

Specific Improvement Schemes 2022 – R332 Kilmaine to Foxhall



APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT
September 2022



Client:
Mayo County Council
Aras an Contae
The Mall
Castlebar
Co. Mayo

Specific Improvement Schemes 2022 – R332 Kilmaine to Foxhall

Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Roughan & O'Donovan (ROD) was appointed by Mayo County Council to produce an Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report in respect of the proposed realignment of the R332 Regional Road from Kilmaine village towards Tuam and the county boundaries of Mayo and Galway (“the proposed development”).

The AA Screening Report is intended to determine whether or not the proposed development, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, in view of best scientific knowledge, is likely to have a significant effect on areas designated as being of European importance for nature conservation (“European sites”), thereby enabling Mayo County Council, as the Competent Authority in this case, to fulfil its obligations under Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (“the Habitats Directive”).

This document comprises the AA Screening Report in respect of the proposed development and was prepared by ROD on behalf of the Mayo County Council and in accordance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive, as transposed into Irish law by Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) (“the Planning and Development Act”). The aim of this AA Screening Report is to inform and assist the competent authority in determining whether or not the proposed development, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, has the potential to significantly affect one or more European sites in view of their Conservation Objectives.

It is the considered opinion of ROD, as the author of this AA Screening Report, that the proposed development, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects in view of best scientific knowledge, is not likely to have a significant effect on any European site, in view of their Conservation Objectives.

1.2 Competent Experts

This AA Screening Report was prepared by Patrick O'Shea and Rachel Heaphy. Patrick is an Ecologist with over nine years' experience in ecological assessment. He holds a degree in Botany from Trinity College Dublin and an MSc in Ecological Management and Conservation Biology from Queen's University Belfast. Patrick is a Full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecological and Environmental Management (CIEEM). Rachel holds a BSc (Hons) in Zoology from University College Cork, an MRes degree (with distinction) from the University of Roehampton and has one year's experience in ecological assessment.

1.3 Legislative Context

Council Directive 92/43/EEC of the 21st May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats of wild fauna and flora (“the Habitats Directive”) and Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of the 30th November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (“the Birds Directive”) list habitats and species which are, in a European context, important for conservation and in need of protection. This protection is afforded in part through the designation of sites which support significant examples of habitats or populations of species. (“European sites”). Sites designated for wild birds are termed “Special Protection Areas” (SPAs) and sites designated for natural habitat types or other species are termed “Special Areas of Conservation” (SACs). The complete network of European sites is referred to as “Natura 2000”.

In order to ensure the protection of European sites in the context of land use planning and development, Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive provides for the assessment of the implications of plans and projects for European sites, as follows:

“Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site¹ and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.”

In Case C-323/17[§34], *People Over Wind*, the Court of Justice of the European Union (‘the CJEU’) referred to the nature of the test to be applied in making a screening determination as follows:

“[...] it is settled case-law that Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive makes the requirement for an appropriate assessment of the implications of a plan or project conditional on there being a probability or a risk that the plan or project in question will have a significant effect on the site concerned. In the light, in particular, of the precautionary principle, such a risk exists if it cannot be excluded on the basis of objective information that the plan or project will have a significant effect on the site concerned (judgment of 26 May 2011, Commission v Belgium, C-538/09, EU:C:2011:349, paragraph 39 and the case-law cited). The assessment of that risk must be made in the light inter alia of the characteristics and specific environmental conditions of the site concerned by such a plan or project (see, to that effect, judgment of 21 July 2016, Orleans and Others, C-387/15 and C-388/15, EU:C:2016:583, paragraph 45 and the case-law cited).”

Article 7 of the Habitats Directive provides that the provisions of, *inter alia*, Article 6(3) are to apply to SPAs under Directive 2009/147/EC (the “Birds Directive”).

As stated, the requirements arising out of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive are transposed into Irish law by Part XAB of the 2000 Act and by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 as amended² (S.I. No.477 of 2011) (the Habitats Regulations), including Part 5 thereof.

The determination of whether or not a plan or project requires AA is referred to as “Stage 1” or “AA Screening”. A “Stage 1” or “AA Screening” is completed to determine whether or not the proposed development, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, in view of best scientific knowledge, is likely to have a significant effect on areas designated as being of European importance for nature conservation (“European sites”), thereby enabling the Applicant, to fulfil its obligations under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive specifies that AA must be undertaken by the “competent national authorities”. In Ireland, the “competent authority” is the relevant planning authority for each plan or project, e.g. the local authority or An Bord Pleanála. Consequently, the responsibility for carrying out AA Screening lies solely with the competent authority. In that respect, the AA Screening Report is not in itself an AA

¹ Including, where applicable, ‘sites’.

² Including inter alia S.I. 290 of 2013; SI 499 of 2013; SI 355 of 2015; the Planning, Heritage and Broadcasting (Amendment) Act 2021, Chapter 4; SI 293 of 2021.

Screening Assessment but provides the competent authority with the information it needs in order to carry out its AA Screening.

1.4 Screening Methodology

At this stage of the process, the AA Screening Report assesses the potential effects from the plan or project on the European sites within the likely zone of influence and evaluates them in view of the sites' Conservation Objectives.

This AA Screening Report has had regard inter alia to the following matters³:

- The threshold test is that an appropriate assessment will be required if the proposed development is likely *to have a significant effect* on (a) European site(s) either individually or in combination with other plans or protects.
- It is not necessary, in order to trigger the requirement to proceed to stage 2 AA that the proposed development will *'definitely'* have significant effects on the protected site, but such a requirement will arise if it is a *'mere probability'* that such an effect exists. The requirement to carry out an AA will be satisfied if there is a *'probability or a risk'* that the proposed development will have *'significant effects'* on (a) European site(s).
- Consequent upon the application of the precautionary principle, such a *'risk'* will be found to exist if *'it cannot be excluded on the basis of objective information'* that the particular proposed development *'will have significant effects'* on (a) European site(s).
- An AA will be required if, on the basis of objective information, a *'significant effect'* on a European site *'cannot be excluded'*. An AA will not be required if, on the basis of objective information, a *'significant effect'* on (a) European site(s) *'can be excluded'*.
- In the case of *'doubt as to the absence of significant effects'* an AA must be carried out.
- The requirement to conduct an AA will arise where, at the screening stage, it is ascertained that the particular development is *'capable of having any effect'* (albeit this must be any *'significant effect'*) on (a) European site(s).
- The *'possibility'* of there being a *'significant effect'* on (a) European site(s) will give rise to a requirement to carry out an AA for the purposes of Article 6(3). There is no need to *'establish'* such an effect and it is merely necessary to determine that there *'may be'* such an effect.
- In order to meet the threshold of likelihood of significant effect, the word *'likely'* in Article 6(3) means less than the balance of probabilities. The test does not require any *'hard and fast evidence'* that such a significant effect was likely. It merely has to be shown that there is a *'possibility'* that this significant effect is likely.
- The assessment of whether there is a risk of *'significant effect'* on the European site must be made in light, inter alia, of the *'characteristics and specific environmental conditions of the site concerned'* by the relevant plan or project.
- Plans or projects or applications for developments which have *no appreciable effect* on European sites are excluded from the requirement to proceed to AA. If all applications for permission for proposed developments capable of having *any effect whatsoever* on such sites were to be caught by Article 6(3) *activities on or near the site would risk being impossible by reason of legislative overkill.*

³ See Eoin Kelly v. An Bord Pleanála [2019] IEHC 84; Kelly v. An Bord Pleanála [2014] IEHC 400; Connelly v. An Bord Pleanála [2018] IESC 31; [2018] ILRM 453.

While the threshold at the screening stage of Article 6(3) is very low nonetheless it is a threshold which must be met before it is necessary to proceed to the stage 2 AA.

Accordingly, best practice in undertaking AA Screening involves five steps as follows:

- (1) The first step involves gathering the information and data necessary to carry out a screening assessment. These include, but are not limited to, the details of all phases of the plan or project, environmental data pertaining to the area in which the plan or project is located, e.g. rare or protected habitats and species present or likely to be present, and the details of the European sites within the likely zone of influence.
- (2) The second step involves examining the information gathered in the first step and a scientific analysis of the potential impacts of the project on the receiving environment, particularly the European sites in the likely zone of influence.
- (3) The third step evaluates the impacts analysed in the second step against the Conservation Objectives of the relevant European sites, thereby determining whether or not those impacts constitute “likely significant effects”, within the meaning of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.
- (4) The fourth step involves considering the potential for likely significant effects to arise from the combination of the impacts of the plan or project with those of other plans or projects. If it is determined in the third step that Stage 2 (AA) is required, consideration of potential cumulative impacts may be deferred to that stage.
- (5) The last step involves the issuing of a statement of the determination of the AA Screening. Notwithstanding the recommendation made in the AA Screening Report, the responsibility for completing this step lies solely with the competent authority.

The following guidance documents informed the assessment methodology:

- EC (2021) *Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*. Environment Directorate-General of the European Commission.
- EC (2018) *Managing Natura 2000 sites: The provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC*. European Commission, Brussels.
- DEHLG (2010) *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities*. Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin.
- NPWS (2010) *Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities*. Circular Letter NPWS 1/10 & PSSP 2/10. National Parks & Wildlife Service, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin.
- OPR (2021) *Practice Note PN01: Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management*. Office of the Planning Regulator.

1.5 Ecological Assessment

In order to fully inform this AA Screening Report in respect of the proposed development, it was necessary to establish the baseline ecological conditions in the receiving environment, particularly with regard to European sites. This was achieved by undertaking a number of desktop studies and field surveys and engaging in consultations with the relevant stakeholders, including the National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) and Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI).

Desk Study

During the desk study, the statutory consultee, the National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS), provided data on designations of sites, habitats and species of conservation interest. This included reporting pursuant to Article 17 of the Habitats Directive⁴ (NPWS, 2019a, b, c) and Article 12 of the Birds Directive⁵ (Eionet, 2018), as well as the Site Synopses and Conservation Objectives for the relevant European sites.

The desk study involved a thorough review of existing information relating to ecology in the vicinity of the proposed development and in the surrounding area. A number of web-based geographic information systems (GISs) were used to obtain information relating to the natural environment surrounding the proposed development. These included the NPWS *Map Viewer* (NPWS, 2022a), which provided information on the locations of protected sites, the National Biodiversity Data Centre's *Biodiversity Maps* (NBDC, 2022), which provided recent and historic records of rare and protected species in the area.

As with all desk studies, the data considered were only as good as the data supplied by the recorders and recording schemes. The recording schemes provide disclaimers in relation to the quality and quantity of the data they provide, and these were considered when examining outputs of the desk study.

Assessment

The ecological baseline which was established by the desk study described above was used to inform the assessment of the potential ecological effects arising from the proposed development, particularly with regard to European sites. Any assumptions that were made in view of gaps in the ecological data were made in accordance with the Precautionary Principle.

⁴ Under Article 17, to report to the European Commission every six years on their status and on the implementation of the measures taken under the Directive.

⁵ Every three years, Member States of the European Union are required by Article 12 of the Birds Directive to report on implementation of the Directive. The most recent reporting available is for the period 2008-2012.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Overview

The R332 is a single carriageway lined by stone walls along much of its length with grassed verges in other locations. The posted speed limit is 80km/h, however the section of the R332 between Kilmaine and Foxhall has very poor horizontal and vertical alignment. The width of the road is not to Regional Road standard. High stone walls line parts of the road on both sides and there is poor drainage in places. The existing R322 Regional Road is substandard in terms of horizontal and vertical alignment, pavement strength, pavement condition and carriageway width, making it unsafe in many locations.

The proposed development will aim to reduce hazards caused by the existing horizontal and vertical alignment of the R332 carriageway. The proposed development comprises realignment of the existing carriageway and the construction of a new shared use pedestrian and two-way cycle facility.

The proposed works involve approximately 3 km of online and offline carriageway construction, divided into 7 No. sections. The areas along the R332 where works are proposed are highlighted in Figure 2.1. Proposed works involve horizontal and vertical bend realignment to eliminate substandard curves on the road, road widening, pavement overlay and strengthening works and provision of cycle facilities. The proposed road cross section consists of a 6 m carriageway, a 3 m wide shared use pedestrian and two-way cycle facility with 2 m segregation, 1 No. 0.5 m (minimum) lateral clearance area for the cycle way and 1 No. 3 m verge.

Where road widening is proposed, roadside verges shall be removed. On bend realignment, walls and trees shall be removed. There will be no demolition of buildings associated with the proposed development.

