

# Report to Inform Screening for Appropriate Assessment Cork City to Viaduct Greenway Phase I

Prepared for Cork City Council

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Cork City to Viaduct Greenway Phase I

## Revision Control Table

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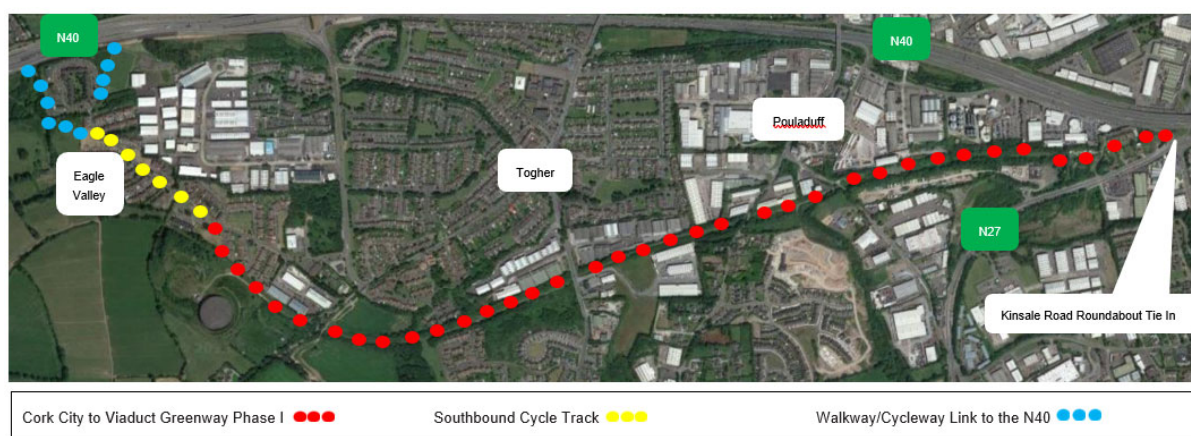
## 1 Introduction

This report has been prepared by Greenleaf Ecology on behalf of Cork City Council. The purpose of this report is to inform Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) for the proposed Cork City to Viaduct Greenway Phase 1 (hereinafter referred to as ‘the proposed development’).

This report comprises information to support the screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) to be undertaken by the competent authority in line with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora; the Planning and Development Act (as amended), and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477/2011) as amended.

The proposed greenway will be located between Eagle Valley and Kinsale Road Roundabout, with links to the N40 also proposed at the western end of the scheme. The location of the proposed development can be seen in Figure 1-1.

Figure 1-1: Location of proposed development.



### 1.1 Legislative Context for Appropriate Assessment

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

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

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive sets out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to adversely affect the integrity of European sites (Annex 1.1). Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for AA:

*Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the [Natura 2000] site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subjected to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the*

*plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.*

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

The competent authority is obliged to consider, in view of best scientific knowledge, whether the proposed development is likely to have a significant effect either individually or in combination with other plans and projects. If screening determines that there is likely to be significant effects on a European site, then AA must be carried out for the proposed development at Cork city, including the compilation of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) to inform the decision making.

## 1.2 Statement of Competence

This screening for Appropriate Assessment has been prepared by Karen Banks. Karen is an ecologist with 16 years' experience in the field of ecological assessment. She holds a BSc (Hons) in Environment and Development from Durham University and is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management. Karen has extensive experience in the production of reports to inform AA screening and Natura Impact Statements including those for transport infrastructure, small to large scale housing and mixed-use developments, flood alleviation schemes and wind farms.

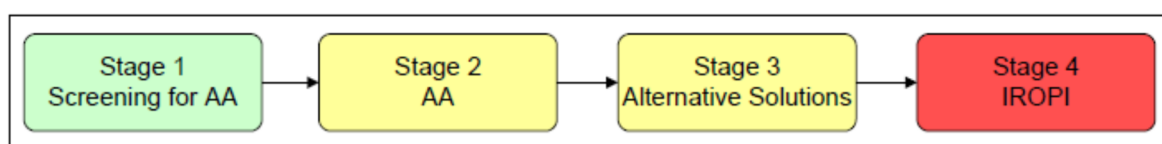
## 2 Methodology

### 2.1 Stages of Appropriate Assessment

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government guidelines (DELHG, 2009, rev. 2010) outlines the European Commission's methodological guidance (EC, 2002) promoting 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.

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

Figure 2-1: Four Stages of Appropriate Assessment



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

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

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

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

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

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

- European Union Habitats Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora 92/43/EEC;
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland Guidance for Planning Authorities (DOEHLG 2009, rev 2010);
- The Planning and Development Act (as amended);
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg (EC, 2018);
- European Commission Notice Brussels C (2021) 6913 final 'Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC' (EC, 2021);

- Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg (EC, 2002);
- Interpretation Manual of European Union Habitats. Version EUR 28. European Commission 2013;
- The European Union (Environmental Impact Assessment and Habitats) Regulations 2011; and
- The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, S.I. No. 477 of 2011 (as amended).

## 2.2 Information consulted for this report

This report has had regard to the following sources of data and information:

- Information on the location, nature and design of the proposed development;
- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage – online land use mapping [www.myplan.ie/en/index.html](http://www.myplan.ie/en/index.html);
- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage - EIA Portal <https://www.housing.gov.ie/planning/environmental-assessment/environmental-impact-assessment-eia/eia-portal>
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – Water Quality [www.epa.ie](http://www.epa.ie), <http://gis.epa.ie/Envision>;
- Geological Survey of Ireland – Geology, soils and Hydrogeology [www.gsi.ie](http://www.gsi.ie);
- Water Framework Directive website – [www.catchments.ie](http://www.catchments.ie);
- Inland Fisheries Ireland website and [www.wfdfish.ie](http://www.wfdfish.ie);
- National Parks and Wildlife Service – online European site network information, including site conservation objectives [www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie);
- National Parks and Wildlife Service – Information on the status of EU protected habitats in Ireland (NPWS 2019a, 2019b);
- National Biodiversity Data Centre – [www.biodiversityireland.ie](http://www.biodiversityireland.ie);
- Ordnance Survey of Ireland – Mapping and Aerial photography [www.osi.ie](http://www.osi.ie);
- Site walkover surveys undertaken by Ms Karen Banks in 2022 and 2023 (see Section 4).

## 2.3 Screening Protocol

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

- Ascertain whether the plan or project is necessary for the management of the European site (see Section 5.1);
- Description of the plan or project (see Section 3);
- Definition of the likely zone of influence for the proposed development (including construction phase works) (see Section 2.3.2, Section 2.3.3 and Section 4.2);
- Identification of the European sites that are situated (in their entirety or partially or downstream) within the likely zone of influence of the proposed development (see Section 4.2);
- Identification of the most up-to-date Qualifying Interests (QIs) and Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) for each European site within the zone of influence (see Section 4.2);
- Identification of the environmental conditions that maintain the QIs/SCIs at the desired target of Favourable Conservation Status (see Section 4.2.2);
- Identification of the threats/impacts – actual or potential that could negatively impact the environmental conditions of the QIs/SCIs within the European sites (see Section 4.2.3);



- Highlighting the construction and operational activities of the proposed development that could give rise to significant negative impacts (see Section 5.2); and
- Identification of other plans or projects, for which in-combination impacts would likely have significant effects (see Section 5.3).

### 2.3.1 Screening Determination

In accordance with Regulation 42(7) of the Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477/2011) as amended, the competent authority shall:

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

Further, under Regulation 42(8) (a):

*“Where, in relation to a plan or project for which an application for consent has been received, a public authority makes a determination that an Appropriate Assessment is required, the public authority shall give notice of the determination, including reasons for the determination of the public authority, to the following—*

*the applicant, if appropriate, any person who made submissions or observations in relation to the application to the public authority, or if appropriate, any party to an appeal or referral.*

*(b) Where a public authority has determined that an Appropriate Assessment is required in respect of a proposed development it may direct in the notice issued under subparagraph (a) that a Natura Impact Statement is required”.*

### 2.3.2 Zone of Influence

In accordance with EC (2021) *Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*, identification of the European sites that may be affected should be done by taking into consideration all aspects of the plan or project that could have potential effects on any European sites located within the zone of influence of the plan or project. This should take into account all of the designating features (species, habitat types) that are significantly present on the sites and their conservation objectives.

In particular, it should identify:

- Any European sites geographically overlapping with any of the actions or aspects of the plan or project in any of its phases, or adjacent to them;
- Any European sites within the likely zone of influence of the plan or project. Natura 2000 sites located in the surroundings of the plan or project (or at some distance) that could still be indirectly affected by aspects of the project, including as regards the use of natural resources (e.g. water) and various types of waste, discharge or emissions of substances or energy;
- European sites in the surroundings of the plan or project (or at some distance) which host fauna that can move to the project area and then suffer mortality or other impacts (e.g. loss of feeding areas, reduction of home range);
- European sites whose connectivity or ecological continuity can be affected by the plan or project.

- The range of European sites to be assessed, i.e. the zone in which impacts from the plan or project may arise, will depend on the nature of the plan or project and the distance at which effects may occur.

### 2.3.3 Likely Significant Effects

The threshold for a likely significant effect is treated in the screening exercise as being above a de minimis level<sup>1</sup>. The opinion of the Advocate General in CJEU case C-258/11 outlines:

*“the requirement that the effect in question be ‘significant’ exists in order to lay down a de minimis threshold. Plans or projects that have no appreciable effect on a European site are thereby excluded. If all plans or projects capable of having any effect whatsoever on the site were to be caught by Article 6(3), activities on or near the site would risk being impossible by reason of legislative overkill.”*

In this report, therefore, ‘relevant’ European sites are those within the potential zone of influence of the construction and / or operation of the proposed development, and to which likely significant effect pathways were identified through the source-pathway-receptor model.

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<sup>1</sup> Sweetman v. An Bord Pleanála (Court of Justice of the EU, case C-285/11). A de minimis effect is a level of risk that is too small to be concerned with when considering ecological requirements of an Annex I habitat or a population of Annex II species present on a European site necessary to ensure their favourable conservation condition. If low level effects on habitats or individuals of species are judged to be in this order of magnitude and that judgment has been made in the absence of reasonable scientific doubt, then those effects are not considered to be likely significant effects.

## 3 Project Description

### 3.1 Location of Proposed Development

Phase I of the Cork City to Viaduct Greenway is located between Chetwynd Reservoir and Kinsale Road Roundabout. The Greenway will be circa. 2.9km in length with another circa 0.9km of linking infrastructure proposed to connect it to existing facilities along the N40. There is an area of circa 5.68ha within the red line boundary. The route of the Greenway is shown in Figure 1-1 above and is described in the following sections.

#### 3.1.1 Eagle Valley to Spur Hill

The greenway commences within an open space area of Eagle Valley adjacent to the main spine road and to the cul-de-sac which accommodates house numbers 43 – 54. The greenway will form a junction with the main spine road and associated footpaths, thereby providing direct access for cyclists and pedestrians. From here the greenway travels south through part of the current open space area to enter the adjoining Irish Water Chetwynd reservoir site. There are associated site development and landscaping works proposed within the open space immediately adjoining the greenway so that it can be both physically accommodated at an appropriate gradient as well as visually absorbed into this area.

