OCSC

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MULTIDISCIPLINARY CONSULTING ENGINEERS

G467: N83 BRIDGE STREET DUNMORE

AA SCREENING REPORT

For

Galway County Council

27 June 2025

NOTICE & DOCUMENT CONTROL

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DOCUMENT CONTROL & HISTORY

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P01	**S2**	Eoin Toomey	Eadaoin Butler	Eleanor Burke	27/06/2025

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROJECT CONTRACTUAL BASIS & PARTIES INVOLVED

This Appropriate Assessment (AA) Report has been prepared by O'Connor Sutton Cronin & Associates Ltd. (OCSC) at the request of their Client, Galway County Council as part of a part 8 planning application. This project aims to promote village revitalisation and improve quality and reliability of traffic with facilities for pedestrians. The proposed project involves the demolition of several existing buildings east of Bridge Street to allow for the widening of the road. This route is designed to facilitate an upgrade of the junction of the N83 and the R360 at Sion Hill – Gater Street. The new junction will facilitate improved pedestrian facilities, improved visibility and better junction legibility. The regulatory authority for the site is Galway County Council. The site location is shown in Figure 1.1.

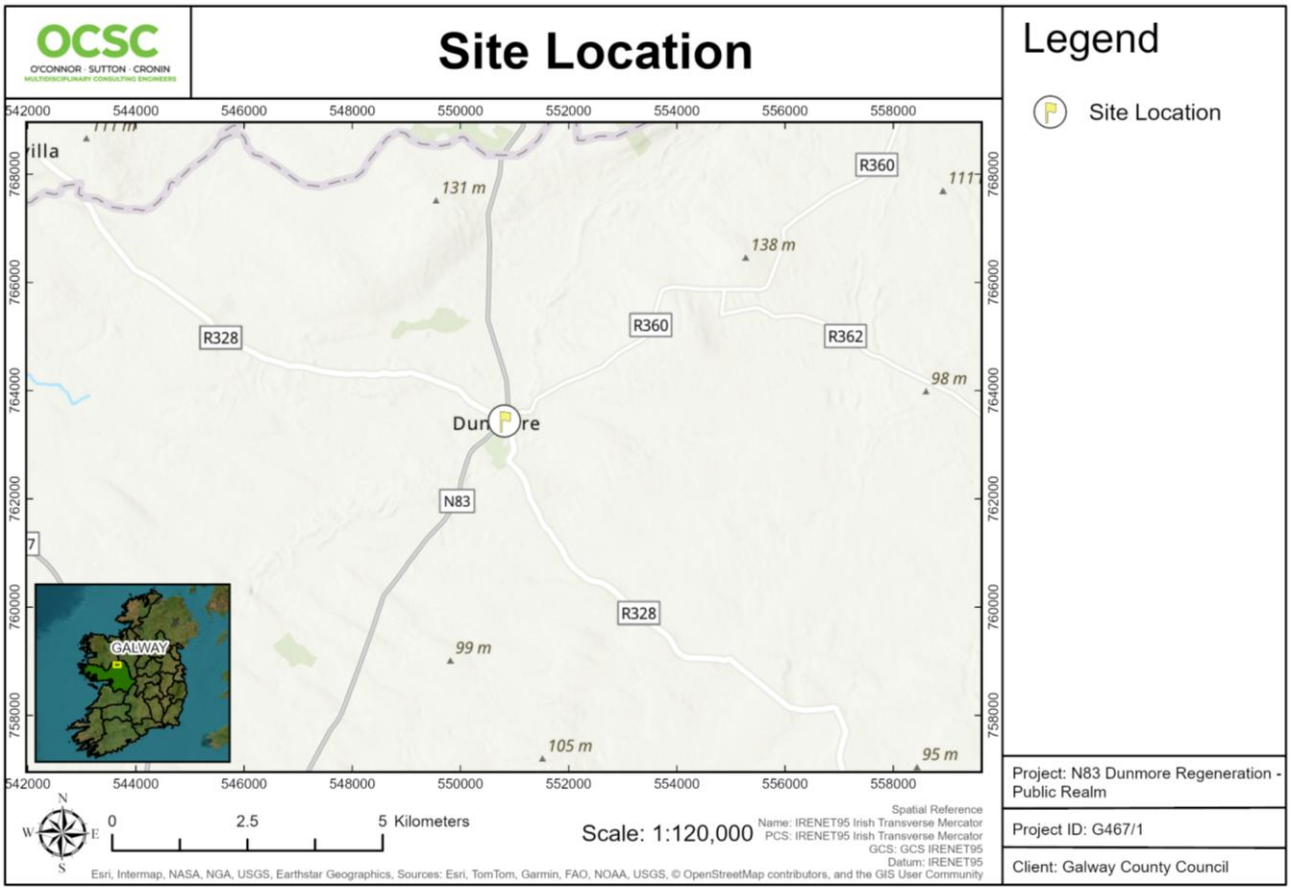


Figure 1.1: Regional Site Location (Source: OCSC, 2025)

1.2 QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

The report was completed by Eoin Toomey, BA, Consultant Ecologist, reviewed by Eadaoin Butler, BSc, Consultant Ecologist; and authorised by Eleanor Burke BSc, MSc, DAS, MIEnvSc, CSci, Technical Principal, and the OCSC Environmental Division Manager.

1.3 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

The Natura 2000 network is a European network of important ecological sites, as defined under Article 3 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, which comprises both special areas of conservation and special protection areas.

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) are natural habitat types listed in Annex I, and habitats of the species listed in Annex II, of the Habitats Directive, and are established under the Habitats Directive itself. Special Protection Areas (SPA) are established under Article 4 of the Birds Directive 2009/147/EC for the protection of endangered species of wild birds. The aim of the network is to aid the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats.

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to affect such sites. Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for AA. These requirements are implemented in the Republic of Ireland by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended) and the Planning Development Act 2000 (as amended). The process of appropriate assessment involves several stages, as discussed below.

Stage One: Screening

The process identifies the likely impacts upon a European site of a project, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant.

Screening is the process that addresses and records the reasoning and conclusions in relation to the first two tests of Article 6(3):

i. whether a plan or project is directly connected to or necessary for the management of the site, and
ii. whether a plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, is likely to have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site in view of its conservation objectives.

If the effects are deemed to be significant, potentially significant, or uncertain, or it the screening process becomes overly complicated, then the process must proceed to Stage 2 (AA). Screening should be undertaken without the inclusion of mitigation, unless potential impacts clearly can be avoided through the modification or redesign of the plan or project, in which case the screening process is repeated on the altered plan. The greatest level of evidence and justification will be needed in circumstances when the process ends at screening stage on grounds of no impact.

Stage Two: Appropriate Assessment

This stage considers whether the plan or project, alone or in combination with other projects or plans, will have adverse effects on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site, and includes any mitigation measures necessary to avoid, reduce or offset negative effects. The proponent of the plan or project will be required to submit a Natura Impact Statement, i.e. the report of a targeted professional scientific examination of the plan or project and the relevant Natura 2000 sites, to identify and characterise any possible implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. This should provide information to enable the competent authority to carry out the appropriate assessment. If the assessment is negative, i.e. adverse effects on the integrity of a site cannot be excluded, then the process must proceed to Stage 4, or the plan or project should be abandoned. The AA is carried out by the competent authority and is supported by the NIS.

Stage Three: Assessment of Alternative Solutions

This stage examines any alternative solutions or options that could enable the plan or project to proceed without adverse effects on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site. The process must return to Stage 2 as alternatives will require appropriate assessment in order to proceed. Demonstrating that all reasonable alternatives have been considered and assessed, and that the least damaging option has been selected, is necessary to progress to Stage 4.

Stage Four: Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain.

Stage 4 is the main derogation process of Article 6(4) which examines whether there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) for allowing a plan or project that will have adverse effects on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site to proceed in cases where it has been established that no less damaging alternative solution exists. The extra protection measures for Annex I priority habitats come into effect when making the IROPI case. Compensatory measures must be proposed and assessed. The Commission must be informed of the compensatory measures. Compensatory measures must be practical, implementable, likely to succeed, proportionate and enforceable, and they must be approved by the Minister.

1.4 METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

The AA Screening has been prepared taking into account the aforementioned and following legislation and guidance:

- Guidance for EIA and AA screening of active travel projects funded by the NTA, October 2023.
- OPR Guidance Note PN02 Environmental Impact Assessment Screening, June 2021.
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland. Guidance for Planning Authorities. Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2009; 11 February 2010 revision.
- Commission Notice: Managing Natura 2000 sites – The provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. European Commission, 2018.

- Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. European Commission Environment DG, 2002.
- Managing Natura 2000 sites: the Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. European Commission, 2000.
- Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management. Office of the Planning Regulator, March 2021.

The above documents have been used to carry out a desktop AA Screening based on the best available guidance and operating within the applicable legislation.

1.5 SCOPE OF WORKS

To meet the project objectives, the following scope of works was completed:

- Present a discussion of the proposed development and its potential effects on its receiving environment;
- Present a discussion of the current site status and key environmental influences around the site;
- Undertake and present a review of European sites in the region of the proposed development;
- Conduct and present a discussion on the screening of the identified European sites in relation to the potential effects arising from the project; and
- Provide a conclusion as to whether or not the proposed development is likely to, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, have a significant effect on any European site.

1.6 LIMITATIONS

This Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been prepared for the sole use of Galway County Council ("the Client"). No other warranty, expressed or implied, is made as to the professional advice included in this report or any other services provided by OCSC.

This assessment is based on a review of available historical information, environmental records, consultations, relevant guidance information, and reports from third parties. All information received has been taken in good faith as being true and representative.

This report has been prepared in line with the best industry standards. The methodology adopted and the sources of information used by OCSC in providing its services are outlined in this Report. The assessment was undertaken and described by OCSC in April 2025 and is based on the information available during that period. The scope of this report and the services are accordingly factually limited by these circumstances.

OCSC disclaim any undertaking or obligation to advise any person of any change in any matter affecting the Report which may come or be brought to OCSC's attention after the date of the Report. The conclusions

presented in this report represent OCSC's best professional judgement based on a review of the relevant information available at the time of writing. The opinions and conclusions presented are valid only to the extent that the information provided was accurate and complete.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

2.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been prepared for the proposed N83 Dunmore Regeneration – Public Realm. The N83 is a strategic National link in Galway which is a locally and regionally important route as it provides connectivity between regional centres. N83 Bridge Street in Dunmore is presently between 3.4 and 4.5 metres wide at Bridge Street, Dunmore. There is a necking effect which leads to an informal STOP/GO arrangement and occasional mounting of the footpath by vehicles. The constraints on this section of N83 has identified the need for the road to be improved for continuation of two-way traffic including Heavy Goods Vehicles. This upgrading is fundamental to facilitate the through traffic and maintaining the vibrancy of Dunmore.

As part of the project, five different options have been proposed, with Option 2 chosen as the final design. The works for Option 2 includes:
This is a short option with no additional length or additional material needed to facilitate the works in comparison to existing route. The works would include the demolition of the existing buildings, however construction of a new bridge over the Sinking River will not be required. This route is designed to facilitate an upgrade of the junction of the N83 and the R360 at Sion Hill – Gater Street. The new junction will facilitate improved pedestrian facilities, improved visibility and better junction legibility.

The brief works involved:

- Acquisition and Demolition of 5 no. derelict/vacant properties in the centre of Dunmore town on Bridge Street
- Relocation of one set of tenants from one property to another via the Galway County Council Housing Department, then acquisition and demolition of this 1 no. property also
- Setting back of boundaries to widen Bridge Street
- Widening of the Street via widening of the road carriageway, construction of wide footpaths, addition of public lighting – improvement of the public realm aspect of the street, new street furniture and planting
- The installation of broadband infrastructure along Bridge Street

The aims of this project:

- To remove all properties immediately abutting the N83 along Bridge Street, south of the Bridge, thereby removing an extensive length of dereliction in the town centre
- The widening of the N83/R328 junction to accommodate turning HGVs, thereby eliminating the need to 'do a loop of the town centre'.
- The creation of wide footpaths to accommodate pedestrian traffic.

- To aesthetically improve the street and therefore part of the town centre and public realm
- The introduction of new public lighting to improve mobility along the street for all users.
- To improve the potential of the western side of the street for new business
- To increase the attractiveness for commercial suppliers to roll out broadband on this street.
- Potential Increase in the rates of engagement of e-comers.
- Members of the Public would be able to avail of internet connectivity.
- Dunmore has the benefits of a number of tourist attraction and public amenities, free Public Wi-Fi would complement these amenities
- Local Authority would have access to a Wi-Fi network if they wished to roll out smart street future (e.g. Smart Bins, Smart parking Meters, IP Camera network).

2.2 SITE SETTING AND LOCATION

The site is located in Dunmore, County Galway. The regional site location is shown in Figure 1.1, and the study area is shown in Figure 2.1.

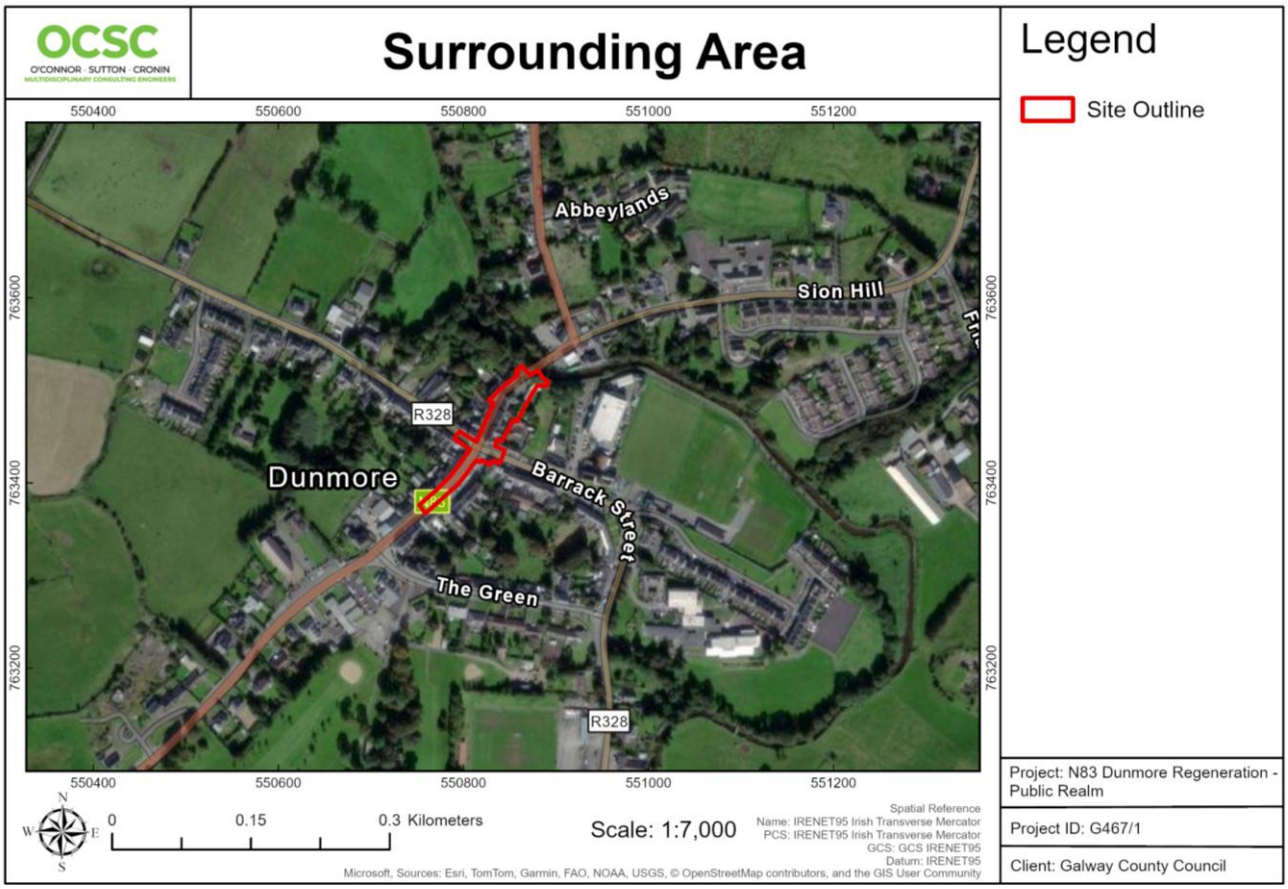


Figure 2.1: Surrounding Area, (Source: OCSC, 2025).

