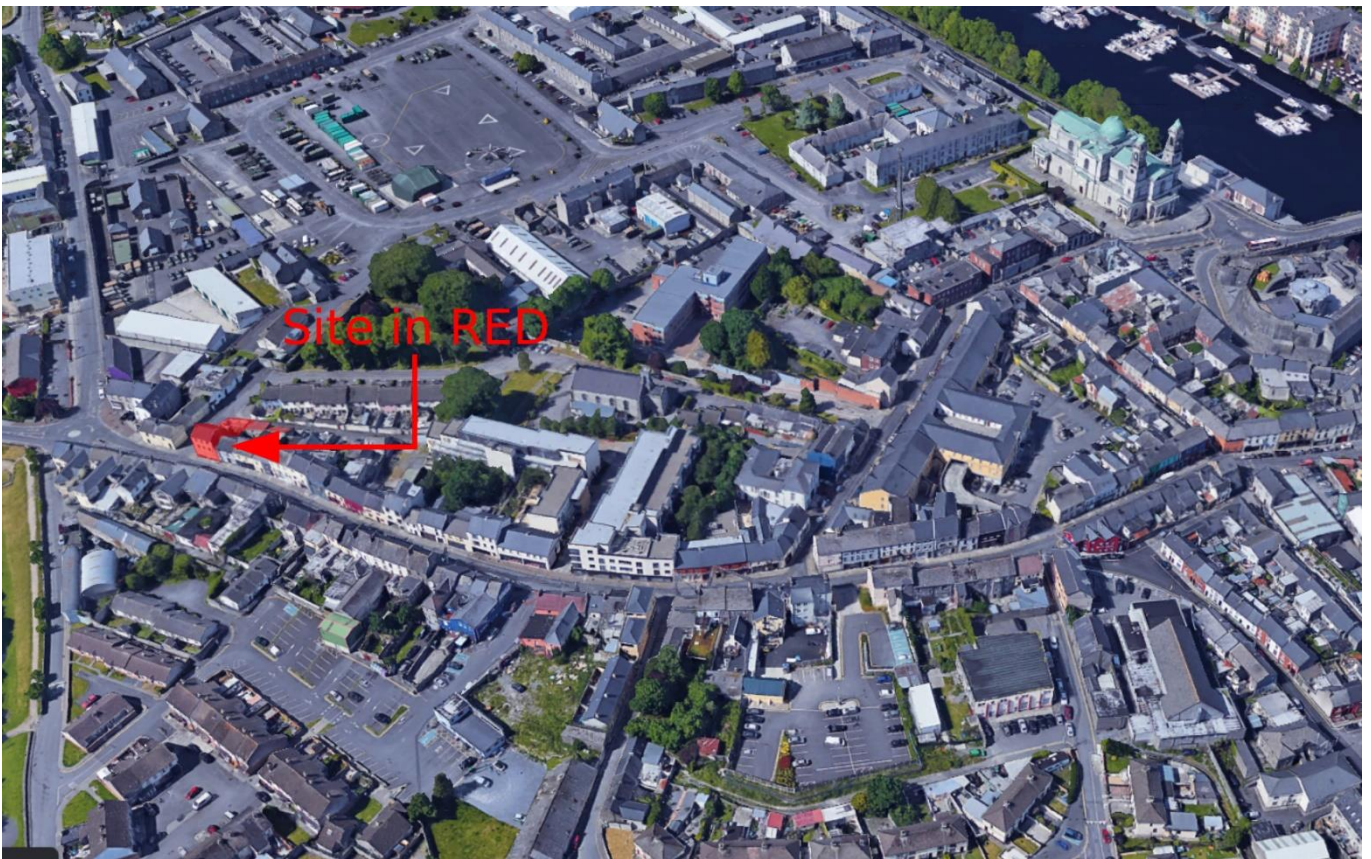

*APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING
REPORT FOR PART 8 APPLICATION*



(site shown in red)

**2 No. Social Housing Units
& 1 No Retail Unit
at
59 Connaught Street,
Athlone, Co Westmeath**

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1.0 Introduction

Westmeath County Council is proposing to develop 2 No social housing units & 1 No Retail unit within the existing vacant dwelling at 59 Connaught Street, Athlone, Co Westmeath. Pursuant to proper planning and development Westmeath County Council ensures all proposals/projects are screened to avoid significant impacts on Natura 2000 sites in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

The purpose of this assessment is to determine, the appropriateness, or otherwise, of the proposed project in the context of the conservation objectives of sites which are protected for their natural habitats and species under European legislation, termed Natura 2000 sites.

