

## Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

### Dun a Rí Natural Play Area



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Issued To: The Paul Hogarth Company

Prepared By: Flynn Furney Environmental Consultants

**Note**

Works, plans, methodologies, materials, and infrastructural requirements are based on the client's brief, draft plans, and drawings provided to Flynn Furney Environmental Consultants as of 2023.

**Statement of Authority**

This Natura Impact Statement has been carried out by suitably qualified and experienced professionals of Flynn Furney Environmental Consultants.

## Contents

1	Introduction .....	4
2	Legislative Context .....	5
2.1	The Appropriate Assessment Process .....	6
2.2	The Source-Pathway-Receptor Approach .....	7
2.3	Stage 1 Appropriate Assessment Screening.....	7
2.4	Statement of Authority .....	8
3	Description of the Proposal and Local Site Characteristics .....	8
4	Ecological Assessment.....	9
4.1	Desk study .....	9
4.1.1	Designated Sites .....	9
4.1.2	Natura Designated Sites Relevant to the Proposed Works .....	10
4.2	Field Surveys .....	14
4.2.1	Habitats and Flora .....	14
4.2.2	Fauna .....	16
5	Assessment of Screening Assessment 6(3) .....	17
6	Findings of Article 6(3) Screening Assessment .....	20
6.1	Screening Determination Statement.....	22
	References.....	23
	Appendix .....	24

## 1 Introduction

Flynn Furney has been commissioned by Cavan County Council to carry out a Stage 1 Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report for a Natural Play Area at Dun a Rí. The proposed site of works is in the 565 acre Dun a Rí Forest Park located just outside Kingscourt in County Cavan. The area of proposed works is located at the end of the main site access route off the R179, adjacent to the upper car parking facilities.

