



Access to Tramore Valley Park
Via Half Moon Lane
Road Improvement Scheme

Screening Report for Appropriate
Assessment

Doherty Environmental Consultants Ltd.

July 2020

Access to Tramore Valley Park

Via Half Moon Lane

Road Improvement Scheme

Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment

Document Stage	Document Version	Prepared by
Final	1	Pat Doherty MSc, MCIEEM

For and on behalf of

Doherty Environmental Consultants
Ltd

Prepared By: Pat Doherty

This report has been prepared by Doherty Environmental Consultants Ltd. with all reasonable skill, care and diligence. Information report herein is based on the interpretation of data collected and has been accepted in good faith as being accurate and valid.

This report is prepared for Cork City Council and we accept no responsibility to third parties to whom this report, or any part thereof, is made known. Any such party relies on the report at their own risk.

Table of Contents

<u>1.0 INTRODUCTION</u>	1
1.1 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT	1
1.1.1 REQUIREMENT FOR AN ASSESSMENT UNDER ARTICLE 6 OF THE HABITATS DIRECTIVE	1
<u>2.0 SCREENING METHOD</u>	5
<u>3.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION</u>	6
3.1 PROJECT AIM	6
3.2 OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT	7
3.3 KEY FEATURES OF THE PROJECT	8
3.4 PLANT & CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS REQUIRED	8
3.5 SITE PERSONNEL	10
3.6 DURATION OF CONSTRUCTION PHASE	11
3.7 BASELINE ECOLOGY AT THE PROJECT SITE	11
3.7.1 HABITATS	11
3.7.2 FAUNA	11
3.8 IS THE PROJECT DIRECTLY CONNECTED WITH OR NECESSARY FOR THE CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT OF EUROPEAN SITES	11
<u>4.0 IDENTIFY EUROPEAN SITES LIKELY TO BE INFLUENCED BY THE PROJECT</u>	11
4.1 OVERVIEW OF THE CORK HARBOUR SPA	12
4.2 OVERVIEW OF THE GREAT ISLAND CHANNEL SAC	13
4.3 DO THE CORK HARBOUR EUROPEAN SITES OCCUR WITHIN THE ZONE OF INFLUENCE OF THE PROJECT	14
<u>5.0 SCREENING STATEMENT CONCLUSION: FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS</u>	22
<u>REFERENCES</u>	23

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Cork City Council have commissioned Doherty Environmental Consultants (DEC) Ltd. to complete a Stage 1 Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment for the development of a safe access point for all road users to the Tramore Valley Park by way of Half Moon Lane and the South Douglas Road. The location of the project is shown on Figure 1.1.

This Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment forms Stage 1 of the Habitats Directive Assessment process and is being undertaken in order to comply with the requirements of the Habitats Directive Article 6(3). The function of this Screening Report is to identify the potential for the project to result in likely significant effects to European Sites and to provide information so that the competent authority can determine whether a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is required for the project.