Within the reservoir site the greenway will pass under electricity overhead lines, traverse an area of open space and cross over an existing 4m wide concrete access road serving the Chetwynd reservoir. The greenway will run eastwards parallel with, and on the southern side of, the access road towards Spur Hill. Before Spur Hill the greenway will deviate from the access road. The greenway continues eastwards to cross under the Spur Hill railway bridge. The reservoir access road will continue to join with Spur Hill approximately 40m to the north at its current location. No structural works are required at the bridge, but the stonework will be cleaned and repaired.

To accommodate the section of greenway and the access road running parallel, it is necessary to move the access road approximately 1.3m northwards for a distance of circa 130m.

In order to maintain security within the reservoir site it is necessary to control public access from the greenway. This requires 2m high palisade fencing to be introduced. For most of the route within the reservoir site the fence is required on the southern side of the greenway only, with open access to the access road on its northern side. At the western part of the greenway within the reservoir site the fence is necessary on both sides of greenway separating it from the access road and the various reservoir infrastructure. To facilitate this security arrangement the existing gate to the reservoir at Spur Hill will be removed and a new gate introduced where the fencing on both sides of the greenway commences. In addition, there will be gates provided on either side of the greenway where it crosses the access road.

There will be a need to clear circa 600m<sup>2</sup> of shrubbery and gorse within the Chetwynd Reservoir site.

At Eagle Valley, wildflowers and ornamental planting will be provided. Landscaping will be limited within the Chetwynd Reservoir site due to space limitations.

There will be a requirement to excavate circa 460m<sup>3</sup> of earth for the construction of the track but 60m<sup>3</sup> of this material will be reused for fill material for reprofiling the embankments. This leaves a net volume of circa 390m<sup>3</sup> that will need to be transported off site.

The construction of the extension to the concrete road within the Chetwynd Reservoir site will require 200m<sup>2</sup> of concrete road.

### 3.1.2 Spur Hill to L-2454 Togher Road

After crossing under Spur Hill bridge the proposed greenway will continue eastwards along the route of the former railway line to Togher Road (L-2454) which it will meet at grade. The part of the route is currently largely overgrown with an existing dirt track. There is heavy/thick vegetation consisting mostly of briars and gorse on both sides of an existing track. There will therefore be a need for clearance of gorse and scrub.

The horizontal alignment initially from Spur Hill heading east will have a prolonged curve until it reaches the point with Fernwood Crescent to the south. The remainder of the section up to Togher Road (L-2454) being straight.

Generally, there will be 0.75 to 1.0m landscaped verges with wildflowers and ornamental planting and it will tie into the existing shrubbery/vegetation and open space areas to the northwest of Fernwood Crescent. The Greenway will run to the north of Fernwood Crescent but at a lower level with a tree lined boundary and this should result in no impact on their vista views northwards from properties backing onto the greenway. The greenway will pass immediately adjacent to a public open space area of Fernwood Crescent from which access onto to the greenway will be possible.

The terrain from Spur Hill to Togher Road (L-2454) is uneven and undulating, with steep localized slopes. This will require reprofiling along a significant proportion of this section of the greenway to get an adequate standard of longitudinal profile for the proposed greenway.

There will be a requirement to excavate circa 640m<sup>3</sup> of earth for the construction of the track but 50m<sup>3</sup> of this material will be reused for fill material. This leaves a net volume of circa 590m<sup>3</sup> that will need to be transported off site.

### 3.1.3 L-2454 Togher Road to L-2455 Lehenaghmore Road

The greenway will cross Togher Road (L-2454) via a new toucan crossing, which will have all necessary associated warning signage, lining and traffic lights.

From Togher Road (L-2454) to Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) the proposed greenway works will comprise the replacement and widening of an existing substandard paved walkway. The horizontal alignment of this section of the greenway will be predominately straight.

The greenway will cross beneath Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) bridge. This bridge will not be altered but the stonework will be cleaned and repaired. A 3m pedestrian and cyclists' access path will be provided to the western side of Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) on the southern side of the greenway. This access path is already approved and will be provided as part of the approved Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) Improvement Scheme by Cork City Council.

Generally, there will be 0.75 to 1.0m landscaped verges with wildflowers and ornamental planting that will integrate with existing shrubbery/vegetation on the edges of the former West Cork Railway corridor. Proposed planting will be limited initially after Togher Road due to the provision of steep embankments to the northern side of the Greenway and a boundary wall and fencing to the Westgate Business Park on the southern side of the Greenway.

There will be a requirement to excavate circa 650m<sup>3</sup> of earth for the construction of the track but 30m<sup>3</sup> of this material will be reused for fill material. This leaves a net volume of circa 620m<sup>3</sup> that will need to be transported off site.

There will be a requirement to deconstruct a small area of existing wall / pillars and 1m high fencing to the south side of the entrance to the Westgate Business Park and reconstruct the pillar to the south of the new Greenway.

#### 3.1.4 L-2455 Lehenaghmore Road to Forge Hill

From Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) the greenway runs eastwards to Forge Hill where it will pass under the railway bridge and road. A 3m pedestrian and cyclists' access path will be provided to the eastern side of Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) on the southern side of the greenway. As with the access path on the western side of Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455), this is already approved and will be provided as part of the approved Lehenaghmore Road (L-2455) Improvement Scheme by Cork City Council.

At the western half of this section of the route the greenway will replace a dirt track. At the eastern part from Farm Lawn housing estate, the greenway will be accommodated along the route of an existing paved service access road. The existing service access road provides gated / fenced access to Farm Lane. This access will remain gated.

The Forge Hill bridge will not be altered but the stonework will be cleaned and repaired. No pedestrian or cycle access is proposed from Forge Hill.

The horizontal alignment will be predominately straight except for two slight curves in the alignment to the west of the Forge Hill railway bridge.

Generally, there will be 0.75 to 1.0m landscaped verges with wildflowers and ornamental planting, which will tie in with the existing trees and shrubbery on the periphery of the former West Cork Railway corridor.

There will be a requirement to excavate circa 650m<sup>3</sup> of earth for the construction of the track but circa 20m<sup>3</sup> of this material will be reused for fill material for reprofiling the embankments. This leaves a net volume of circa 630m<sup>3</sup> that will need to be transported off site.

Thick vegetation, consisting mainly of briars and gorse, restricts access to the Forge Hill Bridge and disconnects the existing corridor. The vegetation will be removed to accommodate the greenway.

#### 3.1.5 Forge Hill to Kinsale Road Roundabout

The section of greenway from Forge Hill to Kinsale Road roundabout runs through a number of different landscape types. Travelling east from Forge Hill it passes firstly through the site of a former Travellers residential scheme, onward through an overgrown stretch of the former railway alignment, to the south of an existing Travellers accommodation and yard site, crossing Hazelwood Grove access road at grade before running to the south of Hazelwood Grove residential properties and eventually meeting with Kinsale Road roundabout.

Immediately to the east of Forge Hill Road is the site of the former Travellers' residential scheme. While largely demolished and partially cleared there are significant amounts of construction and demolition waste present on this site along with parts of former buildings still intact and significant areas of hardstand. There will be a need for site clearance of gorse and vegetation and the removal of existing hardstanding areas associated with the remains of abandoned accommodation units.

When cleared, this area will accommodate both the greenway and a new 50 space car park on the northern side of the greenway. Vehicular access will be provided by upgrading an existing access to Forge Hill which previously served the Travellers residential scheme. Bike parking and bicycle repair facilities will be provided at this car park.

Public realm/landscape measures will be included at this car park location.

From the car park, the greenway will continue east in a predominantly straight horizontal alignment along the former railway corridor firstly through an overgrown area and then to the south of a Travellers accommodation and yard site. To ensure the privacy and security of the residents of this site, post and panel fencing and associated landscaping are proposed. From here the greenway crosses the access road to Hazelwood Grove and runs through the open space area to the south of No. 1 to No. 8 Hazelwood Grove. It will be necessary to acquire a small portion of land from the rear garden of No. 4 Kinsale Road. A new wall will be built along the new setback boundary. At the eastern end of Hazelwood Grove, it runs alongside the boundary of the rear garden of the 'The Cottage', property. The horizontal alignment of the Greenway will be curved over the last circa 75m, in the vicinity of the 'The Cottage' on approach to Kinsale Road Roundabout. In this area the route is mainly accommodated within a public green space area facing the South Link slip road and roundabout. To achieve appropriate vertical alignment however, and to allow safe tie-in to the pedestrian footpath at the Kinsale Road roundabout, it will be necessary to acquire a small amount of land from the rear garden of 'The Cottage' property. A new wall will be built along the new setback boundary.

The proposed development terminates at the existing signalised pedestrian/cyclist crossing, which crosses the N40 westbound on-slip at the junction with the N27/R851 Frankfield Road.

Generally, there will be 0.75 to 1.0m landscaped verges with wildflowers, ornamental planting and low grass planting.

There will be a requirement to excavate circa 1,200m<sup>3</sup> of earth for the construction of the track but 50m<sup>3</sup> of this material will be reused for fill material. This leaves a net volume of circa 1,150m<sup>3</sup> that will need to be transported off site.

### 3.1.6 Links to the Greenway

#### **Link from the N40 to Eagle Valley via Undeveloped Land**

It is proposed to provide a 4m wide combined walkway/cycleway between the N40 (an existing walkway/cycleway at the edge of the carriageway) and the spine road in Eagle Valley, via undeveloped lands including along a former residential access road to the abandoned Garrane house. The first 170m of this walkway/cycleway from the N40 walkway /cycleway goes along this former access road, which comprises elements of disused pavement surfacing and unbound stone material. There are a number of existing mature trees running alongside this access road and there is heavy/thick vegetation consisting mostly of briars and gorse that overhangs sections of this existing access road. The horizontal alignment of the walkway/cycleway will be curved over the first 50m but then remains straight up for the next 120m. Generally, there will be 0.75 to 1.0m landscaped verges with wildflowers and ornamental planting and it will tie into the existing tree lined environment.

The proposed walkway/cycleway then turns sharply to the east of the former residential access and crosses over an open drainage channel (associated with the adjacent field) which will be bridged by a single-span structure and crosses an open field towards Eagle Valley. There are associated landscaping works proposed within this open field immediately adjoining the walkway/cycleway so that it can be both physically accommodated at an appropriate gradient as well as visually absorbed into this area. Once within Eagle Valley it will cross an open space area, to the south of No. 271A Eagle Valley and connect to a proposed new cycle track on the opposite side of the spine road, via a raised table crossing. Appropriate levels of landscape screening will be provided adjacent to the properties.

### **Link from the N40 to Eagle Valley Via Garrane Darra**

It is proposed to provide a 4m wide combined walkway /cycleway between the N40 (the existing walkway/cycleway at the edge of the carriageway) and the Garrane Darra Residential complex, via an existing gravel walkway along the edge of a former disused football field. There are a number of mature trees along the eastern side of the walkway and there will be a requirement to remove a section of the existing fence in order to complete the link to the N40. There will be a requirement to reprofile the ground levels in the vicinity of the tie in with the N40 walkway/cycleway to accommodate the new walkway/cycleway. Generally, there will be 0.75 to 1.0m landscaped verges with wildflowers and ornamental planting and it will tie into the existing tree lined environment.

### **Works along the Eagle Valley Spine Road**

It is proposed to resurface a circa 451m length of the spine road within Eagle Valley and provide new traffic lane markings and signage to accommodate a new cycle track on the northern side of the road. The new road markings will indicate two traffic lanes of minimum 3.0m wide and a min 1.5m wide southbound segregated on-road cycle track. A raised table crossing will be provided at the southern extent of the cycle track to safely connect the on-road cycle track to the main Greenway from Eagle Valley to Kinsale Road Roundabout which commences at the existing green open space area on the opposite side of the road.

