

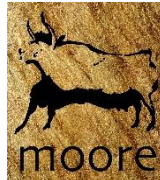
**Report for the purposes of  
Appropriate Assessment Screening**

**as required under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive  
(Council Directive 92/43/EEC)**

**Data Storage Centre (Project R)  
at Clonsaugh Business & Technology Park, Dublin**

**6<sup>th</sup> December 2016**

**Prepared by: Moore Group – Environmental Services**




**On behalf of  
Dublin City Council**

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<b>Client</b>	ADSIL
<b>Project</b>	Development of a Data Storage Centre (Project R) at Clonshaugh Business & Technology Park, Dublin
<b>Title</b>	Report for Appropriate Assessment Screening Data Storage Centre (Project R) at Clonshaugh Business & Technology Park, Dublin

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## Appendix A – Finding Of No Significant Effect Report

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. General Introduction

This report contains information required for the competent authority, in this case Dublin City Council, to undertake an Appropriate Assessment (AA) process on the effects of the proposed construction of a Data Storage Centre (Project R) at Clonshaugh Business & Technology Park, Dublin.

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 is directly connected to or necessary for the management of the site, and
- ii) whether a plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, is likely to have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site in view of its conservation objectives.

If the effects are deemed to be significant, potentially significant, or uncertain, or the screening process becomes overly complicated, then the process must proceed to Stage 2 (AA). Screening should be undertaken without the inclusion of mitigation, unless potential impacts clearly can be avoided through the modification or redesign of the plan or project, in which case the screening process is repeated on the altered plan.

When screening the project there are two possible outcomes:

- the project poses no risk of a significant effect and as such requires no further assessment; and
- the project has potential to have a significant effect (or this is uncertain) and AA of the project is necessary.

The report has been prepared by Moore Group – Environmental Services on behalf of Dublin City Council and assesses the potential for the proposed development to impact on sites of European-scale ecological importance in accordance with Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive. It was compiled by Ger O'Donohoe (B.Sc. Applied Aquatic Sciences (GMIT, 1993) & M.Sc. Environmental Sciences (TCD, 1999)) who has over 20 years' experience in environmental impact assessment and has completed numerous Appropriate Assessment Screening Reports and Natura Impact Statements in terrestrial and aquatic habitats.

The report assesses the potential for the proposed development to impact on sites of European-scale ecological importance. It is necessary that the Project has regard to Article 6 of the Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (as amended) (referred to as the Habitats Directive). This is transposed into Irish Law by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 (S.I. 477) (referred to as the Habitats Regulations).

## 1.2. Legislative Background - The Habitats and Birds Directives

The Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora) is the main legislative instrument for the protection and conservation of biodiversity in the EU. Under the Directive member States are obliged to designate Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) which contain habitats or species considered important for protection and conservation in a European Union context.

The Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC as codified by Directive 2009/147/EC), is concerned with the long-term protection and management of all wild bird species and their habitats in the EU. Among other things, the Directive requires that Special Protection Areas (SPAs) be established to protect migratory species and species which are rare, vulnerable, in danger of extinction, or otherwise require special attention.

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas, designated under the Birds Directive, form a pan-European network of protected sites known as Natura 2000. The Habitats Directive sets out a unified system for the protection and management of SACs and SPAs.

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the requirement for an assessment of proposed plans and projects likely to affect Natura 2000 sites.

Article 6(3) establishes the requirement to screen all plans and projects and to carry out a further assessment if required (Appropriate Assessment (AA)):

Article 6(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 subjected to an 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): “If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the 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 the Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted. Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to the beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest.”

This Screening Report is a documentary record of the Appropriate Assessment process on the effects of the development of a Data Storage Centre (Project R) at Clonshaugh Business & Technology Park, Dublin, referred to in this case as the Project.

## 2. Methodology

The Commission’s methodological guidance (EC, 2002) promotes a four-stage process to complete the AA, and outlines 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.