2.0 Process

Ireland became a signatory to the EU Birds Directive in 1979 and the Habitats Directive in 1992. Arising from this legislation was the obligation to establish the Natura 2000 network: nominated sites of highest biodiversity importance for rare and threatened habitats and species across the EU. In Ireland, the Natura 2000 network of European sites comprises Special Areas of Conservation (SACs, including candidate SACs), and Special Protection Areas (SPAs, including proposed SPAs).

SACs are selected for the conservation of Annex I habitats (including priority types which are in danger of disappearance) and Annex II species (other than birds). SPAs are selected for the protection of Annex I birds and other regularly occurring migratory birds and their habitats. The annexed habitats and species for which each site is selected correspond to the qualifying interests of the sites; from these the conservation objectives of the site are derived.

The requirements for an Appropriate Assessments (AA) are fully set out in the EU Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of this Directive state:

6.3. 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 site 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.

6.4. If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature, the Member State shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted.

Where a site that is impacted upon by a proposed development hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species, the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG) issued guidance on Appropriate Assessment (Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities) in December 2009 which provided advice on the information required in an

Appropriate Assessment. Guidance from DoEHLG published in February 2010 stated that it is the responsibility of the competent authority (or consent authority) to undertake the Appropriate Assessment. The assessments may be based on information submitted by the proponent of the plan or project, in the form of a Natura Impact Statement. This Natura Impact Statement must be prepared by an ecological specialist with input from other relevant disciplines as required experts, e.g. engineers, planning specialists, hydrologists.

This screening assessment has been prepared in accordance with the current guidance (NPWS, 2009, Revised February 2010).

3.0 Stages of the Appropriate Assessment

This document has been prepared in accordance with the European Commission Environment DG document “Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC”, referred to as the “EC Article 6 Guidance Document”. The guidance document provides a non-mandatory methodology for carrying out assessments required under Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive, and is viewed as an interpretation of the EU Commission’s document “Managing Natura 2000 sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC”, referred to as “MN2000”. In addition, “Appropriate Assessment Guidance for Planning Authorities” was published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in December 2009 (DEHLG, 2009) and amended in March 2010. Cognisance has been taken of this document in carrying out this screening assessment.

The Habitats Directive promotes a hierarchy of avoidance, mitigation and compensatory measures. In the first instance, the plan should aim to avoid any negative impacts on European sites by identifying possible impacts early in the plan-making and writing the plan in order to avoid such impacts. Following that, mitigation measures should be applied, if necessary, during the AA process to the point where no adverse impacts on the site(s) remain. If the plan is still likely to result in adverse effects, and no further practicable mitigation is possible, then it is rejected. If no alternative solutions are identified and the plan is required for imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI test) under Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, then compensation measures are required for any remaining adverse effect.

4.0 Methodology

4.1 Desk Study and Site Visit

The information collected for this report, to assist the competent authority to screen the proposal for AA, was based on a desktop study carried out on 5th of September 2023. A site visit was carried out to inform this report.

Information relied upon included the following information sources, which included maps and ecological data:

- Online data available on European sites as held by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) from www.npws.ie
- Information on the location and operation of the potential development supplied by the client in the form of their own proposed works statements, maps and related materials

- Information on the status of EU protected habitats and species in Ireland (National Parks & Wildlife Service)
- Site Specific Conservation Objectives for relevant European Sites

The following planning and policy documents relevant to this site were consulted with respect to considering cumulative effects / in combination effects with other plans and projects;

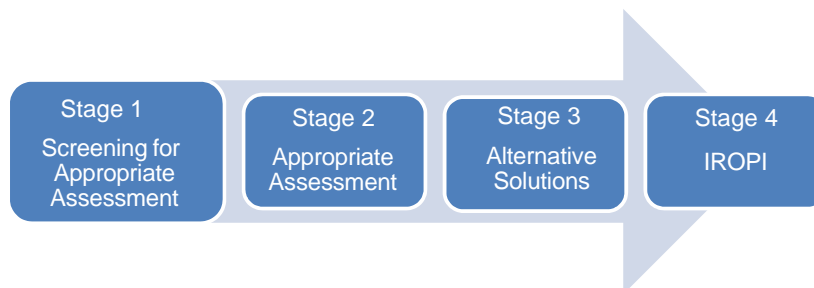
- Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027

4.2 Authors Qualifications

This report is prepared by Paul Hogan, Msc. Spatial Planning, H. Dip. Physical Planning, Deg. Architectural Science, Dip. In Architecture, M.R.I.A.I.

