

Article 6 (3) Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

Proposed Graveyard
Extension at Cloonlee, Co.
Galway





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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

MKO has been appointed to provide the information necessary to allow the competent authority to conduct an Article 6(3) Screening for Appropriate Assessment of the expansion of an existing burial ground, in Cloonlee, Loughrea, Co. Galway (Grid Reference: M 72206 10770).

Screening for Appropriate Assessment is required under Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive). Where it cannot be excluded that a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, would have a significant effect on a European Site then same shall be subject to an appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. The current project is not directly connected with, or necessary for, the management of any European Site consequently the project has been subject to the Appropriate Assessment Screening process.

The assessment in this report is based on a desk study and field surveys undertaken during July/August 2022. It specifically assesses the potential for the proposed development to result in significant effects on European sites in the absence of any best practice, mitigation or preventative measures.

This Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been prepared in accordance with the European Commission's Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological Guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2021) and Managing Natura 2000 Sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2018) as well as the Department of the Environment's Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG, 2010) and the Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management. Office of the Planning Regulator, Dublin 7, Ireland OPR (2021).

In addition to the guidelines referenced above, the following relevant documents were also considered in the preparation of this report:

1. *Council of the European Commission (1992) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. Official Journal of the European Communities. Series L 20, pp. 7-49.*
2. *EC (2007) Guidance document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitats Directive' 92/43/EEC - Clarification of the concepts of: alternative solutions, imperative reasons of overriding public interest, compensatory measures, overall coherence. Opinion of the commission.*
3. *EC (2013) Interpretation Manual of European Union Habitats. Version EUR 28. European Commission.*

1.2 Appropriate Assessment

1.2.1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment

Screening is the process of determining whether an Appropriate Assessment is required for a plan or project. Under Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, screening must be carried out by the Competent Authority. As per Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended 'A screening for appropriate assessment shall be carried out by the competent authority to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if that Land use plan or proposed development, individually or in combination with another plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on the European site'. The Competent Authority's determination as to whether an Appropriate Assessment is required must be made on the basis of objective information and should be recorded. The Competent Authority may request information to be supplied to enable it to carry out screening.

Consultants or project proponents may provide for the competent authority, the information necessary for them to determine whether an Appropriate Assessment is required and provide advice to assist them in the Article 6(3) Appropriate Assessment Screening decision.

Where it cannot be excluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt at the Screening stage, that a proposed plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, would have a significant effect on the conservation objectives of a European site, an Appropriate Assessment is required.

Where an Appropriate Assessment is required, the Competent Authority may require the applicant to prepare a Natura Impact Statement.

The term Natura Impact Statement (NIS) is defined in legislation¹. An NIS, where required, should present the data, information and analysis necessary to reach a definitive determination as to 1) the implications of the plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, for a European site in view of its conservation objectives, and 2) whether there will be adverse effects on the integrity of a European site. The NIS should be underpinned by best scientific knowledge, objective information and by the precautionary principle.

This Article 6(3) Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been prepared in compliance with the provision of section 177U of the Planning & Development Act 2010 as amended.

1.2.2 Statement of Authority

A baseline ecological survey was undertaken on the 9th of August 2022 by John Hynes (BSc. Env., QCIEEM) of MKO, who has 10 years' experience in ecological assessment. This report has been prepared by Georgina Mooney (BSc. Env.) of MKO, who has over 1 years' professional ecological consultancy experience., and reviewed by Sibeal Fallon (B.Sc. Env., QCIEEM) who has over 2 years' professional ecological consultancy experience.

¹ As defined in Section 177T of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended, an NIS means a statement, for the purposes of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, of the implications of a proposed development, on its own and in combination with other plans and projects, for a European site in view of its conservation objectives. It is required to include a report of a scientific examination of evidence and data, carried out by competent persons to identify and classify any implications for the European site in view of its conservation objectives

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Site Location

The proposed site is located in the townland of Cloonlee along a local road in the Bracklagh Electoral District, Loughrea, Co. Galway (Irish Grid Reference: M 72206 10770) and covers an area of approximately 0.1 hectare. The village of Killimor is located approximately 8.5km east of the site.