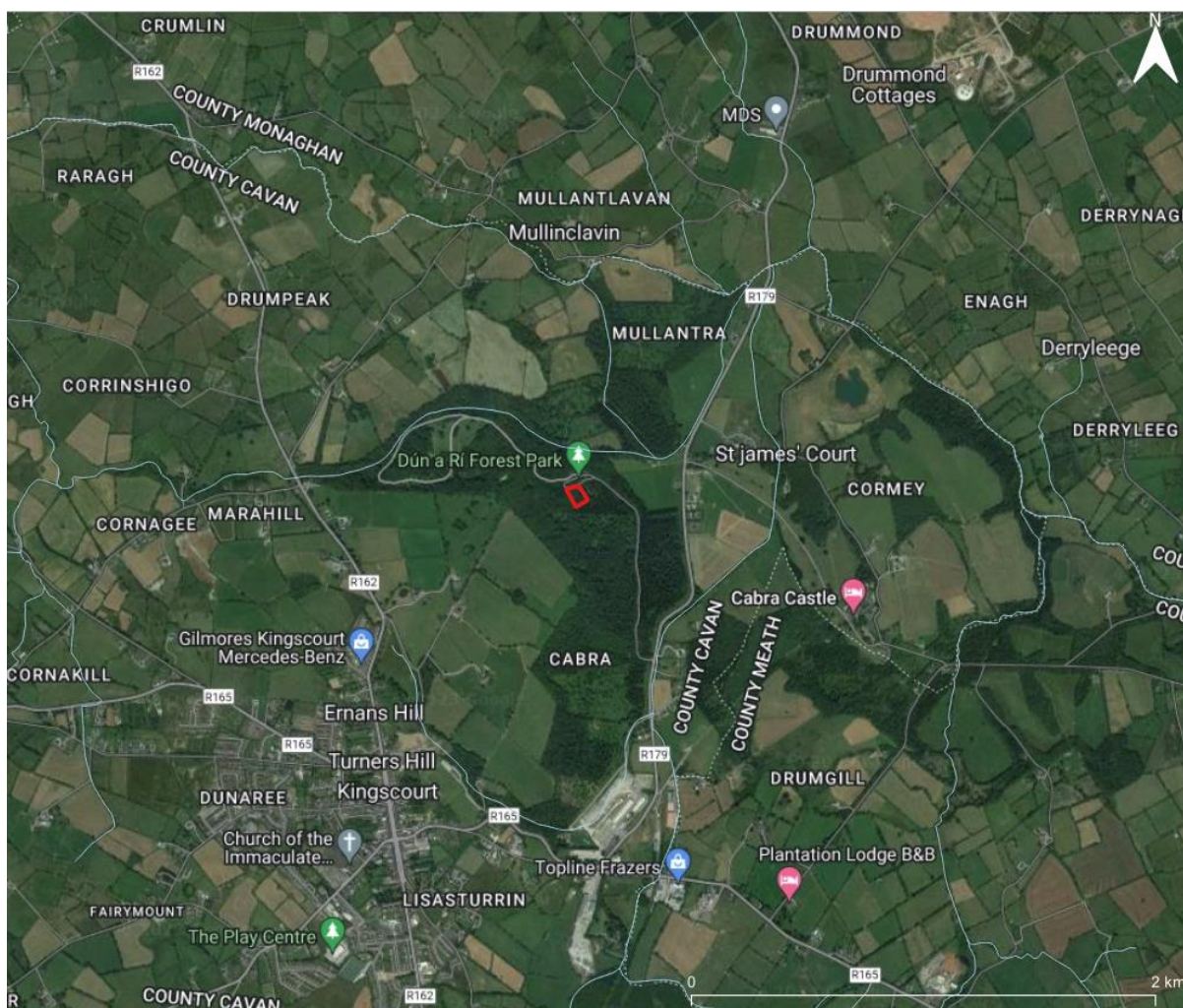


Figure 1.1 Location of proposed development (red)

This screening exercise aims to determine whether the proposed works may have the potential to impact the conservation objectives and overall integrity of any Natura 2000 sites significantly or indeterminately. This assessment is based upon desk research and fieldwork carried out by suitably qualified ecologists.

This report has been completed to provide information regarding the ecological status of the proposed site of works. This report has also been completed to provide the information necessary to

allow the competent authority to conduct an Article 6[3] Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening of the proposed development. The legislation and methodology for this are detailed in the following sections.

## 2 Legislative Context

The methodology for this screening statement is set out in a document prepared for the Environment DG of the European Commission entitled ‘Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC’ (European Commission, 2019). This report and contributory fieldwork were carried out by guidelines given by the Department of Environment, Heritage, and Local Government (2009, amended February 2010).

The process is given in Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive and is commonly referred to as ‘Appropriate Assessments’ (which refers to Stage 2 in the sequence under the Habitats Directive Article 6 assessment). Article 6 of the Habitats Directive sets out provisions that govern the conservation and management of Natura 2000 sites. Article 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:

*“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 and projects, shall be subjected to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site given the site’s conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implication 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) of the same directive states: If despite a negative assessment of the implications for the site and the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of social or economic nature, the Member State shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted.

Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment, or, further to an opinion from the Commission to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

It is the responsibility of the proponent of the plan or project to provide the relevant information (ecological surveys, research, analysis, etc.) for submission to the ‘competent national authority. Having satisfied itself that the information is complete and objective, the competent authority will use this information to screen the project, *i.e.* to determine if an AA is required and to carry out the AA if one is deemed necessary. The competent authority shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned.

## 2.1 The Appropriate Assessment Process

The appropriate assessment process has four stages. Each stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required. If, for example, the conclusions at the end of Stage One are that there will be no significant impacts on the Natura 2000 site, there is no requirement to proceed further. The four stages are:

1. Screening to determine if an appropriate assessment is required
2. Appropriate assessment
3. Consideration of alternative solutions
4. Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest/Derogation

Table 2.1 Appropriate Assessment Process 4 Stages

<b>Stage 1. Screening</b>
This is to determine if an appropriate assessment is required. Screening is the technique applied to determine whether a particular plan would be likely to have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site and would thus warrant an Appropriate Assessment. The key indicator that will determine if an Appropriate Assessment is required is the determination of whether the development is likely to have <i>significant environmental effects</i> on a Natura 2000 site or not.
<b>Stage 2. Appropriate Assessment</b>
This step is required if the screening report indicates that the development is likely to have a significant impact on a Natura 2000 site. Stage 2 assesses the impact of a plan or project on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, with respect to the site’s structure, function, and conservation objectives. Where there are adverse impacts, an assessment of the potential mitigation of these impacts is also required.
<b>Stage 3. Assessment of Alternative Solutions</b>

If it is concluded that, subsequent to the implementation of measures, a plan or project will have an adverse impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site, it must be objectively concluded that no alternative solutions exist before the plan or project can proceed.

#### Stage 4. Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest/ Derogation

Where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain but imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) exist for the implementation of a plan or project, an assessment of compensatory measures that will effectively offset the damage to the Natura 2000 site will be necessary.

