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# APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT

FOR

PROPOSED

VILLAGE RENEWAL MASTERPLAN

AT

STRAFFAN, Co. KILDARE

ON BEHALF OF

Kildare County Council

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

Enviroguide Consulting was commissioned by Kildare County Council (KCC) to prepare an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report in respect of a Proposed Village Renewal Masterplan (hereafter referred to as 'Proposed Masterplan' or 'Site' where referring to the area of the Proposed Masterplan) for Straffan, Co. Kildare. This report contains information to enable the competent authority to undertake Stage 1 Appropriate Assessment (AA) screening in respect of the Proposed Masterplan.

## 1.2 Legislative Background

The Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) seeks to conserve natural habitats and wild fauna and flora by the designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) seeks to protect birds of special importance by the designation of Special Protection Areas (SPAs). It is the responsibility of each Member State to designate SPAs and SACs, both of which will form part of the Natura 2000 Network, a network of protected sites throughout the European Community. These designated sites are referred to as 'Natura 2000 sites' or 'European sites'. SACs are selected for the conservation of Annex I habitats (including priority types which are in danger of disappearance) and Annex II species (other than birds). SPAs are selected for the conservation of Annex I birds and other regularly occurring migratory birds and their habitats. The annexed habitats and species for which each site is selected correspond to the Qualifying Interests (QIs) and Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of the sites; from these the conservation objectives of the site are derived.

An AA is a required assessment to determine the likelihood of significant effects, based on best scientific knowledge, of any plans or projects on European sites. Screening for AA determines whether a plan or project, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, is likely to have significant effects on a European site, in view of its conservation objectives.

This AA Screening has been undertaken to determine the potential for significant effects on relevant European sites. The purpose of this assessment is to determine the appropriateness of the Proposed Masterplan in the context of the conservation objectives of such sites.

### 1.2.1 Legislative Context

The obligations in relation to AA have been implemented in Ireland under Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended ("the 2000 Act"), and in particular Section 177U and Section 177V thereof. The relevant provisions of Section 177U in relation to AA screening have been set out below:

*"177U.— (1) A screening for appropriate assessment of a draft Land use plan or application for consent for proposed development shall be carried out by the competent authority to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if that Land use plan or proposed development, individually or in combination with another plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on the European site.*

(2)...

(3)...

*(4) The competent authority shall determine that an appropriate assessment of a draft Land use plan or a proposed development, as the case may be, is required if it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the draft Land use plan or proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.*

*(5) The competent authority shall determine that an appropriate assessment of a draft Land use plan or a proposed development, as the case may be, is not required if it can be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the draft Land use plan or proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.”*

An Appropriate Assessment is required under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive where a project or plan may give rise to significant effects upon a European site. Paragraph 3 states that:

*“6(3) Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site, in view of the site's conservation objectives. In the 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.”*

### **1.2.2 Stages of Appropriate Assessment**

This AA Screening Report (the 'Screening Report') has been prepared by Enviroguide Consulting. It considers whether the Proposed Masterplan is likely to have a significant effect on any European sites and whether a Stage 2 AA is required.

The AA process is a four-stage process. Each stage requires different considerations, assessments and tests to ultimately arrive at the relevant conclusion for each stage. An important aspect of the process is that the outcome at each successive stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required.

## Overview of Screening and Appropriate Assessment

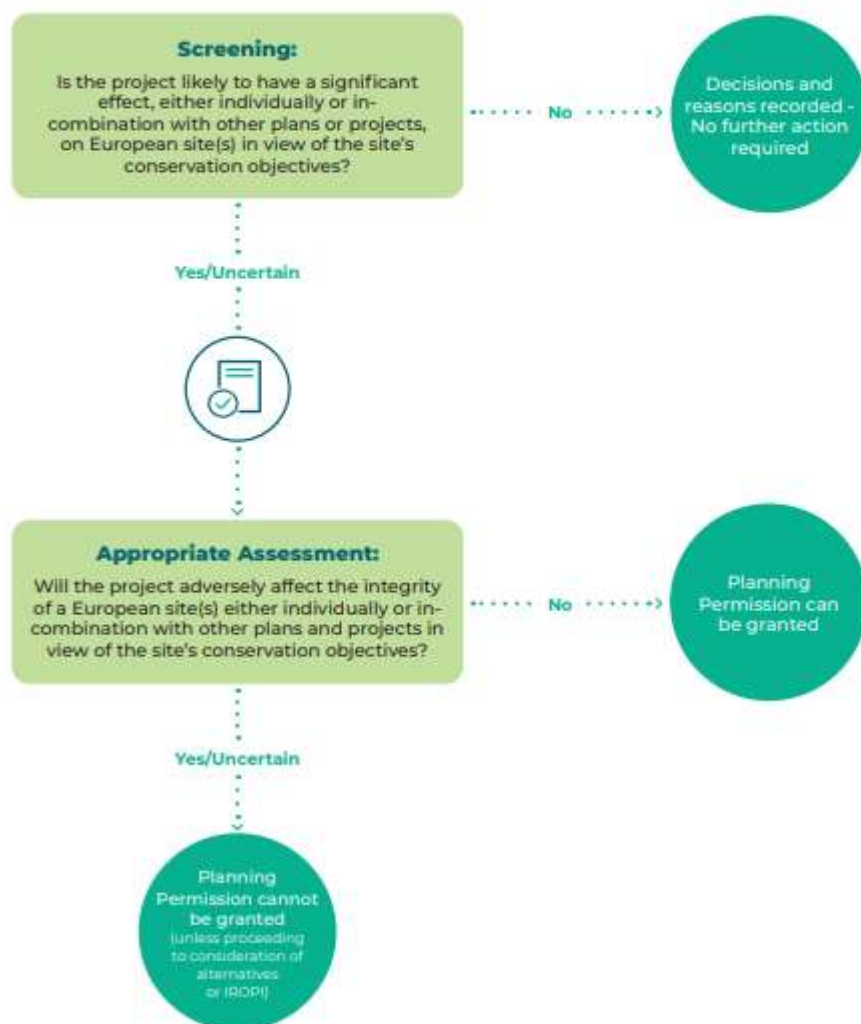


FIGURE 1. OVERVIEW OF SCREENING AND APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT (OPR, 2021).