Stages 1-2 deal with the main requirements for assessment under Article 6(3). Stage 3 may be part of Article 6(3) or may be a necessary precursor to Stage 4. Stage 4 is the main derogation step of Article 6(4).

**Stage 1 Screening:** This stage examines whether a project is directly connected to or necessary to the management of the site(s) and if not, the likely effects of a project either alone or in combination with other projects upon a Natura 2000 site and considers whether it can be objectively concluded that these effects will not be significant.

**Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment:** In this stage, the impact of the project is considered on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site with respect to the conservation objectives of the site and to its structure and function.

Stage 3 Assessment of Alternative Solutions: This stage examines alternative ways of implementing the project that, where possible, avoid any adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site.

Stage 4 Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain: Where imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) exist, an assessment to consider whether compensatory measures will or will not effectively offset the damage to the sites will be necessary.

In order to ensure that the Project complies fully with the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and all relevant Irish transposing legislation, Moore Group compiled this screening report on the Project on behalf of Dublin City Council to determine if Stage 2 AA is required.

## 2.1. Guidance

The AA has been compiled in accordance with guidance contained in the following documents:

- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities. (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2010 rev.).
- Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities. Circular NPWS 1/10 & PSSP 2/10.
- 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 (European Commission Environment Directorate-General, 2001); hereafter referred to as the EC Article Guidance Document.
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC (EC Environment Directorate-General, 2000); hereafter referred to as MN2000.

## 2.2. Data Sources

Sources of information that were used to collect data on the Natura 2000 network of sites are listed below:

- Ordnance Survey of Ireland mapping and aerial photography available from [www.osi.ie](http://www.osi.ie), Google Earth, and Bing aerial photography (2016).
- Online data available on Natura 2000 sites as held by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) from [www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie) including; the Natura 2000 network Data Form; Site Synopsis; Generic Conservation Objective data
  - Online database of rare, threatened and protected species

- Publicly accessible biodiversity datasets.
- Status of EU Protected Habitats in Ireland. (National Parks & Wildlife Service, 2013)
- Relevant Development Plans and Local Area Plans in neighbouring areas.

### 3. Description of the Project

The proposed development comprises an electronic data storage centre (Project R) which post its construction will generate minimal traffic movements or emissions. The development is the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of an overall Masterplan for up to 4 data centre buildings at the site (as described in Chapter 3 Description of the Proposed Development in the EIS).

The proposed Data Centre building is c.14,000m<sup>2</sup> in area and will be approximately 11.4m high. The administrative area and supporting storage areas etc. are located within the main Data Centre building.

The Project R Data Centre comprises 8 individual data halls – each hall supported by electrical rooms, generators and AHUs. A GIS substation and transformer compound, diesel compound, and on-site attenuation ponds formed part of the previously approved development however increased attenuation capacity is proposed

Access to the site will be via the existing site entrance located in the south west of the site. Access is via an un-named road within the Clonsaugh Business and Technology Park which connects to Clonsaugh Road. Subject to grant of planning permission, construction work is anticipated to commence in Q2 2017 with approximately 12 to 18 months for both the construction phase and commissioning phase prior to commencement of full operations.

The site storm water drainage system will pass through oil interception before passing to storm drainage.

Foul drainage will be collected from site and discharged to the local foul drainage network which ultimately discharges to Ringsend WWTP.

The location and layout of the proposed development areas are presented in Figures 1 and 2 below.