4.3 Stage 1 - Screening

The above referenced guidance (Section 3) documents set out a staged process for carrying out AA.



Stage 1 in the Appropriate Assessment process i.e. Screening for Appropriate Assessment seeks to establish whether, in relation to the proposed plan or project, appropriate assessment is required. In doing so, its purpose is to determine, on the basis of a preliminary assessment and objective criteria, whether the proposed plan or project, alone and in combination with other plans or projects, could have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site in view of the site's conservation objectives. The determination reached at Stage 1 and following each successive stage (if required) informs whether a further stage in the Appropriate Assessment process is required.

Stage 2 is required in the event that potential significant effects on a Natura 2000 site cannot be ruled out and the precautionary approach is undertaken.

Stage 3 is carried out in the event that significant effects cannot be ruled out and therefore, alternative solutions are required.

Stage 4 (being the final stage in the process) is required in such circumstances that derogation is required, in accordance with Article 6(4) of the EU Habitats Directive.

In the case of the proposed Section 179 Local Authority Development – i.e. '2 No social housing units & 1 No Retail unit within the existing vacant dwelling at 59 Connaught Street, Athlone, Co Westmeath, this Stage 1 Screening Report provides the necessary information to enable the Planning Authority to screen

the proposed development works for the requirement to undertake Appropriate Assessment and inform the entire process in an open and transparent manner.

Note; In accordance with OPR Practice Note PN01 Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management March 2021, if it is absolutely clear that a proposed development could not have any conceivable effect on a European site. No further screening is required.

4.4 Stage Two – Appropriate Assessment

Appropriate assessment will only proceed if there is assessed to be a “likelihood of significant effects” occurring on any European sites, as a result of the proposed project, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects and where there is no requirement to apply the ‘precautionary principle’.

4.5 Screening Phase

This section of the screening process describes the Natura 2000 sites within a 15km radius of the proposed 2 No social housing units & 1 No Retail unit within the existing vacant dwelling at 59 Connaught Street, Athlone, Co Westmeath. A 15km buffer zone has been chosen as a precautionary measure, to ensure that all potentially affected Natura 2000 sites are included in the screening process. This is in line with “Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities”, produced by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

The integrity of a Natura 2000 site (referred to in Article 6.3 of the EU Habitats Directive) is determined based on the conservation status of the qualifying features of the SAC. The qualifying features for each site have been obtained through a review of online documentation relating to each Natura 2000 site available from the NPWS.

There are a number of sites identified using the online data available on European sites as held by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) from www.npws.ie. The associated identified sites are outlined in the table within section 6.1 below.

5.0 Overview of Proposed Project & the Receiving Environment

5.1 Description of Proposed Project

The Proposed Development Consists of;

Develop 2 No social housing units within the existing vacant dwelling at 59 Connaught Street, Athlone, Co Westmeath. The development includes renovation to existing buildings on site to create a retail unit of c92.4 SqM on ground floor. External stairs access to first floor and the construction of 1 No 1 bed apartment with associated private open balcony area and 1 no duplex 2 bed apartment on first and second floor. All with associated services connections

