

Waste Soils Recovery Facility, Midleton, Co. Cork

Screening for Appropriate Assessment





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1 INTRODUCTION

RPS has been commissioned by Roadstone Limited to conduct a screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) for a proposed waste soils recovery facility at a site referred to as Midleton Quarry, located south east of Midleton, Co. Cork as can be seen in **Figure 1.1** below

This report comprises information in support of screening for AA in line with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora; the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2018; and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477/2011).

1.1 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

The Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, better known as “The Habitats Directive”, provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. Articles 3 to 9 of the Directive provide the legislative means to protect habitats and species of Community interest through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of sites known as Natura 2000.

The Habitats Directive has been transposed into Irish law by Part XAB of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 - 2018 and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477/2011) as amended.

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive establish the requirement for AA and set out the decision-making principles for the need for AA for plans and projects likely to impact on or to adversely affect the integrity of European sites.

Article 6(3) states:

Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the [Natura 2000] site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subjected to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.

Article 6(4) states:-

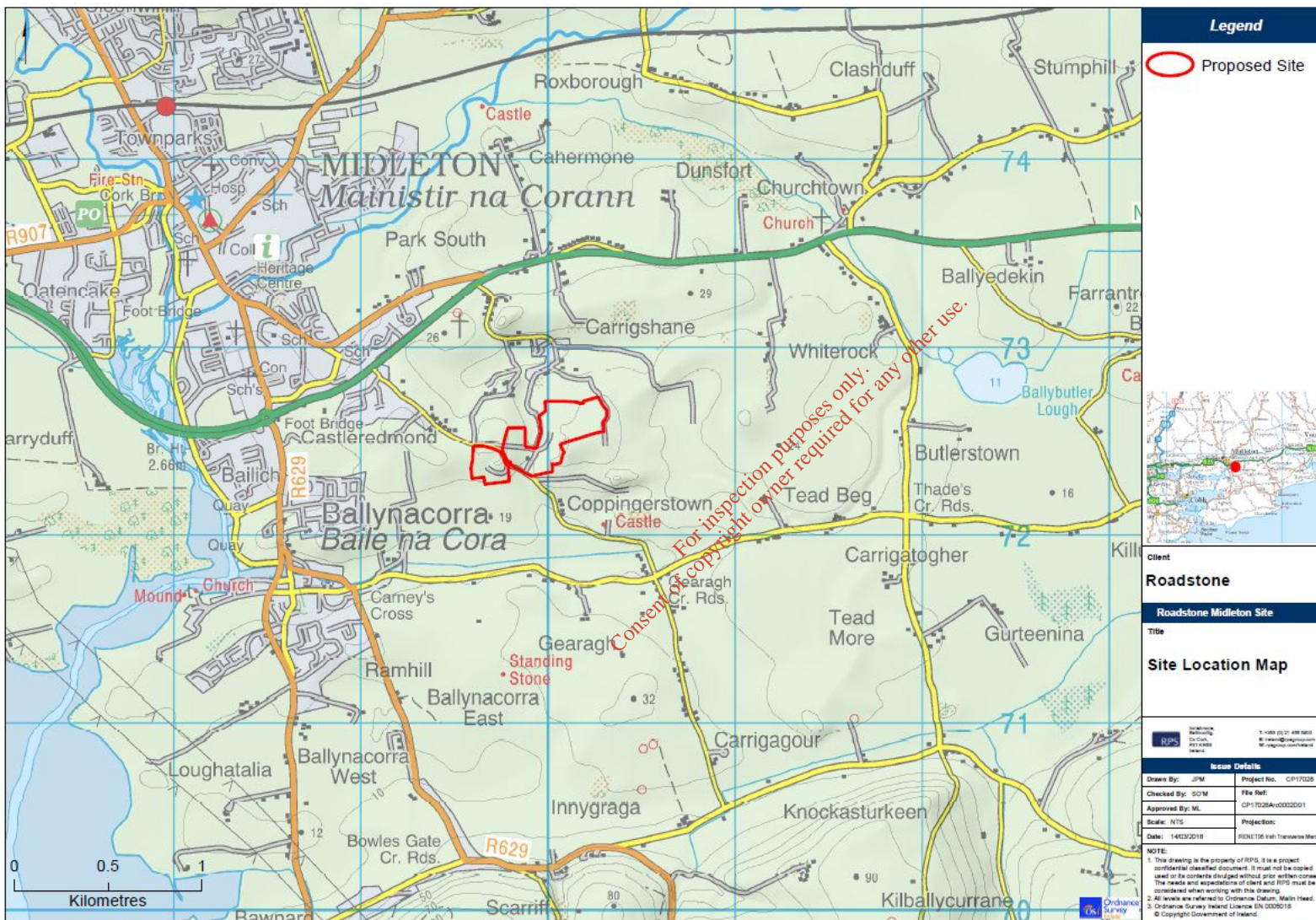
If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the [Natura 2000] site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature, Member States shall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

Natura 2000 sites are defined under the Habitats Directive (Article 3) as a coherent European ecological network of special areas of conservation, composed of sites hosting the natural habitat types listed in Annex I or habitats of the species listed in Annex II. This network shall enable the natural habitat types and the species habitats concerned to be maintained or, where appropriate, restored at a favourable conservation status in their natural range. In Ireland, these sites are designated as European sites and include Special Protection Areas (SPAs), established under the EU Birds Directive (79/409/EEC, as codified by 2009/147/EC) for birds and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), established under the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC for habitats and species.

Roadstone Limited and Cork County Council are obliged to examine the likely significant effects, individually or in combination with other Plans and projects, of the proposal on European sites in light of their specific qualifying interests and conservation objectives. If screening determines that there is likely to be significant effects on a European Site, then a Stage 2 AA must be carried out for this proposal, including the compilation of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) to inform the decision making.

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Figure 1.1: Site Location



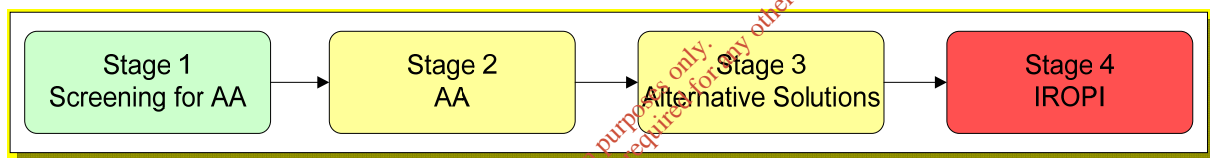
2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 STAGES OF APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government guidelines ‘*Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities*’ (DEHLG, 2009, rev. 2010) outline the European Commission’s methodological guidance (EC, 2002) for AA. They promote a four-stage process to complete the AA and outline the issues and tests at each stage. An important aspect of the process is that the outcome at each successive stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required.

The four stages are summarised diagrammatically in **Figure 2.1**. Stages 1-2 deal with the main requirements for assessment under Article 6(3) and Regulation 42 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 as amended. Stage 3 may be part of the Article 6(3) Assessment or may be a necessary precursor to Stage 4. Stage 4 is the main derogation step of Article 6(4).

Figure 2.1: Stages of Appropriate Assessment - Taken from Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities (2010)



The methodology followed in relation to this assessment has had regard to the following guidance and legislation:-

- ‘*Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland Guidance for Planning Authorities*’ (DOEHLG 2009, rev 2010);
- *Managing Natura 2000 Sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the ‘Habitats’ Directive 92/43/EEC*, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg (EC, 2000);
- *Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg (EC, 2002);
- *Interpretation Manual of European Union Habitats*. Version EUR 28. European Commission 2013;
- The European Union (Environmental Impact Assessment and Habitats) Regulations 2011;
- The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011;
- The Planning and Development Acts 2000-2018, and
- Relevant case law, particularly a recent ruling from the European Court of Justice Case C-323/17: Request for a preliminary ruling under Article 267 TFEU from the High Court (Ireland), made by decision of 10th May 2017, received at the Court on 30th May 2017, in the proceedings, *People Over Wind, Peter Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta*.

In light of the finding by the European Court of Justice in Case C – 323/17, it has been clarified that Stage 1 assessment needs to be based on the development proposal in the absence of site-specific mitigation. The source pathways for potential connectivity are therefore assessed carefully in consideration of the above ruling. An extract from the above ruling is provided herein: “Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora must be interpreted as meaning that, in order to determine whether it is necessary to carry out, subsequently, an appropriate assessment of the implications, for a site concerned, of a plan or project, it is not appropriate, at the screening stage, to take account of the measures intended to avoid or reduce the harmful effects of the plan or project on that site.”

Stage 1 - Screening is the process that addresses and records the reasoning and conclusions in relation to the first two tests of Article 6(3):

- i. whether a plan or project (in this instance the proposed works) is directly connected to or necessary for the management of the European sites, and
- ii. whether a plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, is likely to have significant effects on the European sites in view of their conservation objectives.