The site location is shown in Figure 2.1.

2.2 Characteristics of the Works

2.2.1 Description of the works

The proposed development will consist of:

- An extension of 0.1 ha to the existing graveyard at Cloonlee
- The provision of 66 double burial plots
- The removal of a chain link fence and wooden fence posts separating the project area from the existing burial ground to the north of the project area.
- The removal of a number of mature trees and scrub adjacent to the southern boundary of the site.
- The erection of a post and rail fence along the southern and eastern boundaries, with additional laurel hedging to be planted along the eastern boundary.

2.2.2 Description of the Baseline Ecological Environment

Assessing the impacts of any project and associated activities requires an understanding of the ecological baseline conditions prior to and at the time of the project proceeding. Ecological baseline conditions are those existing in the absence of proposed activities (CIEEM 2018). Multidisciplinary ecological walkover surveys were conducted on the 9th August 2022 in line with NRA (2009) guidelines (Ecological Surveying Techniques for Protected Flora and Fauna during the Planning of National Road Schemes) by John Hynes of MKO. All habitats within the site were readily identifiable during the visit.

The project area consists of Dry meadows and grassy verges (**GS2**), with surrounding vegetation including sweet vernal grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*), hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*), creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), dock (*Rumex* spp.), and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) (Plate 2-1).

An area of scrub (**WS1**), with instances of a mature ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) tree and a mature spruce (*Picea* spp.) tree are present adjacent to the southern boundary (Plate 2-2).

The site is bounded by an existing block stone wall, classified as Buildings and artificial surfaces (**BL3**), with instances of ivy (*Hedera helix*) also present (Plate 2-3). A storm drain is present to the east of the project area, along the local road, and is separated from the project area by the block stone wall (Plate 2-4).

No habitats or species listed under Annex I and Annex II of the Habitats Directive were recorded within or directly adjacent to the footprint of the project area.

No species listed under the Third Schedule of SI 477 were recorded within the surveyed areas.



Plate 2-1 The proposed project area, which consists of Dry meadows/grassy verges (GS2)



Plate 2-2 Mature ash and spruce trees, present in an area of scrub (WS4) along the southern boundary



Plate 2-3 Block stone wall (BL3), along the western boundary.




Plate 2-4 Storm drain, adjacent to the western boundary, buffered from the sit by the block stone wall.



Map Legend

- ◆ Site location
- Site Boundary
- Special Protection Area (SPA)
- WFD Hydrological Catchments