2.3 SURROUNDING LAND USE

The site and its surroundings are set in a predominantly mixed residential and commercial/retail with some public amenity, and greenspace land uses. The site is located in the centre of Dunmore and includes a stretch of the N83 from Barrack Street to the Sinking river, the site also includes several properties to the east of the N83. To the east of the site are residential properties, retail properties and Dunmore Rugby Football Club, north of the site is the Sinking river, greenspace and residential and retail properties. To the west of the site are residential and retail properties, greenspace and agricultural land, south of the site are residential and retail properties, Dunmore McHale's GAA Grounds and Dunmore Demesne Golf Club. See Table 2.1 for adjacent land uses.

Table 2.1. Adjacent Land Uses

Boundary	Land Use
North	Sinking river, greenspace and residential and retail properties
South	Residential and retail properties, Dunmore McHale's GAA Grounds and Dunmore Demesne Golf Club
East	Residential properties, retail properties and Dunmore Rugby Football Club
West	Residential and retail properties, greenspace and agricultural land

2.4 HYDROLOGY

The nearest surface waterbody is the Sinking river (IE_WE_30S010300) located ~12m north of the site. The Sinking river flows in a westerly direction before merging into the Clare (Galway) river (IE_WE_30C010300) before discharging into Lower Lough Corrib. Lough Ree subsequently feeds the Corrib river which ultimately discharges into the Atlantic Ocean at Galway Harbour. See Figure 2.2 and 2.3 for waterbody locations.

Based on the most recent water quality information (2016-2021), the Sinking river has an overall Water Framework Directive (WFD) status of 'Good' as shown in Figure 2.2.

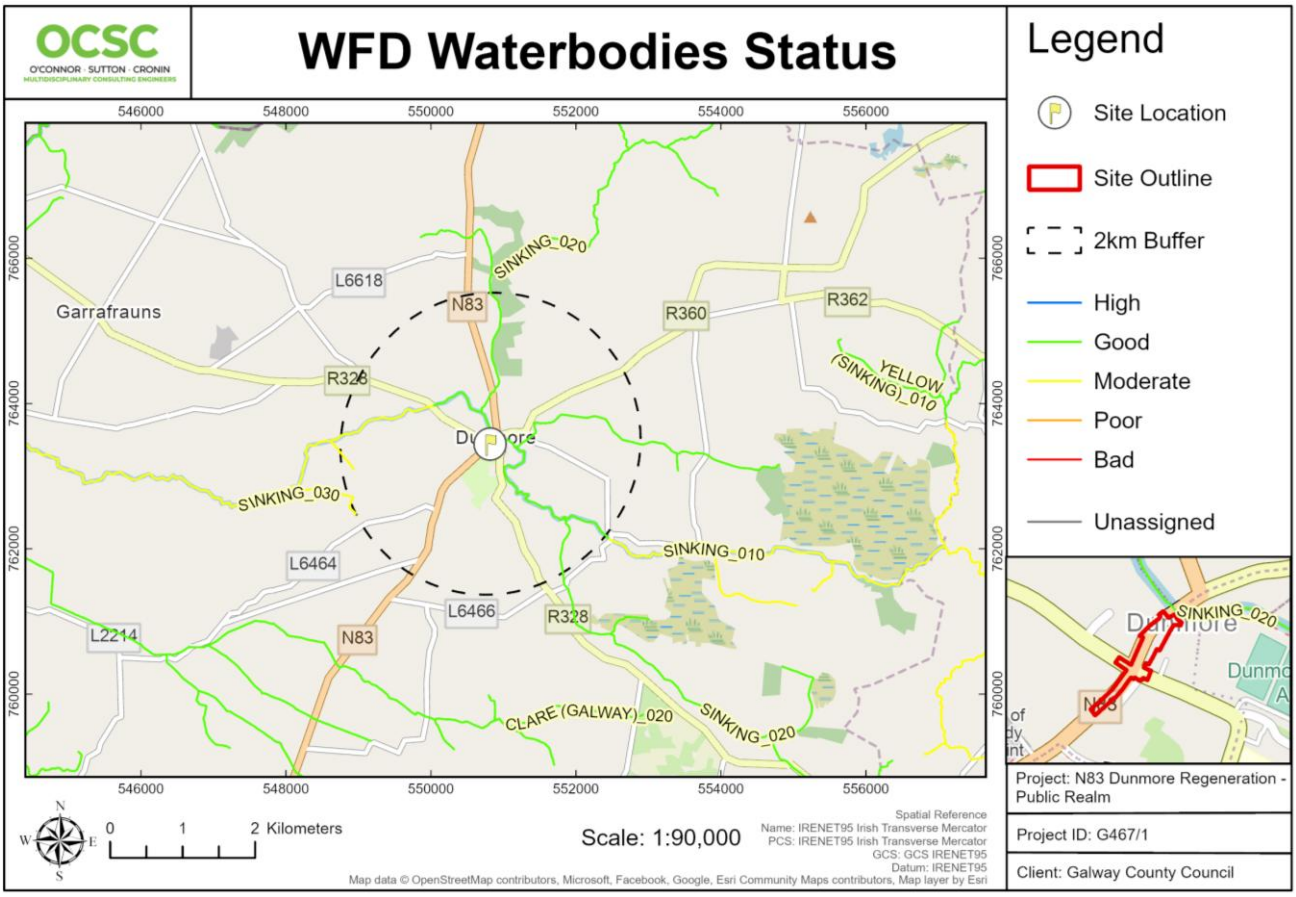


Figure 2.2: River Waterbodies Status, (Source: OCSC, 2025)

The EPA spatial dataset indicates that the Sinking river is 'not at risk' of failing to meet its WFD objectives by (EPA 2025) as shown in Figure 2.3. WFD information for these waterbodies is summarised in Table 2.2.

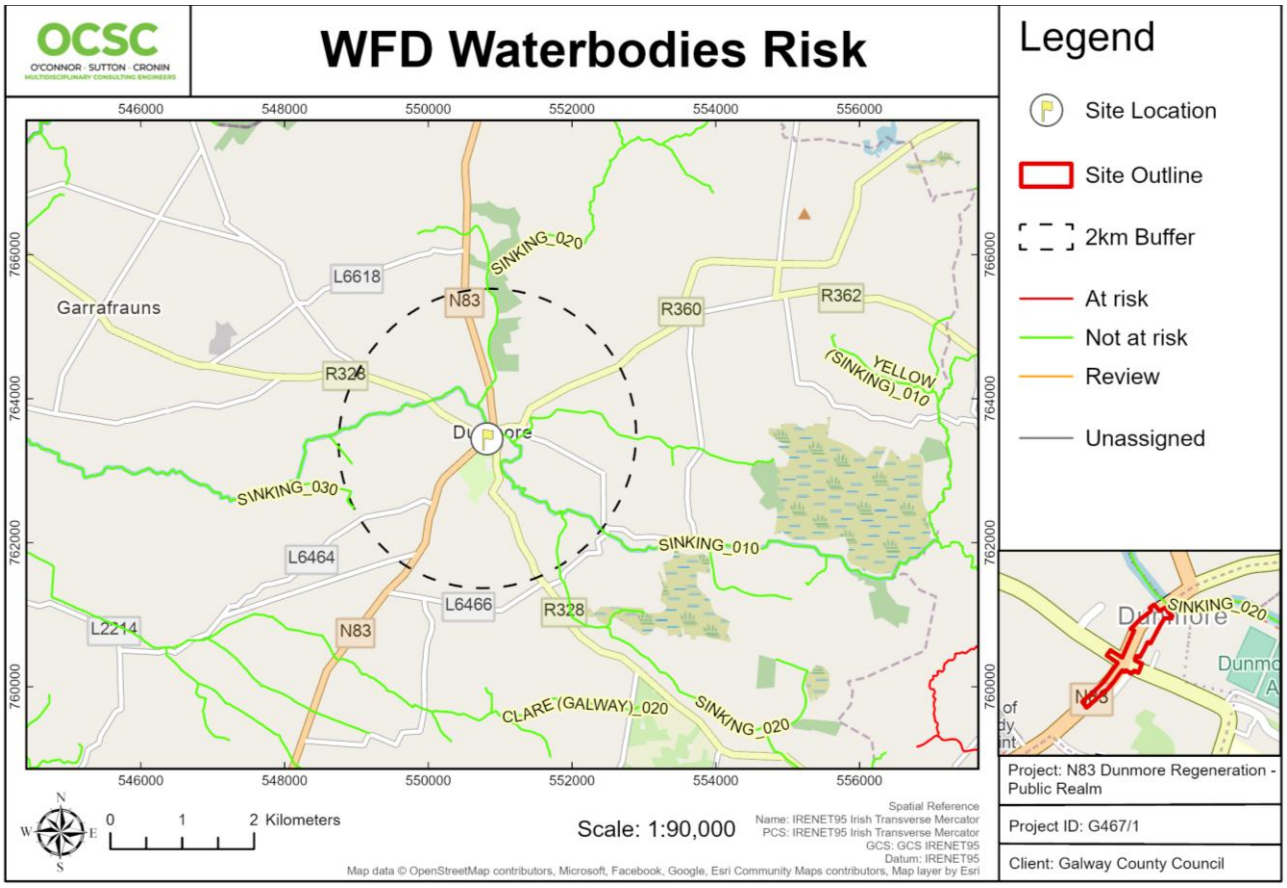


Figure 2.3: River Waterbodies Risk, (Source: OCSC, 2025).

