

Mr. Ken Foxe
By Email Only:

Our Ref: FOI 175 24

25th October 2024

Dear Mr. Foxe

I refer to the request received from you under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 seeking access to:

- Item 1:** Business Case
- Item 2:** Cost Benefit Analysis
- Item 3:** Valuation Report

On today's date, I have made a final decision regarding your request, see my responses to explain this decision below.

Item 1 & 2: The requested records under these headings do not exist. In lieu of this, I have made the decision to grant the release of the **Acquisition Appraisal Report** under which the acquisition of Lucan House was assessed and evaluated by the Council.

Item 3: I have made a final decision to Part Grant your request under Section 37(1) of the Act. The purpose of this letter is to explain that decision.

This explanation has the following parts:

1. A schedule of records
2. An explanation of the relevant findings concerning the records to which access is partially granted
3. A statement of how you can appeal this decision should you wish to do so.

This letter addresses each of these parts in turn.

1. Schedule of records

A schedule is enclosed with this letter, it shows the documents that this body considers relevant to your request. It describes each document and refers to the sections of the FOI Act which apply to records which are partially granted. The schedule also refers you to sections of the detailed explanation given under heading 2 below, which are relevant to the document in question. It also gives you a summary and overview of the decision as a whole.

2. Findings, particulars and reasons for decisions to part grant access

Personal information

37. (1) Subject to this section, a head shall refuse to grant an FOI request if, in the opinion of the head, access to the record concerned would involve the disclosure of personal information (including personal information relating to a deceased individual).

As some of the information you have requested relates solely to third parties and is held by South Dublin County Council on a confidential basis, I am satisfied that Section 37(1) as indicated in the Schedule applies to the records at issue.

Further to the FOI Act, section 37 (2) sets out certain circumstances in which Section 37 (1) does not apply. I am satisfied that none of those circumstances arise here. In this regard, (a) the information contained in the records does not relate to the requester: (b) the third parties have not consented to the release of that information: (c) the information is not of a kind that is available to the general public: (d) the information at issue does not belong to a class of information which would, or might, having regard to all the circumstances, be made available to the general public: and, (e) the disclosure of the information is not necessary to avoid a serious and imminent danger to the life or health of an individual.

Public Interest Test

A public interest test is provided for in Section 37(5) that allows a request to be granted where, on balance, (a) the public interest in granting the request outweighs the public interest in upholding the right to privacy of the individuals concerned or (b) granting the request would benefit the individuals concerned.

I have considered the public interest issues which arise in this case and have taken account of the following factors in favour of release:

- Ensuring openness and transparency of organisational functions to the greatest possible extent.
- The public interest in members of the public exercising their rights under the FOI Act.
- That there is more than just a transitory interest by the public in this information being released.

In considering the public interest factors which favour withholding the records I have taken account of the following:

- Allowing a public body to hold personal information without undue access by members of the public.
- The best course of action which is in the public interest with regard to these records.
- The right to privacy is outweighed by the needs of the public regarding the discharging of functions of a public body.
- That there is no overriding public interest that outweighs the right to privacy by an individual

In considering the access to the records, I had particular regard to the constitutional right to privacy and that providing access to such records would be a breach of those rights.

Third Parties who consult with, interact with or are contacted by South Dublin County Council are entitled to a degree of privacy in relation to their communications with the Council and I am satisfied that this information is held by South Dublin County Council on the understanding that it would be treated as confidential.

The information at issue here is of a personal nature and if released, it effectively amounts to general disclosure as the FOI Act places no restrictions on how a record is subsequently treated. While there is a public interest in the independence and the transparency with which we perform our organisational functions, I must consider whether the public interest in granting access outweighs, on balance, the public interest in protecting the privacy rights of the individuals to whom the information relates.

In this instance I consider that the public interest in upholding the right to privacy of the individuals concerned outweighs the public interest in granting the request and accordingly, Section 37(5)(a) does not apply. I am also satisfied that the release of the records would not benefit the individuals to whom the information relates, so that Section 37(5)(b) does not apply. It is my belief that the provision of these partial records and other contract related documents satisfies the public interest in this matter.

You may appeal this decision.

In the event that you need to make such an appeal, you can do so by writing to the Council's Freedom of Information Unit, County Hall, Tallaght, Dublin 24. Appeals in relation for FOI request for non-personal information should include a fee of €30 (€10 for medical card holders and their dependents) for processing the appeal. Payment should be made by way of bank draft, money order, postal order or personal cheque made payable to South Dublin County Council. You can also make the payment by debit/credit card over the phone by ringing the Council's Cash Office at 01-4149000 Extensions 2211 or 3339.

You should make your appeal within 4 weeks from the date of this notification. However, the making of a late appeal may be permitted in appropriate circumstances. The appeal will involve a complete reconsideration of the matter by a more senior member of the staff of this Department/Body.

The Freedom of Information Act 2014 requires that public bodies routinely publish disclosure logs detailing non personal requests made to the under the Act. The log is available here [foi-disclosure-log.pdf \(sdcc.ie\)](#)

If you have any queries regarding this correspondence, you can contact The Freedom of Information officer by email at foi@sdblincoco.ie or phone 01 -4149000.

Yours sincerely,



David Reilly

A/Property Management Officer
Economic, Enterprise & Tourism Development
South Dublin County Council

Rec No	Brief Description	No. of Pages	Decision: Grant/Part Grant/Refuse	Basis of Refusal: Section of Act	Reason for Decision	Released/Released with Deletions
1	Acquisition Appraisal Report	42 (incl Cover)	Grant	-	-	-
2	Valuation Report	11	Part Grant	Section 37	Redact email address and mobile telephone number (P.2 of document)	Released with Redaction

Item 1 & 2
Acquisition Appraisal Report



Lucan House

Acquisition Appraisal Report

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	2
Introduction	5
Lucan Village Overview	5
Lucan House and Demesne Overview	6
Site Location and Description	6
Lucan House and Ancillary Structures	7
Valuation of Lucan House	10
Policy Context Review	10
Assessment of Planning and Environmental Considerations	15
Options Assessment and Evaluation	18
Evaluation of Options	18
Critical Success Factors & Evaluation	19
Risk Assessment	21
SWOT Analysis	22
Comparative Assessment	23
Public Amenity /Economic, Environmental Analysis	24
Economic Benefits	25
Environmental Benefits	27
Tourism Market	27
Funding /Financial Review	29
Lucan House and Demesne Vision and Goals	30
Strategic Goals	31
Conclusion & Recommendation	32
Appendix 1: Planning Context and Detailed Appraisal	34

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Lucan village is situated on the banks of the Griffeen and Liffey Rivers in a scenic part of the Liffey Valley adjoining the Liffey Valley Special Amenity Area. Lucan largely dates from the eighteenth century when the town became a fashionable resort, following the discovery of a sulphuric spa in 1758. The main street dates from 1800 to 1830 and Lucan House as it presently stands has been situated in the heart of the village since the 1790's albeit within a walled 30-acre Demesne. South Dublin County Council has had a long-held interest in the property given the strategic location and potential to the County offered through ownership of an historic property of this calibre. This report critically assesses what the acquisition of the property and grounds would mean for the Council from a social, cultural, economic and environmental perspective, providing the requisite background information and appraisal of potential future opportunities to inform a decision on whether to acquire this historic property.

Lucan House and Demesne are located in a strategic position bound by the River Liffey to the north and Lucan village to the east and south (Main Street and Lucan/ Leixlip Road respectively). Lucan House is set within mature demesne parkland with various outbuildings. Lucan House is an impressive, imposing and substantially intact country house and demesne, with a richly decorated interior. The house is an important late-Georgian mansion dating to c.1775 and comprises of approximately 1,425 sqm GIA (Gross Internal Area). The house is built in Palladian villas style. There are a number of other ancillary structures such as Gate Houses, Stable House, Boat House etc. within the landholding.

Given its central location and the extent of amenity space within the curtilage of Lucan House, the property represents a significant opportunity to acquire a distinctive property of rich heritage value, which could facilitate public access and create a public amenity for the local community of Lucan and the citizens of South Dublin. The property has historically been in private ownership and with the continued growth of South Dublin, the potential to acquire this property creates an opportunity to add to Lucan's distinctive village setting, enhancing the provision of public amenity space, biodiversity and access to the River Liffey, as well as securing public ownership of an important historic asset, thereby ensuring Lucan House and its attendant grounds can be enjoyed by the public for generations to come.

In line with South Dublin County Council's Tourism Strategy, which identifies the Liffey Valley as a tourism cluster, the potential acquisition of Lucan House and Demesne presents a significant opportunity to create a new visitor destination in the County as part of an overall tourism proposition for South Dublin. It presents an opportunity to transform Lucan House and Demesne into a best-in-class community and tourism model, connecting communities and playing an instrumental role in the development of the County's tourism proposition. It is envisaged that Lucan House could act as a destination public amenity and would both complement and be an asset for the immediate locality, the wider County and region.

With the extensive footprint of Lucan House and the associated buildings within the demesne, the exact nature and scale of future uses would have to be determined post any potential acquisition. As part of this, a master planning approach would have to be undertaken to ensure the most up to date and best practice approaches to concepts, urban design, architectural conservation and land use planning. The overall intention of any masterplan is to act as a design guide for any future development of lands and as always would be informed by background research and baseline analysis in respect of conservation, green infrastructure and ecological enhancement, surface water and drainage, building uses and possible phasing. Central to any such process would be public engagement with the local community.

A detailed analysis of local, regional and national policy was undertaken as part of this appraisal, with the acquisition of this property and its repurposing as a local amenity and tourism asset conforming with policy requirements. The opportunity for the reuse, repair, adaptation and upgrading of an older historic house and associated outbuildings is a key component of promoting sustainable development and also a catalyst for the revitalisation of town and village centres. The reuse and adaptation of Lucan House and Demesne also supports other objectives, including Ireland's move towards a low-carbon society, heritage-led regeneration and a circular economy supporting local craftspeople and trades.

In considering the possible acquisition of a property of this scale and scope and anticipating future use, three options were assessed, which included (1) leaving the property to be acquired by a private entity, secondly, seeking to work with a private entity by entering into a partnership agreement to open up Lucan House for public access and as a visitor destination or thirdly, the local authority acquiring the property independently. Following this analysis, the recommended approach was for the local authority to pursue the acquisition

of the property independently, which would secure long-term public access to the property and enable the public to play an integral role in shaping the future development of Lucan House and Demesne.

As well as an assessment of Planning and Environmental considerations being undertaken, a SWOT analysis was prepared to further interrogate the potential for acquisition and understand the opportunities along with threats that would present with local authority ownership. At this appraisal stage, whilst high-level risks are recognised, it is the case that Lucan House and Demesne is a well-regarded natural and cultural heritage asset located in Lucan Village. It has always been privately owned and therefore has been inaccessible to the general public. The opportunity in bringing this significant asset into public amenity use and to develop the potential offered by the house itself, the additional buildings and the demesne lands along the River Liffey is very significant and supports the acquisition of the property by South Dublin County Council.

Whilst acknowledging that a detailed business plan would need to be prepared upon acquiring this property, a preliminary assessment would suggest that up to 150,000 people could visit Lucan House and Demesne when fully activated on an annual basis, which could give rise to an estimated direct benefit of €1.5m per annum in visitor revenue, as well as indirect and induced benefits of visitor expenditure worth €2.25m annually to the South Dublin County economy. This would serve to support job creation, the local economy and the economic development of the County in line with national policy as part of a longer-term investment.

With a market value of €10.5m, South Dublin County Council has been presented with the opportunity to acquire Lucan House and Demesne, which will secure public ownership of a longstanding private property of historical significance. In recommending the acquisition of this property, South Dublin County Council will be acquiring a strategically important landholding, with rich architectural and historic value, complete with extensive public amenity space and biodiversity features, all within the historic village setting of Lucan. The acquisition of the property will secure public access to this unique amenity for generations to come, whilst it also affords a significant opportunity to create a distinctive visitor destination within the County, where the public can have an integral role in shaping its future development as part of the County's overall tourism proposition.

INTRODUCTION

This appraisal report critically assesses the principle of acquiring Lucan House and Demesne, having due regard to all salient requirements, including the relevant policy context, corporate objectives, environmental considerations, the level of financial investment and social dividend, as well as future development opportunities relating to the subject property.

Integral to the decision to potentially acquire Lucan House and its associated demesne relates to the development potential of the property as a cultural and public amenity for the citizens of South Dublin for generations to come, as well as being a distinctive tourism destination for the County. In this regard, this appraisal considers the property's acquisition in the context of taking a longer-term view on its potential to grow and develop into a strategically important public amenity for local communities and the residents of the County and wider region.