1.1 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

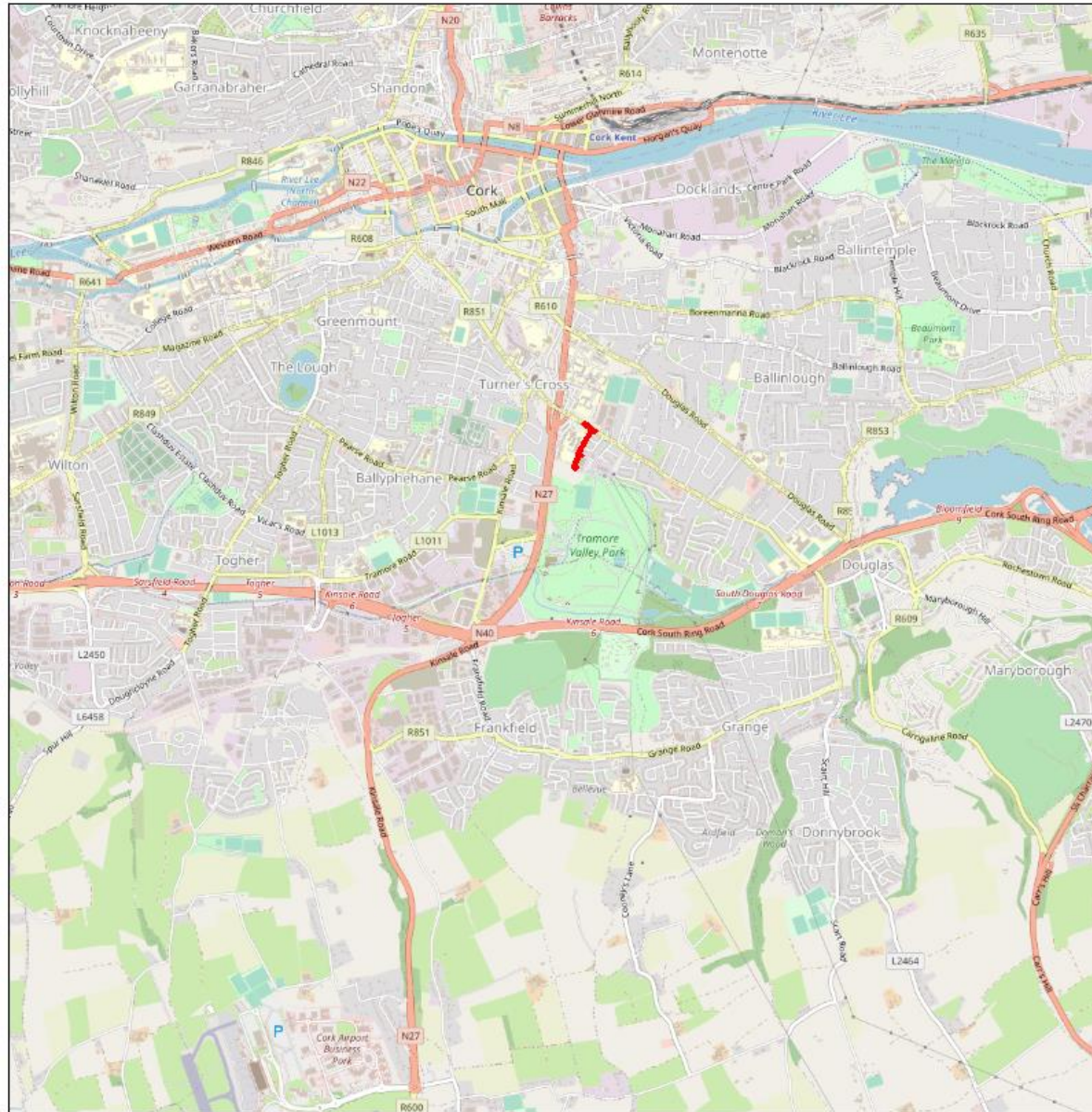
This Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment is being prepared in order to enable the competent authority to comply with Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC (The Habitats Directive). It is prepared to assess whether or not the project alone or in combination with other plans and projects is likely to have a significant effect on any European Site in view of best scientific knowledge and in view of the conservation objectives of the European Sites and specifically on the habitats and species for which the sites have been designated.

1.1.1 Requirement for an Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive

According to Regulation 42(1) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 – 2015, the competent Authority has a duty to:

- Determine whether the proposed Project is directly connected to or necessary for the management of one of more European Sites; and, if not,
- Determine if the Project, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, would be likely to have a significant effect on the European Site(s) in view of best scientific knowledge and the Conservation Objectives of the site(s).

This Report contains a Screening for Appropriate Assessment and is intended to examine and address all issues regarding the construction and operation of the Project and to inform and allow the competent authority to comply with the Habitats Directive. Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive defines the requirements for assessment of projects and plans for which likely significant effects on European Sites may arise. The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 – 2015 (the Habitats Regulations) transpose into Irish law Directive 2009/147/EC (the Birds Directive) and Council Directive 92/43/EEC (the Habitats Directive) lists habitats and species that are of international importance for conservation and require protection. The Habitats legislation requires competent authorities, to carry out a Screening for Appropriate Assessment of plans and projects that, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, would be likely to have significant effects on European Sites in view of best scientific knowledge and the Site’s conservation objectives. This requirement is transposed into Irish Law by Part 5 of the Habitats Regulations and Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).



