



ENVIRONMENTAL BALANCE IN DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

NATURA IMPACT STATEMENT OF THE OLDTOWN MOORETOWN LOCAL AREA PLAN 2010



NOVEMBER 2010



NATURA IMPACT STATEMENT OF THE OLDTOWN MOORETOWN LOCAL AREA PLAN 2010

FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

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Abstract: This document comprises the Natura Impact Assessment of the Oldtown Mooretown Local Area Plan, 2010. The assessment is required under Articles 6 (3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive for any project or plan that may give rise to significant effects on a Natura 2000 site. This assessment follows the methodological guidelines set out in the document 'Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites' (2001) and guidance issued by NPWS 'Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland -Guidance for Planning Authorities' (2009).

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Under the E.U. Birds (2009/147/EC) and Habitats (92/43/EEC) Directives, member states are required to designate areas in order to protect priority habitats and species. These sites are known as Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) respectively. Collectively, these sites are referred to as Natura 2000 sites. Any plan or project that is likely to have a potential impact on a Natura 2000 site must undergo an assessment to determine the potential impacts, and where necessary, devise appropriate measures to prevent or minimise any such impacts.

The requirements for an Appropriate Assessment are set out in the E.U. Habitats Directive. Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of this Directive state:

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

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 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 report comprises the Natura Impact Statement of the Oldtown Mooretown Local Area Plan (LAP). The report has been prepared in consideration of the E.U.'s guidance document 'Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites, Methodological guidance on the provisions of Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC' (2001) and the recently published National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) document 'Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities' (2009).

1.2. Oldtown Mooretown LAP

Fingal County Council has prepared a LAP for the Oldtown Mooretown area. The Oldtown and Mooretown LAP area comprises 111.5 ha of undeveloped lands at the western development boundary of Swords.

The purpose of the LAP is to provide the optimal future development strategy for these lands in order to ensure the proper planning and sustainable development of this area. The LAP clearly establishes the parameters for the future development of the LAP lands.

This assessment was conducted on the draft LAP released for the first consultation period held in April 2010 and appended to the SEA environmental report as Appendix 2. The proposed amendments released for a second consultation period (July to August 2010) were also assessed based on the assessment methodology. This report was updated for the adopted LAP based on the initial screening report and the assessments of amendments proposed to the draft LAP (Table 1.1) and adopted in October 2010.

Table 1.1: Amendments Proposed to the LAP

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. An additional 16 class primary school within the Mooretown Local Centre.2. Phasing programme in relation to key infrastructural elements has been amended, with Western Distributor Link Road brought forward and resultant rearrangement of the phasing of land parcels and associated infrastructure. Revised phasing maps were produced and placed on public display, as well as revised text for section 4 on phasing.3. Commitment to undertake a mid-term review of the LAP by the Planning Authority with a report to be prepared and submitted to the Members before commencement of phase 3. The review shall in particular focus on infrastructural requirements and phasing. The review will be undertaken to ensure assumptions applied to the traffic modelling and analysis undertaken as part of the Transport Network Study by Roughan O'Donovan are valid and remain appropriate. Any amendments arising as a result of the review shall be incorporated as appropriate into the phasing programme or where material shall require a review of the LAP. A mid-term review of the phasing programme in relation to school provision in Mooretown shall be undertaken as part of phase 2 of development. This review shall be undertaken in consultation with the Department of Education and Science and any amendment arising out of this review shall be incorporated within the LAP phasing programme.4. As part of phase 1 of development there is a requirement that Active Class 1 Open Space, including associated changing facilities, generated by development of all of Oldtown lands are to be made available for use prior to commencement of the next phase of development. |
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2. METHODOLOGY FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

This assessment follows the guidance set out in the document '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' (2001). This document is referred to as the 'Guidance Document' in this report. These guidelines are read in conjunction with the document 'Managing Natura 2000 sites: The provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC' (2000). In 2009, NPWS published guidance for the Appropriate Assessment process in Ireland. This document follows the E.U. published guidance with additional information in relation to plans and projects in Ireland. This assessment has taken the NPWS guidance into account.

The assessment requirements of Article 6 are generally dealt with in a stage by stage approach. The stages outlined by the NPWS guidance document are:

- Stage 1: Screening

The process which identifies the likely impacts upon a Natura 2000 site of a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant.

- Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment

The consideration of the impact on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site of the project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, with respect to the site's structure and function and its conservation objectives. Additionally, where there are adverse impacts, an assessment of the potential mitigation of those impacts.

- Stage 3: Assessment of alternative solutions

The process which examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site.

- Stage 4: Assessment where adverse impacts remain

An assessment of compensatory measures where, in the light of an assessment of Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI), it is deemed that the project or plan should proceed.

Each stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required. If, for example, the conclusions at the end of Stage One are that there will be no significant impacts on the Natura 2000 site, there is no requirement to proceed further. It is best practice, however, to complete a 'finding of no significant effects' report. The relationship of the 4 stages of this assessment is illustrated in the NPWS guidance document.

