

Article 6 (3) Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

Proposed Housing
Development at Mulranny,
Co. Mayo





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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 proposed housing development at Mulranny, Co. Mayo.

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 in January 2021. It specifically assesses the potential for the proposed works 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, 2001) 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).

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 (2019) Managing Natura 2000 Sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.*
3. *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.*
4. *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 26th of January 2021 by Julie O’Sullivan (BSc, MSc). Julie is an experienced ecologist with over 5 years’ experience working in the ecology sector. This report was prepared by Julie O’Sullivan.

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 WORKS

2.1 Site Location

The proposed residential housing development is located in Mulranny, Co. Mayo (grid reference: L84013 96751), approximately 400m east of Mulranny Village. The site is accessed via the N59 roadway to the south of the site.

The proposed development site is located 192.5m south of the Owenduff/Nepkin Complex SAC, 232m north of Clew Bay Complex SAC and 187m south of Owenduff/Nepkin Complex SPA. The site location is shown in Figure 2.1 along with the nearby EU designated sites.

2.2 Characteristics of the Proposed Works

The proposed development will consist of the following:

- 1) Construction of 16no. new 2 storey dormer scale dwelling units – comprising of 8no. 2 bed (4 person) dormers and 8no. 3 bed (6 person) dormers.
- 2) Provision of community space, shared communal and private open space, site landscaping, site services and all associated site development works.

The proposed site layout drawings are included with the application documentation.

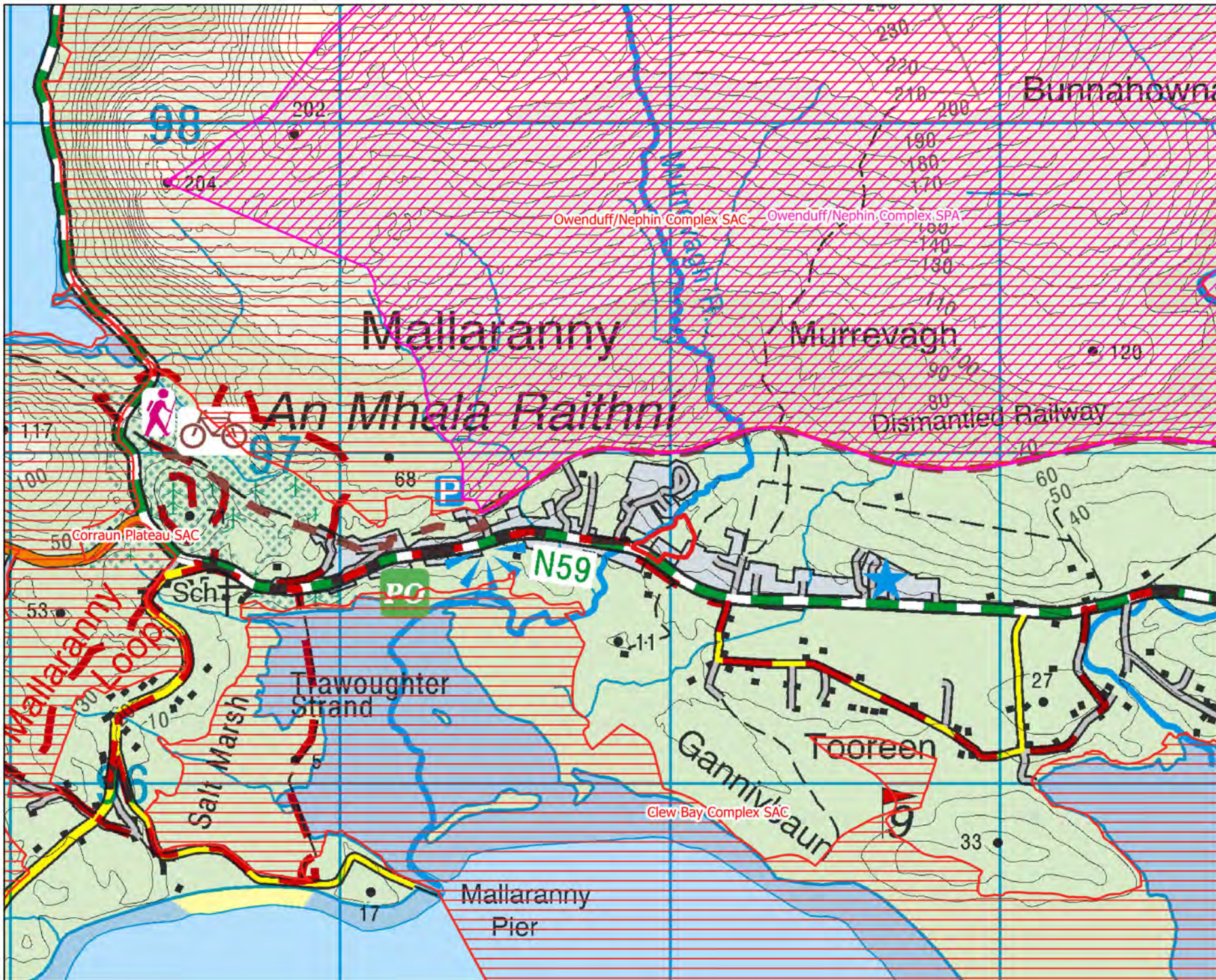
The surface water network has been designed in line with sustainable urban drainage best practice and the surface water will discharge to the public stormwater network.