Flynn Furney Environmental Consultants Ltd has been appointed by Cavan County Council to undertake the first stage of the above process: an AA Screening exercise to allow Cavan County Council to determine whether the proposed development has the potential to have any significant or indeterminate impacts on the conservation objectives and overall integrity of any Natura 2000 sites.

## 2.2 The Source-Pathway-Receptor Approach

Consideration has also been given to the 'source-pathway-receptor approach.' This is a standard tool in environmental assessment.

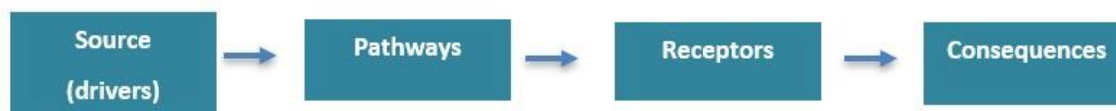


Figure 2.1 Source-Pathway-Receptor Approach

The source-pathway-receptor concept in ecological impact assessment relates to the idea that for the risk of an impact to occur, a 'source' is needed, e.g. a construction site; then a 'receptor', in this case, sites designated for nature conservation; and finally a 'pathway' between the source and the receptor, this could be a watercourse that links the development site to the designated site. Even though there might be a risk of an impact that does not mean that it might 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 (in this instance, this is any Natura 2000 sites).

## 2.3 Stage 1 Appropriate Assessment Screening

This report provides stage one: Appropriate Assessment Screening. It aims to establish whether a plan or project is likely to affect a Natura 2000 site. The study is based on a preliminary impact

assessment using both publicly available data and data collected during site visits and ecological surveys. This is followed by a determination of whether there is a risk that the effects identified could significantly impact any Natura 2000 sites.

The need to apply the precautionary principle in making any key decisions about the tests of AA has been confirmed by European Court of Justice case law. Therefore, where significant effects are likely, possible, or uncertain at the screening stage, AA is be required.

## 2.4 Statement of Authority

Flynn Furney Environmental Consultants have over 20 years of experience in ecological surveying and management. We have detailed knowledge on the principles and implementation of both Irish and European environmental legislation. We have worked closely with statutory bodies including the National Parks and Wildlife Service and Waterways Ireland on habitat management and protection projects. Other expertise includes Ecological Impact Assessment, Habitat and Floral Surveys, Bird Surveying, Bat Surveying, Fish and Waterways surveys.

## 3 Description of the Proposal and Local Site Characteristics

A description of the proposed works, site characteristics, a habitat survey of the surrounding area are outlined in the table below. The relevant prescribed bodies consulted are also outlined.

Table 3.1 Description of the project/ proposal and local site characteristics

Description of the project/ proposal and local site characteristics	
<b>Brief description of the project or plan:</b>	This project involves the construction of a Natural Play Area in Dun a Rí Forest Park, Co. Cavan.
<b>Brief description of site characteristics:</b>	The proposed site of works is in the 565 acre Dun a Rí Forest Park located just outside Kingscourt in County Cavan. The area of proposed works is located at the end of the main site access route off the R179, adjacent to the upper car parking facilities. The main habitats within and in the surrounding area of the proposed development include (mixed) broadleaved woodland, (mixed) conifer woodland and treelines.
<b>Relevant prescribed bodies consulted:</b>	This report will be generated and submitted to Cavan County Council and will also be supplied to NPWS if requested.



## 4 Ecological Assessment

### 4.1 Desk study

A desktop study was carried out as part of this screening process. This included a review of available literature on the site and its immediate environs. Sources of information included the National Parks and Wildlife Service databases on protected sites and species.

#### 4.1.1 Designated Sites

Sites designated for the conservation of nature in Ireland include:

- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
- Special Protection Areas (SPA)
- Natural Heritage Areas (NHA); and
- proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA).

**SPAs and SACs** are prime wildlife conservation areas in the country, considered to be important on a European as well as Irish level. SPAs and SACs are designated under EU Habitats Directive, transposed into Irish law by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011), as amended.

**NHA** is the basic designation for wildlife in Ireland. These are areas considered important for their habitats or species of plants and animals whose habitat needs protection. They first entered into European Law under the 1976 Wildlife Act, these were then transposed into Irish law with the 1997 Natural Habitats Regulations (S.I. No. 94 of 1997) finally gaining full statutory backing in Ireland with the passing of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000.

**pNHA** sites were published on a non-statutory basis in 1995 but have not since been statutorily proposed or designated. These sites are designated as being of significance for species and habitats. While not afforded the same protection as sites protected under the Habitats Directive, they are subject to protection through the following mechanisms:

- Agri-environmental farm planning schemes such as GLAS (Formally the Rural Environment Protection Scheme)
- Forest Service requirement for NPWS approval before they will pay afforestation grants on pNHA lands
- Recognition of the ecological value of pNHAs by Planning and Licencing Authorities.