Table 2.2. WFD Summary Information

WFD Summary Information	
Name	Sinking river
Waterbody Code	IE_WE_30S010300
Waterbody Name	SINKING_020
Waterbody Type	River
Iteration	SW 2016-2021
Status	Good
Risk	Not at Risk

3 SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

3.1 SCREENING PROCESS

This stage of the process identifies any likely significant effects to European sites from a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans. The screening phase was progressed in stages during which a series of questions were asked to determine:

- Whether a plan or project can be excluded from AA requirements because it is directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European Site.
- Whether the project will have a potentially significant effect on a European Site, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, in view of the site's conservation objectives or if residual uncertainty exists regarding potential impacts.

An important element of the AA process is the identification of the "'conservation objectives", "Qualifying Interests" (QIs), and/ or "Special Conservation Interests" (SCIs) of European sites requiring assessment. QIs are the habitat features and species listed in Annexes I and II of the Habitats Directive for which each European Site has been designated and afforded protection. SCIs are wetland habitats and bird species listed within Annexes I and II of the Birds Directive. It is also vital that the threats to the ecological/environmental conditions that are required to support QIs, and SCIs are considered as part of the assessment.

Site-Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCOs) have been designed to define favourable conservation status for a particular habitat or species at that site. Paragraph 4.6(3) of the European Commission interpretation document 'Managing Natura 2000 sites: The provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC' states:

> *"The significant effects on any European Site, in view of the site's conservation objectives, involves its ecological functions. The decision as to whether it is adversely affected should focus on and be limited to the site's conservation objectives."*

Favourable conservation status of habitat is achieved when:

- Its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing;
- The specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future; and
- The conservation status of its typical species is favourable.

The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

- Population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats;
- The natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future; and

- There is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

This AA screening is based on the best scientific knowledge and has utilised ecological and hydrological expertise. In addition, a detailed online review of published scientific literature and 'grey' literature was conducted. This included a detailed review of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) website, including mapping and available reports for relevant sites and, in particular, sensitive qualifying interests/ special conservation interests described and their conservation objectives. The EPA EnVision map viewer (EPA 2024) and available reports were also reviewed, as was the NPWS (2019) publication "The Status of Protected EU Habitats and Species in Ireland".

3.2 IDENTIFICATION OF RELEVANT EUROPEAN SITES

Appropriate Assessment screening of potential effects on European sites is conducted following a standard source-pathway-receptor model where all three elements of this mechanism must be in place for an effect to be established. The absence or removal of one of the elements of the mechanism is sufficient to conclude that a potential effect is not of any relevance or significance. The elements of this model consist of the following:

Source(s)

Identify the characteristics of the proposed development such as the nature, size and location and the type of impacts

Examples:

Direct Impacts:

- Direct emissions (water, air, noise or light).
- Loss of habitat (including breeding or foraging habitat).

Indirect Impacts:

- Loss of breeding or foraging habitat outside the European site.
- Impact on a non-QI habitat or species within the European site that is ecologically linked to the conservation objectives/QI.
- Barriers to movement e.g. aquatic species, otter, bats, bird species.
- Collision risk.
- Loss of breeding or foraging for a prey species.

Pathway(s)

Identify the existence and characteristics of the pathways that could link European sites and their Qualifying Interests to the proposed development.

Examples:

Direct Pathways:

Indirect Pathways:

- Proximity (i.e. location within the European site).
- Water bodies (rivers/streams, marine, lakes, groundwater).
- Air (for both air emissions and noise impacts).
- Disruption to migratory paths, e.g. bird species, aquatic species, bats.
- 'Sightlines' where noisy or intrusive activities may result in disturbance to shy species.

Receptor(s)

Qualifying species and habitats which may be linked to sources of impact via identified pathways. The location, nature, and sensitivities of these potential receptors must be established along with the ecological conditions underpinning their survival and the conservation objectives specified to maintain or restore favourable conservation status.

Examples:

- Freshwater Pearl Mussels' extreme sensitivity to siltation in water.
- Lesser Horseshoe Bats' sensitivity to noise and light.
- Turloughs' sensitivity to changes in groundwater levels.

Screening for Appropriate Assessment is comprised of the following steps:

(a) Describe the details of the proposed development and the characteristics of the receiving environment
(b) Identify all the potential impacts of the proposed development
(c) Define the zone of influence using the Source-Pathway-Receptor model.
(d) Identify the European site(s) within the zone of influence of the proposed development along with their Qualifying Interests and conservation objectives
(e) Determine whether the proposed development is directly connected with, or necessary to the conservation management of, any European site(s)
(f) Assess the potential effects on European sites
(g) Assess the likely significant direct and indirect effects on the conservation objectives of the site(s) in relation to project alone, and in-combination with other plans and projects.
(h) Conclusions of screening assessment process. Determine if the project, in the absence of mitigation measures will undermine the conservation objectives of the site(s) and give rise to likely significant effects.

Conservation objectives that have been considered by this assessment are included in the following NPWS documents:

- NPWS (2017) Conservation Objectives: Lough Corrib SAC 000297. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.
- NPWS (2018) Conservation Objectives: Williamstown Turloughs SAC 002296. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
- NPWS (2017) Conservation Objectives: Coolcam Turlough SAC 000218. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

- NPWS (2017) Conservation Objectives: Croaghill Turlough SAC 000255. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
- NPWS (2020) Conservation Objectives: Levally Lough SAC 000295. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.
- NPWS (2023) Conservation Objectives: Derrinlough (Cloonkeenleananode) Bog SAC 002197. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.
- NPWS (2016) Conservation Objectives: Lough Lurgeen Bog/Glenamaddy Turlough SAC 000301. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
- NPWS (2016) Conservation Objectives: Lisnageeragh Bog and Ballinastack Turlough SAC 000296. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

The locations of relevant European sites are shown on Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2. Natura sites within 15km of the site and details and distances of these from the site are included in Table 3.1.