The proposed development aims to improve the safety for drivers along this stretch of road and will comprise the following:

- Land acquisition to accommodate the realignment works and cycle facilities;
- Removal of existing roadside wall at locations of bend realignments;
- Vegetation clearance to accommodate road construction;
- Earthworks - predominantly in offline construction locations;
- Road formation;
- Drainage works;
- Pavement overlay;
- Pavement construction (offline);
- Utilities diversions (watermain diversion);
- Adjustment to local telecom/ESB services, as required to facilitate the works;
- Construction of shared use cycle facility.

Drawings for proposed development are presented in Appendix A.

2.2 Location

The proposed development is located between the villages of Kilmaine and Foxhall. The proposed development extents are predominantly within County Mayo, with the eastern end of the scheme extending roughly 75 m over the county boundary into County Galway at Foxhall. The extents of the proposed development are as shown in Figure 2.1.

2.3 Receiving Natural Environment

The primary land use in the area is agricultural, with a mixture of pasture and arable land. The R332 is bordered by traditional dry-stone walls, grassy verges and hedgerows. Residential dwellings and farmyards also occur along the R332 carriageway. The R332 crosses the Kilmaine_30 stream, Rathgranagher stream and Black River at different points, which all flow in a southerly direction. The Rathgranagher stream flows south into the Black River, which eventually discharges into Lough Corrib.

2.4 Likely Effects on the Natural Environment

Habitat Loss

The construction works will result in the loss of 'improved agricultural grassland (GA1), 'dry meadows and grassy verges' (GS2), 'hedgerows' (WL1), 'treelines' (WL2), 'stone walls and other stonework' (BL1) and 'buildings and artificial surfaces' (BL3) habitat types as they lie within the footprint of the proposed development.

Disturbance/Artificial Lighting

Noise, vibration, and visual disturbance will cause impacts during the construction phase and have potential to impede the movement of species, including mammals and birds, in and around the proposed development. Artificial lighting poses a risk of negative impacts on nocturnal species, particularly bats and badger, by fragmentation of commuting/foraging corridors, disruption of circadian rhythms and increases the risk of predation.

The proposed development will not lead to any measurable increase in traffic during the operational phase. There are no artificial lighting plans as part of the operation of the proposed development. Therefore, the operation of the proposed development will not cause negative impacts to biodiversity by fragmentation of commuting/foraging corridors, disruption of circadian rhythms or increase the risk of predation.

Water Quality

During construction works there is potential for water quality impacts. Any water quality impacts arising from the proposed development could be carried downstream into Lough Corrib. These water quality impacts could have a negative effect on the aquatic species present downstream and an indirect negative effect on species dependent on the lake for a food source.

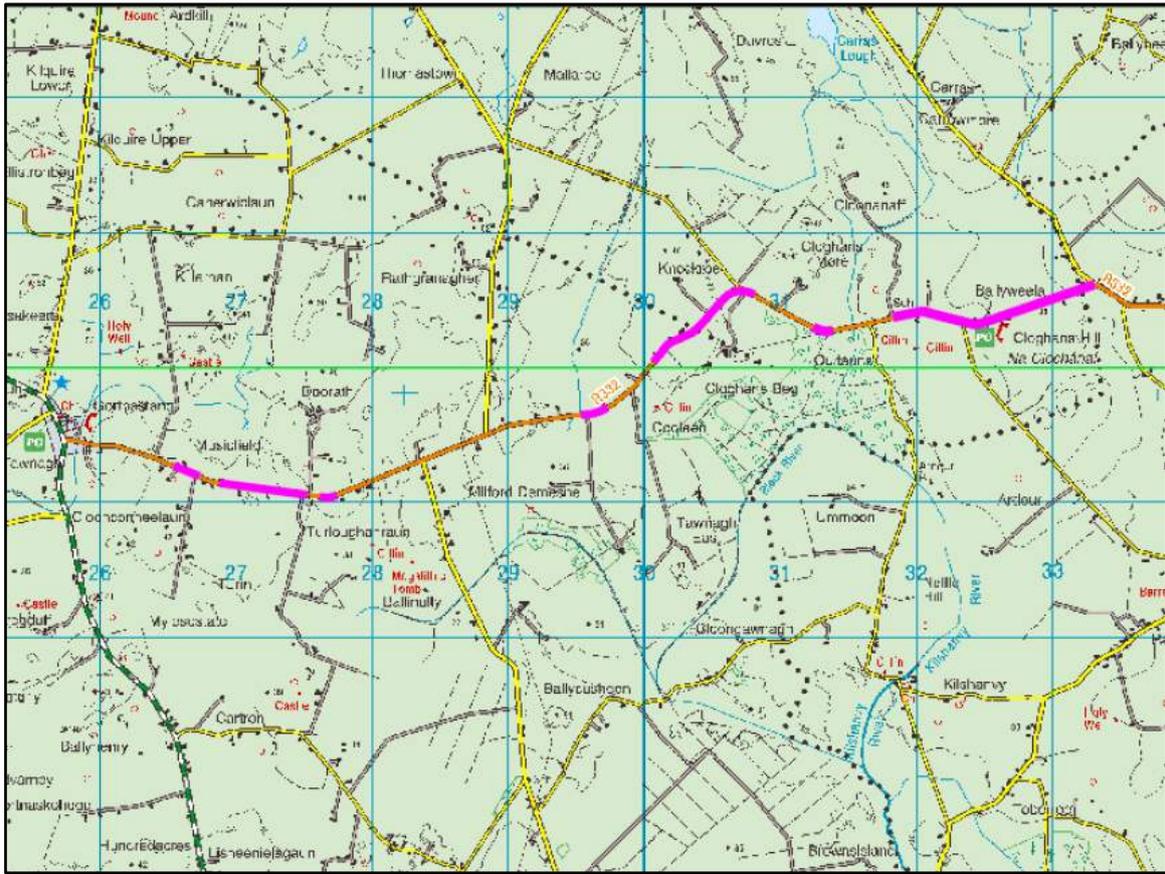


Figure 2.1 Location of the proposed development (highlighted in magenta)

3.0 IDENTIFICATION OF LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS

3.1 Establishing the Likely Zone of Influence

Section 3.2.3 of DEHLG (2010) outlines the procedure for selecting the European sites to be considered in AA. It states that European sites potentially affected should be identified and listed, bearing in mind the potential for direct, indirect, and cumulative effects. It also states that the specific approach in each case is likely to differ depending on the scale and likely effects of the plan or project. However, it advises that the following sites should generally be included:

- All European sites within or immediately adjacent to the plan or project area;
- All European sites within the likely zone of influence of the plan or project; and
- In accordance with the Precautionary Principle, all European sites for which there is doubt as to whether or not they might be significantly affected.

The “likely zone of influence” of a plan or project is the geographic extent over which significant ecological effects are likely to occur. In the case of plans, this zone should extend to a distance of 15 km in all directions from the boundary of the plan area. In the case of projects, however, the guidance recognises that the likely zone of influence must be established on a case-by-case basis, with reference to the following key variables:

- The nature, size, and location of the project;
- The sensitivities of the ecological receptors; and,
- The potential for cumulative effects.

For example, in the case of a project that could affect a watercourse, it may be necessary to include the entire upstream and/or downstream catchment in order to capture all European sites with water-dependent features of interest.

Having regard to the above key variables, the likely zone of influence was defined as:

- The proposed development plus a 500 m buffer
- Downstream extents of the watercourses as far as Lough Corrib.

This area was defined as the likely zone of influence and extends to the maximum distance at which potential likely significant effects could occur including via hydrological connections i.e. surface and groundwater pathways. Beyond this limit, noise and visual disturbance to birds will not occur.

A geographical representation of the likely zone of influence was produced in ArcGIS 10.5 using the proposed development boundary and publicly available Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSi) maps. This was used in combination with NPWS shapefiles to identify the boundaries of European sites in relation to the zone of influence (Figure 3.1).

It was determined that two European sites occur within the zone of influence. Table 3.1 describes how these sites are connected to the proposed development. Detailed descriptions of these sites are given in Section 3.2.

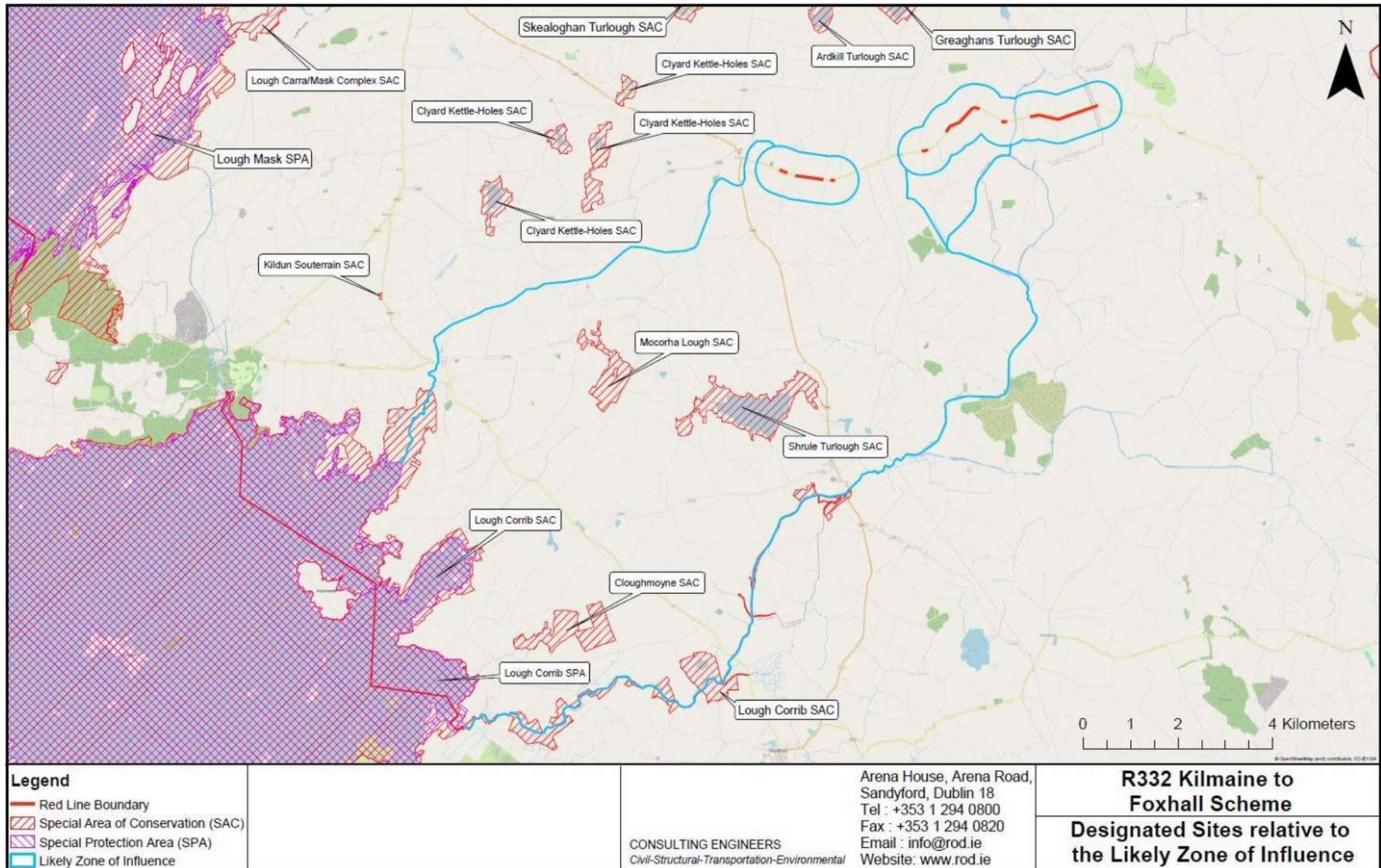


Figure 3.1 Location of European sites in relation to the likely zone of influence of the proposed development.

Table 3.1 European sites located within the likely zone of influence.

European site [site code]	Are there potential pathways for impacts from the proposed development to this site?
Lough Corrib SAC [000297]	Yes. The shortest absolute distance from the proposed development to this site is approx. 6.5 km south. This distance is over land. The shortest distance from the proposed development to the site via a hydrological connection is 12.3 km south and downstream through the Black River. Therefore, the effective distance to the site is 12.3 km.
Lough Corrib SPA [004042]	Yes. The shortest absolute distance from the proposed development to this site is approx. 10.7 km southwest. This distance is over land. The shortest distance from the proposed development to the site via a hydrological connection is 12 km southwest and downstream through the Kilmaine_30 River into Lough Corrib. Therefore, the effective distance to the site is 12 km.