All Natura 2000 designated sites were considered during the desktop study stage of this screening assessment in order to assess the potential for significant effects upon their Qualifying Interests / Special Conservation Interests and Conservation Objectives. This stage of the process is used to determine whether any of the designated sites may be ‘screened out’. That is, that they can be regarded as not being relevant to the process, having no potential to be significantly affected or impacted upon.

#### 4.1.2 Natura Designated Sites Relevant to the Proposed Works

Designated sites as described above were considered during the screening process for their potential to have significant effects upon their qualifying interests, special qualifying interests or conservation objectives. The site synopses and conservation objectives of the sites were also examined during this stage of the survey. The above initial screening has identified one SAC and one SPA, as requiring further consideration in this assessment. The remaining Natura 2000 sites are at a greater remove and have no identifiable connectivity with the proposed works. Given the nature and scale of the works, there is no known vector, pathway, or conduit for impacts between the proposed works and the remaining Natura 2000 sites. Therefore, the proposed works are considered *extremely unlikely* to have any significant direct or indirect impacts on any other Natura 2000 sites and they are therefore not considered further in this screening assessment. The relevant Natura 2000 sites are outlined below, along with their qualifying interest/ special conservation interest, distance from site, connection to the site and if they should be considered further in screening.

Table 4.1 Relevant Natura 2000 sites

Identification of relevant Natura 2000 sites using Source-Pathway-Receptor model and compilation of information on Qualifying Interests and conservation objectives.				
European Site (code)	List of Qualifying Interest/ Special Conservation Interest	Distance from proposed development (km)	Connections (Source-Pathway-Receptor)	Considered further in screening Y/N
Dundalk Bay SAC 000455	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Estuaries [1130]</li> <li>2. Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]</li> <li>3. Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220]</li> </ol>	56km	Potential for impacts due to hydrological connection	Yes

Dun a Rí Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]</li> <li>5. Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae) [1330]</li> <li>6. Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi) [1410]</li> </ol>			
Dundalk Bay SPA 004026	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Great Crested Grebe (Podiceps cristatus) [A005]</li> <li>2. Greylag Goose (Anser anser) [A043]</li> <li>3. Light-bellied Brent Goose (Branta bernicla hrota) [A046]</li> <li>4. Shelduck (Tadorna tadorna) [A048]</li> <li>5. Teal (Anas crecca) [A052]</li> <li>6. Mallard (Anas platyrhynchos) [A053]</li> <li>7. Pintail (Anas acuta) [A054]</li> <li>8. Common Scoter (Melanitta nigra) [A065]</li> <li>9. Red-breasted Merganser (Mergus serrator) [A069]</li> <li>10. Oystercatcher (Haematopus ostralegus) [A130]</li> </ol>	56km	Potential for impacts due to hydrological connection	Yes

Dun a Rí Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

	<p>11. Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A137]</p> <p>12. Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140]</p> <p>13. Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A141]</p> <p>14. Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142]</p> <p>15. Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143]</p> <p>16. Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149]</p> <p>17. Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156]</p> <p>18. Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157]</p> <p>19. Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160]</p> <p>20. Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162]</p> <p>21. Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179]</p> <p>22. Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182]</p> <p>23. Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184]</p> <p>24. Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</p>			
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The Natura Designated sites above both require further consideration in screening.