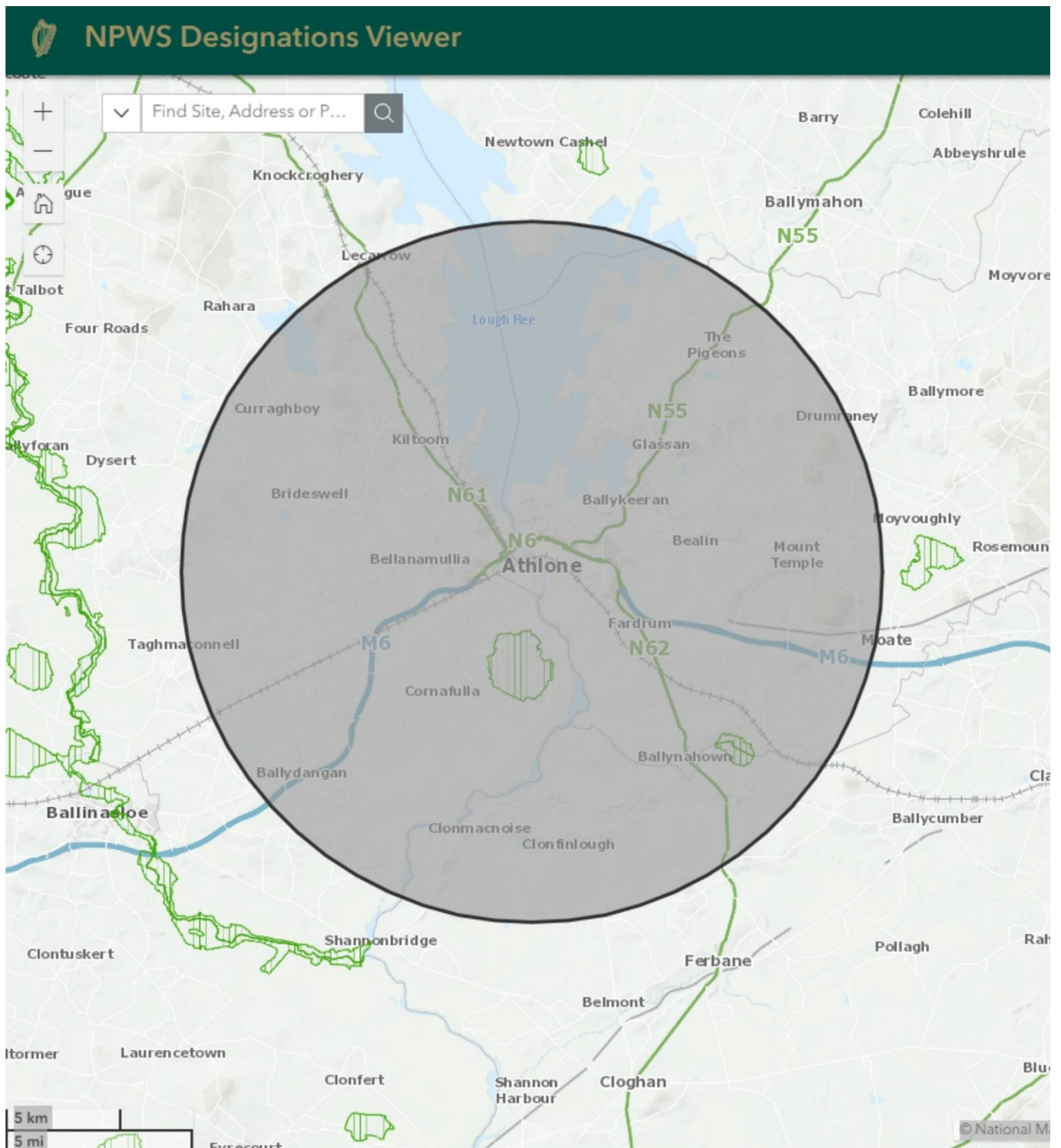
Foul water from the site is to be connected to the existing foul and surface water system. There are no alterations to the foul and surface water networks and the proposed development will not generate any additional discharge.