If the effects are deemed to be significant, potentially significant, or uncertain, or if the screening process becomes overly complicated, then the process must proceed to Stage 2 (AA). This report fulfils the information necessary to enable the competent authority to screen the proposal for the requirement to prepare an AA.

This report forms Stage 1 of the AA process and sets out the following information:

- Description of the proposed works;
- Characteristics of the proximal European sites; and
- Assessment of potential for significance effects of the proposed works on the European sites in question.

2.2 INFORMATION CONSULTED FOR THIS REPORT

Sources of data reviewed as part of the screening process for this project included (but were not limited to):

- Information provided by RPS design team on the location, design and project elements of the proposed project.
- Environmental Protection Agency – Water Quality information www.epa.ie, <http://gis.epa.ie/Envision>, www.catchments.ie
- ESRI Ireland - Mapping Themes www.esri-ireland.ie
- Geological Survey of Ireland – Geology, soils and Hydrogeology mapping and data www.gsi.ie
- Water Framework Directive website – www.wfdireland.ie
- National Parks and Wildlife Service – online European site network information, including site conservation objectives www.npws.ie

- National Parks and Wildlife Service – *Information on the status of EU protected habitats in Ireland (NPWS 2013a, 2013b)*.
- National Biodiversity Data Centre – Information on location of EU protected habitats - www.biodiversityireland.ie
- Ordnance Survey of Ireland – Mapping and Aerial photography www.osi.ie

2.3 SCREENING PROTOCOL

The sequence of events when completing the AA Screening process is provided below.

2.3.1 Screening Sequence

- Definition of the zone of influence for the proposed works.
- Identification of the European sites that are situated (in their entirety or partially) within the zone of influence of the proposed works.
- Identification of the most up-to-date Qualifying Interests (QIs) for each European site occurring either wholly or partially within the zone of influence.
- Identification of the environmental conditions that maintain the QIs at the desired target of Favourable Conservation Status.
- Identification of the threats/impacts – actual or potential that could negatively impact the environmental conditions of the QIs within the European sites.
- Highlighting the activities of the proposed works that could give rise to significant negative impacts.
- Identification of other plans or projects for which In-combination impacts would likely have significant effects.

2.3.2 Screening Determination

In accordance with *Regulation 42(7) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477/2011)* as amended:-

The public authority shall determine that an Appropriate Assessment of a plan or project is not required where the plan or project is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site as a European site and if it can be excluded on the basis of objective scientific information following screening under this Regulation, that the plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

Further, under Regulation 42(8):-

- (a) *Where, in relation to a plan or project for which an application for consent has been received, a public authority makes a determination that an Appropriate Assessment is required, the public authority shall give notice of the determination, including reasons for the determination of the public authority, to the following—*
- i) the applicant,*
 - ii) if appropriate, any person who made submissions or observations in relation to the application to the public authority, or*
 - iii) if appropriate, any party to an appeal or referral.*
- (b) *Where a public authority has determined that an Appropriate Assessment is required in respect of a proposed development it may direct in the notice issued under subparagraph (a) that a Natura Impact Statement is required.*

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3 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed development comprises a waste soils recovery facility. It comprises the importation of approximately 1.4Mm³ of inert soil and stones material to fill quarry voids. In this regard, the purpose of the development is twofold. The first is to restore the site to in terms of its landform and agricultural use, to a state comparable to its nature prior to extraction activities commencing at the site. The second is to cater to a recognised shortage of waste disposal facilities for construction waste.

Following restoration, the land use will be agricultural.

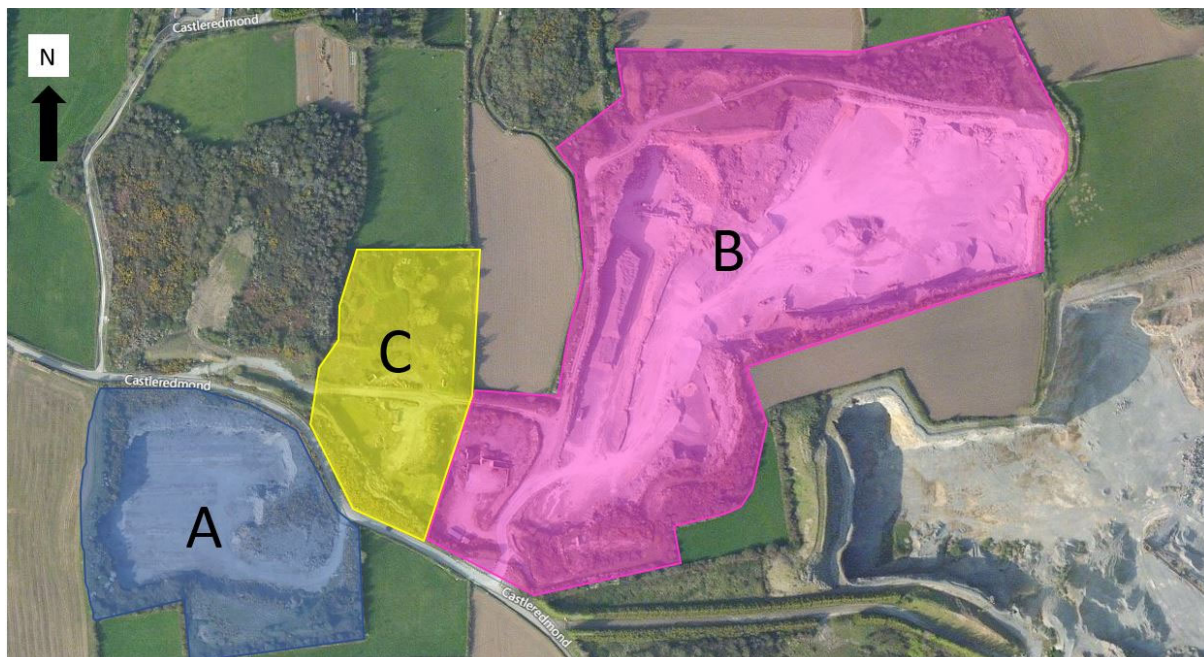
The overall application site comprises 15.7 hectares approx., which extends to include all elements of the development including ancillary works areas such as welfare and operational facilities. The full extent of the proposed soils recovery development comprises the following structures and works:

- Provision of connecting track between Midleton and Coppingerstown Quarry to include provision of hardstanding and car parking spaces.
- Drainage of the connecting track and hardstanding area to a soakpit via a fuel / oil interceptor.
- Provision of a quarantine area / shed.
- Installation of weighbridge, wheelwash, site office and welfare facilities.
- Removal of hedgerow / scrub and stone walls to northwest of entrance to Zone A, and subsequent installation of new post and chainlink fencing; lowering of hedgerow line to southeast of entrance to Zone A (as part of ongoing maintenance works).
- Infill quarry voids of approx. 9ha hectares with inert soils and stones material; total volume estimate of 1.4Mm³.
- Final Landscaping / restoration of infill areas.
- Final removal of hardstand and site facilities (when extraction at neighbouring Coppingerstown Quarry also complete).

3.1 GENERAL SCOPE OF PROJECT

The overall site area comprises 15.7ha. Of this, approximately 9ha are permitted for extraction. Thus, the infilling proposed under this application also relates to approximately 9ha. The other ancillary elements identified above are within the wider 15.7ha site.

For ease of reference in the application reporting, the site has been subdivided into three separate and identifiable zones, Zones A, B and C. These are identified on **Figure 3.1** below.

Figure 3.1: Site Zoning

3.1.1 Nature of Imported Material

The nature of the material proposed to be imported to the subject site comprises inert soil and stones which fall under the European Waste Category of 17 05 04¹. This material will largely originate from excavations to accommodate large scale infrastructural or other construction works. Material accepted at the site will be subject to acceptance criteria summarised in **Section 3.1.4**.

3.1.2 Phasing

All extraction activities have ceased in Zone A and therefore it is proposed that importation of material will commence in this location. Once sufficient material is imported to fill the majority of the void to the proposed final profile levels, the focus will shift towards final restoration of the site with appropriate levels of subsoils and topsoils and landscaping. It is envisaged that the finished profile and landscaping will tie Zone A in with the surrounding landscape.

Extraction is currently ongoing in Zone B and it is envisaged that once the permitted volumes are exhausted, that extraction activities will then focus on Zone C allowing importation and backfilling of Zone B. Finally, Zone C shall be filled following completion of all permitted extraction.