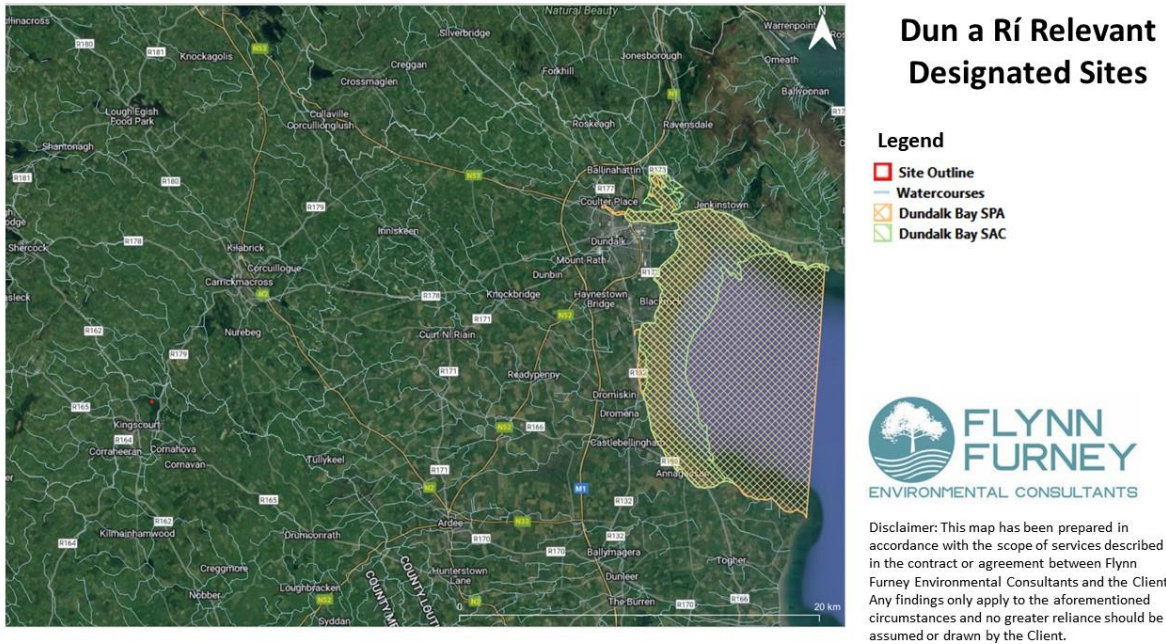


Figure 4.1 Designated sites relevant to the Dun a Ri Forest Park Natural Play Area

#### 4.1.2.1 Dundalk Bay SAC

Dundalk Bay SAC is of conservation interest due to the presence of six habitats listed on Annex I / II of the EU Habitats Directive which includes estuaries, tidal mudflats and sandflats, perennial vegetation of stony banks, *Salicornia* mud, Atlantic salt meadows and Mediterranean salt meadows.

The conservation objectives for this SAC include maintaining habitat area and range, maintaining community distribution, maintaining vegetative cover in each habitat type, maintaining natural processes and to minimise the spread of negative indicator species such as *Spartina angelica*. The main threats and pressures on these habitats include habitat loss and degradation, pollution, climate change, invasive species, overfishing, poaching by livestock and altered hydrology. The proposed development does not have the potential to place these threats or pressures on the Dundalk Bay SAC due to the nature of the works.

#### 4.1.2.2 Dundalk Bay SPA

Dundalk Bay SPA has conservation interest due to the extensive list of bird species protected under the EU Birds Directive which depend on sandflats, mudflats, shallow water habitats and roosting sites provided by the bay. This includes Great Crested Grebe, Greylag Goose, Light-bellied Brent Goose, Shelduck, Teal, Mallard, Pintail, Common Scoter, Redbreasted Merganser, Oystercatcher, Ringed Plover, Golden Plover, Grey Plover, Lapwing, Knot, Dunlin, Black-tailed Godwit, Bar-tailed Godwit, Curlew, Redshank, Black-headed Gull, Common Gull and Herring Gull. Wetland and waterbirds are particularly important in this protected site.

Conservation objectives for this site mainly involve maintaining bird populations and distribution within the SPA. The main threats and pressures on wetland and waterbirds in Ireland include habitat loss and habitat degradation, pollution, water quality decline, invasive species and climate change. Although the site of the proposed development is hydrologically connected to Dundalk Bay SPA, it is very unlikely that the nature and the scale of the proposed works being carried out would significantly impact Dundalk Bay SPA.

## 4.2 Field Surveys

Field surveys were carried out on the 14<sup>th</sup> of September 2023. The primary aims of the field surveys were to:

- Identify habitat types within the study area
- Assess for the presence of protected species of flora and fauna
- Assess for the presence of any species or habitat that is a qualifying interest of any protected sites identified.
- Habitat survey and mapping was carried out as per the guidelines given by Smith et al (2011).
- Habitats were classified according to Fossitt's Guide to Habitats in Ireland (Fossitt, 2000).

Surveys were carried out at an optimal time and the habitat types and their usage at the time of the survey were readily identifiable. Habitats were classified and dominant plant species noted according to the guidelines given by the JNCC (2010). Habitats were classified according to Fossitt (2000).

An overview of the survey findings will be given in this section.

No habitats listed as qualifying interests of the Dundalk Bay SAC and SPA have been recorded during the field surveys. No rare, threatened, or protected species of plants as per the Red Data Book (Curtis and McGough, 1988) or Red List (Wyse Jackson et al., 2016) were found. No species listed in the Flora Protection Order (2015) were found to be growing within the study area. No Annex I habitat types were recorded within or surrounding the proposed development area.