It is proposed to discharge the wastewater from the proposed development to the existing manhole public wastewater network. The wastewater layout has been designed in accordance with Irish Water's latest standard details and codes of practice. Irish water have confirmed that there is capacity for the proposed development to connect to the public foul water supply (Reference No: CDS21001644, included as Appendix 1). The proposed development will comply with all Irish Water requirements prior to connections.

2.2.1 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).

A multidisciplinary walkover survey was conducted on the 26th of January 2021 in line with NRA (2009) guidelines (Ecological Surveying Techniques for Protected Flora and Fauna during the Planning of National Road Schemes) by Julie O'Sullivan (BSc., MSc). Although the ecological survey was not undertaken within the optimal time of year to undertake a habitat and flora survey (Smith et. al, 2011) all habitats were readily identifiable at the time of the visit. A dedicated invasive species survey was also undertaken during the site visit. During the survey, the site was searched for species listed on the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations (S.I. 477 of 2011).



Map Legend

- Site boundary
- Designated Sites**
 - Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
 - Special Protection Area (SPA)

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Drawing Title

Site Location

Project Title

Mullaranny Housing Development

Drawn By	JOS	Checked By	PR
Project No.	200813	Drawing No.	Figure 2.1
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2.2.2 Habitats

The site slopes gently from north-east down to its southern boundary. **Wet grassland (GS4)** occurs in the north-east section of the site (Plate 2.1 – Plate 2.2). Species recorded in this habitat including abundant Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), soft rush (*Juncus effusus*), frequent common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), meadow buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale* agg.), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*), springy turf-moss (*Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*), stands of nettle (*Urtica dioica*), and occasional birch (*Betula* spp.). Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) grows along the boundary wall of this habitat.

The invasive species *Rhododendron* grows extensively throughout the site, and individual plants occur scattered throughout the wet grassland habitat. The invasive species plant giant rhubarb (*Gunnera tinctoria*) was also recorded in the wet grassland habitat.

A mosaic habitat of **Wet Grassland (GS4)/Recolonising Bare Ground (ED3)** (Plate 2.3). habitat with a low vegetation height occurs in the north-east of the site on shallow soils. The species recorded in this habitat included frequent common bent (*Agrostis capillaris*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), gorse (*Ulex europaeus*), tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*), mouse ear hawkweed (*Pilosella officinarum*), fescue (*Festuca* spp.), and sheep's sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*) with occasional hawkbit (*Leontodon* spp.), *cladonia* spp., heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) and devils bit scabious (*Succisa pratensis*).

Stone walls form the field boundaries within the site and are classified as **Stonewalls and Other Stonework (BL1)**. The boundaries along the entire north-eastern site boundary are formed of dense stands of rhododendron, which encroach into the wet grassland habitat.

A derelict house with surrounding agricultural sheds occurs within the centre of the site and is classified as **Buildings and Artificial Surfaces (BL3)** (Plate 2.4). An area of **Mixed Broadleaved/Conifer Woodland (WD1)** (Plate 2.5) surrounds the house and extends to the south-western corner of the site and includes the species sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), birch (*Betula* spp.), willows (*Salix* spp.), with non-native conifers scattered throughout including spruce (*Picea sitchensis*) and pine (*Pinus* spp.).

The shrub layer is dominated by large dense stands of rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*), bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*), bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), gorse (*Ulex europaeus*), honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*) and montbretia (*Crocsmia x crocosmiiflora*). Species recorded in the ground flora of the woodland include herb Robert (*Geranium robertianum*), ivy (*Hedera helix*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), harts tongue fern (*Asplenium scolopendrium*), nettle (*Urtica dioica*), lesser celandine (*Ficaria verna*), soft rush (*Juncus effusus*), Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), sowthistle (*Sonchus* spp.), creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*) and foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*).

An eroding/upland (FW1) river, the Murrevagh River, flows in a southerly direction outside the western site boundary (Plate 2.6). No drainage ditches occur within the site.

There are no Annex I habitats listed under the EU Habitats Directive present within the Proposed development site boundary. No botanical species protected under the Flora (protection) Order (1999, as amended 2015), listed in the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), or listed in the Irish Red Data Books were recorded on the site and no suitable habitat occurs within the site. All species recorded are common in the Irish landscape.