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Drawing Title

Site Location

Project Title	
Proposed Graveyard Extension at Clonlee, Co. Galway	
Drawn By	Checked By
GM	SF
Project No.	Drawing No.
220713	Fig. 2-1
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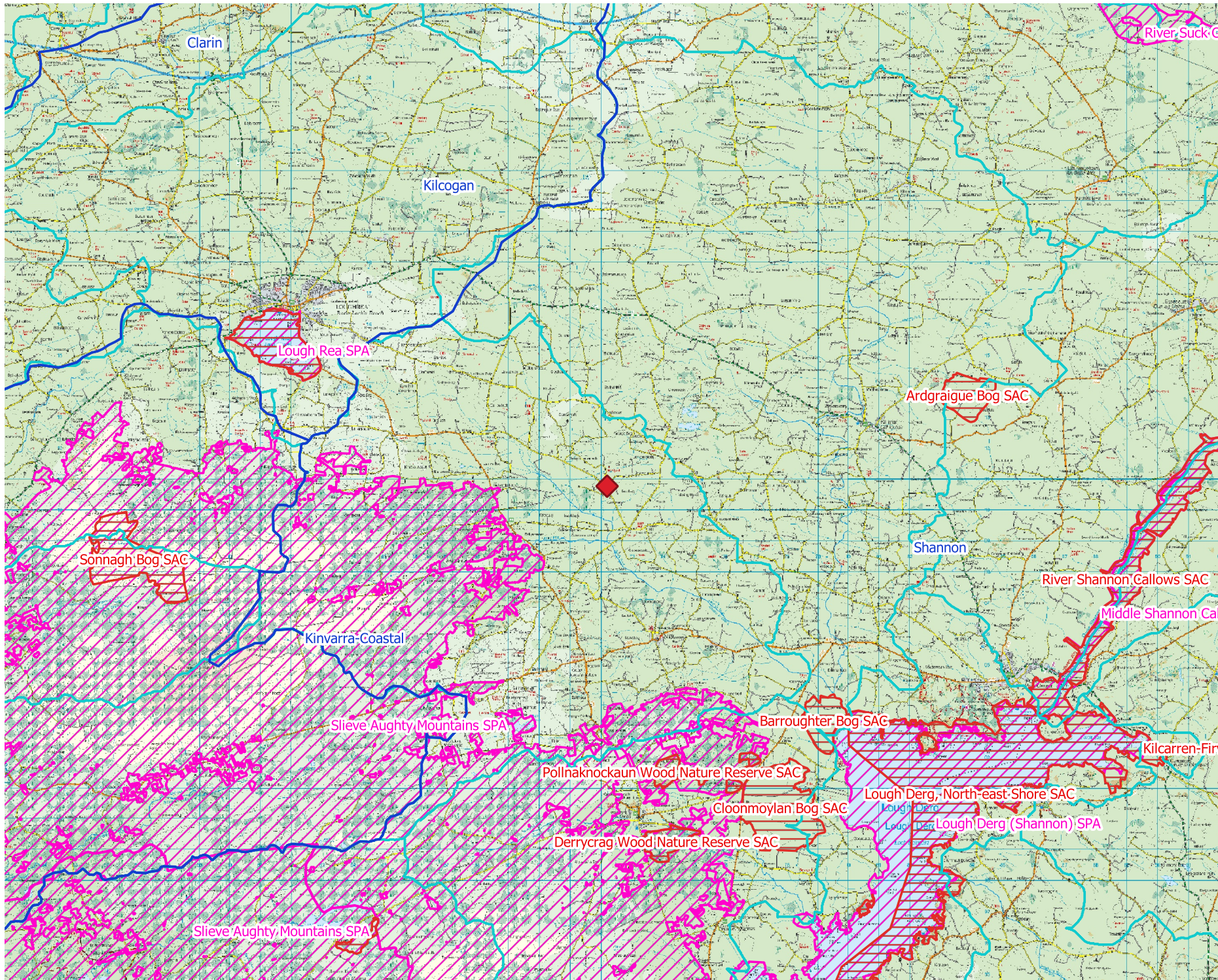
3. IDENTIFICATION OF RELEVANT EUROPEAN SITES

3.1 Identification of the European Sites within the Likely Zone of Impact






The following methodology was used to establish which European Sites are within the Likely Zone of Impact of the proposed development:

- Initially the most up to date GIS spatial datasets for European designated sites and water catchments were downloaded from the NPWS website (www.npws.ie) and the EPA website (www.epa.ie) on the 23/08/2022. The datasets were utilized to identify European Sites which could feasibly be affected by the proposed development.
- All European Sites that could potentially be affected were identified using a source-pathway - receptor model. To provide context for the assessment, European Sites within a distance of 15km surrounding the development site are shown on Figure 3.1. Information on these sites with regard to their conservation objectives is provided in Table 3-1². Sites that were further away from the proposed development were also considered and no complete source-pathway-receptor chain for significant effect was identified for any European Site that was further than 15km from the site.
- The catchment mapping was used to establish or discount potential hydrological connectivity between the site of the proposed development and any European Sites. The hydrological catchments are also shown in Figure 3.1.
- In relation to Special Protection Areas, in the absence of any specific European or Irish guidance in relation to such sites, the Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) Guidance, ‘Assessing Connectivity with Special Protection Areas (SPA)’ (2016) was consulted. This document provides guidance in relation to the identification of connectivity between proposed development and Special Protection Areas. The guidance takes into consideration the distances species may travel beyond the boundary of their SPAs and provides information on dispersal and foraging ranges of bird species which are frequently encountered when considering plans and projects.
- Table 3.1, provides details of all relevant European Sites as identified in the preceding steps and assesses which are within the likely Zone of Impact. The assessment considers any likely direct or indirect impacts of the proposed development, both alone and in combination with other plans and projects, on European Sites by virtue of the following criteria: size and scale, land-take, distance from the European Site or key features of the site, resource requirements, emissions, excavation requirements, transportation requirements and duration of construction, operation and decommissioning were considered in this screening assessment.
- The site synopses and conservation objectives of these sites, as per the NPWS website (www.npws.ie), were consulted and reviewed at the time of preparing this report 23/08/2022.
- Where potential pathways for Significant Effect are identified, the site is included within the Likely Zone of Impact and further assessment is required.


² Office of the Planning Regulator (2021) guidance; ‘OPR Practice Note PN01 Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management’, utilises the Source-Pathway-Receptor model. This Appropriate Assessment Screening Report follows this guidance as well as providing information on European sites located within 15km of the proposed development as recommended in guidance provided by DEHLG (2010).



Map Legend

-  Site location
-  Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
-  Special Protection Area (SPA)
-  WFD Hydrological Catchments
-  WFD Hydrological Sub-catchments

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Drawing Title	
European Sites within 15km	
Project Title	
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Table 3.1 Designated sites within the Likely Zone of Impact

European Sites and distance from proposed development	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, www.npws.ie on the 23/08/2022	Conservation Objectives	Likely Zone of Impact Determination
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)			
<p>Pollnacknockaun Wood Nature Reserve SAC [000319]</p> <p>Distance: Approx. 8.9km</p>	<p>➤ 91A0 Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles</p>	<p>Specific conservation objectives for this site (Version 1, May 2018) were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at www.npws.ie</p>	<p>There is no potential for direct effects as the project footprint is located entirely outside the designated site.</p> <p>There is no pathway for indirect effects on the terrestrially based habitats for which the site is designated.</p> <p>No pathway for effect was identified and the site is not within the Likely Zone of Impact.</p>
<p>Barroughter Bog SAC [000231]</p> <p>Distance: Approx. 9.5km</p>	<p>➤ 7110 Active raised bogs</p> <p>➤ 7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration</p> <p>➤ 7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i></p>	<p>Specific conservation objectives for this site (Version 1, November 2015) were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at www.npws.ie</p>	<p>There is no potential for direct effects as the project footprint is located entirely outside the designated site.</p> <p>There is no pathway for indirect effects on the terrestrially based habitats for which the site is designated.</p> <p>No pathway for effect was identified and the site is not within the Likely Zone of Impact.</p>
<p>Rosturra Wood SAC [001313]</p> <p>Distance: Approx. 9.8km</p>	<p>➤ 91A0 Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles</p>	<p>Specific conservation objectives for this site (Version 1, May 2018) were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at www.npws.ie</p>	<p>There is no potential for direct effects as the project footprint is located entirely outside the designated site.</p>