LUCAN VILLAGE OVERVIEW

Lucan is situated 14 kilometres to the west of Dublin City along the N4 economic corridor. It is characterised by an historic village core surrounded by generally low-density suburban neighbourhoods. The area is served by high frequency bus routes to Dublin City. The Dublin – Kildare rail line serves communities, including Adamstown, to the south of Lucan. Employment is provided for locally through mixed use retail and commercial areas adjacent to the village core. Grange Castle and other business parks provide employment to the south.

Lucan Village represents the long interaction between local communities and the river. This is demonstrated in the range of built heritage features throughout that gives Lucan unique identities recalling a history of habitation, industry, and architectural styles from vernacular to splendid estates and ecclesiastical structures. Lucan has a rich natural heritage, with its ecological corridors and abundance of biodiversity of plant, animals, birds, insects and their associated habitats. Lucan village offers high quality buildings along its linear main street and remaining examples of industrial buildings on the southern bank of the Liffey.

Tourism is recognised as a significant economic driver in South County Dublin, supporting job creation across a diverse range of sectors. Development of tourism in Lucan is centred on the significant built and natural heritage assets such as the River Liffey and associated Parks at Waterstown and Lucan Demesne, Lucan Weir, and the development of Lucan as a 'destination town.'

There is a significant level of planned investment in enhancement works, valued at €6.4m, in the Lucan Area which will aid the promotion of tourism in Lucan.

LUCAN HOUSE AND DEMESNE OVERVIEW

SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

Situated in the centre of Lucan village, approximately 16km west of Dublin City centre and approximately 6km west of the M50. Lucan House and Demesne are located in a strategic position bound by the River Liffey to the north and Lucan village to the east and south (Main Street and Lucan/ Leixlip Road respectively). The boundary to the village is by way of a coursed and uncoursed limestone rubble masonry wall. The River Griffeen runs through the demesne, naturally separating the grounds to the northeast from the rest of the site. Demesne access is either via the main gate from Main Street, or a separate service entrance, now closed but used periodically for heavy vehicles accessing the estate to avoid excessive loading on the historic stone bridge over the River Griffeen which is located just inside the main gate.

Lucan House is set within mature demesne parkland with various outbuildings. The demesne grounds are a mixture of manicured lawns in the vicinity of the house, and dense woodlands thereafter. There are several trails on the demesne both along the river and parallel to the estate wall along the Lucan/Leixlip Road. There are several structures on the demesne and the demesne also includes a small island within the River Liffey.

The site area is based on the folio map extends to a gross site area of 12.22 hectares/c.30 acres. It is noted that the lands within the folio map extend to the river and centre of the road. **Figure 1.1 refers.**



Figure 1.1: Lucan House and Demesne Lands

LUCAN HOUSE AND ANCILLARY STRUCTURES

Lucan House is an impressive, imposing and substantially intact country house set in a 30 acre demesne. It boasts a richly decorated interior partly designed by William Chambers, with interior plasterwork by Michael Stapleton. Historically and socially important as the principal land holding in Lucan village with which the demesne is intimately associated.

The House is an important late-Georgian mansion dating to c.1775 and comprises of approximately 1,425 sqm GIA (Gross Internal Area). The house is built in Palladian villas style. Lucan House is two storey with an attic and basement. The house comprises of a reception hall; reception rooms, dining room, drawing room at ground floor; bedrooms laid out as suites with adjoining bathrooms, small kitchen and living room at first floor; partial floor centrally located over rotunda and entrance hall. Staff quarters are at attic level; and the basement is a full floor accommodating kitchen and stores, safe and boiler house. There is direct access to the boat house from this level.

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) describes Lucan house as a '*detached seven-bay two-storey over basement Palladian country house,*

c.1775, with three-bay pedimented breakfront and three-bay rere bow, each having attic storey. Five bays to south side. Roughcast rendered walls with granite platband, string courses, sill course and quoins. Ashlar granite walls to breakfront, with rusticated ground floor and four half-engaged giant Ionic columns above. Small pane sash windows with stone sills throughout. A timber panelled door with elaborate fanlight. Hipped slate roof behind parapet with stone cornice and rendered chimney stacks. Retains many fine interior features, including late eighteenth-century plasterwork. Single-storey service building to north, with roughcast rendered walls, round-headed windows, segmental-headed archway and single-pitched roof. Set within mature demesne parkland with various outbuildings (separately recorded).'

In addition to the principal house, there are a number of structures within the demesne which include the following:

Structures	Description
Gate Lodge No.1	Gate Lodge No.1 is located to the left of the main entrance, currently vacant and in need of refurbishment. Detached three-bay single-storey former gate lodge, c.1790, partly forming boundary of demesne. Diagonally projecting entrance porch to northwest corner facing avenue. Single-storey lean-to projection to south. Roughcast rendered walls. Timber fixed and casement windows in pointed openings to main section. Diamond-paned timber casement window and timber panelled door to porch. Stone sills throughout. Hipped slate roof, curved to porch with wide timber bracketed eaves. Single rendered chimney stack.
Gate lodge No.2	Gate Lodge No.2 is located to the right of the main entrance, and currently occupied by the Ambassador's chaperone and driver. Detached single-storey house, c.1905, on an L-plan with a projecting bow-fronted porch. Roughcast rendered walls with smooth base. Timber casement windows. Hipped slate roof with timber bracketed, sprocketed eaves and rendered chimney stack.
Stable building	Stable Building is located inside the service entrance gate. Detached multiple-bay single-storey with attic former stable building, c.1790, now in use as house and storage building, and partly unoccupied. Built on a C-shaped half-octagonal plan. Roughcast rendered walls to convex side. Rendered, ruled and lined walls to concave side, with five three-bay sections alternately having superimposed arcade or ashlar pedimented breakfront. Pedimented breakfront to single-bay end bays. Granite platband at arch springing level. Timber sash windows with stone sills. uPVC casement windows to southern domestic section. Timber tongue and groove doors with overlights. Hipped slate roof with red brick dentil eaves course. Single-storey red brick lean-to shed to the north.
Boat House	Boat House comprises of c167sqm, lying to the north of the main house and connected to it at basement level.
Workers House	Workers House is adjacent to the service entrance gates. The modest, charming house retains its original form and many materials. Still inhabited, it is a good example of a functional vernacular estate building, unobtrusively sited in a corner of the demesne. Semi-detached seven-bay single-storey cottage, c.1790. Random limestone rubble walls. Pointed and segmental-headed window openings with timber casement windows. Glazed timber door. Pitched and hipped slate roof. Building slopes down from west to east, following the fall of the road.

Bath House	Bath House is located in the southwest corner of the demesne. The Bath House is an estate building in the style of a grotto combined with the refinement of a classical building. The materials used and the location of the building create an atmosphere of rugged picturesque primitivism. The detached three-bay single-storey gable-fronted former Bath House, c.1785, is now disused. Round-headed openings set in coursed limestone rubble walls. Gable front decorated with river-weathered limestone, with buttresses and emphasised dressing to door opening and pediment surround. Limestone coping to north wall. Brick dressing and stone finial above doorway in north wall. Pitched, ivy-covered roof with stone bellcote. Central fireplace with pointed arch stone surround and flanking niches to south interior wall. Pointed arch with flanking oval niches to east bay interior wall. Segmental-arched opening to west section with ornamental bath and shallow steps. Plastered barrel-vaulted ceiling. A small stream flows from an arched culvert over an ornamental waterfall cascade and beneath a simple stone footbridge to the east of the Bath House.
Steelwork Bridge	Steelwork Bridge is a simple iron footbridge c.1930, connecting the demesne to an island site in the River Liffey. Sits well in wooded surroundings at the perimeter of Lucan House demesne. Limestone coursed rubble piers to either end.
Sarsfield Monument	Sarsfield Monument is a triangular plan limestone monument, c.1790, set on an elevated earthen mound with narrow steps, c.1985. Stepped base, three carved tortoises to corners, Portland stone main section with carved relief roundel to two sides, surmounted by a limestone urn, all executed in a Greek classical idiom. Formerly located to the west within the demesne.
Main Entrance Gates	Main Entrance Gate as the principal entrance to demesne, c.1775, with a pair of channelled granite ashlar gate piers having Coade stone roundels to cap stones. Replacement sliding gate. Set in random rubble boundary wall, stretching from Vesey Bridge to former Lucan Parish School, of three to six metres in height, with 'Famine hole' to southern extreme. Pedestrian cast-iron gate with granite lintel set in wall at eastern extreme. An elegant, well-designed entrance gateway which complements the architectural style of the main house beyond. The flanking sections of boundary wall are appropriately forbidding for a demesne of this importance, and remain an integral part of the estate, as well as adding character and interest to this approach to the village centre.
Service Entrance Gates	Service Entrance Gates are the principal service entrance to demesne, c.1790. Pair of coursed and quarry-faced limestone gate piers with niches to rear, capstones and urns. Sheet metal gates. Pedestrian gateway to either side with ashlar and quarry-faced block and start pointed surrounds. Timber tongue and groove doors. Flanking rubble stone quadrant screen walls, each with a three-bay single-storey gate house to convex side having brick and rubble walls, pointed timber casement windows or blind openings, quarry-faced block and start surround to door, and curved pitched slate roof with single chimney stack. A vigorously treated and imposing entrance ensemble, with a loosely picturesque articulation. A key element of both Lucan Demesne and the streetscape, its materials echoing those used elsewhere in the vicinity. Easternmost gate house formerly used as a dairy from which dairy products could be distributed to the town.
Stone Bridge	Stone Bridge located inside the Main Gate crosses the River Griffeen. A rustic bridge, the primitive articulation of which is at odds with its graceful segmental arch, lending it a picturesque quality. An integral and vital functional element of the demesne. Single-arch road bridge over river, c.1790. Shallow segmental arch with limestone rubble voussoirs. Abutments and low parapet wall of uncoursed limestone rubble with some dressed stone elements. Bridge carries main avenue to house.
Demesne Walls	Demesne Walls are imposing boundary walls, the blocked openings showing gradual changes of use since construction. Adds character to this approach to Lucan village as well as being an important constituent of the demesne. Coursed and uncoursed limestone rubble boundary wall, c.1785. Wall

	contains many blocked former openings, including a low level segmental arch with quarry-faced keystone marking site of a tunnel to the former orchard on the south side of Leixlip Road.
Cemetery	Cemetery is a significant group of structures, including the original Lucan Estate tower house and a collection of fine headstones related to the Vesey and Sarsfield families. A valuable constituent of the Lucan House demesne. Enclosed cemetery containing unroofed remains of church, rebuilt c.1730, ruins of medieval tower house, and collection of carved headstones dating from the early eighteenth century. Random limestone rubble boundary wall to south and east with pedestrian gateway.

Table 1.1: Structure Description¹

VALUATION OF LUCAN HOUSE

Dublin City Council Valuation Office has provided South Dublin County Council with an independent market value for the proposed acquisition of Lucan House. The market value of the subject property is in the region of €10,500,000.

It should be noted that on behalf of the vendor, a private real estate company recommended an asking price ranging from €12.5m to €15m for the property.

The acquisition of the property would be funded from the Council's Capital Reserves.

POLICY CONTEXT OVERVIEW – NATIONAL REGIONAL AND COUNTY

This Section sets out the relevant planning policy context and provides a brief overview of the national and regional legislation and relevant policies. A detailed review of the planning policy framework within which the Business Case is elaborated is set out in Appendix 1 of this report.

¹ Source: National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

The National Planning Framework (NPF) recognises 'Enhanced Amenities and Heritage' as a National Strategic Outcome (NSO) and sees our natural, cultural and built heritage as having a fundamental value that adds to the identity and sense of place of urban and rural areas.

NSO 7 specifically aims to conserve, manage and present our heritage for its intrinsic value and as a support to economic renewal and sustainable employment and aims to open up our heritage estates to public access, where possible.

It states to 'ensure that our cities, towns and villages are attractive and can offer a good quality of life. It will require investment in well-designed public realm, which includes public spaces, parks and streets, as well as recreational infrastructure. It also includes amenities in rural areas, such as national and forest parks, activity-based tourism and trails such as greenways, blueways and peatways. This is linked to and must integrate with our built, cultural and natural heritage, which has intrinsic value in defining the character of urban and rural areas and adding to their attractiveness and sense of place.'

The NPF states that *'Investment in our towns and villages through regeneration, public realm improvements and the appropriate adaptation and re-use of our built heritage are key factors in developing, promoting and investing in a sense of place and aligning the objectives of creating high quality with that of spatial planning'*.