¹ Environmental Protection Agency, (2015) *Waste Classification: List of Waste & Determining if Waste is Hazardous or Non-hazardous*. Dublin: Environmental Protection Agency

Landscaping and restoration of the furthestmost areas of Zone B will be possible while extraction or importation works are underway in Zone C. Due to the requirement for access, however, to the overall site and to provide sufficient circulation and working space for ongoing extraction/importation in Zone C, it is likely that landscaping for much of Zone B and all of Zone C will commence once all importation activities have been completed in order to enable a coherent approach and appropriately restore both zones.

3.1.3 Filling Approach

The EPA *Draft Guidance Note on Soil Recovery Waste Acceptance Criteria* (EPA, 2018) sets out a high-level approach towards acceptance of soils material at such licensed facilities and any testing requirements recommended to be carried out. The guidance document states that material should only be accepted from the following donor sites:-

Table 3.1: Waste Acceptance

Donor Site Type	Suitability for Acceptance
Greenfield Sites:	Acceptable, subject to meeting agreed Waste Acceptance Criteria.
Non-greenfield sites where the risk of contamination from chemical or solid materials is low:	Acceptable, subject to meeting agreed Waste Acceptance Criteria
Non-greenfield sites where there is an increased risk of contamination from chemicals or solid materials:	Not acceptable – such materials should not be accepted at soil recovery facilities. Waste soil and stone from such sites should be transferred to an appropriately licensed landfill or recovery facility.

The guidance document also suggests procedures and methodologies for waste characterisation, soil trigger levels and groundwater monitoring. There is a network of new monitoring wells at the site. It is proposed under the current application to undertake regular monitoring for groundwater levels and groundwater quality at six locations. The frequency and reporting procedures will be determined by the EPA under the waste licence application.

Waste acceptance procedures based on the EPA guidance are proposed for the site and are summarised in **Section 3.1.4**.

3.1.4 Filling Procedures

Waste acceptance criteria and procedures at the site will be in accordance with the guidance set out in the EPA *Draft Guidance Note on Soil Recovery Waste Acceptance Criteria* and as specified in due course by the EPA in a waste licence. The guidance document states that material should only be accepted from the following source sites identified in **Table 3.2**.

Table 3.2: Waste Acceptance

Type of Source Site	Suitability for Acceptance
Greenfield Sites	Acceptable, subject to meeting agreed Waste Acceptance Criteria.
Non-greenfield sites where the risk of contamination from chemical or solid materials is low:	Acceptable, subject to meeting agreed Waste Acceptance Criteria
Non-greenfield sites where there is an increased risk of contamination from chemicals or solid materials:	Not acceptable – such materials should not be accepted at soil recovery facilities. Waste soil and stone from such sites should be transferred to an appropriately licensed landfill or recovery facility.

All hauliers must hold a valid waste collection permit which shall be presented to the facility prior to transportation of material onto site. Appropriate competent persons shall carry out invasive species risk assessments and waste characterisation. Waste Acceptance Criteria (WAC) results and all site investigation and laboratory reports (to comply with criteria below) shall be presented to the facility for review prior to material acceptance.

Following testing as per the criteria noted at section 3.1.5 below, if the material is deemed suitable for acceptance, then the customer will be informed in writing and notification will be given for presentation at on-site verification. Additionally, a Roadstone New Site Notification sheet must be completed by a competent person and reviewed by Roadstone and Roadstone chain of custody booklets shall be issued to site.

In addition to the criteria per the EPA draft guidance, an invasive species risk assessment will be carried out by appropriately skilled persons and site visits will be carried out to source sites if necessary. Representative spot samples will be taken at the rate of 1 sample per 2,000 tonnes of waste accepted and sent to laboratories if necessary for further analysis.

All loads in and out of the facility shall be weighed and issued with a docket providing the type of waste and customer details. A Waste Intake Log Sheet shall be filled out by the weighbridge clerk and signed by the driver for all loads in and out. It shall include details such as the date and time, waste permit no., vehicle registration no., name of haulier, net weight, comments, certificate of conformity no. and signatures of both the driver and clerk.

Imported waste shall not be processed in any capacity on site. If material arrives to site and is deemed to be unsuitable for depositing in the quarry void it will be refused, or if necessary to retain that material at a quarantine area until such a time that it is ready to be transported elsewhere for disposal as appropriate.

3.1.5 Waste Acceptance Criteria

The following criteria will be applied at the site to ensure waste acceptance at the site in line with the requirements of the EPA to accept soil and stones (LoW code 17 05 04). These procedures will ensure that only suitable material is actually accepted and deposited in quarry voids. It should be noted that the aforementioned EPA guidance document is a draft document at the time of the current planning application, and has not been finalised. In addition, these procedures may be subject to agreement with the EPA under a condition of any Waste Licence granted; therefore the procedures outlined here may be subject to change.

Greenfield Soil and Stone

A Letter of suitability for the first 5,000 tonnes of material received, and a further letter of suitability for each subsequent 5,000 tonnes of material received will be required.

Each letter of suitability shall be signed by a suitably qualified person and shall, at a minimum, state the following:-

- The waste is greenfield soil and stone.
- A description of the source and nature of the soil and stone.
- The location of the source of the soil and stone (including a map showing the source site boundary).
- The material is suitable for use as backfill within the facility.
- The material will not cause environmental pollution at the facility.

The draft EPA guidance document states that no requirement for testing greenfield soil and stone, unless directed by the Agency. However, it is advisable that the suitably qualified person relies on soil test results to confirm the greenfield status of the source site before signing the letter of suitability. When the material arrives at the soil recovery facility, a visual check is required to verify that the material is greenfield soil and stone.

Non-Greenfield Soil and Stone

Prior to accepting material from each individual source site, the Applicant shall obtain information on the past use of the site and shall reject non-greenfield sites where soil or groundwater contamination has been identified or where there is an increased risk of contamination being present. Soil and stone shall not be accepted from sites where activities in the past have involved the manufacture or storage of hazardous substances e.g. chemical manufacturing facilities, oil storage facilities, retail filling stations.

Basic characterisation, compliance testing and on-site verification shall be undertaken, as outlined in **Table 3.3** below and / or as revised by licence requirements.

Table 3-3: Waste Acceptance Criteria per EPA Guidance

Amount of Material	Testing Requirement	Frequency of Testing/Location of Sampling
Greater than 2,000 tonnes from a single source	Basic characterisation *	To be carried out off-site prior to agreeing acceptance of the waste at the facility.
	Compliance testing *	One representative sample shall be analysed for every 2,000 tonnes of material received at the facility. A portion of each sample shall be retained on site for three years and shall be available for inspection/analysis by the Agency.
	On-site verification * *	Every load received at the facility
Less than 2,000 tonnes from a single source	Basic characterisation *	Sampling shall be undertaken at the facility prior to the use of material as backfill. At least one representative sample shall be collected from every 2,000 tonnes of material from the collective of single sources, each of which is less than 2,000 tonnes * * * A portion of each sample shall be retained on site for three years and shall be available for inspection/analysis by the Agency.
	On-site verification *	Every load received at the facility

Notes:

* This constitutes a thorough determination, according to standardised analysis and behaviour testing methods, of the short and long-term leaching behaviour and/or characteristic properties of the waste. Parameters and trigger levels are to be agreed with the Agency.

* * Rapid check methods (e.g. visual inspection) to confirm that a waste is the same as that which has been subjected to compliance testing and that which is described in any accompanying documents.

* * * It is recommended that waste in this category is placed in the quarantine area until sampling is completed and the results are available to determine suitability for acceptance.

Soil Trigger Levels

Contaminant concentrations within the soil and stone must comply with soil trigger levels to be agreed with the EPA. They must focus on the requirement for material accepted at the facility to be uncontaminated and will be used for basic characterisation and compliance testing.

3.1.6 Lifetime of the Development

The applicant has applied for a permission with a duration of 18 no. years which allows for approximately 15 no. years of importation and 3 no. years of monitoring.

3.1.7 Ancillary Buildings and Facilities

The ancillary buildings and facilities required for the operation of the soils recovery facility are listed below. These are temporary facilities only to be provided for the duration of the soils recovery activities and will be removed from site as part of the final restoration works. Some of these items are already in place for the quarrying activity and will be utilised for and retained for the duration of recovery activities also.

- Site security facilities.
- Site office / staff welfare facilities.
- New wheelwash and weighbridge.
- Quarantine area for any imported material suspected of being contaminated or unsuitable for acceptable at the facility. This will comprise of a covered concrete slab area.

3.1.8 Surface Water Drainage

Surface water drainage will be installed adjacent to the new wheel wash and weighbridge. The surface water will pass through a petrol interceptor before flowing to a stone filled soakaway.

3.1.9 Restoration

The underlying concept for the end use of this site is to revert to agricultural use and to restore the land profile to approximately what it would have been prior to the commencement of extraction activities. It is proposed to profile the imported soils material according to a site-specific landscape plan.