European Sites and distance from proposed development	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, www.npws.ie on the 23/08/2022	Conservation Objectives	Likely Zone of Impact Determination
			<p>There is no pathway for indirect effects on the terrestrially based habitats for which the site is designated.</p> <p>No pathway for effect was identified and the site is not within the Likely Zone of Impact.</p>
<p>Cloonmoylan Bog SAC [000248]</p> <p>Distance: Approx. 10.4km</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 7110 Active raised bogs ➤ 7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration ➤ 7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> ➤ 91D0 Bog woodland 	<p>Specific conservation objectives for this site (Version 1, January 2016) were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at www.npws.ie</p>	<p>There is no potential for direct effects as the project footprint is located entirely outside the designated site.</p> <p>There is no pathway for indirect effects on the terrestrially based habitats for which the site is designated.</p> <p>No pathway for effect was identified and the site is not within the Likely Zone of Impact.</p>
<p>Lough Rea SAC [000304]</p> <p>Distance: Approx. 10.0km</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 3140 Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp. 	<p>Specific conservation objectives for this site (Version 1, July 2019) were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at www.npws.ie</p>	<p>There is no potential for direct effects as the project footprint is located entirely outside the designated site.</p> <p>The SAC is located in a separate surface water catchment area as the proposed works site, and there is no surface water connectivity between the SAC and the works area.</p> <p>Due to the scale and nature of the works, the potential for significant run-off or pollution to the</p>

European Sites and distance from proposed development	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, www.npws.ie on the 23/08/2022	Conservation Objectives	Likely Zone of Impact Determination
			<p>adjacent storm drain is unlikely. The storm drain is buffered from the works area by a stone block wall. There will be no potential for significant indirect effect to the SAC via deterioration in water quality.</p> <p>No pathway for effect was identified and the site is not within the Likely Zone of Impact.</p>
<p>Lough Derg, North-east Shore SAC [002241]</p> <p>Distance: Approx. 10.8km</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 5130 <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands ➤ 7210 Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> ➤ 7230 Alkaline fens ➤ 8240 Limestone pavements ➤ 91E0 Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>) ➤ 91J0 <i>Taxus baccata</i> woods of the British Isles 	<p>Specific conservation objectives for this site (Version 1, April 2019) were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at www.npws.ie</p>	<p>There is no potential for direct effects as the project footprint is located entirely outside the designated site.</p> <p>The SPA is located within the same surface water catchment area as the proposed works site; however, there is no surface water connectivity between the SAC and the works area.</p> <p>Due to the scale and nature of the works, the potential for significant run-off or pollution to the adjacent storm drain is unlikely. The storm drain is buffered from the works area by a stone block wall. There is no potential for significant indirect effect to the SAC via deterioration in water quality.</p> <p>There is no pathway for indirect effects on the terrestrially based habitat for which the SAC is designated.</p> <p>No pathway for effect was identified and the site is not within the Likely Zone of Impact.</p>

European Sites and distance from proposed development	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, www.npws.ie on the 23/08/2022	Conservation Objectives	Likely Zone of Impact Determination
<p>Ardgraique Bog SAC [002356]</p> <p>Distance: Approx. 11.1km</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 7110 Active raised bogs ➤ 7120 Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration ➤ 7150 Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> 	<p>Specific conservation objectives for this site (Version 1, December 2015) were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at www.npws.ie</p>	<p>There is no potential for direct effects as the project footprint is located entirely outside the designated site.</p> <p>There is no pathway for indirect effects on the terrestrially based habitat for which the SAC is designated.</p> <p>No pathway for effect was identified and the site is not within the Likely Zone of Impact.</p>
<p>Derrycrag Wood Nature Reserve SAC [000261]</p> <p>Distance: Approx. 11.2km</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 91A0 Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles 	<p>Specific conservation objectives for this site (Version 1, May 2018) were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at www.npws.ie</p>	<p>There is no potential for direct effects as the project footprint is located entirely outside the designated site.</p> <p>There is no pathway for indirect effects on the terrestrially based habitat for which the SAC is designated.</p> <p>No pathway for effect was identified and the site is not within the Likely Zone of Impact.</p>
<p>Sonnagh Bog SAC [001913]</p> <p>Distance: Approx. 13.9km</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 7130 Blanket bogs (* if active bog) 	<p>Specific conservation objectives for this site (Version 1, March 2019) were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at www.npws.ie</p>	<p>There is no potential for direct effects as the project footprint is located entirely outside the designated site.</p> <p>There is no pathway for indirect effects on the terrestrially based habitat for which the SAC is designated.</p>