The four stages of an AA, can be summarised as follows:

- Stage 1: *Screening*. The first stage of the AA process is to determine the likelihood of significant effects of the proposal, this addresses:
  - whether a plan or project is directly connected to or necessary for the management of the European site, or
  - whether a plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, is likely to have significant effects on a European site in view of its conservation objectives.
- Stage 2: *Appropriate Assessment*. The second stage of the AA requires the competent authority to determine whether the project or plan (either alone or in combination with other projects or plans) will have an adverse effect on the integrity of the European site, having regard to the conservation objectives of the site and its ecological structure

and function. The developer must provide a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) to the competent authority to inform the AA, which is a statement, for the purposes of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive of the potential impacts of a proposed development, on its own or in combination with other plans or projects, for one or more than one European site, in view of the conservation objectives of the site or sites. It must include a report of a scientific examination of evidence and data, carried out by competent persons to identify and classify any potential impacts for one or more than one European site in view of the conservation objectives of the site or sites. The competent authority must consult with the public in relation to any plan or project that requires AA. If the competent authority determines that the plan or project would have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European site, it can only grant consent after proceeding through stages 3 and 4.

- **Stage 3: Assessment of alternative solutions.** If the outcome of Stage 2 is negative i.e., adverse impacts to the sites cannot be scientifically ruled out, despite mitigation, the plan or project should proceed to Stage 3 or be abandoned. This stage examines alternative solutions to the proposal.
- **Stage 4: Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain.** The final stage is the main derogation process examining whether there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) for allowing a plan or project to adversely affect a European site, where no less damaging solution exists.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Guidance

This Screening Report has been undertaken in accordance with the following guidance:

- *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities.* (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2010 revision);
- *Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities.* Circular NPW 1/10 & PSSP 2/10;
- *Communication from the Commission on the precautionary principle* (European Commission, 2000);
- *Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC* (European Commission, 2019);
- *Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites – Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC* (European Commission, 2021); and
- *Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management, OPR Practice Note PN01, Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) March 2021.*

### 2.2 Screening Steps

Screening for AA involves the following steps:



- Establish whether the plan is directly connected with or necessary for the management of a European site;
- Description of the plan or project and the description and characterisation of other projects or plans that in combination have the potential for having significant effects on the European site;
- Identification of European sites potentially affected;
- Identification and description of potential effects on the European site(s);
- Assessment of the likely significance of the effects identified on the European site(s); and
- Exclusion of sites where it can be objectively concluded that there will be no significant effects.

### 2.3 Desk Study

A desktop study was carried out to collate and review available information, datasets and documentation sources relevant for the completion of this Screening Report. The desktop study relied on the following sources:

- Information on the network of European sites, boundaries, qualifying interests and conservation objectives, obtained from the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) at [www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie);
- Text summaries of the relevant European sites taken from the respective Standard Data Forms and site synopses available at [www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie);
- Information on waterbodies, catchment areas and hydrological connections obtained from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at [www.gis.epa.ie](http://www.gis.epa.ie);
- Information on bedrock, groundwater, aquifers and their statuses, obtained from Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) at [www.gsi.ie](http://www.gsi.ie);
- Satellite imagery and mapping obtained from various sources and dates including Google, Digital Globe, Bing and Ordnance Survey Ireland; and
- Information on the existence of permitted developments, or developments awaiting decision, in the vicinity of the Proposed Masterplan from KCC.

For a complete list of the specific documents consulted as part of this assessment, see *Section 5 References*.

### 2.4 Identification of Relevant European Sites

According to CIEEM, 2018, the Zone of Influence (ZOI) is defined as “*the area over which ecological features may be affected by biophysical changes as a result of the proposed project and associated activities. This is likely to extend beyond the project site, for example where there are ecological or hydrological links beyond the site boundaries.*” In order to identify the European sites that potentially lie within the Zone of Influence (in this case a ZOI of 10km) of the Proposed Masterplan, a Source-Path-Receptor (S-P-R) method was adopted, as

described in 'OPR Practice Note PN01 - Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management' (OPR, 2021), a practice note produced by the Office of the Planning Regulator, Dublin. This note was published to provide guidance on screening for AA during the planning process, and although it focuses on the approach a planning authority should take in screening for AA, the methodology is also readily applied in the preparation of Screening Reports such as this.

The methodology used to identify relevant European sites comprised the following:

- Identification of potential sources of effects based on the Proposed Masterplan description and details;
- Use of up-to-date GIS spatial datasets for European designated sites and water catchments – downloaded from the NPWS website ([www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie)) and the EPA website ([www.epa.ie](http://www.epa.ie)) to identify European sites which could potentially be affected by the Proposed Masterplan; and
- Identification of potential pathways between the Proposed Masterplan and the European sites identified in the preceding step. The catchment data were used to establish or discount potential hydrological connectivity between the Site and any European sites.

#### **2.4.1 Potential Sources of Effects**

The Proposed Masterplan will act as a non-statutory framework for the enhancement of Straffan Village, including recommendations for road and flow improvements, addition of green spaces and footpaths, and exploring the potential for increased connectivity via additional public transport to and from the village.

Therefore, potential sources of effects do not directly relate to development proposals but are identified to represent potential development projects undertaken under advice from the Proposed Masterplan.

The following elements of the Proposed Masterplan were identified and assessed for their potential to cause likely significant effects on European sites:

- Uncontrolled releases of surface water containing silt/sediments and other pollutants into the River Liffey from potential road improvement projects.
- Uncontrolled releases of surface water containing pollutants into the ground water during road improvement projects.
- Accidental spread of invasive plants during greening projects.
- Increased traffic and associated pollution as a result of increased visitors by private car.

## **2.5 Field Surveys**

No field surveys were deemed necessary for the preparation of this Screening Report.

## 2.6 Assessment of Significant Effects

The potential for significant effects that may arise from the Proposed Masterplan was considered through the use of key indicators, namely:

- Habitat loss or alteration.
- Habitat/species fragmentation.
- Disturbance and/or displacement of species.
- Changes in population density.
- Changes in water quality and resource.

In addition, information pertaining to the conservation objectives of the European sites, the ecology of the designated habitats and species and known or perceived sensitivities of the habitats and species were considered.

