

**Appropriate Assessment and Strategic
Environmental Assessment Screening Report
for the
Draft Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan
(2021-2025)
May 2021**



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Table of Contents

Part A: Screening for Appropriate Assessment.....	4
1.0 Introduction.....	5
1.1 Legislation.....	5
2.0 Screening Methodology.....	6
2.1 Guidance documentation.....	8
2.2 Assessment Methodology.....	8
2.3 Data Sources.....	9
3.0 Provision of Information for Screening for Appropriate Assessment.....	10
3.1 Brief description of the Plan.....	10
3.2 Brief description of European Sites within the Plan area.....	12
3.3 Brief description of European Sites within 15km of the Plan boundary.....	14
3.4 Describe the individual elements of the Plan (either alone or in combination with other plans) likely to give rise to impacts on European Sites.....	18
3.5 Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the Plan (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on European Sites by virtue of:.....	30
3.6 Describe any likely changes arising as a result of:.....	31
<i>Reduction in Habitat Area</i>	31
<i>Disturbance to Key Species</i>	31
<i>Habitat and Species Fragmentation</i>	31
<i>Changes in Key Indicators of Conservation Value</i>	32
<i>Climate Change</i>	32
3.7 Describe any likely impacts on European Sites in terms of:.....	32
4.0 Conclusions of Screening Assessment Process.....	33
5.0 Conclusion Statement.....	34
Part B: Screening for Strategic Environmental Assessment.....	35
1.0 Introduction.....	36
2.0 Description of the Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2025.....	37
3.0 The European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 to 2011.....	38
4.0 Screening for Strategic Environmental Assessment.....	39
5.0 Conclusion.....	39

Part A: Screening for Appropriate Assessment

1.0 Introduction

The Draft Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan has been prepared by Dublin City Council. The draft Plan has been prepared within the framework of the *Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022* and is a response to national obligations under the *National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017 -2021*, and under the *European Union Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 - Bringing nature back into our lives*.

The draft Plan describes the diversity of nature in Dublin City and draws attention to the essential benefits that we receive from nature. The draft Plan has been prepared in the context of a biodiversity crisis having been declared formally two years ago by both Dublin City Council and by Ireland becoming the second nation in the world to declare a national climate and biodiversity emergency on 9 May 2019 by Dáil Éireann. In response to these challenges, the document outlines a series of objectives and actions that, over a five-year period between 2021-2025, aim to achieve the protection and restoration of the City's biodiversity, while ensuring that those who live in, work in and visit Dublin City continue to enjoy and benefit from the many services that nature provides.

This Screening for Appropriate Assessment report is relevant to the aims and objectives as outlined in the draft Biodiversity Action Plan and will be published for public consultation. It comprises a record of the reasoning and conclusions of the first stage of Appropriate Assessment, which considers whether the plan, alone or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have significant effects on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site.

1.1 Legislation

The report has regard to the following legislative instruments:

- Planning and Development, Act 2000, as amended;
- European Commission (EC) Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC;
- European Commission (EC) Birds Directive 2009/147/EC;
- European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011-2015.

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. These are Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)

designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under European Union Nature Directives - the Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (79/409/ECC). Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to affect Natura 2000 sites (Annex 1.1). Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for Appropriate Assessment (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”.

Article 6(4) states:

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

2.0 Screening Methodology

The first part of the Appropriate Assessment process is the Screening phase. Screening is the process that applies the first two tests of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive and addresses the following:

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

Following Screening, if there is a possibility of there being a significant effect on a European site, then this will necessitate an appropriate assessment for the purposes of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. This means that if the conclusions at the end of the screening exercise are that significant effects on any European sites, as a result of the draft Plan, either alone or in

combination with other plans and projects, are likely, uncertain or unknown, then an Appropriate Assessment must be carried out. This is in accordance with established precedent and case law. If a plan or project is revised, then the Appropriate Assessment must also be revised as it is an iterative process.

For the risk of an adverse effect to occur there must be a 'source', such as a construction site; a 'receptor', such as a designated site for nature conservation; and a pathway between the source and the receptor, such as a watercourse that links a construction site to the designated site. Although there may be a risk of an impact it may not necessarily occur, and if it does occur, it may not be significant. Identification of a risk means that there is a possibility of ecological or environmental damage occurring, with the level and significance of the impact depending upon the nature and exposure to the risk and the characteristics of the receptor. There are no set recommended distances for projects to consider European sites as being relevant for assessment. Irish national guidance recommends that the distance should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis (NPWS 2010). It is often considered appropriate to include all European sites within 15km, although greater distances may be considered if hydrological connectivity warrants this approach. The distance considered in the Appropriate Assessment is called the "zone of influence" (ZOI).

The steps in this AA screening process have been devised from the guidance documents listed below and are as follows:

- Description of the plan and plan area.
- Identify Natura 2000 sites in the zone of influence of the plan and compilation of information on their qualifying interests and conservation objectives.
- Identify pathways for interaction between the plan and sites within the "zone of influence", considering the conditions required to support sites and species, site sensitivities and known threats or vulnerabilities.
- Assessment of likely effects of the plan or project in view of the characteristics and specific environmental conditions of the Natura 2000 sites. The Precautionary Principle underpins the Habitats Directive and requires that where doubt exists about the risk of a significant effect, an AA must be carried out. (EC, 2006).
- Assessment of significance. An effect of a proposed plan or project is considered significant if it would likely undermine any of the site's conservation objectives including its structure and function.

2.1 Guidance documentation

The Screening Statement has been prepared with reference to guidance contained in the following documents:

- *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities.* (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2010 revision).
- *Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities.* Circular NPW 1/10 & PSSP 2/10.
- *Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological Guidance on the Provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (European Commission Environment Directorate-General, 2001).* This document provides a non-mandatory methodology for carrying out assessments required under Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive.
- *Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC (EC Environment Directorate-General, 2000).*
- *Guidance Document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitats Directive' 92/43/EEC. Clarification of the Concepts of Alternative Solutions, Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest, Compensatory Measures, Overall Coherence. Opinion of the European Commission (European Commission, January 2007).*

2.2 Assessment Methodology

The guidance above sets out a staged process for carrying out Appropriate Assessment. To determine if an Appropriate Assessment is required, documented screening is required. Screening identifies the potential for effects on the conservation objectives of European sites, if any, which would arise from a proposed plan or project, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects (i.e. likely significant effects). Significant effects on a European site are those that would undermine the conservation objectives supporting the favourable conservation condition of the Qualifying Interest (QI) habitats and/or the QI/Special Conservation Interest (SCI) species of a European site(s).