3.2 Site Descriptions

Lough Corrib SAC

The description of the Lough Corrib SAC provided here is based on the Conservation Objectives (NPWS, 2017a), Site Synopsis (NPWS, 2015b), and Conservation Objectives Supporting Document – *Najas flexilis* (NPWS, 2017b) and Conservation Objectives Supporting Document – Lesser Horseshoe Bat (NPWS, 2018) for the site.

Qualifying Interests of the Site

- [3110] Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (*Littorelletalia uniflorae*)
- [3130] Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the *Littorelletea uniflorae* and/or Isoeto-Nanojuncetea
- [3140] Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of *Chara* spp.
- [3260] Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation
- [6210] Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (*Festuco-Brometalia*) (* important orchid sites)
- [6410] Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinion caeruleae*)
- [7110] Active raised bogs
- [7120] Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration
- [7150] Depressions on peat substrates of the *Rhynchosporion*
- [7210] Calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the *Caricion davallianae*
- [7220] Petrifying springs with tufa formation (*Cratoneurion*)
- [7230] Alkaline fens
- [8240] Limestone pavements
- [91A0] Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles
- [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] 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*)

Site Overview

Lough Corrib is situated to the north of Galway city and is the second largest lake in Ireland, with an area of approximately 18,240 ha (the entire site is 20,556 ha). The lake can be divided into two parts: a relatively shallow basin, underlain by Carboniferous limestone, in the south, and a larger, deeper basin, underlain by more acidic granite, schists, shales and sandstones to the north. The surrounding lands to the south and east are mostly pastoral farmland, while bog and heath predominate to the west and north. A number of rivers are included within the SAC as they are important for Atlantic Salmon. These rivers include the Clare, Grange, Abbert, Sinking, Dalgan and Black to the east, as well as the Cong, Bealanabrack, Failmore, Cornamona, Drimneen and Owenriff to the west. In addition to the rivers and lake basin, adjoining areas of conservation interest, including raised bog, woodland, grassland and limestone pavement, have been incorporated into the site.

Open areas of orchid-rich calcareous grassland are also found in association with the limestone exposures. These can support a typically rich vegetation, including many orchids such as Pyramidal Orchid (*Anacamptis pyramidalis*), Common Spotted-orchid (*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*), Early-purple Orchid (*Orchis mascula*), Frog Orchid (*Coeloglossum viride*), Fragrant Orchid (*Gymnadenia conopsea*), Marsh Helleborine (*Epipactis palustris*), Greater Butterfly-orchid (*Platanthera chlorantha*) and Irish Lady's-tresses (*Spiranthes romanzoffiana*). The latter is protected under the Flora (Protection) Order, 2015.

The rare and Annex II listed Slender Green Feather-moss (*Drepanocladus [Hamatocaulis] vernicosus*) is found at the fen at Gortachalla, north-east of Moycullen. Here it is widespread around the margins, and this constitutes a large and significant population in the national context. A very large population of another rare moss, *Pseudocalliergon trifarium*, is also found in this area.

Otter and Irish Hare have been recorded regularly within this site. Both of these species are listed in the Red Data Book and are legally protected by the Wildlife Act, 1976. Otter is also listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive. Lough Corrib is considered one of the best sites in the country for Otter, due to the sheer size of the lake and associated rivers and streams, and also the generally high quality of the habitats. Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*) use the lake and rivers as spawning grounds. Although this species is still fished commercially in Ireland, it is considered to be endangered or locally threatened elsewhere in Europe and is listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive. Lough Corrib is also a well-known fishing lake with a very good Trout (*Salmo trutta*) fishery. The lake has a population of Sea Lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*), a scarce, though probably under-recorded species listed on Annex II of the

E.U. Habitats Directive. Brook Lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*), also listed on Annex II, are also known from a number of areas within the site. A population of Freshwater Pearl Mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*), a species listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive, occurs within the site. White-clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*), also listed on Annex II, is well distributed throughout Lough Corrib and its in-flowing rivers over limestone. A summer roost of Lesser Horseshoe Bat, another Annex II species, occurs within the site – approximately 100 animals were recorded here in 1999.

Lough Corrib is one the best examples of a large lacustrine catchment system in Ireland, with a range of habitats and species still well represented. These include 15 habitats which are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive, six of which are priority habitats, and nine species which are listed on Annex II. The lake is also internationally important for birds and is designated as a Special Protection Area.

Lough Corrib SPA

The description of the Lough Corrib SPA provided here is based on the Conservation Objectives (NPWS, 2022b) and Site Synopsis (NPWS, 2014a) for the site.

Qualifying Interests of the Site

- [A051] Gadwall (*Anas strepera*)
- [A056] Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*)
- [A059] Pochard (*Aythya farina*)
- [A061] Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*)
- [A065] Common Scoter (*Melanitta nigra*)
- [A082] Hen Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*)
- [A125] Coot (*Fulica atra*)
- [A140] Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*)
- [A179] Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*)
- [A182] Common Gull (*Larus canus*)
- [A193] Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*)
- [A194] Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*)
- [A395] Greenland White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons flavirostris*)

Site Overview

Lough Corrib is the largest lake in the country and is located, for the most part, in County Galway, with a small section in the north extending into County Mayo. The lake can be divided into two parts: a relatively shallow basin in the south, which is underlain by Carboniferous limestone, and a larger, deeper basin to the north, which is underlain by more acidic granite, schists, shales and sandstones. The main inflowing rivers are the Black, Clare, Dooghta, Cregg, Owenriff and the channel from Lough Mask. The main outflowing river is the Corrib, which reaches the sea at Galway City.

The site is a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the E.U. Birds Directive, of special conservation interest for the following species: Greenland White-fronted Goose, Gadwall, Shoveler, Pochard, Tufted Duck, Common Scoter, Hen Harrier, Coot, Golden Plover, Black-Headed Gull, Common Gull, Common Tern and Arctic Tern. The site is

also of special conservation interest for holding an assemblage of over 20,000 wintering waterbirds. The E.U. Birds Directive pays particular attention to wetlands and, as these form part of this SPA, the site and its associated waterbirds are of special conservation interest for Wetlands & Waterbirds.

Lough Corrib is an internationally important site that regularly supports in excess of 20,000 wintering waterbirds including an internationally important population of wintering Pochard (10,107) – except where indicated all figures are five year mean peaks for the period 1995/96 to 1999/2000. The site also supports nationally important populations of wintering Greenland White-fronted Goose (160 - five year mean peak for the period 1994/95 to 1998/99), Gadwall (48), Shoveler (90), Tufted Duck (5,486), Coot (14,426) and Golden Plover (1,727). Other species which occur include Mute Swan (182), Whooper Swan (35), Wigeon (528), Teal (74), Mallard (155), Goldeneye (74), Lapwing (2,424) and Curlew (114). In winter nationally important numbers of Hen Harrier (8 - four year mean peak count between 2006 and 2009) also utilise the site as a communal roost.

Lough Corrib is also a traditional breeding site for gulls and terns, with various islands being used for nesting each year. There are important colonies of Common Tern (37 pairs in 1995) and Arctic Tern (60 pairs in 1995).

The site supports substantial colonies of Black-headed Gull (431 pairs in 2000) and Common Gull (186 pairs in 2000), these representing 3% and 11% of the respective all-Ireland totals. Small numbers of Lesser Black-backed Gull, Great Black-backed Gull and Herring Gull have also been recorded breeding within the site. The site supports approximately half of the national population of nesting Common Scoter (30 pairs in 1995); Lough Corrib was colonised by this rare, Red Data Book species only as recently as the late 1970s/early 1980s.

Lough Corrib SPA is an internationally important site which supports in excess of 20,000 wintering waterbirds, including a population of Pochard that is, itself, of international importance. A further six species of wintering waterfowl have populations of national importance. The site also contains a nationally important communal roost site for Hen Harrier. Lough Corrib is the most important site in the country for breeding Common Scoter. Its populations of breeding gulls and terns are also notable, with nationally important numbers of Black-headed Gull, Common Gull, Common Tern and Arctic Tern occurring. It is of note that several species which regularly occur are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive, i.e. Whooper Swan, Greenland White-fronted Goose, Hen Harrier, Golden Plover, Common Tern and Arctic Tern. Lough Corrib is a Ramsar Convention site.

3.3 Evaluation against Conservation Objectives

Tables 3.2 and 3.3 below details the evaluation of the likely effects of the proposed development in view of the Conservation Objectives of the sites identified in section 3.1 and described in section 3.2. As explained in sections 1.2 and 1.3, AA Screening is carried out in view of the Conservation Objectives of the relevant European sites, which are in turn defined by detailed Attributes and corresponding Targets. Therefore, the evaluation of whether or not a likely effect is significant (in view of the conservation Objective in question) is made with regard to these Attributes and Targets.

Table 3.2 Evaluation of the likely effects of the proposed development in view of the Conservation Objectives of Lough Corrib SAC [000297].

Qualifying Interest	Conservation Objective as per NPWS (2017a)	Does the proposed development provide for any potential delay or interruption in the achievement of this Conservation Objective, as defined by its Attributes and Targets?	Likely Significant Effect
Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110]	<i>“To restore the favourable conservation condition of Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) in Lough Corrib SAC”</i>	<p>The Attributes of these Conservation Objectives focus on “<i>Habitat Area</i>”, “<i>Habitat Distribution</i>”, “<i>Typical Species</i>”, “<i>Vegetation Composition</i>”, “<i>Vegetation Distribution</i>”, “<i>Hydrological Regime</i>”, “<i>Lake Substratum Quality</i>”, “<i>Water Quality</i>”, “<i>Acidification Status</i>”, “<i>Water Colour</i>”, “<i>Dissolved Organic Carbon</i>”, “<i>Turbidity</i>” and “<i>Fringing Habitat</i>”.</p> <p>The proposed development will not result in the loss of any areas of this habitat within the Lough Corrib SAC. The only potential impact that the proposed development may have on these Qualifying Interests is an impact on water quality.</p>	No
Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or <i>Isoeto-Nanojuncetea</i> [3130]	<i>“To restore the favourable conservation condition of Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or <i>Isoeto-Nanojuncetea</i> in Lough Corrib SAC”</i>	<p>The Black River crosses the proposed development 6.4 km east of Kilmaine village on the R332 road. The minimum hydrological distance to these Qualifying Interests in Lough Corrib SAC is 12.3 km downstream from the proposed development via the Black River. The hydrological connection provides a pathway for contaminants such as concrete, hydrocarbons and sediments that may be accidentally spilled during construction. However, the quantities of pollutants that will be used/ produced during construction will be small and the level of impact these spillages could have on water quality within the European site will be negligible considering the distance between the proposed development site and the European site as well as the volume of water and the assimilative capacity within the Black River and Lough Corrib.</p>	No
Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp. [3140]	<i>“To restore the favourable conservation condition of Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp. in Lough Corrib SAC”</i>	<p>Therefore, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will not significantly affect the Lough Corrib SAC in view of its Conservation Objectives for these Qualifying Interests.</p>	No

Qualifying Interest	Conservation Objective as per NPWS (2017a)	Does the proposed development provide for any potential delay or interruption in the achievement of this Conservation Objective, as defined by its Attributes and Targets?	Likely Significant Effect
<p>Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260]</p>	<p><i>“To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation in Lough Corrib SAC”</i></p>	<p>The Attributes of this Conservation Objective focuses on “<i>Habitat Area</i>”, “<i>Habitat Distribution</i>”, “<i>Hydrological Regime</i>”, “<i>Substratum Composition</i>”, “<i>Water Quality</i>”, “<i>Vegetation Composition</i>”, “<i>Floodplain Connectivity</i>” and “<i>Riparian Habitat</i>”.</p> <p>The proposed development will not result in the loss of any areas of this habitat within the Lough Corrib SAC. The only potential impact that the proposed development may have on this Qualifying Interest is an impact on water quality.</p> <p>The Black River crosses the proposed development 6.4 km east of Kilmaine village on the R332 road. The minimum hydrological distance to these Qualifying Interests in Lough Corrib SAC is 12.3 km downstream from the proposed development via the Black River. The hydrological connection provides a pathway for contaminants such as concrete, hydrocarbons and sediments that may be accidentally spilled during construction. However, the quantities of pollutants that will be used/ produced during construction will be small and the level of impact these spillages could have on water quality within the European site will be negligible considering the distance between the proposed development site and the European site as well as the volume of water and the assimilative capacity within the Black River and Lough Corrib.</p> <p>Therefore, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will not significantly affect the Lough Corrib SAC in view of its Conservation Objectives for this Qualifying Interest.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (* important orchid sites) [6210]</p>	<p><i>“To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (* important orchid sites) in Lough Corrib SAC”</i></p>	<p>The Attributes of these Conservation Objectives focus on “<i>Habitat Area</i>”, “<i>Habitat Distribution</i>”, “<i>Vegetation Composition</i>”, “<i>Vegetation Structure</i>” and “<i>Physical Structure</i>”.</p> <p>The proposed development will not result in the loss of any areas of these habitats within the Lough Corrib SAC. The shortest distance to the Lough Corrib SAC from the proposed development is 6.5 km over land. As these habitats are terrestrial, there are no hydrological pathways for effects.</p>	<p>No</p>