National Policy Objectives (NPO) underpin the NPF and set a new way forward for regional and local planning and sustainable development policy in Ireland. The following are of particular relevance to the Project:

NPO 17: Enhance, integrate and protect the special physical, social, economic and cultural value of built heritage assets through appropriate and sensitive use now and for future generations.

NPO 60: Conserve and enhance the rich qualities of natural and cultural heritage of Ireland in a manner appropriate to their significance.

Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES)

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) views cultural heritage as the fabric of our lives and societies, surrounding us in the buildings of our towns and cities, our landscapes, natural sites, monuments and archaeological sites, as something that brings communities together and builds shared understandings of the places in which we live.

The RSES sets out Regional Strategic Outcomes which are aligned with international, EU and national policy and specifically identifies, under Regional Strategic Outcome 5, 'Creative Places' as one of these outcomes. It recognises the need to enhance, integrate and protect our arts, culture and heritage assets to promote creative places and heritage led regeneration. A number of objectives are particularly relevant to the area of cultural heritage:

Regional Policy Objective 9.25 of the RSES seeks 'to work with all relevant stakeholders to promote equality of access to and engagement with arts and cultural services and in the promotion of culture and heritage led urban and rural regeneration' while RPO 9.30 of the RSES seeks to 'Support the sensitive reuse of protected structures. The reuse, repair, adaptation and upgrading of old buildings is a key component of promoting sustainable development and can also be a catalyst for the revitalisation of town and village centres. Reuse and adaptation will also support other objectives including Ireland's move towards a low-carbon society, heritage-led regeneration and a circular economy supporting local craftspeople and trades.

SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022 – 2022

The South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028 (the Development Plan) takes account of National and Regional Plans, Strategies and Policy Documents. Lucan House and Demesne is addressed indirectly throughout the plan in statements of the plan policy and specific objective of relevance are outlined in the text below:

Chapter 3: Natural, Cultural and Built Heritage

South Dublin County Council recognises the value of the County's natural, built and cultural heritage, and is committed to ensuring that these assets continue to contribute to the future sustainable cultural and economic development of the County.

In South Dublin County there are seven proposed NHAs (pNHAs), of which, the Liffey Valley is one, which were originally identified on a non-statutory basis but have not been formally designated. This pNHA falls within part of the lands running along the River Liffey at the northern boundary. The pNHA process is underway by the National Parks and Wildlife Service to resurvey and formally designate some pNHA sites as NHAs on a country-wide basis. In the meantime, a degree of protection is afforded

to pNHAs under County Development Plans and other environmental protection schemes.

The Development Plan recognises that while Council parks that facilitate access to the river are located at Lucan in the West (Lucan Demesne), public access to the remaining river valley is limited. Opportunities to strengthen this public amenity by creating additional appropriate access to the river and improving permeability to adjacent counties is an objective of the Development Plan. The protection and enhancement of the sensitive river valley landscape and its associated natural and built heritage features is also a Development Plan priority.

NCBH7 Objective 1: To restrict development within areas designated with Zoning Objective 'HA-LV' (To protect and enhance the outstanding character and amenity of the Liffey Valley) and to ensure that new development:

- does not significantly impact on built or cultural heritage assets, on sensitive habitats, species, or ecosystem services;
- is related to the area's amenity potential;
- is designed and sited to minimise environmental and visual impacts; and
- enhances the County's green infrastructure network.

NCBH7 Objective 5: To ensure that development proposals within the Liffey Valley, including local and regional networks of walking and cycling routes:

- avoid impacts on the Valley's sensitive landscape character and ecological network;
- maximise opportunities for enhancement of existing features;
- protect and incorporate natural and built heritage features as part of the County's Green Infrastructure network; and
- do not prejudice the future creation and development of interconnected public parklands.

NCBH23 Objective 1: To ensure that designs to reimagine historic buildings are based on conservation principles such as minimal intervention, reversibility, and respectful alteration and repair, in order to conserve the historic fabric.

NCBH24 Objective 1: To encourage the re-purposing and reuse of older vacant and derelict structures, particularly within towns, villages and Architectural Conservation Areas.

NCBH24 Objective 4: To ensure the reuse, adaption and upgrade of historic buildings is in accordance with conservation principles including minimal intervention, reversibility, respectful alteration and repair.

NCB25 Objective 4: To support placemaking initiatives and projects as part of Architectural Conservation Area and village enhancements, making the areas more

attractive to residents, businesses and visitors and improving environment and community wellbeing.

Chapter 4: Green Infrastructure

Green Infrastructure (GI) networks have been defined in the Development Plan. GI networks are spatially defined in terms of several common components. Core Areas serve as anchors within a GI network. They are the point of origin and destination for wildlife and are sites at which essential ecological processes occur. Corridors represent the physical links that tie the network of Core Areas together. They typically align with water courses or linear open spaces and allow for the migration of species between Core habitats. Stepping Stones are smaller areas of green space. They provide alternative routes for the movement of species within the overall network and contribute to local biodiversity. The spatial arrangement of these different components and their relationship to one another comprises a spatial GI network. In the context of South Dublin County these Core Areas and Corridors provide connections not just within the County itself but also to the adjoining Local Authorities.

Lucan House and Demesne lands are located within the Liffey Valley and is identified as a major Core Area within the County and provides strong GI links with adjoining counties. These core areas are important centres of biodiversity in their own right and also serve as important recreational assets for South Dublin residents and visitors. The objectives of particular note that relate to this core area and of relevance to include the following:

- To preserve the existing woodland, trees and hedgerows at Lucan Demesne.
- To investigate the potential for enhanced connectivity between Lucan Demesne and St. Edmundsbury lands.
- To maximise the recreational amenity supported by proximity to the river within Lucan Demesne.

Chapter 9 Economic Development and Employment

EDE19 Objective 1: To support the development of tourism infrastructure, attractions, activities, accommodation and facilities at appropriate locations subject to sensitive design and demonstrated environmental safeguards.

EDE19 Objective 2: To primarily direct tourist facilities into established centres, in particular town and village centres, where they can contribute to the wider economic vitality of urban centres.

EDE19 Objective 4: To support tourism-related enterprises at appropriate locations along existing and proposed Green Routes, including greenways, which do not impact on environmental sensitivities and subject to sensitive design and development safeguards.

EDE22 Objective 1: To support the sensitive restoration or conversion of heritage buildings and facilitate heritage tourism in appropriate locations.

ASSESSMENT OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Planning	Environmental
<p>Lucan House is currently owned by the Italian Republic and is residence of the Italian Ambassador to Ireland.</p> <p>Lucan House is situated in an area that is zoned objective High Amenity Liffey Valley, HA/LV which aims 'to protect and enhance the outstanding natural character and amenity of the Liffey Valley, Dodder Valley and Dublin Mountain areas' under the South Dublin County Development Plan 2022 - 2028.</p> <p>A portion of the site and properties therein is located in an "Architectural Conservation Area" mainly on the eastern side.</p> <p>Part of the property is located within a Sites and Monuments Record Zone of Notification whereby the western portion of the demesne contains zones of notifications around specific features with protected structures identified also.</p> <p>The Area was not identified as being a key area at risk of flooding.</p> <p>The Area falls within the Landscape Character Area of 'Liffey Valley' which identifies this area as having a Medium to High Landscape Value and Sensitivity.</p> <p>A section of the river valley is designated as a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) along the northern boundary falling into part of the demesne lands.</p>	<p>It is anticipated that the property and land could welcome up to 150,000 visitors per annum when fully established and activated.</p> <p>This has potential to be a stimulus for wider economic growth in Lucan and the wider South Dublin Area.</p> <p>It has the potential to offer people vibrant commercial, employment, as well community, cultural and leisure opportunities.</p> <p>At this preliminary stage, it is estimated that a figure of approximately €1.5m per annum could potentially be generated from visitor related uses within the property, subject to the preparation of a detailed business plan, while it is anticipated that the estimated indirect and induced benefits of visitor expenditure within Lucan is worth €2.25m to the South Dublin County economy.</p> <p>This acquisition would complement current investments in other infrastructure projects underway and add to the vibrancy and attraction of Lucan.</p> <p>There are a number of potential environmental benefits which are grounded in national, regional, and local policies.</p> <p>The facilities to be created at Lucan House will be critical in place-making and ensuring that everyone has optimal access to a range of local facilities and amenities.</p>

Table 1.2: Planning & Environmental Considerations.

This assessment informs the decision on the viability and desirability of acquisition from this perspective and no major risks have been identified.

This strategy identifies actionable recommendations to guide and stimulate tourism development and investment which can maximise national and international stays/visits to South Dublin County from market segments offering an economic return.

The Strategy notes that the creation of clusters and corridors/trails/routes represents a means whereby the socio-economic benefits of tourism can be shared across South Dublin County since each community can be part of a cluster or corridor. They can strengthen the interest and appeal of the different areas of South Dublin for visitors. Liffey Valley Cluster is identified in a series of six clusters and corridors/trails/routes proposed.

The principal components, of relevance to the Liffey Valley cluster are proposed as follows:

Liffey Villages – ‘featuring the villages along the River linking Palmerstown and Lucan with Leixlip and Celbridge in County Kildare, with Lucan serving as the “hub” for the entire cluster. The focus will be on quality food offering. Village heritage trails and the attractive amenity offering of the riverside parklands and demesnes, with potential spurs to the Royal and Grand Canals for longer linear cycling routes.’

Lucan Hub for Water-based Activities and Cycling – ‘canoeing and kayaking in the Liffey is already popular with Lucan as the central point. The opportunity exists to expand such activities through the provision of upgraded facilities (e.g. changing rooms at Lucan Demesne) and improved access.’

The strategy states that ‘Lucan would be at the centre of a potential series of cycling loops with access to the Grand Canal via Vesey Park and Griffen Park, linking to the Royal Canal via Lucan Demesne – St Catherine’s Park. Possible routes are:

- i. City>Grand Canal>Lucan>Liffey>City,
- ii. City>Royal Canal>Lucan>Liffey>City, and
- iii. City>Grand Canal>Lucan>Royal Canal>City.

The final, long loop could be proposed to Fáilte Ireland as the Dublin Canals Greenway with Clondalkin and Lucan as loops off bringing benefit to villages in South Dublin.’

Liffey Blueway – ‘In the medium term, consideration could be given to developing and promoting the concept of the Liffey Blueway. This concept would involve minimum intervention but would leverage existing usage on the river Liffey and high status events such as the Liffey Descent to develop market awareness.

Potential stages of the Liffey Blueway would connect villages and water courses from Lucan Demesne to Palmerstown/Farmleigh.

The Council secured funding from Fáilte Ireland under the Destination Towns initiative. A plan was developed in which the Council addressed a number of areas to strengthen Lucan's appeal, including public realm development and interpretation.

In summary, the areas relevant to the potential acquisition are as follows:

- An emphasis on the built heritage of the area as a foundation: there should be attention given to the revealing and interpreting of the many elements of heritage and history, large and small, that run through the area;
- The protection and integration of natural heritage;
- Further attention to presentation of the Village;
- Support for development of the evening economy;
- Integration of the Village with the riverside and parks through public realm and wayfinding;
- Creation of a more pedestrian/cyclist friendly environment, including addressing traffic issues and provision of adequate visitor parking; and
- Ensuring water quality is consistently suitable for watersports and, in the longer term, for bathing.

With reference to Lucan House, the following recommendations were made:

- Seek solutions to gain regular public access to Lucan House, possibly by guided tours at key times of the year that can be pre-booked.
- Re-instate an original view of Lucan House & Grounds, integrate heritage details in interpretation

OPTIONS ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

A number of options for the potential acquisition of Lucan House have been considered. These options extend to consideration of how the property might be acquired and brought into public use. This high-level evaluation seeks to establish the most appropriate or preferred option that should be progressed and to review that option under a set of critical success factors.

EVALUATION OF OPTIONS

01 Do Nothing

Assumes no sources of funding available to bring the property and grounds into meaningful, safe and sustainable public use. This option would most likely lead to the private acquisition of Lucan House with the potential for it to remain in private ownership and therefore no associated wider County and community benefits would be derived from the amenities.

02 South Dublin County Council and Private Entity Co-Lead and jointly own and manage the property.

Under this option, an assumption is made of part capital funding, part private funding for full acquisition and delivery of a Masterplan leading to the opening of the property and grounds. This option would reduce the cost to the Council but could result in significant time delays due to governance issues and differing vision, strategic goals and objectives. This option allows for significant financial, programme, development and operational risk. Involvement of a private entity may not fully support the need to collaborate with all stakeholders on the most suitable uses and may seek to over commercialise the use, restricting full public amenity value and open access. It is an objective for the Council that the local community have an integral role in shaping the future development of Lucan House and its attendant lands, which may not be guaranteed in pursuing this option. Allied to this, there is no guarantee that the Council could secure a third-party entity to work with in realising a partnership approach under this option.