In order to provide an economical and practical land package for modern day agricultural use, it is not proposed to restore field boundaries to those represented in historical mapping. Many of the pre-existing fields are of a small size and are unsuitable for the large machinery required to operate a modern sustainable farming enterprise.

Screening berms were previously provided to the existing quarrying activities as required by their planning permissions. In general, these will be retained in situ until infill is complete. This will ensure ongoing protection of the visual amenities of the area. As infill is complete the original topsoil stored in these bunds will be spread over the infill area.

3.2 EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

A site walkover was undertaken on 23rd May 2018 by RPS Ecologist Mr Conor Ruane and on 22nd August by Ecologist Karen Banks, Greenleaf Ecology.

The ecology of the site is described in full in Chapter 12: Biodiversity of the EIAR. In summary, the site comprises Fossitt (2000) habitat Active quarries (ED4) in the actively worked area of the site (Zone B) and Exposed calcareous rock (ER2) in areas where quarrying is completed (Zone A). The margins of the quarry and Zone C comprise predominantly of Scrub (WS1) and Recolonising bare ground (ED3). The majority of the site is bound by Hedgerows (WL1), with berms positioned near to the L-3626.

No species or habitats that are listed as the Qualifying Interests of the European Sites situated within 15km of the proposed site (**Table 3.5** and **Table 3.6**) were recorded during the site surveys undertaken in 2018.

3.2.1 Invasive Alien Species

Butterfly bush was present throughout the site. No High Impact species or species listed on the Third Schedule were recorded onsite

3.2.2 Hydrology

The site is located in the Owennacurra River surface water catchment within the South Western River Basin District. A regional hydrology map is shown as **Figure 3.2** below.

The Owennacurra River flows through Midleton town approx. 1.5km to the west of the site. Downstream of Midleton town this watercourse is referred to as the Ballynacorra River which flows into Cork Harbour further south.

The northern section of the site is located in the Dungourney River catchment which flows in a westerly direction approx. 1.9km north of the site. The Dungourney River discharges into the Owennacurra River at Midleton town. The southern section of the site drains to an unnamed stream but which is referred to on EPA mapping as the West Ballynacorra Stream. The source of the West Ballynacorra Stream is a karst spring which is located approximately 650m to the south east of the proposed site. The West Ballynacorra Stream flows westerly and discharges into the Ballynacorra River estuary, which is part of the Great Island Channel SAC and pNHA and Cork Harbour SPA.

Other than the West Ballynacorra Stream, there are no other natural surface water features within the site or in close proximity to the boundary of the site. A local hydrology map is shown as **Figure 3.3** below and **Table 3.2** provides a summary of watercourses in close proximity to the proposed site.

Figure 3.2: Regional Hydrology Map

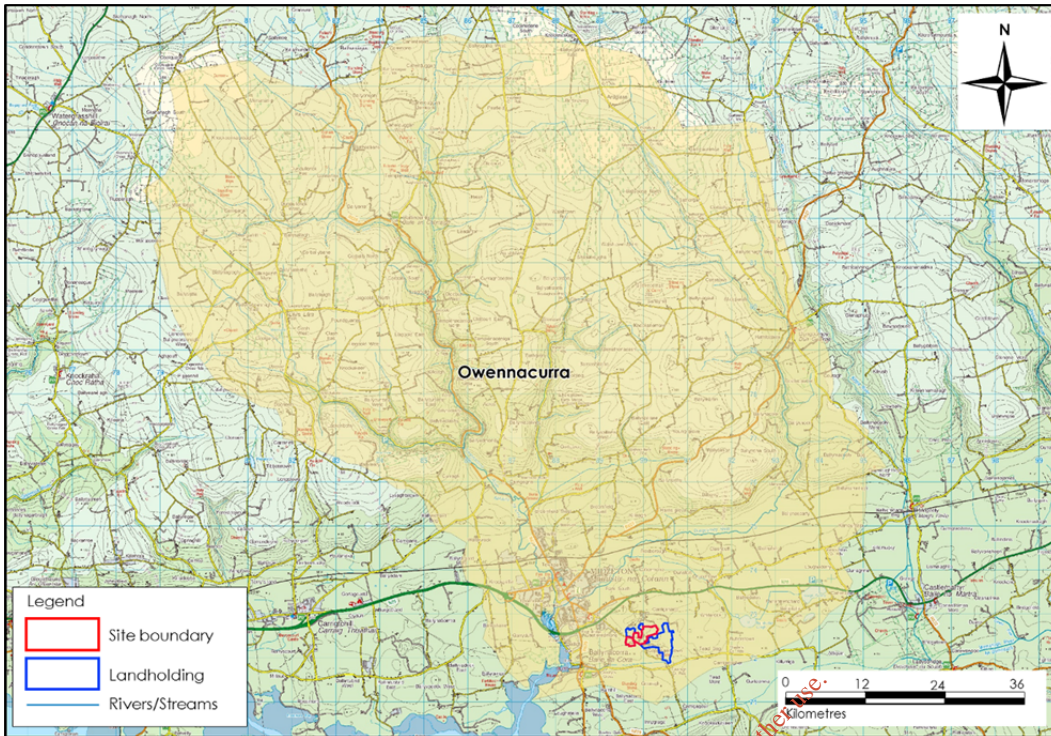


Figure 3.3: Local Hydrology Map

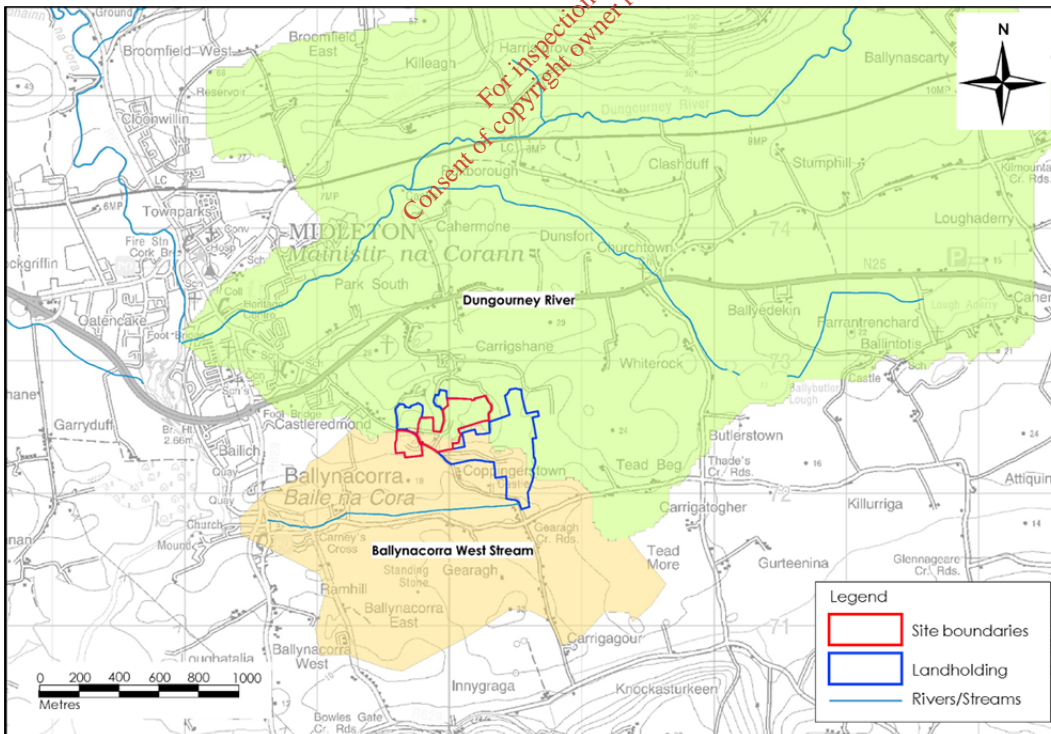


Table 3.4: Watercourses in Close Proximity to the Proposed Works

Watercourse	National Watercourse Code	Proximity to the Proposed Works	EPA Q - Value Rating 2004 -2016	WFD Status 2010 - 2015	Connectivity to Proposed Works
Ballynacorra West Stream	IE_SW_19K630910	c.0.65km	Not available	Unassigned	None
Dungourney River	IE_SW_19D070700	c1.3km	Q4 (Good Status) upstream of Midleton but reduces to Q3 (Poor Status) at Midleton Town	Poor	None

3.2.3 Flooding

The existing permitted quarrying activity allows extraction of limestone as far as 9mOD which is 1m above the water table.

No recurring flood incidents in the area of the proposed site were identified from OPW's indicative river and coastal flood map, which is shown as on **Figure 3.4** below. CFRAM mapping has been completed for the area of the proposed site (**Figure 3.5**). The CFRAM mapping shows that the proposed development site is not located within any fluvial or pluvial flood zone.