## 3 STAGE 1 SCREENING

### 3.1 Management of European Sites

The Proposed Masterplan at Straffan is not directly connected with a European site. However, the Proposed Masterplan at Straffan is within 10km of the *Rye Water Valley/Cartron SAC (001398)*. However, as will be shown, the Proposed Masterplan is deemed to have no impact on the management of the *Rye Water Valley/Cartron SAC*.

### 3.2 Straffan Village Renewal Masterplan (VRMP)

#### 3.2.1 Village Location and Description

Straffan is a village, located in the north-east part of County Kildare, approximately 20kms to the west of Dublin City (Figure 2). It occupies an attractive setting along the River Liffey and River Morrell.

The village name is the anglicised form of the original Irish, Teach Srafáin, which translates as “Church of St. Srafán”, a saint of the early Irish church who resided in the area at the end of the 7th century. The second Irish name of the village, Cluaníní, means “little meadows.” The current form of the village is linked to the Anglo-Norman invasion of the 12th century. It has developed from a small village to largely become a service centre for its rural hinterland. Today, Straffan village has a population of over 800 people (Census 2016). Straffan is situated close to the larger towns of Celbridge (5km), Maynooth (7km), Clane (5km) and Naas (10km).

The primary land use within the Straffan is residential, with some educational (Straffan National School), commercial (local retail and Straffan Inn), sport (Straffan GAA) and religious land uses (St. Bridget’s Church and Straffan Parish Church), which represent the key destinations to and within the village.

In addition, outside the village boundary is the Kildare Club (The K-Club) hotel and golf course, 13th century Barberstown Castle hotel and The Steam Museum & Lodge Park Walled Garden, land uses which also attract people to the village of Straffan. In recent years, the K Club has also become synonymous with golf in Ireland, hosting the 2006 Ryder Cup, the European Open from 1991 – 2007 and the Irish Open in May 2016. The Ryder Cup alone, as the third

biggest sporting event in the world, brought recognition and crowds to Straffan in equal measure.

Straffan village is concentrated around the two crossroads, Barberstown Road/The Glebe/Lovers Lane crossroad and Barberstown Road/The Boreen Rd crossroad. Barberstown Road is the main link through the village, connecting Straffan to the R403 and the R406 / Maynooth Road (connecting to the M4 at Junction 7) to the north and to the local road network / N7 to the south. Barberstown Road is a two-way road, comprising a single carriageway (one lane in each direction) through the village. Straffan is served by Bus Éireann route 120 (Dublin to Tullamore, via Straffan, Clane, Derrinturn and Edenderry) and route 123 between Dublin and Newbridge.

### **3.2.2 VRMP Main Objectives**

The central aim of the Proposed Masterplan is to support the renewal of Straffan in order to improve the living environment of its communities with growth levels to cater for local needs at an appropriate scale (Figure 3 & Figure 4). The overall intention is to:

- Increase the attractiveness of the village, and as a result increase its sustainability as a place in which to live and work.
- Enhance the village environment and amenities in the interests of residents and visitors.
- Promote the village potential for tourism and as a centre for culture and local heritage, thus enhancing the sense of identity – physically and socially.

The renewal plan seeks to build on the very strong asset base of Straffan, to ensure it retains its strong identity, to contribute to its enhancement, and to create opportunities which are unique to Straffan for its citizens to identify with. As a village with growth potential, it needs to ensure that its current and future growth areas stitch into the village centre and its community base, and draw on its character and sense of place.

The objectives of the Renewal Plan are to:

1. Create the opportunities for enabling strategies that the local community, stakeholders, and KCC can support and sustain for the future development of the village.
2. Enhance the vitality and vibrancy of Straffan through ensuring future growth areas are woven into the village and the urban structure is consolidated.
3. Create an enhanced environment for people living, working, and visiting the village through public realm interventions, encouraging, and sustaining economic growth
4. Re-balance the movement network ensuring accessibility for all, to further enhance the walking and cycling environment, prioritizing public over private transport, and creating safe connections and places for people.
5. Enhance landscape quality and positive 'sense of place' in the village which in turn will not only help combat the effects of climate change but also support higher property values and rental yields.
6. Create a Compact Low-Carbon Climate Resilient Village including strategic regeneration proposals incorporating best practice in low-carbon placemaking and design, the promotion of sustainable transport modes and the enhancement of biodiversity in the village through blue and green infrastructure developments.

The Proposed Masterplan identifies a number of key priority projects relating to the identified opportunity areas for the regeneration of Straffan (Figure 4), these include:

- **Public realm improvements** i.e., replacing worn out footpaths and road surfaces in disrepair, adding greenery, creation of additional legible and attractive markers around the village centre which create strong ‘sense of place’ opportunities and provide a distinctive feel to Straffan. There is potential to link this orientation to historical and natural features in the village and introduce interesting walking trail around the village. This proposal seeks to improve the signage and interpretation provision within the Village Centre, to ensure that visitors fully appreciate when navigating the streetscape all that the village has to offer.
- **Transport and Connection projects**, and improved movement in the form of an integrated, safe multi-use network connecting River Liffey, Village Centre, GAA Hub, Steam Museum, Boreen Road, School and all residential areas.
- Define **streetscape** from village centre to GAA entrance, including continuous footpaths and rationalised car parking.
- **GAA grounds** expansion.
- Opportunity Site for **Children’s Play Area** / Public Amenity (subject to consultation with existing registered landowners).