This report covers Stage 1 (screening) only as the proposed LAP is not expected to have significant adverse impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 site.

Throughout this assessment, those paragraphs in *italics* refer to specific instructions contained in the guidance document.

3. STAGE ONE -SCREENING

3.1. Brief Description of the LAP

The LAP area comprises approximately 111.5 hectares and is located at the western development edge of Swords. The Rathbeale Road (R125) divides the plan lands into two distinct areas, with the lands to the north of the road known as Oldtown (c. 50.4 ha) and to the south known as Mooretown (c. 61 ha). The Rathbeale Road links to Swords town centre approx 2 km to the east, and Ashbourne is located approx 10 km to the west. The Broadmeadow River is located north of the Oldtown lands, beyond the LAP boundary.

The lands are located in a transitional zonal area, being between an existing built up area and agricultural lands. To the west of Mooretown the lands are zoned 'GB' – 'to protect and provide for a greenbelt to demarcate the urban and rural area and provide for agriculture and amenity in a manner that protects the physical and visual amenity of the area'. To the west and north of Oldtown, the lands are zoned 'OS' – 'to preserve and provide for open space and recreational amenities', with the OS lands to the west identified for Swords Regional Park and OS lands to north for Broadmeadow Linear Park. To the east and south of the LAP lands are existing residential developments, zoned 'RS' – 'to provide for residential development and to protect and improve residential amenity'.

A Swords Variation was adopted in July 2008 which included zoning changes and proposals for the Oldtown-Mooretown Lands. The following changes were made to the Swords Map, SW1:

LO K - To develop Oldtown-Mooretown Western Distributor Link Road, as part of a comprehensive package of local road improvements to facilitate the optimum and sustainable development of West Swords development area, in accordance with an approved LAP. This road must be delivered in tandem with the construction of any new dwellings on these lands, in accordance with the approved phasing arrangements, as outlined in the LAP for the area.

Rezone GB to RS1 To provide for the rezoning of approximately 17 ha of land from GB to RS1 at Oldtown/Mooretown, thereby extending the development boundary of Swords westwards to provide adequate additional lands to support an improved road and public transport network in west Swords and to support the provision of a mix of uses at this location necessary for the creation of a strong, vibrant and well serviced community, including the Regional Park (Objective SWORDS 17).

Rezone GB to OS Rezone from 'GB' to 'OS' of approximately 65 ha of agricultural land west of Oldtown and adjoining and ultimately extending into the Broadmeadow River Valley Linear Park.

It is estimated that the Local Area Plan will facilitate approx. 3,400 residential units (1,600 at Oldtown and 1,800 at Mooretown), equating to an approximate new population in the region of 10,000 on the west side of Swords. This population will be supported by a range of community services, open space and physical infrastructure, which will be developed in tandem with the growth of the area.

3.1.1. Key Elements of the LAP

Key elements within the LAP include:

- Development of a number of new roads/road links – in particular provision of the Western Distributor Link Road to link in with the future Inner Ward River Valley Crossing.
- To provide for a mix of residential units. The total number of residential units across the lands will be approximately 3,400 units, which could result in a population of approximately 10,000.
- Development of 2 Local Centres, providing for a mix of uses, including retail and community services to serve the plan lands
- Promote and implement sustainable urban drainage solutions within the LAP lands.
- Biodiversity: To incorporate existing trees and hedgerows within green corridors and develop strategic planting; and protect and manage the Broadmeadow River watercourse and existing streams within the plan lands.

- Archaeological Heritage. Protect and preserve in situ the significant subsurface ecclesiastical remains identified in the Oldtown and Mooretown lands, in accordance with the Oldtown-Mooretown Conservation and Management Plan.
- Open space. Develop the lands zoned Open Space within the Swords Regional Park, extend the Broadmeadow River Valley Park, develop a network of green corridors within the LAP lands and ensure a high level of connectivity and accessibility through the incorporation of key green cycle and pedestrian routes.
- Provision of a quality bus route to transport those living in the west of Swords into the Town Centre;
- In order to satisfactorily meet the future school needs of the northwest Swords area, 3 primary schools and 1 secondary school are required.
- The HSE will require one Primary Care Centre for a population of 10,000. It is an objective of this LAP to facilitate this centre within the Mooretown Local Centre
- Development of the LAP lands will only be allowed when the Swords Waste Water Treatment Plant has been upgraded and the foul drainage network improvements have been undertaken.
- All foul infrastructure will be designed and constructed in accordance with the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage works and should comply with the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GSDSDS).

3.2. Measures included in the LAP to ameliorate potential impacts

3.2.1. Storm Water Management

Fingal County Council employs the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GSDSDS), a policy document that aims to minimise the impact of urban drainage systems. Within the GSDSDS, one of the objectives is to ensure that all new developments use a storm water management plan that will replicate the run-off from a Greenfield site. The Oldtown Mooretown LAP has been prepared in line with GSDSDS.