Screening for Appropriate Assessment involves the following steps:

1. Determining whether the proposed plan or development is directly connected with, or necessary to the conservation management of, any European site(s)
2. Description of the plan and plan area.
3. Identifying Natura 2000 sites in the zone of influence of the plan and compilation of information on their qualifying interests and conservation objectives.

4. Identifying pathways for interaction between the plan and sites within the zone of influence, considering the conditions required to support sites and species, site sensitivities and known threats or vulnerabilities.
5. Assessment of likely effects of the plan or project in view of the characteristics and specific environmental conditions of the Natura 2000 sites. The Precautionary Principle underpins the Habitats Directive and requires that where doubt exists about the risk of a significant effect, an AA must be carried out. (EC, 2006)
6. Assessment of significance. An effect of a proposed plan or project is considered significant if it would likely undermine any of the sites conservation objectives including its structure and function.

If the conclusion at the end of screening is that there is no likelihood of significant effects occurring on any European site, as a result of the plan or project, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, then there is no requirement to undertake Appropriate Assessment.

These findings must be clearly documented in order to provide transparency of decision-making, and to ensure the application of the 'Precautionary Principle' in accordance with [Article 191\(2\) of the Treaty on the Functioning the European Union](#) ("The Lisbon Treaty").

2.3 Data Sources

Information was collated from the organisations and websites listed below:

- Data on European sites and rare and protected plant and animal species contained in the following databases:
 - The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (www.NPWS.ie);
 - The National Biodiversity Data Centre (NDBC) (www.biodiversityireland.ie);
 - BirdWatch Ireland (www.birdwatchireland.ie);
 - Bat Conservation Ireland (www.batconservationireland.org).
- Information on land-use zoning from the online mapping of the Department of the Environment,
- Community and Local Government (<http://www.myplan.ie/en/index.html>);
- Recent and historical OSi mapping and aerial photography, including www.geohive.ie;

- Information on water quality in the area (www.epa.ie);
- Information on the River Basin Districts from www.wfdireland.ie;
- Information on soils, geology and hydrogeology in the area (www.gsi.ie);
- Information on the Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland (Article 17 report) (NPWS, August 2019);
- Third National Biodiversity Plan 2017 – 2021 (Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, 2017);
- Dublin City Development Plan 2016 – 2022, including the accompanying Appropriate Assessment documentation (Natura Impact Report).

3.0 Provision of Information for Screening for Appropriate Assessment

3.1 Brief description of the Plan

The Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2026 is the third such plan for the City, and its preparation has been informed by:

- Current knowledge and lessons learned from the Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2015-2020.
- Guidance from key stakeholders influencing biodiversity conservation in Dublin City.
- Legislation and policy at Local, National, European, and International level, for the preparation and implementation of Local Biodiversity Action Plans.

The overarching aim of the Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2026, is the conservation of biodiversity within the City. This will rely on a combination of different approaches, including direct and appropriate management of biodiversity at local and regional level, identification and protection of important conservation value areas, enhancing biodiversity conservation within the green infrastructure network, raising awareness and understanding among decision-makers, provision of appropriate guidance to landowners, and changing behaviour among the public towards the protection and appreciation of biodiversity.

In this regard, the Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2026 contains six Themes, which reflect the Strategic Objectives of Ireland's National Biodiversity Plan (Actions for Biodiversity 2017-2021). The six Themes of the Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2026 are

underpinned by 100 Actions, and will continue to build on progress achieved during Dublin City's first and second Biodiversity Action Plans. The six Themes are set out below.

Theme 1: Maintaining Nature in the City

Theme 2: Restoring Nature in the City

Theme 3: Building for Biodiversity

Theme 4: Dublin as a Green Capital City

Theme 5: Understanding Biodiversity in the City

Theme 6: Partnering for Biodiversity

Dublin City Council will be the lead authority for the implementation of the Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2026. Dublin City Council's Biodiversity Section is within Parks, Biodiversity and Landscape Services, which complements the other work programmes operating within this Division, including the management of public parks, open spaces, street trees, green infrastructure, and Dublin City Council's role within the Dublin Bay UNESCO Biosphere Partnership and the Dublin Mountains Partnership.

There are a number of policies which guide the daily operations of Dublin City Council, and which will be important for the successful implementation of this Biodiversity Action Plan. These policies are set out below.

1. To ensure that all plans, programmes, strategies, works, and permissions within Dublin City, comply with biodiversity legislation, and incorporate biodiversity conservation at the earliest possible stages.
2. To strive for the highest standards in biodiversity conservation, and to adopt and evaluate best practice management from successful national and international examples.
3. To work collaboratively with all stakeholders for the benefit of biodiversity conservation within Dublin City and the greater Dublin region.
4. To promote and support biodiversity research within Dublin City.

3.2 Brief description of European Sites within the Plan area

There are four European Sites within the Plan area. There are two Special Areas of Conservation (North Dublin Bay SAC and South Dublin Bay SAC), and two Special Protection Areas (North Bull Island SPA and South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA). The Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests of these sites are set out in Table 1 below. Site Specific Conservation Objectives are available for all these European Sites.

