



# Sallins Local Area Plan [2015 – 2021]

## Screening for Appropriate Assessment

### Document Control Sheet

Client:	Kildare County Council
Project Title:	AA Screening of the Sallins Draft Local Area Plan 2015 - 2021
Document Title:	Screening for Appropriate Assessment
Document No:	MDE1048Rp0023F01

Text Pages:	29	Appendices:	-
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Rev.	Status	Date	Author(s)		Reviewed By		Approved By	
A01	Draft for Client	9 <sup>th</sup> June 2015	KB	<i>W. Searles</i>	EO	<i>L. O'Brien</i>	KB	<i>W. Searles</i>
F01	Final	16 <sup>th</sup> June 2015	<i>W. Searles</i>		<i>L. O'Brien</i>		<i>W. Searles</i>	
F02	Final	6 <sup>th</sup> November	<i>W. Searles</i>		<i>L. O'Brien</i>		<i>W. Searles</i>	

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

This report comprises information in support of screening for an Appropriate Assessment of the draft Local Area Plan (LAP) for Sallins 2015 - 2021 in line with the requirements of: Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora; the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended); and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477/2011).

## 1.1 PURPOSE OF THE DRAFT SALLINS LOCAL AREA PLAN

It is an objective of the parent plan, the Kildare County Development Plan 2011 - 2017, to prepare an LAP for Sallins. The purpose of the draft LAP is to set out a community-led strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Sallins area. This strategy will facilitate the planned, integrated and sustainable development of the area so that growth and development can take place in a co-ordinated manner, while protecting and preserving the area's character, heritage and amenity and making a positive contribution to people's quality of life. The draft LAP has been prepared taking into account the Local Area Plans Guidelines for Planning Authorities, issued by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in June 2013.

This document concentrates on the draft LAP and the potential for impacts on European (Natura 2000) sites within the LAP area and within a 15km range of the LAP boundary, arising from implementation of the policies, objectives and zonings set out within the draft Plan.

## 1.2 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

Appropriate Assessment of the Plan (draft LAP) will be conducted in line with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora; the Planning and Development Act 2000 (Part XAB) (as amended); and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477/2011).

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 the Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (79/409/ECC) as codified by Directive 2009/147/EC.

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to affect European 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 [European] 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 [European] 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.*

These articles together with the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations (S.I. No. 477/2011) and the Planning and Development Act 2000-2014 (Part XAB), means that where the implementation of the LAP has potential to have a significant effect on a European Site, the relevant Local Authority (in this case Kildare County Council) must ensure that an appropriate assessment is carried out in view of that site's conservation objectives. The LAP can be only be approved by Kildare County Council if it has been ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the European site(s) concerned, or in the case of a negative assessment and where there are no alternative solutions, the plan can only be approved for reasons of overriding public interest.

### 1.3 STAGES OF APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

The AA process progresses through four stages. If at any stage in the process it is determined that there will be no significant effect on the integrity of a European Site in view of the sites conservation objectives, the process is effectively completed. The four stages are as follows:

- Stage 1 – Screening of the proposed plan or project for AA;
- Stage 2 – An appropriate assessment of the proposed plan or project ;
- Stage 3 – Assessment of alternative solutions; and
- Stage 4 – Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI)/ Derogation.

Stages 1 and 2 relate to Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive; and Stages 3 and 4 to Article 6(4).

#### Stage 1: Screening

The aim of Stage 1, Screening, is to determine whether or not the proposed plan or project is likely to *adversely affect the integrity of* any European Site and to determine whether or not Stage 2, the AA, is required. This is done by examining the proposed plan or project and the conservation objectives of any European Sites that might potentially be affected.

#### Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment

The aim of Stage 2 is to identify any adverse impacts that the plan or project might have upon the integrity of relevant European Sites. As part of the assessment, a key consideration is 'in combination' effects with other plans or projects. Where adverse impacts are identified, the AA will

propose changes to the plan or project that would avoid, reduce or remedy any such negative impacts and the plan or project should then be amended accordingly, thereby avoiding the need to progress to Stage 3.

### **Stage 3: Assessment of Alternative Solutions**

If it is not possible during the Stage 2 assessment to reduce impacts to acceptable, non-significant levels by avoidance and/or mitigation, Stage 3 of the process must be undertaken which is to objectively assess whether alternative solutions exist by which the objectives of the plan or project can be achieved. Explicitly, this means alternative solutions that do not have negative impacts on the integrity of the European Site.

The process must return to Stage 2 as alternatives will require assessment in order to proceed. Demonstrating that all reasonable alternatives have been considered and assessed, and that the least damaging option has been selected, it is necessary to progress to Stage 4.

It should also be noted that EU guidance on this stage of the process states that, 'other assessment criteria, such as economic criteria, cannot be seen as overruling ecological criteria' (EC, 2002). In other words, if alternative solutions exist that do not have negative impacts on European Sites; they should be adopted regardless of economic considerations.

### **Stage 4: Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI)/ Derogation**

This stage of the AA process is undertaken when it has been determined that negative impacts on the integrity of a European Site will result from a plan or project, but that no alternatives exist. At this stage of the AA process, it is the characteristics of the plan or project itself that will determine whether or not the competent authority can allow it to progress. This is the determination of 'overriding public interest'.

It is important to note that in the case of European sites that include in their qualifying features 'priority' habitats or species, as defined in Annex I and II of the Directive, the demonstration of 'overriding public interest' is not sufficient and it must be demonstrated that the plan or project is necessary for 'human health or safety considerations'.

Where plans or projects meet these criteria, they can be allowed, provided adequate compensatory measures are proposed. Stage 4 of the process defines and describes these compensation measures.

## 2 SCREENING

### 2.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAFT LAP

Sallins is a small town as classed under the County Settlement Strategy, located in County Kildare approximately 21km south-west of Dublin City. It is a key local centre for services and lies in close proximity to the larger urban centre of Naas to the south. The town is centered on the Grand Canal and lies between the River Liffey to the north-west and the M7 motorway to the south; the M4 motorway lies approximately 16km to the north of Sallins. The mainline railway linking Dublin to the south and south-east of the country also runs through Sallins town centre.

The Grand Canal and River Liffey are distinguishing features of the town. This unique element influences the development and location of buildings and roads due to natural constraints of the Grand Canal and the River Liffey, and due to man-made constraints such as the railway and M7 motorway. The main residential areas are located to the east and west of the R407 Naas to Clane regional road. Much growth has occurred spatially in a north-south direction through the town.

The draft LAP will facilitate the appropriate expansion of retail development sufficient to meet local needs and will support tourism development. New community facilities to meet the needs of the existing and future population will also be facilitated.

The provision of roads, cycleways, footpaths and promoting interconnectivity between the modes is a key challenge and the Council will promote the use of sustainable modes of transport throughout the lifetime of the LAP. The development of dedicated sports and playground/mixed-use facilities are a key objective of the draft LAP.

#### 2.1.1 Development Strategy for the draft LAP

The development strategy for Sallins is to improve the quality of life for the local community and provide for the future sustainable growth of the town:

*To build on the strengths of Sallins and to provide a focused approach to planning for future growth in a coherent sustainable and spatial fashion. The Local Area Plan aims to achieve a more consolidated urban form that facilitates a sustainable economic base and creates sustainable and integrated communities while balancing future development with the conservation and enhancement of the town's natural and built environment.*

The draft LAP focuses on the provision of additional infrastructure, services and community facilities to serve the existing and future population, and visitors to the area. The principles of sustainable development enshrine the strategy, with a strong emphasis on the protection of the area's natural heritage and environment.