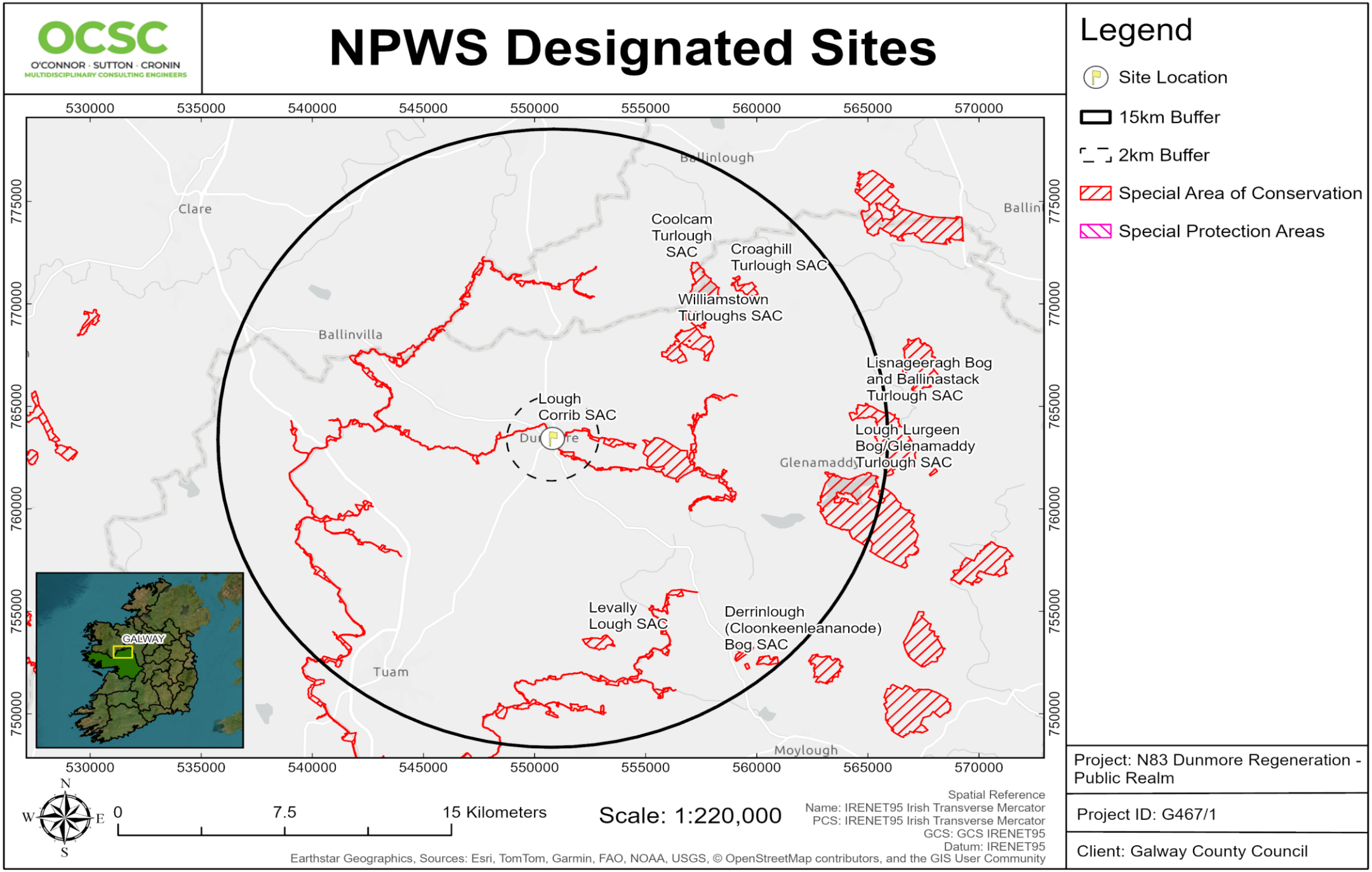


Figure 3.1: NPWS Designated Sites, (Source: OCSC, 2025)

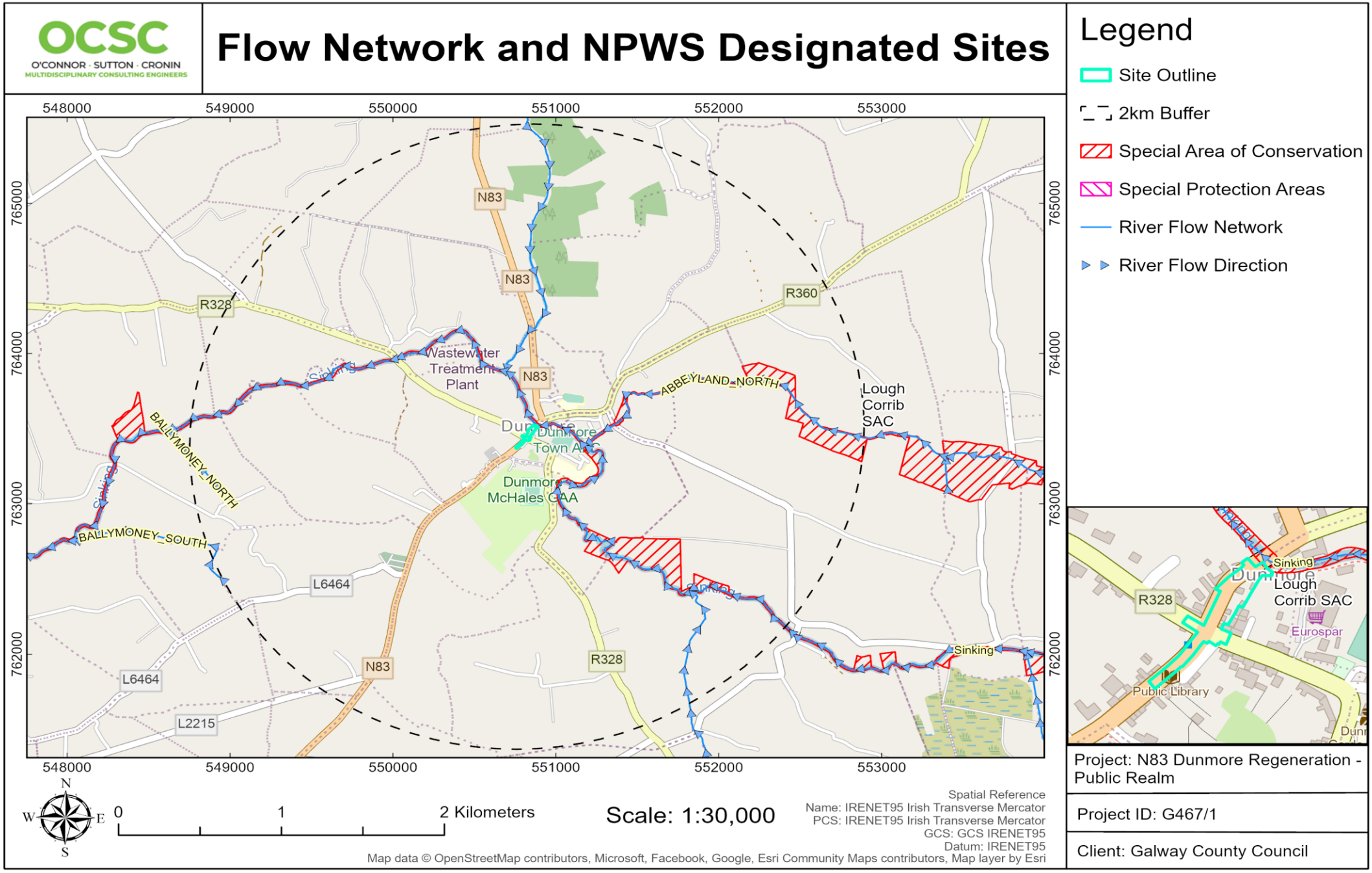


Figure 3.2: Flow Network and NPWS Designated Sites, (Source: OCSC, 2025)

Table 3.1: European Sites Within 15 km of the Proposed Works

European Sites and distance (km) to the proposed development	Sensitive Receptors (*= Priority habitats)	Conservation Objectives
Lough Corrib SAC 000297 Distance: 0.006	[3110] Oligotrophic Waters containing very few minerals [3130] Oligotrophic to Mesotrophic Standing Waters [3140] Hard Water Lakes [3260] Floating River Vegetation [6210] Orchid-rich Calcareous Grassland* [6410] Molinia Meadows [7110] Raised Bog (Active)* [7120] Degraded Raised Bog [7150] Rhynchosporion Vegetation [7210] Cladium Fens* [7220] Petrifying Springs* [7230] Alkaline Fens [8240] Limestone Pavement* [91A0] Old Oak Woodlands [91D0] Bog Woodland* [1029] Freshwater Pearl Mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*) [1092] White-clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*) [1095] Sea Lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*) [1096] Brook Lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*) [1106] Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*) [1303] Lesser Horseshoe Bat (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*) [1355] Otter (*Lutra lutra*) [1833] Slender Naiad (*Najas flexilis*) [6216] Slender Green Feather-moss (*Hamatocaulis vernicosus*)	The conservation objectives of the site are (NPWS, 28/04/2017): "To restore the favourable conservation condition of Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (*Littorelletalia uniflorae*) in Lough Corrib SAC" "To restore the favourable conservation condition of Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae and/or Isoëto-Nanojuncetea in Lough Corrib SAC" "To restore the favourable conservation condition of Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp. in Lough Corrib SAC" "To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitricho-Batrachion vegetation in Lough Corrib SAC" "To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (*Festuco-Brometalia*) (* important orchid sites) in Lough Corrib SAC" "To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinion caeruleae*) in Lough Corrib SAC" "To restore the favourable conservation condition of Active raised bogs* in Lough Corrib SAC" "To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Calcareous fens with Cladium mariscus and species of the Caricion davallianae in Lough Corrib SAC" "To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion)* in Lough Corrib SAC," "To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Alkaline fens in Lough Corrib SAC" "To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Limestone pavements* in Lough Corrib SAC" "To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles in Lough Corrib SAC" "To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Bog woodland* in Lough Corrib SAC" "To restore the favourable conservation condition of Freshwater Pearl Mussel in Lough Corrib SAC" "To maintain the favourable conservation condition of White-clawed Crayfish in Lough Corrib SAC" "To restore the favourable conservation condition of Sea Lamprey in Lough Corrib SAC" "To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Brook Lamprey in Lough Corrib SAC" "To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Atlantic Salmon in Lough Corrib SAC"