Table 1: European Sites, Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests within Plan Area

Site Code	European Site	Qualifying Interest/ Special Conservation
000206	North Dublin Bay SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] • Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] • Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] • Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330] • Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] • Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] • Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120] • Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] • Humid dune slacks [2190] • <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (Petalwort) [1395]
000210	South Dublin Bay SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] • Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] • Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] • Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]
004006	North Bull Island SPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] • Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] • Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052] • Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054] • Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056] • Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] • Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] • Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] • Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143]

Site Code	European Site	Qualifying Interest/ Special Conservation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144] • Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] • Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] • Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] • Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160] • Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] • Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>) [A169] • Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] • Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]
004024	South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] • Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] • Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] • Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] • Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143] • Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144] • Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] • Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] • Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] • Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] • Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) [A192] • Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] • Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194] • Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]

3.3 Brief description of European Sites within 15km of the Plan boundary

When assessing the impact of a Plan on European Sites outside the Plan area, a distance of 15km is recommended as the likely zone of impact as per the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government's publication, 'Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Local Authorities'ⁱ. There are 11 SAC's and 8 SPA's within 15km of the boundary of the Plan area as set out in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Natura 2000 sites within 15 km of boundary of the BAP area

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Interests	Distance to site (km)
	Special Areas of Conservation		
003000	Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reefs [1170] • Phocoena phocoena (Harbour Porpoise) [1351] 	2.6
000199	Baldoyle Bay SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] • Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] • Atlantic salt meadows (Glaucopuccinellietalia maritimae) [1330] • Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi) [1410] 	1.97
000202	Howth Head SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] • European dry heaths [4030] 	1.55
000204	Lambay Island SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reefs [1170] • Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] • Halichoerus grypus (Grey Seal) [1364] • Phoca vitulina (Harbour Seal) [1365] 	12.0
000205	Malahide Estuary SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] • Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] • Atlantic salt meadows (Glaucopuccinellietalia maritimae) [1330] • Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi) [1410] • Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes) [2120] • Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] 	3.82
000208	Rogerstown Estuary SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estuaries [1130] • Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] 	10.1

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Interests	Distance to site (km)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] 	
000713	Ballyman Glen SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Petrifying springs with tufa formation (<i>Cratoneurion</i>) [7220] Alkaline fens [7230] 	13.44
000725	Knocksink Wood SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Petrifying springs with tufa formation (<i>Cratoneurion</i>) [7220] Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0] 	13.59
001209	Glenasmole Valley SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (* important orchid sites) [6210] <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410] Petrifying springs with tufa formation (<i>Cratoneurion</i>) [7220] 	6.88
002122	Wicklow Mountains SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110] Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160] Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010] European dry heaths [4030] Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] Calaminarian grasslands of the <i>Violetalia calaminariae</i> [6130] Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe) [6230] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130] Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladani</i>) [8110] 	7.78

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Interests	Distance to site (km)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210] • Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220] • Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0] • Lutra (Otter) [1355] 	
002193	Ireland's Eye SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] • Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] 	3.91
Special Protection Area			
004015	Rogerstown Estuary SPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>) [A043] • Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] • Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] • Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056] • Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] • Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] • Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] • Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143] • Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] • Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] • Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] • Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] 	10.1
004016	Baldoyle Bay SPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] • Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] • Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137] • Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] • Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] • Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] • Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] 	1.97
004025	Malahide Estuary SPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>) [A005] • Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] • Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] • Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) [A054] • Goldeneye (<i>Bucephala clangula</i>) [A067] • Red-breasted Merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>) [A069] 	3.82

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Interests	Distance to site (km)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141] Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] 	
004069	Lambay Island SPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) [A009] Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017] Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) [A018] Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>) [A043] Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>) [A183] Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184] Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188] Guillemot (<i>Uria aalge</i>) [A199] Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>) [A200] Puffin (<i>Fratercula arctica</i>) [A204] 	12.0
004113	Howth Head Coast SPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188] 	3.93
004117	Ireland's Eye SPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017] Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184] Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188] Guillemot (<i>Uria aalge</i>) [A199] Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>) [A200] 	3.91
004040	Wicklow Mountains SPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>) [A098] Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>) [A103] 	8.81
004172	Dalkey Islands SPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roseate Tern (<i>Sterna dougallii</i>) [A192] Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194] 	7.56

3.4 Describe the individual elements of the Plan (either alone or in combination with other plans) likely to give rise to impacts on European Sites.

The overarching aim of the Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2025, is the conservation of biodiversity within the City. The Plan contains six Themes, which are underpinned by one hundred Actions. These are set out below.

Table of Themes, Objectives and Actions

Theme 1: Maintaining Nature in the City

Objective 1: Ensure effective implementation of the Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 1:					
Action No.	Action	Timeframe	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Performance Indicators
1.1	Undertake an annual review of the implementation of the actions identified in the Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan	Annually	DCC	-	Annual review published & distributed to relevant stakeholders
1.2	Undertake an annual review of the implementation of the biodiversity actions completed under the Dublin City Climate Action Plan	Annually	DCC	CARO	Annual review published & distributed to relevant stakeholders
Objective 2: Protect designated sites for nature conservation in accordance with the Conservation Management objectives for Natura 2000 sites and proposed Natural Heritage Areas in Dublin City					
Action No.	Action	Timeframe	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Performance Indicators
2.1	Implement the Conservation Management objectives for the following Natura 2000 sites in Dublin City: North Bull Island SAC, North Bull Island SPA, South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA, South Dublin Bay SAC	2021-2025	DCC	NPWS, DLRCC, FCC, DBBRP	No. of objectives implemented or completed for Natura 2000 sites
2.2	Implement the biodiversity measures identified in the North Bull Island National Nature Reserve Management Plan	2021-2025	DCC	DBBRP, NPWS, NBI Oversight Forum	No. of actions from the plan completed
2.3	Implement the conservation objectives of the Dublin Bay UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Conservation and Research Strategy	2021-2025	DBBRP	DCC, NPWS, DPC, DLRCC, FCC, FI,	No. of actions from the plan completed

				DNFC, NGOs	
2.4	Prepare a conservation management plan for South Dublin Bay	2021-2022	DCC	NPWS, DBBRP SDCC,	Management Plan completed
2.5	Monitor and prepare report on the seagrass (<i>Zostera</i> spp.) beds at Sandymount and Merrion Gates to inform conservation management of this area.	2023	NUI G, CWI	DCC, NPWS	Survey completed & results published
2.6	Establish student research programme for dunes and saltmarsh habitats at North Bull Island	2022	TCD , UC D, NUI G, TU D	DCC	No. of student projects completed annually
2.7	Prepare grassland management guidelines for the management of Brent Goose feeding sites on all lands in State and semi-state ownership, including public parks, schools, and other lands	2022	DBB RP	DCC, IBGRG, NPWS, BWI	Strategy completed
2.8	Create a database and map of the feeding and roosting sites of Light-bellied Brent Geese within Dublin City to inform development, in conjunction with the Dublin Bay Biosphere Reserve Partnership, University of Exeter, and the Irish Brent Goose Research Group	2022	DBB RP	DCC, UoE, IBGRG	Database completed

