FLYNN FURNEY
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS

Invasive Alien Species Survey

Proposed Accelerated Social Housing Scheme
Ravel Dunleer

Document Details

Client:	**Louth County Council**
Project Title:	**Invasive Alien Species Survey**
Document Title:	**Proposed Accelerated Social Housing Scheme Ravel Dunleer**
Prepared by:	**Flynn Furney Environmental Consultants**

Rev	Status	Date	Author(s)	Approved by
01	Final	19/01/2024	ID	ID
02	Final	29/03/24	LW	ID

Contents

1 Introduction

The purpose of this Invasive Alien Species (IAS) Survey is to outline the results of a pre-construction invasive species survey conducted at Ravel Dunleer Co. Louth. These surveys aimed to identify invasive plant species which may impact the proposed works and local ecology.

1.1 Site & Project Overview

The Ravel Dunleer site is located on the northern edge of Dunleer village The developable site area is 2.7ha in total, broken into two blocks. The northern block is 2.1ha and the smaller southern block is 0.6ha. To the south of the site is the Scoil Bhride, and to the east is an existing housing estate, The Adree Road runs along the site's western boundary. Pasture-based farmland is found to the north.

The site is currently composed of **Grassy Verge (GS2)** habitat throughout. This was dominated by coarse grasses including Cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), Bents (*Agrostis spp*.), False Oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*) and Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*). The herb layer likely contains mainly tall growing or climbing herbs including common Hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*), Bush Vetch (*Vicia sepium*), Thistles (*Cirsium arvense, C. vulgare*) and an abundance of Docks (*Rumex spp*.). Areas of hedgerow around were found along the site's northern boundary and were composed of mostly Ash *(Fraxinus excelsior),* Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus agg*) and Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*).

There are no Natura 2000 designated sites within close proximity to the subject site. The closest is Dundalk Bay SAC and SPA is found 6.7km northwest.

Currently the development is proposed to include: The construction of 70no. houses including 9no. 2-bed bungalows, 24no. two storey 2-bed houses, 18no. two storey 3-bed houses, 5no. two storey 4-bed houses, and 2no. 3-bed bungalows, and 12no. sheltered accommodation 2-bed bungalows.

The development will also include the construction of new connections to the existing estate road; provision of new cycleway, footpath, and public lighting along the boundary with the R170; new estate roads and homezones within the site; 123no. car parking spaces including both on-street and in-curtilage

parking; cycle parking; hard and soft landscaping including public open spaces, playground, and private gardens; boundary treatments; ESB substation; lighting; laying of underground sewers, mains and pipes; underground pump station and attenuation tank; and all associated works.

The developable site area is 2.72 hectares. The proposed development will include 20% public open space.

General works associated with the proposed development include:

- The removal of soil and overburden material
- Connection to services including water, wastewater, stormwater, electricity and broadband, where applicable
- The construction of 74 social housing units
- The installation of SuDS infrastructure including attenuation tanks, oil/ petrol interceptors, bio-retention systems/ rain gardens and attenuation tanks
- Landscaping and;
- All associated site works.

Attenuation tanks will only be used as a last resort where other measures are not feasible. They will be provided on site and will have the capacity for site storage for 1/100 storm and 20% climate change with hydrobrake connection to mains. Petrol/ oil interceptors will be included in the overall drainage design. Bio-retention systems/ rain gardens and tree pits will be included in the landscape design but are not included in SuDS calculation due to impermeable ground conditions and poor infiltration however they will still contribute to overall SuDS.

2 Relevant Legislation

Natural Habitats Regulations SI 477 of 2011 contains a number of provisions relating to invasive non-native species (INNS), covering several sections and subsections of the Acts. It is prohibited, without license, to plant or otherwise cause to grow in a wild state, in any place in the State, any species of flora, or the flowers, roots, seeds or spores of invasive flora listed on the Third Schedule. Articles 49 and 50 of the aforementioned Acts set out the legal implications associated with INNS and Schedule 3 (the Third Schedule) of the regulations lists non-native species subject to the restrictions of Articles 49 and 50, which make it an offence to plant, disperse, allow dispersal or cause the spread of invasive species.

As regards to non-Third Schedule invasive species, including noxious weeds (native species that can act in an invasive manner), there are obligations under the EU Habitats Directive to address any threats to the conservation status of the various habitats and species listed for protection under the Directive.

Ireland has also ratified a number of international conventions that oblige the government to address issues pertaining to the spread of non-native invasive species, including the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Bern Convention and the International Plant Protection Convention.

Under the EU Plant Health Directive, emergency legislation was introduced in 2002 to prevent the introduction into and the spread of Phytophthora ramorum within the EU. P. ramorum is a fungal pathogen that causes blight in woody plant species, including many broadleaf species like oak, sycamore, chestnut and beech, and causes the disease known as “sudden oak death”. Since 2003, annual surveys have been carried out throughout the EU, and Phytophthora ramorum has been found in a number of EU member States including Ireland. *Rhododendron ponticum* is a known host of this pathogen and it has been found surviving on, but not killing, species of Rhododendron and Viburnum, meaning that they can act as vectors for its spread.

3 Invasive Species Survey

3.1 Desk Survey

A search of records for invasive non-native species on the National Biodiversity Data Centre[1] was carried out as part of this project. Several Third Schedule and Non-third Schedule Invasive species were recorded on the NBDC database within 2km of any of the works' areas. A summary of the results is found in Table 1.

Table 1: Invasive species recorded on the NBDC within 2km of the works area

Species Name	Record count	Date of record	Data source	Third-schedule invasive species	Found during field surveys	Management required
Brown Rat (Rattus norvegicus)	1	23/12/1968	Northern Ireland Mammal Database	No	No	None
Common Garden Snail (Cornu aspersum)	1	31/12/1909	All Ireland Non-Marine Molluscan Database	No	No	None
Keeled Slug (Tandonia sowerbyi)	1	31/12/1905	All Ireland Non-Marine Molluscan Database	No	No	None
Wrinkled Snail (Candidula	1	31/12/1905	All Ireland Non-Marine	No	No	None

[1] https://maps.biodiversityireland.ie/Map

intersecta)			Molluscan Database			
European Rabbit (Oryctolagus cuniculus)	1	23/12/1968	Northern Ireland Mammal Database	No	No	None

3.2 Field Survey

Field surveys were carried out on the site on the 21st of July 2023 and the 12th of January 2024 as part of a multidisciplinary site walkover survey of the Ravel site and surrounds. No Third Schedule invasive species were found during the survey site.

4 Results and Discussion

No third scheduled invasive species were found within or surrounding the survey site. Non-third schedule species were recorded within private gardens adjacent to the site. These included Snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*), Fuchsia (*Fuchsia magellanica*) and Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*). These species are not subject to any legislative restrictions and are not within the landholding for this development. If 12 months passes before construction commences, it is advised to carry out a pre-construction IAS survey prior to the commencement of works.

References

TII (2010) The Management of Noxious Weeds and Non-Native Invasive Plant Species on National Roads Revision 1, December 2010

Irish Water AMT-SOP-009 Japanese Knotweed published by Irish Water - Information and Guidance Document on Japanese knotweed

(Bat Conservation Trust, 2016)