Tramore Valley Park Access via Half Moon Lane

Figure 1.1

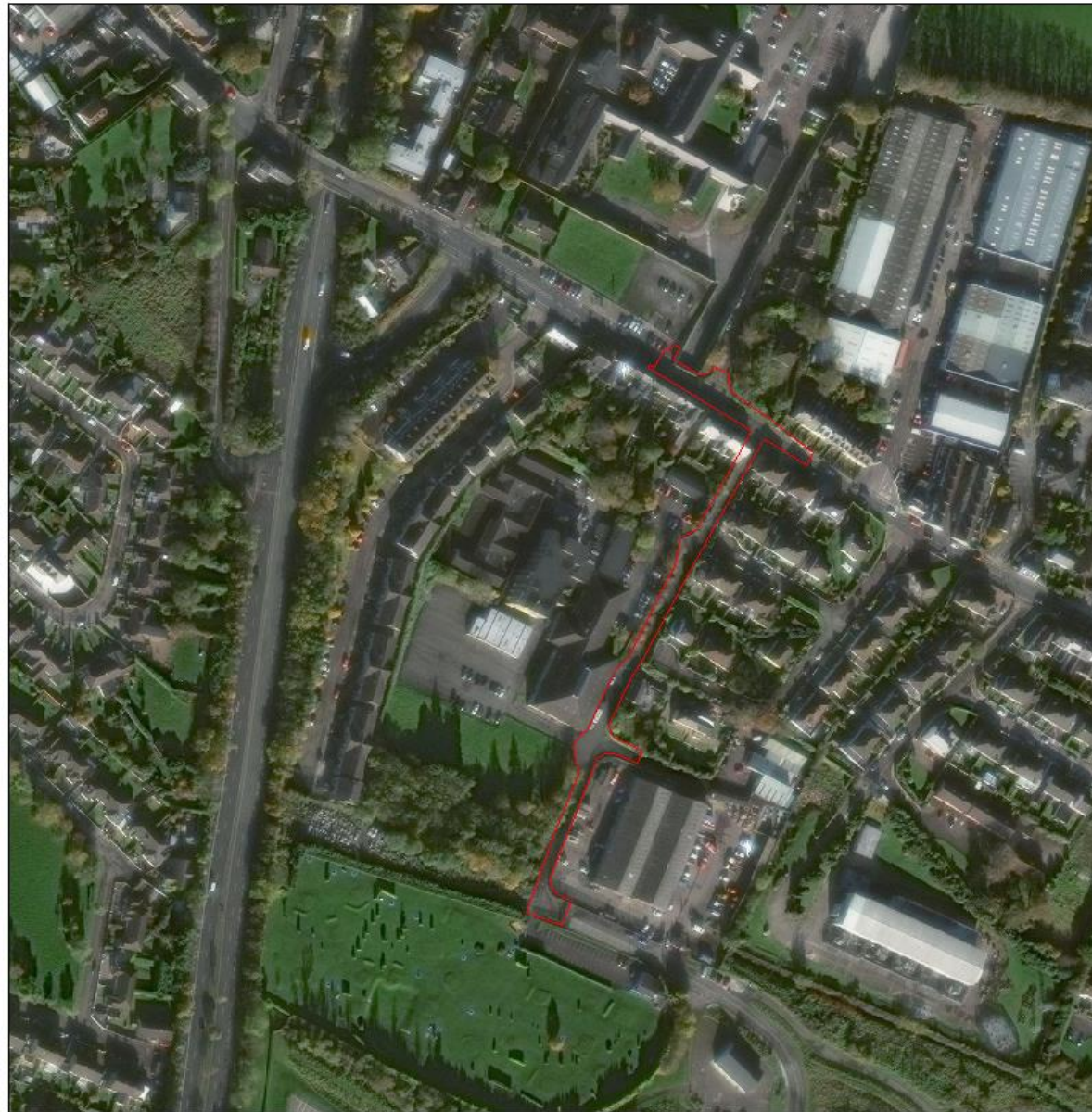
Aerial View of Project Extent

 Project Location

0 0.35 0.7 1.4 Km



Drawn By	PD
Date	29/07/2020
Data Source	OSM




Tramore Valley Park Access via Half Moon Lane

Figure 1.2

Aerial View of Project Extent

 Project Extent

0 0.0275 0.055 0.11 Km



Drawn By	PD
Date	29/07/2020
Data Source	OSM

2.0 SCREENING METHOD

The function of the Screening exercise is to identify whether or not the proposal will have a likely significant effect on European Sites. In this context “likely” refers to the presence of doubt with regard to the absence of significant effects (ECJ case C-127/02) and “significant” means not trivial or inconsequential but an effect that has the potential to undermine the site’s conservation objectives (English Nature, 1999; ECJ case C-127/02 &). In other words any effect that compromises the conservation objectives for the site would constitute a significant effect.