Plate 2-1 Wet grassland (GS4) habitat in the centre of the site, with stonewalls forming the boundary.



Plate 2-2 Wet grassland (GS4) habitat in the north-east of the site, with encroaching rhododendron along the boundary.



Plate 2-3 Recolonising Bare Ground (ED3) /Wet grassland (GS4) mosaic habitat within the eastern section of the site.



Plate 2-4 A derelict house with surrounding agricultural sheds occurs within the centre of the site and is classified as Buildings and Artificial Surfaces (BL3).



Plate 2-5 An area of Mixed Broadleaved/Conifer Woodland (WD1) surrounds the house and extends to the south-western corner of the site.



Plate 2-6 Murrevagh river, an eroding/upland (FW1) river, flows in a southerly direction outside the western site boundary.

2.2.3 Fauna

The walkover survey was designed to detect the presence, or likely presence, of a range of protected species associated with European protected sites. No Annex listed faunal species were recorded within the proposed works area during the site visit.

No evidence of otter was recorded within the proposed development site including holts, couches, lay-up sites, prints or spraints. There are no drainage ditches or watercourses within the site that offer suitable habitat for otter, however the Murrevagh River flows in a southerly direction outside the western site boundary and is likely to support Otter.

A total of six bird species were recorded within or flying over the site during the field survey, including goldcrest, rook, robin, wren, chaffinch and jackdaw. Bird species recorded within the site boundaries during the site visit were an assemblage of common birds that are typical of the garden and agricultural grassland habitats in the wider area of the proposed development site.

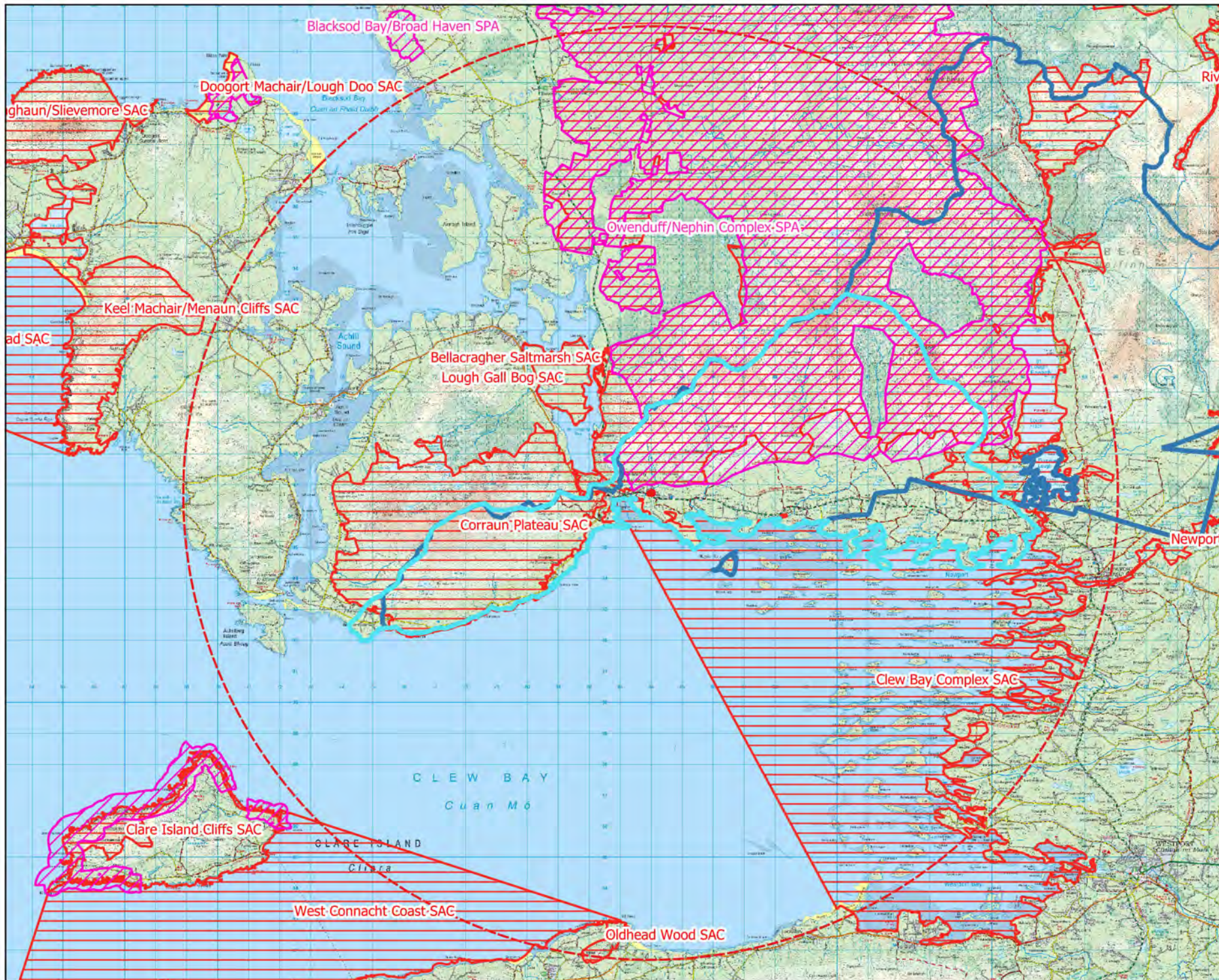
No Annex I bird species or species of conservation concern were recorded within the proposed development site during the field survey. The site is dominated by rank rushy wet grassland and mixed conifer/broadleaved woodland habitat and does not provide supporting habitat for any bird species that are among the SCIs of any European Site. Given the lack of significant habitat for rare or protected bird species identified within the site, there is no requirement for further bird surveys at the site.