03 South Dublin County Council fund acquisition and Masterplan

Under this option, full capital funding, and full acquisition and delivery by South Dublin County Council is assumed. This option allows the Council to lead, manage and coordinate from acquisition to optimising the potential for public amenity and community benefit.

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS & EVALUATION OF OPTIONS

A set of Critical Success Factors have been developed to analyse and compare the options being considered leading to a high-level evaluation of whether they contribute to achieving delivery of overarching corporate objectives of acquisition.

Critical Success Factors		
1.	Public Amenity, Social & Cultural value	1.1. Does this option support the local community through the creation of a public amenity, providing cultural facilities and adding to the vibrancy of the village while boosting the local economy in the longer term? 1.2. Does this option create strong sense of community in utilising the public amenities created and influencing the future development of Lucan House?
2.	Transport & Connectivity	2.1. Does this option create strong linkages from Lucan House and wider Lucan area via cycle lanes and walking lanes? 2.2. Does this option support Active Travel Routes to go ahead as planned? 2.3. Does this option optimise economic growth with connectivity to the wider South Dublin County, Fingal County and Kildare County?
3.	Economic Growth	3.1. Does this option fully support urban design, environmental and climate action? 3.2. Does this option support the economic growth of the South Dublin by maximising the opportunity for job creation? 3.3. Does this option support the economic growth of tourism in Lucan and the wider South Dublin Area?
4.	Environmental	4.1. Does this option fully support the NPF, NDP, RSES, Climate Action Plan and the SDCC County Development Plan required policy objectives set out in? 4.2. Does this option maximise the creation and enhancement of Green Infrastructure to support various ecosystems?
5.	Tourism Delivery	5.1. Does the option enable the delivery of a robust tourism offering within 3 years of acquisition? 5.2. Is the option financially viable? 5.3. Does this option align with the South Dublin County Council Tourism Strategy?

Table 1.3: Critical Success Factors

Critical Success Factor Evaluation			
Critical Success Factor	Option 01	Option 02	Option 03
<i>Public amenity, Social & Cultural Value</i>			
1.1	✗	✓	✓
1.2	✗	✗	✓
<i>Transport & Connectivity</i>			
2.1	✗	✓	✓
2.2	✗	✓	✓
2.3	✗	✓	✓
<i>Economic Growth</i>			
3.1	✗	✓	✓
3.2	✗	✓	✓
3.3	✗	✓	✓
<i>Environmental</i>			
4.1	✗	✓	✓
4.2	✗	✓	✓
<i>Tourism Delivery</i>			
1.1	✗	✗	✓
1.2	✗	✗	✓
1.3	✗	✗	✓
Total Qualitative Criteria	0/13	9/13	13/13
Percentage Criteria %	0%	69%	100%

Table 1.4: Critical Success Factor Evaluation

PREFERRED OPTION

The high-level evaluation set out in Table 1.4 demonstrates the qualitative aspects of the options to be considered. The evaluation concludes that Option 3 is the preferred option. This option delivers above the other options on the strategic criteria set out.

Based on this criteria, Option 3:

- Could create significant public amenity value, social cohesion and a strong sense of community.
- It has the potential to deliver a tourism project within 3 years in the Lucan House landholding subject to the preparation of masterplan, whilst also securing public involvement in this process.
- It can be financially viable through capital funding and other potential funding mechanisms, whilst not being dependent on private funding and the associated risks of same.
- Aligns with the vision and actions of the South Dublin County Council, Corporate, Planning and Tourism strategies.

In Option 3 South Dublin County Council acquire the property and engage in a process to bring the property into sustainable public use in keeping with the Council's corporate objectives. This achieves balancing the maximum public

amenity value with tourism delivery, which also aligns with the policies and objective at National, Regional and local level. Also from the wider corporate perspective, Option 3 provides sound planning, environmental, financial and economic sense, based on the analysis undertaken and represents a real opportunity to develop a vibrant new public amenity and tourism offering in Lucan, which will support proposed investment in the village and aligns with the objectives of the recent Lucan Tourism Product and Proposition Plan (2021).

RISK ASSESSMENT

At this stage of appraisal, risk has been assessed at a very high level with a recommendation for an ongoing exercise of risk identification and categorisation from an overall risk management approach in the event of the Council acquiring Lucan House and Demesne. In assessing risk, it is doing so on the basis of the local authority acquiring the property and developing it as a public amenity and visitor destination. It is recognised that risk management needs to be further developed for any specific development stages and an approach to management of risk at any potential future design, construction, operation and maintenance phases.

The high-level risks identified for the purposes of this assessment with mitigants that can help reduce such risks are as follows but not limited to:

Risk	Mitigation/Avoidance
Acquisition Cost: The Council need to secure the most economically advantageous price for the acquisition for the property to ensure the attainment of value for money.	Engage with Dublin City Council Valuers to provide an independent market valuation for the property, following which, the Council should engage in a robust negotiation process to secure the best possible acquisition price for the property.
Development & Land Use: Upon any successful acquisition of the property, there needs to be an appropriate level of certainty around the future use of the house, ancillary buildings and associated lands to support local authority investment.	The Council should develop a masterplan for the lands, which outlines future uses, development objectives and a roadmap for delivery based on best practice research, complete with a comprehensive public consultation process.
Capital Cost: In the event of the Council securing ownership of the property and seeks to develop an enhanced local amenity and visitor destination, there is a risk the complexity of the programme and the lack of certainty around designs and implementation can result in costs exceeding the initial estimates. The biggest cost risk at the time of writing pertains to the current rate of inflation in the cost of construction materials.	Cost projections based on the deliverables of a masterplan must be developed in conjunction with quantified risk analyses conducted to calculate contingency levels. Completion of thorough site, environmental, structural and services surveys; accurate design and specification are essential. Good project management, enabled by an experienced and expert project management team should also be applied to support the implementation of any future masterplan.
Stakeholder Impacts: The risk of delays, overruns or even failures can arise from the	Identify key stakeholders, understand their requirements and develop a Communication and

<p>actions or inactions of key stakeholders. Lack of communication with key stakeholders and the public can result in negative perception and impacts to reputation.</p> <p>Consultant/Contractor Delays: In some cases, project delays are unavoidable, for example where there are shortages in the supply of construction materials. However, in other cases, delays can be caused by inefficiencies on the part of consultants or contractors, and these are avoidable.</p>	<p>Consultation Strategy. Revisit the plan at regular intervals to check all stakeholders are being well-managed, consulted and updated.</p> <p>A robust Project Management and Project Controls functions to monitor programme of works shall be put in place with a strong Project Manager to execute same. The programme shall be communicated early with the inclusion of lead times to allow for unavoidable slippages and late penalties in contracts. A robust risk management processes shall be put in place.</p>
<p>Scope Changes: Changes to initial project scope may lead to extra cost.</p>	<p>Set clear objectives and targets. Ensure all workstreams are tracked and in line with the original brief.</p>
<p>Visitor Numbers: The need to understand visitor numbers to any new public amenity and visitor destination so as to ensure appropriate measures and facilities are in place to support demand levels.</p>	<p>Prepare a detailed business plan as part of the preparation of a masterplan to determine potential visitor numbers. Any such work should be based on an assessment of similar such facilities. The masterplan should provide all necessary facilities to support an appropriate level of visitor numbers.</p>

Table 1.5: High Level Risks and Mitigation.

SWOT ANALYSIS

In undertaking this appraisal, a high-level SWOT analysis has been completed to assess the potential acquisition of Lucan House and its potential future use as a public amenity and visitor destination. The SWOT analysis provides a useful framework to assess the potential acquisition from a strategic perspective.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic village centre location • Close proximity to Dublin city centre • Unique landscape and natural features • Rich in natural, cultural and built heritage • Historical features and cultural value • Significant public amenity value • Local population and socially cohesive community • Supported by planning economic and tourism policy • Firmly established asset • Potential connections with Fingal • Current tourism development of Lucan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Dublin's tourism offer is relatively unknown • Costs of renovation of protected structures • Operational costs • Health and safety – during construction and operation • Programme overruns • Staff/skills to maintain and operate • Cultural and environmental constraints
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquire strategic asset for public gain • Acquire land along Liffey Valley corridor • Maximise public amenity value • Improved biodiversity • End uses to complement Lucan village • Develop a cultural tourist attraction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental impact – grounds of the demesne • Impact of increased visitor numbers • Availability of specialised contractors if required • Capital funding availability • Protection of special character and setting

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance pedestrian connectivity to Lucan village and beyond • Masterplan to optimise use of the asset • Increase visitor expenditure on goods and services within the Lucan area • Educational resource and wider awareness • Enhance the profile of South Dublin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managed cost of implementation of any proposed masterplan
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Table 1.6: SWOT Analysis

COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT

For the purposes of this assessment, comparable evidence was used to represent and demonstrate where similar visions have been executed not just by local authorities. These are looked at as best practice models for informing a decision on whether to proceed with an acquisition of the property. The comparable properties below most closely align with Lucan House and Demesne. In the event of South Dublin County Council acquiring Lucan House, a detailed assessment of properties such as these should be undertaken as part of the preparation of a business model for the development of a public amenity and visitor destination at Lucan House and Demesne.

Venue	Use Description
Malahide Castle	Malahide Castle and Gardens offers 260 acres of parkland with a butterfly house and fairy trail, Newbridge House and farm, castle tours, the casino model railway museum and meeting rooms. It can cater for evening banquet, private parties and weddings in the Great Hall as well as corporate events.
Russborough House	Russborough House offers a 200 acre estate with trails and walks, walled garden, icehouse, hippodrome, house tours, café, 2km maze, a children's playground and outdoor adventure zone, the National Bird of Prey Centre, artisan craft courtyard and apartment rentals.
Killruddery House	Killruddery offers an 800 acre estate with flowering woodland, 17 th century gardens, high hedge sylvan theatre, long ponds and a walled garden. The heritage Killruddery yard offers retail and café.
Wells House & Gardens	Wells House and Gardens offers 450 acres of woodlands and gardens, including fairy and gruffalo walks, animal farm, playground, walks, house tours, formal gardens and arboretum, café, and onsite accommodation in the courtyard cottages.
Westport House	Westport House offers 400 acres estate with an adventure park, house tours, gaming zone, event catering, woodlands, walks, restaurants/cafes and caravan park/glamping/campsite.
Airfield Estate	Airfield Estate offers over 6 acres of Gardens ranging from an ornamental walled garden, shade gardens and glasshouse spaces, to an extensive organic certified fruit, vegetable and edible flower garden. In addition to 38 acre working farm, café, heritage tours, airfield house, farmers market and community hub.

Table 1.7: Comparable Uses.

PUBLIC AMENITY /SOCIAL AND CULTURAL BENEFITS

The acquisition of Lucan House and Demesne represents a significant opportunity to acquire a distinctive property of rich heritage value, which could facilitate public access and create a public amenity for the local community of Lucan and the citizens of South Dublin. The property has been in private ownership for some time and the potential to acquire this property creates an opportunity to add to Lucan's distinctive village setting, enhancing the provision of public amenity space, biodiversity and access to the River Liffey, as well as securing public ownership of an important historic asset, thereby ensuring Lucan House and its attendant grounds can be enjoyed by the public for generations to come.

The acquisition also presents an opportunity for use as a public resource, leading to a wider awareness of cultural and natural heritage, increased awareness and interest in conservation, heritage and environmental issues and an increased sense of cultural and environmental stewardship among the local population.

The acquisition has the potential to offer tangible and intangible societal benefits to include but not limited to:

- **Public health and Wellbeing:** Public access to the riverside setting and adjacent parks would make Lucan House an amenity destination with notable health benefits in South Dublin County. It will support healthy communities as all families will live within a 5/10 minute walk of parklands, with additional green spaces, which will have a full range of recreational amenities to suit all ages and are all linked as part of an integrated network of green spaces. This benefit can also be captured through estimates of value of life. These include the avoided public cost of medical expenditure due to improved public health and reduced loss of productivity due to ill-health, days off work and exclusion from the labour force.
- **Pure agglomeration:** Lucan House could provide for gains in productivity arising from increases in business proximity and effective density. The clustering of tourism-related businesses, services, and attractions could serve in developing Lucan as a 'Destination Town'.
- **Improved Livability:** Improved livability, which can be considered as a contribution to improved quality of life is achieved through reduced

levels of traffic, reduced contact with vehicles, reduced noise and perceived accident risk. The strategic location of 30 acres of parkland within Lucan, with the potential for enhanced connections through the demesne would support active travel initiatives and enhance livability in the area.