European Sites and distance from proposed development	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, www.npws.ie on the 23/08/2022	Conservation Objectives	Likely Zone of Impact Determination
			No pathway for effect was identified and the site is not within the Likely Zone of Impact.
Special Protection Area (SPA)			
<p>Slieve Aughty Mountains SPA [004168]</p> <p>Distance: Approx. 3.1km</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > A082 Hen Harrier <i>Circus cyaneus</i> > A098 Merlin <i>Falco columbarius</i> 	<p>This site has generic conservation objectives:</p> <p><i>“To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA:”</i></p> <p>NPWS (2022) Conservation objectives for Slieve Aughty Mountains SPA [004168]. Generic Version 9.0. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage</p>	<p>There is no potential for direct effects as the project footprint is located entirely outside the designated site.</p> <p>The works will result in a small-scale loss of grassy verge/dry meadow (GS2) and the loss of a stand of mature trees present adjacent to the southern boundary of the project area. The project area is approx. 3.1km from the SPA and these habitats are common and widespread in the wider area. There will be no potential for direct effect on the SPA via disturbance or displacement of SCI species.</p> <p>The SPA is located within the same surface water catchment area as the proposed works site; however, there is no surface water connectivity between the SPA and the works area. Therefore, there is no potential for significant indirect effect on the SPA via hydrological pathways.</p> <p>Due to the scale and nature of the works, the potential for significant run-off or pollution to the adjacent storm drain is unlikely. The storm drain is buffered from the works area by a stone block wall. There will be no potential for significant indirect effect to the SPA via deterioration in water quality.</p>

European Sites and distance from proposed development	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, www.npws.ie on the 23/08/2022	Conservation Objectives	Likely Zone of Impact Determination
			<p>No pathway for effect was identified and the site is not within the Likely Zone of Impact.</p>
<p>Lough Rea SPA [004134]</p> <p>Distance: Approx. 10.0km</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > A056 Shoveler <i>Anas clypeata</i> > A125 Coot <i>Fulica atra</i> > A999 Wetlands 	<p>This site has generic conservation objectives:</p> <p><i>“To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.”</i></p> <p>And</p> <p><i>“To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat at Lough Rea SPA as a resource for the regularly-occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it.”</i></p> <p>NPWS (2022) Conservation objectives for Lough Rea SPA [004134]. Generic Version 9.0. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.</p>	<p>There is no potential for direct effects as the project footprint is located entirely outside the designated site.</p> <p>The works will result in a small-scale loss of grassy verge/dry meadow (GS2). The works site is approx. 10.0km from the SPA and these habitats are common and widespread in the wider area. There will be no potential for significant direct effect on the SPA via disturbance or displacement of SCI species.</p> <p>The SPA is located in a separate surface water catchment area as the proposed works site, and there is no surface water connectivity between the SPA and the works area.</p> <p>Due to the scale and nature of the works, the potential for significant run-off or pollution to the adjacent storm drain is unlikely. The storm drain is buffered from the works area by a stone block wall. There will be no potential for significant indirect effect to the SPA via deterioration in water quality.</p> <p>No pathway for effect was identified and the site is not within the Likely Zone of Impact.</p>