Objective 3: Identify and protect sites that have conservation value for biodiversity using evidence-based research

Action No.	Action	Timeframe	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Performance Indicators
3.1	Survey and populate into GIS all areas of conservation value within Dublin City using evidence-based research	2021-2022	DCC	DNFC, NGOs, Third level	No. of areas surveyed & results published
3.2	Implement recommendations of the Dublin City Hedgerow Survey 2020 to conserve hedgerows	2021-2025	DCC	Landowners	No. of actions taken & extent of hedgerow in linear metres city-wide in 2025
3.3	Conduct biodiversity surveys in Dublin City Council golf courses and implement measures for biodiversity	2023-2024	DCC	DNFC	No. of completed surveys & programme of improvements devised
3.4	Conduct surveys and implement measures to conserve and enhance burial grounds as reserves for biodiversity	2021-2022	DCC	TUD, DNFC	Survey completed & results published. No. of recommendations implemented

Objective 4: Monitor and conserve legally-protected species within Dublin City, particularly those listed in the annexes of the EU Birds and Habitats Directive using evidence-based research					
Action No.	Action	Timeframe	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Performance Indicators
4.1	Conduct systematic survey of breeding bird populations on NBI, targeting Ringed Plover, Little Tern, Skylark, Stonechat, Meadow Pipit, Reed Bunting, Snipe and Grasshopper Warbler species.	2021	DHLGH	BWI, DCC, NPWS	Survey completed & results published
4.2	Conduct new and repeat surveys of mammals in parks across Dublin City (targeting badger, hedgehog, and pygmy shrew) to inform conservation management	2024	DCC	NUIG, IWT	Survey completed & results published
4.3	Support the first National Hedgehog Survey and promote citizen science through the Helping Hedgehogs initiative	2021-2022	NUIG	DCC, GCC, MCC, RCC, KCC, DLR, UWT, CNaN	Survey advertised, training conducted, No. of sightings recorded & results published
4.4	Update Herpetofauna (common frog, common lizard, and common newt) surveys of Dublin City parks	2022	DCC	HSI	No. of surveys completed & published
4.5	Review data and map in GIS the distribution of bats across the city and identify areas requiring surveying.	2022-2023	DCC	BCI, DBG	Review completed & results published
4.6	Conduct surveys for Kingfisher along the Liffey, Santry, Dodder and Tolka Rivers	2023	DCC	BWI, IMRG, NPWS	No. of surveys completed & published
4.7	Implement the recommendations of the Dublin City Otter Survey (2019)	2021-2025	DCC	NPWS, other State Agencies	No. of recommendations completed by 2025
4.8	Update the Dublin City Otter Survey (2019) and expand to include Dublin canals	2024	DCC /W WI	NPWS	Survey completed & results published
4.9	Update survey of grey and common (harbour) seal in Dublin City	2023	DCC	DBBRP, ISS	Survey completed & results published
4.10	Develop an agreed approach to recording seal mortality within the Dublin City area	2021-2025	DCC	ISS, SRI, NPWS	Approach agreed & disseminated to partners
Objective 5: Prepare and plan for the impacts of climate change on biodiversity					

Action No.	Action	Timeframe	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Performance Indicators
5.1	To identify natural and cultural heritage at risk from climate change in Dublin City and quantify the impacts to inform planning and management decisions	2021-2023	DCC	Various including CARO, Third level, NGOs, DNFC	Assessment & report completed
5.2	Prepare a city-wide survey of butterfly populations on an evidence-based review	2021-2022	DNFC	DCC	Survey completed & results published
5.3	Facilitate annual monitoring of coastal change in Dublin Bay for coastal zone management	2021-2025	DCC	GSI, TCD	Annual surveys completed
5.4	Facilitate baseline groundwater monitoring of Dublin City by Geological Survey of Ireland and prepare public information/educational materials	2021-2025	DCC	GSI	Survey completed. Results published. Materials launched.
5.5	Assess causes and impacts of Ectocarpus brown algal growth in Dublin Bay	2023	NUI G	DCC	Assessment complete & actions developed
5.6	Share data with the central clearing house for monitoring impacts of climate change on biodiversity in accordance with the Sectoral Climate Change Adaptation Plan	2021-2025	DHL GH	EPA, BIM, MI, Third level, DCC & LAs	Percentage of data shared
Objective 6: Implement measures for species with that have a local biodiversity value or impact local biodiversity					
Action No.	Action	Timeframe	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Performance Indicators
6.1	Conduct systematic survey of swifts across key Dublin suburbs to locate breeding sites and assess populations within the city.	2021	BWI	DCC	Survey completed & information provided to owners of breeding sites.
6.2	Undertake swift monitoring projects and establish new sites with community groups and through development controls	2022-2025	DCC	SCI, BWI, landowners, communities	No. of new sites established & monitoring reports completed
6.3	Produce species lists of flora and fauna for the 10 largest Dublin City Council parks to identify gaps in knowledge and raise awareness at a local level	2022-2025	DCC	DNFC, Third level, DNFC,	No. of species lists produced. No. of awareness raising activities.