As part of the development of the Oldtown / Mooretown LAP lands, all surface water design and construction works shall be based on the SuDS design philosophy, incorporating an integrated approach to the management of runoff from each catchment and neighbourhood so that a universal and consistent approach to provision of an overall functional solution to surface water management is adopted throughout the LAP lands.

All development within the LAP area shall comply with the SuDS Strategy (Moynlan, March 2010) which has been developed as a background document to this LAP. Specifically the following are the minimum requirements which must be incorporated into each development:

Water Quality

All development must provide suitable measures to ensure that the quality of runoff from roads, paved areas and roofs is improved by incorporating the following:

- Retention ponds;
- green roofs;
- wetlands;
- rainwater harvesting;
- filter drains;
- infiltration trenches;
- permeable paving;
- detention ponds; and
- swales.

Each section and phase of the development within the LAP lands must demonstrate to the satisfaction of Fingal County Council that water quality improvement measures are adequately provided.

In addition, a wetland area is proposed for the regional park along the Broadmeadow River to further improve water quality and to provide for a water based amenity area incorporating biodiversity.

Water Quantity

Surface water attenuation will be provided generally in locations identified in the SuDS Strategy. Design of surface water attenuation shall be based on the requirements of the GDSDS. Particular reference shall be made to Volume 2 Appendix E which provides guidance on attenuation design.

All development areas must provide the following:

- Runoff from roof areas is to be discharged to soakaways where ground conditions are deemed suitable. All planning applications for development within the LAP lands must include percolation tests, carried out in accordance with BRE365. Percolation tests are to be provided at a minimum rate of 1 per hectare.
- All commercial and institutional development within the LAP must include rain water harvesting for each unit within the proposed development.
- Permeable surfacing shall be utilised where it is considered suitable following testing of the sub-grade.
- Storage of storm water in underground tanks will not be permitted

A Surface Water Management Train approach is to be adopted in the design of the proposed surface water drainage regime for the subject lands by utilising suitable SuDS mechanisms in providing Source, Site and Regional Control.

The surface water discharge from the development shall replicate existing Greenfield runoff rates by limiting flow by means of flow control devices constructed to the requirements of Fingal County Council.

All development within the LAP will be designed to tie in with the outfall arrangements set out in the SuDS Strategy for Oldtown-Mooretown.

[3.2.2. Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Fingal East Meath Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study \(FEM FRAMS\)](#)

Fingal County Council along with project partners Meath County Council and the Office of Public Works (OPW) is currently carrying out FEM FRAMS, which is a catchment-based flood risk assessment and management study of rivers and streams within the county area. The Broadmeadow River runs along the northern boundary of the site with several tributaries running through the development lands. Draft flood risk maps have been produced for this river for the 1% (1 in 100) and 0.1% (1 in 1000) probability of flooding.

As part of any future application on these lands, the results of FEM FRAMS shall be adhered to. No development shall be permitted in the 1 in 100 year flood probability, as defined by the FEM FRAMS.

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment of the plan lands has also been undertaken to ensure no negative impact on the Broadmeadow River.

[3.2.3. Foul drainage](#)

Foul wastewater generated by the developments within the LAP area will be treated at the existing Swords wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). At present, the Swords WWTP is operating at its design capacity of 60,000 population equivalent (p.e). Fingal County Council intends to upgrade the plant to 90,000 p.e. in the medium term and are investigating the possibility of expanding to 140,000 in the long term. The Council has applied for a discharge licence to operate the existing plant and an Appropriate Assessment was carried out in parallel with this process. The assessment found that there is no significant impact caused by the discharge from the Swords WWTP on any Natura 2000 site. Any increase in the capacity of the WWTP will require a further Appropriate Assessment.

All foul infrastructure will be designed and constructed in accordance with the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage works and will comply with the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GDSDS).

No residential development shall take place within the LAP lands until such time as the Swords WWTP has been upgraded, is operational and the required network upgrades to facilitate development are completed. To comply with this, a phasing programme for development of the LAP area is to be drawn up so that residential development can only take place in relation to the phased development of the required infrastructure, including foul water services.

3.3. Existing environment at the LAP lands

The LAP lands are primarily agricultural in nature. The lands at Mooretown, south of the Rathbeale Road, comprise a significant number of trees/hedgerows. Lands at Oldtown, to the north, contain large fields with few subdivisions. The Broadmeadow River lies to the north of the LAP boundary. The Environment Protection Agency (EPA) website shows that the nearest water quality monitoring station downstream of the site has a water quality (Q rating) value of 3.

A limited number of individual residences and commercial premises are located on the lands adjoining the Rathbeale Road, and 2 no. temporary school facilities are located north of the Rathbeale Road, at the termination of the Glen Ellan Distributor Road Extension. The temporary schools have been granted planning permission and a permanent structure will be built in due course to the east of the temporary location.