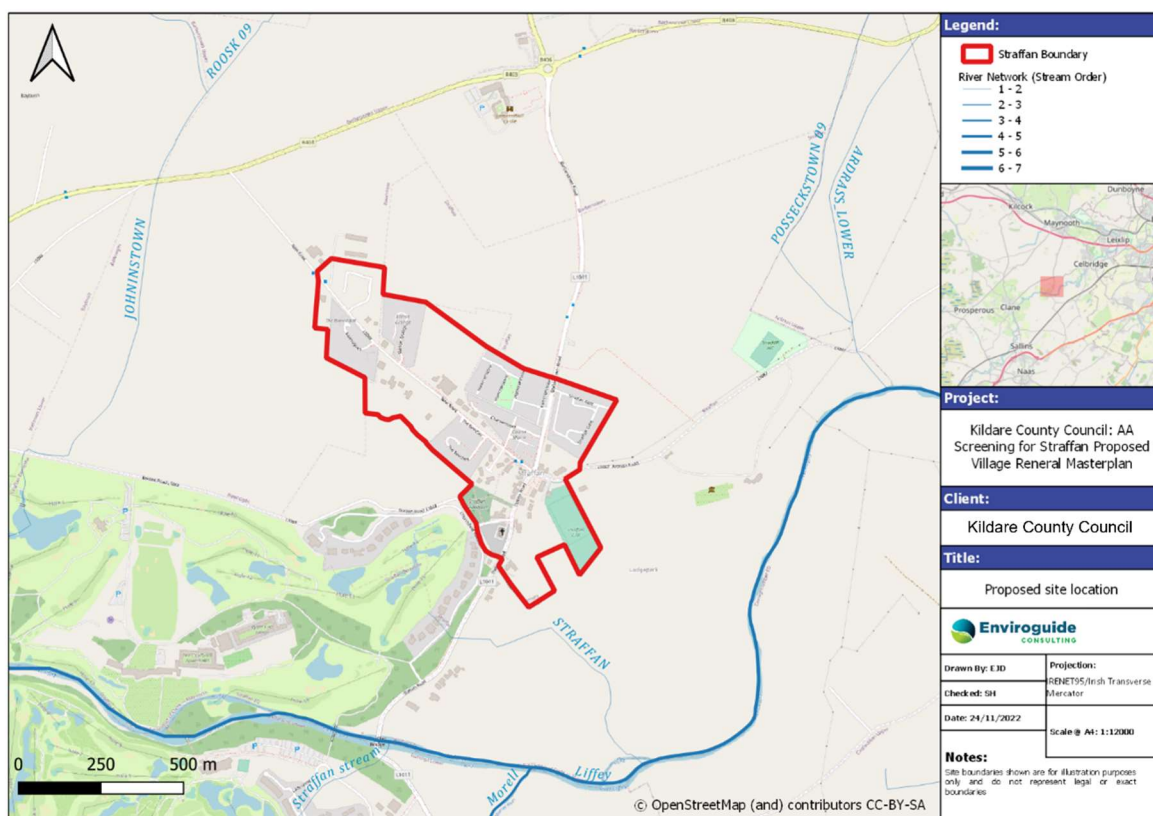


FIGURE 2. SITE LOCATION

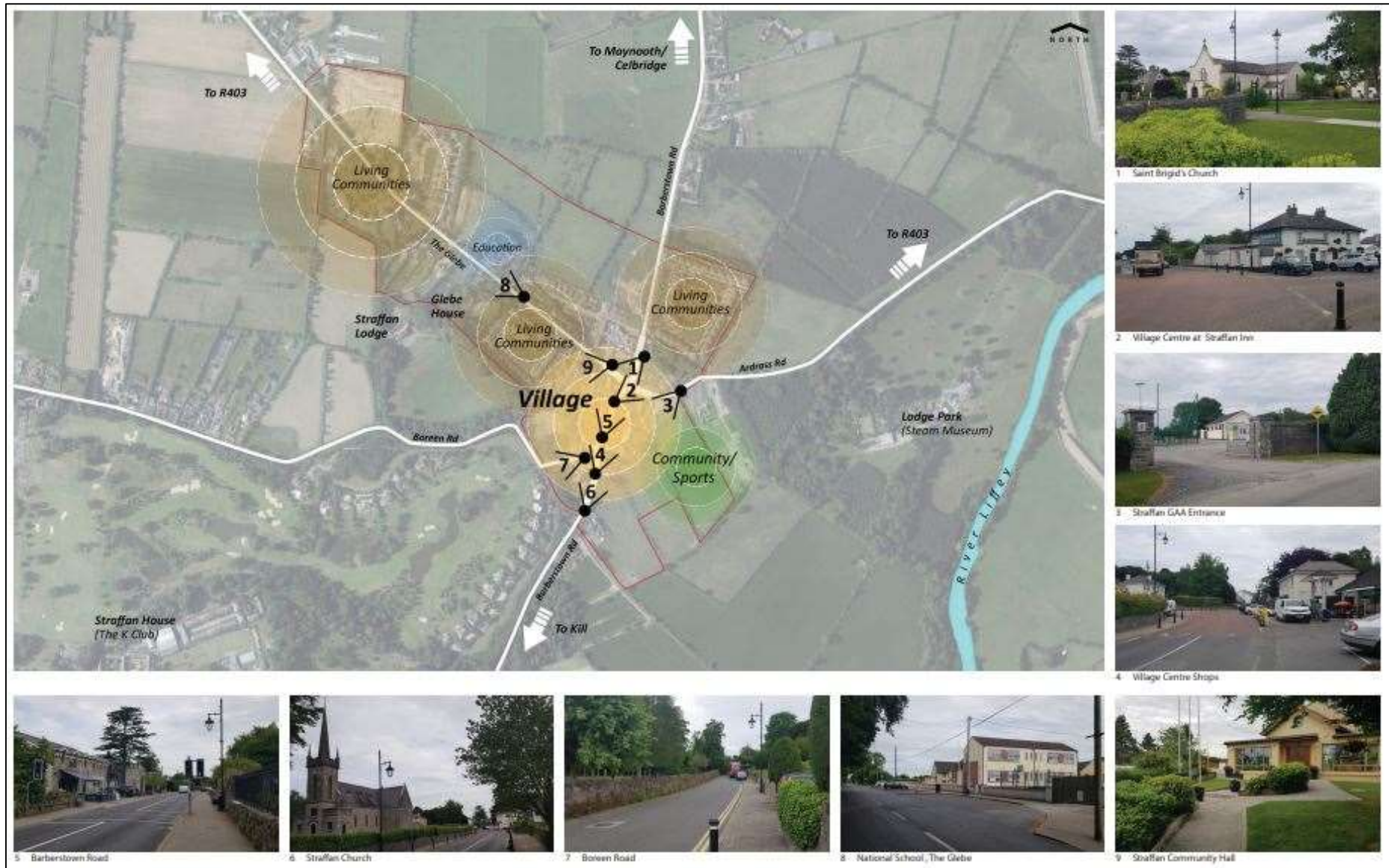


FIGURE 3. STRAFFAN VILLAGE EXISTING LAYOUT (SOURCE: STRAFFAN VRMP (KCC 2022)). NOTABLE LOCATIONS INCLUDED IN INSET [1 – 9]