There is no text on local available historical 6" or 25" mapping for the proposed site that identifies areas that are "prone to flooding" within the site boundary, or downstream of the site.

Figure 3.4: OPW's Indicative River and Coastal Flood Map

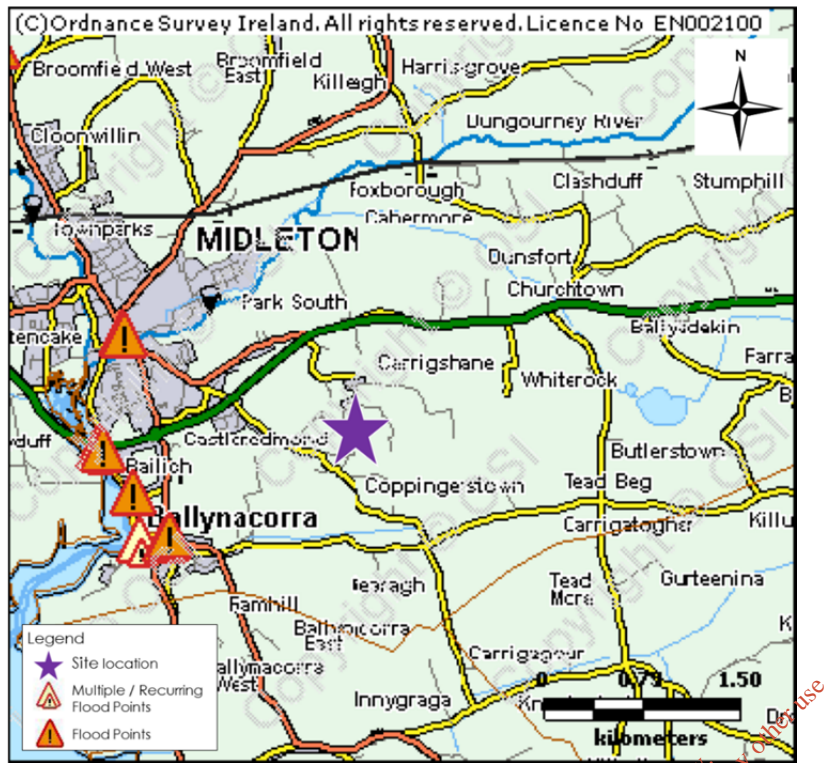
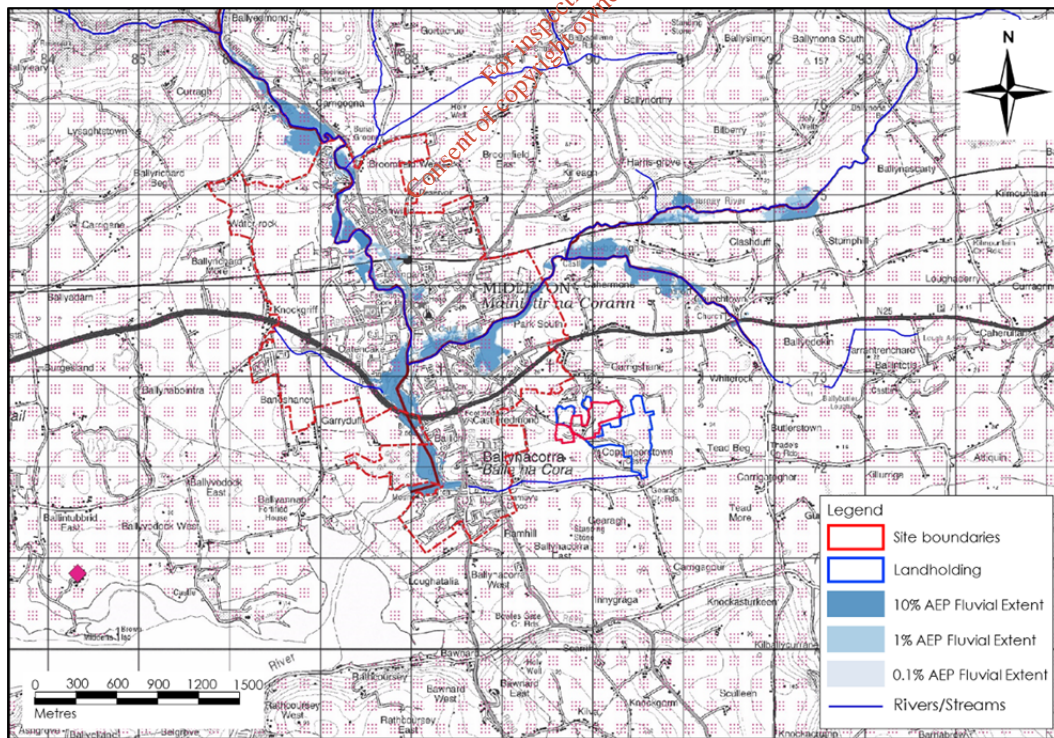


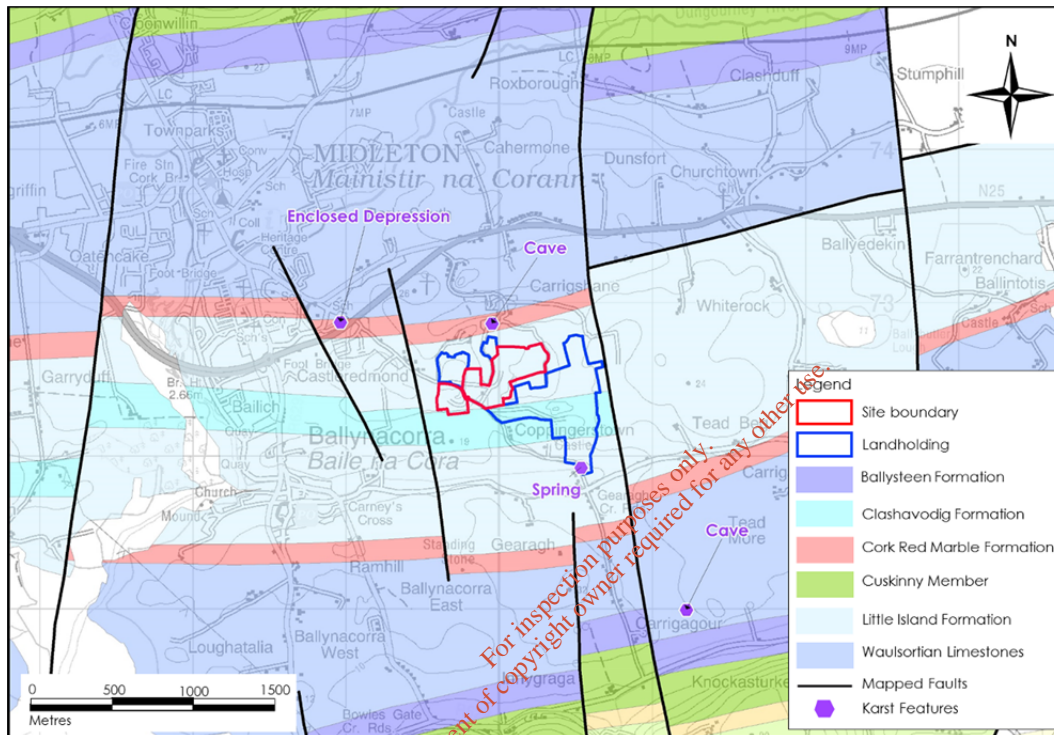
Figure 3.5: CFRAM Flood Risk Assessment Map



3.2.4 Soils, Geology and Hydrogeology

The GSI soils map (www.gsi.ie) for the site area indicates that the majority of the surrounding lands are overlain by Shallow well-drained mineral soils derived from mainly basic parent material (BminSW). In terms of bedrock geology, the Little Island formation composed of massive and crinoidal fine limestone underlies the site. This bedrock type is susceptible to karstification. A local bedrock geology map is shown as **Figure 3.6** below.

Figure 3.6: Local Bedrock Geology Map



The different bedrock units which underlie the site are mapped by the GSI as part of the same Regionally Important Karstified (diffuse) Aquifer. These rocks are devoid of intergranular permeability. Groundwater flow occurs in the many faults and joints, enlarged by karstification. There are no significant karstified rock features/weathering in the quarry walls of the site.

The groundwater flow direction in the area of the quarry is to the west/southwest. This is consistent with the local hydrology of the area which is towards the estuary of Ballynacorra River/estuary located to the southwest of the site. The proposed site is located within the Midleton GWB (IE_SW_G_058), which is assigned Good status under the 2010-2015 WFD round (www.catchments.ie).

3.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE EUROPEAN SITES

This stage of the screening for AA outlines the proposed projects zone of influence (Zoi) and describes the European sites within this Zoi. Current guidance (DEHLG, 2010) on the Zoi to be considered during the Screening for AA states the following:

“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”.