				NGOs, IWT	
6.4	Conduct monitoring of fox populations at selected public parks in Dublin City to assess their status and role in the ecosystem	2021-2022	UCD	DCC, OPW	Survey completed & information provided to owners of breeding sites.
6.5	Support the Mute Swan Census to monitor the population in Dublin City.	2021-2025	DCC	IMRG	No. of annual census surveys completed
6.6	Conduct bird ringing and monitoring surveys in public parks and install nest boxes where appropriate	2021-2025	IMR G	DCC	No. of parks surveyed, monitoring statistics & No. of bird boxes
6.7	Prepare a survey of Peregrine Falcon sites	2023-2024	BWI	DCC	Survey completed

Objective 7: Prepare and disseminate information on guidance for development and site management for biodiversity conservation

Action No.	Action	Timeframe	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Performance Indicators
7.1	To prepare revised guidelines for developers for taking-in-charge to include biodiversity measures.	2021	DCC	-	Guidelines published
7.2	Update the Dublin City Habitat Map	2025	DCC	DNFC	Map completed
7.3	Conduct training sessions for relevant DCC staff on biodiversity conservation for Continuing Professional Development and to ensure best practice	2021-2025	DCC	Professional Institutes, DNFC, NGOs	No. of training sessions
7.4	Update the manual of best practice management for the conservation of biodiversity within public parks and develop a strategy to increase biodiversity	2024	DCC	OPW	Manual updated
7.5	Provide information on habitats and species and their occurrence in Dublin City produced under the City BAP to support decision-making and research	2021-2025	DCC	DBBP & various partners	Percentage of studies available
7.6	Update the Dublin City Hedgerow Survey	2025	DCC	-	Survey completed

Theme 2 - Restoring Nature in the City

Objective 8: Devise and implement habitat restoration initiatives across Dublin City

Action No.	Action	Timeframe	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Performance Indicators
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8.1	Identify and map sites owned by DCC for habitat restoration and prepare a strategy	2021-2023	DCC	UCD, DNFC, NGOs	Strategy completed
8.2	Develop and implement river restoration measures for all rivers in Dublin City, including continuing measures for the River Tolka and new initiatives for the Santry and Camac Rivers	2021-2025	DCC	LAWPRO, IFI, ANG, OPW, NPWS, DNFC	Extent of river zones restored
8.3	Gather evidence-based data and develop a wildlife corridors strategy for Dublin	2021-2023	DCC, Irish Rail	WWI, Irish Rail, IFI, DNFC, landowners	Strategy completed
8.4	Implement pilot projects to retrofit and construct wetlands for biodiversity	2021-2023	DCC	DHLGH, NGOs	Completion of pilot projects
8.5	Implement measures to support migratory fish and their life cycles, particularly Atlantic salmon, eel, and lamprey	2021-2025	IFI	DCC, OPW, NPWS, LAWPRO, ANG	No. of measures completed
8.6	Investigate the potential for a seagrass (<i>Zostera</i> spp.) restoration project in Sandymount Strand	2021-2024	DCC	NUIG, CWI, NPWS,	Research Project initiated
8.7	Prepare a strategy for the rehabilitation of historic landfills in public parks and open spaces for Dublin City.	2021-2024	DCC	-	Strategy completed
8.8	Work with community organisations to support nature targeting areas of high land use density as identified in the EU Urban Atlas, such as community gardens and small-scale rewilding	2021-2025	DCC	Tidy Towns and community groups	No. of community groups engaged. Area (Ha) where measures implemented
8.9	To assess performance of measures for restoration to learn what is most effective in Dublin City	2021-2025	DCC	Third Level, DNFC	Evaluation reports produced for projects

Objective 9: To use nature-based solutions to restore biodiversity and ecosystem services					
Action No.	Action	Timeframe	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Performance Indicators
9.1	Identify and map habitats, species and supporting features that provide ecosystem services	2023-2024	DCC in cooperation with DBBRP	Third level, NGOs, community groups	Completion of an ecosystem services map for biodiversity in Dublin City

9.2	Implement actions from the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan (2021- 2025)	2021-2025	AIPP	DCC, Tidy Towns & community groups	No. of actions implemented; outcome of actions, & area (Ha) enhanced for pollinators
9.3	Strengthen our understanding of natural capital and ecosystem services and incorporate into policy and decision-making in Dublin City	2021-2025	DCC	Natural Capital Forum	No. of training workshops held
9.4	Agree a programme of measures for recovery of intertidal habitats in Dublin City	2022-2024	DCC in cooperation with DBBRP	Third level, CWI, NGOs, community groups	No. of measures completed
9.5	Update the Dublin City Tree Map to monitor attributes of the urban forest that support biodiversity and ecosystem services	2022-2024	DCC	Third level, NGOs, community groups	Update completed

Objective 10: Strengthen measures to control Invasive Alien Species, improve biosecurity and ecological status of catchments

Action No.	Action	Timeframe	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Performance Indicators
10.1	Update the Dublin City Invasive Alien Species Action Plan, 2015-2020* in accordance with European and national legislation	2021-2022	DCC	NPWS, FCC, DLRCC, SDCC, ANG, IW, WWI, LAWPRO	Updated plan published
10.2	Update the survey of DCC waterways for invasive alien species	2022-2025	DCC	WWI, NPWS, LAWPRO	Survey completed & training workshop held for DCC staff
10.3	To ensure implementation of the Dublin City Invasive Species Action Plan for all projects and operations by DCC departments	2021-2025	DCC	-	Annual training workshops & review
10.4	To develop communications strategy for the early warning of IAS to prevent the spread of new IAS	2021-2022	DCC	NBDC, NPWS, FCC, DLRCC, SDCC,	Strategy agreed jointly for a pilot basis on one species

				LAWPRO, ANG	
10.5	Investigate detection and monitoring of IAS species using eDNA in combination with biological survey approaches in aquatic habitats in accordance with NBAP	2021-2023	DHLGH	NUIG, DCC, NPWS, NBDC	Pilot project on e-DNA monitoring for one waterbody