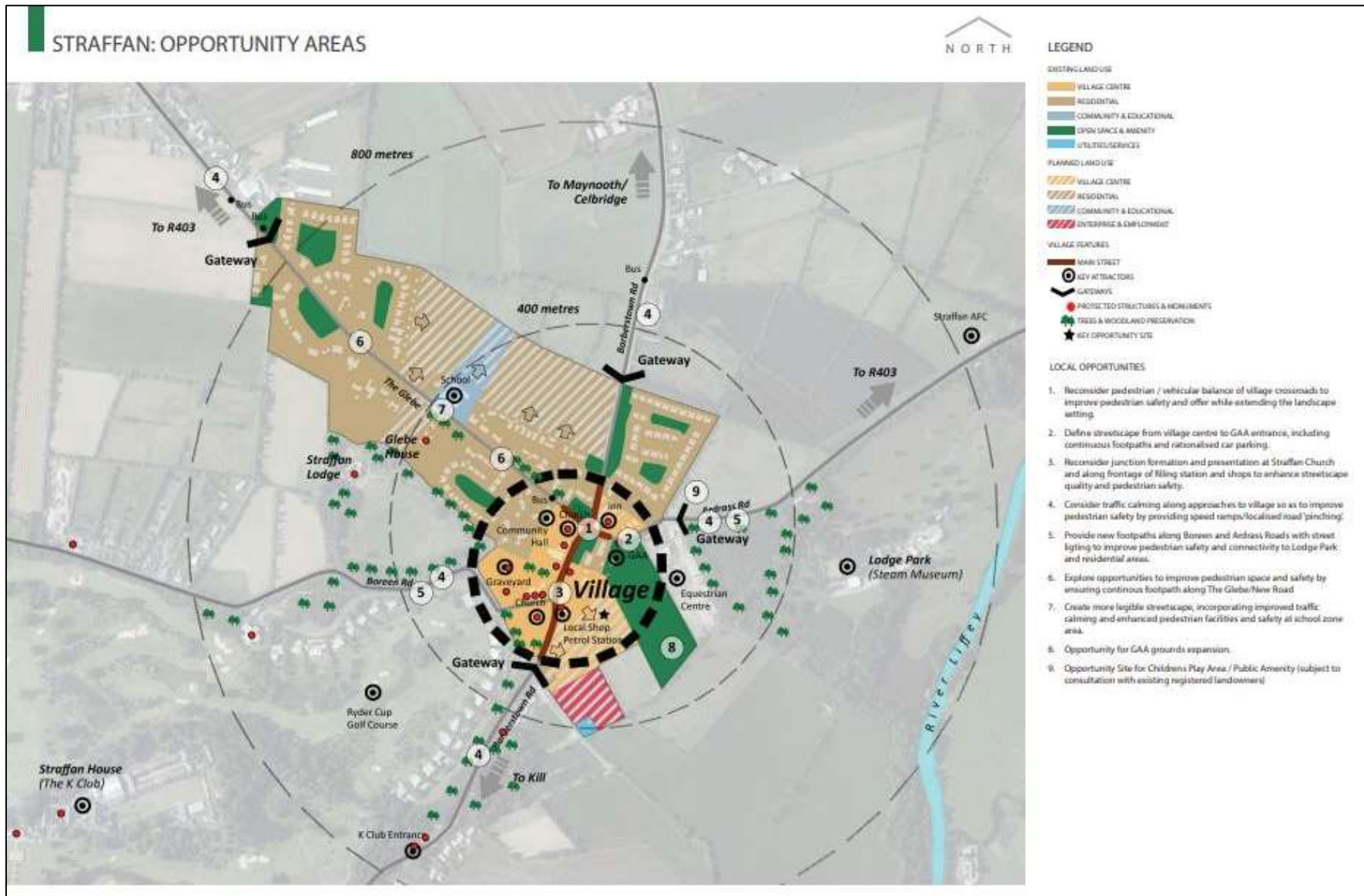


FIGURE 4. PROPOSED OPPORTUNITY AREAS (SOURCE: STRAFFAN VRMP (KCC, 2022))

### 3.3 Existing Environment

#### 3.3.1 Hydrology

The village has been mapped by the EPA (EPA, 2022) to be within the Liffey and Dublin Bay Water Framework Directive (WFD) Catchment (ID: 09), the Liffey\_SC\_050 Sub-Catchment, (Sub-catchment ID: 09\_7) and the LIFFEY\_140 WFD River Sub Basin (European Code: IE\_EA\_09L011700).

The closest surface water feature to the village is the first order stream 'Straffan' (European Code: IE\_EA\_09L011700), which is located to the southwest of the village, closest to the existing GAA pitches of the village. The L1011 road leads from the village toward the stream to the southwest. The first order stream 'Straffan' feeds into the River Liffey (which borders the village to the south and east) south of the village, close to the GAA pitches. No published data for the status of the 'Straffan' was available at the time of writing this report. The L1011 road crosses the River Liffey at Straffan Bridge close to the entrance of The K Club. The River Liffey has been assigned a *Good* ecological status based on monitoring, and it is *Not At Risk* of not achieving its WFD objectives (EPA, 2022)<sup>1</sup>.

#### 3.3.2 Geology and Hydrogeology

The village is situated on the Dublin (IE\_EA\_G\_008) groundwater body. The overall WFD status of the Dublin GWB is *Good* and its risk projection is currently under review (EPA, 2022)<sup>2</sup>. The bedrock aquifer in the area is a '*Locally Important Aquifer - Bedrock which is Moderately Productive only in Local Zones*'. The groundwater rock units underlying the aquifer across the village is classified as 'Dinantian Upper Impure Limestones' (GSI, 2022).