#### 2.1.2 Economic Development in the Plan Area

The draft LAP envisages that Sallins will experience an increase in population growth which will help to sustain existing services and increase the demand and feasibility to provide other important services in the plan area. The draft LAP focuses on the provision and improvement of infrastructure,

services, amenity and community facilities to serve the existing and future population, and visitors to the area. Economic development will cater primarily to consolidating and supporting commercial, office, light industry and warehousing development in the town centre.

The LAP will seek to promote employment and enterprise land uses in order to provide opportunities for Sallins to become a self-sustaining town as well as encouraging and facilitating the consolidation of lands zoned as town centre in order to secure and deliver higher order uses around a newly-defined urban core. It should also be noted that Millennium Park is located approximately 2km to the south-west of the centre and this land bank represents a significant working population in the area and has capacity for further development.

### **2.1.3 Tourism**

Sallins is well situated within a wealth of tourism opportunities including the Grand Canal and the associated Grand Canal National Waymarked Trail, the Leinster Aqueduct, Oberstown House, Palmerstown House and Demesne as well as a number of golf courses and a driving range at Kerdiffstown. There is potential to expand the tourism potential of Sallins given its location on the Grand Canal; tourist activity can support community development, lead to local employment and help to enhance the overall image of the area. Opportunities exist to promote tourism, built and natural heritage and retail so that Sallins could benefit from an increase in visitor numbers. The town's built heritage is a unique and definitive feature of Sallins and it is recognised that this is a unique resource that attracts tourism.

The draft LAP supports the sustainable development of the Grand Canal for recreation activities and associated infrastructure; as an example, Waterways Ireland recently completed a house-boat mooring facility on the canal in the town centre. The heritage, tourism and recreational opportunities of the Grand Canal will be promoted as a key feature for Sallins. The existing canal walkways are popular and there are opportunities to implement physical and environmental improvements along the canals' banks via dedicated cycleways, green routes and nature trails.

### **2.1.4 Community Facilities**

Sallins currently relies on Naas for some community facilities; while this is acceptable for certain needs such as healthcare, it is necessary to support self-sufficiency for Sallins. The draft LAP supports the provision of a range of community facilities in the plan area. It is considered that with population growth and as new communities emerge, the development of further community facilities would make a significant contribution to the town. These facilities could be used for a variety of purposes relating to education, community, leisure and recreation.

### **2.1.5 Access and Movement**

Sallins is serviced by both bus and rail facilities. Rail services operate from Dublin Heuston and there are commuter and Intercity services running through Sallins to service Kildare/Portlaoise, Cork/Limerick/Tralee, Waterford, Galway and Westport/Ballina; Sallins train station is also connected by feeder bus to Naas. Bus Éireann operates a route (number 123) from Dublin via Celbridge and Clane servicing Sallins, additionally other bus services operate through Naas. An upgrade of the Kildare railway line has been completed as far as Hazelhatch, the station immediately north of Sallins. The second phase of the project to upgrade the track to four lines as far as Kildare

Town has been deferred, but this upgrade once completed would allow for a more frequent service to and from Sallins. It is therefore important that Sallins seeks continued improvement of such connections with Dublin, Kildare Town, Newbridge and Celbridge.

The draft LAP seeks to rectify the current congestion problem that exists within Sallins as the town is located strategically between two motorways, with the R407 linking to the M4 to the north and the M7 passing directly to the south of the town. Sustained traffic congestion at peak times from the motorways and through Main Street in the town centre can impact the urban environment and quality of life for local residents. The construction of the Sallins bypass (approved in 2014) would significantly improve traffic flows through the town centre and allow for civic improvements and regeneration of key town centre areas. This will potentially improve the congestion problem. There are also cycle facilities in the town but improvements are needed to reduce the need to use cars and increase the appeal of alternative modes of transport. The proposed Sallins Road Pedestrian/Cycle Scheme outlines a road improvement scheme for enhanced walking and cycling facilities. Reduced traffic levels and improved pedestrian and cycling routes will make the town more attractive to walk and cycle in.

### **2.1.6 Housing**

The Regional Planning Guidelines have allocated an annual target of 3,122 units for the Kildare County over the period 2016-2022. Sallins' allocation for 2018-2021 is therefore calculated as 1.9% of this annual county target (59 x 4 years). Adding this to the 2017 housing unit target (531 units) gives a revised target of 767 new housing units for Sallins for the plan period 2006-2021.

There is sufficient undeveloped land zoned in the plan area to meet the housing requirement, and indeed the previous LAP (2009) over-zoned land for residential use. This, taken in conjunction with the number of housing units which can be provided by the current vacant stock and the extant permissions, is considered sufficient to meet the housing needs of the area during the lifetime of the draft LAP.

### **2.1.7 Built and Natural Heritage**

Sallins' natural heritage is a unique and special resource. As well as the Grand Canal habitats and the River Liffey at Oberstown, the natural heritage includes woodlands, hedgerows, treelines and tree copses.

There are distinctive elements of built heritage which make a positive contribution to the character of the area and help to achieve a sense of place. This includes the Sallins railway station and Sallins castle tower house to name a few. Such features have an important social and historical association with the development of the town, and vernacular architecture contributes to the character of the town's streetscapes.

Natural heritage, often referred to as biodiversity, is important for many things including food, fertile soils and clean air and water. It can be threatened by the development of land and human activity. Therefore, it is important that the development objectives in the draft LAP are balanced with conservation measures and objectives which ensure that the area's natural heritage is protected and conserved.

While there are no European sites within or immediately adjoining the Plan area, there are 7 sites within 15km of the LAP boundary. These sites include: Ballynafagh Bog SAC (Site Code: 000391) approximately 6.8km to the north-west of the LAP boundary; Ballynafagh Lake SAC (Site Code: 001387) approximately 7km to the north-west; Mouds Bog SAC (Site Code: 002331) approximately 7.7km to the south-west; Pollardstown Fen SAC (Site Code: 000396) approximately 11.9km to the south-west; Red Bog Kildare SAC (Site Code: 000397) approximately 9.6km to the south-east; Wicklow Mountains SAC (Site Code: 002122) approximately 14.6km to the south-east; and Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA (Site Code: 004063) approximately 11.9km to the south-east of the LAP boundary.

The Grand Canal is a man-made waterway comprising the central channel and the banks either side of it. It serves as a wildlife corridor and is designated as a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA). The River Liffey at Oberstown is also a pNHA representing a good example of riverside vegetation.

### 2.1.8 Infrastructure

The main considerations for development within the town and its outskirts within zoned areas are outlined below:

- Provision of recreation and amenity spaces, including appropriate play and recreation areas. It is envisaged that a large area between the canal and bypass be reserved for future active and passive recreation; a key objective is the delivery of a cycle network along the canal.
- Opportunities exist for the regeneration of the former Odlums Mill in the town centre as a strategic brownfield site.
- The former meat factory lands represent another strategic brownfield site with opportunities for mixed development.
- A design brief has been incorporated into the draft LAP to inform regeneration of lands north and south of the railway station, where substantial areas of brownfield land remain undeveloped or vacant.
- It is the objective of the draft LAP to promote consolidation of the town centre as the commercial heart of Sallins, while allowing for future expansion in the core area.
- It is recognised that community and recreational facilities in Sallins have not kept pace with the increase in population over the past two decades. Any future development of residential lands (excess of 25 units) are to address this deficit through social infrastructure assessment, design (e.g. playgrounds, pocket parks) and integration of services.
- The construction of the town bypass is critical to the future development of Sallins. The Council will actively pursue this project which is a key component to the regeneration of the town centre and adjoining lands.