Access to the Mooretown lands is generally restricted to agricultural and individual residential access points only from the Rathbeale Road. Lands at Oldtown are accessible by an extension to a local distributor road known as the Glen Ellan Distributor Road, which traverses this landbank.

3.4. Brief description of the Natura 2000 sites

The LAP lands do not include any area that has been designated as a Natura 2000 site (i.e. SAC or SPA). Neither does the LAP boundary lie adjacent to a Natura 2000 site. The Broadmeadow River lies to the north of the LAP lands and flows into the Broadmeadow (Malahide) estuary, which is a designated SPA, cSAC, pNHA and Ramsar site. In line with NPWS guidance, the Natura 2000 sites that occur within a 15 km radius of the LAP land boundary are given in Table 3.1 below. Figure 3.1 also shows these sites in relation to the LAP lands boundary.

A total of 17 Natura 2000 sites lie within 15 km of the LAP boundary. The SAC's are:

- Malahide Estuary (site code 000205)
- Rogerstown Estuary (000208)
- Baldoyle Bay (000199)
- North Dublin Bay (000206)
- South Dublin Bay (000210)
- Howth Head (000202)
- Ireland's Eye (002193)
- Lambay Island (000204)

The SPA's are:

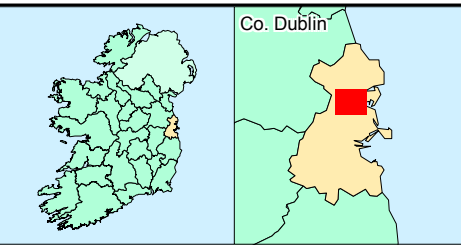
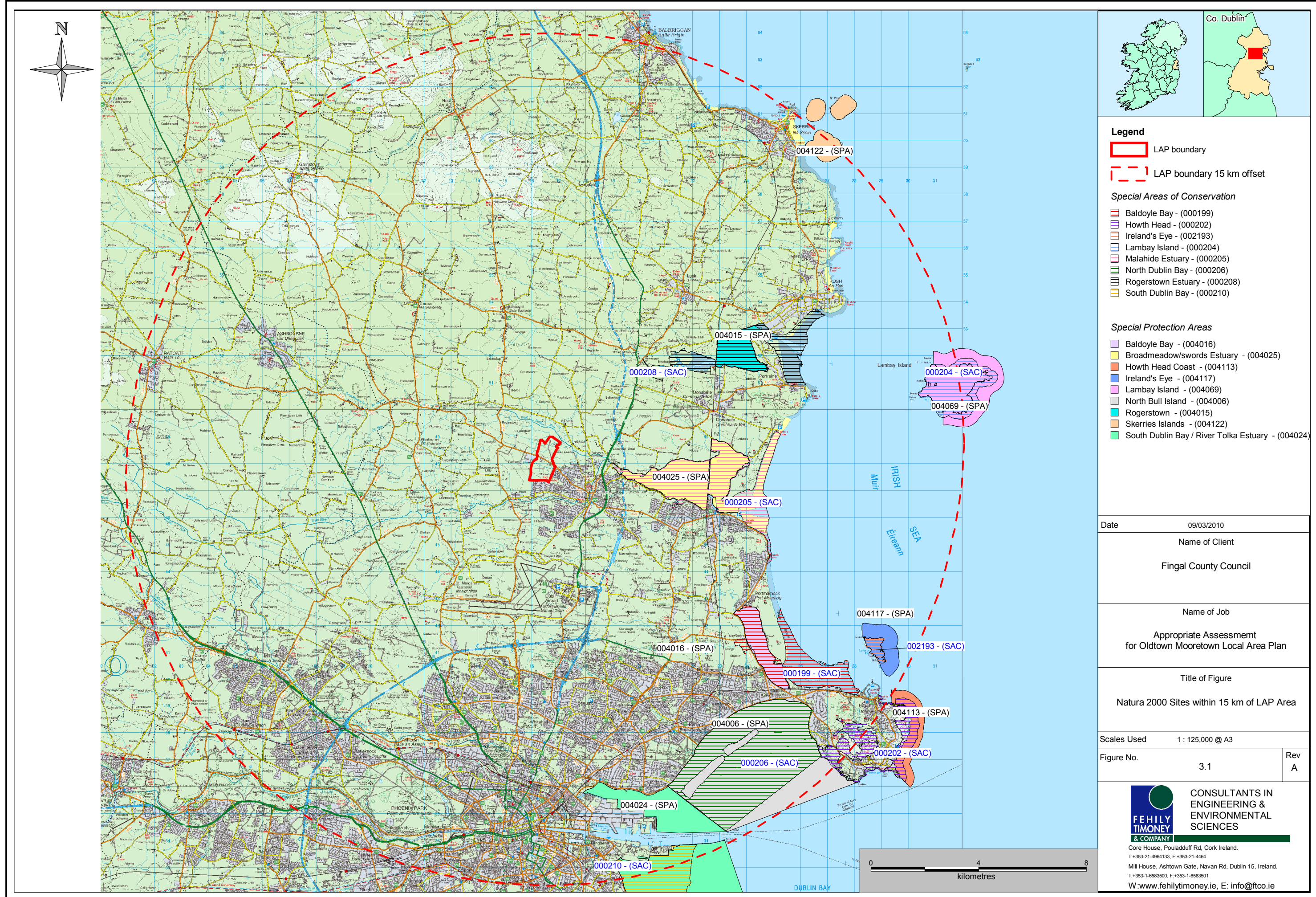
- Broadmeadow/Swords Estuary (site code 004025)
- Rogerstown Estuary (004015)
- Baldoyle Bay (004016)
- North Bull Island (004006)
- South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary (004024)
- Ireland's Eye (004117)
- Lambay Island (004069)
- Howth Head Coast (004113)
- Skerries Islands (004122)

