local plans, programmes, strategy and policy documents that have the potential to affect the same receiving environment that could be affected by the Dublin Mountains DEDP.

The South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028 and Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028 set out policies and objectives for land use, settlement strategy, sustainable development, transport, infrastructure, environmental protection, and management, cultural heritage, climate change, etc. for the counties. Other higher-level international, national and regional plans are integrated within the County Development Plans and have been assessed as such. The Dublin Mountains DEDP will comply with the provisions set within the relevant County Development Plans which themselves have been subject to standalone environmental assessment (SEA, AA, etc.).

The assessment of cumulative effects concludes that the implementation of the Dublin Mountains DEDP will not result in direct, indirect or cumulative impacts which would have the potential to adversely affect the environment. Indeed the implementation of the Dublin Mountains DEDP has the potential for positive cumulative interactions in delivering on policies and objectives of higher level plans in relation to increased economic activity and employment and greater appreciation and understanding or natural heritage, cultural heritage and landscape.

Table 4.2 Potential Cumulative Effects with other Plans and Programmes

Plan, Programme etc.	Potential Cumulative effect	Likely Cumulative Effect
National Planning Framework (NPF) First Revision, April 2025 National Development Plan (NDP) 2021-2030 as revised by the NDP Review 2025 (*As part of Project Ireland 2040 the National Development Plan sets out the Government's over-arching investment strategy and budget for the period 2021-2030*)	The SEA and AA processes carried out during the preparation of the National Planning Framework have ensured that the potential significant environmental impacts associated with implementation of the plan have been identified and that these impacts have been given appropriate consideration.	No
Eastern and Midland Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019-2031 (currently under review)	The SEA and AA processes carried out during the preparation of the RSES have ensured that the potential significant environmental impacts associated with implementation of the RSES have been identified and that these impacts have been given appropriate consideration.	No
National CFRAMS Programme Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Study	Catchment-based Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Studies and their product – Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs) – are at the core of national policy for flood risk management and the strategy for its implementation. These studies are required by The Floods Directive [2007/60/EC], which is being implemented in Ireland through the European Communities (Assessment and Management of Flood Risks) Regulations 2010 [S.I.122/2010]. Each FRMP is accompanied by an associated SEA Environmental Report and Natura Impact Statement. The SEA and AA processes carried out during the preparation of the FRMP have	No

Plan, Programme etc.	Potential Cumulative effect	Likely Cumulative Effect
	ensured that the potential significant environmental impacts associated with implementation of the FRMP have been identified and that these impacts have been given appropriate consideration.	
4th National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030	The Biodiversity Action notes the requirements and purposes of AA and SEA and the vision of the plan to conserve and restored for the benefit of all sectors of society.	No
National Sustainable Mobility Policy (2022)	The policy sets a strategic framework to 2030 for active travel and public transport to support Ireland's overall requirement to achieve a 51% reduction in carbon emissions by the end of this decade. The projects which will be implemented as a result of this national policy will be subject to their individual environmental impact assessment and appropriate assessment processes (as appropriate) and hence there would be no potential adverse effects on the overall receiving environment.	No
River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) for Ireland 2022-2027	The SEA and AA processes carried out during the preparation of the RBMP have ensured that the potential significant environmental impacts associated with implementation of the Plan have been identified and that these impacts have been given appropriate consideration.	No
County Development Plans for counties adjoining the study area: (Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029, Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028, Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028, and Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029)	The County Development Plan (CDP) provides the principal planning strategy document for the development of a local authority area over the statutory time period of the plan. Each of the CDP with the Zone of Influence of the study area has been subject to SEA and AA processes to ensure that the potential significant environmental impacts associated with implementation of the Plan have been identified and that these impacts have been given appropriate consideration.	No
Regional Tourism Development Strategies 2023-2027 – Failte Ireland's Dublin Destination and Experience Development Plans.	The SEA and AA processes carried out during the preparation of the Strategy have ensured that the potential significant environmental impacts associated with implementation of the Strategy have been identified and that these impacts have been given appropriate consideration.	No

4.3 Conservation objectives, threats and vulnerabilities of the European Sites

A key aim of the Habitats Directive is to '*maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest*'. Site-specific conservation objectives aim to define favourable conservation condition for particular habitats or species within a European site.

The integrity of a site is the coherence of its ecological structure and function, across its whole area, which enables it to sustain the habitat, complex of habitats and/or the levels of populations of the species for which it was classified.

Site specific conservation objectives for each of the 11 European sites under appraisal in the NIS have been published by NPWS. For every SAC the conservation objectives are to maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of each of the Qualifying Interests (habitats), as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.

For every SPA the conservation objectives are to maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of each of the Special Conservation Interests (the bird species and the wetland habitat), as defined by the range of attributes and targets set out.