#### 3.1.7 Other measures

- Realigned boundary walls
- Seating and viewing point areas
- Relocation of two ESB overground poles and wires.
- New public lighting along the route.
- Any potential future SI works
- Landscaping and biodiversity measures
- Removal and treatment of isolated areas of Japanese knotweed and other invasive species.

#### 3.1.8 Drainage

The proposed drainage will be over the edge drainage, where the design level crossfall will result in all surface water running off into the adjacent verges. There will a gully and carrier pipe drainage at the new car park to the east of Forge Hill. Surface water run-off from the new car park will pass through a bypass interceptor before discharge to the existing surface water network at Forge Hill.

#### 3.1.9 Construction Compound

The construction compound will be located to the east of Forge Hill and to the west of the L-2454 Togher Road.

## 3.2 Site Enabling Works

### 3.2.1 Ground clearance

There will be a requirement to clear circa 22,000m<sup>2</sup> of vegetation (shrubbery and gorse) across the extent of the scheme.

There will be a requirement to remove three mounds of soil that are located under the former railway bridges at Spur Hill, L-2455 Lehenaghmore Road and Forge Hill. There will be a requirement to treat limited Japanese knotweed to the west and east of Forge Hill.

### 3.2.2 Demolition works

The following elements of the Proposed Development will lead to demolition works:



**Site of Former Travellers' Accommodation Units:** Immediately to the east of Forge Hill is the site of a former Travellers' accommodation units. While largely demolished and partially cleared there are significant amounts of construction and demolition waste present on this site along with parts of former buildings still intact and significant areas of hardstand. There will be removal of circa 1,360m<sup>2</sup> of hand standing area associated with the former accommodation units.

**Boundary Walls/Fences:** There is a need to deconstruct a small amount of the existing wall / pillars and 1m high fencing to the south side of the entrance to the Westgate Business Park. Parts of rear boundary walls of two residents at Kinsale Road will also need to be removed and replaced along a slightly set back boundary.

**Chetwynd Reservoir Concrete Road:** Additionally within the Chetwynd Reservoir site and to the west of Spur Hill there will be a need to break up and remove circa 200m<sup>2</sup> of the southern side of the existing concrete road.

Additionally, small areas of fencing will be required to be removed to facilitate the links to the N40.

### 3.2.3 Land take requirements

There will be land take from two residential properties, between Hazelwood Grove and Kinsale Road Roundabout.

### 3.2.4 Landscaping and Biodiversity

A significant part of the works will be the landscaping and development of focal points and open spaces along the scheme to provide enhanced recreational and community value in line with the recommendations stated in the Greenway and Cycle Routes Ancillary Infrastructure Guidelines.

The core environmental aim of the proposed Greenway is *"To ensure the Greenway functions as a biodiversity/wildlife corridor and to enhance the ecological, environmental, cultural and built heritage resources of the route."* Landscaping will seek to achieve an improved public realm while maintaining and protecting existing biodiversity features and identify areas which would benefit from enhancement.

### 3.2.5 Operational Phase

The entire scheme will have public lighting to enhance the quality of the routes from a security perspective. The new lantern fittings will adopt an advanced intelligent light control system which will have automatic dimming and sensor control which will allow increased illumination when pedestrian and cyclists go past but they will dim accordingly when there are no users on the Greenway.

Only maintenance vehicles will be allowed to access the greenway. This will be on a regular basis for waste collection and landscaping at appropriate frequency. Access will also be provided as required for repair or upgrade works



## 4 Existing Environment

Terrestrial ecology surveys of the proposed greenway were undertaken by ecologist Ms Karen Banks, MCIEEM, between February 2022 and September 2022; the proposed links to the greenway were surveyed on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. The results of these surveys are outlined in the following sections.

### 4.1.1 Habitats

The proposed development is located along a section of the former West Cork Railway corridor. In places, the old railway line has recolonised with low growing grassland species including Annual Meadow-grass (*Poa annua*), Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), Self-heal (*Prunella vulgaris*), Ribwort Plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*) and Daisy (*Bellis perennis*); while other areas support taller species such as False Oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), Cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), Yorkshire Fog (*Holcus lanatus*) and herbs such as Common Knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*) and Ox-eye Daisy (*Oxalis acetosella*). This habitat classifies as Fossitt habitat dry meadows and grassy verges (GS2). In some areas, the margins of the old railway line have become encroached with scrub (WS1), predominantly comprising Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), Willow (*Salix cinerea*), Elder (*Sambucus nigra*), Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) and Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*). The old railway banks predominantly comprise Sycamore, Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) and Willow, with occasional Larch (*Larix* spp), Elder and Alder (WD1). Amenity grassland (GA2) is present at the west of the proposed greenway and buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3) are also present in areas of hardstanding and the existing road and walkway network. The proposed links to the greenway are predominantly located on built land comprising existing roads, a disused access road and a walkway/cycleway (BL3); the link routes also cross a field of improved agricultural grassland (GA1). Habitats fringing the link routes include a disused football field (GA2), treelines (WL2) comprising Alder, Willow and occasional Ash and a drainage ditch (FW4).

### 4.1.2 Species

Fauna were surveyed through observation of field signs such as direct observation, tracks, feeding signs and droppings. Habitats were assessed for their potential for use, or confirmed use, by protected species of fauna during the site walkovers undertaken between February and March 2023. The results of the site walkovers then informed the scope of further taxon specific surveys, which included badger survey and bat survey. No evidence of badger was recorded at the proposed site and the scrub and broadleaved woodland within the site provide limited opportunities for roosting bats.

Species recorded along the proposed greenway route during the breeding bird surveys undertaken in April 2022 and June 2022 reflected the habitats present. The scrub and woodland habitats along the margins of the old railway line supported a range of passerines, Rooks were widespread throughout the proposed site and Buzzard was recorded on one occasion flying over the site to the east of Forge Hill.

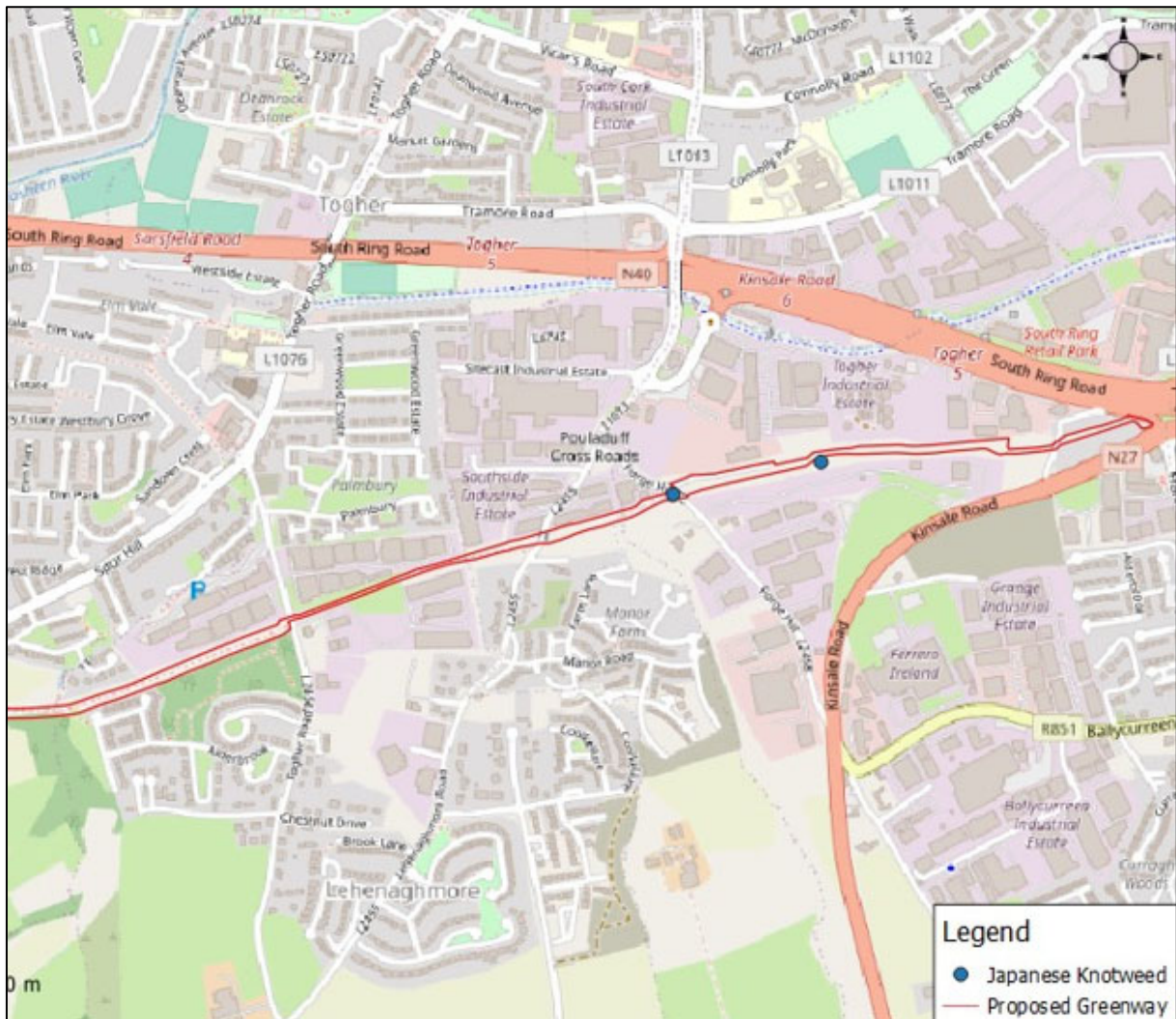
No Annex II species or Annex I bird species were recorded at the proposed site.

#### 4.1.2.1 Invasive Species in Proximity to the Proposed Works

An invasive species survey was undertaken during the habitat survey completed on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2022 and the walkover of the proposed links to the greenway on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. Two stands of Japanese Knotweed were recorded: one to the east of Forge Hill and one adjacent to the bridge at Forge Hill.

A map detailing the location of Japanese Knotweed is included below (Figure 4-1).

Figure 4-1: Location of Japanese Knotweed at the Proposed Site and its Environs



#### 4.1.3 Water Bodies

The proposed greenway is within the WFD Catchment 19 of Lee, Cork Harbour and Youghal Bay. There is one main WFD River Waterbody within the vicinity, namely that of the Moneygurney\_010 (WFD Name). The WFD Status of the Moneygurney\_010 is Good for the monitoring period of 2016-2021. The WFD Status was Moderate for the monitoring period of 2013-2018. The proposed greenway crosses the Douglas (Lee) 1<sup>st</sup> order stream over an existing culvert to the east of Spur Hill. The Douglas (Lee) then flows into the Transitional Waterbody of Lough Mahon c.5.5km downstream. The proposed greenway crosses the Lehenagh Beg 1<sup>st</sup> order stream over an existing culvert to the west of Forge Hill; this watercourse flows into Lough Mahon c.4.1km downstream. The WFD Status of the Lough Mahon waterbody is Moderate for the monitoring period of 2016-2021 and 2013-2018. Lough Mahon is “at Risk” of failing to meet its WFD objectives by 2027. Lough Mahon flows into the Coastal Waters of Cork Harbour which is assigned a Moderate WFD Status for the monitoring period of 2016-2021 and 2013-2018 and is also “at Risk” of failing to meet its WFD objectives by 2027.