The nature of the likely interactions between the project and the conservation objectives of European Sites will depend upon the sensitivity of the sites qualifying features of interest to potential impacts arising from the project; the current conservation status of the European Sites and its qualifying features of interest; and any likely changes to key environmental indicators (e.g. habitat structure; vegetation community) that underpin the conservation status of the site and its associated qualifying features of interest, in combination with other plans and projects.

This Screening exercise has been undertaken with reference to respective National and European guidance documents: Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland (2010) and *Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 sites – Methodological Guidance of the Provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats directive*

92/43/EEC and relevant European and National case law. The following guidance documents were also of relevance during this Screening Assessment:

- Managing Natura 2000 Sites – The provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats directive 92/43/EEC. European commission (2018).

The EC (2001) guidelines outline the stages involved in undertaking a Screening exercise of a project that has the potential to have likely significant effects on European Sites. The methodology adopted for this Screening exercise is informed by these guidelines and was undertaken in the following stages:

1. Describe the project and determine whether it is necessary for the conservation management of European Sites;
2. Identify European Sites likely to be influenced by the project;
3. Screen the project against established assessment criteria to determine if it has the potential to affect European Sites; and
4. Identify other plans or projects that, in combination with the project, have the potential to affect European Sites.

3.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3.1 PROJECT AIM

The purpose of the proposed development is to provide safe access route to the Tramore Valley Park. Currently there is limited access to the Tramore Valley Park (a major new parkland area close to the centre of Cork City of over 70 hectares). One entrance is off the N27 City Link, a dual carriageway, the other access is a pedestrian/cyclist access close to Douglas Village.

The objective of this scheme is to develop safe access for pedestrians and cyclists to the Park by way of Half Moon Lane and the South Douglas Road. South Douglas Road currently operates as a two-way commuter link to the city from the large residential and commercial area of Douglas and its environs.

Pedestrian facilities on South Douglas Road are limited due to existing public roadway widths and there are no off-road cycle facilities. Future plans as outlined in the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS) document may see the South Douglas Road become one-way inbound to the city which will allow for the widening of footpaths and the provision of bus lanes/cycle facilities. There is no set date for the delivery of this scheme. The current proposed scheme as presented does not compromise the delivery of this project and it is in accordance with both CMATS and the Cork City Cycle Network Strategy Document.

3.2 OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT

- Cork City Council proposes to carry out works which includes the provision of new footpaths on Half Moon Lane, a new signalised junction with controlled pedestrian crossings, the relocation of an existing controlled pedestrian crossing on South Douglas Road (southbound), new uncontrolled pedestrian crossings on Half Moon Lane, a new public lighting scheme, new traffic calming measures, improved road markings, signage and elements of carriageway resurfacing. The proposed scheme will have the following benefits: -
 - The provision of continuous footpath access to Tramore Valley Park from South Douglas Road via Half Moon Lane.
 - The scheme will improve road safety for pedestrians and cyclists to access Tramore Valley Park via Half Moon Lane
 - The proposed new LED Street lighting scheme will provide an appropriate level of lighting along the length of the scheme ensuring a safer environment for all users.
 - The proposed signalised junction with controlled pedestrian crossings of Half Moon Lane and the South Douglas Road will have the following benefits:
 - Resolve the current sightline issue for vehicles exiting the junction onto South Douglas Road.
 - Facilitate the swept path of large vehicles, including Council vehicles, when exiting onto South Douglas Road.
 - Provide controlled pedestrian facilities on the identified pedestrian desire line when accessing the Secondary School and Tramore Valley Park from South Douglas Road (northbound).
- Works proposed on the South Douglas Road will result in wider footpaths and a narrowing of the trafficked carriageway resulting in a traffic calming gain at this location.
- The scheme will fit into a wider cycling network, which connects Grange/Donnybrook to Cork City Centre.

The location of the proposed road improvement works are set out on the drawing numbers HMLUW_SL_P01 and HMLUW_PL_P01/02/03 and HMLUW_PLXS_P01, contained in

Appendix B of Part 8 Planning Report which is presented under separate cover as part of the Part 8 planning documentation.