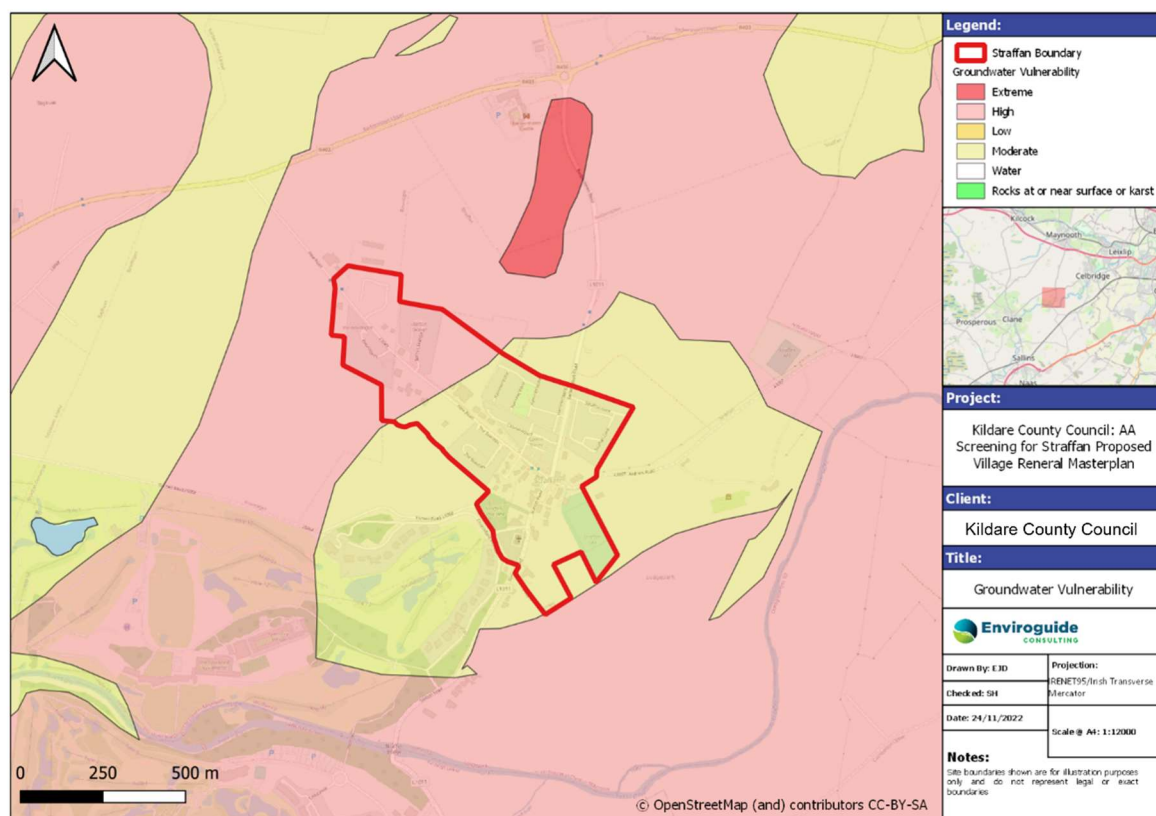
The majority of the village sits on ground with *High* vulnerability to groundwater contamination from human activities, however the north-western part of the existing settlement area (northwest along the L5049 continuing northwest from St Bridget's National School) lies on ground with *Moderate* vulnerability to groundwater contamination (GSI, 2022), (Figure 5).

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.catchments.ie/data/#/waterbody/IE\\_EA\\_09L011700?k=f134cz](https://www.catchments.ie/data/#/waterbody/IE_EA_09L011700?k=f134cz) [Accessed: November 2022]

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.catchments.ie/data/#/waterbody/IE\\_EA\\_G\\_008?k=k3z50m](https://www.catchments.ie/data/#/waterbody/IE_EA_G_008?k=k3z50m) [Accessed: November 2022]





**FIGURE 5 GROUNDWATER VULNERABILITY**

### 3.4 Potential Pathways to European Sites

For the above listed potential sources of effects to have the potential to cause likely significant effects on any European site, a pathway between the source of potential effects (i.e., the Site of the Proposed Masterplan) and the receptor is required. The potential for pathways between European sites and the Proposed Masterplan Site was assessed on a case-by-case basis using the S-P-R framework as per the OPR Practice Note PN01 (OPR, 2021). Pathways considered included:

- a. Direct pathways e.g., proximity/location within a European site, water bodies, air (for both air emissions and noise impacts).
- b. Indirect pathways e.g., disruption to migratory paths, 'Sightlines' where noisy or intrusive activities may result in disturbance to shy species.

Potential impact pathways are discussed in the following sections in the context of the potential impact sources as identified in section 2.4.1.