6.0 European sites within a 15km Radius of Proposed Works to Connaught Street

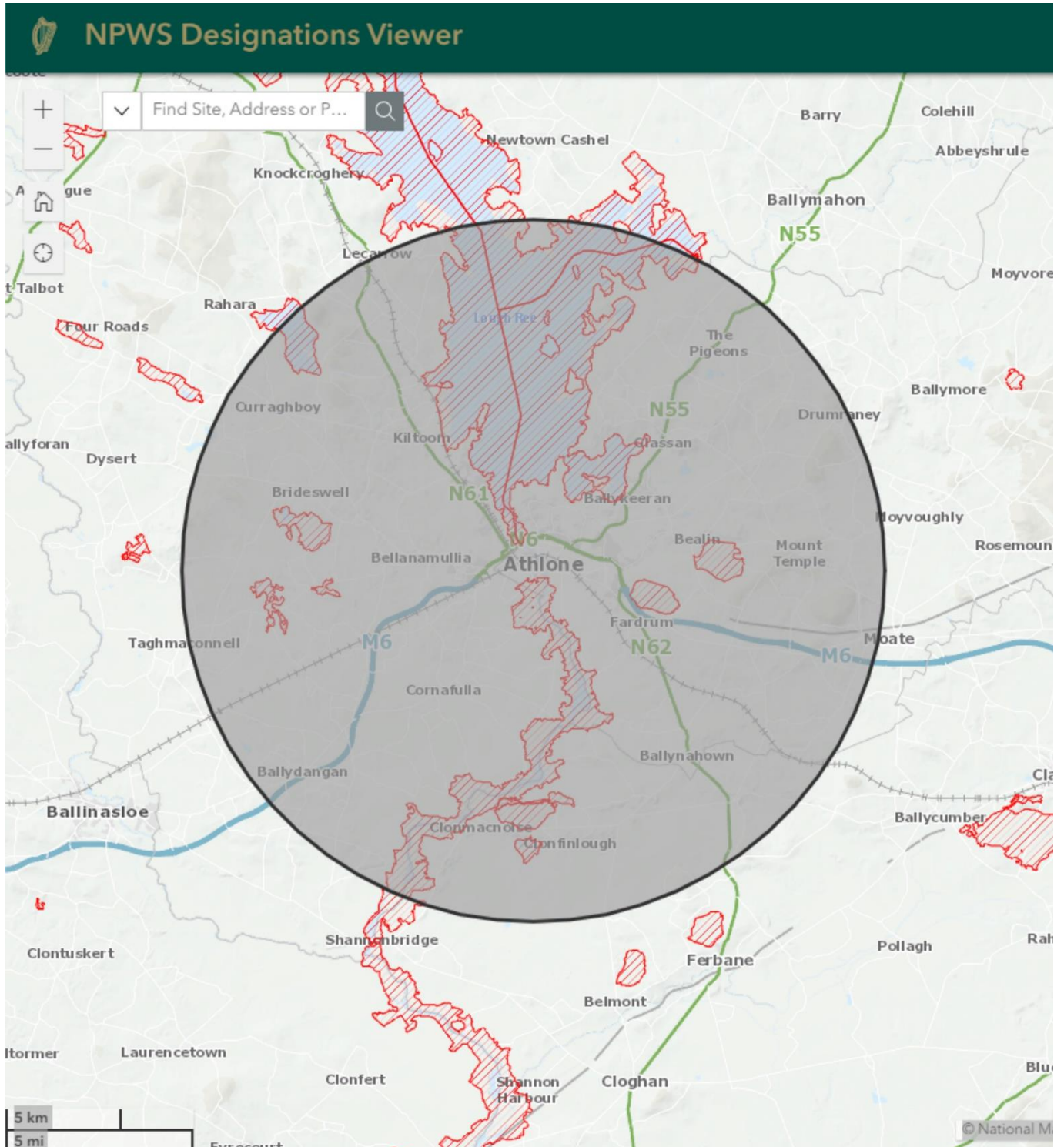
Map 1, 2 and 3 below above delineates all European sites within a 15km radius of the proposed works at Connaught Street. This radius extends into County Westmeath, County Offaly and County Roscommon. In total, there are 14 European sites contained within this 15km radius distributed within those counties, with some zones having shared county boundaries (Lough Ree and River Shannon callows).

Table 7.1 below outlines these sites and provides detail on their respective qualifying interests, separation distances from the proposed development works and a reasoned assessment on connectivity between the works proposed and these Natura 2000 sites. The outcome of this assessment has informed the overall determination in this screening process.