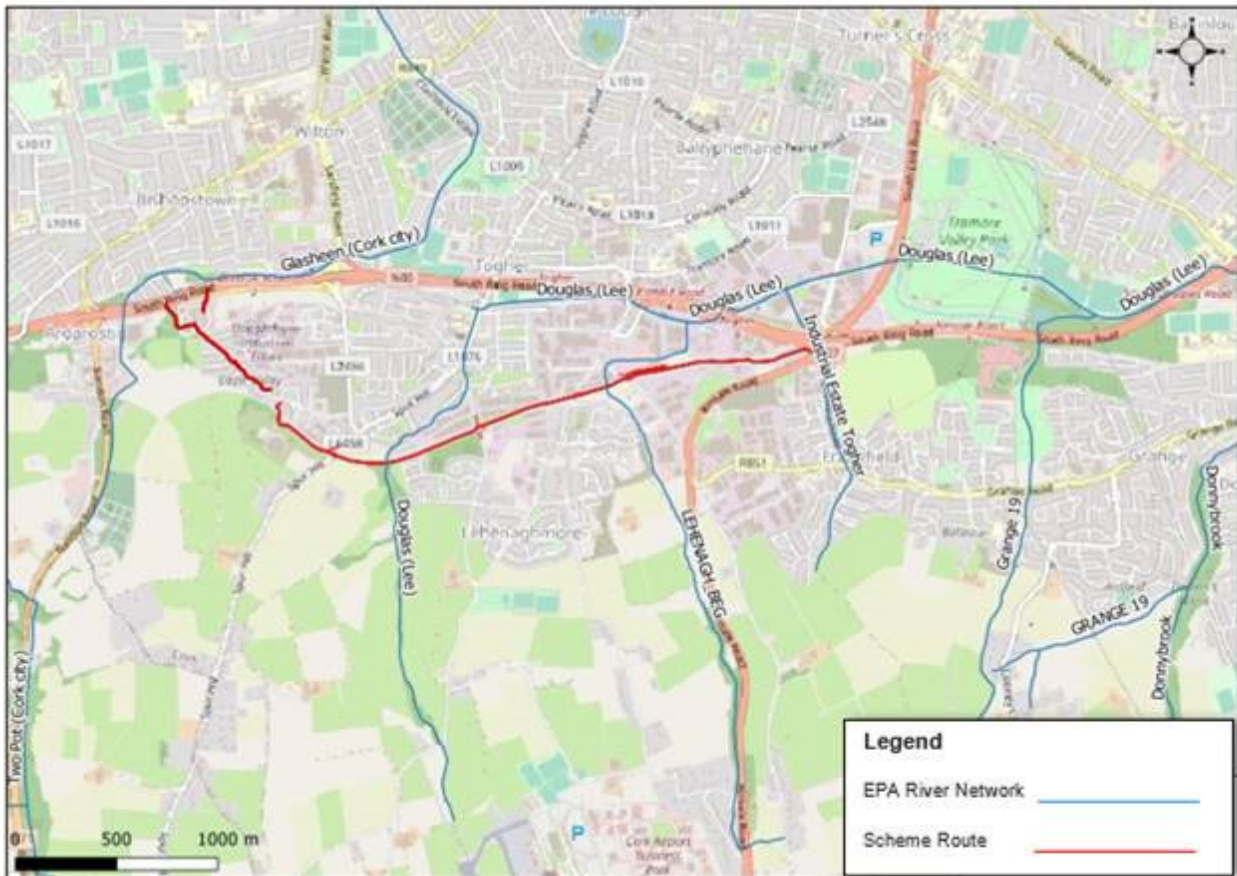
The waterbody Glasheen (Cork city) flows north in a culvert beneath the Dunnes Stores property and underneath the South Ring Road (N40) and then flows east. The WFD Status of this waterbody is Poor for the monitoring period of 2016-2021 and 2013-2018. There is a further active drainage ditch which flows in

the field west of Garrane Darra in a northerly direction. This drainage ditch is culverted under the laneway which the proposed walkway/cycleway will traverse. This drainage ditch is not an EPA mapped watercourse.

The proposed greenway overlies the Ballinhassig East groundwater body which is moderately productive only in local zones. Groundwater flow directions are expected to approximately follow the local surface water catchments. (GSI 2004).

Figure 4-2 shows the proximal watercourses in relation to the proposed development.

Figure 4-2: Local river network (EPA mapping)



#### 4.1.4 Flooding

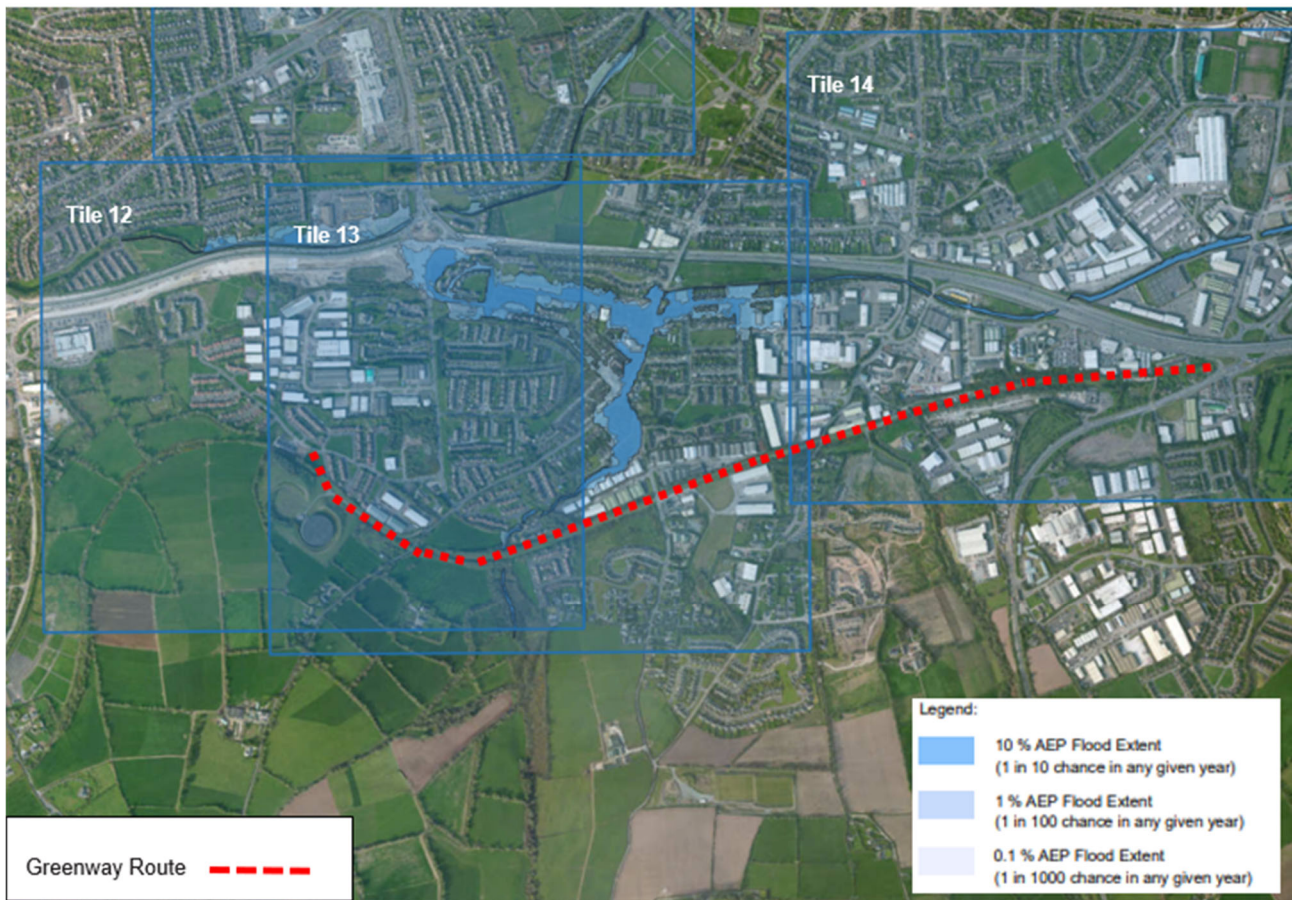
The CFRAM River Flood Extents mapping notes that the proposed development crosses an area mapped as of being High probability (AEP 10%) at Spur Hill. A risk of pluvial flooding is identified within the Garrane Darra housing development; the scheme route does not intersect this area and existing surface water drainage infrastructure is in place. Minimal additional hard surfacing will be provided in this area.

As can be seen in

Figure 4-3, Togher Village is at risk of flooding. The Draft Catchment Flood Risk Management Plan, published in February 2010, recommended flood relief measures for the Togher area. Currently Cork City Council are carrying out such works as part of the Togher Flood Relief and Public Realm Enhancement Works. A new culvert has been installed between Togher Community Centre and Lehenaghmore Industrial Estate. Other flood alleviation works include the addition of a trash screen at the rear of Lehenaghmore Industrial Estate which has been recently installed. These works will alleviate the risk of flooding within the village.

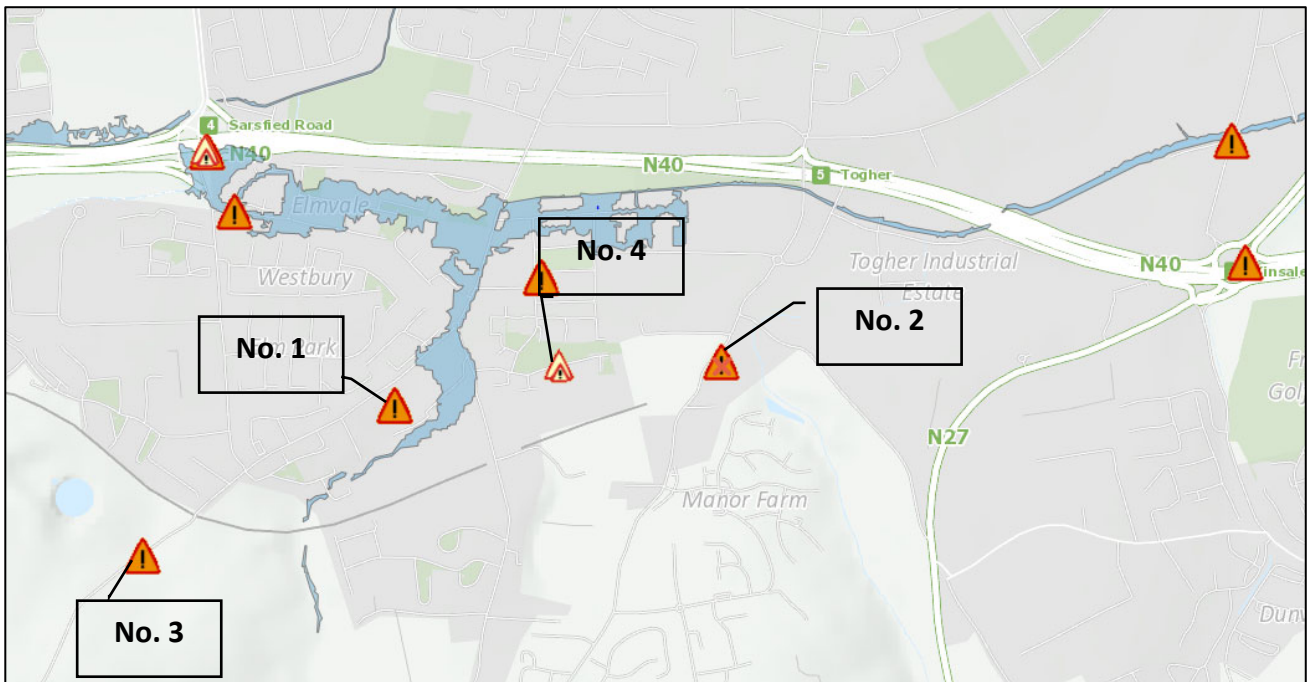


Figure 4-3: Flooding Probability



Source: Flood Maps website (<https://www.floodinfo.ie/map/floodmaps/>)

Figure 4-4: Past Flood Events (Source: <https://www.floodinfo.ie/map/floodmaps/>)



A review of the Office of Public Works (OPW) Flood Maps ([www.floodinfo.ie](http://www.floodinfo.ie)), extract seen in Figure 4-4 reveals no past flood events are recorded along the route of the proposed greenway. The nearest past flood events are detailed in Table 4-1.