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 09/04/2021. The datasets were utilized to identify European Sites which could feasibly be affected by the proposed development.
- › All European Sites within a distance of 15km surrounding the works site were identified and are shown on Figure 3.1. In addition, the potential for connectivity with European Sites at distances of greater than 15km from the proposed works was also considered in this initial assessment. In this case, no potential connectivity with sites located at a distance of over 15km from the proposed works was identified.
- › The catchment mapping was used to establish or discount potential hydrological connectivity between the site of the proposed works 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. Figure 3.1 shows the location of the proposed works in relation to all European sites within 15km of the proposed development.
- › Where potential pathways for Significant Effect are identified, the site is included within the Likely Zone of Impact and considered in the Screening Assessment



Map Legend

-  Red line boundary
-  15km Buffer
-  Malranny Groundwater Catchment
-  Owengarve Sub-catchment
- Designated Sites**
-  Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
-  Special Protection Area (SPA)



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Drawing Title

EU Sites Within 15km

Project Title

Mullranny Housing Development

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Table 3.1 Identification of Designated sites within the Likely Zone of Impact

European Sites and distance from proposed works	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, www.npws.ie on the 09/04/2021	Conservation Objectives	Likely Zone of Impact Determination
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)			
<p>Owenduff/Nephin Complex SAC</p> <p>Distance: 192.5m</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110] › Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160] › Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260] › Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010] › Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] › <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands [5130] › Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130] › Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140] › <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106] › <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355] › <i>Saxifraga hirculus</i> (Marsh Saxifrage) [1528] › <i>Hamatocaulis vernicosus</i> (Slender Green Feather-moss) [6216] 	<p>Detailed conservation objectives for this site, (Version 1, July 2017), were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at www.npws.ie</p>	<p>This European Site is located 192.5m north of the proposed development site and is entirely outside of the development site boundary. There will be no direct effects as the project footprint is located entirely outside of the designated site.</p> <p>This site is hydrologically upstream of the proposed development site and there is no potential for surface water pollution of any aquatic habitat or supporting habitat for aquatic species listed as QIs of this SAC. All surface water and wastewater will discharge to the existing public services network and there is no potential for deterioration in surface water.</p> <p>Given the distance between this EU site and the proposed development, no pathway for indirect effect on the terrestrial habitats or species for which the site has been designated exists.</p> <p>The otter population of this SAC may use the Murrevagh River along the western site boundary for commuting, however there is no potential for disturbance. The proposed development is set back 10m from this river and is buffered from it by existing woodland which will be retained as part of the project. Otter are predominantly crepuscular in nature and construction activity will be confined to daytime hours, thus ensuring there is no potential for disturbance related impacts. In addition, the proposed works are located in a built-up area, adjacent to a busy main road and existing residential housing developments and it is anticipated that otter are habituated to activity in the area.</p>

European Sites and distance from proposed works	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, www.npws.ie on the 09/04/2021	Conservation Objectives	Likely Zone of Impact Determination
			<p>No source-pathway-receptor chain for effect was identified between the site of the proposed development and the habitats and species for which this site has been designated. Potential for direct or indirect effects on the European Site can be excluded. This site is not within the likely zone of impact and no further assessment is required.</p>
<p>Clew Bay Complex SAC Distance: 232m</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] › Coastal lagoons [1150] › Large shallow inlets and bays [1160] › Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] › Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] › Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330] › Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] › Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120] › Machairs (* in Ireland) [21A0] › Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0] › <i>Vertigo geyeri</i> (Geyer's Whorl Snail) [1013] › <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355] › <i>Phoca vitulina</i> (Harbour Seal) [1365] 	<p>Detailed conservation objectives for this site, (Version 1, July 2011), were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at www.npws.ie</p>	<p>This European Site is located 232m south of the proposed development site and is entirely outside of the development site boundary. There will be no direct effects as the project footprint is located entirely outside of the designated site.</p> <p>This site is hydrologically downstream of the proposed development site and the Murrevagh River which flows outside of the western boundary of the proposed development site discharges to this SAC. However, there is no potential for surface water pollution of any aquatic habitat or supporting habitat for aquatic species listed as QIs of this SAC. The proposed development is set back 10m from the Murrevagh River. All surface water and wastewater will discharge to the existing public services network and there is no potential for deterioration in surface water.</p> <p>Given the distance between this EU site and the proposed development, no pathway for indirect effect on the terrestrial habitats or species for which the site has been designated exists.</p> <p>Disturbance effects to the QI species harbour seal, can be ruled out, given the intervening distance between the SAC and the proposed development site.</p>