### 2.1.9 Flood Risk Management and Surface Water

It has been identified that the risk of flooding in Sallins has increased due to climate change. There are two types of flooding events which can arise separately or in combination in Sallins:

- Fluvial Flooding arising from river and streams; and
- Pluvial Flooding arising from extreme rainfall.

The management of surface water and storm water is important so as to avoid increased flood or pollution risk in rivers, streams and the storm water network. The Council will require the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in all new developments (Section 17 of draft LAP). The incorporation of SuDS techniques allows surface water to be either infiltrated or conveyed more slowly to water courses using porous surface treatments, ponds, swales, filter drains or other installations. This will minimise the risk of flooding and contamination and protect environmental and water resources. Furthermore SUDS offer the opportunity to combine water management with green space, which can increase amenity and biodiversity.

Kildare County Council will have regard to all future flood maps and the flood management plan when assessing development proposals and such development proposals will be subject to site-specific flood risk assessment appropriate to the scale and nature of development; this is outlined in Section 13.4 of the draft LAP.

## 2.2 POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

As a proactive measure, prior to compilation of the draft Local Area Plan, policies were put in place to ensure that protective policies for European Sites within and in the vicinity of the draft LAP boundary were interwoven into the fabric of draft LAP. Policies including those relating to water supply, waste water, surface water drainage and groundwater were provided to ensure the protection of supporting features, including water quality. As a result, the draft LAP contains numerous policies and objectives focused on the protection of European Sites, which will contribute to the conservation of European Sites in accordance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive (**Table 2.1**).

**Table 2.1: The main policies and objectives within the draft LAP relating to environmental protection**

Policy/Objective Code	Policies and Objectives
<b><u>Overarching Policy</u></b>	Any proposed development within and adjoining the LAP boundary will be screened for Appropriate Assessment to determine its potential impact on the Natura 2000 network in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive
<b><u>PS 2</u></b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Public Space Network</u></b></p> To retain, where appropriate, mature landscaping including hedgerows and trees which contribute to the character of the town.
<b><u>PT 2</u></b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Public Transport</u></b></p> To support the extension of the Kildare Route Project to Sallins, subject to planning and environmental considerations, including Appropriate Assessment in accordance with the Habitats Directive.
<b><u>FR 1</u></b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Surface Water Drainage</u></b></p> To ensure that no surface water will be permitted to discharge to the Grand Canal or its feeders either temporarily or permanently without written consent from Waterways Ireland.
<b><u>FR 2</u></b>	To create appropriate buffer zones between the River Liffey and the Grand Canal. The extent and nature of a buffer zone shall be determined in consultation with a qualified ecologist and following a Flood Risk Assessment. All existing and proposed landscaping shall have regard to the Green Infrastructure Mapping detailed on Map 6. This may

	require the retention/enhancement of key hedgerows or the creation of stepping stones for habitats.
	<b><u>Natural Heritage</u></b>
<b><u>NH 1</u></b>	To protect the proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) and sites of heritage value in accordance with the policies and objectives under Chapter 13 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017.
<b><u>NH 2</u></b>	To identify, protect, conserve and enhance, wherever possible, wildlife habitats and species of local importance, not otherwise protected by legislation. Such habitats may include woodland, grassland areas and field boundaries (hedges, stone walls, ditches etc.). These are mapped on Map 6. Such features form part of a network of habitats and corridors, which allow wildlife to exist and flourish. Once a locally important habitat has been identified it shall be surveyed to establish its significance and a site specific conservation plan prepared to establish development guidelines for the area.
<b><u>NH 3</u></b>	To conserve and protect the natural habitats in the local river and canal systems. In this regard, relevant planning applications must: (a) Identify all ecological habitats and corridors which are present on the proposed development lands (including hedgerows and masonry stone walls) that are likely to be affected by the development proposal; (b) Identify any losses to these habitats and corridors which would result if the application was to be granted; (c) Show that such losses would be fully offset if the application was to be granted through the replacement of the relevant corridors, with corridors composed of similar species prior to any losses to the existing corridors; (d) Show that habitat loss will either be offset should the application be granted or is not locally important to the area.
<b><u>NH 4</u></b>	To require development to be screened for Appropriate Assessment of its potential impacts on the European sites in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.
<b><u>NH 5</u></b>	To seek the protection of the trees and groups of trees of special amenity value identified in Table 8 and identified on Map 5.
	<b><u>Green Infrastructure</u></b>
<b><u>GI 1</u></b>	To ensure old stone walls and/or hedgerows are protected where appropriate for the contribution that they make to green infrastructure.
<b><u>GI 2</u></b>	To support the development and appropriate management of semi-natural grasslands within new developments and existing amenity grassland areas.
<b><u>GI 3</u></b>	To seek the enhancement of existing wetlands and the creation of new wetlands where appropriate, through the provision of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and Integrated Constructed Wetlands (ICW).
<b><u>GI 4</u></b>	To develop links between larger areas of green infrastructure (such as the River Liffey and Grand Canal, the banks and buffer zones of the railway, motorway and proposed bypass) and the surrounding countryside.
<b><u>GI 5</u></b>	To ensure replacement with semi-mature trees in cases where mature trees are removed during development. Semi-mature trees are defined as trees with an overall height in excess of 4 metres and or a stem girth measurement circumference of 20 centimetres or larger.

<b><u>GI 6</u></b>	To avoid development within the root protection area of the trees/hedgerows to be retained within a development.
<b><u>GIO 1</u></b>	To deliver the green infrastructure strategy outlined on Map 6 through the integration of a network of natural habitat and biodiversity supporting spaces, parkland for passive and active recreational uses, heritage features, sustainable surface water and flood risk management measures.
<b><u>GIO 2</u></b>	To promote the development of a series of green routes/green linear corridors that connect amenity and open space areas with new and established communities.

## 2.3 EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

### 2.3.1 Water quality

The River Liffey is located on the western/north-western periphery of the town of Sallins. The most up to date fisheries stock assessment by Inland Fisheries was conducted in 2013 at Kilcullen Bridge, approximately 12km south-west of the draft LAP. A total of six fish species were recorded at this location. Brown trout was the most abundant species recorded followed by salmon, minnow, stone loach, perch and European eel.

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) required Member States to manage all of their waters to ensure they achieve at least 'good status' by 2015. In line with requirements of the Eastern River Basin District River Basin Management Plans (ERBD RBMP) 2009 – 2015, ecological sampling by the EPA is carried out. The nearest EPA sampling point to Sallins is at Castlekeely Ford and the latest results (2010-2012) are presented in **Table 2.2**.

**Table 2.2: ERBD Risk Characterisation and Ecological Classification for the River Liffey at Castlekeely Ford**

Q-Value	Physico-Chemical Status	WFD Ecological Status	Overall Risk Result	Pollution Status
3-4	Moderate	Moderate	At Risk of Not achieving Good Status	Slightly Polluted

The overall status of the River Liffey at this location is 'Moderate', however this sampling point is located upstream of Sallins (to the south-west); the portion of the River Liffey running north-south through Sallins (the Naas/Corbally branch of the Grand Canal) and its feeders to the north of the Leinster Aqueduct are currently at 'Good' status.