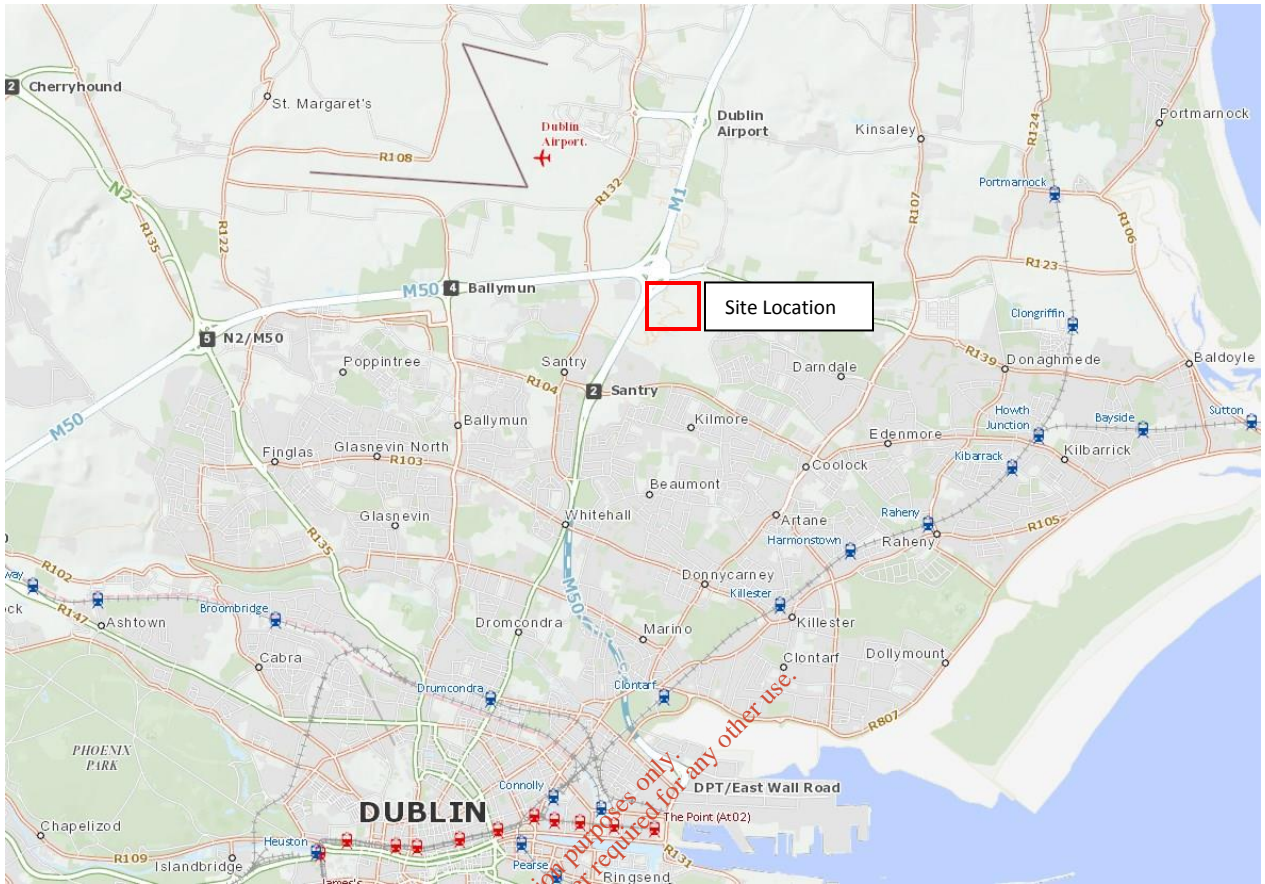


Figure 1. Site Location at Clonsilla in north Dublin ©Geohive.



Figure 2. Site Location at Clonsilla in north Dublin ©Google.

## 4. Description of the Existing Environment

The areas of application for consent are comprised of rank amenity grassland which is considered as Improved agricultural grassland (GA1) bordered by small sections of boundary Hedgerows (WL1) which are remnant and in poor condition. There are no water courses on site.