European Sites and distance from proposed works	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, www.npws.ie on the 09/04/2021	Conservation Objectives	Likely Zone of Impact Determination
			<p>The otter population of this SAC may use the Murrevagh River along the western site boundary for commuting, however there is no potential for disturbance. The proposed development is set back 10m from this river and is buffered from it by existing woodland which will be retained as part of the project. Otter are predominantly crepuscular in nature and construction activity will be confined to daytime hours, thus ensuring there is no potential for disturbance related impacts. In addition, the proposed works are located in a built-up area, adjacent to a busy main road and existing residential housing developments and it is anticipated that otter are habituated to activity in the area.</p> <p>No source-pathway-receptor chain for effect was identified between the site of the proposed development and the habitats and species for which this site has been designated. Potential for direct or indirect effects on the European Site can be excluded. This site is not within the likely zone of impact and no further assessment is required.</p>
<p>Corraun Plateau SAC</p> <p>Distance: 1.4km</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010] › European dry heaths [4030] › Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] › <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands [5130] › Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladani</i>) [8110] › Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220] 	<p>Detailed conservation objectives for this site, (Version 1, August 2016), were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at www.npws.ie</p>	<p>This SAC is located 1.4km west of the proposed development site. The European Site is located entirely outside the boundary of the proposed development site and no pathway for direct effect exists.</p> <p>This site is designated for terrestrial upland and peatland habitats. No pathway for indirect effect on the terrestrial habitats for which the site has been designated exists.</p> <p>This site is not within the likely zone of impact and no further assessment is required.</p>

European Sites and distance from proposed works	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, www.npws.ie on the 09/04/2021	Conservation Objectives	Likely Zone of Impact Determination
<p>Lough Gall Bog SAC</p> <p>Distance: 3.2km</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130] › Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150] 	<p>Detailed conservation objectives for this site, (Version 1, May 2017), were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at www.npws.ie</p>	<p>This SAC is located 3.2km north-west of the proposed development site. The European Site is located entirely outside the boundary of the proposed development site and no pathway for direct effect exists.</p> <p>This site is designated for terrestrial upland and peatland habitats. No pathway for indirect effect on the terrestrial habitats for which the site has been designated exists.</p> <p>This site is not within the likely zone of impact and no further assessment is required.</p>
<p>Bellacragher Saltmarsh SAC</p> <p>Distance: 3.6km</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330] › Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] 	<p>Detailed conservation objectives for this site, (Version 1, December 2016), were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at www.npws.ie</p>	<p>This SAC is located 3.6km north-west of the proposed development site. The European Site is located entirely outside the boundary of the proposed development site and no pathway for direct effect exists.</p> <p>This site is designated for coastal/marine habitats and is located in a separate hydrological catchment. No pathway for indirect effect exists.</p> <p>This site is not within the likely zone of impact and no further assessment is required.</p>
<p>West Connacht Coast SAC</p> <p>Distance: 13.4km</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › <i>Tursiops truncatus</i> (Common Bottlenose Dolphin) [1349] 	<p>Detailed 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>This SAC is located 13.4km south-west of the proposed development site on the opposite side of Clew Bay. The European Site is located entirely outside the boundary of the proposed development site and no pathway for direct effect exists.</p> <p>There is no potential for surface water pollution of any aquatic supporting habitat for this aquatic QI species of the SAC. All surface water and wastewater will discharge to the existing public services network and there is no potential for deterioration in surface water.</p> <p>This site is not within the likely zone of impact and no further assessment is required.</p>