- **Labour Force Participation:** In the event of the Council acquiring this property and developing it as a local amenity and visitor destination, it is likely that employment opportunities would arise within Lucan House and the surrounding village, providing people with a wider geographical choice of employment most notably in the tourism and hospitality sector.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Acquiring the property offers new commercial, community, cultural and tourism opportunities. It has potential to be a stimulus for wider economic growth in Lucan and the wider South Dublin Area. It would create a new place to attract investment and afford an integrated approach to sustainable tourism. At this preliminary stage, it is anticipated that opening the grounds to the public would require an investment of approximately €300,000 in terms of general upgrades and to meet health and safety requirements. The overall investment in Lucan House and associated outbuildings would need to be considered in the context of an overall masterplan, which should provide a phased programme of works and associated costs as part of the delivery of same.

In potentially acquiring the property, the Council could take a longer-term view in terms of its development, with phased opening of new facilities as part of a staged investment programme, thereby negating the requirement for any significant financial capital outlay as part of a singular project. Integral to informing this will be the importance of public engagement and ensuring that any redevelopment of Lucan House is adequately informed and shaped by the local community. It is noted that Lucan house is a protected structure and irrespective of any potential future use of this property, investment will be required in terms of conservation, and restoration works as part of its ongoing maintenance. In this regard, the Council's Architectural Conservation Officer should be involved in the preparation of any masterplan, whilst opportunities for any grant funding should be explored in both the preparation of any

masterplan and the undertaking of any conservation works associated with Lucan House and its outbuildings.

It would be a requirement of any masterplan to quantify overall costs as part of the provision of any community, cultural, leisure and tourism-related uses. In doing so, the potential for any such uses to make a financial contribution to the potential redevelopment of Lucan House and its ongoing maintenance should be explored.

In assessing the potential acquisition of Lucan House, it is acknowledged that the tourism development potential of Lucan House as a visitor destination creates a platform for providing an improved tourism experience for those visiting the area, potentially increasing dwell time in the area, and consequently increasing tourist expenditure on goods and services within the Lucan area. In terms of medium-term development, this would have the effect of increasing economic activity and jobs in South County Dublin. At this very preliminary stage, it is estimated that a figure of approximately €1.5m² per annum can be estimated for visitor revenue based on the establishment of a new visitor destination, as part of the preparation of a masterplan for Lucan House and Demesne. As such, using an accepted multiplier of 1.5 it can be estimated that the indirect and induced benefits of visitor expenditure within Lucan could be worth €2.25m per annum to the South Dublin County economy and in turn will have a multiplier effect on other offers within Lucan. A masterplan approach for Lucan House and the Demesne would seek to identify viable hospitality related uses to generate revenue whilst ensuring positive impacts for the wider Lucan area. Any such revenues derived from the future development of Lucan House and Demesne could then be reinvested as part of its ongoing development and operation as a public amenity and visitor destination.

Furthermore, the acquisition of Lucan House and Demesne would complement current investments in other infrastructure projects planned in the area, which seek to enhance the vibrancy and attraction of Lucan, such as the Grand Canal to Lucan Village Greenway. This will see the construction of 4.2 km of shared pedestrian pathways and cycle facilities, complete with traffic calming measures from Grand Canal to Lucan Village, which will terminate directly adjacent to Lucan House and Demesne.

² Anticipated 150,000 visitors x €10 Average Spend for Historic Houses and Castles

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Environmental benefits are critical and are grounded in national, regional, and local policies. The potential acquisition of Lucan House and Demesne would enhance the existing Green Infrastructure networks within the area.

If the Council acquired this property, environmental benefits include but are not limited to:

- **Reducing carbon emissions:** Connectivity and local links would provide important linkages to existing and planned pedestrian networks and greenways, which in the long term, reduce carbon emissions which are expected to contribute to a deceleration in the rate of climate change.
- **Improved biodiversity:** Sustainability and enhancement of existing natural habitats and diverse ecosystems. Benefits will see the enhancement to the amenity of the area and the nature conservation opportunities.
- **Reducing Flood Risk:** A Surface Water Strategy would be developed and be delivered, which would detail a robust and evidence-based approach to surface water drainage and flood risk management.
- **Multifunctional Features:** Provide amenity and ecology features, as well as providing the additional volumetric storage required during extreme rainfall events.
- **Place Setting:** Provide an attractive, resilient and green community.

It is noted that NSO7 'Enhanced Heritage and Amenity' of the National Planning Framework places emphasis on investment in well-designed public realm, which includes streets, parks, and recreational infrastructure. Lucan House and Demesne has the potential to provide high quality public realm, amenity spaces and green infrastructure amongst other things through the provision of pedestrian links/trails/cycleways and 30 acres of parkland and open spaces.

TOURISM MARKET

Lucan House is well positioned to benefit from the comparatively densely populated areas within easy walking and driving distance and it is expected to provide a valuable and attractive experience to two main audiences, comprising local residents and tourists. It would also be attractive to a number

of niche audiences, including schools, historical societies, special interest groups and others.

Dublin currently attracts 6.6 million overseas visitors and 1.8 million overnight visits from residents of the island of Ireland. This represents a sizeable and economically important market for any business in the Dublin area and Lucan House and Demesne would be in a position to support tourism development within the County and Dublin region.

At a very preliminary level, which would be subject to further analysis, it is anticipated that Lucan House and Demesne could attract up to 150,000 visitors per annum when fully established could be reached. Anticipated and projected high level demand levels in terms of visitor numbers have been established using comparative data relating to sites/attractions that are outside the main city-centre area and comparable (e.g. Airfield Estate attracts over 300,000 visitors each year while Malahide Castle and Grounds attract over 200,000).

It is expected that there will be significant local demand to avail of this facility from the local community and citizens of South Dublin, with tourism related visits increasing as any potential new visitor destination becomes established. This would be supported by enhanced accessible public transport options and pedestrian access at this location and an effective marketing and branding campaign.

Given the strategic location of the property, as well as the availability of similar experiences elsewhere in the wider local area, it is likely there will be a high level of repeat visitors particularly from local residents, schools and special interest groups such as historical and heritage groups. Based on comparable evidence, it is considered that demand from these audiences is expected to remain strong due to the obvious value placed on the amenity by its regular visitors. The Lucan Tourism and Proposition Plan 2021 has already identified a demand from the public (regular visitors) for Lucan House to have regular opening hours.

In addition, as part of an repurposing of Lucan House, it could provide an attractive location for small bespoke corporate or other events. This could include corporate meetings, conferences, training events, or team-building activities outdoors. Such facilities are provided at other comparable locations elsewhere in Dublin, such as Phoenix Park and Malahide Castle. A Business Plan would be essential for marketing to attract visitors, guide operations, and

to achieve long-term success. Additionally, to inform market positioning, operational requirements and services to be provided on site.

There would be broader financial benefits to the development of Lucan House and Demesne as a public amenity and visitor destination, as its development would not only have the potential to create long term public amenity, but also could give rise to social, economic, and commercial growth opportunities in Lucan, whilst also increasing footfall, vitality and vibrancy in immediate area.

FINANCIAL / FUNDING REVIEW

An initial capital budget of €10m is anticipated to acquire the property given its condition, expansive landholding and in relation to comparable properties. This sum has been derived from an independent valuation from the Dublin City Council Valuers Office. It should be noted that on behalf of the vendor, a private real estate company recommended an asking price ranging from €12.5m to €15m for the property.

Should the local authority acquire the property, it is estimated that approximately €300,000 would be required to be invested in the property initially in terms of general upgrades and to meet health and safety requirements in order to facilitate public access to the property.

If the property is acquired, a further capital budget of €200,000 - €300,000 is anticipated to carry out the relevant studies to outline the development opportunities to create a public amenity and visitor destination that will optimise the potential of this historic property and its associated lands. In potentially developing a masterplan, external funding opportunities could be explored to support the preparation of same.

Once a Masterplan and a bill of quantities is prepared, this will allow for a realistic capital budget for the development of detailed design and construction to advance. It is advised that inflation and optimism bias be adequately considered to understand the contingency required as part of the total capital costs associated with any future development project.

External funding mechanisms and grant funding opportunities should be investigated at each stage and duly considered where applicable.

LUCAN HOUSE AND DEMESNE VISION AND GOALS

Acquisition of the property would create a significant opportunity to develop a range of services and public amenities within the County for its citizens to enjoy. Lucan House, its associated buildings and attendant grounds, presents an exciting opportunity to create a public amenity and visitor destination of significance, serving to support community development, whilst also playing an instrumental role in the development of the County's tourism proposition. It is envisaged that Lucan House would act as a destination amenity which would both complement and be an asset for the immediate locality, the wider County and region.

The exact nature of future uses would have to be determined. As such, a master planning approach would be the most appropriate approach to take and would add significant value by ensuring the incorporation of up to date and best practice approaches to concepts, urban design and land use planning. A Masterplan should explore the feasibility of land-uses, including but not limited to cultural, community, artisan/crafts, enterprise, café, and leisure facilities.

The River Liffey, which runs parallel and within the lands, allows for connectivity for both terrestrial and aquatic habitats. The location within the Liffey Valley acts as an important green infrastructure habitat which provides relatively undisturbed areas of mature trees, scrub and hedgerows. While it is recognised that Liffey Valley forms important habitat networks, there is also an opportunity to unlock key pedestrian connectivity at this location that would provide for environmentally sensitive linkages, further boosting sustainable active travel and recreational amenity of the area. Providing such pedestrian connectivity and protection of these significant habitat networks would need to be explored as part of any masterplan process.

A masterplan would also have full regard to the setting and integrity of the protected structures on the lands, the highly sensitive environmental characteristics of the demesne lands in relation to the Liffey Valley and Green Infrastructure principles and the need to provide appropriate public access, including an area of accessible public realm within the lands and connectivity to adjacent lands. A masterplan would act as a design guide for future development of the lands, informed by background research and baseline analysis in respect of conservation, green infrastructure and ecological enhancement, surface water and drainage, building uses and phasing.

In potentially acquiring Lucan House and Demesne, any such masterplan should set out clearly the core strategic objectives for the future development of these

lands. To inform any acquisition and potential future master-planning process, a series of strategic objectives, as outlined below, should be duly considered.

STRATEGIC GOALS

In developing any future masterplan, a number of strategic goals should form the framework for a masterplan to be built upon. The primary strategic goals that should be explored and fully considered include:

- **Public amenity value** – The Council would investigate the best uses that benefit the immediate locality and wider County from a social, economic, environmental and sustainability perspective
- **Conservation of heritage** – Cultural heritage is the link between natural and built heritage. The conservation and enhancement of heritage is key given the nature of Lucan House and Demesne and is considered the foremost Strategic Objective.
- **Easy movement and access, and good communications** – A place designed for all, from young to old, with a range of recreational and environmental opportunities, stimuli and excitement that entice users back again and again.
- **An attractive destination** – Visual appeal will be an important element in creating an attractive setting for local communities, as well as attracting returning visitors. The environment should be of a high standard and quality that will enhance the cultural identity of Lucan House and demesne.
- **Public awareness and participation** – Any future development should respond to the changing needs of community and users so two-way communication is a priority. Local engagement should be a core pillar in preparing any future masterplan
- **Visitor destination** – Any future development of Lucan House and Demesne should support the delivery of South Dublin's tourism objectives, forging the creation of employment opportunities and the economic development of the County.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The purpose of this report is to provide a high-level framework for assessing benefits, risks, and environmental, social and planning sensitivities associated with the potential acquisition of Lucan House and Demesne in order to make an informed decision in whether to pursue the property's acquisition. In potentially investing public finance in the acquisition of this property it is important to have a clear understanding of the potential future use of these lands and the process of deriving benefit by the Council in investing in the acquisition of this property.

The benefits associated with this potential acquisition were subjected to a high-level appraisal, including a review of risks. A significant determining factor in potentially acquiring the property is the potential of Lucan House and Demesne in creating a public amenity of regional significance that can support local communities and the continued growth of the County. Allied to this, the potential to acquire this property creates a unique opportunity to add to Lucan's distinctive village setting, enhancing the provision of public amenity space, biodiversity and access to the River Liffey, as well as securing public ownership of an important historic asset, thereby ensuring Lucan House and its attendant grounds can be enjoyed by the public for generations to come.