## 5. Identification of Natura 2000 Sites

### 5.1. Pre-Screening of Natura Sites Potentially Affected

There are no designated conservation areas on the site of the proposed development. Designated conservation areas within a standard 15 kilometre potential zone of influence were considered and include:

- 000199 Baldoyle Bay SAC and 004016 Baldoyle Bay SPA
- 000202 Howth Head SAC and 004113 Howth Head Coast SPA
- 000204 Lambay Island SAC and 004117 Ireland's Eye SPA
- 000205 Malahide Estuary SAC and 004025 Malahide Estuary SPA
- 000206 North Dublin Bay SAC
- 000208 Rogerstown Estuary SAC and 004015 Rogerstown Estuary SPA
- 000210 South Dublin Bay SAC
- 004006 North Bull Island SPA
- 004024 South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA
- 004069 Lambay Island SPA
- 003000 Rockabill to Dalkey Islands SAC

The proposed development site has limited biological connectivity and no hydrological connectivity to these Natura 2000 sites.

The locations of Conservation sites in relation to the proposed development site are presented in Figure 3 below.

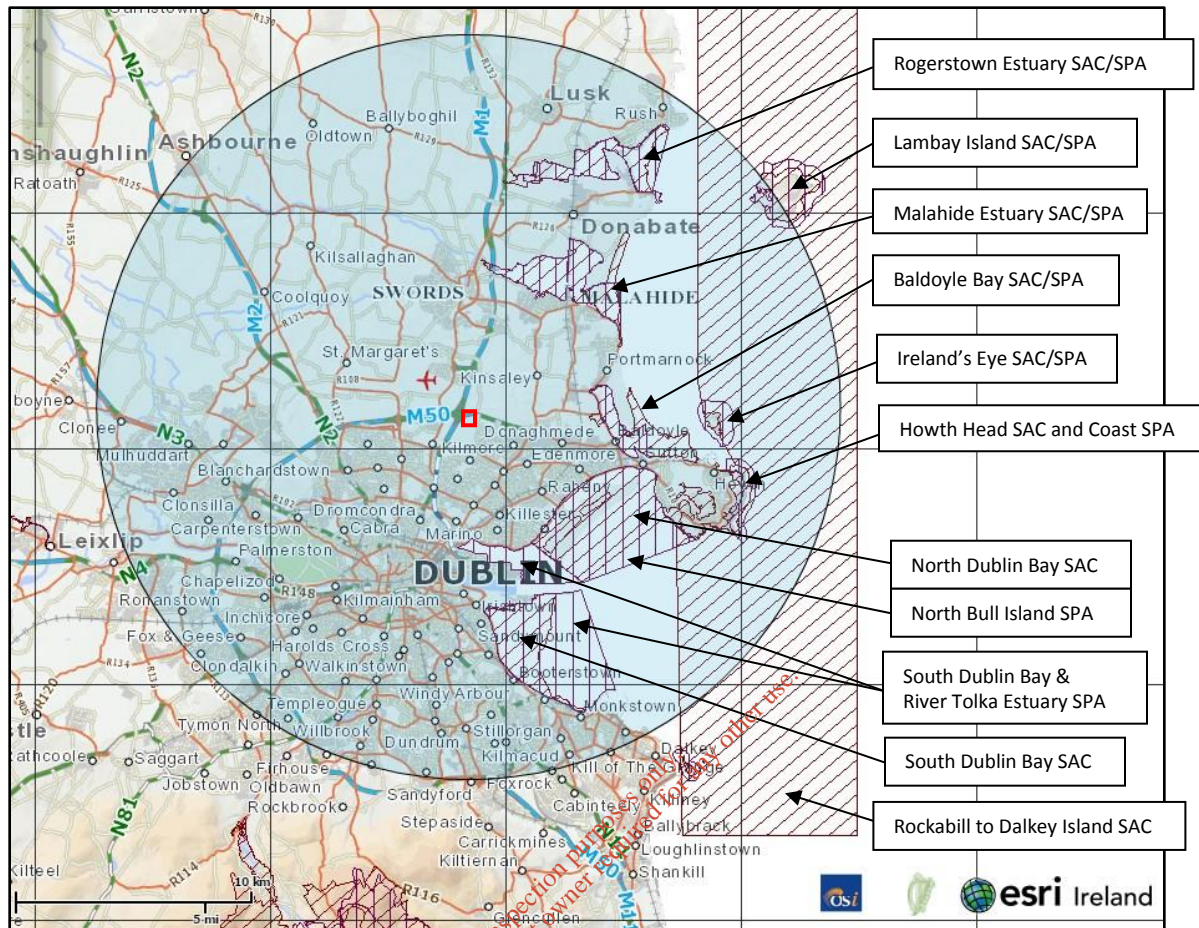


Figure 3. Site Location at Clonsilla in relation to European sites within a 15 km radius.

## 5.2. Assessment Criteria

### 5.2.1. Examples of Direct, Indirect or Secondary Impacts

Potential impacts may arise where the project or plan has the potential to:

- cause delays in progress towards achieving the conservation objectives of the site;
- interrupt progress towards achieving the conservation objectives of the site;
- disrupt those factors that help to maintain the favourable conditions of the site;
- interfere with the balance, distribution and density of key species that are the indicators of the favourable condition of the site;
- cause changes to the vital defining aspects (e.g. nutrient balance) that determine how the site functions as a habitat or ecosystem;
- change the dynamics of the relationships (between, for example, soil and water or plants and animals) that define the structure and/or function of the site;

- interfere with predicted or expected natural changes to the site (such as water dynamics or chemical composition);
- reduce the area of key habitats;
- reduce the population of key species;
- change the balance between key species;
- reduce diversity of the site;
- result in disturbance that could affect population size or density or the balance between key species;
- result in fragmentation;
- result in loss or reduction of key features (e.g. tree cover, tidal exposure, annual flooding, etc.).