4.4 Mitigation measures

The findings set out in Section 4.2 of this Natura Impact Statement confirm that, if unmitigated, a number of the actions of the Dublin Mountains DEDP have potential for adverse effects on the integrity of a total of 5 no. European sites.

This Plan sits at the lower level of the hierarchy and must comply with relevant higher-level strategic actions / plans. These documents include plans and programmes, which have also been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant.

The projects included in this Plan will have to comply, as relevant, with the various provisions of legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework, of which this Plan is not part and does not contribute towards. The Plan includes requirements for environmental protection and management including the ones set out in the the ***Regional Tourism Development Strategies 2023-2027*** especially the ***Dublin Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023-2027***. As stated in the Dublin Mountains DEDP these include:

- Infrastructure Management - With respect to infrastructure (including drinking water, wastewater, surface water, waste and transport) consideration must be given to the available capacity and the potential impact on existing infrastructure, as well as the potential environmental effects arising from the provision of new infrastructure and / or from a likely increase in tourism-related pressures. Any such environmental effects will be appropriately mitigated. The promotion of developing visitor friendly infrastructure where it is required is encouraged.
- Visitor Management - Those receiving funding will be requested to manage any increase in visitor numbers and/or any change in visitor behaviour in order to avoid significant effects including loss of habitat and disturbance, including ensuring that new projects are located at a suitable setback from ecological sensitivities.
  Research by Fáilte Ireland has shown improved environmental outcomes (including improved attainment of conservation objectives) in areas operating appropriate visitor management strategies. Visitor management strategies will be required for proposed plans, programmes and projects that are to receive funding as relevant and appropriate.
- Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services - Those receiving funding shall contribute towards the maintenance of existing green infrastructure and its ecosystem services, taking into account the output of the Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystem Services project being undertaken by the NPWS. Proposals for the development of any green infrastructure should demonstrate the

synergies that can be achieved with regard to the: provision of open space amenities; sustainable management of water; the enhancement, protection and management of biodiversity; protection of cultural heritage; and protection of landscape sensitivities.

The Plan's mitigation measures are achieved through the detailed environmental protective policies and objectives as set out in the South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028 and Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028. The Development Plans provides for sustainable planning and management control of all development in the study area– including the delivery of Destination & Experience Development Plans through continued collaboration with Fáilte Ireland.

Proposals for development within the Dublin Mountains DEDP area must comply as appropriate with the relevant provisions included within the South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028 and Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028. Given that the Dublin Mountains DEDP sits within and at a lower level in the planning hierarchy, the measures contained within the Development Plans, and in their Natura Impact Report (NIR), SEA Environmental Report / SEA Statement and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) are applicable to the Dublin Mountains DEDP.

Therefore, the key environmental protection measures included in the ***South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028*** and ***Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028*** provide for appropriate and detailed mitigation of potential uncertain environmental effects of the Dublin Mountains DEDP. These measures include the following selected policies / objectives:

South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028 protective policies/ objectives are as follows:

- ***Policy NCBH2****: Protect, conserve, and enhance the County's biodiversity and ecological connectivity having regard to national and EU legislation and Strategies.*
- ***NCBH2 Objective 2:*** *To ensure the protection of designated sites in compliance with relevant EU Directives and applicable national legislation.*
- ***NCBH2 Objective 3:*** *To protect and conserve the natural heritage of the County, and to conserve and manage EU and nationally designated sites and non-designated locally important areas which act as 'stepping stones' for the purposes of green infrastructure and Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.*
- ***Policy NCBH3:*** *Conserve and protect Natura 2000 sites and achieve and maintain favourable conservation status for habitats and species that are considered to be at risk through the protection of the Natura 2000 network from any plans or projects that are likely to have a significant effect on their coherence or integrity.*
- ***Policy NCBH4:*** *Protect the ecological, visual, recreational, environmental and amenity value of the County's proposed Natural Heritage Areas and associated habitats and species.*
- ***NCBH4 Objective 1:*** *To ensure that any proposal for development within or adjacent to a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) is designed and sited to minimise its impact on the biodiversity, ecological, geological and landscape value of the pNHA particularly plant and animal species listed under the Wildlife Acts and the Habitats and Birds Directive including their habitats.*
- ***Policy NCBH5:*** *Protect and promote the conservation of biodiversity outside of designated areas and ensure that species and habitats that are protected under the Wildlife Acts 1976 to 2018, the Birds Directive 1979 and the Habitats Directive 1992, the Flora (Protection) Order 2015, and wildlife corridors are adequately protected.*
- ***NCBH6 Objective 5:*** *To ensure that any development above the 350-metre contour in the Dublin Mountains will seek to protect the open natural character of mountain heath, gorselands and mountain bogs.*