European Sites and distance from proposed works	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, www.npws.ie on the 09/04/2021	Conservation Objectives	Likely Zone of Impact Determination
<p>Oldhead Wood SAC</p> <p>Distance: 13.7km</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > European dry heaths [4030] > Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0] 	<p>Generic conservation objectives for this site, (Version 7, 2020), were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at www.npws.ie</p>	<p>This SAC is located 13.7km south-west of the proposed development site on the opposite side of Clew Bay. The European Site is located entirely outside the boundary of the proposed development site and no pathway for direct effect exists.</p> <p>This SAC is designated for a terrestrial woodland and heath habitat. No pathway for indirect effect on the terrestrial habitats for which the site has been designated exists.</p> <p>This site is not within the likely zone of impact and no further assessment is required.</p>
<p>Newport River SAC</p> <p>Distance: 14.6km</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] > <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106] 	<p>Detailed conservation objectives for this site, (Version 1, August 2019), were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at www.npws.ie</p>	<p>This SAC is located 14.6km west of the proposed development site. The proposed development site is located entirely outside the boundary of this European Site. No pathway for direct effect exists.</p> <p>This site is designated for aquatic species and is located in a separate hydrological catchment. No pathway for indirect effect exists.</p> <p>This site is not within the likely zone of impact and no further assessment is required.</p>
Special Protection Area (SPA)			
<p>Owenduff/Nephin Complex SPA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>) [A098] > Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] 	<p>This site has the generic conservation objective:</p> <p><i>To maintain or restore the favourable conservation</i></p>	<p>This European Site is located 187m north of the proposed development site. The proposed development is entirely outside the SPA boundary therefore no potential pathway for direct effect exists.</p>

European Sites and distance from proposed works	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, www.npws.ie on the 09/04/2021	Conservation Objectives	Likely Zone of Impact Determination
Distance: 187m		<p><i>condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA', (Generic Version 7.0 NPWS 2020)</i></p>	<p>The proposed works area does not offer suitable supporting habitat for the SCI species associated with the SPA and there is no potential for habitat loss.</p> <p>Golden plover is designated for its breeding population within the SPA. There is no suitable breeding or foraging habitat for this species within the site. Golden Plover breed on open upland habitats where they are known to favour areas of short vegetation (<10cm), particularly dominated by heather mixed with grasses (Parr, 1980; Whittingham et al., 2001). Clotworthy (2009) indicated that breeding Golden Plover territories, within the Owenduff/Nepin Complex SPA, showed a preference for either undamaged or moderately grazed Ling Heather (<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>). There is no suitable foraging habitat for golden plover within the site. This species forages within upland peatland and grassland habitats during the breeding season. The wet grassland within the site is rank and overgrown. This species has a preference for grassland with a short sward with the optimum sward height approximately 7 cm tall (Gillings, 1999).</p> <p>There is no suitable breeding or foraging habitat for Merlin within the site. Merlin forage in open habitats with a preference for peatland. In Ireland merlin predominantly nest in trees with a strong preference for conifer plantations and bog and heathland adjacent to nest sites (Lusby et al., 2017). Human related disturbance is likely to be a deterrent to nesting Merlin (McCarthy and Lusby, 2017). The site is located near an existing residential housing development, and a busy well-lit road and therefore is not suitable breeding habitat for this species.</p> <p>The potential for disturbance to SCI species was also considered. Given the intervening buffer distance from the SPA and the nature and</p>

European Sites and distance from proposed works	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, www.npws.ie on the 09/04/2021	Conservation Objectives	Likely Zone of Impact Determination
			<p>scale of the proposed development, no potential pathway for disturbance related impact on SCI populations associated with the SPA was identified.</p> <p>This site is not within the likely zone of impact and no further assessment is required.</p>

3.2

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

The potential for the proposed works to contribute to a cumulative impact on European Sites was considered. The online planning system for Mayo County Council was consulted on the 09/04/2021. Additional projects identified in the area include;

- › Planning permission to construct sheep shed and ancillary works (i.e. concrete yard/sheep handling areas for agricultural purposes only in a new farmyard utilising existing entrance to field). Planning reference: 17261
- › Planning permission to construct an extension and make alterations to existing dwelling house together with all ancillary site works. Planning reference: 19132
- › Planning permission to construct an extension and make alterations to existing dwelling house together with all ancillary site works. Planning reference: 15704
- › Planning permission to construct new extension to the side of the existing dwelling house along with works and ancillaries. Planning reference: 18332
- › Planning permission to construct two new dormer type window to rear of property (replacing existing velux type windows). Planning reference: 166
- › Planning permission to change of use of ambulance base at Mulranny amenity centre to community shop with ancillary works, siteworks and services. Planning reference: 13229
- › Planning permission to change of use of the existing shop to fishmongers and retail unit. Planning reference: 17836
- › Planning permission to construct 6 self-contained eco pods, with amenity and shower facility building with connection to existing public services, together with associated site works. Planning reference: 19768.
- › Planning permission to construct 2 no. Dwelling houses, with connection to public sewer. Planning reference: 15476
- › Planning permission essential repairs to existing 38kv line between Wewport station and Achill station. Works will include replacing existing double wood poles, stays and headgear in the townlands of Carrickaneady, Clooneshil, Drumlong, Camcloon, Derryloughan, Derrintaggart, Kiltarnagh, Shanvallyhugh, Derrada, Derrycooldrim, Carrowsallagh, Knockbreaga, Tiernaur, Rossgaliv, Rosstur, Bunnahown, Murrevagh, Mallaranny, Cois Leice, An Abhainn Dubh, Ton Re Gaoth, Poll Raithni. Planning Reference: 17872

No pathway or mechanism for the proposed works to result in any significant effect on any European Site was identified when considered on its own during the assessment process and therefore there is no potential for it to contribute to any such effects when considered in-combination with other developments.