### 5.2.2. Ecological Network Supporting Natura 2000 Sites

An analysis of the proposed Natural Heritage Areas and designated Natural Heritage Areas in terms of their role in supporting the species using Natura 2000 sites was undertaken. It was assumed that these supporting roles mainly related to mobile fauna such as mammals and birds which may use pNHAs and NHAs as “stepping stones” between Natura 2000 sites.

Article 10 of the Habitats Directive and the Habitats Regulations 2011 place a high degree of importance on such non-Natura 2000 areas as features that connect the Natura 2000 network. Features such as ponds, woodlands and important hedgerows were taken into account during the rest of the AA process.

There are no other conservation areas located within 15km of the proposed development site which have relevant connectivity to the project site.

## 6. Identification of Potential Impacts & Assessment of Significance

The project is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the sites considered in the assessment and therefore potential impacts must be identified and considered.

### 6.1. Potential Impacts

This section describes any likely significant effects of implementation of the Project. This assumes the absence of any controls, conditions or assumption mitigation measures.

The likely significant effects of the Project are considered both in isolation and potentially in combination with other plans and projects.

Given the inclusion of design measures such as Sustainable Drainage (SuDS) and the fact that the site is not hydrologically connected to the Natura 2000 sites considered, the likelihood of pollution of surface or groundwater water during construction is extremely low.

The development will comply with the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works Version 6.0.

## 6.2. Assessment of Potential Cumulative Effects

Cumulative impacts or effects are changes in the environment that result from numerous human-induced, small-scale alterations. Cumulative impacts can be thought of as occurring through two main pathways: first, through persistent additions or losses of the same materials or resource, and second, through the compounding effects as a result of the coming together of two or more effects.

As part of the Screening for an Appropriate Assessment, in addition to the proposed works, other relevant projects and plans in the region must also be considered at this stage. This step aims to identify at this early stage any possible significant in-combination or cumulative effects / impacts of the proposed development with other such plans and projects on the Natura 2000 sites.

A review of the Dublin City Council website and planning section for the last 3 years was undertaken.