### 2.3.2 Hydrogeological Features

The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) bedrock aquifer mapping identifies that the draft LAP area is underlain partially by a “Locally Important Aquifer - Bedrock which is Moderately Productive only in Local Zones” (LI aquifer) in the north-west portion of the Plan area, and by “Regionally Important Aquifer – Karstified (Diffuse)” (Rkd aquifer) for the rest of the Plan area. LI aquifers typically have limited connectivity of the fracture and joint spaces, with low fissure permeability which tends to decrease with increasing depth. Higher permeability may exist within the top few metres and along fault zones. In general this aquifer type has poor storage. Rkd aquifers are characterised by the presence of karst features and most groundwater flow typically occurs through more permeable and interconnected karst fissures/enlarged zones, which can be several kilometres long. Karstification of rock usually results in an uneven distribution of permeability.

There is also a “Locally Important” sand/gravel aquifer along the eastern boundary of the draft LAP. These aquifers are typically smaller in size than regionally important gravel aquifers (1-10km<sup>2</sup>) or have a less consistent permeability or ability to meet recharge requirements for abstraction.

Groundwater Vulnerability indicates that the draft LAP area is predominately located in an area with a vulnerability rating of ‘Moderate’ to ‘High’. The Water Framework Directive assigned the groundwater in and around the Sallins area as having ‘Good’ status between 2010 and 2012.

It is Council policy to:

- *To ensure that no surface water will be permitted to discharge to the Grand Canal or its feeders either temporarily or permanently without written consent from Waterways Ireland. (FR 1)*
- *To deliver the green infrastructure strategy outlined on Map 6 through the integration of a network of natural habitat and biodiversity supporting spaces, parkland for passive and active recreational uses, heritage features, sustainable surface water and flood risk management measures. (GIO 1)*

### 2.3.3 Wastewater Facilities

Sallins is served by the Oberstown Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP), of the Upper Liffey Sewerage Scheme, which also serves the towns of Naas, Newbridge, Carragh, Clane and Kilcullen. The scheme is currently operating at 80,000 population equivalent (PE) and is being expanded and upgraded to provide a treatment capacity of up to 130,000 PE. The upgraded WWTP will ensure a sufficient supply of waste water infrastructure to serve new development in the Plan area.

The Council is committed to ensuring that adequate wastewater treatment facilities are in place to serve the existing and future population of the plan area. It is Council policy to:

- *To ensure that no surface water will be permitted to discharge to the Grand Canal or its feeders either temporarily or permanently without written consent from Waterways Ireland. (FR 1)*

In addition, Section 13.2 of the LAP states that: *No development shall be permitted to proceed if the local services are insufficient to cater for the development.*

### 2.3.4 Natural Heritage / European Sites

Sallins has a diverse natural heritage ranging from rivers, riparian habitats, woodlands and groups of trees. There are no European sites within the draft LAP boundary. The nearest European site to the draft LAP area of Sallins is Ballynafagh Bog SAC, located approximately 6.8km to the north-west of the draft LAP boundary.

There is one pNHA within the draft LAP boundary, namely, the Grand Canal. A number of different habitats are found within the canal boundaries e.g. hedgerow, tall herbs, calcareous grassland, reed fringe, open water, scrub and woodland.

Protection of designated sites is high priority. The aim of the Council is to conserve and protect the natural heritage of the plan area to ensure that the ecological integrity of all natural heritage sites, designated or proposed for designation under European and national legislation, are protected.

It is Council policy to:

- *To protect the proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) and sites of heritage value in accordance with the policies and objectives under Chapter 13 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017. (NH 1)*
- *To require development to be screened for Appropriate Assessment of its potential impacts on the European sites in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. (NH 4)*

## 2.4 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE EUROPEAN SITES

This section of the screening process describes the European (Natura 2000) Sites within a 15km radius of the draft LAP boundary. A 15km buffer zone has been chosen as a precautionary measure, to ensure that all potentially affected European Sites are included in the screening process. This is in line with *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities*, produced by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

**Table 2.3** lists the European Sites that are within 15km of the LAP boundary and

Figure 2.1 shows their locations in relation to the draft Sallins Local Area Plan 2015-2021.

The integrity of a European Site (referred to in Article 6.3 of the EU Habitats Directive) is determined based on the conservation status of the qualifying features of the SAC or SPA. The qualifying features for each site have been obtained through a review of the Conservation Objectives available from the NPWS.

**Table 2.3: European Sites within the Zone of Influence of the draft Sallins Local Area Plan 2015 - 2021**

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Habitats	Qualifying Species
000391	Ballynafagh Bog SAC	Raised Bog [7110] Degraded Raised Bog [7120] <i>Rhynchosporion</i> Vegetation [7150]	-
001387	Ballynafagh Lake SAC	Alkaline fens [7230] Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140]	Desmoulin's Whorl Snail ( <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> ) [1016] Marsh Fritillary ( <i>Euphydryas aurinia</i> ) [1065]
002331	Mouds Bog SAC	Active raised bogs [7110] Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150]	-
000396	Pollardstown Fen SAC	Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> [7210] Petrifying springs with tufa formation ( <i>Cratoneurion</i> ) [7220] Alkaline fens [7230]	Geyer's Whorl Snail ( <i>Vertigo geyeri</i> ) [1013] Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail ( <i>Vertigo angustior</i> ) [1014] Desmoulin's Whorl Snail ( <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> ) [1016]
000397	Red Bog (Kildare) SAC	Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140]	-
002122	Wicklow Mountains SAC	Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or <i>Isoeto-Nanojuncetea</i> [3130] 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] Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas [6230] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130] Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels ( <i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and	Otter ( <i>Lutra lutra</i> ) [1355]

		<p><i>Galeopsietalia ladani</i>) [8110]          Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210]          Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220]          Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0]</p>	
004063	Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA	-	<p>Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>) [A043]          Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>) [A183]</p>

**Figure 2.1: European Sites within 15km of Sallins LAP boundary**

## 2.5 IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS

The following potential impacts on European Sites owing to the implementation of the draft LAP have been identified.

### 2.5.1 Direct Impacts on Habitats and Species

The construction of residential space, retail units, car parks, business units, cycleways, walkways and other developments within Sallins has no potential to impact directly on the habitats or species listed as Qualifying Interests of the aforementioned European Sites as these sites do not lie within the draft LAP boundary (

Figure 2.1).

## 2.5.2 Indirect Damage / Degradation of Habitats and Disturbance to Species

The construction of new developments within Sallins poses minimal potential to impact indirectly on the habitats listed as Qualifying Interests of the European Sites or result in disturbance to species as they are all a significant distance from the draft LAP area i.e. in excess of 6km away. Additionally, there are no hydrological connections between the draft LAP area and a European Site. Sallins is located in the Liffey River Catchment. The majority of Mouds Bog SAC and Red Bog SAC are also in the Liffey River Catchment; however, there is no hydrological connectivity from either of these sites to the LAP area. Any potential development in Sallins is highly unlikely to impact on the groundwater regime of Mouds Bog SAC or Red Bog SAC and therefore will not impact on the integrity of the SACs or the habitats for which they are designated.

Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA is located approximately 38km upstream of the draft LAP boundary. Due to the distance of the LAP lands, no impacts through direct or indirect disturbance of species and habitats will occur from development occurring through the implementation of the objectives of the draft LAP. Also, due to the fact that the SPA is located upstream of the LAP lands, no potential impacts to water quality would be expected.