Table 4-1: Past flood events in the environs of the proposed greenway

Ref.	Waterbody	Flood Location	Date	Distance from Proposed Development	Source of Flooding
1.	Moneygureny_010 (Douglas (Lee))	North of Lehenaghmore Industrial Estate	05/11/2002	95m from the section of the Proposed Greenway between Togher Road and Spur Hill.	Heavy rainfall caused stream to overtop where it enters the culvert.
2.	Moneygureny_010 (Lehenagh_Beg)	Pouladuff Road	20/11/2002	100m south of the Proposed Development at Forge Hill.	Land and road flooding due to blockage in stream caused by cable drums.
3.	n/a Pluvial	Spur Hill LP2452	27/11/2002	Adjacent to the Proposed Development. Spur Hill Bridge on Spur Hill and road to the south.	Downpours caused surface water to flow along road. Records of potholes and loose gravel on the road.
4.	n/a Pluvial	Palmbury Estate Togher	Reoccurring (20/21/27/11/2002)	Located 150m to the south of the Proposed Development.	Surface water drainage is effected through soakaways, heavy rainfall caused localised flooding in estate.

#### 4.1.5 Soil, Geology and Hydrogeology

The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) online database ([www.gsi.ie](http://www.gsi.ie)) was consulted for available edaphic, geological and hydrological information of the site and its environs. The Proposed Development runs between areas of AminDW - Acid Brown Earths/Brown Podzolics with smaller sections running through Made Ground and AdminSW - Lithosols Regosols. In terms of bedrock geology, the Glyeen formation, composed of sandstone with mudstone and siltstone underlies the site.

The bedrock units which underlie the site are mapped by the GSI as part of the same Locally Important Aquifer. Groundwater vulnerability is a term used to represent the intrinsic geological and hydrogeological characteristics that determine the ease at which groundwater may be contaminated. The proposed greenway is located over an area that ranges from 'High' to 'Extreme' groundwater vulnerability. There are no one karst features located in the vicinity of the proposed greenway.

#### 4.2 Description of European Sites

This stage of the screening for AA process describes European sites within the likely zone of influence of the works. The methodology for establishing the likely zone of influence is described in Section 2.3.2.

Connectivity between the proposed works and European sites has been reviewed. Connectivity is identified via the potential source-pathway-receptor model which identifies the potential impact pathways such as land, air, hydrological, hydrogeological pathways etc. which may support direct or indirect connectivity of the proposed works to European sites and/or their qualifying features.

In view of the location of the proposed development in relation to European sites (see Figure 4-5) and the characteristics of the proposed project (greenway to be located on old railway line with no requirement for instream works, see Section 3) and the source, pathway and receptors of potential impacts, a 15km radius is considered an appropriate zone of influence to screen all likely significant effects that might impact upon the European sites. The establishment of the likely zone of influence is in line with EC (2021) *Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*.

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

The European sites located within 15km of the proposed works are outlined in Table 4-2 and Figure 4-5. There are 2 European sites located within 15km of the proposed works:

1. Great Island Channel SAC (Site Code: 001058); and
2. Cork Harbour SPA (Site Code: 004030)

Connectivity between the sites and the proposed development has been reviewed. Connectivity is identified via the potential source-pathway-receptor model which identifies the potential impact pathways such as land, air, hydrological, hydrogeological pathways etc. which may support direct or indirect connectivity of the proposed works to European sites and/or their qualifying features.

Source – pathway – receptor dynamics were assessed for Great Island Channel SAC and Cork Harbour SPA. The proposed greenway crosses two watercourses that flow into Lough Mahon and Cork Harbour SPA c.4.1km downstream at its closest point; Great Island Channel SAC is located a further c.6.1km along the coast.

## Cork City to Viaduct Greenway Phase I: Screening for Appropriate Assessment

Likely significant effects on Great Island Channel SAC and Cork Harbour SPA will be considered further in the screening assessment (section 5.).



Cork City to Viaduct Greenway Phase I: Screening for Appropriate Assessment

Figure 4-5: European Sites within 15km of the Proposed Development

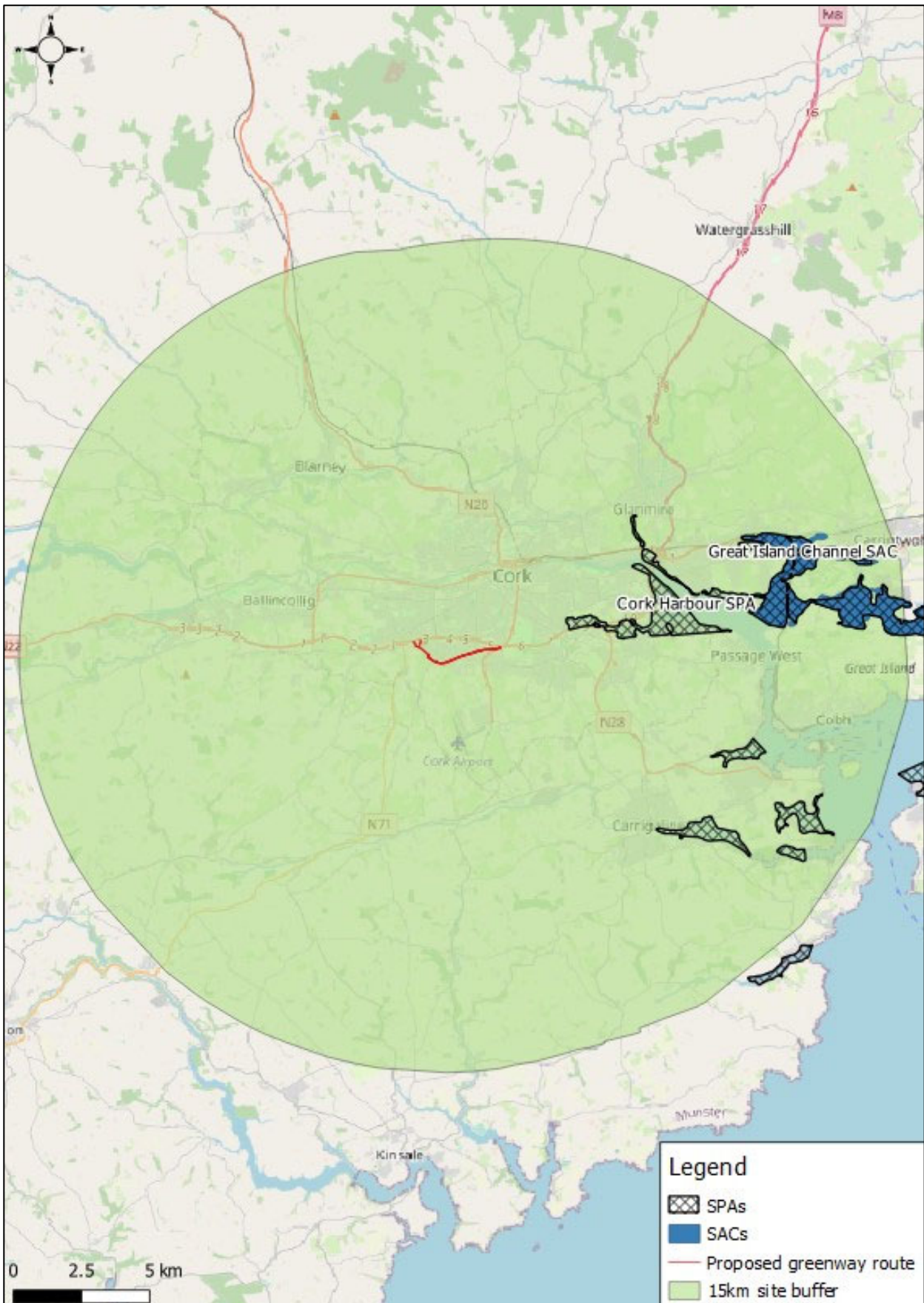




Table 4-2: European Sites within 15km of the Proposed Development and their connectivity.

Site Name and Code	Qualifying Features (Annex I Habitats/ Annex II Species)	Distance from proposed works	Connectivity
<b>Great Island Channel SAC (001058)<sup>2</sup></b>	<p><b>Annex I Habitats</b></p> <p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide (1140)</p> <p>Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritimae</i>) (1330)</p>	9.2km	There is potential remote and indirect connectivity via the crossing of two watercourses which flow into the open waters of Cork Harbour c.4.1km downstream at its closest point and, potentially, this SAC which is located a further 6.1km along the coast.
<b>Cork Harbour SPA (004030)<sup>3</sup></b>	<p><b>Bird Species:</b></p> <p>Little grebe (<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>) [wintering]</p> <p>Great crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>) [wintering]</p> <p>Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [wintering]</p> <p>Grey heron (<i>Ardea cinerea</i>) [wintering]</p> <p>Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [wintering]</p> <p>Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) [wintering]</p> <p>Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [wintering]</p> <p>Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [wintering]</p> <p>Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [wintering]</p> <p>Red-breasted Merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>) [wintering]</p> <p>Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [wintering]</p> <p>Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [wintering]</p> <p>Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [wintering]</p> <p>Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [wintering]</p> <p>Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [wintering]</p> <p>Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [wintering]</p> <p>Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [wintering]</p> <p>Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [wintering]</p> <p>Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [wintering]</p>	2.6km	There is potential remote and indirect connectivity via the crossing of two watercourses which flow into Cork Harbour SPA c.4.1km downstream at its closest point.

<sup>2</sup> NPWS (2014) Conservation Objectives: Great Island Channel SAC 001058. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

<sup>3</sup> NPWS (2014) Conservation Objectives: Cork Harbour SPA 004030. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

	Black-headed Gull ( <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i> ) [wintering] Common Gull ( <i>Larus canus</i> ) [wintering] Lesser Black-backed Gull ( <i>Larus fuscus</i> ) [wintering] Common Tern ( <i>Sterna hirundo</i> ) [breeding] Wetlands		
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#### 4.2.1 Site Description

##### 4.2.1.1 Great Island Channel SAC

The Standard Data Form (NPWS, 2019) describes Great Island Channel SAC as comprising the north-eastern part of Cork Harbour. It includes all of the Great Island Channel, the intertidal areas between Fota Island and Little Island, and also the estuary of the Dungourney and Owennacurra Rivers as far as Midleton. The North Channel is on average 1 km wide but extends for about 9 km from east to west. The area is well sheltered and the intertidal sediments are predominantly fine muds. In addition to the estuarine habitats, the site includes some wet grassland areas which are used by roosting birds, as well as some broad-leaved woodland at Fota Island. Compared to the rest of Cork Harbour, the Great Island Channel is relatively undisturbed, with aquaculture the main activity.