Table 3.1: Natura 2000 sites within 15 km of the LAP boundary

Designated Site	Site Code	Reason for designation	Minimum Distance from site (km)
Malahide Estuary SAC	000205	This site is a fine example of an estuarine system with all the main habitats represented. The site is important ornithologically, with a population of Brent Geese of international significance.	2.0
Broadmeadow/Swords Estuary SPA	004025	Broadmeadow/Swords Estuary SPA is a fine example of an estuarine system, providing both feeding and roosting areas for a range of wintering waterfowl. The lagoonal nature of the inner estuary is of particular value as it increases the diversity of birds which occur. The site is of high conservation importance, with an internationally important population of Brent Goose and nationally important populations of a further 12 species. Three of the species which occur regularly (Golden Plover, Bar-tailed Godwit and Ruff) are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive.	2.4
Rogerstown Estuary SAC & SPA	000208 & 004015	This site is a good example of an estuarine system, with all typical habitats represented, including several listed on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive. Rogerstown is an internationally important waterfowl site and has been a breeding site for Little Terns. The presence within the site of three rare plant species adds to its importance. It is an important link in the chain of estuaries on the east coast. It supports an internationally important population of Brent Goose and a further 14 species in numbers of national importance.	3.8 SAC 6.4 SPA
Baldoyle Bay SPA & SAC	004016 & 000199	Baldoyle Bay is a fine example of an estuarine system. It contains four habitats listed on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive and has two legally protected plant species. The site is also an important bird area and supports internationally important numbers of Brent Geese and nationally important numbers of six other species including two Annex I Birds Directive species.	8.4
North Bull Island SPA	004006	The North Bull Island SPA is an excellent example of an estuarine complex and is one of the top sites in Ireland for wintering waterfowl. It is of international importance on account of both the total number of waterfowl and the individual populations of Light-bellied Brent Goose, Black-tailed Godwit and Bar-tailed Godwit that use it. Also of significance is the regular presence of several species that are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive, notably Golden Plover and Bar-tailed Godwit, but also Ruff and Short-eared Owl	11.0

Designated Site	Site Code	Reason for designation	Minimum Distance from site (km)
North Dublin Bay SAC	000206	This site is an excellent example of a coastal site with all the main habitats represented. The holds good examples of ten habitats that are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive; one of these is listed with priority status. Several of the wintering bird species have populations of international importance, while some of the invertebrates are of national importance. The site contains a numbers of rare and scarce plants including some which are legally protected. Its proximity to the capital city makes North Dublin Bay an excellent site for educational studies and research.	11.0
South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA	004024	The South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA is of international importance for Light-bellied Brent Goose and of national importance for nine other waterfowl species. As an autumn tern roost, it is also of international importance. Furthermore, the site supports a nationally important colony of Common Tern. All of the tern species using the site are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive, as are Bar-tailed Godwit and Mediterranean Gull.	11.3
Ireland's Eye SAC & SPA	002193 & 004117	This uninhabited marine island has a well developed maritime flora, with two habitats (sea cliffs and shingle) listed on Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive. The island is of high ornithological importance, with seven seabird species having populations of national importance. The regular presence of a breeding pair of Peregrine Falcon is also of note.	13
Lambay Island SAC & SPA	000204 & 004069	Lambay is an internationally important seabird colony and one of the top seabird sites in Ireland. Four species have populations of international importance and a further five have populations of national importance. In addition to the seabirds, it also supports a nationally important population of Greylag Goose. The site is also of conservation for the population of Grey Seal, a species that is listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive and has good examples of vegetated sea cliffs, a habitat listed on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive,	13.4
Howth Head SAC	000202	Howth Head displays a fine range of natural habitats, including two Annex I habitats, within surprisingly close proximity to Dublin city. The site is also of scientific importance for its seabird colonies, invertebrates and lichens. It also supports populations of at least two legally protected plant species and several other scarce plants.	14