Qualifying Interest	Conservation Objective as per NPWS (2017a)	Does the proposed development provide for any potential delay or interruption in the achievement of this Conservation Objective, as defined by its Attributes and Targets?	Likely Significant Effect
Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinia caeruleae</i>) [6410]	<i>“To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinia caeruleae</i>) in Lough Corrib SAC”</i>	Therefore, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will not significantly affect the Lough Corrib SAC in view of its Conservation Objectives for these Qualifying Interests.	No
Active raised bogs [7110]	<i>“To restore the favourable conservation condition of Active raised bogs in Lough Corrib SAC”</i>	The Attributes of these Conservation Objectives focus on “Habitat Area”, “Habitat Distribution”, “High Bog Area”, “Hydrological Regime”, “Transitional Areas Between High Bog and Adjacent Mineral Soils”, “Vegetation Quality”, “Typical ARB Species”, “Elements of Local Distinctiveness”, “Negative Physical Indicators”, “Vegetation Composition”, “Air Quality”, “Water Quality”.	No
Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120]	<i>“The long-term aim for Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration is that its peat-forming capability is re-established; therefore, the conservation objective for this habitat is inherently linked to that of Active raised bogs (7110) and a separate conservation objective has not been set in Lough Corrib SAC”</i>	The proposed development will not result in the loss of any areas of these habitats within the Lough Corrib SAC. The shortest distance to the Lough Corrib SAC from the proposed development is 6.5 km over land. There is no hydrological pathway for effects between the proposed development and these Qualifying Interests. Therefore, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will not significantly affect the Lough Corrib SAC in view of its Conservation Objectives for these Qualifying Interests.	No

Qualifying Interest	Conservation Objective as per NPWS (2017a)	Does the proposed development provide for any potential delay or interruption in the achievement of this Conservation Objective, as defined by its Attributes and Targets?	Likely Significant Effect
<p>Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150]</p>	<p><i>“Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion is an integral part of good quality Active raised bogs (7110) and thus a separate conservation objective has not been set for the habitat in Lough Corrib SAC”</i></p>	<p>[As above]</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> [7210]</p>	<p><i>“To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Calcareous fens with Cladium mariscus and species of the Caricion davallianae in Lough Corrib SAC”</i></p>	<p>The Attributes of this Conservation Objective focuses on “<i>Habitat Area</i>”, “<i>Habitat Distribution</i>”, “<i>Ecosystem Function</i>”, “<i>Vegetation Structure</i>”, “<i>Vegetation Composition</i>”, “<i>Physical Structure</i>”, “<i>Indicators of Local Distinctiveness</i>”, “<i>Hydrological Regime</i>”, “<i>Water Quality</i>” and “<i>Community Structure</i>”.</p> <p>The proposed development will not result in the loss of any areas of these habitats within the Lough Corrib SAC. Any effect on ground water at the site of the proposed development would dissipate long before reaching the SAC. The shortest distance to the Lough Corrib SAC from the proposed development is 6.5 km over land. There is no hydrological or hydrogeological pathways for effects between the proposed development and these Qualifying Interests.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Petrifying springs with tufa formation (<i>Cratoneurion</i>) [7220]</p>	<p><i>“To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) in Lough Corrib SAC”</i></p>	<p>The proposed development will not result in the loss of any areas of these habitats within the Lough Corrib SAC. Any effect on ground water at the site of the proposed development would dissipate long before reaching the SAC. The shortest distance to the Lough Corrib SAC from the proposed development is 6.5 km over land. There is no hydrological or hydrogeological pathways for effects between the proposed development and these Qualifying Interests.</p>	<p>No</p>

Qualifying Interest	Conservation Objective as per NPWS (2017a)	Does the proposed development provide for any potential delay or interruption in the achievement of this Conservation Objective, as defined by its Attributes and Targets?	Likely Significant Effect
Alkaline fens [7230]	<i>“To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Alkaline fens in Lough Corrib SAC”</i>	Therefore, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will not significantly affect the Lough Corrib SAC in view of its Conservation Objectives for these Qualifying Interests.	No
Limestone pavements [8240]	<i>“To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Limestone pavements in Lough Corrib SAC”</i>	The Attributes of this Conservation Objective focuses on <i>“Habitat Area”, “Distribution”, “Vegetation Composition”, “Vegetation Structure”, “Physical Structure”, “Indicators of Local Distinctiveness”, “Woodland Size” and “Woodland Structure”</i> . The proposed development will not result in the loss of any areas of these habitats within the Lough Corrib SAC. The shortest distance to the Lough Corrib SAC from the proposed development is 6.5 km over land. As these habitats are terrestrial, there are no hydrological pathway for effects.	No
Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0]	<i>“To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles in Lough Corrib SAC”</i>	Therefore, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will not significantly affect the Lough Corrib SAC in view of its Conservation Objectives for these Qualifying Interests.	No
Bog woodland [91D0]	<i>“To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Bog Woodland in Lough Corrib SAC”</i>		No
Freshwater Pearl Mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>) [1029]	<i>“To restore the favourable conservation condition of Freshwater Pearl Mussel in Lough Corrib SAC”</i>	The Attributes of these Conservation Objectives focus on <i>“Distribution”, “Population size”, “Population Structure”, “Suitable Habitat”, “Water Quality”, “Substratum Quality”, “Hydrological Regime”, “Host Fish”, “Fringing Habitat and “Disease”</i> . This Qualifying Interest refers to the population of Freshwater Pearl Mussel in the Owenriff catchment, which is on the western side of Lough Corrib, and not hydrologically connected to the proposed development. Therefore, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will not significantly affect the Lough Corrib SAC in view of its Conservation Objectives for this Qualifying Interest.	No

Qualifying Interest	Conservation Objective as per NPWS (2017a)	Does the proposed development provide for any potential delay or interruption in the achievement of this Conservation Objective, as defined by its Attributes and Targets?	Likely Significant Effect
<p>White-clawed Crayfish <i>(Austropotamobius pallipes)</i> [1092]</p>	<p><i>“To maintain the favourable conservation condition of White-clawed Crayfish in Lough Corrib SAC”</i></p>	<p>The Attributes of these Conservation Objectives focus on <i>“Distribution”, “Population Structure”, “Negative Indicator Species”, “Disease”, “Water Quality”</i> and <i>“Habitat Quality”</i>.</p> <p>The only potential impact that the proposed development may have on this Qualifying Interest is an impact on water quality.</p> <p>The Black River crosses the proposed development 6.4 km east of Kilmaine village on the R332 road. The minimum hydrological distance to this Qualifying Interest in Lough Corrib SAC is 12.3 km downstream from the proposed development via the Black River. The hydrological connection provides a pathway for contaminants such as concrete, hydrocarbons and sediments that may be accidentally spilled during construction. However, the quantities of pollutants that will be used/ produced during construction will be small and the level of impact these spillages could have on water quality within the European site will be negligible considering the distance between the proposed development site and the European site as well as the volume of water and the assimilative capacity within the Black River and Lough Corrib.</p> <p>Therefore, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will not significantly affect the Lough Corrib SAC in view of its Conservation Objectives for this Qualifying Interest.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Sea Lamprey <i>(Petromyzon marinus)</i> [1095]</p>	<p><i>“To restore the favourable conservation condition of Sea Lamprey in Lough Corrib SAC”</i></p>	<p>The Attributes of these Conservation Objectives focus on <i>“Distribution”, “Population structure of juveniles”, “Juvenile density in fine sediment”, “Extent and distribution of spawning habitat”, “Availability of juvenile habitat”, “Adult spawning fish”, “Salmon fry abundance”, “Out-migrating smolt abundance”, “Number and distribution of redds”</i> and <i>“Water Quality”</i>.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Brook Lamprey <i>(Lampetra planeri)</i> [1096]</p>	<p><i>“To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Brook Lamprey in Lough Corrib SAC”</i></p>	<p>The only potential impact that the proposed development may have on these Qualifying Interests is an impact on water quality.</p> <p>The Black River crosses the proposed development 6.4 km east of Kilmaine village on the R332 road. The minimum hydrological distance to these Qualifying Interests in Lough</p>	<p>No</p>

Qualifying Interest	Conservation Objective as per NPWS (2017a)	Does the proposed development provide for any potential delay or interruption in the achievement of this Conservation Objective, as defined by its Attributes and Targets?	Likely Significant Effect
<p>Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) [1106]</p>	<p><i>“To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Atlantic Salmon in Lough Corrib SAC”</i></p>	<p>Corrib SAC is 12.3 km downstream from the proposed development via the Black River. The hydrological connection provides a pathway for contaminants such as concrete, hydrocarbons and sediments that may be accidentally spilled during construction. However, the quantities of pollutants that will be used/ produced during construction will be small and the level of impact these spillages could have on water quality within the European site will be negligible considering the distance between the proposed development site and the European site as well as the volume of water and the assimilative capacity within the Black River and Lough Corrib.</p> <p>Therefore, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will not significantly affect the Lough Corrib SAC in view of its Conservation Objectives for these Qualifying Interests.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Lesser Horseshoe Bat (<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>) [1303]</p>	<p><i>“To restore the favourable conservation condition of Lesser Horseshoe Bat in Lough Corrib SAC”</i></p>	<p>The Attributes of this Conservation Objective focuses on “<i>Population per Roost</i>”, “<i>Summer Roosts</i>”, “<i>Number of Auxiliary Roosts</i>”, “<i>Extent of Potential Foraging Habitat</i>”, “<i>Linear Features</i>” and “<i>Light Pollution</i>”.</p> <p>The lesser horseshoe roost and potential foraging grounds, within 2.5 km of the roost, are on the north side of Lough Corrib, c. 17 km west of the proposed development. Considering the nature of the proposed development the duration of the proposed construction works and the distance to the area with roosts and foraging habitat for this species, it can be concluded that the proposed development will not lead to likely significant effects on the integrity of this site, as defined by its Conservation Objective for this Qualifying Interest.</p> <p>Therefore, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will not significantly affect the Lough Corrib SAC in view of its Conservation Objectives for this Qualifying Interest.</p>	<p>No</p>

Qualifying Interest	Conservation Objective as per NPWS (2017a)	Does the proposed development provide for any potential delay or interruption in the achievement of this Conservation Objective, as defined by its Attributes and Targets?	Likely Significant Effect
<p>Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1355]</p>	<p><i>“To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Otter in Lough Corrib SAC”</i></p>	<p>The Attributes of this Conservation Objective focuses on “<i>Distribution</i>”, “<i>Extent of Terrestrial, River and Lake Habitats</i>”, “<i>Couching Sites and Holts</i>”, “<i>Fish Biomass Availability</i>” and “<i>Barriers to Connectivity</i>”.</p> <p>Potential effects which the proposed development may have on this Qualifying Interest include habitat fragmentation, disturbance and water quality impacts.</p> <p>The proposed development will not result in the reduction of suitable terrestrial, river or lake habitats within this SAC. The minimum hydrological distance to this Qualifying Interests in Lough Corrib SAC is 12.3 km downstream from the proposed development via the Black River. The hydrological connection provides a pathway for contaminants such as concrete, hydrocarbons and sediments that may be accidentally spilled during construction. However, the quantities of pollutants that will be used/ produced during construction will be small and the level of impact these spillages could have on water quality within the European site will be negligible considering the distance between the proposed development site and the European site as well as the volume of water and the assimilative capacity within the Black River and Lough Corrib.</p> <p>Therefore, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will not significantly affect the Lough Corrib SAC in view of its Conservation Objectives for these Qualifying Interests.</p>	<p>No</p>