3.3 KEY FEATURES OF THE PROJECT

The following lists the principal features of the proposed scheme:

- Construction of new footpaths to ensure a continuous provision along South Douglas Road and Half Moon Lane.
- Installation of a new traffic signal-controlled junction between South Douglas Road and Half Moon Lane with pedestrian crossing including advance stop lines for cyclists.
- Re-location of a demand activated controlled pedestrian crossing on South Douglas Road.
- Installation of uncontrolled pedestrian crossings at entrances along Half Moon Lane.
- Tightening up of junction radii at the school entrances and on the access road to the Business Park on Half Moon Lane using concrete build-outs.
- The use of a single lane 'Priority' section of road on Half Moon Lane to facilitate the provision of a minimum 1.8m footpath.
- Installation of a new LED Public Lighting Scheme.
- Alterations to existing surface water drainage.
- Installation of new road markings and signage including cycle route markings.
- Changing the existing Woodlawn residential access from traffic signal-controlled to a Priority Junction.

3.4 PLANT & CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS REQUIRED

The type of plant and machinery required will be typical civil engineering road construction plant for earthworks and paving, and is likely to include:

- 360 degree 20 tonne Excavators (crawler track machines)
- Rubber-tyred Excavators 6 tonne JCB
- 3 tonne Mini Diggers
- 6 tonne Dumpers
- 7.5 tonne multi-purpose truck
- 20 tonne and 30 tonne delivery trucks (importation of rock and bitumenous paving materials)
- Teleporter for erection of lighting columns
- Site Vehicles (4x4 wheel short base and vans)
- Compactor plates
- 1 tonne hand roller
- 6 tonne vibrating Rollers
- 10 tonne dead weight rollers
- Blawknex Paving Machine
- Bitumen Boiler/Hot Box
- Oil Tanker/Sprayer
- Road Planing Machine
- Extruded Kerb Laying Machine
- Road Saws/Con Saws/chain saws
- Bark Mulchers
- Air Compressors

- Jack Hammers
- Stihl Saws
- Small tools/hand tools
- Traffic Management Signs, Cones & Barriers
- Herras Fencing
- Mobile Traffic Lights
- Road Sweeper & Water Tank Truck
- PPE

All machinery will be inspected and certified to be free of leaks and weeps prior to mobilisation on site.

The materials will be typical civil engineering road construction materials consisting of cement, sand, gravel of various aggregate sizes, recycled stone, imported and reused rock fill, imported and reused top soil, concrete blocks, paviors and sets, natural stone paviors and sets, precast concrete kerbs, manhole bases, covers, precast concrete culverts, pipes, precast concrete services chambers, PVC-u ducts & chambers, PVC-u drainage channels with galvanised steel covers, galvanised metal chamber covers, galvanized, powder-coated street lighting columns and traffic signal poles, galvanised steel sign posts and metal traffic signs, bituminous road paving materials, thermoplastic road marking materials, LED lighting lanterns & electrical equipment, traffic signals & controller electronic equipment, galvanised metal field gates, driveway gates and posts.

3.5 SITE PERSONNEL

At its peak it is expected that there will be between 10 and 20 personnel on site full time. The personnel will consist of general operatives, skilled operatives and tradesmen, apprentice tradesmen, machine operators, truck drivers, engineers, technicians, surveyors and construction managers.

3.6 DURATION OF CONSTRUCTION PHASE

It is estimated that the construction process will take up to 3 months.

3.7 BASELINE ECOLOGY AT THE PROJECT SITE

3.7.1 Habitats

The project is located within an urban setting within the inner suburbs of Cork City. The dominant land cover occurring within and adjacent to the project footprint is buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3). Amenity grassland (GA2) in the form of green playing areas associated with Christ the King's Secondary school and the pitch and putt club to the south of the project footprint occur in the surrounding vicinity. Hedgerows and treelines are associated with residential gardens bounding and in the vicinity of the project site.

3.7.2 Fauna

The project site does not support habitats that could be relied upon by sensitive fauna species, such as special conservation interest wetland bird species of the Cork Harbour SPA or protected mammal species such as otters, badgers etc. The project footprint and surrounding area is of low ecological value for fauna.

3.8 IS THE PROJECT DIRECTLY CONNECTED WITH OR NECESSARY FOR THE CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT OF EUROPEAN SITES

Given the description of the proposed project in Section 3 above it is clear that the project is not directly connected with or necessary for the management of any European Sites.