Designated Site	Site Code	Reason for designation	Minimum Distance from site (km)
Skerries Islands SPA	004122	The Skerries Islands SPA is of high ornithological importance for both breeding seabirds and wintering waterfowl, with six species having populations of National Importance. In addition there is an internationally important population of Brent Goose. Golden Plover and Short-eared Owl, EU Birds Directive Annex I species, occur regularly in winter.	14.1
South Dublin Bay SAC	000210	This site is a fine example of a coastal system with extensive sand and mudflats, a habitat listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive. South Dublin Bay is also an internationally important bird site.	14.2
Howth Head Coast SPA	004113	This site is of high ornithological importance, with four seabird species having populations of national importance. It is also a traditional nesting site for Peregrine Falcon.	14.9



- Legend**
- LAP boundary
 - LAP boundary 15 km offset
- Special Areas of Conservation**
- Baldoye Bay - (000199)
 - Howth Head - (000202)
 - Ireland's Eye - (002193)
 - Lambay Island - (000204)
 - Malahide Estuary - (000205)
 - North Dublin Bay - (000206)
 - Rogerstown Estuary - (000208)
 - South Dublin Bay - (000210)
- Special Protection Areas**
- Baldoye Bay - (004016)
 - Broadmeadow/swords Estuary - (004025)
 - Howth Head Coast - (004113)
 - Ireland's Eye - (004117)
 - Lambay Island - (004069)
 - North Bull Island - (004006)
 - Rogerstown - (004015)
 - Skerries Islands - (004122)
 - South Dublin Bay / River Tolka Estuary - (004024)

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Name of Client	Fingal County Council
Name of Job	Appropriate Assessment for Oldtown Mooretown Local Area Plan
Title of Figure	Natura 2000 Sites within 15 km of LAP Area
Scales Used	1 : 125,000 @ A3
Figure No.	3.1
Rev	A

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3.5. Assessment Criteria

3.5.1. Description of the elements of the project likely to give rise to impacts on the Natura 2000 site

Describe the individual elements of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the Natura 2000 site.

The Oldtown-Mooretown LAP will set out a development strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the plan lands, which will address issues relating to:

- Phased and integrated development of LAP lands, primarily for residential use, with a supporting level of mixed uses to serve the needs of the area and support the development of a sustainable community;
- Creation of a permeable and legible movement network for all modes of transport linking the site internally and with the surrounding area;
- Provision of high quality recreational open space and amenity facilities to meet needs of the expanding population in this area;
- Increase in community and health care facilities, in particular provision of additional schools;
- Enhancement and preservation of existing archaeological sites and increase in appropriate usage and public acknowledgement of such sites;
- Enhancement and protection of existing environmental features within the plan lands and Broadmeadow Linear Park north of the plan lands.

It is to be noted that while the LAP sets out aims, policies and objectives to promote the sustainable development of Oldtown Mooretown area, it does not set out any specific development projects. However it does put forward that a new Western Distributor Link Road is to be constructed to facilitate the development of the LAP lands.

The LAP further allows for a total number of residential units across the lands of approximately 3,400 units, which could result in a population of approximately 10,000. The LAP recognises that the existing Swords WWTP will require upgrading in order to allow for this level of development and that development will not take place until sufficient capacity exists in the WWTP.

Whilst no Natura 2000 site occurs within the LAP lands or lies adjacent to the LAP boundary, the LAP does recognise that the Broadmeadow River is located north of the lands. This river flows into the Broadmeadow (Malahide) estuary, which is a designated SPA and cSAC. It is therefore important that the quality of this river is maintained and that all future development examines surface water issues, and that SUDS principles are incorporated.

3.5.2. Description of the likely impacts of the project on Natura 2000 sites

Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the Natura 2000 site by virtue of:

Likely Impacts of the Plan on the Natura 2000 site by Virtue of:

Size and scale

The total area of land covered by the LAP boundary is approximately 112 ha. There are no Natura 2000 sites within the LAP boundary or adjacent to the LAP boundary. The nearest Natura 2000 sites are the Malahide Estuary SAC and Broadmeadow Swords Estuary SPA, approximately 2 and 2.4 km downstream of the LAP lands. There will be no direct impact on any Natura 2000 site as a result of this LAP in terms of size and scale.

Land-take

There are no Natura 2000 sites within the LAP boundary or adjacent to the LAP boundary. The nearest Natura 2000 sites are the Malahide Estuary SAC and Broadmeadow Swords Estuary SPA, some 2 and 2.4 km downstream of the LAP lands. It is considered that there will be no significant impacts on any Natura 2000 site in terms of land-take as a result of the LAP.

Distance from Natura 2000 site or key features of the site

There are no Natura 2000 sites within or adjacent to the LAP boundary. The nearest designated sites are the Malahide Estuary SAC and Broadmeadow Swords Estuary SPA, approximately 2 and 2.4 km downstream. There are no other Natura 2000 sites within 3 km of the LAP land and no other sites downstream.