European Sites and distance (km) to the proposed development	Sensitive Receptors (*= Priority habitats)	Conservation Objectives
		"To restore the favourable conservation condition of Lesser Horseshoe Bat in Lough Corrib SAC" "To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Otter in Lough Corrib SAC" "To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Slender Green Feather-moss (Shining Sickle-moss) in Lough Corrib SAC" "To restore the favourable conservation condition of Slender Naiad in Lough Corrib SAC" Available at: **https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000297.pdf**
Williamstown Turloughs SAC 002296 Distance: 6.23 NE	[3180] Turloughs*	The conservation objectives of the site are (NPWS, 31/01/2018): "To restore the favourable conservation condition of Turloughs* in Williamstown Turloughs SAC" Available at: **https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002296.pdf**
Coolcam Turlough SAC 000218 Distance: 9.3 NE	[3180] Turloughs*	The conservation objectives of the site are (NPWS, 07/11/2017): "To restore the favourable conservation condition of Turloughs* in Coolcam Turlough SAC" Available at: **https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000218.pdf**
Levally Lough SAC 000295 Distance: 9.82 S	[3180] Turloughs*	The conservation objectives of the site are (NPWS, 16/12/2020): "To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Turloughs in Levally Lough SAC" Available at: **https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000295.pdf**
Croaghill Turlough SAC 000255 Distance: 10.86 S	[3180] Turloughs*	The conservation objectives of the site are (NPWS, 20/11/2017): "To restore the favourable conservation condition of Turloughs* in Croaghill Turlough SAC"

European Sites and distance (km) to the proposed development	Sensitive Receptors (*= Priority habitats)	Conservation Objectives
		Available at: **https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000255.pdf**
Lough Lurgeen Bog/Glenamaddy Turlough SAC 000301 Distance: 12.29 E	[3180] Turloughs* [3270] Chenopodion rubri p.p. and Bidention p.p. vegetation [7110] Raised Bog (Active)* [7120] Degraded Raised Bog [7150] Rhynchosporion Vegetation	The conservation objectives of the site are (NPWS, 04/04/2016): "To restore the favourable conservation condition of Turloughs in Lough Lurgeen Bog/Glenamaddy Turlough SAC" "To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Rivers with muddy banks with Chenopodion rubri p.p. and Bidention p.p. vegetation" "To restore the favourable conservation condition of Active raised bogs in Lough Lurgeen Bog/Glenamaddy Turlough SAC" Available at: **https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000301.pdf**
Derrinlough (Cloonkeenleananode) Bog SAC 002197 Distance: 12.98 SE	[7120] Degraded Raised Bog	The conservation objectives of the site are (NPWS 19/07/2023): "To restore the favourable conservation condition of Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration in Derrinlough (Cloonkeenleananode) Bog SAC" Available at: **https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002197.pdf**
Lisnageeragh Bog and Ballinastack Turlough SAC 000296 Distance: 13.32 E	[3180] Turloughs* [7110] Raised Bog (Active)* [7120] Degraded Raised Bog [7150] Rhynchosporion Vegetation	The conservation Objectives of this site are (NPWS 22/03/2016): "To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Turloughs in Lisnageeragh Bog and Ballinastack Turlough SAC" "To restore the favourable conservation condition of Active raised bogs in Lisnageeragh Bog and Ballinastack Turlough SAC" Available at: **https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000296.pdf**

3.3 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

3.3.1 EXCLUSION FROM APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

As set out in the provisions of the Habitats Directive, plans or projects that are directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European Site do not require AA. For this exception to apply, management is required to be interpreted narrowly as nature conservation management in the sense of Article 6(1) of the Habitats Directive. This refers to specific measures to address the ecological requirements of annexed habitats and species (and their habitats) present on a site(s). The relationship should be shown to be direct and not a by-product of the plan, even if this might result in positive or beneficial effects for a site(s).

In this case, however, N83 Dunmore Regeneration, Public Realm at Dunmore in County Galway is neither necessary for, nor directly connected with the management of a European Site. As such, the development cannot be excluded from AA.

3.3.2 ELEMENTS OF WORK WITH POTENTIAL TO GIVE RISE TO EFFECTS

The construction and operational phases of the proposed development have the potential to introduce effects such as indirect disturbance due to noise/vibrations and surface water run-off. These effects are examined in detail in relation to the sensitive receptors of each of the European sites identified with regard to the conservation objectives and the potential pathways for effects.

3.3.3 IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL EFFECTS AND SCREENING OF SITES

This section documents the final stage of the screening process. It uses the information collected on the sensitivity of each European Site and describes any impact to have likely significant effects on any European Site, in view of the site's conservation objectives, resulting from the proposed works. This assessment assumes the absence of any controls, conditions, or mitigation measures. In determining the potential for effects, a number of factors have been considered including the sensitivity and reported threats to the European Site and the individual elements of the proposed works and the potential effect they may cause to the site.

Sites are screened out based on one or a combination of the following criteria:

- Where it can be shown that there are no significant pathways such as hydrological links between activities of the proposed works and the site to be screened;
- Where the site is located at such a distance from proposed works that effects are not foreseen; and/ or

- Where it is that known threats or vulnerabilities at a site cannot be linked to potential impacts that may arise from the proposed works.

3.4 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL EFFECTS

Assessment is the process of evaluating the importance or significance of project/plan effects (whether negative or positive). The following parameters are described when characterising impacts (following guidance from the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, the Environmental Protection Agency, and Transport Infrastructure Ireland/ National Roads Authority):

Direct and Indirect Impacts – An impact can be caused either as a direct or as an indirect consequence of proposed development.

Magnitude - Magnitude refers to size, amount, intensity, and volume. It should be quantified if possible and expressed in absolute or relative terms (e.g., the amount of habitat lost, percentage change to habitat area, percentage decline in a species population). Magnitude measures the size of an impact which is described as high, medium, low, very low, or negligible.

Extent - The extent is the spatial or geographical area over which the impact/effect may occur under a suitably representative range of conditions (e.g. noise transmission underwater).

Duration - The time for which the effect is expected to last prior to recovery or replacement of the resource or feature.

- Temporary: the effects would take up to 1 year to be mitigated;
- Short Term: the effects would take 1-7 years to be mitigated;
- Medium Term: the effects would take 7-15 years to be mitigated;
- Long Term: the effects would take 15-60 years to be mitigated; and
- Permanent: the effects would take 60+ years to be mitigated.

Likelihood – The probability of an impact/effect occurring taking into account all available information.

- Certain/Near Certain: >95% chance of occurring as predicted;
- Probable: 50-95% chance as occurring as predicted;
- Unlikely: 5-50% chance as occurring as predicted; and
- Extremely Unlikely: <5% chance as occurring as predicted.

The document 'Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, European Commission Environment DG, 2001' outlines the types of effects that may impact European sites. These include effects from the following activities:

- Land take

- Resource requirements (drinking water abstraction, etc.)
- Emissions (disposal to land, water, or air)
- Excavation requirements
- Transportation requirements
- Duration of construction, operation, decommissioning

In addition, the guidance outlines the following likely changes that may occur at a designated site which may result in significant effects on any European Site and its function, in view of its conservation objectives:

- Reduction of habitat area
- Disturbance to key species
- Habitat or species fragmentation
- Reduction in species density
- Changes in key indicators of conservation value (water quality, etc.)
- Climate change

The elements detailed above were considered with reference to each of the European sites identified within the ZoI of the site (Table 3.1).

3.4.1 LAND TAKE/HABITAT LOSS

There is no overlap between the site and any European sites, therefore there is no anticipated land take or habitat loss posed to European sites from the proposed works.

3.4.2 RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

There are no resource requirements (i.e. mineral/drinking water abstractions, etc.) for the proposed project. Therefore, there will be no interactions with resources necessary for the maintenance of the ecological integrity of any European sites.

3.4.3 DURATION OF WORKS

The construction phase of the proposed works is anticipated to be short term. Given the relatively small-scale and short-term nature of the construction works, the duration of the works is extremely unlikely to have any impact on nearby European sites.