Theme 3 - Building for Biodiversity

Objective 11: Ensure that measures for biodiversity and nature-based solutions are incorporated into new building projects, retrofit and maintenance works					
Action No.	Action	Timeframe	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Performance Indicators
11.1	Develop a set of standard conditions for biodiversity conservation in Dublin City to enable an efficient and consistent approach to planning and development	2021-2025	DCC	NGOs	Conditions prepared & in use
11.2	Develop best practice guidance on mitigating impacts for biodiversity in new and existing building projects	2021-2025	DCC	DCC, NGOs, DNFC, HC, HON	No. of guidance publications produced
11.3	To implement actions for ecology under Section EN5.0 of the Home Performance Index (HPI) for all DCC new build housing schemes	2021-2025	DCC	Irish Green Building Council	No. of schemes where HPI minimum level 3 is achieved
11.4	To incorporate Inland Fisheries Ireland's guidance on Planning for Watercourses in the Urban Environment into plans and projects	2021-2025	IFI	DCC	Percentage of plans & projects implementing the guidance
Objective 12: Promote net biodiversity gain and ensure there is no net loss of biodiversity through strategies, planning, mitigation measures, appropriate offsetting and/or investment in Blue-Green infrastructure					
Action No.	Action	Timeframe	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Performance Indicators
12.1	To develop a programme for net biodiversity gain for Dublin City Council to guide future development in association with professional bodies and the construction industry.	2023	DCC	Professional bodies, NGOs, DNFC	Programme agreed & published
12.2	To ensure that climate change adaptation measures align with biodiversity conservation measures on projects in Dublin City	2024	DCC	-	Checklist produced to guide project planning & assessment
12.3	To prepare a Dublin City Green Infrastructure Strategy	2021-2022	DCC	-	Strategy completed & adopted

12.4	DCC SUDS Strategy published and updated accordingly to promote net biodiversity gain	2021	DCC	-	Strategy adopted in 2021 with review process ongoing
12.5	To implement greening strategies informed by ecological assessment for Dublin City to support biodiversity	2021-2025	DCC	-	No. of strategies implemented & scoring of value for biodiversity
12.6	To establish biodiversity standards for green, brown, and blue roofs	2022	DCC	-	Standards published

Objective 13: Pilot initiatives for the creation of habitats using artificial habitat methods

Action No.	Action	Timeframe	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Performance Indicators
13.1	Conduct research on measures for design and installation of artificial habitats in Dublin City	2021-2025	DCC	Third level	No. of studies completed
13.2	Survey the current extent of usage of artificial habitats in Dublin City by various species	2023-2024	DCC	HSI, IWT, DNFC	Survey & report completed
13.3	Install artificial habitat measures on DCC-owned lands and projects	2021-2025	DCC	DCC	No. of measures installed by 2025

Objective 14: Minimise and reverse soil sealing in the Dublin City Council administrative area

Action No.	Action	Timeframe	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Performance Indicators
14.1	Actively assess soil degradation in Dublin City for all functions of soil, including establishing the status of soil sealing, to reach the EU Parliament's objectives of "no land degradation" by 2030	2021-2022	DCC	GSI	Survey completed
14.2	Prepare public awareness campaign and guidance to prevent soil sealing of private gardens	2023	DCC	LAWPRO, community groups	Campaign launched & guidance published
14.3	Restrict development of green areas which results in soil sealing	2021-2025	DCC	-	Percentage of unsealed area
14.4	Require calculations of soil sealing/unsealing for projects as part of assessment of planning applications	2021-2025	DCC	-	Initiative has been put in place

Theme 4 - Dublin as a Green Capital City

Objective 15: Implement measures for Dublin City to be a leader on biodiversity as a Green Capital City

Action No.	Action	Timeframe	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Performance Indicators
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15.1	Measure progress on biodiversity to support Dublin City's efforts to attain EU Green Capital status by 2026	2021-2025	DCC	-	Completion of report on biodiversity & green infrastructure for application
15.2	Manage and monitor biodiversity indicators and implement biodiversity measures so that Dublin City can join the Green City Accord, under the EU Biodiversity Strategy	2021-2025	DCC	NGOs, DNFC	Completion of report & continue to monitor indicators to maintain membership of the Accord
15.3	Strengthen alliances with other European and EU capital cities in leading initiatives for biodiversity	2021-2025	DCC	DBBRP, Third level, CARO	No. of initiatives developed
15.4	Support research on increasing biodiversity to improve health outcomes and access to nature	2021-2025	DCC	DCC, Third level, other	No. of research activities supported

Theme 5 - Understanding Biodiversity in the City

Objective 16: Increase understanding and appreciation of biodiversity and its importance across Dublin City					
Action No.	Action	Timeframe	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Performance Indicators
16.1	Implement an annual education and outreach programme to raise awareness of local and city-wide biodiversity, which will be promoted through various Dublin City Council outlets and the Dublin Bay Biosphere.	Annually	DCC	DBBRP, NGOs, HC, DNFC	No. of projects & outreach figures
16.2	Develop interpretation and education programmes for schools and community groups in collaboration with various stakeholders	2021-2025	DCC	ECO, BWI, HC, OWLS, HSI, IFI, LAWPRO, NGOs	No. of projects & outreach figures
16.3	Engage with citizens to promote behavioural changes & raise awareness of biodiversity & climate change through collaboration between City Arts Office, City Heritage Office, & other stakeholders	2021-2025	DCC	CARO, DBBRP, LAWPRO	No. of projects & outreach figures
16.4	Produce a range of resources to raise awareness of biodiversity across the city, including guides on how people can help biodiversity at home	2021-2025	DCC	DNFC, NGOs	No. of resources produced & distributed
16.5	Produce a Biodiversity Communications Strategy	2022	DCC	NGOs	Strategy produced & in use

16.6	Produce a quarterly newsletter on the actions achieved in the biodiversity action plan and relevant news on biodiversity in the city	2021-2025	DCC	DNFC, NGOs, Others TBC	No. of newsletters produced. Distribution & outreach figures.
Objective 17: Empower citizens to connect with, and take positive action for biodiversity at a local and city-wide level					
Action No.	Action	Timeframe	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Performance Indicators
17.1	Develop a series of citizen science projects to increase awareness of biodiversity and data collection on various species in collaboration with the Dublin Bay UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, Third level educational institutes, NBDC and NGOs	2021-2025	DCC	DBBRP, Third level, NGOs, LAWPRO	No. of projects carried out over 5 years
17.2	Develop new and support existing volunteering initiatives for biodiversity, including the conservation volunteer programme on North Bull Island	2021-2025	DCC	DBBRP, NBIV, BIAG, DAG, NGOs, CVI, DNFC	No. of volunteering opportunities completed
17.3	Support communities to prepare and implement local area biodiversity action plans to encourage practical action for biodiversity and shared learning	2021-2025	DCC	Residents, community & Tidy Towns' groups, NGOs	No. of site visits & projects initiated