Pollardstown Fen SAC, Ballynafagh Bog SAC and Ballynafagh Lake SAC are all located in the Barrow River Catchment, and so have no hydrological connectivity to the LAP area. Any potential development in Sallins is highly unlikely to impact on the surface water or groundwater regime of these SACs and therefore will not impact on the integrity of the SACs or the habitats and species for which they are designated. Appropriate Assessment in accordance with the Habitats Directive is carried out for any plan or project which individually or in combination with other plans and projects is likely to have a significant direct or indirect impact on any European site or sites.

## 2.5.3 Resource Requirements (e.g. Drinking Water Abstractions)

The Water Treatment Plant at Ballymore Eustace serves Sallins via the Poulaphouca Reservoir Regional Scheme, and it is anticipated that there will be an adequate supply of water to facilitate development during the life of this plan; a number of areas formerly served by the Ballymore Eustace Reservoir within County Kildare have recently been added to the first phase of the River Barrow Abstraction Scheme, thereby freeing up supply to other areas including Sallins.

## 2.5.4 Emissions (e.g. Disposals to Lands, Water, Air)

The construction of new residential and other developments to cater for an increasing population within Sallins has the potential to result in a reduction in the water quality in the receiving waterbodies through an increase in the waste water discharged. The upgrade to the Oberstown WWTP/Upper Liffey Sewerage Scheme will have positive impacts for water quality and all new development will be subject to appropriate infrastructure being in place. Therefore, it is not envisaged that the implementation of the Plan will have any negative impacts on water quality.

## 2.5.5 Excavation Requirements

Any excavations taking place as part of a proposed development within the draft LAP is unlikely to pose potential impacts on the habitats and species listed as Qualifying Interests of the aforementioned European Sites. Appropriate Assessment in accordance with the Habitats Directive is carried out for any plan or project which individually or in combination with other plans and projects is likely to have a significant direct or indirect impact on any European Site or Sites.

## 2.6 ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS

### 2.6.1 Direct, Indirect or Secondary Impacts

**Table 2.3** lists the European Sites within 15 km of the draft LAP area. There are six SAC sites and one SPA site in all. These European Sites identified include:

- Ballynafagh Bog SAC;
- Ballynafagh Lake SAC;
- Mouds Bog SAC;
- Pollardstown Fen SAC;
- Red Bog (Kildare) SAC;
- Wicklow Mountains SAC; and
- Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA.

It is the aim of the Council to protect, conserve and enhance the natural heritage and biodiversity within and adjacent to Sallins. The Council is committed to protecting and enhancing sites designated or proposed for designation under European and national legislation and have specific policies relating to their protection and maintenance, as appropriate e.g. **PS 2, PT 2, FR 1, FR 2, NH 1, NH 2, NH 3, NH 4 and NH 5**. In particular, it is an objective of the Council to ensure that development is to be screened for Appropriate Assessment of its potential impacts on European sites in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive (**NH 4**) and the overarching policy in Section 6.0 of the LAP.

Therefore, the draft Sallins Local Area Plan will not result in direct impacts on the European Sites through land take or fragmentation of habitats.

There are a number of feeder watercourses within and adjacent to the draft LAP area which drains into the Grand Canal and the River Liffey runs through the LAP. While the Grand Canal itself is designated as a pNHA rather than an SAC or SPA, it is recognised that the Council is committed to protecting these water resources, and to this regard there are a number of objectives and policies within the draft LAP, which focus on maintaining and protecting the natural character and water quality of these waterbodies (**FR 1**). Within the draft LAP area, development proposals will be required to set back a certain distance (as determined from consultation with a qualified ecologist) from the Grand Canal and River Liffey (**FR 2**).

The management of surface and storm water is important so as to avoid increased flood or pollution risk in the storm water network, rivers and streams. New development can exacerbate the problems of flooding by accelerating and increasing surface water run-off. The Council will require the application of Sustainable (urban) Drainage Systems (SuDS) in new developments and have identified specific objectives in this regard (**GI 3**). Reducing the extent of hard surfacing and using

permeable pavements will aid in minimizing the risk of flooding and contamination, and protect the environmental and water resources. Such water quality objectives will ensure that the receiving waterbodies, (e.g. Grand Canal and feeders, River Liffey), are protected.

All European Sites are a sufficient distance (>6km) from the draft LAP area and have no connecting pathways (i.e. rivers or streams or groundwater receptors) to be impacted by the present or future development of the draft Sallins LAP area.

This AA Screening has examined each objective within the draft Sallins LAP and has determined that there is no potential to impact on the European Sites due to:

- The considerable distance between draft LAP boundary and European Sites; and
- Appropriate policies and procedures set within the LAP framework to offset any potential impacts.

## 2.7 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

This step aims to identify at this early stage any possible significant in-combination or cumulative effects/impacts of the draft LAP with other such plans and projects on the European Sites network. Other plans and projects specific to the relevant European sites are presented in Table 2.4.

**Table 2.4: In-combination Impacts of the draft LAP with other Plans or Projects**

Name of plan or project	Key issues directly linked to relevant European sites	Potential cumulative or in-combination impacts on relevant European sites
Kildare County Development Plan 2011 -2017	The Kildare County Development Plan supports information on Designated sites, Habitats and Species Policies and Objectives, Natural Heritage and Biodiversity Policies and Objectives, Natural Water Systems Polices. All of these Policies and Objectives are set out to safeguard County Kildare's natural heritage and by extension the protected and designated sites associated with County Kildare	Positive Impacts
Inland Fisheries Ireland Corporate Plan 2011 -2015	<b>Goals:</b> To improve the protection and conservation of the resource. To develop and improve wild fish populations. To increase the number of anglers. To generate a better return for Ireland from the Resource	Positive Impacts
Eastern River Basin Management Plan 2009 -2015	The Eastern International RBD Management Plan, issued in July 2010, set out a number of objectives and measures for all water bodies in the Eastern River Basin Region. <b>Objectives:</b> Ensure that the status of waters supporting protected areas are protected and (where necessary) improved by 2015. It should be noted the next cycle of River Basin Management Plans (covering the period 2015-2021) are due to be delivered in 2017. <b>Measures:</b> Implement 11 EU Directives, 11 other basic requirements.	Positive Impacts

### 2.7.1 Likely Changes to the European Sites

The likely changes that could arise from the implementation of the draft LAP have been examined in the context of a number of factors that could potentially affect the integrity of the identified European sites. It has been determined that no European Site will be negatively impacted as a result of the draft LAP. **Table 2.5** shows the likely changes to European Sites as a result of the draft LAP.

**Table 2.5: Likely Effects on European Sites**

Site Name	Reduction of Habitat Area	Disturbance to Key Species	Habitat or Species Fragmentation	Reduction in Species Density	Changes in Key Indicators of Conservation Value (Water Quality, etc.)	Climate Change
Ballynafagh Bog SAC	None	None	None	None	None	None
Ballynafagh Lake SAC	None	None	None	None	None	None
Mouds Bog SAC	None	None	None	None	None	None
Pollardstown Fen SAC	None	None	None	None	None	None
Red Bog (Kildare) SAC	None	None	None	None	None	None
Wicklow Mountains SAC	None	None	None	None	None	None
Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA	None	None	None	None	None	None

### 3 SCREENING AND CONCLUSIONS

The likely impacts that will arise from the draft Sallins Local Area Plan alone and in combination with other plans and programmes have been examined in the context of a number of factors that could potentially affect the integrity of European Sites, in view of their Conservation Objectives. No European Site(s) will be adversely affected by the draft LAP. A Finding of No Significant Effects Matrix has been completed and is presented in **Section 4** of this Screening Statement.