European Sites and distance from proposed development	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, www.npws.ie on the 23/08/2022	Conservation Objectives	Likely Zone of Impact Determination
<p>Lough Derg (Shannon) SPA [004058]</p> <p>Distance: Approx. 10.7km</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > A017 Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i> > A061 Tufted Duck <i>Aythya fuligula</i> > A067 Goldeneye <i>Bucephala clangula</i> > A193 Common Tern <i>Sterna hirundo</i> > A999 Wetlands 	<p>This site has generic conservation objectives:</p> <p><i>“To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA”</i></p> <p>And</p> <p><i>“To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat at Lough Derg (Shannon) SPA as a resource for the regularly-occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it.”</i></p> <p>NPWS (2022) Conservation objectives for Lough Derg (Shannon) SPA [004058]. Generic Version 9.0. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.</p>	<p>There is no potential for direct effects as the project footprint is located entirely outside the designated site.</p> <p>The works will result in a small-scale loss of grassy verge/dry meadow (GS2). The works site is approx. 10.7km from the SPA and these habitats are common and widespread in the wider area. There will be no potential for direct effect on the SPA via disturbance or displacement of SCI species.</p> <p>The SPA is located within the same surface water catchment area as the proposed works site; however, there is no surface water connectivity between the SPA and the works area. Therefore, there is no potential for significant indirect effect on the SPA via hydrological pathways.</p> <p>Due to the scale and nature of the works, the potential for significant run-off or pollution to the adjacent storm drain is unlikely. The storm drain is buffered from the works area by a stone block wall. There will be no potential for significant indirect effect to the SPA via deterioration in water quality.</p> <p>No pathway for effect was identified and the site is not within the Likely Zone of Impact.</p>

3.2 **European Sites with the Potential to be Significantly Affected by the Proposed Development**

No European Sites have the potential to be significantly affected by the development.

3.3 **Likely Cumulative Impact of the Proposed Works on European Sites, in-combination with other plans and projects**

The potential for the development to contribute to a cumulative impact on European Sites was considered. The online planning system for Galway County Council was consulted on the 23/08/2022. The Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 was also consulted. Recent projects identified in the area include the following:

- Permission was sought for the construction of part single, part two storey dwelling 246.60m² with a treatment plant, percolation area & all associated site works. Gross floor space of proposed works 246.60sqm. [Pl.Ref. 171455]
- Permission was sought to construct a new dwelling house, garage, septic tank/treatment unit with percolation area and all associated site works. Gross floor space of proposed works 153.6 sqm & (garage) 59.6 sqm. [Pl.Ref. 18295]
- Permission was sought to replace a 10m high timber pole with a 21m high telecommunications monopole together with antennas, dishes and associated telecommunications equipment. [Pl.Ref. 211825].
- Permission was sought for timber processing and drying facilities in existing yard and shed. [Pl.Ref. 20271]
- Permission was sought to construct a dwelling house, domestic garage and single dwelling treatment system with percolation area and all associated site works. Gross floor space of proposed works: House: 241 sqm, Garage: 35 sqm. [Pl.Ref. 201520]
- Permission was sought to construct a three bay double slatted shed with creep area on this lands. Gross floor space of proposed works 260sqm. [Pl.Ref. 171533]
- Permission was sought to construct a milking parlour incorporating a collection yard, drafting yard, dairy, office, storage and plant room, water tank, meal bin slatted tank and associated site work. Gross floor space of proposed works, including meal bin & water tank area; 824sqm. [Pl.Ref. 201071]

The proposed development will not result in any significant effects on any EU Designated Sites. Therefore, the development will not contribute to any cumulative impacts in this regard when considered in-combination with other plans and projects.

4. ARTICLE 6(3) APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING STATEMENT AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this Screening Assessment are presented following the European Commission's Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological Guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2021) and Managing Natura 2000 Sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2018) as well as the Department of the Environment's Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG, 2010).

4.1 Data Collected to Carry Out Assessment

In preparation of the report, the following sources were used to gather information:

- > Review of NPWS Site Synopses, Conservation Objectives for the European Sites
- > Review of 2019, 2013 and 2007 EU Habitats Directive (Article 17) Reports.
- > Review of online web-mappers: National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), EPA, Water Framework Directive (WFD).
- > Review of OS maps and aerial photographs of the site of the proposed project.
- > Review of other plans and projects within the area.
- > A site visit was conducted by John Hynes on the 9th August 2022.

4.2 Concluding Statement

It is concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt, in view of best scientific knowledge, on the basis of objective information and in light of the conservation objectives of the relevant European sites, that the proposed project, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on any European Site.

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