4.0 IDENTIFY EUROPEAN SITES LIKELY TO BE INFLUENCED BY THE PROJECT

Current guidance on undertaking EU Habitats Directive Article 6 Assessments advises that all European Sites occurring within a 15km radius of a project site should be included within a Screening Assessment (Scott Wilson et al., 2006; DOEHLG, 2010). The guidelines go on to

state that for certain projects this 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.

Given that the project will be confined to existing areas of made ground and will involve the enhancement of road and pedestrian surface within a restricted area the zone of influence of the project will be limited to the project footprint and immediate surrounding area.

Two European Sites occur within the wider area surrounding the project site. These are the Great Island Channel SAC (located approximately 8.3km to the east) and the Cork Harbour SPA (located approximately 1.7km to the east) (hereafter jointly referred to as the Cork Harbour European Sites). The location of the Cork Harbour European Sites with respect to the project site are shown on Figure 4.1.

All other European Sites are located at a remote distance from the project site (i.e. at distance greater than 15km) and are not connected to the project site via any impact pathways.

4.1 OVERVIEW OF THE CORK HARBOUR SPA

Cork Harbour SPA is a large European Sites consisting of a number of discrete sections associated with river estuaries. The special conservation interests of Cork Harbour SPA include a list of 23 wetland bird species and wetland habitats.

The special conservation interest bird species (with EU Birds Directive Code No. in parenthesis) are as follows:

- Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*) [A004]
- Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*) [A005]
- Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) [A017]
- Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*) [A028]
- Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*) [A048]
- Wigeon (*Anas penelope*) [A050]
- Teal (*Anas crecca*) [A052]
- Pintail (*Anas acuta*) [A054]

- Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*) [A056]
- Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*) [A069]
- Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*) [A130]
- Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) [A140]
- Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) [A141]
- Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*) [A142]
- Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) [A149]
- Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*) [A156]
- Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) [A157]
- Curlew (*Numenius arquata*) [A160]
- Redshank (*Tringa totanus*) [A162]
- Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) [A179]
- Common Gull (*Larus canus*) [A182]
- Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*) [A183]
- Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) [A193]

The wetland habitats of the SPA include intertidal mudflats, saltmarshes and estuaries.

4.2 OVERVIEW OF THE GREAT ISLAND CHANNEL SAC

The Great Island Channel stretches from Little Island to Middleton, with its southern boundary being formed by Great Island. 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 Middleton, provide the main source of freshwater to the North Channel.

The site is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) selected for the following habitats and/or species listed on Annex I / II of the E.U. Habitats Directive (* = priority; numbers in brackets are Natura 2000 codes):

[1140] Tidal Mudflats and Sandflats

[1330] Atlantic Salt Meadows

The main habitats of conservation interest in Great Island Channel SAC are the sheltered tidal sand and mudflats and the Atlantic salt meadows. Owing to the sheltered conditions, the intertidal flats are composed mainly of soft muds. These muds support a range of macro-invertebrates, notably *Macoma balthica*, *Scrobicularia plana*, *Hydrobia ulvae*, *Nephtys hombergi*, *Nereis diversicolor* and *Corophium volutator*. Green algal species occur on the flats, especially *Ulva lactuca* and *Enteromorpha* spp. Cordgrass (*Spartina* spp.) has colonised the intertidal flats in places, especially at Rossleague and Belvelly.

The saltmarshes are scattered throughout the site and are all of the estuarine type on mud substrate. Species present include Sea Purslane (*Halimione portulacoides*), Sea Aster (*Aster tripolium*), Thrift (*Armeria maritima*), Common Saltmarsh-grass (*Puccinellia maritima*), Sea Plantain (*Plantago maritima*), Greater Sea-spurrey (*Spergularia media*), Lax-flowered Sea-lavender (*Limonium humile*), Sea Arrowgrass (*Triglochin maritimum*), Sea Mayweed (*Matricaria maritima*) and Red Fescue (*Festuca rubra*).

While the main land use within the SAC is aquaculture (oyster farming), the greatest threats to its conservation significance come from road works, infilling, sewage outflows and possible marina developments.

The site is of major importance for the two habitats listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive, as well as for its important numbers of wintering waders and wildfowl. It also supports a good invertebrate fauna.

4.3 DO THE CORK HARBOUR EUROPEAN SITES OCCUR WITHIN THE ZONE OF INFLUENCE OF THE PROJECT

As the nearest European Site (Cork Harbour SPA) is located approximately 1.7km to the east, the project will not have the potential to result in direct impacts to European Sites. Thus this Screening exercise focuses on investigating whether the project will have the potential to result in indirect effects to European Sites or effect mobile species associated with European Sites beyond the boundaries of their designated conservation areas.