On the basis of the findings of this Screening for Appropriate Assessment of European Sites, it is concluded that the proposed draft Sallins Local Area Plan will not have a significant effect on the European sites network and a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not required.

## 4 FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS REPORT MATRIX

Name of Project or Plan	Sallins Local Area Plan 2015 - 2021
<p><b>Name and location of Natura 2000 site</b></p>	<p>Ballynafagh Bog SAC (6.8km north-west of the draft LAP boundary)</p> <p>Ballynafagh Lake SAC (approximately 7km north-west of the draft LAP boundary)</p> <p>Mouds Bog SAC (approximately 7.7km south-west of the draft LAP boundary)</p> <p>Pollardstown Fen SAC (approximately 11.9km south-west of the draft LAP boundary)</p> <p>Red Bog Kildare SAC (approximately 9.6km south-east of the draft LAP boundary)</p> <p>Wicklow Mountains SAC (approximately 14.6km south-east of the draft LAP boundary)</p> <p>Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA (approximately 11.9km south-east of the draft LAP boundary)</p>
<p><b>Description of the Plan or Project</b></p>	<p>Sallins is a small town as classed under the County Settlement Strategy, located in County Kildare approximately 21km south-west of Dublin City. It is a key local centre for services and lies in close proximity to the larger urban centre of Naas to the south. The town is centered on the Grand Canal and lies between the River Liffey to the north-west and the M7 motorway to the south; the M4 motorway lies approximately 16km to the north of Sallins. The mainline railway linking Dublin to the south and south-east of the country also runs through Sallins town centre.</p> <p>The Grand Canal and River Liffey are distinguishing features of the town. This unique element influences the development and location of buildings and roads due to natural constraints of the Grand Canal and the River Liffey, and due to man-made constraints such as the railway and M7 motorway. The main residential areas are located to the east and west of the R407 Naas to Clane regional road. Much growth has occurred spatially in a north-south direction through the town.</p> <p>The draft LAP will facilitate the appropriate expansion of retail development sufficient to meet local needs and will support tourism development. New community facilities to meet the needs of the existing and future population will also be facilitated.</p> <p>The provision of roads, cycleways, footpaths and promoting interconnectivity between the modes is a key challenge and the Council will promote the use of sustainable modes of transport throughout the lifetime of the Plan. The development of dedicated spots and playground/mixed-use facilities are a key objective of the draft LAP.</p> <p><b><i>Development Strategy for the Proposed Plan</i></b></p> <p>The development strategy for Sallins is to improve the quality of life for the local community and provide for the future sustainable growth of the town:</p> <p><i>To build on the strengths of Sallins and to provide a focused approach to planning for future growth in a coherent sustainable</i></p>

*and spatial fashion. The Local Area Plan aims to achieve a more consolidated urban form that facilitates a sustainable economic base and creates sustainable and integrated communities while balancing future development with the conservation and enhancement of the town's natural and built environment.*

The draft LAP focuses on the provision of additional infrastructure, services and community facilities to serve the existing and future population, and visitors to the area. The principles of sustainable development enshrine the strategy, with a strong emphasis on the protection of the area's natural heritage and environment.

#### **Economic Development in the Plan Area**

The draft LAP envisages that Sallins will experience an increase in population growth which will help to sustain existing services and increase the demand and feasibility to provide other important services in the plan area. The draft LAP focuses on the provision and improvement of infrastructure, services, amenity and community facilities to serve the existing and future population, and visitors to the area. Economic development will cater primarily to consolidating and supporting commercial, office, light industry and warehousing development in the town centre.

The plan will seek to promote employment and enterprise land uses in order to provide opportunities for Sallins to become a self-sustaining town as well as encouraging and facilitating the consolidation of lands zoned as town centre in order to secure and deliver higher order uses around a newly-defined urban core. It should also be noted that Millennium Park is located approximately 2km to the south-west of the centre and this land bank represents a significant working population in the area and has capacity for further development.

#### **Tourism**

Sallins is well situated within a wealth of tourism opportunities including the Grand Canal and the associated Grand Canal National Waymarked Trail, the Leinster Aqueduct, Oberstown House, Palmerstown House and Demesne as well as a number of golf courses and a driving range at Kerdiffstown. There is potential to expand the tourism potential of Sallins given its location on the Grand Canal; tourist activity can support community development, lead to local employment and help to enhance the overall image of the area. Opportunities exist to promote tourism, built and natural heritage and retail so that Sallins could benefit from an increase in visitor numbers. The town's built heritage is a unique and definitive feature of Sallins and it is recognised that this is a unique resource that attracts tourism.

The draft LAP supports the sustainable development of the Grand Canal for recreation activities and associated infrastructure; as an example, Waterways Ireland recently completed a house-boat mooring facility on the canal in the town centre. The heritage, tourism and recreational opportunities of the Grand Canal will be promoted as a key feature for Sallins. The existing canal walkways are popular and there are opportunities to implement