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, 2001) 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)
- › Review of OS maps and aerial photographs of the site of the proposed project.
- › Site visits conducted by Julie O'Sullivan (BSc, MSc) on the 26th of January 2021.

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 works, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on any European Site.

5.

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APPENDIX 1

IRISH WATER LETTER

Connor Daly

Unit 9, N5 Business Park,
Castlebar
Co. Mayo
F23E283

Uisce Éireann
Bosca OP 448
Oifig Sheachadta na
Cathrach Theas
Cathair Chorcaí

Irish Water
PO Box 448,
South City
Delivery Office,
Cork City.

www.water.ie

30 March 2021

Re: CDS21001644 pre-connection enquiry - Subject to contract | Contract denied
Connection for Housing Development of 16 unit(s) at Murrevagh, Mulranny, Mayo

Dear Sir/Madam,

Irish Water has reviewed your pre-connection enquiry in relation to a Water & Wastewater connection at Murrevagh, Mulranny, Mayo (the **Premises**). Based upon the details you have provided with your pre-connection enquiry and on our desk top analysis of the capacity currently available in the Irish Water network(s) as assessed by Irish Water, we wish to advise you that your proposed connection to the Irish Water network(s) can be facilitated at this moment in time.

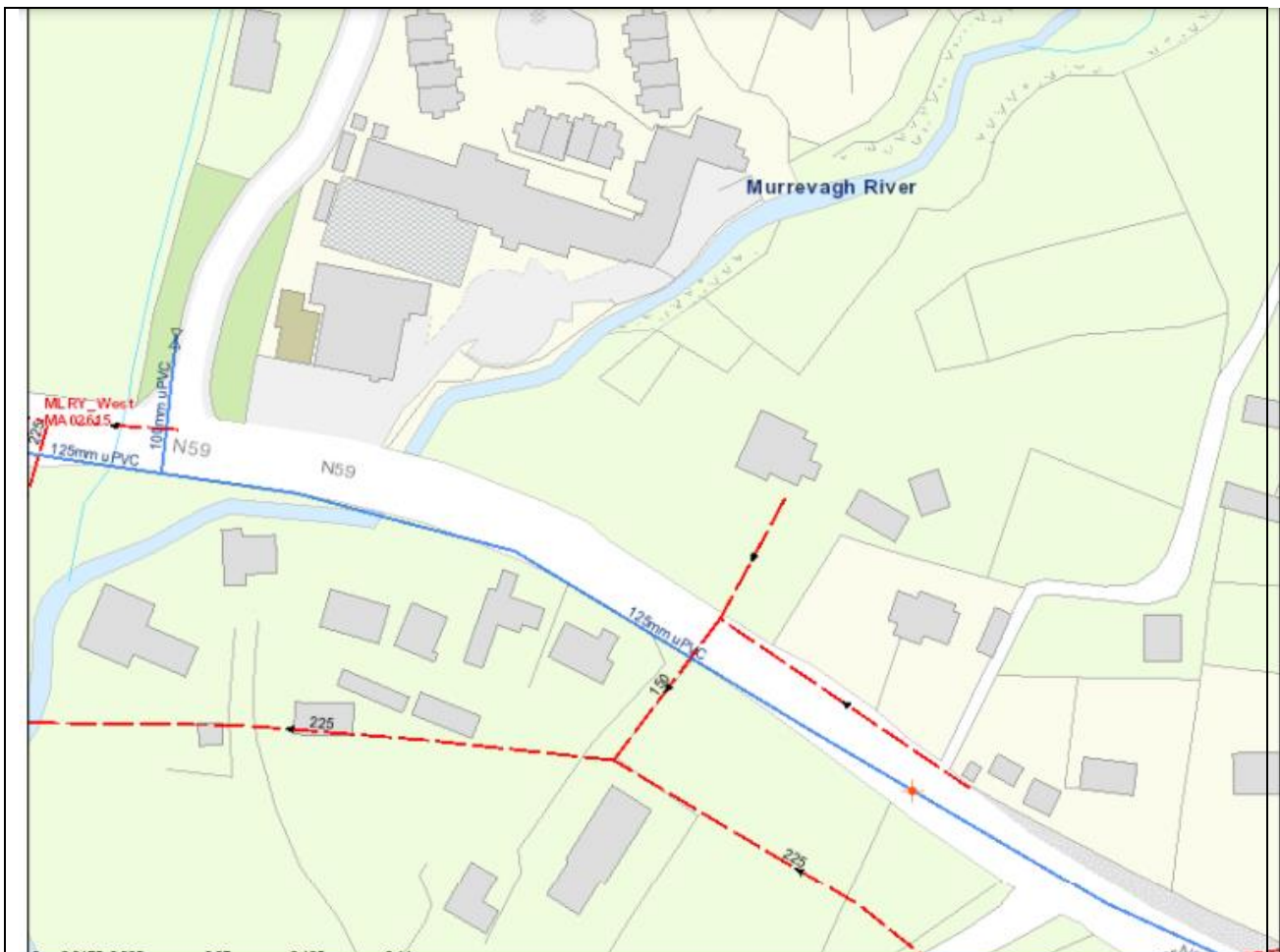
SERVICE	<p style="text-align: center;">OUTCOME OF PRE-CONNECTION ENQUIRY</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>THIS IS NOT A CONNECTION OFFER. YOU MUST APPLY FOR A CONNECTION(S) TO THE IRISH WATER NETWORK(S) IF YOU WISH TO PROCEED.</u></p>
Water Connection	Feasible without infrastructure upgrade by Irish Water
Wastewater Connection	Feasible without infrastructure upgrade by Irish Water
SITE SPECIFIC COMMENTS	
Water Connection	There should be sufficient access for Irish Water to operate and maintain the proposed water mains in future, the area of the proposed water main to the south of proposed houses 01 – 05 appears to have limited access. Compliance with Drawing STD-W-11, STD-W-12, STD-W-12A shall be adhered to regarding separation distances from other services, boundary walls, trees, etc...
Wastewater Connection	<p>Again there appears to be limited access to operate and maintain the proposed foul sewer to the south of proposed houses 01 – 05. Compliance with Drawing STD-WW-05, STD-WW-06, STD-WW-06A shall be adhered to regarding separation distances from other services, boundary walls, trees, etc...</p> <p>Please note, there is an existing Irish Water owned 150mm dia. foul sewer crossing the site, if you believe any works will have an impact on any Irish Water assets or a diversion is required, please contact the diversions team</p>