A source-pathway-receptor model has been used to establish which European Sites could occur within the zone of influence of potential indirect impacts. Under such a model the project, as described in Section 3 of this Screening Statement, represents the source.

Potential impact pathways are restricted to hydrological pathways. No other pathways such as noise disturbance, visual disturbance or emissions to atmosphere will arise due to the distance of the project site from the nearest European Sites. In addition, due to the location of the project site within an urban setting and the absence of suitable habitat within the project site to support special conservation interest bird species of the Cork Harbour SPA, there will be no potential for it to interact with such species outside the boundary of their European Sites.

The receptors represent European Sites and their associated qualifying features of interest.

European Sites and their associated qualifying features are likely to occur in the zone of influence of the project only where hydrological pathways establish a link between the project and the European Site.

Table 4.1 provides a determination as to whether the Cork Harbour European Sites occur within the zone of influence of the project. This determination has been undertaken in line with the following assessment questions:

- Is there a hydrological pathway link between the Project site and European Sites?
- Does the hydrological pathway establish a connection between qualifying habitats of these European Sites and the project site?
- Does the hydrological pathway establish a connection between qualifying species of these European Sites and the project site?

Table 4.1: identification of European Sites within the Zone of Influence of the Project

European Sites	Distance from Project Site	Hydrological Pathway	Do qualifying habitats occur within the zone of influence of the project.	Does the Project have the potential to interact with Qualifying Species	Do European Sites occur within the Projects Zone of Influence?
Cork Harbour SPA (Site Code: 004030)	1.7km to the east.	No. There are no watercourse occurring within the vicinity of the project site. The nearest watercourse is the Tramore River which is located over 650m to the south of the project footprint. There will be no hydrological pathway connecting the project to this SPA.	No. the project footprint is located within an urban area and no suitable habitat for the special conservation interest bird species of the SPA occur at or in the immediate vicinity of the project site.	No. The project footprint is well buffered from any areas suitable for supporting special conservation interest bird species of the SPA. In addition the project site is located within an urban area that is subject to high levels of human activity. All works associated with the project will not result in a discernible change in human activity within the wider vicinity of the project.	No. There are no pathways linking the project site to this SPA and as such this SPA is located outside the zone of influence of the project.
Great Island Channel SAC (Site Code:)	8.3km to the east.	No. This SAC is located at a remote distance from the project site and there are no hydrological pathways	No. The qualifying habitats of this SAC are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide 	No. No qualifying species are listed as qualifying features of interest for this SAC	No. There are no pathways linking the project site to this SAC and as such this SAC is located outside the

001058)		linking the project to this SAC.	<p>[1140]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae) [1330] <p>As no hydrological pathway links the project site to this SAC there will be no potential for the project to interact with the qualifying habitats of this SAC.</p>		zone of influence of the project.
---------	--	----------------------------------	--	--	-----------------------------------

Table 4.1 above examines the relationship between the project site and the Cork Harbour European Sites. As noted within this table no European Sites occur in close proximity to the project site. The project site is not linked to the Cork Harbour SPA or the Great Island Channel SAC. The Source-Pathway-Receptor model has not identified the presence of an impact pathway linking the project site to European Sites in the wider surrounding area.

The absence of any potential impact pathways will eliminate the potential for this project to result in likely significant effects to European Sites. A Screening Matrix, in line with European Commission (2001) guidelines is provided below in Table 5.2.

Table 4.2: Screening Matrix for Project

Screening Criteria	Assessment
Brief description of the project or plan	The project and associated activities are described in Section 3 above.
Brief description of the European Sites	The European Sites occurring in the wider surrounding area are identified and briefly described in Section 4.2 above.
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 European Sites.	The project is located at a remote distance from European Sites and no pathways link the project site to the Cork Harbour European Sites which are the nearest European Sites to the project. The project will result in works confined to existing areas of made artificial ground. The works will be small in scale and will not have the potential to result in significant negative environmental effects or negatively affect the status of the Cork Harbour European Sites.
Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the European Sites site by virtue of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • size and scale; • land-take; • distance from the Natura 2000 site or key features of the site; • resource requirements (water abstraction 	<p>The project will not have the potential to result in direct, indirect or secondary impacts to European Sites.</p> <p>The project is small in scale and relates to the alterations to existing areas of made artificial surfaces.</p> <p>The project will not result in any land take from</p>