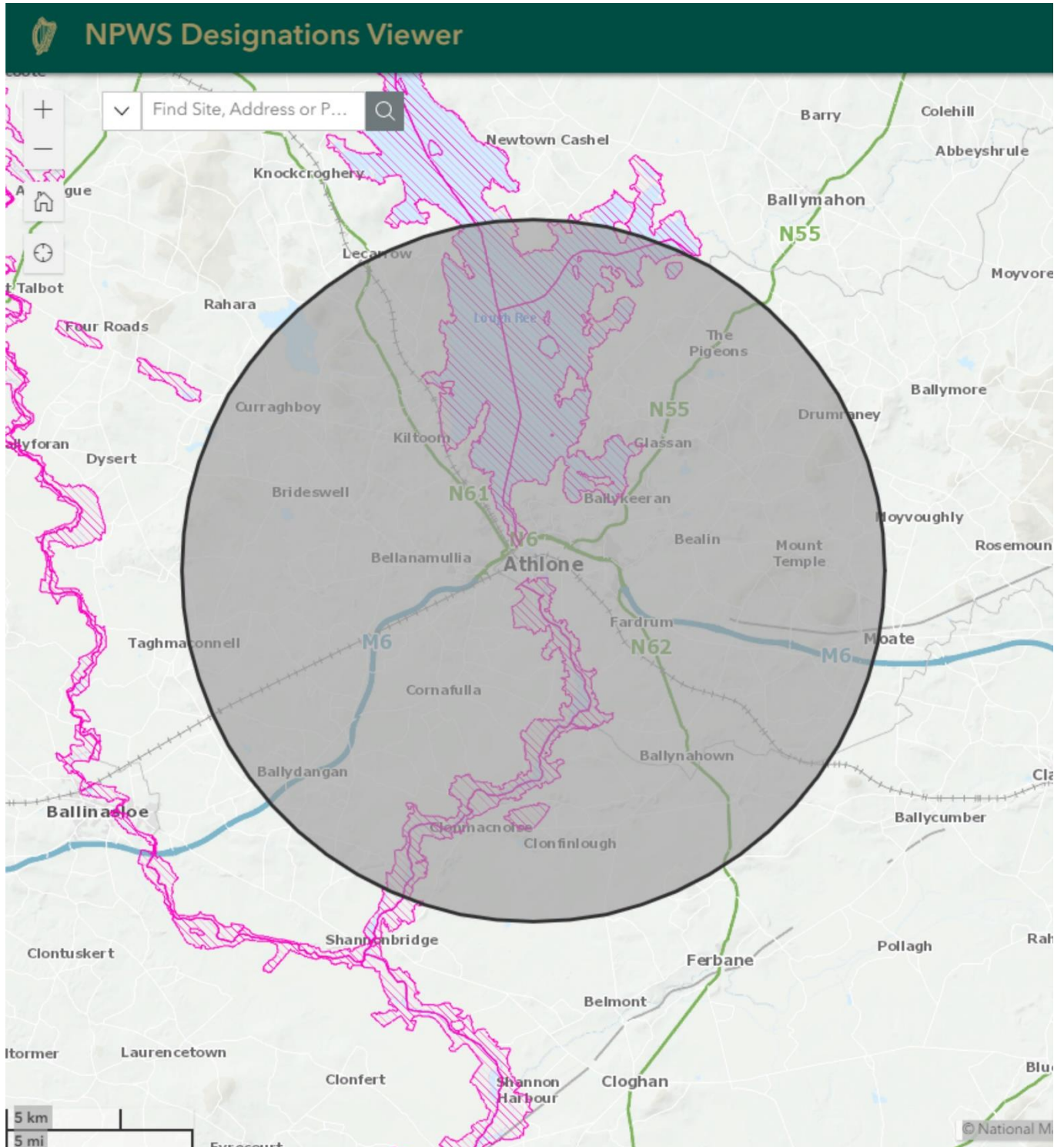
6.1 Map 1 – Natural Heritage Areas



6.2 Map 2 – Special Area of Conservation



6.3 Map 3 – Special Protection Areas



7.0 Assessment of significance of the proposed works on the identified European sites located within proximity to the subject development.

7.1 Table 7.1 - Identified Natura 2000 sites

European Site	Site Code	Qualifying Interests	Separation Distance	Connectivity
Carrickynaghtan Bog NHA. Co Roscommon	001623	Peatlands [4]	4.18 km	<p>None.</p> <p>This NHA is located a distance of in excess of 4km. Having regard to the separation distance and given the nature and scale of the works proposed within an established urban area, and furthermore, with no direct catchment, ecological or hydrological connectivity to Carrickynaghtan Bog, it is considered that there will be no significant impacts arising from this development on this NHA.</p> <p>Therefore, this European site will not be considered any further as part of the Screening for AA process.</p>
Clonydonnin Bog NHA. Co Westmeath / Roscommon	000565	Peatlands [4]	11.69 km	<p>None.</p> <p>This NHA is located a distance of in excess of 11km. Having regard to the separation distance and given the nature and scale of the works proposed within an established urban area, and furthermore, with no direct catchment, ecological or hydrological connectivity to Clonydonnin Bog, it is considered that there will be no significant impacts arising from this development on this NHA.</p> <p>Therefore, this European site will not be considered any further as part of the Screening for AA process.</p>
Carn Park Bog SAC. Co Westmeath	002336	Active raised bogs [7110] Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120]	8.02 km	<p>None.</p> <p>This SAC is located a distance of in excess of 8km. Having regard to the separation distance and given the nature and scale of the works proposed within an established urban area, and furthermore, with no</p>