	<p>physical and environmental improvements along the canals' banks via dedicated cycleways, green routes and nature trails.</p> <p><b>Community Facilities</b></p> <p>Sallins currently relies on Naas for some community facilities; while this is acceptable for certain needs such as healthcare, it is necessary to support self-sufficiency for Sallins. The draft LAP supports the provision of a range of community facilities in the plan area. It is considered that with population growth and as new communities emerge, the development of further community facilities would make a significant contribution to the town. These facilities could be used for a variety of purposes relating to education, community, leisure and recreation.</p> <p><b>Access and Movement</b></p> <p>Sallins is serviced by both bus and rail facilities. Rail services operate from Dublin Heuston and there are commuter and Intercity services running through Sallins to service Kildare/Portlaoise, Cork/Limerick/Tralee, Waterford, Galway and Westport/Ballina; Sallins train station is also connected by feeder bus to Naas. Bus Éireann operates a route (number 123) from Dublin via Celbridge and Clane servicing Sallins, additionally other bus services operate through Naas. An upgrade of the Kildare railway line has been completed as far as Hazelhatch, the station immediately north of Sallins. The second phase of the project to upgrade the track to four lines as far as Kildare Town has been deferred, but this upgrade once completed would allow for a more frequent service to and from Sallins. It is therefore important that Sallins seeks continued improvement of such connections with Dublin, Kildare Town, Newbridge and Celbridge.</p> <p>The draft LAP seeks to rectify the current congestion problem that exists within Sallins as the town is located strategically between two motorways, with the R407 linking to the M4 to the north and the M7 passing directly to the south of the town. Sustained traffic congestion at peak times from the motorways and through Main Street in the town centre can impact the urban environment and quality of life for local residents. The construction of the Sallins bypass (approved in 2014) would significantly improve traffic flows through the town centre and allow for civic improvements and regeneration of key town centre areas. This will potentially improve the congestion problem. There are also cycle facilities in the town but improvements are needed to reduce the need to use cars and increase the appeal of alternative modes of transport. The proposed Sallins Road Pedestrian/Cycle Scheme outlines a road improvement scheme for enhanced walking and cycling facilities. Reduced traffic levels and improved pedestrian and cycling routes will make the town more attractive to walk and cycle in.</p> <p><b>Housing</b></p> <p>The Regional Planning Guidelines have allocated an annual target of 3,122 units for the Kildare County over the period 2016-2022. Sallins' allocation for 2018-2021 is therefore calculated as 1.9% of this annual county target (59 x 4 years). Adding this to the 2017</p>
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	<p>housing unit target (531 units) gives a revised target of 767 new housing units for Sallins for the plan period 2006-2021.</p> <p>There is sufficient undeveloped land zoned in the plan area to meet the housing requirement, and indeed the previous LAP (2009) over-zoned land for residential use. This, taken in conjunction with the number of housing units which can be provided by the current vacant stock and the extant permissions, is considered sufficient to meet the housing needs of the area during the lifetime of the draft LAP.</p> <p><b>Built and Natural Heritage</b></p> <p>Sallins' natural heritage is a unique and special resource. As well as the Grand Canal habitats and the River Liffey at Oberstown, the natural heritage includes woodlands, hedgerows, treelines and tree copses.</p> <p>There are distinctive elements of built heritage which make a positive contribution to the character of the area and help to achieve a sense of place. This includes the Sallins railway station and Sallins castle tower house to name a few. Such features have an important social and historical association with the development of the town, and vernacular architecture contributes to the character of the town's streetscapes. The Council is committed to the protection, appreciation and appropriate re-use of this built heritage.</p> <p>Natural heritage, often referred to as biodiversity, is important for many things including food, fertile soils and clean air and water. It can be threatened by the development of land and human activity. Therefore, it is important that the development objectives in the draft LAP are balanced with conservation measures and objectives which ensure that the area's natural heritage is protected and conserved.</p> <p>While there are no European sites within or immediately adjoining the Plan area, there are 7 sites within 15km of the LAP boundary. These sites include: Ballynafagh Bog SAC (Site Code: 000391) approximately 6.8km to the north-west of the LAP boundary; Ballynafagh Lake SAC (Site Code: 001387) approximately 7km to the north-west; Mouds Bog SAC (Site Code: 002331) approximately 7.7km to the south-west; Pollardstown Fen SAC (Site Code: 000396) approximately 11.9km to the south-west; Red Bog Kildare (Site Code: 000397) approximately 9.6km to the south-east; Wicklow Mountains SAC (Site Code: 002122) approximately 14.6km to the south-east; and Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA (Site Code: 004063) approximately 11.9km to the south-east of the LAP boundary.</p> <p>The Grand Canal is a man-made waterway comprising the central channel and the banks either side of it. It serves as a wildlife corridor and is designated as a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA). The River Liffey at Oberstown is also a pNHA representing a good example of riverside vegetation.</p> <p><b>Infrastructure</b></p> <p>The main considerations for development within the town and its outskirts within zoned areas are outlined below:</p>
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- Provision of recreation and amenity spaces, including appropriate play and recreation areas. It is envisaged that a large area between the canal and bypass be reserved for future active and passive recreation; a key objective is the delivery of a cycle network along the canal.
- Opportunities exist for the regeneration of the former Odlums Mill in the town centre as a strategic brownfield site.
- The former meat factory lands represent another strategic brownfield site with opportunities for mixed development.
- A design brief has been incorporated into the draft LAP to inform regeneration of lands north and south of the railway station, where substantial areas of brownfield land remain undeveloped or vacant.
- It is the objective of the draft LAP to promote consolidation of the town centre as the commercial heart of Sallins, while allowing for future expansion in the core area.
- It is recognised that community and recreational facilities in Sallins have not kept pace with the increase in population over the past two decades. Any future development of residential lands (excess of 25 units) are to address this deficit through social infrastructure assessment, design (e.g. playgrounds, pocket parks) and integration of services.
- The construction of the town bypass is critical to the future development of Sallins. The Council will actively pursue this project which is a key component to the regeneration of the town centre and adjoining lands.

#### **Flood Risk Management and Surface Water**

It has been identified that the risk of flooding in Sallins has increased due to climate change. There are two types of flooding events which can arise separately or in combination in Sallins:

- Fluvial Flooding arising from river and streams; and
- Pluvial Flooding arising from extreme rainfall.

The management of surface water and storm water is important so as to avoid increased flood or pollution risk in rivers, streams and the storm water network. The Council will require the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in all new developments (Section 17). The incorporation of SuDS techniques allows surface water to be either infiltrated or conveyed more slowly to water courses using porous surface treatments, ponds, swales, filter drains or other installations. This will minimise the risk of flooding and contamination and protect environmental and water resources. Furthermore SuDS offer the opportunity to combine water management with green space, which can increase amenity and biodiversity.

Kildare County Council will have regard to all future flood maps and the flood management plan when assessing development proposals and that such development proposals will be subject to

	<p>site-specific flood risk assessment appropriate to the scale and nature of development; this is outlined in Section 13.4 of the draft LAP.</p> <p><b>EXISTING ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p><b>Water Quality</b></p> <p>The River Liffey is located on the western/north-western periphery of the town of Sallins. The most up to date fisheries stock assessment by Inland Fisheries was conducted in 2013 at Kilcullen Bridge, approximately 12km south-west of the draft LAP. A total of six fish species were recorded at this location. Brown trout was the most abundant species recorded followed by salmon, minnow, stone loach, perch and European eel.</p> <p>The Water Framework Directive (WFD) required Member States to manage all of their waters to ensure they achieve at least 'good status' by 2015. In line with requirements of the Eastern River Basin District River Basin Management Plans (ERBD RBMP) 2009 – 2015, ecological sampling by the EPA is carried out. The nearest sampling point to Sallins is at Castlekeely Ford and the latest WFD results (2010-2012) are presented in <b>Table 2.2</b>.</p> <p>The overall status of the River Liffey at this location is 'Moderate', however this sampling point is located upstream of Sallins (to the south-west); the portion of the River Liffey running north-south through Sallins (the Naas/Corbally branch of the Grand Canal) and its feeders to the north of the Leinster Aqueduct is currently at 'Good' status.</p> <p><b>Hydrogeological Features</b></p> <p>The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) bedrock aquifer mapping identifies that the draft LAP area is underlain partially by a "Locally Important Aquifer - Bedrock which is Moderately Productive only in Local Zones" (LI aquifer) in the north-west portion of the Plan area, and by "Regionally Important Aquifer – Karstified (Diffuse)" (Rkd aquifer) for the rest of the Plan area. LI aquifers typically have limited connectivity of the fracture and joint spaces, with low fissure permeability which tends to decrease with increasing depth. Higher permeability may exist within the top few metres and along fault zones. In general this aquifer type has poor storage. Rkd aquifers are characterised by the presence of karst features and most groundwater flow typically occurs through more permeable and interconnected karst fissures/enlarged zones, which can be several kilometres long. Karstification of rock usually results in an uneven distribution of permeability.</p> <p>There is also a "Locally Important" sand/gravel aquifer along the eastern boundary of the draft LAP. These aquifers are typically smaller in size than regionally important gravel aquifers (1-10km<sup>2</sup>) or have a less consistent permeability or ability to meet recharge requirements for abstraction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>To ensure that no surface water will be permitted to discharge to the Grand Canal or its feeders either temporarily or permanently without written consent</i></li> </ul>
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	<p><i>from Waterways Ireland. (FR 1)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>To deliver the green infrastructure strategy outlined on Map 6 through the integration of a network of natural habitat and biodiversity supporting spaces, parkland for passive and active recreational uses, heritage features, sustainable surface water and flood risk management measures. (GIO 1)</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Wastewater Facilities</b></p> <p>Sallins is served by the Oberstown Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP), of the Upper Liffey Sewerage Scheme, which also serves the towns of Naas, Newbridge, Carragh, Clane and Kilcullen. The scheme is currently operating at 80,000 population equivalent (PE) and is being expanded and upgraded to provide a treatment capacity of up to 130,000 PE. The upgraded WWTP will ensure a sufficient supply of waste water infrastructure to serve new development in the Plan area.</p> <p>The Council is committed to ensuring that adequate wastewater treatment facilities are in place to serve the existing and future population of the plan area.</p> <p><i>It is Council policy to ensure that no surface water will be permitted to discharge to the Grand Canal or its feeders either temporarily or permanently without written consent from Waterways Ireland. (FR 1)</i></p> <p>In addition, Section 13.2 of the LAP states that:</p> <p><i>No development shall be permitted to proceed if the local services are insufficient to cater for the development.</i></p> <p><b>Natural Heritage/European Sites</b></p> <p>Sallins has a diverse natural heritage ranging from rivers, riparian habitats, woodlands and groups of trees.</p> <p>There are no European sites within the draft LAP boundary. The nearest European site to the draft LAP area of Sallins is Ballynafagh Bog SAC, located approximately 6.8km to the north-west of the LAP boundary.</p> <p>Protection of designated sites is high priority. The aim of the Council is to conserve and protect the natural heritage of the plan area to ensure that the ecological integrity of all natural heritage sites, designated or proposed for designation under European and national legislation, are protected.</p> <p>It is Council policy to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>To protect the proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) and sites of heritage value in accordance with the policies and objectives under Chapter 13 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017. (NH 1)</i></li> <li>▪ <i>To require development to be screened for Appropriate Assessment of its potential impacts on the European Site(s) in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. (NH 4)</i></li> </ul>
<p>Is the project or Plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site?</p>	<p>No</p>