3.4.4 EMISSIONS (DISPOSAL TO LAND, WATER OR AIR)

Construction phase:

Potential water quality impacts during construction phase include increased siltation and turbidity to surface runoff as well as pollution from surface runoff due to accidental spillages of oils or fuels from machinery, concrete/cement, paint, etc. The nearest designated site is Lough Corrib SAC (000297) located ~6m from the site. Therefore, due to the scale of the proposed project, the location of an SAC within the site, and the presence of hydrological connections impacts to designated sites are predicted to be unlikely not significant and temporary.

Construction phase elements of the plan may give rise to increased temporary effects such as noise or dust. Due to the scale of the proposed project, the location of an SAC within the site, and the presence of hydrological connections these impacts are predicted to be probable and low magnitude.

Operational Phase:
Given the nature of the site during its operational phase, no impacts to designated sites are predicted to occur provided the use of SUDs to prevent higher levels of surface water run off than previously recorded at the site.

3.4.5 EXCAVATION REQUIREMENTS/EROSION/SEDIMENTATION

The proposed works do not require significant excavation works. However, several trees are to be removed near the south bank of the Sinking River. Therefore, given the location of Lough Corrib SAC within the site and removal of trees in close proximity to the Sinking River, the impacts arising from excavation, erosion, and sedimentation are considered to be probable, brief and not significant.

3.4.6 TRANSPORTATION REQUIREMENTS

There will be a small, short-term increase in traffic during the construction phase. These effects are considered not significant with regard to European sites due to the small scale and short duration of the construction works.

3.4.7 DURATION OF CONSTRUCTION, OPERATION, DECOMMISSIONING

The proposed project duration is short term. The N83 Dunmore Regeneration – Public Realm project will be a permanent feature with no decommissioning phase. Given the small scale and short duration of the construction, impacts stemming from; duration of construction, operation and decommissioning are considered to be extremely unlikely and imperceptible with regards to European sites.

3.4.8 HABITAT REDUCTION

Although Lough Corrib SAC is located within the site, there are no supporting habitats identified within the site footprint for any Annex I or Annex II species. As such, there will be no reduction of habitat of European sites resulting from the proposed development.

3.4.9 SPECIES DISTURBANCE

Of the protected sites, the closest one, Lough Corrib SAC, which is located ~6m from the site. Considering the distance to these sites as well as the scale and duration of the proposed works, disturbance from noise, vibrations, lighting, etc. impacting on these SACs is probable, temporary and not significant.

3.4.10 HABITAT OR SPECIES FRAGMENTATION

Given the scale, timeline, and nature of the proposed works the proposal is considered to have no potential effects on any European site with regard to habitat or species fragmentation.

3.4.11 CHANGES IN KEY INDICATORS OF CONSERVATION VALUE

Given the location of Lough Corrib SAC, ~6m from the site there is a direct pathway for impacts to Lough Corrib SAC. As such, changes in key indicators of conservation value on these sites resulting from the proposed works are considered to be probable, temporary and not significant.

3.4.12 CLIMATE CHANGE

Due to the nature and scale of the proposed work, the effects of the proposed development on climate and Ireland's obligations under the Kyoto Protocol are predicted to be not significant.

3.4.13 COMBINATION EFFECTS WITH OTHER PROJECTS

Cumulative effects can result from individually insignificant but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time or concentrated in a location. Cumulative effects can occur where a proposed development results in individually insignificant impacts that, when considered in-combination with impacts of other proposed or permitted plans and projects, can result in significant effects.

The effects of the proposed construction are likely to be confined to the immediate area of the site and will be limited to habitat loss and habitat degradation of commonly occurring and widespread habitats as well as temporary disturbance and displacement of species within the immediate surroundings of the site. These

effects are not thought to be significant subject to the implementation of design and construction phase mitigation measures.

Proposed and granted planning applications within 1km of the site and dating back to 2019 were reviewed to identify works of a significant scale which may produce in-combination effects with the proposed works. Grants of planning in the vicinity of the site were reviewed to identify works of a significant scale which may produce in-combination effects with the proposed works. The following planning grants of larger than single domestic scale were identified:

- **Planning Application Reference 22908:** Permission for partial demolition of storage sheds to the rear yard, construction of 1 x two storey dwelling in the rear yard area, first and second floor rear extension to the existing dwelling over the shop, first floor deck area to the rear of the shop. conversion of existing first floor storage shed to studio, misc. alterations to all elevations of the existing dwelling, associated siteworks, hard and soft landscaping. The application is subject to AA Screening and Flood Risk Assessment. Gross floor space of proposed works: 167.24 sqm
- **Planning Application Reference 2461697:** Permission for partial demolition of boundary wall to the north, replacement and repair of existing roof finishes, car parking, misc. alterations to west elevation of the existing building, associated site works, hard and soft landscaping. Gross floor space of work to be retained: 426 sqm

Other granted planning permissions in the vicinity of the site pertain primarily to small-scale constructions, change of use, or retention of works. However, these larger grants and the smaller scale grants of planning, and existing businesses and amenities in the vicinity of the site are unlikely to produce significant in-combination effects with the proposed development.

The Galway County Council County Development Plan 2022-2028 was consulted to assess any impacts of the proposed works along with future development projects planned within the surrounding area. The Development Plan identifies areas within the county outlined for development along with the development aims.

The development plan is unlikely to produce any negative in-combination effects to the site. The proposed development will likely provide positive in-combination effects to the development plan within the vicinity of the site to help achieve their objectives and goals.

Table 3.2. Screening assessment of the potential effects arising from the proposed works

European Sites and distance to the proposed development	Sensitive Receptors (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, www.npws.ie on 21/03/2025)	Identification of Impact Pathways and Screening Assessment
Lough Corrib SAC 000297 Distance: 0.006	[3110] Oligotrophic Waters containing very few minerals [3130] Oligotrophic to Mesotrophic Standing Waters [3140] Hard Water Lakes [3260] Floating River Vegetation [6210] Orchid-rich Calcareous Grassland* [6410] Molinia Meadows [7110] Raised Bog (Active)* [7120] Degraded Raised Bog [7150] Rhynchosporion Vegetation [7210] Cladium Fens* [7220] Petrifying Springs* [7230] Alkaline Fens [8240] Limestone Pavement* [91A0] Old Oak Woodlands [91D0] Bog Woodland* [1029] Freshwater Pearl Mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*) [1092] White-clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*) [1095] Sea Lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*) [1096] Brook Lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*) [1106] Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*) [1303] Lesser Horseshoe Bat (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*) [1355] Otter (*Lutra lutra*) [1833] Slender Naiad (*Najas flexilis*) [6216] Slender Green Feather-moss (*Hamatocaulis vernicosus*)	There will be no direct effects as the project footprint is located entirely outside the designated site. There will be no land take or possibility of encroachment into the SAC as part of the construction, operational, or decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development; therefore, no pathways for direct effects on the QI habitats of the SAC exist. Given the intervening distance and the nature and scale of the Proposed Development, no potential pathway for indirect effects on the terrestrial QI habitats of the SAC exists. The proposed site shares a hydrological sub-catchment with the SAC and hydrological connectivity exists between the SAC and the Proposed Development works. There is therefore potential pathway for significant effects on the aquatic dependant QI habitats and species of the SAC. No other potential pathway for significant effect on this SAC exists. **The SAC is inside the Likely Zone of Impact and further assessment is required.**
Williamstown Turloughs SAC 002296 Distance: 6.23 NE	[3180] Turloughs*	There will be no direct effects as the project footprint is located entirely outside the designated site. There will be no land take or possibility of encroachment into the SAC as part of the construction, operational, or decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development; therefore, no pathways for direct effects on the QI habitats of the SAC exist. The proposed site shares the same hydrological sub-catchment as the SAC. However, due to the nature of the works and the lack of hydrological connections and subject to the following of best practice guidelines, no significant impacts are likely to occur. Therefore, there is no