### 4.2.1 Habitats and Flora

#### 1.1.1.1 (Mixed) Broadleaved Woodland WD2

This habitat is predominantly mature beech (*Fagus*) trees however hazel (*Corylus avellana*), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), rowan (*Sorbus subg. Sorbus*), alder (*Alnus*) and Caucasian spruce (*Picea orientalis*) were also less frequently present. The Ash in this section of woodland showed significant signs of ash dieback. Birch (*Betula*) and oak

(Sessile) saplings were present in some areas of the (mixed) broadleaved woodland. Bramble was frequent along with ivy (*Hedera helix*), soft-shield fern (*Polystichum setiferum*), broad-buckler fern (*Dryopteris dilatata*) and male fern (*Dryopteris filix-mas*). Cherry laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*) was present in one section of the woodland.

Groundflora within this habitat was a mixture of herb robert (*Geranium robertianum*), ivy (*Hedera helix*), honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*), white clover (*Trifolium repens*), wood speedwell (*Veronica montana*), remote sedge (*Ajuga reptans*), broadleaf enchanters nightshade (*Circaea lutetiana*), willowherb (*Epilobium parviflorum*), large-leaved avens (*Geum macrophyllum*), hedge woundwort (*Stachys sylvatica*), Lords and Ladies (*Arum maculatum*), Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) and Dog violet (*Viola riviniana*). The woodland was also rich in bryophytes and fungi such as Yellow brittlestem (*Psathyrella ammophila*) and Jelly baby mushroom (*Leotia lubrica*) were also frequently present throughout the woodland.

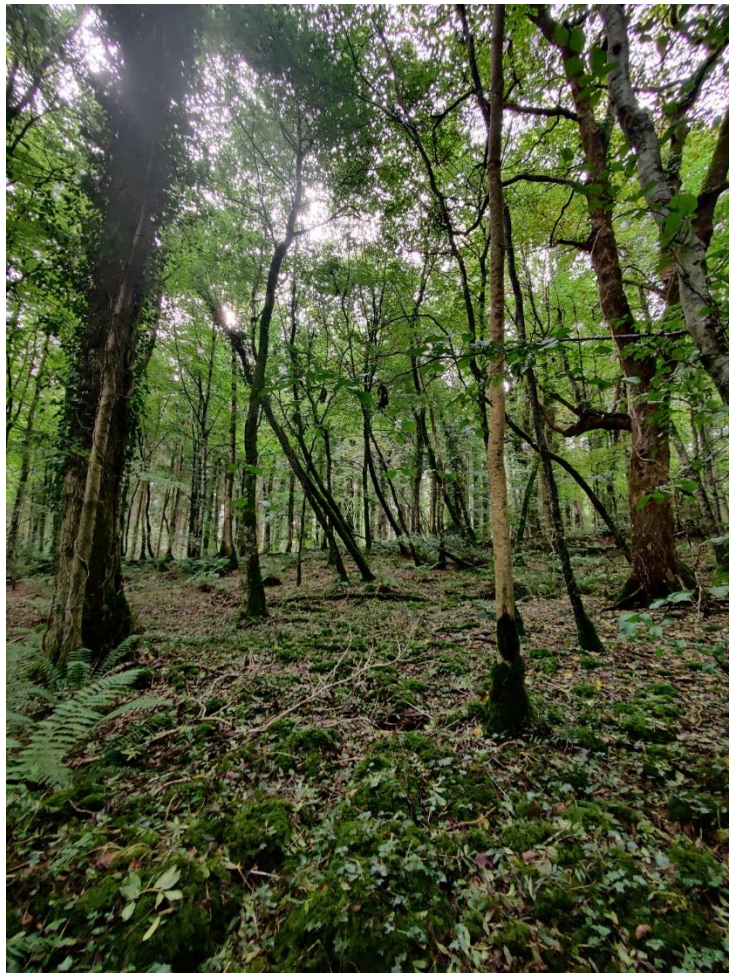


Figure 4.2 (Mixed) broadleaved woodland

#### 1.1.1.2 (Mixed) Conifer Woodland WD3

The conifer plantation surrounding the site was dominated by species such as Sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*) with species like Caucasian spruce (*Picea orientalis*). In some sections of this woodland beech (*Fagus*) and ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) were present but the coverage of broadleaved species was below 25%. The majority of ground flora in this habitat was similar to the ground flora in the (mixed) broadleaved woodland however, the ground flora was most abundant on the borders of the habitat.