A 15km buffer zone has been chosen as a precautionary measure, to ensure that all potentially affected European sites are included in the screening process, which is in line with *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities* (DoEHLG, 2009, rev. 2010). While there may be scientifically appropriate reasons for extending this further afield depending on the source, pathway and receptors of potential impacts, with regard to the current proposal, the 15km distance is considered acceptable to screen all likely significant effects that might impact upon the European sites.

In the case of the current project, and in consideration of the catchment and sub-catchments in which the proposed project will occur, a 15km Zoi is considered appropriate to ensure that all potentially affected European sites are included in the screening process.

The integrity of a European site (referred to in Article 6.3 of the EU Habitats Directive) is determined based on the conservation status of the QIs or SCIs of the SAC or SPA. The QIs/SCIs² for each site have been obtained through a review of the COs available from the NPWS website www.npws.ie.

The European sites located within 15km of proposed access road are listed below:-

1. Great Island Channel SAC (Site Code: 001058).
2. Cork Harbour SPA (Site Code: 004030).
3. Ballymacoda (Clonpriest and Pillmore) SAC (Site Code: 000077).
4. Ballycotton Bay SPA (Site Code: 004022).
5. Ballymacoda Bay SPA (Site Code: 004023).

These sites are shown on **Figure 3.7**.

Connectivity from the development site to the European sites has been reviewed. Connectivity is identified via the potential source-pathway-receptor chain, such as any hydrological connectivity which may support direct or indirect connectivity to European Sites. The proposed site does not support habitat, hydrological or hydrogeological connectivity to site numbers 3, 4 or 5; therefore, these sites will not be impacted on and will not be considered further as part of this screening for AA. As outlined in **Table 3.5** and **Table 3.6** below, there is no surface water or habitat connectivity

² The habitats and species for which this site is designated

between the proposed site and Great Island Channel SAC and Cork Harbour SPA (site 1 and site 2); however, these sites are located in the same groundwater body as the proposed site.

Tables 3.5 and 3.6 also provide details on the Qualifying Interests of the sites and their distance and connectivity distances from the proposed development.

Table 3.5: European Sites (SPAs) within 15km of the Proposed Site

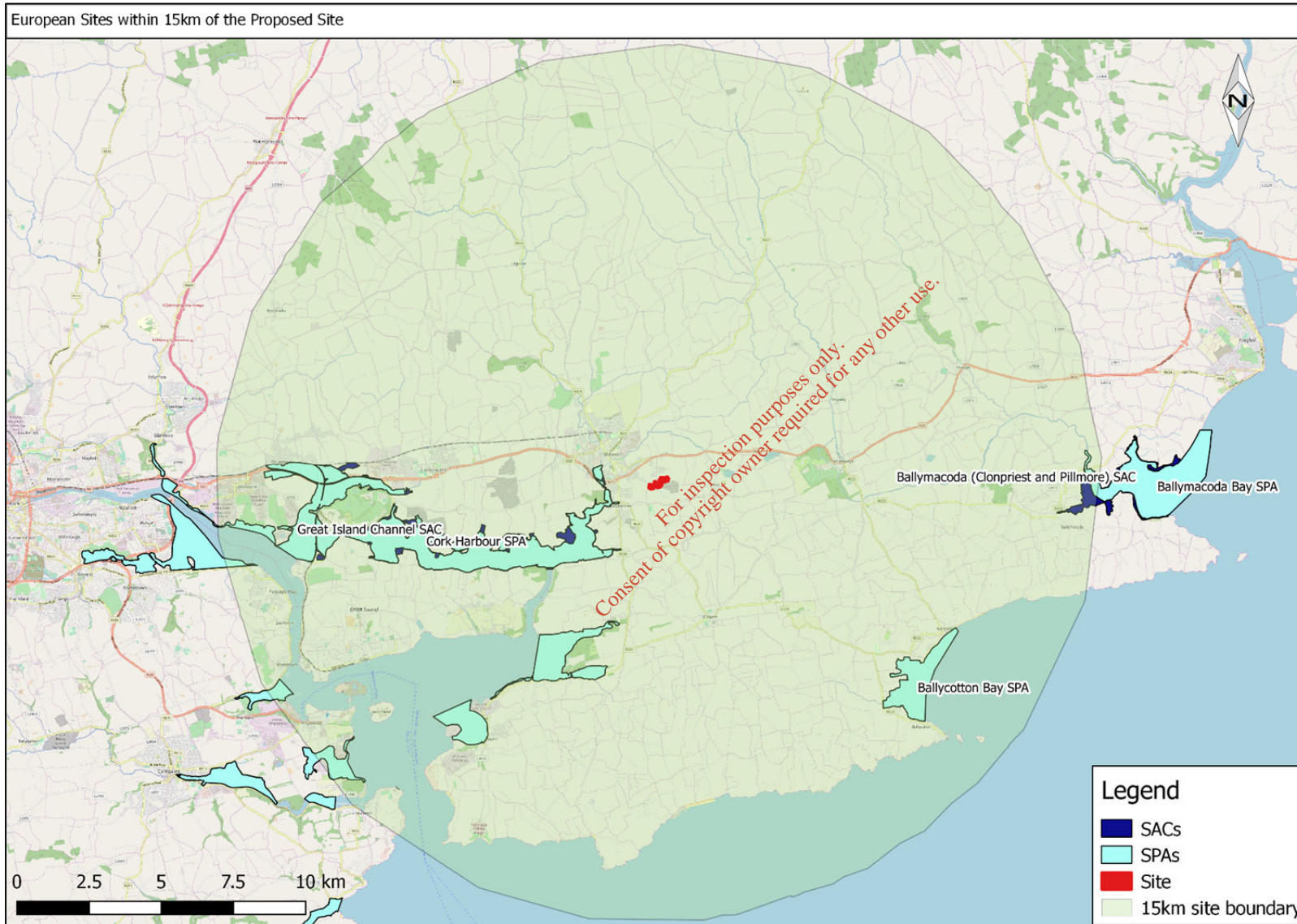
Site Name and Code	Qualifying Interests	Distance from Proposed Works	Connectivity
Great Island Channel SAC (001058)	Annex I Habitats Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330]	1.11	There is no habitat or surface water connectivity. However, the proposed site and this SAC are both situated in the Midleton groundwater body.
Ballymacoda (Clonpriest and Pillmore) SAC (000077)	Annex I Habitats Estuaries [1130] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]	13.49	None

Table 3.6: European Sites (SPAs) within 15km of the Proposed Site

Site Name and Code	Special Conservation Interests (SCI)	Distance from Proposed Works	Connectivity
Ballycotton Bay SPA (004022)	Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052] Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142] Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160] Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) [A169] Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182] Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>) [A183] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	10.03	None
Ballymacoda Bay SPA (004023)	Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) [A050] Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052] Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137]	14.37	None

Site Name and Code	Special Conservation Interests (SCI)	Distance from Proposed Works	Connectivity
	Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142] Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160] Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) [A169] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182] Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>) [A183] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]		
Cork Harbour SPA (004030)	Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] Little Grebe (<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>) [A004] Great Crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>) [A005] Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017] Grey Heron (<i>Ardea cinerea</i>) [A028] Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) [A050] Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052] Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054] Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056] Red-breasted Merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>) [A069] Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160] Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182] Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>) [A183] Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193]	1.13	There is no habitat or surface water connectivity. However, the proposed site and this SPA are both situated in the Midleton groundwater body.

Figure 3.7: European Sites Located within 15km of the Proposed Site



3.3.1 Conservation Objectives of European Sites

The integrity of a European site (referred to in Article 6.3 of the EU Habitats Directive) is determined based on the conservation status of the qualifying interests of the SAC as set out above.

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain at favourable conservation status areas designated as SACs and SPAs. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations that will ensure the ecological integrity of these sites.

Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:-

- Its natural range, and the area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing,
- The specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and
- The conservation status of its typical species is favourable.

The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:-

- Population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats,
- The natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
- There is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its population on a long-term basis.

3.3.2 European Site Description and Conservation Objectives

3.3.2.1 Great Island Channel SAC

Site Description

Relevant extracts from the NPWS Great Island Channel SAC site synopsis are presented below. The full site synopsis can be seen at the following link;

<https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/synopsis/SY001058.pdf>.

Great Island Channel stretches from Little Island to Midleton, with its southern boundary being formed by Great Island. It is an integral part of Cork Harbour which also contains several other sites of conservation interest. Geologically, Cork Harbour consists of two large areas of open water in a limestone basin, separated from each other and the open sea by ridges of Old Red Sandstone. Within this system, Great Island Channel forms the eastern stretch of the river basin and, compared to the rest of Cork Harbour, is relatively undisturbed. Within the site is the estuary of the Owennacurra and Dungourney Rivers. These rivers, which flow through Midleton, provide the main source of freshwater to the North Channel (NPWS, 2014c).

