

# Invasive Species Survey Report

## Kinnegad Economic & Enterprise Hub



For: Cooney Architects  
Date: 26 February 2024

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### **Statement of Authority**

This survey has been carried out by a suitably qualified and experienced professional of Flynn Furney Environmental Consultants. This was Billy Flynn BSc, MSc, MCIEEM, CEnv.



A section of wall with native flora within the site at Kinnegad

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 This Report

The following report details the results of ecological surveys of the lands proposed for development as the Kinnegad Economic & Enterprise Hub at Main Street, Kinnegad. These surveys were carried out by an ecologist of Flynn Furney Environmental Consultants on behalf of Cooney Architects. The purpose of these surveys was primarily to assess the presence of any non-native invasive species on this site.

### 1.2. Invasive Species and Legislation

The European Union Regulation (No. 1143/2014) on Invasive Alien Species (IAS) lists 37 species (23 animals and 14 plants) whose potential adverse impacts are such that concerted action across Member States is required. Member States are required to provide for early detection and eradication of these species and must manage those species already widespread within their jurisdiction. The EU recently updated its list of invasive alien species of Union concern. Relevant species added to the list include Chilean rhubarb *Gunnera tinctoria*, Indian/Himalayan balsam *Impatiens glandulifera* and Giant hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum*.

The Convention on Biological Diversity defines invasive alien species (IAS) as “a species that is established outside of its natural past or present distribution, whose introduction and/or spread threaten biological diversity”. Japanese knotweed *Fallopia japonica* is not included on the EU ‘list’ of invasive species nor are the other knotweed species which have been recorded in Ireland. These species are, however, covered by legislation in Ireland.

Part 1 of the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011) and Amendment 2015 (S.I. No. 355/2015). Section 49 and 50 of Part 6 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011) outlines the legal context for the prohibition of the introduction and dispersal of certain plant and animal species. Specifically, Section 49, paragraph 2 states that any person without the required licence “who plants, disperses, allows or causes to disperse, spreads or otherwise causes to grow” any plant species listed in Part 1 of the Third Schedule within the State shall be guilty of an offence.

Furthermore, under Section 50 paragraph 1, a person without the required licence “shall be guilty of an offence if he or she has in his or her possession for sale, or for the purposes of breeding, reproduction or propagation, or offers or exposes for sale, transportation, distribution, introduction or release” of any plant species listed in Part 1 of the Third Schedule (See Appendix A) or anything from which “a plant referred to in Part 1 of the Third Schedule can be reproduced or propagated or “a vector material listed in Part 3 of the Third Schedule”. This vector material is defined as “soil or spoil taken from places infested with Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Giant knotweed (*Fallopia sachalinensis*) or their hybrid Bohemian knotweed (*Fallopia x bohemica*).” The above are referred to in this document as ‘invasive alien plant species’ or IAPS.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

Surveys were carried out during daylight hours between 23 August 24, 17 January and 26 February 2024. Surveys were carried out by an ecologist with extensive experience (over 25 years) in ecological surveys, including in surveys of structures for invasive species.

Survey for invasive species (IAS) was carried out as per published guidelines by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII, 2020) and Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM, 2019). This involved a direct search of all of the accessible areas within the area proposed for road development and surrounding the route (e.g. adjacent farmland, gardens and buildings)



**Fig. 1.** Front of the site on Main Street Kinnegad and the former school building.

### 3. RESULTS

#### 3.1 Desktop Survey

A search of kilometre square N5945 (see Appendix B) in which lies the area proposed for development was carried out on the National Biodiversity Data Centre database. A single invasive plant species was found. This was Buddleia (also known as Butterfly Bush)

Species	Status
Buddleia <i>Buddleja davidii</i>	Invasive Species: Invasive Species    Medium Impact Invasive Species

This record is recent – dating from 2022. The only other invasive species listed was Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*. However, this species is not relevant to this assessment, there being no suitable habitat for this species in the area proposed for development.

#### 3.2 Invasive Species Field Surveys

A search of the lands made available (LMA) for the project found one invasive species. This was a single plant of Buddleia (described above). While Buddleia has been recorded within lands near the LMA (author's own records), it was not found within the development area.

The leaves of what are believed to be Bluebell plants (*Hyacinthoides*) were seen within the western boundary of the property. As the leaves were undeveloped and this plant had yet to flower, it was not possible to ascertain whether this plant is the native Bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* or the Spanish Bluebell *Hyacinthoides hispanica*. Indeed it may also be a hybrid of the these last species *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* x *Hyacinthoides hispanica*. The Spanish Bluebell is an invasive species listed as being of Low risk of impact (NBDC). However, it is a Third Schedule listed species under the European Communities Regulations detailed in Section 1.2.



Unidentified flower  
(centre of photograph)  
which may be Spanish  
Bluebell

No other legally controlled invasive species were found to occur within the area under survey.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

**Buddleia** (*Buddleja davidii* also known as Butterfly Bush, is a large deciduous shrub that can grow up to 300 cm tall. It is able to survive in poor soil and disturbed ground, colonising new roads, urban sites, railways, as well as eskers and rock outcrops. It can create obstructions, and where it grows near waterways it can lead to erosion problems due to its shallow roots. It can also outcompete native vegetation. While it has been recorded within this wider area, it was **not** found within the area pertaining to this present survey.

**Spanish Bluebell** (*Hyacinthoides hispanica*) may occur within the western boundary of the site. A further visit will be required in order to confirm which species of Bluebell this is. This should be carried out in April 2024. It should be noted that the plant is not within an area that is at this time subject to works. It is however within the western boundary, an area of which is planned for removal for access.

Boundary wall on eastern side of site.



No other species listed on the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011), were found within the boundary of the LMA of this project.

Whilst it is believed that no legally controlled invasive species were identified on site, biosecurity measures to prevent potential infestation should be strictly adhered to. Possible pathways of introduction of invasive species onto the site include machinery and importation of contaminated topsoil. All machinery, particularly tracked machinery, should be sufficiently checked and cleaned prior to entering the site.

If topsoil is being imported into the site at any stage during construction or landscaping, the soil needs to be certified as having been treated for invasive species and / or the source of the topsoil needs to be confirmed as being invasive species free.

A further communication will issue with an update on the identification of the Bluebell species occurring within the boundary of the site.

## 5. References

CIEEM (2019) *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine*, Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

Transport Infrastructure Ireland (2006). *The Management of Invasive Alien Plant Species on National Roads*. TII, Dublin

## Appendix A Mapping

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**Fig. 1** Location of site under survey at Kinnegad



**Appendix B** Some Photographs of Site

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**Fig. 1.** Km Square No N5945 searched on National Biodiversity Data Centre database