Qualifying Interest	Conservation Objective as per NPWS (2017a)	Does the proposed development provide for any potential delay or interruption in the achievement of this Conservation Objective, as defined by its Attributes and Targets?	Likely Significant Effect
<p>Slender Naiad (<i>Najas flexilis</i>) [1833]</p>	<p><i>“To restore the favourable conservation condition of Slender Naiad in Lough Corrib SAC”</i></p>	<p>The Attributes of this Conservation Objective focuses on “<i>Population Extent</i>”, “<i>Population Depth</i>”, “<i>Population Viability</i>”, “<i>Population Abundance</i>”, “<i>Species Distribution</i>”, “<i>Habitat Extent</i>”, “<i>Hydrological Regime</i>”, “<i>Lake Substratum Quality</i>”, “<i>Water Quality</i>”, “<i>Acidification Status</i>”, “<i>Water Colour</i>”, “<i>Associated Species</i>” and “<i>Fringing Habitat</i>”.</p> <p>Records of Slender Naiad in the Conservation Objectives document refers to species found in the northwestern side of Lough Corrib.</p> <p>The hydrological distance to the Lough Corrib SAC from the proposed development is 12.3 km downstream from the proposed development via the Black River. The hydrological connection provides a pathway for contaminants such as concrete, hydrocarbons and sediments that may be accidentally spilled during construction. However, the quantities of pollutants that will be used/ produced during construction will be small and the level of impact these spillages could have on water quality within the European site will be negligible considering the distance between the proposed development site and the European site as well as the volume of water and the assimilative capacity within the Black River and Lough Corrib.</p> <p>Therefore, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will not significantly affect the Lough Corrib SAC in view of its Conservation Objectives for this Qualifying Interest.</p>	<p>No</p>

Qualifying Interest	Conservation Objective as per NPWS (2017a)	Does the proposed development provide for any potential delay or interruption in the achievement of this Conservation Objective, as defined by its Attributes and Targets?	Likely Significant Effect
<p>Slender Green Feather-moss (<i>Hamatocaulis vernicosus</i>) [6216]</p>	<p><i>“To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Slender Green Feather-moss (Shining Sickle-moss) in Lough Corrib SAC”</i></p>	<p>The Attributes of this Conservation Objective focuses on <i>“Distributions of Populations”, “Population Size”, “Population Cover”, “Area of Suitable Habitat”, “Hydrological Conditions”, “Vegetation Composition”</i> and <i>“Vegetation Structure”</i>.</p> <p>Records of Slender Green Feather-moss in the Conservation Objectives document refers to species found in fen habitat on the western side of Lough Corrib, which is not hydrologically connected to the proposed development. As this is a terrestrial species, there are no pathways for effects between the proposed development and this Qualifying Interest.</p> <p>Therefore, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will not significantly affect the Lough Corrib SAC in view of its Conservation Objectives for this Qualifying Interest.</p>	<p>No</p>

Table 3.3 Evaluation of the likely effects of the proposed development in view of the Conservation Objectives of Lough Corrib SPA [004042].

Qualifying Interest	Conservation Objective as per NPWS (2022)	Does the proposed development provide for any potential delay or interruption in the achievement of this Conservation Objective, as defined by its Attributes and Targets?	Likely Significant Effect
Gadwall (<i>Anas strepera</i>) [A051]	<i>“To maintain or enhance the favourable conservation condition of Gadwall in the Lough Corrib SPA” as per the Lough Neagh SPA (Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), 2015).</i>	<p>The Attributes of these Conservation Objectives focus on “<i>Wintering Population</i>” with a Target of “<i>No significant decrease in population against national trends</i>”.</p> <p>The main impacts arising from the proposed development on these Attributes relate to spillages of contaminants altering suitable habitats for these species, subsequently deterring them from certain areas as well as noise impacts causing disturbance.</p> <p>The shortest hydrological distance to the Lough Corrib SPA from the proposed development is 12 km downstream via the Kilmaine_30 River. This provides a pathway for contaminants such as concrete and sediments that may be spilled during construction, to be transported to the site. However, the quantities of concrete and sediment that will be used and produced during construction will be small and the level of impact these spillages may have on water quality within the European site will be negligible considering the distance between the proposed development site and the European site as well as the volume of water and the assimilative capacity within the Black River and Lough Corrib.</p>	No
Pochard (<i>Aythya ferina</i>) [A059]	<i>“To maintain or enhance the favourable conservation condition of Pochard in the Lough Corrib SPA” as per the Lough Neagh SPA (Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), 2015).</i>	<p>The shortest distance over land is 10.7 km. This is of sufficient distance that any noise or vibration impacts during the construction phase would not cause disturbance to these species within the SPA.</p>	No
Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>) [A061]	<i>“To maintain or enhance the favourable conservation condition of Tufted Duck in the Lough Corrib SPA” as per the Lough Neagh SPA (Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), 2015).</i>	<p>Therefore, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will not significantly affect the Lough Corrib SPA in view of its Conservation Objectives for these Qualifying Interests.</p>	No

Qualifying Interest	Conservation Objective as per NPWS (2022)	Does the proposed development provide for any potential delay or interruption in the achievement of this Conservation Objective, as defined by its Attributes and Targets?	Likely Significant Effect
Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056]	<i>“To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Shoveler in the Lough Corrib SPA”</i> as per the Lough Swilly SPA (NPWS, 2011)	The Attributes of these Conservation Objectives focus on <i>“Population Trend”</i> and <i>“Distribution”</i> with Targets of <i>“Long term population trend stable or increasing”</i> and <i>“No significant decrease in the numbers or range of areas used by waterbird species, other than that occurring from natural patterns of variation”</i> respectively.	No
Common Scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>) [A065]	<i>“To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Common Scoter in the Lough Corrib SPA”</i> as per the Blacksod Bay / Broad Haven SPA (NPWS, 2014b).	The main impacts arising from the proposed development on these Attributes relate to spillages of contaminants altering suitable habitats for these species and subsequently deterring them from certain areas as well as noise impacts causing disturbance. The hydrological distance to the Lough Corrib SPA from the proposed development is 12 km downstream via the Kilmaine_30 River. This provides a pathway for contaminants such as concrete and sediments that may be spilled during construction, to be transported to the site. However, the quantities of concrete and sediment that will be used and produced during construction will be small and the level of impact these spillages may have on water quality within the European site will be negligible considering the distance between the proposed development site and the European site as well as the volume of water and the assimilative capacity within the Black River and Lough Corrib.	No
Coot (<i>Fulica atra</i>) [A125]	<i>“To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Coot in the Lough Corrib SPA”</i> as per the Lough Swilly SPA (NPWS, 2011)	The shortest distance over land is 10.7 km. This is of sufficient distance that any noise or vibration impacts during the construction phase would not cause disturbance to these species within the SPA.	No
Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140]	<i>“To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Golden Plover in the Lough Corrib SPA”</i> as per the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA (NPWS, 2012b)	Therefore, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will not significantly affect the Lough Corrib SPA in view of its Conservation Objectives for these Qualifying Interests.	No

Qualifying Interest	Conservation Objective as per NPWS (2022)	Does the proposed development provide for any potential delay or interruption in the achievement of this Conservation Objective, as defined by its Attributes and Targets?	Likely Significant Effect
<p>Hen Harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>) [A082]</p>	<p><i>“To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Hen Harrier in Lough Corrib SPA” as per the Wexford Harbour and Slob SPA (NPWS, 2012a)</i></p>	<p>The Attributes of this Conservation Objective focuses on “Roost Attendance”, “Suitable Foraging Habitat”, “Roost Site: Condition” and “Disturbance at the Roost Site”.</p> <p>This species is a ground nesting bird that forages on small birds and mammals. The main impacts arising from the proposed development on these Attributes relate to disturbance from noise, vibration or visual impacts. The proposed development site does not contain any suitable, breeding or roosting habitat for this species. The shortest distance from the proposed development site to this European site is approx. 10.7 km southwest over land. This is of sufficient distance that any noise, vibration or visual disturbance impacts arising during the construction or operational phase would not impact Hen Harrier in this European site.</p> <p>Hen Harrier are not waterbirds and are not dependent on waterbodies to achieve their Conservation Objectives. While any water quality impacts arising from the proposed development would be negligible by the time they reached this European site, they are not relevant to this Qualifying Interest.</p> <p>Therefore, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will not significantly affect the Lough Corrib SPA in view of its Conservation Objectives for this Qualifying Interest.</p>	<p>No</p>

Qualifying Interest	Conservation Objective as per NPWS (2022)	Does the proposed development provide for any potential delay or interruption in the achievement of this Conservation Objective, as defined by its Attributes and Targets?	Likely Significant Effect
<p>Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179]</p>	<p><i>“To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Black-Headed Gull in the Lough Corrib SPA” as per the Lough Swilly SPA (NPWS, 2011)</i></p>	<p>The Attributes of this Conservation Objective focuses on “<i>Breeding Population Abundance</i>”, “<i>Productivity Rate</i>” and “<i>Distribution</i>”.</p> <p>The shortest distance from the proposed development to this site is approx. 10.7 km southwest over land. The proposed development site does not contain any suitable habitat for this species. The proposed development site is also of sufficient distance that any noise, vibration or visual disturbance impacts arising during the construction or operational phase would not impact Black-headed Gull in this European site.</p> <p>The hydrological distance to the Lough Corrib SPA from the proposed development is 12 km downstream via the Kilmaine_30 River. This provides a pathway for contaminants such as concrete and sediments that may be spilled during construction, to be transported to the site. However, the quantities of concrete and sediment that will be used and produced during construction will be small and the level of impact these spillages may have on water quality within the European site will be negligible considering the distance between the proposed development site and the European site as well as the volume of water and the assimilative capacity within the Black River and Lough Corrib.</p> <p>Therefore, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will not significantly affect the Lough Corrib SPA in view of its Conservation Objectives for this Qualifying Interest.</p>	<p>No</p>

Qualifying Interest	Conservation Objective as per NPWS (2022)	Does the proposed development provide for any potential delay or interruption in the achievement of this Conservation Objective, as defined by its Attributes and Targets?	Likely Significant Effect
<p>Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182]</p>	<p><i>“To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Common Gull in the Lough Corrib SPA” as per the Lough Swilly SPA (NPWS, 2011)</i></p>	<p>The Attributes of this Conservation Objective focuses on <i>“Population Trend”</i> and <i>“Distribution”</i> with Targets of <i>“Long term population trend stable or increasing”</i> and <i>“No significant decrease in the numbers or range of areas used by waterbird species, other than that occurring from natural patterns of variation”</i> respectively.</p> <p>The shortest distance from the proposed development to this site is approx. 10.7 km southwest over land. The proposed development site does not contain any suitable habitat for this species. The proposed development site is also of sufficient distance that any noise, vibration or visual disturbance impacts arising during the construction or operational phase would not impact Common Gull in this European site.</p> <p>The hydrological distance to the Lough Corrib SPA from the proposed development is 12 km downstream via the Kilmaine_30 River. This provides a pathway for contaminants such as concrete and sediments that may be spilled during construction, to be transported to the site. However, the quantities of concrete and sediment that will be used and produced during construction will be small and the level of impact these spillages may have on water quality within the European site will be negligible considering the distance between the proposed development site and the European site as well as the volume of water and the assimilative capacity within the Black River and Lough Corrib.</p> <p>Therefore, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will not significantly affect the Lough Corrib SPA in view of its Conservation Objectives for this Qualifying Interest.</p>	<p>No</p>

Qualifying Interest	Conservation Objective as per NPWS (2022)	Does the proposed development provide for any potential delay or interruption in the achievement of this Conservation Objective, as defined by its Attributes and Targets?	Likely Significant Effect
<p>Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193]</p>	<p><i>“To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Common Tern in the Lough Corrib SPA” as per the Lough Swilly SPA (NPWS, 2011)</i></p>	<p>The Attributes of this Conservation Objective focuses on “<i>Breeding Population Abundance</i>”, “<i>Productivity Rate</i>” and “<i>Distribution</i>”.</p> <p>The shortest distance from the proposed development to this site is approx. 10.7 km southwest over land. The proposed development site does not contain any suitable breeding habitat for this species. The proposed development site is also of sufficient distance that any noise, vibration or visual disturbance impacts arising during the construction or operational phase would not impact Common Tern in this European site.</p> <p>The hydrological distance to the Lough Corrib SPA from the proposed development is 12 km downstream via the Kilmaine_30 River. This provides a pathway for contaminants such as concrete and sediments that may be spilled during construction, to be transported to the site. However, the quantities of concrete and sediment that will be used and produced during construction will be small and the level of impact these spillages may have on water quality within the European site will be negligible considering the distance between the proposed development site and the European site as well as the volume of water and the assimilative capacity within the Black River and Lough Corrib.</p> <p>Therefore, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will not significantly affect the Lough Corrib SPA in view of its Conservation Objectives for this Qualifying Interest.</p>	<p>No</p>