#### 3.4.1 Direct Pathways

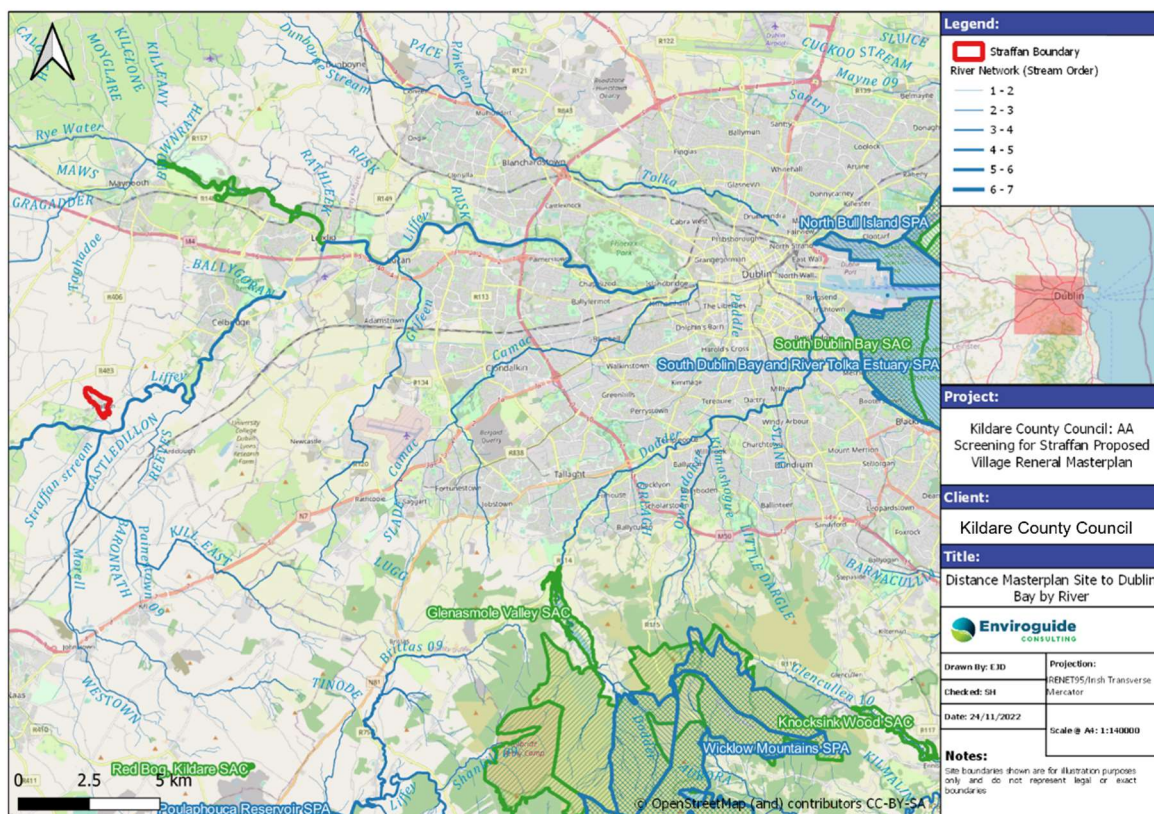
##### Hydrological pathways

The Site is located adjacent to the River Liffey, within the catchment of the River Liffey which is an important salmonid system. The River Liffey rises between the mountains of Kippure and Tonduff in County Wicklow, and flows for a distance of roughly 120km before entering the sea at Dublin Bay, where four European sites are located:

- South Dublin Bay SAC (000210)
- North Dublin Bay SAC (000206)

- South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (004024)
- North Bull Island SPA (004006)

The hydrological pathway to the downstream European sites within Dublin Bay is more than 36 river km, over which any potential pollutants that may enter the River Liffey via the Straffan stream at the Proposed Masterplan Site would become diluted to indiscernible levels. Thus, the hydrological pathway via the River Liffey is deemed to be insignificant (Figure 6).



**FIGURE 6 DISTANCE FROM STRAFFAN TO DUBLIN BAY AS MEASURED ALONG THE RIVER ROUTE**

The River Liffey at Straffan is linked to the *Rye Water Valley/Carton* SAC via a potential hydrological pathway. However, as the River Rye flows *into* the Liffey at Leixlip, and the distance along the river route between the Proposed Masterplan site and this European site is over 13km, this hydrological pathway via the River Liffey is deemed to be insignificant.

### Hydrogeological pathways

During groundworks and other construction activities that may result from developments made under the Proposed Masterplan, the ground will be exposed and any potential accidental discharges to ground could potentially migrate vertically downward to the underlying bedrock aquifer and laterally within the aquifer to downgradient receiving surface waterbodies, i.e., the Straffan stream and/or the River Liffey. The River Liffey eventually flows into Dublin Bay after more than 30 river km. Considering the distance from the Site, via groundwater and the riverine system, that any potential pollutants would have to travel prior to reaching the European sites within Dublin Bay, it is considered the dilution and dispersion potential of the receiving ground and freshwater environments deems the hydrogeological pathway insignificant.

#### Air and land pathways

No air and land pathways from the Proposed Masterplan to any European sites were identified, as the distance between the Site and the nearest designated site (*Rye Water Valley/Cartron SAC 001398*, approx. 8 km northeast of the Site) is deemed sufficient to exclude any potential for impacts from increases in noise, lighting and/or dust or other airborne pollutants.

#### **3.4.2 Indirect Pathways**

No indirect pathways (e.g., disruptions to migratory paths) were identified.

#### **3.4.3 Relevant European Sites**

A European site will only be at risk from likely significant effects where a S-P-R link exists between the Proposed Masterplan Site and the European site. The preceding steps did not identify any S-P-R links of note, and therefore no further assessment is required. European sites within a 10 km radius of the Proposed Masterplan are shown in Figure 7 for information purposes.