Resource requirements (water abstraction etc)

Not possible to reliably estimate at this time. The LAP lands are within the district served by the reservoir in Ballycoolin. Any future increase in water requirements and water supply will need to be assessed as detail on the requirements becomes available. If any proposed increase in water supply is thought to have the potential to impact on a Natura 2000 site, then it will require an Appropriate Assessment.

Likely Impacts of the Plan on the Natura 2000 site by Virtue of:*Emission (disposal to land, water or air)*

The waste water treatment works at Spittal Hill in Swords treats sewage effluent for the agglomeration of Swords. The treatment works discharges treated effluent to the Broadmeadow River at the top of the estuary just slightly upstream of the M1 Motorway Bridge. Ministerial approval was granted in 1998 for the upgrading of the existing treatment works in two phases following the submission of an Environmental Impact Statement. Phase 1 of the upgrade has expanded the works to cater for a 60,000 p.e. and Phase 2 would add a further 30,000 p.e. to the capacity of the works.

At present, the Swords WWTP is operating at its design capacity of 60,000 p.e. Fingal County Council intends to upgrade the plant to 90,000 p.e. in the medium term and is investigating the possibility of expanding to 140,000 in the long term. The Council has applied for a discharge licence to operate the existing plant and an Appropriate Assessment was carried out in parallel with this process. The assessment found that there is no significant impact caused by the discharge from the Swords WWTP on any Natura 2000 site. Any increase in the capacity of the WWTP will require a further Appropriate Assessment.

Development of the LAP lands will only be allowed where capacity is available.

All foul infrastructure will be designed and constructed in accordance with the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage works and should comply with the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GSDSDS).

The measures included in the plan in relation to emissions ensure that there will be no impacts on Natura 2000 sites.

Excavation requirements

At the planning stage, detailed proposals are not available but given that no Natura site occurs within the LAP boundary, it is considered that there will be no impact arising as a result of excavation requirements.

Transportation requirements

In order to facilitate development of the LAP lands, a tiered and phased approach to the improvement of the road network is required. The following elements are necessary:

- Development of a number of new roads/road links – in particular provision of the Western Distributor Link Road and the Inner Ward River Valley Crossing;

- Enhancement of existing junctions;
- Redesign of Glen Ellan Road and
- Design of Mooretown Main Street
- Provision of a quality bus route to transport those living in the west of Swords into the Town Centre;
- Provision of pedestrian and cyclist networks, associated with green corridors both within and into adjoining areas.

No details are available on any of these schemes at this Plan stage. However, given that no Natura 2000 site occurs within the LAP boundary, these proposals are considered to have no impact on any Natura 2000 site.

Duration of construction, operation, decommissioning etc.

Not possible to reliably assess at this time. However, given that no Natura 2000 site occurs within the LAP boundary, it is considered there will be no impact on any Natura 2000 site.

Other

Not possible to reliably assess at this time. However, given that no Natura 2000 site occurs within the LAP boundary, it is considered there will be no impact on any Natura 2000 site

3.5.3. [Description of the likely changes to the site](#)

Describe any Likely Changes to the Site Arising as a Result of:

Reduction of habitat area

There will be no reduction in habitat area of any Natura 2000 site arising as a result of this LAP.

Disturbance to key species

The nearest Natura 2000 sites to the LAP lands are the Malahide Estuary cSAC and the Broadmeadow/Swords Estuary SPA, approximately 2 and 2.4 km downstream of the LAP lands. The SAC is designated for a range of habitats, whilst the SPA is designated for its populations of wintering birds, particularly Light-bellied Brent Geese. Atlantic Salmon (a species listed under Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive) and Brown Trout are known to occur within Broadmeadow River. Foul water treatment will be via the existing Swords WWTP and surface water drainage will follow SUDS principles ensuring that there will be no disturbance impacts on these fish species. There will be no disturbance impacts arising on any of the key species within any Natura 2000 site as a result of this LAP.

Habitat or species fragmentation:

There will be no impacts on any Natura 2000 site resulting in habitat or species fragmentation.

Reduction in species diversity

There will be no impacts on any Natura 2000 site resulting in species diversity.

Describe any Likely Changes to the Site arising as a Result of:

Changes in key indicators of conservation value (water quality etc.)

The EPA operates a water quality monitoring programme and has one monitoring station that is relevant to the LAP area, at the bridge adjacent to the Swords WWTP (station code 08B020800). This monitoring station lies downstream of the LAP area. The most recent results for water quality monitoring at this station give the water quality as poor (Q value of 3). It is assumed that the EPA will continue to monitor these stations and will therefore be able to report on any changes in water quality. Furthermore, the plan proposes an upgrade to the Swords WWTP prior to any development on the LAP lands which should further ensure that water quality is maintained.