- ***NCBH10 Objective 1:*** *To ensure that development proposals do not lead to the spread or introduction of invasive species. If developments are proposed on sites where invasive species are or were previously present, applicants should submit a control and management programme with measures to prevent, control and / or eradicate the particular invasive species as part of the planning process and to comply with the provisions of the European Communities Birds and Habitats Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 / 2011).*
- ***NCBH11 Objective 3:*** *To protect and retain existing trees, hedgerows, and woodlands which are of amenity and / or biodiversity and / or carbon sequestration value and / or contribute to landscape character and ensure that proper provision is made for their protection and management taking into account Living with Trees: South Dublin County Council's Tree Management Policy (2015-2020) or any superseding document and to ensure that where retention is not possible that a high value biodiversity provision is secured as part of the phasing of any development to protect the amenity of the area.*

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028 protective policies/ objectives are as follows:

- ***PO GIB18:*** *It is a Policy Objective to protect and conserve the environment including, in particular, the natural heritage of the County and to conserve and manage Nationally and Internationally important and EU designated sites - such as Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservations (SACs), proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) and Ramsar sites (wetlands) - as well as non-designated areas of high nature conservation value known as locally important areas which also serve as 'Stepping Stones' for the purposes of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.*
- ***PO GIB19:*** *It is a Policy Objective to ensure the protection of natural heritage and biodiversity, including European Sites that form part of the Natura 2000 network, in accordance with relevant EU Environmental Directives and applicable National Legislation, Policies, Plans and Guidelines.*
- ***PO GIB20:*** *It is a Policy Objective to support the provisions of the forthcoming DLR County Biodiversity Action Plan, 2021-2025.*
- ***PO GIB21:*** *It is a Policy Objective to protect and preserve areas designated as proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, and Special Protection Areas. It is Council policy to promote the maintenance and as appropriate, delivery of 'favourable' conservation status of habitats and species within these areas.*
- ***PO GIB22****: It is a Policy Objective to protect and promote the conservation of biodiversity in areas of natural heritage importance outside Designated Areas and to ensure that notable sites, habitats and features of biodiversity importance - including species protected under the Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2000, the Birds Directive 1979, the Habitats Directive 1992, Birds and Habitats Regulations 2011, Flora (Protection) Order, 2015, Annex I habitats, local important areas, wildlife corridors and rare species - are adequately protected. Ecological assessments will be carried out for all developments in areas that support, or have potential to support, features of biodiversity importance or rare and protected species and appropriate mitigation/avoidance measures will be implemented. In implementing this policy, regard shall be had to the Ecological Network, including the forthcoming DLR Wildlife Corridor Plan, and the recommendations and objectives of the Green City Guidelines (2008) and 'Ecological Guidance Notes for Local Authorities and Developers' (Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Version 2014).*
- ***PO GIB23:*** *It is a Policy Objective to protect the Ecological Network which will be integrated into the updated Green Infrastructure Strategy and will align with the DLR County Biodiversity Action Plan.*

Creating this network throughout the County will also improve the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network in accordance with Article 10 of the Habitats Directive. The network will also include non-designated sites.

4.5 Summary and Conclusion

This Natura Impact Statement has considered the potential impacts of the implementation of the Dublin Mountains Destination & Experience Development Plan on the integrity of the relevant European sites.

This report concludes on the best scientific evidence and in view of the conservation objectives of the relevant European sites that, provided the mitigation measures set out in Section 4.4 are implemented, the Dublin Mountains DEDP will not adversely affect the integrity of any European site, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, and that no reasonable scientific doubt remains as to the absence of such effects.

5 References

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AA Screening Determination

further to the main AA Natura Impact Statement

under the
European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 (as amended) for the
Draft Dublin Mountains Destination and Experience Development Plan

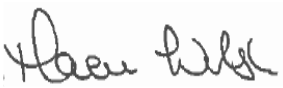
Appropriate Assessment (AA) screening

This ancillary determination is ancillary to both:

- Fáilte Ireland's AA Natura Impact Statement; and
- Fáilte Ireland's AA determination that is made in advance of finalisation of the Dublin Mountains Destination and Experience Development Plan.

In making the determination that AA is required, the information on the potential effects on European Sites arising from the Dublin Mountain Destination and Experience Development Plan is taken into account (this information is reproduced in the AA Natura Impact Statement).

That information has been carefully considered and its reasoning and conclusion agreed with and adopted – allowing the AA Natura Impact Statement to conclude at the end of Section 3 "Screening for Appropriate Assessment" of the Natura Impact Statement that Stage 2 AA is required. It has been determined that the Dublin Mountains Destination and Experience Development Plan may have effects on 11no. European Sites - therefore, Stage 2 AA (including the preparation of the Natura Impact Statement) is required for the Plan (see Natura Impact Statement subsection 3.4 "AA Screening Conclusion").

Signed on behalf of Fáilte Ireland:  **Dated: October 2026**