Screening Criteria	Assessment
<p>etc.);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emissions (disposal to land, water or air); • excavation requirements; • transportation requirements; • duration of construction, operation, decommissioning, etc.; 	<p>European Sites in Cork Harbour or habitat that is relied upon by the special conservation interest bird species of the Cork Harbour SPA.</p> <p>The project site is located over 1.7km from the nearest point of any key feature of the Cork Harbour European Sites.</p> <p>Given the absence of any impact pathways the project will not have the potential to result in any perceptible emissions to Cork Harbour or the surrounding Cork Harbour SPA and Great Island Channel SAC.</p> <p>Any excavations required for the project will be restricted to the footprint of the project site, located at a remote distance from the Cork Harbour European Sites.</p> <p>The project will not involve any perceptible changes to vehicular transport in the local area and will have the potential to result in an increase in sustainable, non-vehicular modes of transport which will have the potential to result in positive impacts for air quality and climate.</p> <p>The works will be completed over a short time frame and given that the works will be restricted to an urban environment with high levels of human activity at a remote distance from the Cork Harbour European Sites there will be no potential for these works to result in disturbance to the Cork Harbour European Sites and the special conservation interest bird species of the SPA.</p>
Describe any likely changes to the site arising as a	The project will not:

Screening Criteria	Assessment
<p>result of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduction of habitat area; • disturbance to key species; • habitat or species fragmentation; • reduction in species density; • changes in key indicators of conservation value • (water quality etc.); • climate change. 	<p>have the potential to result in a reduction in habitat area of any qualifying habitats or wetland habitats of the Cork Harbour European Sites;</p> <p>there are no impact pathways linking the project site to the wetland habitats of the Cork Harbour SPA upon which special conservation interest bird species of the SPA rely and there will be no potential for the project to disturb these bird species in these areas. The project site does not support any habitats upon which special conservation interests bird species of the SPA rely and the project will not result in significant disturbance effects to these birds species beyond the boundary of the SPA.</p> <p>The project will have the potential to result in positive impacts for air quality and climate by enhancing infrastructure for non-vehicular modes of transport which will provide conditions for a reduction in dependency on vehicular transport.</p>
<p>Describe the potential for the project alone or in combination with other plans or projects to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.</p>	<p>Given that the project is located at a remote distance from the Cork Harbour European Sites, that it is small in scale and is not linked to the the Cork Harbour European Sites via impact pathways and that both of these European Site occur outside the zone of influence of the project there will be no potential for the project to combine with any other project to result in cumulative negative impacts to the Cork Harbour European Sites.</p>
<p>Describe any likely impacts on the European Sites site as a whole in terms of:</p> <p>interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site;</p> <p>interference with key relationships that define the function of the site</p>	<p>For reasons set out above the project will not have the potential to interfere with key relationships that define the structure and function of European Sites.</p>

Screening Criteria	Assessment
Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • loss; • fragmentation; • disruption; • disturbance; • change to key elements of the site (e.g. water quality etc.). 	For reasons set out above the project will not have the potential to result in such effects to European Sites.
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.	The project will not have the potential to result in likely significant effects to European Sites.

5.0 SCREENING STATEMENT CONCLUSION: FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS

During the Screening of the proposed project which involves the provision of enhanced access to Tramore Valley Park it was found that two European Sites occur within a 15km radius of the project site. The nearest European Site, the Cork Harbour SPA, to the project site is located approximately 1.7km to the east. This SPA and the Great Island Channel SAC which is located approximately 8.3km to the east (and their associated qualifying features of interest/special conservation interests) are adjudged to be located outside the zone of influence of all activities associated with the proposed project. No impact pathways were identified linking the project site to these surrounding European Sites.

In light of the findings of this report it is the considered view of the authors of this Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment that it can be concluded by Cork City Council that the project is not likely, alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, to have a significant effect on any European Sites in view of their Conservation Objectives and on the basis of best scientific evidence and there is no reasonable scientific doubt as to that conclusion.

REFERENCES

Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG) (2008) Circular letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08.

Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG) (2010). Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects. Guidance for Local Authorities.

English Nature (1999). *Habitats regulations guidance note no. 3 (HRGN No. 3). Determination of Likely Significant Effect under The Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994.*

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

European Commission (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 92/43/EEC.* Luxembourg.

European Commission (1992). EU Habitats Directive.