Figure 4.3 (Mixed) Conifer Woodland

#### 1.1.1.3 Treelines WL2

Treelines in the area surrounding the site of the proposed development consisted of oak (*Sessile* spp.), beech (*Fagus*) and ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*).

### 4.2.2 Fauna

#### 4.2.2.1 Mammals

The survey area was surveyed by direct search (during daylight hours) for signs of mammalian activity which included prints, tracks, hairs, droppings, odour, digging and evidence of feeding. Red squirrels (*Sciurus vulgaris*) were observed in beech trees in the (mixed) broadleaved woodland. No other evidence of mammals was observed.



#### 4.2.2.2 Birds

Bird species heard during the walkover survey included Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*, Wren *Troglodytidae*, Robin *Erithacus rubecula*, Jay *Garrulus glandarius* and Great tit *Parus major*. No species listed on Annex II of the Habitats Directive were found.

#### 4.2.2.3 Bats

All bat species are protected by law in Ireland under the Bonn Convention (1992), the Bern Convention (1982) the EU 'Habitats' Directive (92/43/EC; transposed into Irish law by S.I. No. 94 of 1997) and the Wildlife Acts 1976 and 2000. Lesser Horseshoe Bats are listed as Annex II species of the Habitats Directive (afforded special protection). All other Irish bat species are listed in Annex IV (general protection) of this Directive. Nathusius' pipistrelle was recorded within 5km of the site and Lesser Noctule bat was recorded within 1km of the site.

#### 4.2.2.4 Amphibians and Reptiles

No evidence of breeding activity of Frog (*Rana temporaria*) or Smooth Newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*) was found within the survey area. No Common (or Viviparous) Lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*) were recorded within the site but are likely to be present.

#### 4.2.2.5 Protected Invertebrates

The Marsh Fritillary butterfly (*Euphydryis aurinia*) is Ireland's only Habitats Directive Annex II insect species. In Ireland, the species relies solely on Devil's-Bit Scabious as its larval food plant. This is a plant of damp ground and often occurs in stands (mosaics) within areas of damp and wet grassland. No larval webs were found during the ecology surveys of the site. No stands of Devil's-Bit Scabious were recorded within or surrounding the proposed works site.

#### 4.2.2.6 Invasive Species

Cherry laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*) was present in one section of the area of the proposed development. This species is not on the third Schedule list but it can act invasively.

## 5 Assessment of Screening Assessment 6(3)

Any likely changes to the Natura Designated 2000 site are described in the table below with reference to the following criteria: reduction of habitat area, disturbance too key species, habitat or species fragmentation, reduction in species density, climate change, vegetation clearance, surface

water runoff containing contaminant or sediment, dust, noise, vibration and the presence of people, vehicle and construction activities.

Table 5.1 Assessment of Likely Significant Effects

<b>Assessment of Likely Significant Effects</b>		
<b>Identify all potential direct and indirect impacts that may have an effect on the conservation objectives of a European site, taking into account the size and scale of the project under the following headings:</b>		
<b>Phase:</b>	<b>Impacts:</b>	<b>Possible Significance of Impacts:</b>
<b>Construction phase:</b>	<b>Reduction of habitat area</b>	Works will not change the overall size of the Natura 2000 site.
	<b>Disturbance to key species</b>	Works do not have the potential to lead to the disturbance of any protected species for which either designated site has received its designation due to scale of the works and distance from the designated sites.
	<b>Habitat or species fragmentation</b>	Works do not have the potential to lead to habitat or species fragmentation within the Natura 2000 site due to scale of the works and distance from the designated sites.
	<b>Reduction in species density</b>	Works do not have the potential to lead to a reduction in species density in any Natura 2000 site due to the scale of the works and distance from the designated sites.
	<b>Climate change</b>	No negative effects to any sites as a result of or in combination with climate change are predicted as a consequence of the