at diversions@water.ie. For more information, please see go to the link below:

<https://www.water.ie/connections/developer-services/diversions/>

The design and construction of the Water & Wastewater pipes and related infrastructure to be installed in this development shall comply with the Irish Water Connections and Developer Services Standard Details and Codes of Practice that are available on the Irish Water website. Irish Water reserves the right to supplement these requirements with Codes of Practice and these will be issued with the connection agreement.

The map included below outlines the current Irish Water infrastructure adjacent to your site:



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Whilst every care has been taken in its compilation Irish Water gives this information as to the position of its underground network as a general guide only on the strict understanding that it is based on the best available information provided by each Local Authority in Ireland to Irish Water. Irish Water can assume no responsibility for and give no guarantees, undertakings or warranties concerning the accuracy, completeness or up to date nature of the information provided and does not accept any liability whatsoever arising from any errors or omissions. This information should not be relied upon in the event of excavations or any other works being carried out in the vicinity of the Irish Water underground network. The onus is on the parties carrying out excavations or any other works to ensure the exact location of the Irish Water underground network is identified prior to excavations or any other works being carried out. Service connection pipes are not generally shown but their presence should be anticipated.

General Notes:

- 1) The initial assessment referred to above is carried out taking into account water demand and wastewater discharge volumes and infrastructure details on the date of the assessment. **The availability of capacity may change at any date after this assessment.**
- 2) This feedback does not constitute a contract in whole or in part to provide a connection to any Irish Water infrastructure. All feasibility assessments are subject to the constraints of the Irish Water Capital Investment Plan.
- 3) The feedback provided is subject to a Connection Agreement/contract being signed at a later date.
- 4) A Connection Agreement will be required to commencing the connection works associated with the enquiry this can be applied for at <https://www.water.ie/connections/get-connected/>
- 5) A Connection Agreement cannot be issued until all statutory approvals are successfully in place.
- 6) Irish Water Connection Policy/ Charges can be found at <https://www.water.ie/connections/information/connection-charges/>
- 7) Please note the Confirmation of Feasibility does not extend to your fire flow requirements.
- 8) Irish Water is not responsible for the management or disposal of storm water or ground waters. You are advised to contact the relevant Local Authority to discuss the management or disposal of proposed storm water or ground water discharges
- 9) To access Irish Water Maps email datarequests@water.ie
- 10) All works to the Irish Water infrastructure, including works in the Public Space, shall have to be carried out by Irish Water.

If you have any further questions, please contact Cormac Healy from the design team by email to corhealy@water.ie For further information, visit **www.water.ie/connections**.

Yours sincerely,



Yvonne Harris

Head of Customer Operations