Qualifying Interest	Conservation Objective as per NPWS (2022)	Does the proposed development provide for any potential delay or interruption in the achievement of this Conservation Objective, as defined by its Attributes and Targets?	Likely Significant Effect
<p>Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194]</p>	<p><i>“To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Arctic Tern in the Lough Corrib SPA” as per the South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (NPWS, 2015a).</i></p>	<p>The Attributes of this Conservation Objective focuses on <i>“Passage Population”, “Distribution”, “Prey Biomass Available” “Barriers to Connectivity” and “Disturbance at Roosting Site”.</i></p> <p>The shortest distance from the proposed development to this site is approx. 10.7 km southwest over land. The proposed development site does not contain any suitable habitat for this species. The proposed development site is also of sufficient distance that any noise, vibration or visual disturbance impacts arising during the construction or operational phase would not impact Arctic Tern in this European site.</p> <p>The hydrological distance to the Lough Corrib SPA from the proposed development is 12 km downstream via the Kilmaine_30 River. This provides a pathway for contaminants such as concrete and sediments that may be spilled during construction, to be transported to the site. However, the quantities of concrete and sediment that will be used and produced during construction will be small and the level of impact these spillages may have on water quality within the European site will be negligible considering the distance between the proposed development site and the European site as well as the volume of water and the assimilative capacity within the Black River and Lough Corrib.</p> <p>Therefore, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will not significantly affect the Lough Corrib SPA in view of its Conservation Objectives for this Qualifying Interest.</p>	<p>No</p>

Qualifying Interest	Conservation Objective as per NPWS (2022)	Does the proposed development provide for any potential delay or interruption in the achievement of this Conservation Objective, as defined by its Attributes and Targets?	Likely Significant Effect
<p>Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395]</p>	<p><i>“To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Greenland White-fronted Goose in the Lough Corrib SPA” as per the Lough Swilly SPA (NPWS, 2011)</i></p>	<p>The Attributes of this Conservation Objectives focuses on “<i>Population Trend</i>” and “<i>Distribution</i>” with Targets of “<i>Long term population trend stable or increasing</i>” and “<i>No significant decrease in the numbers or range of areas used by waterbird species, other than that occurring from natural patterns of variation</i>” respectively. The main impacts arising from the proposed development on these Attributes relate to spillages of contaminants, altering suitable habitats for these species which could deter species away from certain areas as well as noise impacts causing disturbance.</p> <p>The hydrological distance to the Lough Corrib SPA from the proposed development is 12 km downstream via the Kilmaine_30 River. This provides a pathway for contaminants such as concrete and sediments that may be spilled during construction, to be transported to the site. However, the quantities of concrete and sediment that will be used and produced during construction will be small and the level of impact these spillages may have on water quality within the European site will be negligible considering the distance between the proposed development site and the European site as well as the volume of water and the assimilative capacity within the Black River and Lough Corrib.</p> <p>The shortest distance over land is 10.7 km. This is of sufficient distance that any noise or vibration impacts during the construction phase would not cause disturbance to this species within the SPA.</p> <p>Therefore, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will not significantly affect the Lough Corrib SPA in view of its Conservation Objectives for this Qualifying Interest.</p>	<p>No</p>

Qualifying Interest	Conservation Objective as per NPWS (2022)	Does the proposed development provide for any potential delay or interruption in the achievement of this Conservation Objective, as defined by its Attributes and Targets?	Likely Significant Effect
<p>Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</p>	<p><i>“To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Wetlands and Waterbirds in the Lough Corrib SPA” as per the Lough Swilly SPA (NPWS, 2011)</i></p>	<p>The Conservation Objective for Wetlands is defined by a single Attribute, namely “Habitat area”, the Target for which is <i>“The permanent area occupied by the wetland habitat is stable and not significantly less than the areas of 4,162, 2,419, 201 and 317 hectares for subtidal, intertidal, supratidal and lagoon (and associated habitats) respectively, other than that occurring from natural patterns of variation.”</i>.</p> <p>As the proposed development does not provide for any reduction in the permanent area or quality of this habitat within the site, it has no potential to delay or interrupt the achievement of this Conservation Objective.</p> <p>Therefore, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will not significantly affect the Lough Corrib SPA view of its Conservation Objectives for this Qualifying Interest.</p>	<p>No</p>

3.4 Summary of Likely Significant Effects

In Section 3.1, it was established that two European sites, namely the Lough Corrib SAC and the Lough Corrib SPA occur within or adjacent to the likely zone of influence of the proposed development. It was determined that no pathways for effects exist between the proposed development and any other European sites. The SAC and SPA are described in detail in Section 3.2.

In Section 3.3, it was established, in light of best scientific knowledge, that the proposed development will not give rise to ecological impacts which would constitute significant effects on the SPA or SAC, in view of the sites' Conservation Objectives. This finding had regard to the nature, size and location of the proposed development as well as the existing levels of noise and visual disturbance in the area and the sensitivities of the Qualifying Interests of the sites concerned.

4.0 IN-COMBINATION EFFECTS

4.1 Introduction

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires that AA be carried out in respect of plans and projects that are likely to have significant effects on European sites, “*either individually or in combination with other plans or projects*”. Therefore, regardless of whether or not the likely effects of a plan or project are significant when considered on their own, the significance of the combined effects of the proposed development under assessment and other plans and projects must also be evaluated.

4.2 Methodology

Plans and projects with potential for interactions with the proposed development were selected for assessment. For the purposes of the assessment, small scale and domestic developments were not considered given the nature of the proposed development and the fact that these developments would be subject to stringent planning controls.

The ePlanning website for Mayo County Council as well as the EIA Portal was used to search for planning applications.

4.3 Outcome

There are no plans or projects within the search area that could combine to lead to likely significant effects. Therefore, it can be concluded that the proposed development, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, is not likely to have a significant effect on any European site.

Table 4.1 Assessment of the likelihood of significant effects on ecology arising from the combination of the proposed development with other plans and projects.

Plan or Project	Description of Plan or Project	In-combination effect(s)
<p>MCC Planning Application No. 1998 (Granted)</p>	<p>Construct serviced dwelling house and domestic garage/store with effluent treatment system and all associated site works and services.</p> <p>The proposed development was granted permission subject to a number of conditions (in the interests of proper planning and development) relating to the layout and house plan of the development, construction materials, the proposed garage/shed, the floor level, existing landscape boundary features, the centre line of the proposed access point, the off carriageway parking, surface water run-off and drainage, the proposed access gradient, the foulwater treatment connection, the effluent treatment and disposal system, the watermains/service pipes/access roads/driveways/paved areas, ESB lines, contributions to MCC and landscaping.</p> <p>Neither the Planners Report, nor the accompanying documents for the proposed development included any mention of ecological assessments to be carried out with respect to the proposed development.</p>	<p>Due to the small scale of this project, the conditions of the planning permission, the distance between this project and the proposed development and the assimilative capacity of the Black River, no significant in-combination effects are predicted to arise from this project and the proposed development.</p>
<p>MCC Planning Application No. 19872 (Granted)</p>	<p>Construct serviced dwelling with an effluent treatment system and garage/shed.</p> <p>The proposed development was granted permission subject to a number of conditions relating to the plans, elevations and documentation for the development (in the interests of proper planning and development), construction materials and floor levels (in the interest of visual amenity), the proposed garage shall be used as a private domestic garage (in the interests of residential amenity), the roadside fence shall be removed over the site frontage (in the interests of traffic safety), no surface water runoff from the site shall be discharged onto the public road, existing roadside drainage shall be maintained at all times and all surface water generated by the development during and after construction shall be collected separately and discharged to the surface water drainage system (in the interests of proper drainage and traffic safety), existing roadside drainage shall be maintained at all times (to prevent interference with existing land or roadside drainage), foul waste will be treated and disposed of in accordance with the Site Assessment Report, the effluent treatment system will be designed and maintained in accordance with the EPA Code of Practice, adequate access shall be provided for the maintenance of the system (to protect public health), if ESB lines cross the site, the ESB shall be informed (to avoid electrocution), contributions will be made to MCC (to comply with MCC's Development Contribution Scheme) and all existing hedgerows and trees shall be retained on site (in the interests of residential amenity).</p>	<p>Due to the small scale of this project, the conditions of the planning permission, the distance between this project and the proposed development and the assimilative capacity of the Black River, no significant in-combination effects are predicted to arise from this project and the proposed development.</p>

Plan or Project	Description of Plan or Project	In-combination effect(s)
	<p>Neither the Planners Report, nor the accompanying documents for the proposed development included any mention of ecological assessments to be carried out with respect to the proposed development.</p>	
<p>MCC Planning Application No. 19496 (Granted)</p>	<p>Construct dwelling house, propriety effluent treatment unit, percolation area and domestic garage along with all ancillary works.</p> <p>The proposed development was granted permission subject to a number of conditions (in the interests of proper planning and development) relating to the layout and house plan of the development, the floor level, the proposed garage/shed, the existing fence, the surface water run-off, the effluent treatment unit, the ESB lines, MCC Fuel Oil Regulations, construction materials, landscaping and contributions to MCC.</p> <p>Neither the Planners Report, nor the accompanying documents for the proposed development included any mention of ecological assessments to be carried out with respect to the proposed development.</p>	<p>Due to the small scale of this project, the conditions of the planning permission, the distance between this project and the proposed development and the assimilative capacity of the Black River, no significant in-combination effects are predicted to arise from this project and the proposed development.</p>
<p>MCC Planning Application No. 19228 (Granted)</p>	<p>Construction of a detached dwelling house, connection to existing services and all associated site works.</p> <p>The proposed development was granted permission subject to a number of conditions relating to the plans, elevations and documentation for the development (in the interests of proper planning and development), floor level shall be 20.76 (to avoid flooding), the existing all along the frontage of the site shall be maintained and the finish surface level shall tie into the level of existing carriageway, the proposed access shall be located as shown on the site layout plan, gates shall open inwards, off carriageway parking for at least 3 No. cars shall be provided on site (in the interests of traffic safety, in order to provide adequate sight visibility from the proposed access, to provide adequate parking for the development), no surface water runoff from the site shall discharge onto the public road, existing roadside drainage shall not be impaired and new entrance shall be designed and shaped to ensure the uninterrupted flow of existing roadside drainage, all surface water generated by the development during and after construction shall be disposed of to a soakpit or drain within the site boundaries (in the interests of proper drainage and traffic safety), if ESB lines cross the site, the ESB shall be informed (to avoid electrocution), compliance with MCC's Fuel Oil regulations (to reduce fire risk), construction materials (in the interests of visual amenity), screen planting of native deciduous trees and shrubs shall be planted along all site boundaries save the entrances (in the interests of</p>	<p>Due to the small scale of this project, the conditions of the planning permission, the distance between this project and the proposed development and the assimilative capacity of the Black River, no significant in-combination effects are predicted to arise from this project and the proposed development.</p>