	<p><b>Vegetation clearance</b></p> <p><b>Surface water run off containing contaminant or sediment</b></p> <p><b>Dust, noise, vibration</b></p> <p><b>Presence of people, vehicles and activities</b></p>	<p>proposed works due to the scale and distance from the designated sites.</p> <p>No vegetation clearance will occur within a designated site and any vegetation clearance associated with the proposal will not occur within habitats protected under Annex I.</p> <p>Due to the scale of the proposed works and the distance from the designated sites, it is very unlikely that the works would have a significant impact on water quality in designated sites.</p> <p>Due to the scale of the proposed works and the distance from the designated sites, it is very unlikely that dust, noise or vibrations associated with the proposed works would have a significant impact on the designated sites.</p> <p>Due to the scale of the proposed works and the distance from the designated sites, it is very unlikely that the presence of people, vehicles or construction activities associated with the proposed works would have a significant impact on the designated sites.</p>
<p><b>Operational phase:</b></p>	<p><b>Surface water run off containing contaminant or sediment</b></p>	<p>Due to the scale of the proposed works and the distance from the designated sites, it is very unlikely that the works would have a significant impact on water quality in designated sites.</p>

	<b>Presence of people, vehicles and activities</b>	Due to the scale of the proposed works and the distance from the designated sites, it is very unlikely that the presence of people, vehicles or construction activities associated with the proposed works would have a significant impact on the designated sites.
<b>In combination/ Other:</b>	Not relevant	A desktop planning application search, using publicly available data from Cavan County Council's ePlan database and MyPlan.ie's National Planning Application database was undertaken. No projects or relevant planning applications that could have cumulative or in combination impacts with the proposed works at Dun a Rí Forest Park Natural Play Area were found.

## 6 Findings of Article 6(3) Screening Assessment

The findings of Article 6(3) Screening Assessment are outlined below in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1 Findings of Article 6(3) Screening Assessment

Findings of Article 6(3) Screening Assessment	
<b>Name and location of the Natura 2000 site</b>	The Natura 2000 sites hydrologically connected to the site of the proposal include Dundalk Bay SAC and SPA (both approx. 56km away from the site of proposed work).
<b>Description of the project or plan</b>	Construction of a Natural Play Area in Dun a Rí Forest Park.
<b>Is the project or plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site?</b>	The project is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of any Natura 2000 site.

<p><b>Are there other projects or plans that together with the project or plan being assessed could affect the site (provide details)?</b></p>	<p>On the basis that the proposed project will have no impacts on any Natura 2000 sites and no other project or plan that could have significant effects has been identified, no cumulative or in-combination impacts are predicted.</p>
<p><b>Are there any other projects or plans that together with the project (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site?</b></p>	<p>The proposed project will not significantly affect any Natura 2000 sites. Works associated with the construction of the natural play area will not impact the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site the reasons outlined below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The size and scale of the works are small</li> <li>2. No significant operational impacts of the completed facility may reasonably be expected</li> </ol>
<p><b>Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to indirectly affect the Natura 2000 site.</b></p>	<p>No indirect impact to the Natura 2000 site are predicted for the reasons outlined below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No significant changes to the integrity and function of the SAC and SPA are likely as a result of the construction phase of the proposal.</li> <li>2. No significant impacts to habitats or species upon which any of the qualifying interests and Conservation Objectives of the Natura 2000 sites rely upon will be impacted upon as a result of the proposal.</li> </ol>

## 6.1 Screening Determination Statement

Table 6.2 Screening Determination Statement

Screening Determination Statement		
<p>The assessment of significance of effects: Describe how the proposed development (alone or in-combination) is/ is <b>not likely</b> to have <b>significant</b> effects on European site(s) in view of its conservation objectives.</p>		
<p>In view of the best and objective scientific knowledge and in view of the conservation objectives of the European sites reviewed in the screening exercise, the proposed development as described here, individually/in combination with other plans and projects (either directly or indirectly) is not likely to have any significant effects on any European sites.</p>		
<p><b>Conclusion:</b> It is recommended to Cavan County Council that Appropriate Assessment is not required.</p>		
	Mark box as Appropriate:	Recommendation:
(i) It is clear there is <b>no likelihood</b> of significant effects on a European site.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The proposal can be screened out: Appropriate assessment not required.
(ii) It is <b>uncertain</b> whether the proposal will have a significant effect on a European site.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Request further information to complete screening <input type="checkbox"/> Request NIS <input type="checkbox"/> Refuse planning permission
(iii) <b>Significant effects</b> are likely.		Request NIS Refuse planning permission

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Appendix



## Dun a Rí Habitat Map

### Legend

- Watercourses
- Site Outline
- (Mixed) Conifer Woodland WD3
- Treeline WL2
- (Mixed) Broadleaved Woodland WD1



Disclaimer: This map has been prepared in accordance with the scope of services described in the contract or agreement between Flynn Furney Environmental Consultants and the Client. Any findings only apply to the aforementioned circumstances and no greater reliance should be assumed or drawn by the Client.

Figure 0.1 Dun a Rí Habitat Map