European Sites and distance to the proposed development	Sensitive Receptors (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, www.npws.ie on 21/03/2025)	Identification of Impact Pathways and Screening Assessment
		potential pathway for significant effects on the aquatic dependant QI habitats and species of the SAC. No other potential pathway for significant effect on this SAC exists. **The SAC is outside the Likely Zone of Impact and no further assessment is required.**
Coolcam Turlough SAC 000218 Distance: 9.3 NE	[3180] Turloughs*	There will be no direct effects as the project footprint is located entirely outside the designated site. There will be no land take or possibility of encroachment into the SAC as part of the construction, operational, or decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development; therefore, no pathways for direct effects on the QI habitats of the SAC exist. Given the intervening distance and the nature and scale of the Proposed Development, no potential pathway for indirect effects on the terrestrial QI habitats of the SAC exists. The proposed site is in a separate hydrological sub-catchment as the SAC and no hydrological connectivity exists between the SAC and the Proposed Development works. There is therefore no potential pathway for significant effects on the aquatic dependant QI habitats and species of the SAC. No other potential pathway for significant effect on this SAC exists. **The SAC is outside the Likely Zone of Impact and no further assessment is required.**
Levally Lough SAC 000295 Distance: 9.82 S	[3180] Turloughs*	There will be no direct effects as the project footprint is located entirely outside the designated site. There will be no land take or possibility of encroachment into the SAC as part of the construction, operational, or decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development; therefore, no pathways for direct effects on the QI habitats of the SAC exist. Given the intervening distance and the nature and scale of the Proposed Development, no potential pathway for indirect effects on the terrestrial QI habitats of the SAC exists. The proposed site is in a separate hydrological sub-catchment as the SAC and no hydrological connectivity exists between the SAC and the Proposed Development works. There is therefore no potential pathway for significant effects on the aquatic dependant QI habitats and species of the SAC. No other potential pathway for significant effect on this SAC exists. **The SAC is outside the Likely Zone of Impact and no further assessment is required.**
Croaghill Turlough SAC 000255 Distance: 10.86 S	[3180] Turloughs*	There will be no direct effects as the project footprint is located entirely outside the designated site. There will be no land take or possibility of encroachment into the SAC as part of the construction, operational, or decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development; therefore, no pathways for direct effects on the QI habitats of the SAC exist. Given the intervening distance and the nature and scale of the Proposed Development, no potential pathway for indirect effects on the terrestrial QI habitats of the SAC exists. The proposed site is in a separate hydrological sub-catchment as the SAC and no hydrological

European Sites and distance to the proposed development	Sensitive Receptors (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, www.npws.ie on 21/03/2025)	Identification of Impact Pathways and Screening Assessment
		connectivity exists between the SAC and the Proposed Development works. There is therefore no potential pathway for significant effects on the aquatic dependant QI habitats and species of the SAC. No other potential pathway for significant effect on this SAC exists. **The SAC is outside the Likely Zone of Impact and no further assessment is required.**
Lough Lurgeen Bog/Glenamaddy Turlough SAC 000301 Distance: 12.29 E	[3180] Turloughs* [3270] Chenopodion rubri p.p. and Bidention p.p. vegetation [7110] Raised Bog (Active)* [7120] Degraded Raised Bog [7150] Rhynchosporion Vegetation	There will be no direct effects as the project footprint is located entirely outside the designated site. There will be no land take or possibility of encroachment into the SAC as part of the construction, operational, or decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development; therefore, no pathways for direct effects on the QI habitats of the SAC exist. Given the intervening distance and the nature and scale of the Proposed Development, no potential pathway for indirect effects on the terrestrial QI habitats of the SAC exists. The proposed site is in a separate hydrological sub-catchment as the SAC and no hydrological connectivity exists between the SAC and the Proposed Development works. There is therefore no potential pathway for significant effects on the aquatic dependant QI habitats and species of the SAC. No other potential pathway for significant effect on this SAC exists. **The SAC is outside the Likely Zone of Impact and no further assessment is required.**
Derrinlough (Cloonkeenleananode) Bog SAC 002197 Distance: 12.98 SE	[7120] Degraded Raised Bog	There will be no direct effects as the project footprint is located entirely outside the designated site. There will be no land take or possibility of encroachment into the SAC as part of the construction, operational, or decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development; therefore, no pathways for direct effects on the QI habitats of the SAC exist. Given the intervening distance and the nature and scale of the Proposed Development, no potential pathway for indirect effects on the terrestrial QI habitats of the SAC exists. The proposed site is in a separate hydrological sub-catchment as the SAC and no hydrological connectivity exists between the SAC and the Proposed Development works. There is therefore no potential pathway for significant effects on the aquatic dependant QI habitats and species of the SAC. No other potential pathway for significant effect on this SAC exists. **The SAC is outside the Likely Zone of Impact and no further assessment is required.**
Lisnageeragh Bog and Ballinastack Turlough SAC 000296 Distance: 13.32 E	[3180] Turloughs* [7110] Raised Bog (Active)* [7120] Degraded Raised Bog [7150] Rhynchosporion Vegetation	There will be no direct effects as the project footprint is located entirely outside the designated site. There will be no land take or possibility of encroachment into the SAC as part of the construction, operational, or decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development; therefore, no pathways for direct effects on the QI habitats of the SAC exist. Given the intervening distance and the nature and scale of the Proposed Development, no potential pathway for indirect effects on the terrestrial QI habitats of the SAC exists. The

European Sites and distance to the proposed development	Sensitive Receptors (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, www.npws.ie on 21/03/2025)	Identification of Impact Pathways and Screening Assessment
		proposed site is in a separate hydrological sub-catchment as the SAC and no hydrological connectivity exists between the SAC and the Proposed Development works. There is therefore no potential pathway for significant effects on the aquatic dependant QI habitats and species of the SAC. No other potential pathway for significant effect on this SAC exists. **The SAC is outside the Likely Zone of Impact and no further assessment is required.**

4 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

4.1 SUMMARY

The Habitats Directive provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance and establishes the requirement for an AA. This AA screening is based on best scientific knowledge and has utilised ecological and hydrological expertise. In addition, a detailed online review of published scientific literature and 'grey' literature was conducted.

This AA has been prepared for the N83 Dunmore Regeneration – Public Realm project in Dunmore, Co. Galway. There is no spatial overlap between the study area and the closest Natura Site Lough Corrib SAC (000297). Due to the lack of spatial overlap and the nature of the works, impacts to Lough Corrib SAC are predicted to be probable, temporary and not significant. The next closest Natura Site is Williamstown Turlough SAC (002296), located 6.2km northeast of the site, there is no hydrological connection between the study area and Williamstown Turloughs SAC or any other Natura Sites within the 15km ZOI. Therefore, impacts to the remainder of European sites within the ZOI are predicted to be Unlikely and not significant.

Changes are predicted to occur at Lough Corrib SAC which may result in effects on the conservation objectives with regard to the following:

- disturbance to key species
- changes in key indicators of conservation value

4.2 CONCLUSION

This stage 1 screening for AA of the N83 Dunmore Regeneration – Public Realm in Dunmore, Co. Galway has considered potential effects which may arise during the construction and operational phases as a result of the implementation of the project.

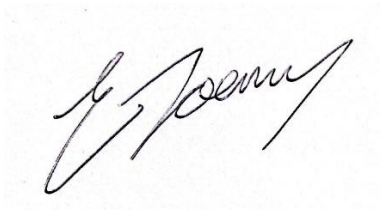
The AA screening process has considered potential effects which may arise during the construction and operational phases as a result of the implementation of the project. Through an assessment of the pathways for effects and an evaluation of the project characteristics, taking into account the processes involved and the distance of separation from European sites, it has been evaluated that adverse effects on the qualifying interests, special conservation interests, or the conservation objectives of Lough Corrib SAC are probable to occur as a result of the proposed project. However, due to the lack of spatial overlap between the site and Lough Corrib SAC as well as the nature of the works, these impacts are predicted to be temporary and not significant.

On the basis of objective information and in view of best scientific knowledge, the proposed development, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, and without relying on any mitigation

measures, is unlikely to have a significant effect on Lough Corrib SAC, in view of the sites' conservation objectives, and there is no reasonable scientific doubt in relation to this conclusion. Consequently, this project screens out and a Stage Two Appropriate Assessment is not required for the project.

5 VERIFICATION

This report was compiled by Eoin Toomey, BA, Consultant Ecologist, reviewed by Glenda Barry, BSc, MSc, PGeo, EurGeol, Associate Consultant; and approved by Eleanor Burke, BSc, MSc, DAS, MIEnvSc, CSci, OCSC Director (Environmental).



Eoin Toomey, BA
Associate Ecologist
O'Connor Sutton Cronin & Associates

OCSC
O'CONNOR · SUTTON · CRONIN
MULTIDISCIPLINARY CONSULTING ENGINEERS

OCSC

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