The site is of ecological importance for its examples of intertidal mud and sand flats and Atlantic salt meadows of the estuarine type. Both habitats are fairly extensive in area and of moderate to good quality. The site has high ornithological importance, supporting regularly c.50% of the wintering waterfowl of Cork Harbour. Significant proportions of the internationally important populations of *Limosa limosa* and *Tringa tetanus*, which winter in Cork Harbour, utilise the site and it supports nationally important populations of a further 12 species, including *Pluvialis apricaria* and *Limosa lapponica*, both listed on Annex I of the EU Birds Directive.

Qualifying habitats for Great Island Channel SAC are presented in Table 4-3 below.

Table 4-3: Great Island Channel Annex I (Qualifying) Habitats

Habitat Name and Code (SAC Qualifying Feature)	Cover (ha)	Representivity <sup>4</sup>
<b>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]</b>	722.55	B
<b>Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae) [1330]</b>	18.91	B

Site specific conservation objectives are available for Great Island Channel SAC. The conservation objectives for the site are provided in the Conservation Objectives document available on the NPWS website, as follows:

[https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation\\_objectives/CO001058.pdf](https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO001058.pdf)

##### 4.2.1.2 Cork Harbour SPA

The Standard Data Form (NPWS, 2021) describes Cork Harbour as a large, sheltered bay system, with several river estuaries - principally those of the Rivers Lee, Douglas, Owenboy and Owenacurra. The site comprises the main intertidal areas of Cork Harbour, including all of the North Channel, the Douglas Estuary, inner Lough

<sup>4</sup> The degree of representativity of the natural habitat type on the site: A : excellent representativity, B : good representativity, C : significant representativity and D: non-significant presence

Mahon, Monkstown Creek, Lough Beg, the Owenboy Estuary, Whitegate Bay and the Rostellan inlet. Owing to the sheltered conditions, the intertidal flats are often muddy in character. Salt marshes are scattered throughout the site and these provide high tide roosts for the birds. Otherwise, birds roost on stony shorelines and in some areas in fields adjacent to the shore. Some shallow bay water is included in the site. Cork Harbour is adjacent to a major urban centre and a major industrial centre.

Cork Harbour is an internationally important wetland site, regularly supporting in excess of 20,000 wintering waterfowl, for which it is amongst the top five sites in the country. It supports an internationally important population of *Tringa totanus*. A further 15 species have populations of national importance, with particularly notable numbers of *Tadorna tadorna* (9.6% of national total), *Anas clypeata* (4.5% of total), *Anas acuta* (4.2% of total) and *Phalacrocorax carbo* (4.1% of total) occurring. It has regionally important populations of *Pluvialis apricaria* and *Limosa lapponica*. Passage waders are regular, including *Philomachus pugnax* and *Tringa erythropus*. It is an important site for gulls in winter and autumn, especially *Larus canus* and *Larus fuscus*. The site provides both feeding and roosting areas for the waterfowl species. The quality of most of the estuarine habitats is good. The wintering birds have been well-monitored since the 1970s. The site has a breeding colony of *Sterna hirundo* which is of national importance. The colony is monitored annually and the chicks ringed.

Special Conservation Interests for Cork Harbour SPA are presented in Table 4-4 below.

Table 4-4: Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) for Cork Harbour SPA

Species	Population Significance <sup>5</sup>
Little grebe ( <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i> ) [wintering]	-
Great crested Grebe ( <i>Podiceps cristatus</i> ) [wintering]	B
Cormorant ( <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> ) [wintering]	B
Grey heron ( <i>Ardea cinerea</i> ) [wintering]	-
Shelduck ( <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> ) [wintering]	B
Wigeon ( <i>Anas penelope</i> ) [wintering]	C
Teal ( <i>Anas crecca</i> ) [wintering]	C
Pintail ( <i>Anas acuta</i> ) [wintering]	B
Shoveler ( <i>Anas clypeata</i> ) [wintering]	B
Red-breasted Merganser ( <i>Mergus serrator</i> ) [wintering]	B
Oystercatcher ( <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i> ) [wintering]	C
Golden Plover ( <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> ) [wintering]	C
Grey Plover ( <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> ) [wintering]	C
Lapwing ( <i>Vanellus vanellus</i> ) [wintering]	C
Dunlin ( <i>Calidris alpina</i> ) [wintering]	B
Black-tailed Godwit ( <i>Limosa limosa</i> ) [wintering]	B
Bar-tailed Godwit ( <i>Limosa lapponica</i> ) [wintering]	C
Curlew ( <i>Numenius arquata</i> ) [wintering]	B
Redshank ( <i>Tringa totanus</i> ) [wintering]	B
Black-headed Gull ( <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i> ) [wintering]	-

<sup>5</sup> Size and density of the population of the species present on the site in relation to the populations present within national territory. A: 100% >= p > 15% B: 15% >= p > 2% C: 2% >= p > 0% D: non-significant population

<b>Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [wintering]</b>	B
<b>Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>) [wintering]</b>	B
<b>Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [breeding]</b>	B

Site specific conservation objectives are available for Cork Harbour SPA. The conservation objectives for the site are provided in the Conservation Objectives document available on the NPWS website, as follows:

[https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation\\_objectives/CO004030.pdf](https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO004030.pdf)

#### 4.2.2 Conservation Objectives of European Sites

The integrity of a European site (referred to in Article 6.3 of the EU Habitats Directive) involves its ecological functions. The decision as to whether it is adversely affected therefore focuses on, and is limited to, conservation objectives set for a particular site (EC, 2018).

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

The qualifying features for each site have been obtained through a review of the conservation objectives available from the NPWS: <http://www.npws.ie/protected-sites>. Site specific conservation objectives are available for Great Island Channel SAC and Cork Harbour SPA; these were accessed in October 2022. For brevity, the site specific CO's are summarised thus:

- To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of Annex I habitats for which the SAC has been selected; and
- To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for the SPA.

#### 4.2.3 Potential Pressures and Threats to European Sites

Table 4-5 and Table 4-6 present the most important impacts and activities with high effects quoted on the Natura 2000 Data Form for Great Island Channel SAC and Cork Harbour SPA.

Table 4-5: Threats, Pressures and Impact Activities to Great Island Channel SAC

<b>Threats and Pressures (Code)<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>Threat Type</b>	<b>Rank<sup>7</sup></b>	<b>Inside(i) / Outside (o) / Both (b)</b>
<b>E01</b>	Urbanised areas, human habitation	H	o
<b>D01.02</b>	Roads, motorways	H	i
<b>F01</b>	Marine and freshwater aquaculture	H	i
<b>A08</b>	Fertilisation	M	o
<b>A04</b>	Grazing	M	i
<b>K02.03</b>	Eutrophication (natural)	M	i
<b>J02.01.02</b>	Reclamation of land from sea, estuary or marsh	H	i
<b>I01</b>	Invasive non-native species	M	i

<sup>6</sup> Threat code sourced from Natura 2000 data form and follows reference list provided on threats, pressures and activities for European sites

<sup>7</sup> Threat, pressure and impact ranking provided on Natura 2000 data form: H – High, M – Medium, L - Low

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Table 4-6: Threats, Pressures and Impact Activities to Cork Harbour SPA

<b>Threats and Pressures (Code)</b>	<b>Threat Type</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Inside (i) / Outside (o) / Both (b)</b>
<b>D01.02</b>	Roads, motorways	H	o
<b>G01.02</b>	Walking, horse-riding and non-motorised vehicles	M	i
<b>F02.03</b>	Leisure fishing	M	i
<b>D03.01</b>	Port areas	H	o
<b>A08</b>	Fertilisation	M	o
<b>F01</b>	Marine and freshwater aquaculture	H	i
<b>G01.01</b>	Nautical sports	M	i
<b>E01</b>	Urbanised areas, urban habitation	H	o
<b>E02</b>	Industrial or commercial areas	H	o
<b>D03.02</b>	Shipping lanes	M	i

## 5 Screening Assessment Criteria

### 5.1 Management of European Sites

AA Screening is not required where the proposed development is connected with, or necessary to the management of any European site. In this case, the proposed development is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of any European site(s).

### 5.2 Elements of the Project Likely to Give Rise to Significant Effects on European Sites

Table 4-2 lists the European sites within 15km of the proposed greenway. There are two sites within a 15km radius of the proposed site: Great Island Channel SAC and Cork Harbour SPA. The proposed works are not situated within any European site, therefore no direct impacts will occur through land take or fragmentation of habitats.

Cork Harbour SPA is of special conservation interest for wetlands and waterbirds. The proposed site comprises built land, recolonising bare ground, dry meadows and grassy verges and scrub and broadleaved woodland at the margins of the old railway line; freshwater habitats are limited to two streams crossed by the proposed greenway and a drainage ditch crossed by a proposed link to the greenway. As such, the proposed site would not be favoured by the Qualifying Interests of Cork Harbour SPA. Bird species observed during the breeding bird surveys conducted in April 2022 and June 2022 comprised species that reflect the habitat assemblages present at the site. No wildfowl or waterbirds were observed at the proposed site and its environs. Further, the proposed site is set back from Cork Harbour SPA by a distance of c.2.6km. In consideration of these factors, it is considered that any disturbance/ displacement or ex-situ impacts to the qualifying interests of Cork Harbour SPA as a result of the proposed development is extremely unlikely. The qualifying interests of Great Island Channel are habitats, not species, therefore ex-situ disturbance impacts are not relevant to this European Site.

High levels of silt in surface water run-off from construction may potentially impact on fish species, in particular salmonids. If of sufficient severity, adult fish may be affected by increased silt levels as gills may become damaged by exposure to elevated suspended solids levels. If of sufficient severity, aquatic invertebrates may be smothered by excessive deposits of silt from suspended solids. In areas of stony substrate, silt deposits may result in a change in the macro-invertebrate species composition, favouring less diverse assemblages and impacting on sensitive species. Aquatic plant communities may also be affected by increased siltation. Submerged plants may be stunted and photosynthesis may be reduced. Such run-off, if severe, may potentially impact on water quality which could also impact on fish stocks, which in turn could impact on waterbirds, including the SCI species for Cork Harbour SPA.

Inadvertent spillages of hydrocarbons (fuels and oils) during construction could introduce toxic chemicals into the aquatic environment via surface water run-off or groundwater contamination and have a toxicological impact on habitats and fauna. The extent of the downstream impact would depend on the amount of substance released and instream concentration.

The proposed greenway crosses the Douglas (Lee) 1<sup>st</sup> order stream via an existing culvert to the east of Spur Hill. The Douglas (Lee) stream then flows into Lough Mahon and Cork Harbour SPA c.5.5km downstream. The proposed greenway also crosses the Lehenagh Beg 1<sup>st</sup> order stream via an existing culvert to the west of Forge Hill; this watercourse flows into Cork Harbour SPA c.4.1km downstream; Great Island Channel SAC is located a further c.6.1km along the coast. The proposed link to the greenway from the N40 to Eagle Valley via undeveloped land crosses a drainage ditch which flows towards the N40 and likely drains into the Glasheen River and, ultimately, the River Lee and Cork Harbour.