There are 8 records relating to the development of the subject site. There is only one other development proposed for Clonsaugh Business & Technology Park. Pl. Ref. 3933/15 refers to permission to install 4 no. telecommunications equipment containers at Hibernia Network Office, International Exchange Centre, Clonsaugh Business and Technology Park, Dublin 17. There are no predicted cumulative effects with this proposed development.

The Dublin City Development Plan in complying with the requirements of the Habitats Directive requires that all Projects and Plans that could affect the Natura 2000 sites in the same zone of influence of the project site would be initially screened for Appropriate Assessment and if requiring Stage 2 AA, that appropriate employable mitigation measures would be put in place to avoid, reduce or ameliorate negative impacts. In

this way any in-combination impacts with Plans or Projects for the area of Clonshaugh in which the development site is located, would be avoided.

Any new applications for the general project area will be assessed on a case by case basis by Dublin City Council which will determine the requirement for AA Screening as per the requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.

## 7. Screening Statement

The proposed development site has no hydrological connectivity to the Natura 2000 sites considered in the assessment.

Given the inclusion design measures for surface and storm water treatment and the appropriate disposal of wastewater to the municipal system, there will be no impact on surface or groundwater.

It has been objectively concluded by Moore Group Environmental Services that:

1. The project is not directly connected with, or necessary to the conservation management of the Natura 2000 sites considered in this assessment.
2. The proposed development is unlikely to indirectly, significantly affect the Qualifying interests or Conservation Objectives of the Natura 2000 sites considered in this assessment.
3. The project, alone or in combination with other projects, is not likely to have significant effects on the Natura 2000 sites considered in this assessment in view of their conservation objectives.
4. It has been determined by Moore Group - Environmental Services that it is possible to rule out likely significant impacts on any Natura 2000 sites considered in the assessment.
5. It is possible to conclude that there would be no adverse effects on site integrity resulting from the project and that there would be no significant effects, no potentially significant effects and no uncertain effects if the project were to proceed.

It is the view of Moore Group Environmental Services that it is not necessary to undertake any further stage of the Appropriate Assessment process.

A finding of no significant effects report is presented in Appendix A in accordance with the EU Commission's methodological guidance (European Commission, 2001).

## 8. References

Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2010) Guidance on Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland (as amended February 2010).

European Commission (2000) Managing Natura 2000 sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC.

European Commission Environment DG (2001) 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 92/43EEC. European Commission, Brussels.

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

NPWS (2013) The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin.

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**Appendix A**  
**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS REPORT**  
Finding no significant effects report matrix

**Name of project or plan**

Construction of a Data Storage Centre (Project R) at Clonshaugh Business & Technology Park, Dublin.

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**Name and location of the Natura 2000 site(s)**

There are no designated conservation areas on the site of the proposed development. Designated conservation areas within a standard 15 kilometre potential zone of influence were considered and include:

- 000199 Baldoyle Bay SAC and 004016 Baldoyle Bay SPA
- 000202 Howth Head SAC and 004113 Howth Head Coast SPA
- 000204 Lambay Island SAC and 004117 Ireland's Eye SPA
- 000205 Malahide Estuary SAC and 004025 Malahide Estuary SPA
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- 004069 Lambay Island SPA
- 003000 Rockabill to Dalkey Islands SAC

The proposed development site has limited biological connectivity and no hydrological connectivity to these Natura 2000 sites.

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**Description of the project or plan**

The proposed development comprises an electronic data storage centre (Project R) which post its construction will generate minimal traffic movements or emissions. The development is the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of an overall Masterplan for up to 4 data centre buildings at the site (as described in Chapter 3 Description of the Proposed Development in the EIS).

The proposed Data Centre building is c.14,000m<sup>2</sup> in area and will be approximately 11.4m high. The administrative area and supporting storage areas etc. are located within the main Data Centre building.