3.5.4. The likely impacts on the Natura 2000 site as a whole

Describe any likely impacts on the Natura 2000 site as a whole in terms of:

- *interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site;*
- *interference with key relationships that define the function of the site.*

It is not considered likely that there will be any long term impacts on the key relationships that define the structure or function of any of the Natura 2000 sites that lie within 15 km of the LAP lands.

3.5.5. Indicators of significance of these impacts

Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of:

Potential Impact	Significance indicator
Disturbance to fauna	None foreseen
Change in key elements of the site e.g. water quality	None foreseen
Habitat loss or degradation	None foreseen
Fragmentation	None foreseen
Disruption	None foreseen

It is emphasised that this Plan does not propose any detailed projects and that impacts and their significance cannot be reliably estimated at this stage.

3.5.6. The likely significance of the potential impacts

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 are not known.

It is not considered likely that there will be any impacts on any of the Natura 2000 sites that occur within 15 km of the LAP lands. Therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not required and a finding of no significance report has been completed for these sites. This is provided in Section 4.

4. FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS REPORT

Finding of No Significant Effects Report	
<i>Name and location of the Natura 2000 site</i>	<p> Malahide Estuary SAC Rogerstown Estuary SAC Baldoyle Bay SAC North Dublin Bay SAC South Dublin Bay SAC Howth Head SAC Ireland's Eye SAC Lambay Island SAC Broadmeadow/Swords Estuary SPA Rogerstown Estuary SPA Baldoyle Bay SPA North Bull Island SPA South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA Ireland's Eye SPA Lambay Island SPA Howth Head Coast SPA Skerries Islands SPA </p>
<i>Description of the project or plan</i>	<p>The Oldtown-Mooretown LAP sets out a development strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the LAP lands, which will address issues relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodation of phased and integrated growth of Swords, primarily for residential use, with a supporting level of mixed uses at Local Centres/Neighbourhood Centres to serve the needs of the area and support the development of a sustainable community; • Creation of a permeable and legible movement network for future development, with access and circulation by all modes of transport linking the site internally and with the surrounding area; • Provision of high quality recreational open space and amenity facilities to meet needs of the expanding population in this area; • Increase in community facilities and health care facilities, in particular provision of additional schools to serve existing and future population; • Enhancement and preservation of existing archaeological sites and increase in appropriate usage and public acknowledgement of such sites.
<i>Is the Project or Plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site (provide details)?</i>	No
<i>Are there other projects or plans that together with the project or plan being assessed could affect the site (provide details)?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swords Waste water Discharge Licence application – Appropriate Assessment, 2009 • Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study • Fingal development Plan 2005-2011

The Assessment of Significant Effects

<i>Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site</i>	The Oldtown Mooretown LAP is not likely to affect any Natura 2000 site.
<i>Explain why these effects are not considered significant</i>	There are no Natura 2000 sites within the LAP boundary or lying adjacent to the boundary. There will be no direct impacts arising from landtake or fragmentation of habitats. The nearest Natura 2000 site is some 2 km from the LAP boundary and there will be no impacts arising from disturbance to any key species or habitats.

Name of Agency or body Consulted	Summary of Response
Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government	A scoping letter was sent to the DoEHLG seeking consultation on the Strategic Environmental Assessment and AA. No response has been received to date.
Eastern Regional Fisheries Board	The ERFB noted that the Broadmeadow River lies close to the northern boundary of the LAP lands. This river supports populations of Atlantic Salmon and Brown Trout. The LAP should incorporate SUDS principles in order to protect sensitive aquatic habitats and species.

Data collected to carry out the assessment

<i>Who carried out the assessment</i>	<i>Sources of Data</i>	<i>Level of assessment completed</i>	<i>Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed</i>
Fehily Timoney and Company on behalf of Fingal County Council	Desktop study of existing information, the Oldtown Mooretown Local Area Plan and the SEA for the LAP. Published information on distribution of protected or rare habitats and species e.g. NPWS website. Water quality data obtained from EPA website.	As well as this Appropriate Assessment scoping report, an SEA was carried out of the Oldtown Mooretown LAP.	Fingal County Council

5. OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

A screening report to determine whether an Appropriate Assessment is required for the Oldtown Mooretown LAP and whether the LAP will lead to any significant impacts on any Natura 2000 site (i.e. SAC or SPA as designated under the E.U. Habitats and Birds Directive) was undertaken.

The Oldtown Mooretown LAP boundary covers an area of approximately 111.5 ha. The LAP allows for the provision of a total number of residential units across the lands of approximately 3,400 units, which could result in a population of approximately 10,000. The LAP recognises that the existing Swords Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) will require upgrading in order to allow for this level of development and that development will not take place until sufficient capacity exists at the WWTP.

There are no Natura 2000 sites within the LAP lands or lying adjacent to the LAP boundary. There are a total of 17 Natura 2000 sites within a 15 km radius of the LAP boundary. The screening report shows that the LAP will not lead to any significant impacts on any of these sites and an Appropriate Assessment is not required. A 'Finding of No Significant Effects' report has been produced.