Theme 6 - Partnering for Biodiversity

Objective 18: Strengthen collaboration for the conservation of biodiversity at a regional, national, and global level					
Action No.	Action	Timeframe	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	Performance Indicators
18.1	Implement and promote the objectives of the Dublin Bay UNESCO Biosphere Partnership and promote the work of the Biosphere.	2021-2025	DBBRP	DCC, DPC, DLRCC, FCC, FI, NPWS, NGOs, DNFC	No. of objectives completed events held & joint projects
18.2	Work with the Dublin Mountains Partnership on implementing strategic plans and activities incorporate biodiversity conservation	2021-2025	DMP	DCC	Resources provided, attendance at meetings & participation in the DMP advisory fora & committees

18.3	Increase collaboration with communities through the support of the Dublin City Council Area Offices and Dublin Bay UNESCO Biosphere	2021-2025	DCC	DBBRP	No. of projects with community groups
18.4	Facilitate an annual workshop/seminar for information exchange between Dublin City Council, the Biodiversity Action Plan Forum members, other biodiversity experts and relevant bodies	Annually	DCC	Biodiversity Forum	No. of workshops held
18.5	Work with members of the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly to improve regional conservation and management of biodiversity	2021-2025	DCC	LA members	No. of meetings held & joint initiatives
18.6	Participate in and support, as a stakeholder or partner, applications for European Union-funded projects for biodiversity in Dublin City	2021-2025	DCC	DCC, Third level, NGOs	No. of projects that are supported
18.7	Work with other Irish local authorities to strengthen our knowledge and protect habitats and species	2021-2025	DCC	Other LAs, HC, LAWPRO	No. of projects completed in collaboration with other local authorities
18.8	Promote a strategic relationship between DCC and the National Biodiversity Data Centre to support and promote citizen science recording initiatives, and to ensure these data are shared to inform the work of both partners.	2021-2025	DCC, NBDC		No. of citizen science initiatives implemented.

In addition, there are a number of policies which guide the daily operations of Dublin City Council, and which will be important for the successful implementation of this Biodiversity Action Plan. These policies are set out below.

1. To ensure that all plans, programmes, strategies, works, and permissions within Dublin City, comply with biodiversity legislation, and incorporate biodiversity conservation at the earliest possible stages.
2. To strive for the highest standards in biodiversity conservation, and to adopt and evaluate best practice management from successful national and international examples.
3. To work collaboratively with all stakeholders for the benefit of biodiversity conservation within Dublin City and the greater Dublin region.
4. To promote and support biodiversity research within Dublin City.

All these Actions are aimed at conserving biodiversity, and as such, there are no elements of the Draft Plan (either alone or in combination with other plans) likely to give rise to impacts on European Sites. 3.5 Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the Plan (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on European Sites by virtue of:

Size and Scale

The draft Plan covers the administrative area of Dublin City Council. It is not a land use plan. It contains Actions to develop best practice management guidelines for legally-protected species and conservation value areas in consultation with National Parks and Wildlife Services, and other stakeholders as relevant.

Land Take

The Draft Plan does not require or recommend encroachment onto any European Site and so will not result in land take.

Distance from the European Site

There are two Special Areas of Conservation and two Special Protection Areas within the Draft Plan area. The Plan contains Actions to undertake research, develop best practice guidance, direct behaviours, and facilitate awareness-raising and educational events, which will occur within

these areas. With regard to awareness raising events, sensitive habitats will be avoided. The Plan contains actions to restore ecosystems upstream of these sites. It is considered that these Actions will be of benefit to the long-term conservation of these areas.

Resource Requirements

No resources are required as a result of this Draft Plan which would impact on any European Site.

Emissions

No emissions arise as a result of this Draft Plan which would impact on any European Site.

Excavation Requirements

No excavations are required as a result of this Draft Plan which would impact on any European Site.

Transport Requirements

No transport requirements arise as a result of this Draft Plan which would impact on any European Site.

3.6 Describe any likely changes arising as a result of:

Reduction in Habitat Area

No reduction in habitat area arises as a result of this Draft Plan. The Plan includes measures to support the maintenance of such habitats.

Disturbance to Key Species

The Draft Plan identifies disturbance to key species as a threat to the City's biodiversity, and contains Actions to address this threat. As such, any changes are likely to be positive.

Habitat and Species Fragmentation

No habitat or species fragmentation as a result of this Draft Plan. The Plan provides measures to increase connectivity of habitats for Species of Conservation Interest and, therefore, any impacts are likely to be positive.

Changes in Key Indicators of Conservation Value

No negative changes in key indicators of conservation value as a result of this Draft Plan.

Climate Change

The Draft Plan does not contain Actions which will accelerate climate change. The Draft Plan contains specific Objectives and Actions which contribute to Climate Change Adaptation, particularly in relation to Green Infrastructure and directing Ecosystem Services to appropriate locations. Furthermore, the Draft Plan has been prepared to align with the Dublin City Climate Action Plan (2019-2024) and Ireland's Biodiversity Sectoral Climate Change Adaptation Plan (2019).

3.7 Describe any likely impacts on European Sites in terms of:

Interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site

No additional impacts or interference to the structure of the sites were noted.

Interference with key relationships that define the function of the site

No additional impacts or interference to the function of the sites were noted.