Are there other plans or projects that together with the project of Plan being assessed could affect the site?	No
<b>The Assessment of Significance of Effects</b>	
Describe how the project or Plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the European site	The proposed Local Area Plan is not likely to affect European sites
Explain why these effects are not considered significant	<p><b>Table 2.3</b> lists the European sites within 15 km of the draft LAP area. There are six SAC sites and one SPA site in all. These European sites identified include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ballynafagh Bog SAC;</li> <li>▪ Ballynafagh Lake SAC;</li> <li>▪ Mouds Bog SAC;</li> <li>▪ Pollardstown Fen SAC;</li> <li>▪ Red Bog (Kildare) SAC;</li> <li>▪ Wicklow Mountains SAC; and</li> <li>▪ Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA.</li> </ul> <p>It is the aim of the Council to protect, conserve and enhance the natural heritage and biodiversity within and adjacent to Sallins. The Council is committed to protecting and enhancing sites designated or proposed for designation under European and national legislation and have specific policies relating to their protection and maintenance, as appropriate e.g. <b>PS 2, PT 2, FR 1, FR 2, NH 1, NH 2, NH 3, NH 4 and NH 5</b>. In particular, it is an objective of the Council to ensure that development is to be screened for Appropriate Assessment of its potential impacts on European Site(s) in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive (<b>NH 4</b>).</p> <p>Therefore, the draft Sallins Local Area Plan will not result in direct impacts on the European Site(s) through land take or fragmentation of habitats.</p> <p>There are a number of feeder watercourses within and adjacent to the draft LAP area which drains into the Grand Canal. The Council is committed to protecting these water resources, and to this regard there are a number of objectives and policies within the draft LAP, which focus on maintaining and protecting the natural character and water quality of these waterbodies (<b>FR 1</b>). Within the draft LAP area, development proposals will be required to set back a certain distance (as determined from consultation with a qualified ecologist) from the Grand Canal and River Liffey (<b>FR 2</b>).</p> <p>The management of surface and storm water is important so as to avoid increased flood or pollution risk in the storm water network, rivers and streams. New development can exacerbate the problems of flooding by accelerating and increasing surface water run-off. The Council will require the application of Sustainable (urban) Drainage Systems (SuDS) in new developments and have identified specific objectives in this regard (<b>GI 3</b>). Reducing the extent of hard surfacing and using permeable pavements will aid in minimizing the risk of flooding and contamination, and protect the environmental and water</p>

	<p>resources.</p> <p>Such water quality objectives will ensure that the receiving waterbodies, (e.g. Grand Canal and feeders, River Liffey), are protected, and therefore, will not result in any indirect impacts on the European sites.</p> <p>All European sites are a sufficient distance (&gt;6km) from the draft LAP area and have no connecting pathways (i.e. rivers or streams or groundwater receptors) to be impacted by the present or future development of the draft Sallins LAP area.</p> <p>This AA Screening has examined each objective within the draft Sallins LAP and has determined that there is no potential to impact on the European sites due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Considerable distance between draft LAP boundary and designated sites; and</li> <li>▪ Appropriate policies and procedures set within the draft LAP framework to offset any potential impacts.</li> </ul>
List of Agencies Consulted	N/A
Response to Consultation	N/A
<b>Data Collected to carry out the Assessment</b>	
Who Carried out the Assessment?	RPS Ecologists
Sources of Data	NPWS database EPA Database Information from Kildare County Council
Level of Assessment Completed	Desktop
Where can this document be viewed?	Kildare County Council
Overall Conclusion	<p>The likely impacts that will arise from the draft Sallins Local Area Plan alone and in combination with other plans and programmes have been examined in the context of a number of factors that could potentially affect the integrity of the European Sites. No European Site(s) will be adversely affected by the draft LAP. A Finding of No Significant Effects Matrix has been completed and is presented in <b>Section 4</b> of this Screening Statement.</p> <p>On the basis of the findings of this Screening for Appropriate Assessment of European Sites, it is concluded that the draft Sallins Local Area Plan will not have a significant effect on the European Sites network and a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not required.</p>

## **5 ADDENDUM**

### **5.1 SCREENING OF MATERIAL ALTERATIONS FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT**

Having considered the Draft Sallins LAP and the Chief Executive's Report on submissions received as a result of the public display period, it was resolved by the elected members of Kildare County Council to alter the Draft Sallins LAP (2015-2021). This addendum comprises a screening of the proposed alterations for Appropriate Assessment under the EU Habitats Directive.

### **5.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ALTERATIONS**

The proposed material alterations to the Draft Sallins LAP include alterations to housing targets; and minor alterations to the Town Centre, Design Briefs, Movement and Transport and Community and Recreation Facilities chapters. There are also proposed alterations to mapping, which include alterations to a cycle route and changes to land zonings. A proposed alteration has also been made to the timeframe of the LAP from 2015-2021 to 2016-2022.

### **5.3 ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS**

The likely significant impacts that will arise from the proposed alterations to the draft Sallins Local Area Plan (2015-2021) alone and in combination with other plans and programmes have been considered with regards to the integrity of the Natura 2000 network. The proposed material alterations will not result in any significant negative impacts upon the Natura 2000 network.

### **5.4 CONCLUSION**

The likely direct and indirect impacts that will arise from the proposed alterations to the draft Sallins Local Area Plan (2015-2021) alone and in combination with other plans and programmes have been examined in the context of a number of factors that could potentially affect the integrity and conservation objectives of the Natura 2000 network. No European Site will be adversely affected by the proposed material alterations to the Plan. Therefore, it is concluded that the proposed material alterations will not have a significant negative impact on the Natura 2000 network and a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not required.