Plan or Project	Description of Plan or Project	In-combination effect(s)
	<p>residential amenity) and contributions will be made to MCC (to comply with MCC's Development Contribution Scheme).</p> <p>Neither the Planners Report, nor the accompanying documents for the proposed development included any mention of ecological assessments to be carried out with respect to the proposed development.</p>	
<p>MCC Planning Application No. 18886 (Granted)</p>	<p>Construct a new agricultural storage shed in existing farmyard.</p> <p>The proposed development was granted permission subject to a number of conditions relating to the plans, elevations and documentation for the development (in the interests of proper planning and development), dry bedding shall not be spread on or applied to land where there is a risk that effluent will run to any waterbodies, all farmyard wastes, including slurry, manure and silage effluent shall be collected and stored in tanks/pits in accordance with the EU Regulations 2014, manure, silage effluent, slurry, soiled water and chemical fertilisers shall be land-spread in accordance with the requirements of the EU, soiled yard areas shall be minimised in order to reduce the volumes of soiled water produced on site, there shall be no change in the approved method of agricultural waste storage and disposal on site and livestock numbers shall not be increased in a manner that results in storage requirements being exceeded (to prevent pollution), all buildings shall be provided with gutters and down-pipes, all existing and proposed surface water gullies shall be designed and maintained to ensure no pollution enters surface water (to prevent flooding) and all construction/demolition waste shall be disposed of in accordance with National Waste Regulations (in the interests of proper planning and development).</p> <p>The Planners Report included a statement on Appropriate Assessment Screening, as follows: <i>'The proposed development site is located within 1200m of Lough Corrib SAC sitecode 000297, however having regard to the nature of the proposed works (agricultural storage shed) Mayo County Council is of the opinion that no appropriate assessment issues arise and it is not considered that the proposed development would likely to have a significant effect individually or in combination with other plans or projects on the European site.'</i></p>	<p>Due to the conditions of the planning permission, the distance between this project and the proposed development and the assimilative capacity of the Black River, no significant in-combination effects are predicted to arise from this project and the proposed development.</p>
<p>MCC Planning Application No. 18835 (Granted)</p>	<p>Construct a serviced dwelling with an effluent treatment system and garage/shed.</p> <p>The proposed development was granted permission subject to a number of conditions relating to the plans, elevations and documentation for the development (in the interests of proper planning and</p>	<p>Due to the small scale of this project, the conditions of the planning permission, the distance between this project and the proposed</p>

Plan or Project	Description of Plan or Project	In-combination effect(s)
	<p>development), the existing fence at the roadside of the site shall be removed (to reduce traffic hazard), the proposed garage shall be used as a private domestic garage (in the interests of residential amenity), no surface water runoff from the site shall be discharged onto the public road (to avoid flooding), the vehicular entrance gate to the site shall be located as per the site layout plans (to reduce traffic hazard), construction materials (in the interest of visual amenity), foul waste will be treated and disposed of in accordance with the Site Assessment Report, the effluent treatment system will be designed and maintained in accordance with the EPA Code of Practice, adequate access shall be provided for the maintenance of the system (to protect public health), if ESB lines cross the site, the ESB shall be informed (to avoid electrocution), all existing hedgerows and trees shall be retained on site (in the interests of residential amenity) and contributions to MCC (to comply with MCC's Development Contribution Scheme).</p> <p>An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report accompanied the proposed development application.</p>	<p>development and the assimilative capacity of the Black River, no significant in-combination effects are predicted to arise from this project and the proposed development.</p>
<p>MCC Planning Application No. 18740 (Granted)</p>	<p>Construct dwelling house and garage with provision for septic tank and percolation area, together with all ancillary site works.</p> <p>The proposed development was granted permission subject to a number of conditions relating to the plans, elevations and documentation for the development (in the interests of proper planning and development), the existing fence at the roadside of the site shall be removed, the vehicular entrance gate to the site shall be located as per the site layout plans (to reduce traffic hazard), the proposed garage shall be used as a private domestic garage (in the interests of residential amenity), no surface water runoff from the site shall be discharged onto the public road (to avoid flooding), the floor level of the house shall be as per the site layout plans, the construction materials (in the interests of visual amenity), foul waste will be treated and disposed of in accordance with the Site Assessment Report, the effluent treatment system will be designed and maintained in accordance with the EPA Code of Practice, no watermains, service pipes, access roads, driveways or paved areas shall be located within the percolation area (to protect public health), if ESB lines cross the site, the ESB shall be informed (to avoid electrocution), all existing hedgerows and trees shall be retained on site (in the interests of residential amenity) and contributions to MCC (to comply with MCC's Development Contribution Scheme).</p> <p>Internal reports accompanying the planning application confirm no indirect hydrological connection to the Lough Corrib SAC and states '<i>due to the limestone bedrock and dry soils, treated effluent is unlikely to move overland flow to the stream</i>'.</p>	<p>Due to the small scale of this project, the conditions of the planning permission, the distance between this project and the proposed development and the assimilative capacity of the Black River, no significant in-combination effects are predicted to arise from this project and the proposed development.</p>

Plan or Project	Description of Plan or Project	In-combination effect(s)
<p>MCC Planning Application No. 17885 (Granted)</p>	<p>Construct extensions and alterations to the existing private dwelling house and to construct a domestic garage with connection to adjoining public foul sewer system along with all associated services.</p> <p>The proposed development was granted permission subject to a number of conditions relating to the plans, elevations and documentation for the development (in the interests of proper planning and development), the proposed garage shall be used as a private domestic garage (in the interests of residential amenity), no surface water runoff from the site shall be discharged onto the public road, existing roadside drainage shall be maintained at all times and all surface water generated by the development during and after construction shall be collected separately and discharged to the surface water drainage system (in the interests of proper drainage and traffic safety), traffic control measures will be carried out and supervised by MCC (to reduce traffic hazard), construction materials (in the interest of visual amenity), if ESB lines cross the site, the ESB shall be informed (to avoid electrocution) and all existing hedgerows and trees shall be retained on site (in the interests of residential amenity).</p> <p>Neither the Planners Report, nor the accompanying documents for the proposed development included any mention of ecological assessments to be carried out with respect to the proposed development.</p>	<p>Due to the small scale of this project, the conditions of the planning permission, the distance between this project and the proposed development and the assimilative capacity of the Black River, no significant in-combination effects are predicted to arise from this project and the proposed development.</p>
<p>MCC Planning Application No. 17876 (Granted)</p>	<p>Construct extension to side of dwelling house.</p> <p>The proposed development was granted permission subject to a number of conditions relating to the house plans, elevations and documentation for the development (in the interests of proper planning and development), the finish of the proposed extension shall match that of the existing dwelling (in the interests of visual amenity) and the surface water shall be collected and disposed of to soakaways on side. No surface water shall be discharged to any public right-of-way (to avoid flooding).</p> <p>Neither the Planners Report, nor the accompanying documents for the proposed development included any mention of ecological assessments to be carried out with respect to the proposed development.</p>	<p>Due to the small scale of this project, the conditions of the planning permission, the distance between this project and the proposed development and the assimilative capacity of the Black River, no significant in-combination effects are predicted to arise from this project and the proposed development.</p>

Plan or Project	Description of Plan or Project	In-combination effect(s)
<p>MCC Planning Application No. 17352 (Granted)</p>	<p>Construct agricultural slatted shed.</p> <p>The proposed development was granted permission subject to a number of conditions relating to the plans, elevations and documentation for the development (in the interests of proper planning and development), the capacity of the proposed slatted shed slurry tank, uncontaminated surface water runoff shall be collected separately from effluent and shall be disposed of to an approved watercourse adjoining the site, proposed slurry/effluent tanks shall be leak proof, no system of overflow, over spill or direct discharge shall take place from proposed slatted tanks or any existing tanks on site, uncontaminated surface water shall be discharged to field drains or soakpits, gutter and downpipes of all existing and proposed buildings shall be maintained in a satisfactory working order at all times, the contents of the slatted tanks shall be land-spread in strict accordance with the standards laid down by the Dept. Agriculture and Food, the waste arising shall not be spread from November to March inclusive, waste shall not be land-spread within 30.5 m of any waterbody or known source of drinking water, waste shall not be land spread preceding, during or after periods of unusually heavy rainfall or frozen ground or at any time during which there would be heavy run-off surface water, no slurry/effluent/contaminated water or surface water shall be discharged from the site or land onto any public road, the activities on the farm shall comply with the provisions of the EU Regulations 2010 (for the protection of public health and to avoid pollution), the location of existing access and wall line shall be retained (in the interests of traffic safety), the site shall be kept in a clean and tidy condition (in the interests of public health and visual amenity) and the proposed shed shall be finished in materials matching those of the existing agricultural buildings on site (in the interests of visual amenity).</p> <p>The Planners Report included a request for an Environmental Report, although no ecological or environmental assessments accompanied the planning application.</p>	<p>Due to the conditions of the planning permission, the distance between this project and the proposed development and the assimilative capacity of the Black River, no significant in-combination effects are predicted to arise from this project and the proposed development.</p>
<p>MCC Planning Application No. 16494 (Granted)</p>	<p>Construct a new house and shed and all ancillary site works and services.</p> <p>The proposed development was granted permission subject to a number of conditions relating to the house plans, elevations and documentation for the development (in the interests of proper planning and development), the floor levels (in the interests of visual amenity), the existing fence shall be removed (in the interests of traffic safety), no surface water shall be discharged onto the public road (to avoid flooding), foul waste will be treated and disposed of in accordance with the Site Assessment Report, the effluent treatment system will be designed and maintained in accordance with the EPA Code of Practice, adequate access shall be provided for the maintenance of the system (to protect public health), if ESB lines cross the site, the ESB shall be informed (to avoid electrocution), there</p>	<p>Due to the small scale of this project, the conditions of the planning permission, the distance between this project and the proposed development and the assimilative capacity of the Black River, no significant in-combination effects are predicted to arise from this</p>

Plan or Project	Description of Plan or Project	In-combination effect(s)
	<p>shall be compliance with MCC Fuel Oil Regulations (to reduce fire risk), construction materials (in the interests of visual amenity), existing trees and hedgerows shall be retained on site (in the interests of residential amenity) and contributions to MCC (to comply with MCC's Development Contribution Scheme).</p> <p>Neither the Planners Report, nor the accompanying documents for the proposed development included any mention of ecological assessments to be carried out with respect to the proposed development.</p>	<p>project and the proposed development.</p>
<p>MCC Planning Application No. 1584 (Granted)</p>	<p>Construct detached dwelling house, domestic garage, proprietary treatment system and all associated site works.</p> <p>The proposed development was granted permission subject to a number of conditions relating to the plans, elevations and documentation for the development (in the interests of proper planning and development), the proposed garage shall be used as a private domestic garage (in the interests of residential amenity), the floor levels of the house (in the interests of visual amenity), the existing fence at the roadside of the site shall be removed, roadside drainage shall be maintained at all times, vehicular entrance gate shall be located as per the site layout plan (in the interests of traffic safety and to provide parking spaces for vehicles associated with the house), no surface water runoff from the site shall be discharged onto the public road (to avoid flooding), foul waste will be treated and disposed of in accordance with the Site Assessment Report, the effluent treatment system will be designed and maintained in accordance with the EPA Code of Practice, adequate access shall be provided for the maintenance of the system (to protect public health), if ESB lines cross the site, the ESB shall be informed (to avoid electrocution), there shall be compliance with MCC Fuel Oil Regulations (to reduce fire risk), construction materials (in the interests of visual amenity), existing trees and hedgerows shall be retained on site (in the interests of residential amenity) and contributions to MCC (to comply with MCC's Development Contribution Scheme).</p> <p>Neither the Planners Report, nor the accompanying documents for the proposed development included any mention of ecological assessments to be carried out with respect to the proposed development.</p>	<p>Due to the small scale of this project, the conditions of the planning permission, the distance between this project and the proposed development and the assimilative capacity of the Black River, no significant in-combination effects are predicted to arise from this project and the proposed development.</p>
<p>MCC Planning Application No. 14256 (Granted)</p>	<p>Construct dwelling house, proprietary effluent treatment unit, percolation area and domestic garage along with all associated services.</p>	<p>Due to the small scale of this project, the conditions of the planning permission, the distance between this project</p>

Plan or Project	Description of Plan or Project	In-combination effect(s)
	<p>The proposed development was granted permission subject to a number of conditions relating to the house plans, elevations, documentation and floor levels, front projection shall be omitted from the proposed dwelling for the development (in the interests of proper planning and development), the proposed garage shall be used only as a private domestic garage (in the interests of residential amenity), no surface water shall be discharged onto the public road (to avoid flooding), foul waste will be treated and disposed of in accordance with the Site Assessment Report, the effluent treatment system will be designed and maintained in accordance with the EPA Code of Practice, no water mains, service pipes, access roads, driveways or paved areas shall be located within the percolation area adequate access shall be provided for the maintenance of the septic tank and percolation area (to protect public health), if ESB lines cross the site, the ESB shall be informed (to avoid electrocution), there shall be compliance with MCC Fuel Oil Regulations (to reduce fire risk), construction materials (in the interests of visual amenity), existing trees and hedgerows shall be retained on site (in the interests of residential amenity) and contributions to MCC (to comply with MCC's Development Contribution Scheme).</p> <p>Neither the Planners Report, nor the accompanying documents for the proposed development included any mention of ecological assessments to be carried out with respect to the proposed development.</p>	<p>and the proposed development and the assimilative capacity of the Black River, no significant in-combination effects are predicted to arise from this project and the proposed development.</p>
<p>MCC Planning Application No. 1377 (Granted)</p>	<p>Construct a single story, 1 room extension to existing dwelling house incorporating associated minor site works.</p> <p>The proposed development was granted permission subject to a number of conditions relating to the site layout and house plan of the development (in the interests of proper planning and development), the surface water shall be discharged from the site onto public road (to avoid flooding) and the finish of the extension shall match that of the existing dwelling (in the interests of visual amenity).</p> <p>Neither the Planners Report, nor the accompanying documents for the proposed development included any mention of ecological assessments to be carried out with respect to the proposed development.</p>	<p>Due to the small scale of this project, the conditions of the planning permission, the distance between this project and the proposed development and the assimilative capacity of the Black River, no significant in-combination effects are predicted to arise from this project and the proposed development.</p>

5.0 CONCLUSION

In accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, Part XAB of the Planning and Development Acts, the relevant case law, established best practice and the Precautionary Principle, this AA Screening Report has examined the details of the R332 Kilmaine to Foxhall Road Realignment and the relevant European sites and has concluded, on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, in view of best scientific knowledge, is not likely to give rise to impacts which would constitute significant effects in view of the Conservation Objectives of the Lough Corrib SAC, the Lough Corrib SPA or any other European site.