The Project R Data Centre comprises 8 individual data halls – each hall supported by electrical rooms, generators and AHUs. A GIS substation and transformer compound, diesel compound, and on-site attenuation ponds formed part of the previously approved development however increased attenuation capacity is proposed

Access to the site will be via the existing site entrance in the south west of the site. Access is via an unnamed road within the Clonshaugh Business and Technology Park which connects to Clonshaugh Road. Subject to grant of planning permission, construction work is anticipated to commence in Q2 2017 with approximately 12 to 18 months for both the construction phase and commissioning phase prior to commencement of full operations.



The site storm water drainage system will pass through oil interception before passing to storm drainage.

Foul drainage will be collected from site and discharged to the local foul drainage network which ultimately discharges to Ringsend WWTP.

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**Is the project or plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site(s)**

No

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**Are there other projects or plans that together with the projects or plan being assessed could affect the site**

A review of the Dublin City Council website and planning section for the last 3 years was undertaken.

There are 8 records relating to the development of the subject site. There is only one other development proposed for Clonshaugh Business & Technology Park. Pl. Ref. 3933/15 refers to permission to install 4 no. telecommunications equipment containers at Hibernia Network Office, International Exchange Centre, Clonshaugh Business and Technology Park, Dublin 17. There are no predicted cumulative effects with this proposed development.

The Dublin City Development Plan in complying with the requirements of the Habitats Directive requires that all Projects and Plans that could affect the Natura 2000 sites in the same zone of influence of the project site would be initially screened for Appropriate Assessment and if requiring Stage 2 AA, that appropriate employable mitigation measures would be put in place to avoid, reduce or ameliorate negative impacts. In this way any in-combination impacts with Plans or Projects for the area of Clonshaugh in which the development site is located, would be avoided.

Any new applications for the general project area will be assessed on a case by case basis by Dublin City Council which will determine the requirement for AA Screening as per the requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.

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***The assessment of significance of effects***

**Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site.**

The proposed development site has no hydrological connectivity to the Natura 2000 sites considered in the assessment.

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**Explain why these effects are not considered significant.**

Given the inclusion of design measures such as Sustainable Drainage (SuDS) and the fact that the site is not hydrologically connected to the Natura 2000 sites considered, the likelihood of pollution of surface or groundwater water during construction is extremely low.

The development will comply with the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works Version 6.0.

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**List of agencies consulted: provide contact name and telephone or e-mail address**

Dublin City Council was consulted as part of pre-planning scoping.

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### **Response to consultation**

Dublin City Council indicated the requirement for EIA and Appropriate Assessment.

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### ***Data collected to carry out the assessment***

#### **Who carried out the assessment**

Moore Group Environmental Services.

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#### **Sources of data**

NPWS database of designated sites at [www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie)

National Biodiversity Data Centre database <http://maps.biodiversityireland.ie>

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#### **Level of assessment completed**

Desktop Assessment and Field Survey.

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#### **Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed**

Dublin City Council Planning Section.

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### ***Overall Conclusions***

The proposed development site has no hydrological connectivity to the Natura 2000 sites considered in the assessment.

Given the inclusion design measures for surface and storm water treatment and the appropriate disposal of wastewater to the municipal system, there will be no impact on surface or groundwater.

It has been objectively concluded by Moore Group Environmental Services that:

1. The project is not directly connected with, or necessary to the conservation management of the Natura 2000 sites considered in this assessment.
2. The proposed development is unlikely to indirectly, significantly affect the Qualifying interests or Conservation Objectives of the Natura 2000 sites considered in this assessment.
3. The project, alone or in combination with other projects, is not likely to have significant effects on the Natura 2000 sites considered in this assessment in view of their conservation objectives.
4. It has been determined by Moore Group - Environmental Services that it is possible to rule out likely significant impacts on any Natura 2000 sites considered in the assessment.

5. It is possible to conclude that there would be no adverse effects on site integrity resulting from the project and that there would be no significant effects, no potentially significant effects and no uncertain effects if the project were to proceed.

It is the view of Moore Group Environmental Services that it is not necessary to undertake any further stage of the Appropriate Assessment process.

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