Qualifying Interests

The qualifying interests for Great Island Channel SAC are listed in **Table 3.5**. Threats and impacts for European Sites are presented in the Natura 2000 data form (2014-2019) for each site. Threats and impacts to Annex I habitats and Annex II species protected under the EU Habitats Directive are also outlined in the NPWS 2013 document *'The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland'*³.

Table 3.7 presents the main threats, pressures and negative impact activities for Great Island Channel SAC, as quoted on the Natura 2000 Data Form for this European Site.

Table 3.7: Threats, Pressures and Impact Activities to Great Island Channel SAC

European Site	Threat Code ⁴	Threat Type	Rank ⁵	i (inside) / o (outside) / b (both) ⁶
Great Island Channel SAC	E01	Urbanised areas, human habitation	H	o
	D01.02	Roads, motorways	H	i
	F01	Marine and freshwater aquaculture	H	i
	A08	Fertilisation	M	o
	A04	Grazing	M	i
	K02.03	Eutrophication (natural)	M	i
	J02.01.02	Reclamation of land from sea, estuary or marsh	H	i
	I01	Invasive non-native species	M	i

3.3.2.2 Cork Harbour SPA

Site Description

Extracts from the Cork Harbour SPA site synopsis are presented below. The full site synopsis can be seen in full through the following link; <https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/synopsis/SY004030.pdf>.

Cork Harbour is a large, sheltered bay system, with several river estuaries - principally those of the Rivers Lee, Douglas, Owenboy and Owennacurra. The SPA site comprises most of the main intertidal areas of Cork Harbour, including all of the North Channel, the Douglas River Estuary, inner Lough Mahon, Monkstown Creek, Lough Beg, the Owenboy River Estuary, Whitegate Bay, Ringabella Creek and the Rostellan and Poul nabibe inlets. The site is of major ornithological significance, being of international importance both for the total numbers of wintering birds (i.e. > 20,000) and also for its populations of Black-tailed Godwit and Redshank. In addition, it supports nationally important wintering populations of 22 species, as well as a nationally important breeding colony of Common Tern. Several of the species which occur regularly are listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive, i.e. Whooper Swan, Little Egret, Golden Plover, Bar-tailed Godwit, Ruff, Mediterranean Gull and

³ Article 17 & Article 11 Reports: <http://www.npws.ie/article-17-reports-0/article-17-reports-2013>

⁴ Threat code follows reference list provided on threats, pressures and activities for European sites

⁵ Threat, pressure and impact ranking H – High, M – Medium, L - Low

⁶ Inside (i), outside (o) or both (b) of European site

Common Tern. The site provides both feeding and roosting sites for the various bird species that use it. Cork Harbour is also a Ramsar Convention site and part of Cork Harbour SPA is a Wildfowl Sanctuary (NPWS, 2015).

Qualifying Interests

The SCI found within the Cork Harbour SPA are listed in **Table 3.6**. The main threats, pressures and negative impact activities for Cork Harbour SPA are outlined in **Table 3.8** below.

Table 3.8: Threats, Pressures and Impact Activities to Cork Harbour SPA

European Site	Threat Code ⁷	Threat Type	Rank ⁸	i (inside) / o (outside) / b (both) ⁹
Cork Harbour SPA	E01.03	Dispersed habitation	L	o
	D01.02	Roads, motorways	H	o
	G01.02	Walking, horseriding and non-motorised vehicles	M	i
	F02.03	Leisure fishing	M	i
	D03.01	Port areas	H	o
	A08	Fertilisation	M	o
	F01	Marine and Freshwater Aquaculture	H	i
	G01.01	Nautical sports	M	i
	E01	Urbanised areas, human habitation	H	o
	E02	Industrial or commercial areas	H	o
	D03.02	Shipping lanes	M	i

⁷ Threat code follows reference list provided on threats, pressures and activities for European sites

⁸ Threat, pressure and impact ranking H – High, M – Medium, L – Low

⁹ Inside (i)outside (o) or both (b) of European site

4 SCREENING ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

4.1 ELEMENTS OF THE PROJECT LIKELY TO GIVE RISE TO IMPACTS ON EUROPEAN SITES

There is no habitat or surface water connectivity between the proposed works and any European Site. Great Island Channel SAC and Cork Harbour SPA are hydrogeologically connected to the proposed site. As detailed in **Section 3.2.4**, the groundwater flow direction in the area of the quarry is to the west / southwest, towards the estuary of Ballynacorra River, which is part of Great Island Channel SAC and Cork Harbour SPA. Therefore, should there be a reduction in groundwater quality as a result of infilling at the proposed site there would be potential for an indirect impact downstream on the water quality of Great Island Channel SAC and Cork Harbour SPA. However, infill of the quarry will not affect groundwater quality for the following reasons:

- The infill material will comprise inert soil and stone (EU Waste Class 17 05 04), as such no contaminants will be present.
- All imported material shall be subject to waste acceptance criteria (as outlined in **Section 3.1.4**).
- All imported material will be subject to routine inspection.
- Inert soil and stone will not contain either organic matter or liquids that will form a source of organic contaminants or microbial pathogens, nor provide a substrate to feed microbial pathogens.
- There will be pre-agreed source sites for inert material ensuring no pollutants, unauthorised material or invasive species.

4.2 POTENTIAL DIRECT, INDIRECT OR SECONDARY IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT ON EUROPEAN SITES

4.2.1 Size and Scale

The proposed works are not within the boundaries of any European Site and the size or scale of the proposed works will not have a significant adverse effect on Great Island Channel SAC or Cork Harbour SPA.

4.2.2 Land Take

There will be no land take from any European Site.

4.2.3 Distance from European Sites or Key Features of the Site

The nearest European Sites to the proposed site are Great Island Channel SAC and Cork Harbour SPA, which are located c. 1.11 and c. 1.13km to the west of the site respectively.

4.2.4 Resource Requirements

The estimated total volume of material to be imported to the site is approximately 1.4M m³ (2.52M tonnes) (Zone A = 100,000m³ approx; Zone B = 1,140,000m³ approx. and Zone C = 147,000m³ approximately). The material required to infill the quarry voids will be comprised entirely of inert waste materials, therefore there will be no resource requirement for infill.

Fuel will be consumed by plant operating on the site and HGVs for transport of materials. There will be a requirement for water to serve both welfare facilities and the wheelwash unit. In terms of energy requirements, electricity is required only for welfare facilities and security such as CCTV and lighting only in the area of the proposed link road to Coppingerstown Quarry.

There is no potential for direct and indirect impacts to European Sites as a result of resource requirements.

4.2.5 Emissions

There is potential for emissions associated with the proposed project affecting air. Emissions to air will include fine particulate matter associated with the infill and movement of soil. Such emissions will not impact negatively on the qualifying features of the European Sites due to the distance between the works and the sites.

Infilling of the site with inert soil will not pose a significant risk to groundwater quality as no harmful contaminants will be present. In addition, inert soil and stone will not contain either organic matter or liquids that will form a source of organic contaminants or microbial pathogens, nor provide a substrate to feed microbial pathogens. Therefore, no significant groundwater quality impacts are anticipated. There is no pathway for surface water to leave the site other than by recharging into groundwater. However, as stated above, no significant groundwater quality impacts are anticipated.

Other potential emissions include the accidental spillage during refuelling of construction/excavation plant with petroleum hydrocarbons, which can pose a contamination risk to soils, groundwater, and associated ecosystems, and to terrestrial and aquatic ecology. As noted, there is no hydrological connectivity available. Therefore, there will be no impact on surface water quality. The employment of standard good practice pollution prevention measures will readily contain pollutants and no significant effects on European Sites as a result of accidental spillages are anticipated.

4.2.6 Transport Requirements

It is estimated that 56 truck-loads will arrive per day with soil in conjunction with ongoing extraction works at Midleton and Coppingerstown Quarries. Based on existing extraction demands at the quarries it is considered that at least 50% of these trucks will be utilised to both import soil and export stone in addition to the standard trucks that arrive empty to extract stone from Midleton and Coppingerstown Quarries. The total number of daily trucks on the L-3626 Rocky Road will be the already permitted 172 truck movements (86 in each direction) which shall provide for both stone extraction and soil importation. Transport requirements will utilise the existing road infrastructure. There will be no impact to European Sites in this regard.

4.2.7 Duration of Construction, Operation and Decommissioning

The applicant has applied for a permission with a duration of 18 no. years which allows for approximately 15 no. years of importation and 3 no. years of monitoring. The proposal allows for an estimated duration of approximately 8.4 years for the full soil recovery works but also allows for a 'worst case scenario' that extends the duration for the full soil recovery works to approximately 15.3 years.