In light of this conclusion, it is the considered opinion of ROD, as the author of this AA Screening Report, that Mayo County Council, as the Competent Authority, may find in completing its AA Screening in respect of the R332 Kilmaine to Foxhall Road Realignment, that the proposed development, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, is not likely to have a significant effect on the Lough Corrib SAC, Lough Corrib SPA or any other European site, in view of best scientific knowledge and the Conservation Objectives of the site concerned. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the author of this AA Screening Report that the Competent Authority may determine that AA is not required in respect of the proposed development.

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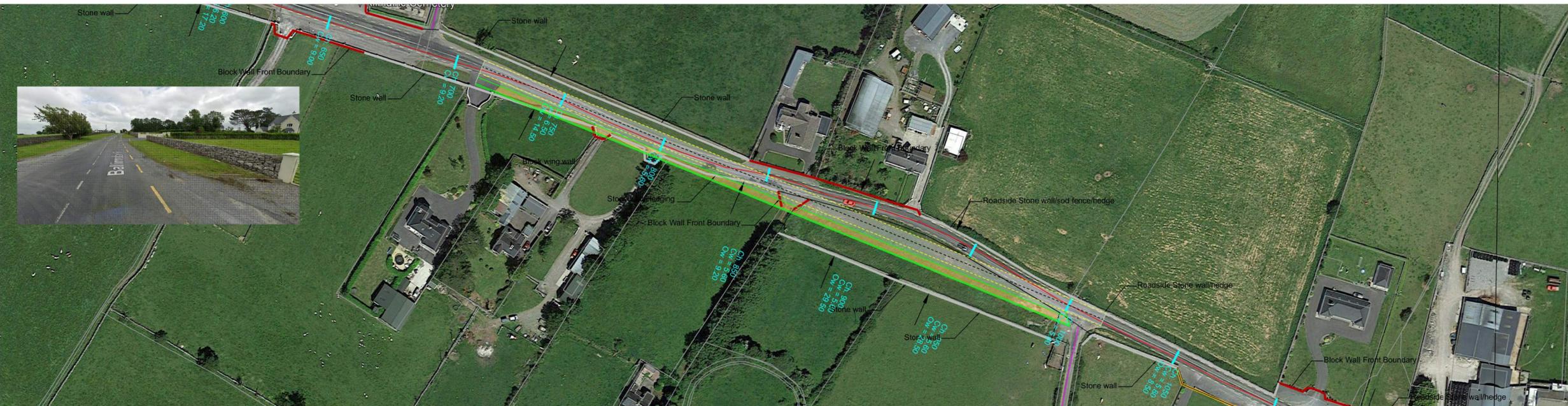
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APPENDIX A

Proposed Development Drawings



3 metre wide cycle track

Minimum 3 metre verge for type 3 road as per Table 4.2 DN-GEO-03036

Minimum 2 metre Separation Distance for Type 3 road as per Table 4.6 & 0.5m Lateral Clearance as per 4.17.4 DN-GEO-03036

Minimum 6 metre Carriageway Section requiring Road Widening, Re-alignment & Pavement Overlay as per Table 4.2 DN-GEO-03036

w = Carriageway width



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REV.	DESCRIPTION	DATE	DRAWN	CHECKED

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SIGNED: _____ DATE: _____
SENIOR ENGINEER

SIGNED: _____ DATE: _____
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Project Title
R332 Kilmaine to Foxhall
Pavement Overlay, Widening and
Bend Realignment

Drawing Title
Proposed works
CH 690 – 2100

Scale	1/1000	Surveyed	OS/DG
Date	May 2022	Designed	DG
Drawn	DG	Checked	

DRAWING No. 5774/22/02



3 metre wide cycle track

Minimum 3 metre verge for type 3 road as per Table 4.2 DN-GEO-03036

Minimum 2 metre Separation Distance for Type 3 road as per Table 4.6 & 0.5m Lateral Clearance as per 4.17.4 DN-GEO-03036

Minimum 6 metre Carriageway Section requiring Road Widening, Re-alignment & Pavement Overlay as per Table 4.2 DN-GEO-03036

w = Carriageway width



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Project Title
R332 Kilmaine to Foxhall
Pavement Overlay, Widening and
Bend Realignment

Drawing Title
Proposed works
CH 3750 – 5700

Scale	1/1000	Surveyed	OS/DG
Date	May 2022	Designed	DG
Drawn	DG	Checked	

DRAWING No. 5774/22/03



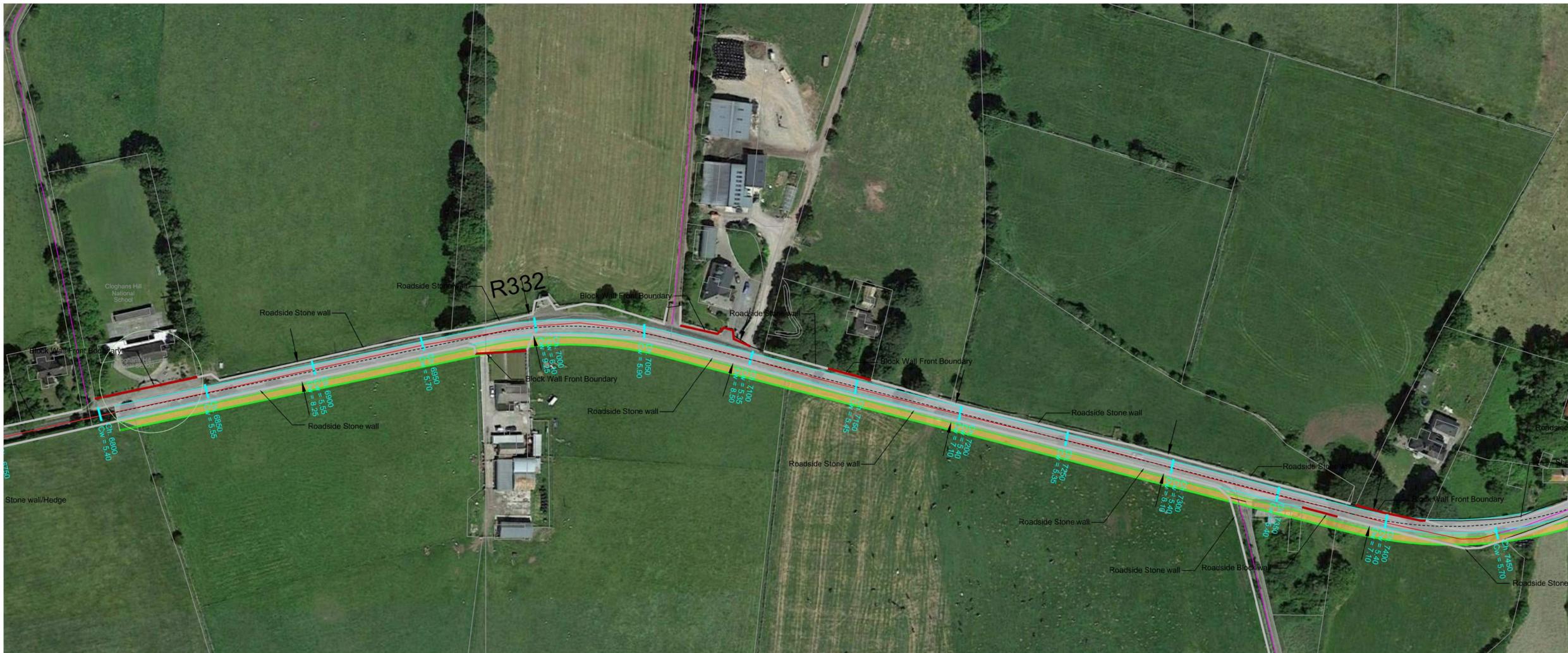
3 metre wide cycle track

Minimum 3 metre verge for type 3 road as per Table 4.2 DN-GEO-03036

Minimum 2 metre Separation Distance for Type 3 road as per Table 4.6 & 0.5m Lateral Clearance as per 4.17.4 DN-GEO-03036

Minimum 6 metre Carriageway Section requiring Road Widening, Re-alignment & Pavement Overlay as per Table 4.2 DN-GEO-03036

w = Carriageway width



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Project Title
 R332 Kilmaine to Foxhall
 Pavement Overlay, Widening and
 Bend Realignment

Drawing Title
 Proposed works
 CH 5900 – 7450

Scale	1/1000	Surveyed	OS/DG
Date	May 2022	Designed	DG
Drawn	DG	Checked	

DRAWING No. 5774/22/04



3 metre wide cycle track

Minimum 3 metre verge for type 3 road as per Table 4.2 DN-GEO-03036

Minimum 2 metre Separation Distance for Type 3 road as per Table 4.6 & 0.5m Lateral Clearance as per 4.17.4 DN-GEO-03036

Minimum 6 metre Carriageway Section requiring Road Widening, Re-alignment & Pavement Overlay as per Table 4.2 DN-GEO-03036

w = Carriageway width



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Project Title
R332 Kilmaine to Foxhall
Pavement Overlay, Widening and
Bend Realignment

Drawing Title
Proposed works
CH 7250 – 8276

Scale	1/1000	Surveyed	OS/DG
Date	May 2022	Designed	DG
Drawn	DG	Checked	

DRAWING No. 5774/22/05



Comhairle Contae Mhaigh Eo Mayo County Council



Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Determination

Proposed Widening and Bend Realignment on the R332 Kilmaine to Foxhall Road, Co. Mayo

An Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report was carried out on the **Proposed Widening and Bend Realignment on the R332 Kilmaine to Foxhall Road, Co. Mayo**

In accordance with Regulation 250(1) of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, (S.I. No. 600 of 2001) as inserted by Regulation 26 of the Planning and Development (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulations, 2011, (S.I. No. 476 of 2011), concerning "Screening for appropriate assessment", which states:

"In order to ascertain whether an appropriate assessment is required in respect of a development which it proposes to carry out a local authority shall carry out a screening of the proposed development to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if the development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, would be likely to have a significant effect on a European site."

Having considered the **"Specific Improvement Schemes 2022 – R332 Kilmaine to Foxhall - Appropriate Assessment Screening Report"** which concluded that:

"this AA Screening Report has examined the details of the R332 Kilmaine to Foxhall Road Realignment and the relevant European sites and has concluded, on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, in view of best scientific knowledge, is not likely to give rise to impacts which would constitute significant effects in view of the Conservation Objectives of the Lough Corrib SAC, the Lough Corrib SPA or any other European site."

In light of this conclusion, it is the considered opinion of ROD, as the author of this AA Screening Report, that Mayo County Council, as the Competent Authority, may find in completing its AA Screening in respect of the R332 Kilmaine to Foxhall Road Realignment, that the proposed development, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, is not likely to have a significant effect on the Lough Corrib SAC, Lough Corrib SPA or any other European site, in view of best scientific knowledge and the Conservation Objectives of the site concerned."

Mayo County Council having considered the Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report has determined that the **Proposed Widening and Bend Realignment on the R332 Kilmaine to Foxhall Road, Co. Mayo** does not require an Appropriate Assessment.

Dated this 8th day of December, 2022.

Paul Dolan
Head of Roads