As noted above, elevated silt levels could theoretically, if of sufficient magnitude, result in changes in the ecology of nearby waters. However, no culvert or in-stream works are required for the proposed greenway.

As such, the risk of significant levels of silt or other pollutants being deposited within the Douglas (Lee) stream and Lehenagh Beg stream or the drainage ditch at the proposed link route and, in turn, Lough Mahon and the River Lee is extremely low. Given the location, scale and nature of the proposed works, no impacts on water quality within Lough Mahon and the River Lee and, in turn, the Cork Harbour SPA and Great Island Channel SAC are expected. The proposed works will not result in a significant effect on the surface water or groundwater quality of any European site.

During the operational phase, the proposed drainage for the greenway and link cycleway/walkways will be over the edge drainage and run-off from the car park will pass through a bypass interceptor before discharging to the existing surface water drainage network at Forge Hill. The proposed new cycleway within Eagle Valley will be within the existing hard surfaced spine road and will drain to existing surface water drainage infrastructure.

In view of the factors described above, no adverse effects on the water quality of Cork Harbour SPA and in turn Great Island Channel SAC as a result of mobilisation of contaminants from the proposed site via surface or groundwater during the construction or operational phase of the proposed greenway are anticipated.

No significant effects on European sites are anticipated as a result of the proposed Cork City to Viaduct Greenway Phase 1.

### 5.3 Cumulative Impacts with Other Plans and Projects in the Area

As part of the screening for an AA, in addition to the proposed works, other relevant projects and plans in the region must also be considered at this stage and assessed in the context of potential for in-combination effects. These plans and projects are outlined and assessed in Table 5-1 below. In order to undertake this review, data sources including the Cork City Council planning enquiry search and general information sections, An Bord Pleanála planning search function, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage’s EIA Portal, the EPA website and Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 were accessed. The EIA Portal (accessed on 10th October 2022 [ArcGIS Web Application](#)) shows applications for development consent accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment Report – only one of which is within 1km of the Proposed Development as seen in Table 5-1.

It is concluded that there will be no negative in-combination effects between the proposed works and plans or projects in the area.

Table 5-1: Other Projects and Plans that could result in potential cumulative impacts

Plan / Programme/Policy	Key Objectives/Policies/Proposals	Potential for In-combination Effects and Mitigation
<b>River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021</b>	The project should comply with the environmental objectives of the Irish RBMP which were set out to be achieved generally by 2021. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure full compliance with relevant EU legislation;</li> <li>▪ Prevent deterioration;</li> <li>▪ Meet the objectives for designated protected areas;</li> <li>▪ Protect high-status waters; and</li> <li>▪ Implement targeted actions and pilot schemes in focused sub-catchments aimed at (1) targeting water bodies close to meeting their objective and (2) addressing more complex issues that will build knowledge for the third cycle.</li> </ul>	The implementation and compliance with key environmental policies, issues and objectives of this management plan will result in positive in-combination effects to European sites. The implementation of this plan will have a positive impact for biodiversity. It will not contribute to in-combination or cumulative impacts with the proposed development.



<p><b>Inland Fisheries Ireland Corporate Plan 2021 -2025</b></p> <p><b>The Inland Fisheries Act 2010.</b></p>	<p>To place the inland fisheries resource in the best sustainable position possible for the benefit of future generations. To protect, manage and conserve Ireland’s inland fisheries and sea angling resources and to maximise their sustainability and natural biodiversity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To sustainably develop and improve fish habitats.</li> <li>▪ To protect, maintain and enhance Ireland’s wild fish populations.</li> <li>▪ To actively engage with stakeholders in the continued stewardship of our shared resource.</li> <li>▪ To play a leadership role in achieving our climate action and biodiversity goals.</li> <li>▪ To value our people and support their development and performance.</li> <li>▪ To foster a culture of value for money and evaluation of performance in a measurable, transparent and accountable manner.</li> <li>▪ Harness the power of innovation to continue to deliver a modern fisheries service.</li> </ul>	<p>The implementation and compliance with key environmental issues and objectives of this corporate plan will result in positive in-combination or cumulative effects to European sites. The implementation of this corporate plan will have a positive impact for biodiversity of inland fisheries and ecosystems. It will not contribute to in-combination or cumulative impacts with the proposed works.</p>
<p><b>Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028</b></p>	<p>A number of walking and cycling improvements are noted in Table 4.3 of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028. Included within Table 4.3 is the ‘Lee to Sea’ Greenway which is described <i>“as a high quality walking, running and cycling route through Cork city, county and around its harbour. Commencing at Inniscarra Dam, the Lee to Sea will follow the River Lee through Cork City Centre via the City quays before travelling along the western shore of Cork harbour before terminating at the Harbour mouth. The greenway will connect the city and its hinterland to the two defining features of the local landscape the glacial Lee valley and Cork harbour.”</i></p> <p>This route does not overlap with the Proposed Development being assessed in this AA Screening.</p>	<p>The Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 includes Objective 6.23:</p> <p>To protect and enhance designated sites and areas of natural heritage and biodiversity and the habitats, flora and fauna for which it is designated, and to protect, enhance and conserve designated species.</p> <p>The policies and objectives of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 ensure that local planning applications comply with proper planning and sustainability and with the requirements of relevant EU Directives and environmental considerations, there is no potential for adverse in-combination effects on European Sites.</p>
<p><b>EPA Licensed Facilities</b></p>	<p>W0291 Industrial Emissions Licence, Forge Hill Recycling Unlimited Company (c.0.22km south of the proposed greenway);</p> <p>P0343 Integrated Pollution Prevention Control Licence, Brooks Haughton Limited (c.0.26km north of the proposed greenway);</p> <p>P0391 Industrial Emissions Licence and P0391-01 and Integrated Pollution Prevention Control Licence, Galco (Cork) Limited (0.32km north of the proposed greenway);</p> <p>P0407 Industrial Emissions Licence and Integrated Pollution Prevention Control Licence, Irish Pioneer</p>	<p>Discharges from these facilities are governed by strict limits to ensure compliance with quality standards. The long-term cumulative impact is predicted to be negligible.</p>



	<p>Works (Fabricators) Limited (c.0.37km north of the proposed greenway);</p> <p>W0012 Industrial Emissions Licence, Kinsale Road Landfill (c.0.56km north-east of the proposed greenway);</p> <p>P0059 Integrated Pollution Prevention Control Licence, Fronville Limited (c.1.0km north of the proposed greenway);</p> <p>P0348 Industrial Emissions Licence, Heiton Buckley Limited (c.1.5km west of the proposed greenway); and</p> <p>P0070 Industrial Emissions Licence, Irish Oxygen Co. Limited (1.9km west of the proposed greenway).</p>	
<p><b>Former CMP Dairies site, known as Creamfields, at Kinsale Road and Tramore Road. Located approx. 0.5km north of the Proposed Development (2240906)</b></p>	<p>Watfore Limited: A Primary Care Centre (c. 7,767m<sup>2</sup>), of principally 4 storeys and part 7 storeys in height above ground at the c. 1.37ha former CMP Dairies site, known as Creamfields, at Kinsale Road and Tramore Road, Cork. A Natura Impact Statement was submitted to the Planning Authority with the application.</p>	<p>Cork City Council’s Planning Report notes the following in respect of Appropriate Assessment:</p> <p><i>AA: I consider it reasonable to conclude based on the information submitted in the NIS, adequate in order to carry out a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment and that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, and subject to the mitigation measures being implemented in full, would not adversely affect the integrity of the SPA, in view of the Conservation Objectives for the sites.</i></p> <p>There is no potential for significant adverse in combination effects on European Sites.</p>
<p><b>Kinsale Road, Ballycurreen, Cork. Located approx. 0.1km south of the Proposed Development (2140353)</b></p>	<p>Denis McBarron: Demolition and removal of an existing dwelling and ancillary structures and the construction of a mixed-use residential and commercial development in 13 no. blocks comprising: 134 no. residential units, neighbourhood centre building which includes a restaurant/take-away, convenience retail, gym, dentist, physio, hairdressers and outdoor amenity at roof level; a creche; a 158 no. bed hotel, a new entrance/signalised junction and improvements to the N27 including 2 no. bus stops, cycle lane and footpaths, car and bicycle parking.</p>	<p>Decision Date: 16/6/2022. Decision to Grant appealed to An Bord Pleanála Appeal Ref. Number ABP-314025-22.</p> <p>Case is due for decision by 30.01.23</p> <p>While not yet considered by An Bord Pleanála the Cork City Council’s Planning Report noted as follows in respect of AA:</p> <p><i>AA: The applicant has submitted an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report in respect of the proposed development. The relevant European sites are the Cork Harbour SPA (site code 004030) and the Great Island Channel cSAC (site code 001058). Having regard to the location of the proposed development site relative to these European site and related watercourses and to the nature and</i></p>

		<p><i>scale of the proposed development it is considered that the proposed development would not affect the integrity of the European sites referred to above. Accordingly, it is considered that appropriate assessment is not required.</i></p> <p>There is no potential for significant adverse in combination effects on European Sites identified.</p>
<p><b>West Link, Togher Industrial Estate, Ballycurreen, Located adjacent to the Proposed Development (2140073)</b></p>	<p>Cork Builders Providers: 666sq.m. external hard surfaced yard for external storage of bulk sands and gravels which will be bagged along with precast concrete products.</p>	<p>Cork City Council’s Planning Report notes the following in respect of Appropriate Assessment:</p> <p><i>AA: The relevant European sites are the Cork Harbour SPA (site code 004030) and the Great Island Channel cSAC (site code 001058). Having regard to the location of the proposed development site relative to these European sites and related watercourses and to the nature and scale of the proposed development it is considered that the proposed development would not affect the integrity of the European sites referred to above. Accordingly it is considered that appropriate assessment is not required.</i></p> <p>There is no potential for significant adverse in combination effects on European Sites.</p>
<p><b>Unit 16A, Togher Industrial Estate, Ballycurreen Togher. Located approx. 0.03km north of the Proposed Development (2140483)</b></p>	<p>Permission for the construction of a light industrial building and all ancillary car parking, fencing and site development works to the rear.</p>	<p>Cork City Council’s Planning Report notes the following in respect of Appropriate Assessment:</p> <p><i>AA: The relevant European sites are the Cork Harbour SPA (site code 004030) and the Great Island Channel cSAC (site code 001058) and a proposed NHA, namely the Douglas River Estuary (Site Code: 001046). Having regard to the location of the proposed development site relative to these European sites and related watercourses and to the nature and scale of the proposed development it is considered that the proposed development would not affect the integrity of the European sites referred to above. Accordingly it is considered that appropriate assessment is not required.</i></p> <p>There is no potential for significant adverse in combination effects on European Sites.</p>