4.2.8 Cumulative Impacts with Other Plans and Projects in the Area

As part of the screening for an AA, in addition to the proposed waste soils recovery facility, other relevant projects and plans in the area must also be considered at this stage. These plans and projects are considered further in this respect in **Table 4.1**.

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Table 4.1: Projects or Plans which May Contribute to Cumulative or In-Combination Impacts

PLANS AND PROJECTS	KEY POLICIES/ISSUES/OBJECTIVES DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE CONSERVATION OF THE NATURA 2000 NETWORK	IMPACT
Land Use and Spatial Plans		
Cork County Development Plan 2014-2020	<p>The policies and objectives of this plan are intended to contribute to the delivery of a number of key aims for the county as a whole. They are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enhanced quality of life for all ▪ Sustainable patterns of growth in urban and rural areas ▪ Sustainable and balanced economic investment ▪ An effective physical and community infrastructure ▪ A quality built environment ▪ A network of enhanced natural resources ▪ Responsible guardianship of the County 	Policies and objectives of the Cork County Development Plan 2014 – 2020 ensure that local planning applications comply with proper planning and sustainability and with the requirements of relevant EU Directives and environmental considerations, there is no potential for adverse in-combination effects on European Sites.
River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021	<p>The project should comply with the environmental objectives of the Irish Draft RBMP which are to be achieved generally by 2021.</p> <p>Ensure full compliance with relevant EU legislation</p> <p>Prevent deterioration</p> <p>Meeting the objectives for designated protected areas</p> <p>Protect high status waters</p> <p>Implement targeted actions and pilot schemes in focus sub-catchments aimed at: targeting water bodies close to meeting their objective and addressing more complex issues which will build knowledge for the third cycle.</p>	The implementation and compliance with key environmental policies, issues and objectives of this management plan will result in positive in-combination effects on European sites. It will not contribute to adverse in-combination or cumulative impacts with the proposed facility.
Pollution Reduction Plans		
IPPC Programme Local Authority Discharge	There are no IPPC Licence holders discharging to proximal or downstream European Sites. The nearest IPPC facility is Mr Mark O'Connor (Ref. No. P0895) which is located 2.5km to the south west of the proposed works.	No impacts

PLANS AND PROJECTS	KEY POLICIES/ISSUES/OBJECTIVES DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE CONSERVATION OF THE NATURA 2000 NETWORK	IMPACT
Major Accident Emergency Plans		
Seveso II Sites	There are no Seveso sites within the vicinity of the proposed works.	No impacts
Fisheries Plans		
<p>Inland Fisheries Ireland Corporate Plan 2016 -2020</p> <p>The Inland Fisheries Act 2010.</p>	<p>To ensure that Ireland's fish populations are managed and protected to ensure their conservation status remains favourable. That they provide a basis for a sustainable world class recreational angling product, and that pristine aquatic habitats are also enjoyed for other recreational uses.</p> <p>To develop and improve fish habitats and ensure that the conditions required for fish populations to thrive are sustained and protected.</p> <p>To grow the number of anglers and ensure the needs of IFI's other key stakeholders are being met in a sustainable conservation focused manner.</p> <p>EU (Quality of Salmonid Waters) Regulations 1988. All works during development and operation of the project must aim to conserve fish and other species of fauna and flora habitat; biodiversity of inland fisheries and ecosystems and protect spawning salmon and trout.</p>	Implementation and compliance with the goals of the IFI corporate plan and legislation will result in net positive in-combination effects to European sites.
Other Water Services Strategic Plans		
Irish Water Capital Investment Plan 2014-2016	Proposals to upgrade and secure water services and water treatment services countrywide.	Likely net positive impact due to water conservation and more effective treatment of water.
Other Plans and Projects		
NPWS Conservation Management Plans	<p>To maintain the favorable conservation condition of Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide in Great Island Channel SAC.</p> <p>To maintain the favorable conservation condition of Qualifying Interests in Cork Harbour SPA.</p>	The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. Generic conservation objectives aim to define favourable conservation condition for a particular habitat or species at that site to ensure the ecological integrity of these sites is maintained or restored. The resultant effects of conservation objectives are a net positive and there is no potential for adverse in combination effects on European sites.

PLANS AND PROJECTS	KEY POLICIES/ISSUES/OBJECTIVES DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE CONSERVATION OF THE NATURA 2000 NETWORK	IMPACT
Midleton GAA	Club house, pitches and associated facilities at Youghal Road, Midleton.	A screening for AA has been undertaken for the proposals which ruled out any significant effects on European Sites.
Irish Distillers	Change of use from warehouse to workshop with ancillary storage, training area and office, modifications to the façade, 2 no. attached exterior store areas and all ancillary site development works	A screening for AA has been undertaken for the proposals which ruled out any significant effects on European Sites.
Dunkettle Interchange	The proposed provision of an improved interchange at the location of the existing Dunkettle Interchange at the intersection of the N8, the N25 and the N40 in the townland of Dunkettle, Co. Cork.	A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) was prepared for the proposed development as part of the planning application. As a result of the appropriate design of the proposed development and proposed mitigation measures, the NIS concluded that the proposed development will have not result in impacts on the integrity of any European Site.
Water Rock Urban Expansion Area (UEA) Infrastructure Works	New services corridor link road, surface water drainage for new infrastructure and for UEA, upgrade of Cork/ Midleton Road and Northern Relief Road Junction, traffic management measures, road to access railway station and bridge to cross over existing railway line, new railway stop, upgrade/ realignment of existing Water Rock road, wastewater pumping station for future UEA development.	A screening for AA has been undertaken for the proposals which ruled out any significant effects on European Sites.

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4.3 CHANGES TO THE EUROPEAN SITES ARISING AS A RESULT OF THE FOLLOWING;

4.3.1 Reduction of Habitat

There will be no reduction in the habitat available in any European Site due to the proposed works.

4.3.2 Disturbance to Key Species

The habitats present at the proposed site are not suitable to support the SCI for Cork Harbour SPA. The proposed works will not cause disturbance to any key species.

4.3.3 Habitat or Species Fragmentation

The proposed works will not result in habitat or species fragmentation to European Sites.

4.3.4 Reduction in Species Diversity

The proposed works will not result in a reduction in the diversity of species or habitats in any European Site.

4.3.5 Changes in Key Indicators of Conservation Value

There will be no change to the key indicators of conservation value of any European Site due to the proposed works.

4.3.6 Climate Change

It is not anticipated that the proposed project will have any significant effects related to climate change.

4.4 LIKELY IMPACTS ON THE EUROPEAN SITES AS A WHOLE IN TERMS OF INTERFERENCE WITH KEY RELATIONSHIPS THAT DEFINE THE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION OF THE SITE

The works will not directly or indirectly impact the Great Island Channel SAC and Cork Harbour SPA nor any other European site.

4.5 INDICATORS OF SIGNIFICANCE AS A RESULT OF THE IDENTIFICATION OF EFFECTS SET OUT ABOVE IN TERMS OF

4.5.1 Loss

There will be no loss to a European Site due to the proposed works.

4.5.2 Fragmentation

There will be no fragmentation to a European Site due to the proposed works.

4.5.3 Disruption

There will be no disruption to a European Site due to the proposed works.

4.5.4 Disturbance

There will be no disturbance to a European Site due to the proposed works.

4.5.5 Change to Key Elements of the Site

There will be no change to the key elements of any European Site due to the proposed works.

4.5.6 Describe from the above those elements of the project or plan, or combination of elements, where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale or magnitude of impacts is not known.

No elements of the project, either alone or in-combination with other projects or Plans, are likely to result in significant effects on European Sites.

5 CONCLUSION

This screening for AA identifies and assesses potential impacts which may occur as a result of the proposed works to the European Site network within a 15km zone of influence. The screening identified five European sites within a 15km radius of the proposed works:-

- Great Island Channel SAC (Site Code: 001058);
- Cork Harbour SPA (Site Code: 004030);
- Ballymacoda (Clonpriest and Pillmore) SAC (Site Code: 000077);
- Ballycotton Bay SPA (Site Code: 004022); and
- Ballymacoda Bay SPA (Site Code: 004023).

Only Great Island Channel (Site code 001058) and Cork Harbour SPA (Site code 004030) have indirect hydrogeological connectivity to the location of the proposed facility.

The potential impacts of the proposed facility have been assessed and no potential direct or indirect impacts upon the Qualifying Interests of any European Site have been identified. It is, therefore, concluded that the proposed Waste Soils Recovery Facility, Midleton, Co. Cork, either alone or in combination with other plans and/or projects, does not have the potential to significantly affect any European Site, in light of their conservation objectives. Therefore, a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is deemed not to be required.

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