4.0 Conclusions of Screening Assessment Process

Table X: Findings of no significant effects report matrix

<p>4.1 - Name of project or plan</p> <p>Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2026</p>
<p>4.2 - Name and location of European Sites</p> <p>There are four European Sites within the Plan area. There are two Special Areas of Conservation (North Dublin Bay SAC and South Dublin Bay SAC), and two Special Protection Areas (North Bull Island SPA and South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA).</p> <p>There are 11 SAC's and 8 SPA's within 15km of the Plan area as set out in Table 2 of Section 3 above.</p>
<p>4.3 - Description of the project or plan</p> <p>The overarching aim of the Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2026, is the conservation of biodiversity within the City. The Plan contains 6 Themes, which are underpinned by 100 Actions.</p>
<p>4.4 - Is the project or plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European Site (provide details)?</p> <p>No. The Draft Plan contains Actions to develop best practice management for specific elements of the European Sites, in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service.</p>
<p>4.5 - Are there other projects or plans that together with the project or plan being assessed could affect a European Site (provide details)?</p> <p>Dublin City Council is preparing draft Management Plans for North Bull Island and South Dublin Bay. Site Specific Conservation Objectives are available for the European Sites from the National Parks and Wildlife Services, and any Plan or Project must have regard to these. This includes actions being undertaken by the Dublin Bay UNESCO Biosphere Partnership. This Draft Plan contains an Objective to "Protect designated sites for nature conservation in accordance with the Conservation Management objectives for Natura 2000 sites and proposed Natural Heritage Areas in Dublin City" and specific Actions to support this Objective.</p>
<p>The assessment of significance of effects</p>
<p>4.6 - Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect a European Site</p> <p>The objectives of the Draft Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2026 are aimed at conserving biodiversity, and as such, there are no elements of the Plan (either alone or in combination with other plans and projects) likely to give rise to impacts on any European Sites.</p>
<p>4.7 - Explain why these effects are not considered significant.</p> <p>All Actions of the Draft Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2026 will be implemented having regard to the Site Specific Conservation Objectives and their supporting documents for all of the European Sites, and in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service and any relevant competent authorities for them.</p>

5.0 Conclusion Statement

This report concludes on the best scientific evidence that it can be clearly demonstrated that no elements of the Draft Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2026 will result in any likely significant impact on any relevant European site, either on their own or in combination with other plans or projects, in light of their Conservation Objectives.

It is the opinion of the author of this report that the implementation of the draft Plan will not have any likely significant effects on European sites under Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) in light of their Conservation Objectives and that the draft Plan does not require an Appropriate Assessment and the preparation of a Natura Impact Statement.

Part B: Screening for Strategic Environmental Assessment

1.0 Introduction

The objective of the Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment (SEA) Directive 2001/42/EC is:

'to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development, by ensuring that, in accordance with the Directive, an environmental assessment is carried out of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment'.

For the purposes of the Directive, "plans and programmes" shall mean plans and programmes, including those co-financed by the European Community, as well as any modifications to them:

- which are subject to preparation and/or adoption by an authority at national, regional or local level or which are prepared by an authority for adoption, through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government, and
- which are required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions

It is noted that the Draft Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2026 is:

1. being prepared by Dublin City Council, and
2. required under Ireland's National Biodiversity Plan (Actions for Biodiversity 2017-2021)

As such, the Draft Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2025 is subject to the SEA Directive.

2.0 Description of the Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2025

The Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2025 is the third such plan for the City, and its preparation has been informed by:

- Current knowledge and lessons learned from the Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2015-2020.
- Guidance from key stakeholders influencing biodiversity conservation in Dublin City.
- Legislation and policy at Local, National, European, and International level, for the preparation and implementation of Local Biodiversity Action Plans.

The overarching aim of the Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2025, is the conservation of biodiversity within the City. This will rely on a combination of different approaches, including direct and appropriate management of biodiversity at local and regional level, identification and protection of important conservation value areas, enhancing biodiversity conservation within the green infrastructure network, raising awareness and understanding among decision-makers, provision of appropriate guidance to landowners, and changing behaviour among the public towards the protection and appreciation of biodiversity.

In this regard, the Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2025 contains six Themes, which reflect the Strategic Objectives of Ireland's National Biodiversity Plan (Actions for Biodiversity 2011-2016). The six Themes of the Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2025 are underpinned by one hundred Actions, and will continue to build on progress achieved during Dublin City's previous Biodiversity Action Plan. The six Themes are set out below.

Theme 1: Maintaining Nature in the City

Theme 2: Restoring Nature in the City

Theme 3: Building for Biodiversity

Theme 4: Dublin as a Green Capital City

Theme 5: Understanding Biodiversity in the City

Theme 6: Partnering for Biodiversity

Dublin City Council will be the lead authority for the implementation of the Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2025. Dublin City Council's Biodiversity Section sits within Parks, Biodiversity and Landscape Services, which complements the other work programmes operating within this division, including the management of public parks, open spaces, street trees, green infrastructure, and Dublin City Council's role within the Dublin Bay UNESCO Biosphere Partnership and Dublin Mountains Partnership.

There are a number of policies which guide the daily operations of Dublin City Council, and which will be important for the successful implementation of this Biodiversity Action Plan. These policies are set out below.

1. To ensure that all plans, programmes, strategies, works, and permissions within Dublin City, comply with biodiversity legislation, and incorporate biodiversity conservation at the earliest possible stages.
2. To strive for the highest standards in biodiversity conservation, and to adopt and evaluate best practice management from successful national and international examples.
3. To work collaboratively with all stakeholders for the benefit of biodiversity conservation within Dublin City and the greater Dublin region.
4. To promote and support biodiversity research within Dublin City.

3.0 The European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 to 2011

These regulations set out the criteria to determine if a Plan or Programme, as defined under the SEA Directive, require Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Article 9 of these regulations states that an environmental assessment shall be carried out for all plans and programmes:

- a. which are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism and town and country planning or land use, and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive, or

- b. which are not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site but, either individually or in combination with other plans, are likely to have a significant effect on any such site

4.0 Screening for Strategic Environmental Assessment

It is noted that the Draft Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2025 has not been prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning, or land use.

The Draft Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2025 does not set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive

The Screening for Appropriate Assessment of the Draft Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2025 has determined that the Draft Plan will not, either individually or in combination with other plans, have a significant effect on any European Site

5.0 Conclusion

Based on the Screening for Strategic Environmental Assessment in Section 4.0 above, Dublin City Council determines that the Draft Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2025 does not require an environmental assessment under the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 to 2011.

References

ⁱ Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government (2010) Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland Guidance for Planning Authorities.