<p><b>Unit 1 2 and 3, University Hall Industrial Estate, Sarsfield Road Doughcloyne. Located adjacent to the Proposed Development (2139831)</b></p>	<p>Blackwater Motors Commercial Centre Ltd: Change of use of part of existing industrial unit to vehicle showroom (384sqmts).</p>	<p>Cork City Council's Planning Report notes the following in respect of Appropriate Assessment:  <i>AA: The relevant European sites are the Cork Harbour SPA (site code 004030) and the Great Island Channel cSAC (site code 001058). Having regard to the location of the proposed development site relative to these European sites and related watercourses and to the nature and scale of the proposed development it is considered that the proposed development would not affect the integrity of the European sites referred to above. Accordingly it is considered that appropriate assessment is not required.</i></p> <p>There is no potential for significant adverse in combination effects on European Sites.</p>
<p><b>Lehenaghmore Road, the Proposed Development will intersect the red line boundary of the Lehenaghmore Road Improvement Scheme.</b></p>	<p>Lehenaghmore Road Improvement Scheme</p>	<p>The AA screening report completed for this proposal concluded that:  <i>Due to the location, scale, duration, and nature of the development, it has been objectively concluded that significant impacts to the integrity of the following Natura 2000 sites are unlikely to occur as a result of the proposed development.</i></p> <p>There is no potential for significant adverse in combination effects on European Sites.</p>
<p><b>Kinsale Road. Located approx. 0.94km north of the Proposed Development.</b></p>	<p>39 no. dwelling units.</p>	<p>In accordance with the Habitats Directive, an Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening has been carried out on the project, in relation to any potential impacts upon the Cork Harbour Special Protection Area [Site No. 004030] and the Great Island Channel Special Area of Conservation [Site No. 001058]. The findings of the AA screening noted that no significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites is likely and it was not necessary to undertake any further stage of the Appropriate Assessment process.</p> <p>There is no potential for significant adverse in combination effects on European Sites.</p>
<p><b>Lehenaghmore, Co. Cork. Located approx. 0.58km south of the</b></p>	<p>Construction of 45 No. units comprising of: -                  14 no. 3-bedroom, semi-detached houses,                  21 no. 3-bedroom, townhouses,</p>	<p>In accordance with the Habitats Directive, an Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening has been carried out on the project, in relation</p>

<p><b>Proposed Development.</b></p>	<p>10 no. 2-bedroom, townhouses, Provision of 87 no. parking spaces. All ancillary site works and signage.</p>	<p>to any potential impacts upon the Cork Harbour Special Protection Area [Site No. 004030] and the Great Island Channel Special Area of Conservation [Site No. 001058]. The findings of the AA screening noted that no significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites is likely and it was not necessary to undertake any further stage of the Appropriate Assessment process.</p> <p>There is no potential for significant adverse in combination effects on European Sites.</p>
<p><b>N27 Kinsale Road, adjacent to the Proposed Development.</b></p>	<p>Cork City Council: N27 Kinsale Road (Airport Hill) Phase 2 Pedestrian and Cycle Scheme: Road works along the N27 Kinsale Road from Frankfield Junction to the Airport Roundabout in the interest of the safety and convenience of road users to include:</p> <p>Upgrade to pedestrian crossing facilities at Frankfield Junction.</p> <p>Upgrade to pedestrian and cyclist facilities from Frankfield Junction to the Ballycurreen Junction.</p> <p>Construction of a new pedestrian footpath along Ballycurreen Road.</p> <p>Construction of a new pedestrian footpath along Forge Hill Road.</p> <p>Upgrade to all pedestrian crossing facilities at Ballycurreen Junction.</p> <p>Provision of segregated on-line cycleway along both sides of the road, from Ballycurreen Junction to the Airport Roundabout.</p> <p>Upgrade to pedestrian and cyclist facilities at the Airport Roundabout.</p>	<p>The AA screening report completed for this proposal concluded that: <i>the proposed development, individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, is not predicted to result in likely significant effects upon Cork Harbour SPA or any of their European site, in view of the said sites' conservation objectives. Therefore, Stage 2 of Appropriate Assessment (Natura Impact Statement) is deemed not to be required.</i></p> <p>There is no potential for significant adverse in combination effects on European Sites.</p>
<p><b>The Former CMP Dairies Site Kinsale Road and Tramore Road Cork. Located approx. 0.6km north of the Proposed Development (ABP-312866-22 EIA Portal ID: 2022020)</b></p>	<p>Strategic Housing Development of 609 no. dwellings in 12 no. buildings of between 1-15 storeys in height over ground, to include a coffee kiosk; gym; café; retail use; creche and community hub; public square, car and cycle parking; and all associated works.</p>	<p>AA: <i>The Bord completed an Appropriate Assessment screening exercise in relation to the potential effects of the proposed development on European Sites.... The Board agreed with and adopted the report of the Inspector that, by itself or in combination with other development, plans and projects in the vicinity, the proposed development would not be likely to have a significant effect on any European Site in view of the Conservation Objectives of such sites, and that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not, therefore, required notwithstanding the fact that an Natura impact assessment was submitted by the applicant.</i></p>

		There is no potential for significant adverse in combination effects on European Sites.
<b>Better Value Unlimited Company. Located approx. 0.5km west of the proposed link to the greenway from N40 to Eagle Valley via undeveloped land (Ref: 2241271)</b>	Permission for development at Bishopstown Court Shopping Centre, Bandon Road, Garranedarragh, Bishopstown, Cork. The development will consist of: A change of use of the shopping centre's bedroom textile area from retail to an off-licence use (233 sq.m) modifying Reg. Ref: 21/40291. This change of use is only temporary (6 months max), after which work will commence to integrate the space with the centre's existing cafe seating area to create 3 no. shop units granted under Reg. Ref: 21/40291.	Adherence to the overarching policies and objectives of Cork City Development Plan 2022 - 2028 ensure that local planning applications and subsequent grant of planning comply with the core strategy of proper planning and sustainability and with the requirements of relevant EU Directives and environmental considerations, there is no potential for significant adverse in combination effects on European Sites.
<b>Grange Road to Tramore Valley Park Link - Connection from Alden Grove. Part 8 proposal.</b>	Cork City Council: It is proposed to provide a new pedestrian and cycleway connecting the Grange Road to Tramore Valley Park Pedestrian and Cycle Link to Alden Grove. Involves the following works:  The construction of approximately 35m of new 3m wide pedestrian and cycleway connecting the Grange Road to Tramore Valley Park Pedestrian and Cycle Link to Alden Grove with associated earthworks.  The construction of approximately 23m of new 3m wide footway within Alden Grove.	The findings of the AA screening concluded that no significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites is likely and it was not necessary to undertake any further stage of the Appropriate Assessment process.  There is no potential for significant adverse in combination effects on European Sites.
<b>Heiton Steel, Ardrostig, Bishopstown located 0.6km to the west of the Proposed development (Ref: 2240835).</b>	Chadwicks Group Ltd.: Permission for the development of an extension to an existing storage warehouse and the construction of an associated office building located in Heiton Steel, Ardrostig, Bishopstown, Cork. The proposed office building will contain a small office area, staff facilities and a trade counter for the existing steel business to replace the existing temporary accommodation cabins which provide the existing staff accommodation and trade counter. It is proposed to remove the existing temporary accommodation cabins. The application also includes an extension to the existing storage yard to keep stock lengths of steel reinforcing bars and mild steel rolled sections.	Cork City Council's Planner's Report notes the following with reference to potential environmental impacts: <i>AA: The relevant European sites are the Cork Harbour SPA (Site Code 004030) and the Great Island Channel cSAC (site code 001058). Having regard to its nature, and location it is considered that the proposed development would not affect the integrity of the sites referred to. Accordingly it is considered that a Natura impact statement for the purposes of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive is not required to be submitted.</i>  There is no potential for significant adverse in combination effects on European Sites.
<b>Circle K, Bishopstown Service Station, Ardrostig Bishopstown located 0.5km to the west of the Proposed development (Ref: 2140415).</b>	BIGbin Waste Tech Ltd: Permission for placement of a portable, pay-to-use waste compactor for the acceptance of residual and food waste and a portable, pay-to-use compactor for mixed recyclables at Circle K, Bishopstown Service Station, Ardrostig, Bishopstown, Cork, T12AYF8 by BIGbin Waste Tech Ltd. This activity requires the	Cork City Council's Planner's Report notes the following with reference to potential environmental impacts: <i>AA: The relevant European sites are the Cork Harbour SPA (Site Code 004030) and the Great Island Channel cSAC (site code 001058). Having regard to its nature, scale</i>

	developers to possess a waste collection permit/certificate of registration.	<p>and location it is considered that the proposed development would not affect the integrity of the sites referred to. Accordingly it is considered that a Natura impact statement for the purposes of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive is not required to be submitted.</p> <p>There is no potential for significant adverse in combination effects on European Sites.</p>
<p><b>8 The Hedgerows, Eagle Valley, Wilton, located 26m to the south west of the Proposed development (Ref: 2140361).</b></p>	<p>Sean O Brien: Permission for alterations and a 2 storey extension to the side of an existing dwelling and all associated site works.</p>	<p>Cork City Council’s Planner’s Report notes the following with reference to potential environmental impacts:</p> <p>AA: <i>The relevant European sites are the Cork Harbour SPA (Site Code 004030) and the Great Island Channel cSAC (site code 001058). Having regard to its nature, scale and location it is considered that the proposed development would not affect the integrity of the sites referred to. Accordingly it is considered that a Natura impact statement for the purposes of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive is not required to be submitted.</i></p> <p>There is no potential for significant adverse in combination effects on European Sites.</p>

### 5.4 Screening Assessment

Table 5-2 identifies the potential direct, indirect and secondary impacts of the proposed development on European Sites within a 15 km radius.

Table 5-2: Potential Significant Effects on European Sites from the Proposed Development

Site Name and Code	Direct Impacts	Indirect / Secondary Impacts	Resource Requirements	Emissions (Disposal to land, Water or Air)	Excavation Requirements
<b>Great Island Channel SAC (001058)</b>	No impact on QI	No impact on QI	No impact on QI	No impact on QI	No impact on QI
<b>Cork Harbour SPA (004030)</b>	No impact on QI	No impact on QI	No impact on QI	No impact on QI	No impact on QI

### 5.5 Likely Changes to the European Site(s)

The likely changes that could arise from the proposed Cork City to Viaduct Greenway Phase 1 have been examined in the context of a number of factors that could have a significant effect on the relevant European Sites (Table 5-3)



Table 5-3: Likely Changes to European Sites

Site Name and Code	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
Great Island Channel SAC (001058)	None	None	None	None	None	None
Cork Harbour SPA (004030)	None	None	None	None	None	None

### 5.5.1 Elements of the Project where the Impacts are Likely to be Significant

No elements of the proposed Cork City to Viaduct Greenway Phase 1 are likely to cause significant effects to the relevant European Sites.

## 6 Conclusion

This AA screening report has been prepared to assess whether the proposed development, individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, and in view of best scientific knowledge, is likely to have a significant effect on any European site(s).

The screening exercise was completed in compliance with the relevant European Commission guidance, national guidance and case law. The potential impacts of the proposed development have been considered in the context of the European sites potentially affected, their qualifying interests or special conservation interests, and their conservation objectives.

Through an assessment of the source-pathway-receptor model, which considered the ZoI of effects from the proposed development and the potential in-combination effects with other plans or projects, the following findings were reported:

- The proposed Cork City to Viaduct Greenway Phase 1, either alone or in-combination with other plans and/or projects, does not have the potential to significantly affect any European Site, in light of their conservation objectives. Therefore, a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is deemed not to be required.

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