It is acknowledged that the tourism development potential of Lucan House as a visitor destination would greatly enhance the overall tourism proposition of the County, which would support the proposed investment in public realm work in Lucan village and the creation of a 'Destination Town'. With the creation of a visitor destination in Lucan House and Demesne, up to 150,000 visitors could potentially visit this property on an annual basis, from which approximately €1.5m per annum could be generated in visitor revenue, whilst indirect and induced benefits of visitor expenditure within Lucan could be worth €2.25m per annum to the South Dublin County economy. This would serve to support job creation, continued investment in local enterprise and have a positive impact on the local economy. In recognising that the development of a visitor destination at Lucan House will need to be delivered on a phased basis, any revenues derived directly from the property could be invested in its ongoing development and operation as a public amenity and visitor destination.

In the long-term, cultural and innovative activities could be facilitated which could create long term social, economic, and commercial growth opportunities, whilst increasing footfall, vitality, and vibrancy, and adding to sense of place in Lucan. As such, the result of this analysis demonstrates that the acquisition would

have an extremely positive impact from a social, economic and environmental perspective for Lucan, and the wider area of South County Dublin

Acquiring Lucan House and Demesne would be of national, regional and local significance in terms of public amenity, tourism, regeneration of heritage buildings, community placemaking benefits, social integration, public health and wellbeing benefits, which aligns with national policy. The overriding findings of this analysis highlights the unique opportunity that presents itself in acquiring Lucan House and its acquisition by South Dublin County Council would lead to the creation of a high-quality public amenity and visitor destination that supports the social, economic and environmental development of the County.

In conclusion, it is recommended that Lucan House and Demesne should be acquired by South Dublin County Council.

APPENDIX 1: PLANNING CONTEXT AND DETAILED APPRAISAL

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL APPRAISAL

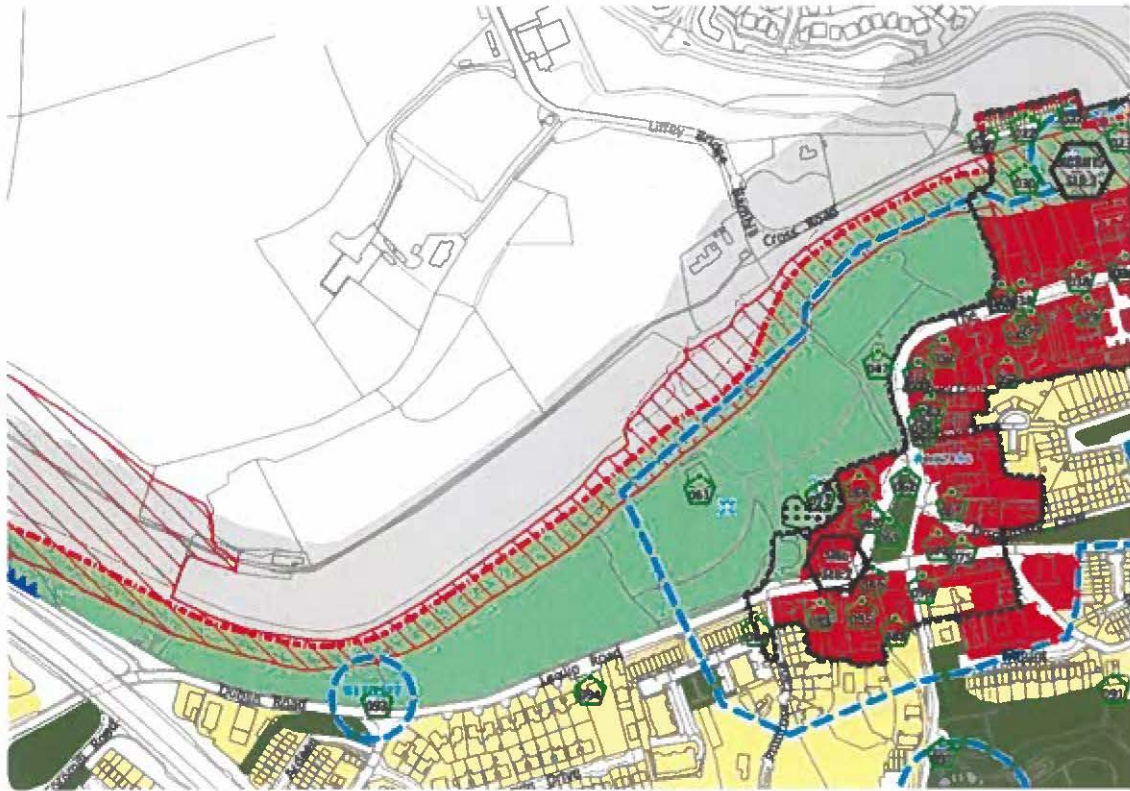
TITLE

It is advised that the property is held under the basis of a Freehold title under folios DN2420F comprising approximately 12.22 ha (c.30 acres). Lucan House is currently owned by the Italian Republic and is residence of the Italian Ambassador to Ireland.

The first owner of Lucan House, Agmondisham Vesey Jr, modelled his villa on the Venetian villas, which he visited during his Grand Tour. The cultural tradition of Lucan House continued with the Colthursts who owned it until 1921. Its historical interest grew with the transfer of the title to the descendant of the King of Ireland, Charles O'Conor Don. Later, Sir William Bourke Teeling bought the house. From 1946 onwards, successive Italian Ambassadors, contributed to the care and preservation of Lucan House.

ZONING

Lucan House is situated in an area that is zoned objective High Amenity Liffey Valley, HA/LV which aims *'to protect and enhance the outstanding natural character and amenity of the Liffey Valley, Dodder Valley and Dublin Mountain areas'* under the South Dublin County Development Plan 2022 - 2028. **Appendix Figure 1.1 refers.**



Appendix Figure 1.1: Zoning Map, South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028

Land Use Zoning Tables provide guidance in relation to the general appropriateness of particular development types or land uses in each land use zone. For the purposes of this appraisal, land uses which are Permitted in Principle and Open for Consideration are relevant. Land uses that are listed as 'permitted in principle' in the land use zoning tables are considered to be generally acceptable, subject to further assessment against the relevant policies, objectives and standards set out under the Development Plan. Land uses that are listed as 'open for consideration' in the land use zoning tables may be acceptable subject to detailed assessment against the principles of proper planning and sustainable development, and the relevant policies, objectives and standards set out in the Development Plan. Some uses open for consideration under this zoning include educational, recreational and restaurant uses. **Appendix Figure 1.2 Refers.**

Use Classes Related to Zoning Objective	
Permitted in Principle	Open Space.
Open for Consideration	Agriculture, Allotments, Bed & Breakfast ^a , Car Park ^{a,b} , Cemetery ^a , Childcare Facilities ^a , Community Centre ^a , Cultural Use ^a , Doctor / Dentist ^a , Education, Embassy ^a , Guest House ^a , Home Based Economic Activities ^a , Hotel / Hostel ^a , Place of Worship ^a , Public House ^a , Public Services ^a , Recreational Facility ^{a,f,g,h} , Residential ^{a,c} , Restaurant / Café ^a , Rural Industry-Food ^a , Shop-Local ^a , Sports Club / Facility ^{a,h} , Traveller Accommodation ^a .

Not Permitted	Abattoir, Advertisements and Advertising Structures, Aerodrome / Airfield, Betting Office, Boarding Kennels, Camp Site, Caravan Park-Residential, Concrete / Asphalt Plant in or adjacent to a quarry, Conference Centre, Crematorium, Data Centre, Enterprise Centre, Fuel Depot, Funeral Home, Garden Centre, Health Centre, Heavy Vehicle Park, Hospital, Housing for Older People, Industry-Extractive, Industry-General, Industry-Light, Industry-Special, Live-Work Units, Motor Sales Outlet, Nightclub, Nursing Home, Office-Based Industry, Offices less than 100 sq m, Offices 100 sq m-1,000 sq m, Offices over 1,000 sq m, Off-Licence, Outdoor Entertainment Park Petrol Station, Primary Health Care Centre, Recycling Facility, Refuse Landfill / Tip, Refuse Transfer Station, Residential Institution, Retail Warehouse, Retirement Home, Science and Technology Based Enterprise, Scrap Yard, Service Garage, Shop-Major Sales Outlet, Shop-Neighbourhood, Social Club, Stadium, Transport Depot, Veterinary Surgery, Warehousing, Wholesale Outlet, Wind Farm, Work-Live Units.
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^a In existing premises

^c In accordance with Council policy for residential development in rural areas

^f Subject to acceptable landscape impact assessment

^g All development classes shall not be permitted within 30m of the riverbank, in order to protect recreational amenity

^h For small-scale amenity or recreational purposes only

Appendix Figure 1.2: Table 12.13: Zoning Objective 'HA-LV': 'To protect and enhance the outstanding character and amenity of the Liffey Valley' of the South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028.

PLANNING HISTORY

There is no relevant planning history of relevance on or in the environs of the location.

CONSERVATION

ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

A portion of the lands are located in an "Architectural Conservation Area," mainly on the eastern side. An Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) is a place, area, group of structures or townscape that is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value or that contributes to the appreciation of Protected Structures. It is noted that Lucan village is situated on the banks of the Griffeen and Liffey Rivers in a scenic

part of the Liffey Valley and adjoins the Liffey Valley Special Amenity Area. Lucan largely dates from the eighteenth century when the town became a fashionable resort, following the discovery of a sulphuric spa in 1758. The main street dates from 1800 to 1830 and the scenic nature of the village attracted residents from Dublin. A series of mills, including linen, woollen and flour mills, was established on the Liffey downstream from Lucan during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and several mill complexes survive in varying degrees of preservation. Lucan Village's distinct character derives from a shared palette of materials, repetitive patterns, streetscape and the layout and details of the village such as the village green, limestone paving, mature tree lined streets, stone buildings and walls and public buildings.

PROTECTED STRUCTURES AND RECORDED MONUMENTS

Protected Structures relate to structures within the County that are considered to be of special architectural, historic, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social, or technical interest while monuments and places relate to those that are protected under the National Monuments Acts. Half of the area is located within in a Sites and Monuments Record Zone of Notification whereby the western portion of the of lands contains zones of notifications around specific features with protected structures identified also. **Appendix Figure 1.1 above refers.**

It is noted that the qualities of archaeological and architectural interest are not mutually exclusive and certain structures may be designated as both a Protected Structure and a Recorded Monument.

RPS Ref	Address/Location	Description
047	Lucan House, Lucan Demesne	Monuments, Lodges, Demesne Walls & Gates
061	Lucan House, Lucan	Three Storey House
072	Lucan House Demesne, Main Street, Lucan	Stone Castle, Church & Graveyard (Ruin) (RM)
093	Lucan Demesne	Stone Oratory (RM)

Appendix Table 1.1: Record of Protected Structures within the Demesne.

Map Ref	Description	Address / Location	Recorded Monument and Places Ref
R178377	Chapel	Lucan demesne	DU017-020
R183279	Ring-ditch	Lucan demesne	DU017-094
R185088	Church	Lucan demesne	DU017-019002
R185088	Bridge	Lucan and Pettycanon, Lucan demesne	DU017-019006
R185088	Graveyard	Lucan demesne	DU017-019003
R185088	Cross	Lucan demesne	DU017-019004
R185088	Castle – tower house	Lucan demesne	DU017-019001

Appendix Table 1.2: National Monuments within the lands.

FLOODING RISK

Having regard to the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) of the Development Plan, it is noted that a strategic and high-level SFRA was carried out for the county. The Area to the northern and eastern boundaries fall within a flood risk area, primarily Flood Zone A and Flood Zone B.

Flood Zone A is where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is highest (greater than 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding or 0.5% or 1 in 200 for coastal flooding) and Flood Zone B is where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is moderate (between 0.1% or 1 in 1000 and 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding and between 0.1% or 1 in 1000 and 0.5% or 1 in 200 for coastal flooding).

Figure 1.3 refers.

A Stage 1 flood risk identification and Stage flood assessment was carried out on zoned lands within the Development Plan area. It noted that area was not identified as being a key area at risk of flooding. The flood mapping from the Office of Public Works (OPW) has indicated past flood events dating back to 1993 at the eastern boundary of area with not recent events. Based on the locations of the flood zones and historic flood history of the site, mitigation measures such Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs), and attenuation should be incorporated into the Masterplan proposals.