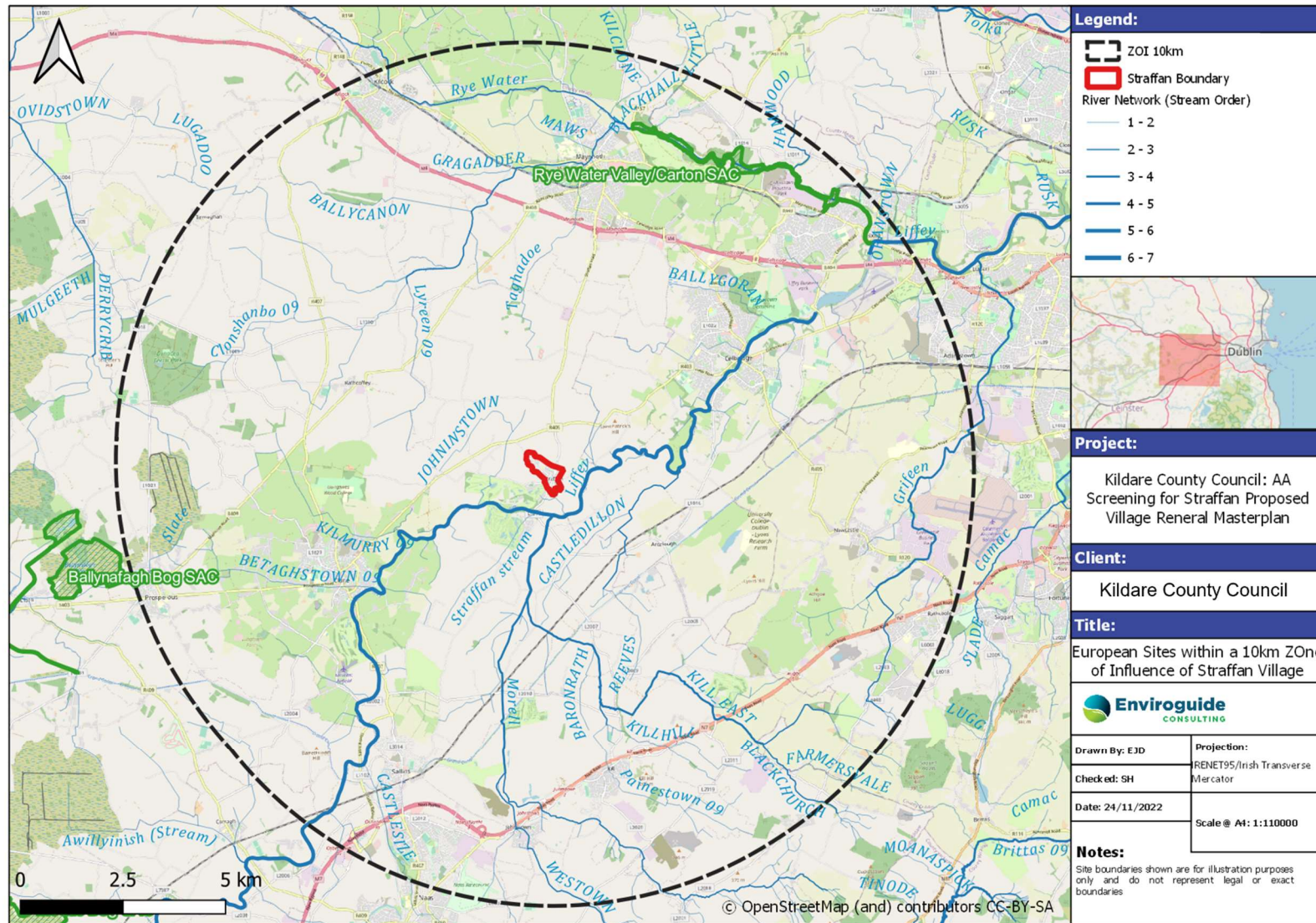


FIGURE 7. EUROPEAN SITES WITHIN A 10KM RADIUS OF PROPOSED MASTERPLAN

### 3.5 Potential for In-combination Effects

Although the Proposed Masterplan is not considered to have the capacity to cause significant effects on any European sites alone, it is important to consider the potential for cumulative effects with other plans and/or projects. The following sections outline existing granted or pending planning permissions in the vicinity of the Proposed Masterplan and assess the potential for adverse in-combination effects on any European sites.

#### 3.5.1 Existing Granted or Pending Planning Permissions

A search of planning applications located within the Proposed Masterplan area and within a 1 km radius of the Site was undertaken using online planning resources such as the National Planning Application Database (NPAD) (MyPlan.ie) and Kildare County Council's Planning Applications Map Viewer (<http://webgeo.kildarecoco.ie/planningenquiry>). Any planning applications listed as granted or decision pending from within the last five years were assessed for their potential to act in-combination with the Proposed Masterplan and cause likely significant effects on the relevant European sites. Long-term developments granted outside of this time period were also considered where applicable.

It is noted that the majority of developments within the Site of the Proposed Masterplan are applications granted for new build dwellings, renovations or extensions to existing dwellings, and/or changes to designs of dwellings that were permitted as part of larger planning applications. With due consideration of the distance to the nearest European sites, it is considered that no potential exists for significant in-combination effects on any European sites.

The larger existing projects within the Proposed Masterplan area and within a 1 km radius are detailed below.

**Reg. Ref. 20151, *Within Proposed Masterplan Site area, Granted as of 29/7/2020:***

The construction of a two storey crèche facility (337.5 sqm Gross Floor Area) and 69 No. residential dwellings comprising of 4 No. two storey, 1 bed maisonette units (Type J and K); 17 No. two storey, 2 bed mid-terrace units (Type E1); 12 No. two storey, 3 bed, end-terrace units (Type F); 25 No. two storey, 3 bed, semi-detached units (Type G); 5 No. two storey, 4 bed, semi-detached units (Type H); 4 No. two and a half storey, 5 bed, semi-detached units (Type H1) and 2 No. two storey, 3 bed, detached units (Type M and N). The proposed development also includes the provision of a vehicular and pedestrian access onto New Road; a vehicular and pedestrian connection to the "Hammerstone" residential development to the east (permitted under KCC Reg. Ref. 10/673 and amended under KCC Reg. Refs. 17/565, 19/139 and 19/376, together with ABP Reg. Ref. 304777-19 (KCC Reg. Ref. 19/376); and potential pedestrian connections to adjoining lands in the ownership of the applicant, which are to be transferred to Scoil Bhríde, Straffan National School. The proposed development incorporates all ancillary internal access roads, parking, infrastructure, drainage, landscaping, boundary treatments and all associated site and development works

**Reg. Ref. 191308, *Within Proposed Masterplan Site area, Granted as of 02/06/2020:***

4 No. two storey detached houses on site Nos. 16-19 inclusive Barton Grange, including completion of associated site development works. The houses are similar to that granted by Planning Permission 13/1001 (expired) and will be similar to the two storey houses already constructed in the Barton Grange development.

**Reg. Ref. 14661, *Within Proposed Masterplan Site area, Granted as of 05/01/2015:***

Permission for the construction of a new 70 bedroom four storeys over lower ground floor extension (c.4,072 sq.m total floor area) to the west side of the existing hotel, provide 70 no. car parking spaces on existing hard-standing area, ESB sub-station and plant room (22 sq.m.). Demolition of bin store (26 sq.m.), Landscaping, Woodland management plan, new foul pumping station and all associated works on a c. 1.56 ha. site. The proposed extension is linked to the existing hotel at lower ground and ground floor levels and is of a similar neoclassical style to match the elevation treatment of the existing hotel façade. Straffan House and entrance gates are Protected Structures. The proposed development does not involve any works to the Protected Structures.

### 3.6 Relevant Policies and Plans

The following policies and plans were reviewed and considered for possible in-combination effects with the Proposed Masterplan.

- Kildare County Development Plan (CDP) 2017-2023
- Kildare County Development Plan (CDP) 2023-2029

Both County Development Plans have directly addressed the protection of European sites through specific policies and objectives. Additionally, the Natura Impact Report for the Kildare CDP Draft 2023-2029 concludes that *“the Plan itself, subject to it securing the mitigation detailed in this report, will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.”* Therefore, **no in-combination effects are expected** with the relevant policies and plans.

## 4 APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING CONCLUSION

The Proposed Village Renewal Masterplan for Straffan, Co. Kildare, has been assessed taking into account:

- The nature, size and location of the proposed works and possible impacts arising from the construction works.
- The qualifying interests and conservation objectives of the European sites.
- The potential for in-combination effects arising from other plans and projects.

In conclusion, upon the examination, analysis and evaluation of the relevant information and applying the precautionary principle, it is concluded by the authors of this report that, on the basis of objective information; the possibility **may be excluded** that the Proposed Masterplan will have a significant effect on any European sites.

As such, no further assessment is required. In carrying out this AA screening, mitigation measures have not been taken into account. Standard best practice construction measures which could have the effect of mitigating any effects on any European sites have similarly not been taken into account.

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