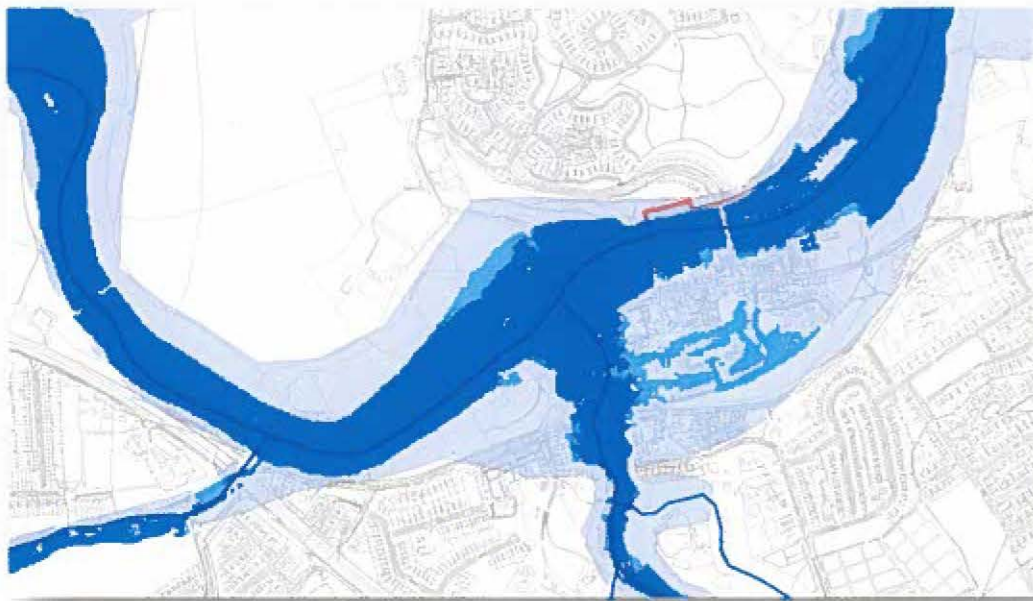
The area is also largely located within a Riparian Corridor as identified in the SFRA. Riparian Corridors protect watercourses and their natural processes. These zones act as the interface between rivers and adjoining lands and are key to managing flood risk within catchments of all sizes. Maintaining and enhancing Riparian Corridors creates "room for the river" and the benefits that entails including reducing risk to persons and property from flooding. Furthermore, maintaining riparian corridors along the major watercourses and their tributaries is key to maximising ecosystem services provided by the watercourses.

Riparian Corridor Objectives:

- 1) To ensure that hydromorphological assessments are undertaken where proposed development is within lands which are partially or wholly within the Riparian Corridors identified as part of this Development Plan.
- 2) To require development proposals that are within riparian corridors to demonstrate how the integrity of the Riparian Corridor can be maintained and enhanced having regard to flood risk management, biodiversity, ecosystem service provision, water quality and hydromorphology.

3) To promote and protect native riparian vegetation along all watercourses and ensure that a minimum of 10m vegetated riparian buffer from the top of the riverbank is maintained/reinstated along all watercourses within any development site.

Due regard will be given to the Riparian Corridor Objectives in the development of any potential masterplan.



Appendix Figure 1.3: Flood Zone Mapping, Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, South Dublin County Development 2022-2028.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS

The Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) is set out in Appendix 9 of the Development Plan. The area falls within the Landscape Character Area of 'Liffey Valley'. Landscape Character Assessment for the Liffey River Valley identifies this area as having a Medium to High Landscape Value and Sensitivity.

This LCA comprises the River Liffey and its valley, an area of significant historical importance and an important ecological corridor. The landscape characteristics and landscape value of this LCA confer on it a distinct sense of place. The elements that are key include historic and cultural heritage exemplified by Lucan, and the variety of preserved naturalistic and rural landscapes in the area. This sense is potentially at risk due to urbanisation. The Landscape Character Assessment therefore makes recommendations aimed at

preserving that sense of place and relating to conservation, protection and enhancement where possible of those key landscape elements and values.

It is contented that use of the property for public good would not yield any impacts on the landscape character, with no effect to views and prospects of amenity value. Moreover, given the potential regeneration and reuse aspects and its immediate proximity to a large established urban area, it is considered that landscape character will not be impacted.

ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGNATIONS AND ECOLOGY

ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGNATIONS

A section of the river valley is designated as a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) along the northern boundary falling into part of the demesne. **Appendix Figure 1.1 above refers.** It is noted that the whole river valley is a key element of South Dublin County's Green Infrastructure Strategy. Being for the most part undeveloped, the banks of the river valley at this location offer a natural and dark corridor between the urban areas of South Dublin and Fingal Counties which extends from Dublin City into County Kildare. This corridor is important for protected species such as light-sensitive bats, and for otter, kingfisher, and a range of other waterfowl, fish, and small mammals. Rare species of plants and insects occur in the woodlands and along the riverbank.

The nearest European site to the lands is Rye Water Valley/Cartron which is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) located c. 2.5km upstream from the boundary of the lands. The location of this designation will require that Appropriate Assessment Screening is carried out. The aim of this assessment is to determine the appropriateness, or otherwise, of the proposed development of a public amenity and visitor destination in the context of the conservation objectives of the relevant European sites. Stage 1 screening is the process carried out to determine the necessity for a more detailed Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment where potential impacts on European sites are deemed to be of significance. Having regard to the nature and distance of this European site and others and the nature of the site, it is considered that there should be no negative impact; however, this would need to be fully determined by a qualified Ecologist.

ECOLOGY

Having regard to the pNHA status that is located within the demesne and the vacant and disused nature of structures, it considered imperative to identify an Ecological Survey Area (ESA) and carry out surveys of the terrestrial ecology. A

desktop survey should be undertaken to gather information on the likely distribution of species/habitats in the general area prior to the field survey visits so that a targeted approach to surveying can be undertaken. The ESA shall encompass the area, access options and areas of adjacent land, where accessible, to provide further context to baseline condition within and in the immediate vicinity of the area. The surveys would guide any potential masterplan whilst providing protection and mitigation, where appropriate.

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL APPRAISAL CONCLUSION

The purpose of the Planning and Environmental Appraisal is to provide a framework for assessing planning and environmental risks and sensitivities associated with Option 03. This information has informed the decision on viability and desirability from this perspective and has concluded that there are no major risks. In the event of a successful acquisition, the preparation of a masterplan should undertake all necessary environmental studies and provide the required protection and mitigation, where appropriate.

Item 3
Valuation Report



Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council

City Valuers Office, Planning & Property Development Department
Block 3, Floor 2, Civic Offices, Wood Quay, Dublin 8. D08 RF3F

Oifig Luachálaí na Cathrach, An Roinn Pleanála & Forbairt Maoiné,
Bloc 3, Urlár 2, Oifigí na Cathrach, An Ché Adhmaid,

Please Quote ref: LP/283-22

Ph: 01 222 5388

28th April 2023

Daniel McLoughlin,
Chief Executive,
South Dublin County Council,
County Hall,
Tallaght,
Dublin 24.

By Email

Re: Market Valuation
Property: Lucan House & Demesne

Dear Daniel,

I refer to the above matter and to your recent instructions in this regard. I have attached herewith our full valuation report for your information.

In summary; the subject property comprises a detached seven-bay two-storey over basement Palladian country house, built c.1775, with three-bay pedimented breakfront and three-bay rear bow, each having attic storey. The main dwelling extends to 1425sq.m g.i.a/ 15338.57sq.ft) excluding the boathouse).

In addition to the main dwelling the demesne comprises a significant stable block, 2 gate lodges, the workers cottage and the boat house as well of a number of other structures of archeological note.

The overall property extends to an a area of 12.2 hectares/ c. 30 acres and the grounds are a mixture of manicured lawns in the vicinity of the house, and dense woodlands with trails thereafter. The demesne is located along the banks of the River Liffey and is traversed by the Griffeen River.

In my view the Market Value of the subject property is in the region of **€10,500,000(ten million five hundred thousand euro)**.

The above valuation is on the basis of the following:

1. That satisfactory proof of unencumbered freehold title and vacant possession by an agreed date will be provided
2. Receipt of a satisfactory structural survey/report on condition.
3. That an agreement on the inventory of fixtures, fittings, furniture and art is to be included in the sale.

There is scope perhaps, for the Council to purchase certain bespoke items of intrinsic historical value, which would support and enhance the future use of this important heritage property by the Council.

Please note that the Council should be exempt from the payment of stamp duty on the purchase of a residential property, but I would recommend that VAT advice be sought.

Finally, should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact Leanne Price of this office on ph.: [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] [@dublincity.ie](mailto:[REDACTED]@dublincity.ie)

Yours faithfully,



David Garvey,
FRICS, FCSI,
City Valuer.

Re: Market Valuation
Property: Lucan House & Demesne



Instruction: To provide South Dublin County Council with a Market Value for the proposed acquisition of the subject property.

Location: Situated in the centre of Lucan village, approximately 16km west of Dublin City centre and c. 6km west of the M50. Frequent bus services to the city, and regular bus connections to the Red Cow Luas stop every 30 minutes.

Lucan village is home to many protected structures and buildings of significant architectural heritage and note. The NIAH describes the village as follows: *Lucan itself is a medieval manorial borough, first reference in 1315. The street plan of the borough was essentially linear and consisted of one principal street. The burgage plots stretched from the street back to the river and the OS 6-inch maps show a complementary pattern on the south side of the street.*

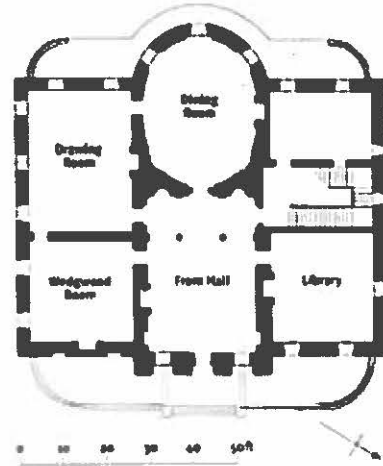
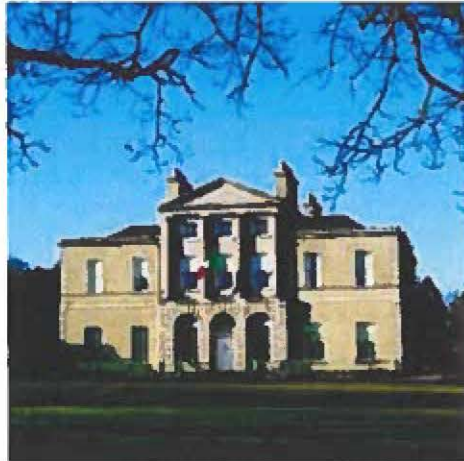


Site location map (Source: myplan.ie)

Description: Lucan House Demesne is bound by the River Liffey to the north and Lucan village to the east and south (Main Street and Lucan/ Leixlip Road respectively). The boundary to the village is by way of a coursed and uncoursed limestone rubble masonry wall. The River Griffeen runs through the demesne, naturally separating the grounds to the north east from the rest of the site. Demesne access is either via the main gate from Main Street, or a separate service entrance, now closed but used periodically for heavy vehicles accessing the estate to avoid excessive loading on the historic stone bridge over the River Griffeen which is located just inside the main gate.

The demesne grounds are a mixture of manicured lawns in the vicinity of the house, and dense woodlands thereafter. There are several trails on the demesne both along the river and parallel to the estate wall along the Lucan/Leixlip Road. There are several structures on the demesne.

The demesne includes a small island within the River Liffey.



L-R: Lucan House and ground floor plan (Source: Italian Embassy Dublin)

Main House (description from NIAH):

An impressive, imposing and substantially intact country house and demesne, with a richly decorated interior. Partly designed by William Chambers, with interior plasterwork by Michael Stapleton, Historically and socially important as the principal land holding in Lucan village with which the demesne is intimately associated.

Detached seven-bay two-storey over basement Palladian country house, c.1775, with three-bay pedimented breakfront and three-bay rear bow, each having attic storey. Five bays to south side. Roughcast rendered walls with granite platband, string courses, sill course and quoins. Ashlar granite walls to breakfront, with rusticated ground floor and four half-engaged giant ionic columns above. Small pane sash windows with stone sills throughout. Timber panelled door with elaborate fanlight. Hipped slate roof behind parapet with stone cornice and rendered chimney stacks. Retains many fine interior features, including late eighteenth-century plasterwork. Single-storey service building to north, with roughcast rendered walls, round-headed windows, segmental-headed archway and single-pitched roof. Set within mature demesne parkland with various outbuildings



Lucan House (Source: NIAH)

Main House accommodation as follows –

Basement: Full floor accommodating kitchen and stores, safe and boiler house. Direct access to the boat house from this level.

Ground floor: Full floor accommodating entrance hall, library, oval dining room, drawing room and 'wedgewood'/ blue room.

Intermediate floor: partial floor accommodating stairs, WC and laundry room.

First floor: Full floor with central hallway, family and guest bedrooms, small kitchen and living room.

Attic: Partial floor centrally located over rotunda and entrance hall. In use as staff quarters.

Additional Structures:

Boat House, c167sqm, lying to the north of the main house and connected to it at basement level.

Sarsfield Monument (former National Monument, description from NIAH):

A beautiful, finely executed monument designed by architect James Wyatt, with many superb examples of Greek classical decoration then fashionable. Its elevated position in an open location, though only recently moved here, allows a fuller appreciation of this remarkable historical feature.

Triangular plan limestone monument, c.1790, set on an elevated earthen mound with narrow steps, c.1985. Stepped base, three carved tortoises to corners, Portland stone main section with carved relief roundel to two sides, surmounted by a limestone urn, all executed in a Greek classical idiom. Formerly located to the west within the demesne.

Appraisal



L-R; Sarsfield Monument and Boat House (Source: NIAH)

Main entrance gates (description from NIAH)

Principal entrance to demesne, c.1775, with pair of channelled granite ashlar gate piers having Coade stone roundels to cap stones. Replacement sliding gate. Set in random rubble boundary wall, stretching from Vesey Bridge to former Lucan Parish School, of three to six metres in height, with 'Famine hole' to southern extreme. Pedestrian cast-iron gate with granite lintel set in wall at eastern extreme.

An elegant, well-designed entrance gateway which complements the architectural style of the main house beyond. The flanking sections of boundary wall are appropriately forbidding for a demesne of this importance, and remain an integral part of the estate, as well as adding character and interest to this approach to the village centre.

Service entrance gates (description from NIAH):

Principal service entrance to demesne, c.1790. Pair of coursed and quarry-faced limestone gate piers with niches to rear, capstones and urns. Sheet metal gates. Pedestrian gateway to either side with ashlar and quarry-faced block and start pointed surrounds. Timber tongue and groove doors. Flanking rubble stone quadrant screen walls, each with a three-bay single-storey gate house to convex side having brick and rubble walls, pointed timber casement

windows or blind openings, quarry-faced block and start surround to door, and curved pitched slate roof with single chimney stack.

A vigorously treated and imposing entrance ensemble, with a loosely picturesque articulation. A key element of both Lucan Demesne and the streetscape, its materials echoing those used elsewhere in the vicinity. Easternmost gate house formerly used as a dairy from which dairy products could be distributed to the town.



L-R: Main entrance from Main Street & service entrance from Lucan/ Leixlip Road
(Source: NIAH)

Gate Lodge No.1, located to the left of the main entrance, currently vacant and in need of refurbishment (description from NIAH):

An attractive former gate lodge, with a highly unusual porch projection. Retains many original elements, and forms a good group with the gates nearby. A valuable component of the estate group.

Detached three-bay single-storey former gate lodge, c.1790, partly forming boundary of demesne. Diagonally projecting entrance porch to northwest corner facing avenue. Single-storey lean-to projection to south. Roughcast rendered walls. Timber fixed and casement windows in pointed openings to main section. Diamond-paned timber casement window and timber panelled door to porch. Stone sills throughout. Hipped slate roof, curved to porch with wide timber bracketed eaves. Single rendered chimney stack. Building currently unoccupied.

Gate lodge No.2 located to the right of the main entrance, and currently occupied by the Ambassador's chaperone and driver (description from NIAH): *A simple, attractive house, less elaborate than the former gate lodge nearby on which this house is modelled. Adds a charming note to this maturely planted area near the main demesne entrance gates.*

Detached single-storey house, c.1905, on an L-plan with a projecting bow-fronted porch. Roughcast rendered walls with smooth base. Timber casement windows. Hipped slate roof with timber bracketed, sprocketed eaves and rendered chimney stack.



L-R: Gate Lodge 1 and Gate Lodge 2 (Source: NIAH)

Stable building located inside the service entrance gate (description from NIAH)

A particularly handsome and well-executed stable building, retaining many original features. Set just inside one of the main demesne gates, it presents a most striking façade on entry. Also a dominant presence on the Leixlip Road and in the vista west from Lucan village. An integral element of this intact demesne.

Detached multiple-bay single-storey with attic former stable building, c.1790, now in use as house and storage building, and partly unoccupied. Built on a C-shaped half-octagonal plan. Roughcast rendered walls to convex side. Rendered, ruled and lined walls to concave side, with five three-bay sections alternately having superimposed arcade or ashlar pedimented breakfront. Pedimented breakfront to single-bay end bays. Granite platband at arch springing level. Timber sash windows with stone sills. uPVC casement windows to southern domestic section. Timber tongue and groove doors with overlights. Hipped slate roof with red brick dentil eaves course. Single-storey red brick lean-to shed to north.

Stone Bridge located inside the Main Gate (crossing the River Griffeen; description from NIAH):

A rustic bridge, the primitive articulation of which is at odds with its graceful segmental arch, lending it a picturesque quality. An integral and vital functional element of the demesne.

Single-arch road bridge over river, c.1790. Shallow segmental arch with limestone rubble voussoirs. Abutments and low parapet wall of uncoursed limestone rubble with some dressed stone elements. Bridge carries main avenue to house.



L-R: Stone bridge and stable building (Source: NIAH)

Workers House adjacent to the service entrance gates (description from NIAH):

A modest, charming house retaining its original form and many materials. Still inhabited, it is a good example of a functional vernacular estate building, unobtrusively sited in a corner of the demesne.

Semi-detached seven-bay single-storey cottage, c.1790. Random limestone rubble walls. Pointed and segmental-headed window openings with timber casement windows. Glazed timber door. Pitched and hipped slate roof. Building slopes down from west to east, following the fall of the road.



L-R: Workers housing and adj. service entrance (Source: NIAH)

Bath House located in the south west corner of the demesne (description from NIAH):

The bath house is an estate building in the style of a grotto combined with the refinement of a classical building. The materials used and the location of the building create an atmosphere of rugged picturesque primitivism. According to tradition the bath house was an oratory dedicated to St John of Jerusalem though no obvious earlier fabric is extant. The cold bath, which fills naturally, is supposedly supplied with water from a holy well. It is not only an important building of Lucan House Estate, but also an intriguing continuation of the tradition of holy wells and bathing, and a reminder of the Spa age of the late eighteenth and nineteenth century for which Lucan was renowned.

Detached three-bay single-storey gable-fronted former bath house, c.1785, now disused. Round-headed openings set in coursed limestone rubble walls. Gable front decorated with river-weathered limestone, with buttresses and emphasised dressing to door opening and pediment surround. Limestone coping to north wall. Brick dressing and stone finial above doorway in north wall. Pitched, ivy-covered roof with stone bellcote. Central fireplace with pointed arch stone surround and flanking niches to south interior wall. Pointed arch with flanking oval niches to east bay interior wall. Segmental-arched opening to west section with ornamental bath and shallow steps. Plastered barrel-vaulted ceiling. A small stream flows from an arched culvert over an ornamental waterfall cascade and beneath a simple stone footbridge to the east of the bath house.



L-R: Bath house, and steelwork bridge (Source: NIAH)

Steelwork Bridge (description from NIAH):

A simple iron footbridge connecting the demesne to an island site in the River Liffey. Sits well in wooded surroundings at the perimeter of Lucan House demesne.

Single-span iron footbridge over river, c.1930, with riveted girder framework, lattice bracing and timber planked walkway. Limestone coursed rubble piers to either end.

Cemetery (description from NIAH):

A very significant group of structures, including the original Lucan Estate tower house and a collection of fine headstones related to the Vesey and Sarsfield families. A valuable constituent of the Lucan House demesne.

Enclosed cemetery containing unroofed remains of church, rebuilt c.1730, ruins of medieval tower house, and collection of carved headstones dating from the early eighteenth century. Random limestone rubble boundary wall to south and east with pedestrian gateway.



L-R: cemetery and demesne walls (Source: NIAH)

Demesne walls (description from NIAH):

An imposing boundary wall, the blocked openings showing gradual changes of use since construction. Adds character to this approach to Lucan village as well as being an important constituent of the demesne.

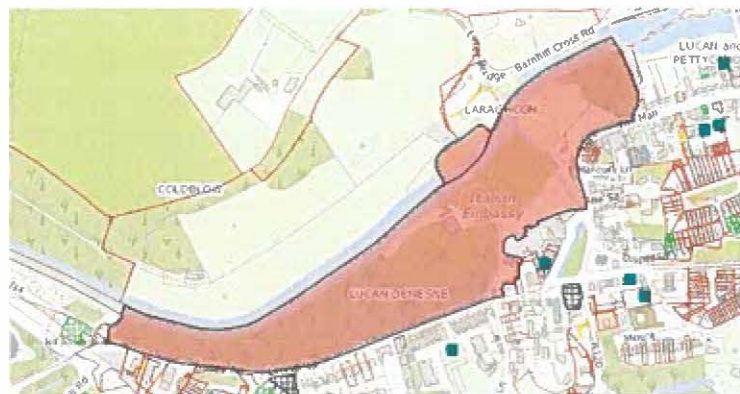
Coursed and uncoursed limestone rubble boundary wall, c.1785. Wall contains many blocked former openings, including a low level segmental arch with quarry-faced keystone marking site of a tunnel to the former orchard on the south side of Leixlip Road.

Flood Risk

Floodmaps.ie - The property is indicated as being subject to flooding

Title:

The property appears to be held freehold under Folio DN2420



Size: The size of the main property is = c. 1,425 sq. m GIA.
(c.. 1,600 sq. m including the adjoining boathouse).

Ground & first floors c. 396 sq.m *2
Intermediate floor c. 60 sq.m
Basement c. 400 sq.m, plus attached boathouse of c. 167 sq.m
Attic floor 173 sq.m

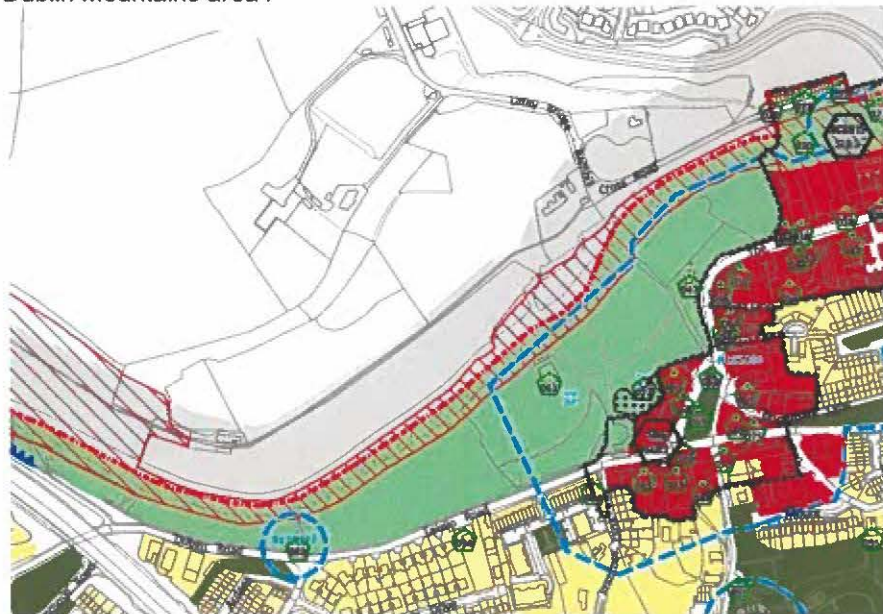
Site Area The site area based on the folio map extends to a gross site area of **12.20 hectares/ c. 30 acres**

Note: Extends to River and centre of the road.

Protected Structures: Ref: 047: Lucan House, Lucan Demesne - monuments, lodges, demesne walls, gates
Ref: 61: Lucan House, Lucan – three storey house
Ref: 72: Lucan Demesne - stone castle, church and graveyard (ruin; Recorded Monument)
Re: 93: Lucan Demesne - stone oratory (Recorded Monument)

Planning: There is no record of any recent planning applications on the subject site.

Zoning: Lucan Demesne is zoned 'High Amenity (LV, DV, DM)' in the 2022-2028 South County Dublin Development Plan, that is 'to protect and enhance the outstanding natural character of the Liffey Valley, the Dodder Valley and the Dublin Mountains area'.



Objective HA
(LV, DV, DM)

To protect and enhance the outstanding natural character and amenity of the Liffey Valley, Dodder Valley and Dublin Mountains areas



Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA)



Sites and Monuments Record Zone of Notification

Comparable:



Seafield House, Donabate Co. Dublin.

895sq.m Palladian Mansion with Gate Lodge Set on 80 acres

Achieved in excess of €9 million

Comments: Smaller property, inferior location, layout and scale of rooms not as impressive. Doesn't have the same architectural prestige

Valuation:

The Market value of the subject property is in the region of €10,500,000