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				<p>direct catchment, ecological or hydrological connectivity to Carn Park Bog, it is considered that there will be no significant impacts arising from this development on this SAC.</p> <p>Therefore, this European site will not be considered any further as part of the Screening for AA process.</p>
Crosswood Bog SAC. Co Westmeath	002337	<p>Active raised bogs [7110]</p> <p>Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120]</p>	5.34 km	<p>None.</p> <p>This SAC is located a distance of in excess of 5km. Having regard to the separation distance and given the nature and scale of the works proposed within an established urban area, and furthermore, with no direct catchment, ecological or hydrological connectivity to Crosswood Bog, it is considered that there will be no significant impacts arising from this development on this SAC.</p> <p>Therefore, this European site will not be considered any further as part of the Screening for AA process.</p>
Castlesampson Esker SAC. Co Roscommon	001625	<p>Turloughs [3180]</p> <p>Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites) [6210]</p>	10.73 km	<p>None.</p> <p>This SAC is located a distance of in excess of 10km. Having regard to the separation distance and given the nature and scale of the works proposed within an established urban area, and furthermore, with no direct catchment, ecological or hydrological connectivity to Castlesampson Esker, it is considered that there will be no significant impacts arising from this development on this SAC.</p> <p>Therefore, this European site will not be considered any further as part of the Screening for AA process.</p>
Ballynamona Bog and Corkip Lough SAC. Co Roscommon	002339	<p>Turloughs [3180]</p> <p>Active raised bogs [7110]</p> <p>Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120]</p> <p>Depressions on peat substrates of the</p>	9.79 km	<p>None.</p> <p>This SAC is located a distance of almost 10km. Having regard to the separation distance and given the nature and scale of the works proposed within an established urban area, and furthermore, with no direct catchment, ecological or hydrological connectivity to Ballynamona Bog and Corkip Lough, it is considered that there will be no significant impacts arising from this development on this SAC.</p>

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		Rhynchosporion [7150] Bog woodland [91D0]		Therefore, this European site will not be considered any further as part of the Screening for AA process.
Lough Funshinagh SAC. Co Roscommon	000611	Turloughs [3180] Rivers with muddy banks with Chenopodium rubri p.p. and Bidention p.p. vegetation [3270]	14.27 km	None. This SAC is located a distance of in excess of 14km. Having regard to the separation distance and given the nature and scale of the works proposed within an established urban area, and furthermore, with no direct catchment, ecological or hydrological connectivity to Lough Funshinagh, it is considered that there will be no significant impacts arising from this development on this SAC. Therefore, this European site will not be considered any further as part of the Screening for AA process.
Pilgrim's Road Esker SAC. Co Offaly	001776	Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites) [6210]	9.91 km	None. This SAC is located a distance of almost 10km. Having regard to the separation distance and given the nature and scale of the works proposed within an established urban area, and furthermore, with no direct catchment, ecological or hydrological connectivity to Pilgrim's Road Esker, it is considered that there will be no significant impacts arising from this development on this SAC. Therefore, this European site will not be considered any further as part of the Screening for AA process.
Mongan Bog SAC. Co Offaly	000580	Active raised bogs [7110] Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150]	10.56km	None. This SAC is located a distance of in excess of 10km. Having regard to the separation distance and given the nature and scale of the works proposed within an established urban area, and furthermore, with no direct catchment, ecological or hydrological connectivity to Mongan Bog, it is considered that there will be no significant impacts arising from this development on this SAC. Therefore, this European site will not be considered any further as part of the Screening for AA process.

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Fin Lough (Offaly) SAC. Co Offaly	000576	Alkaline fens [7230] Vertigo geyeri (Geyer's Whorl Snail) [1013]	11.94 km	None. This SAC is located a distance of almost 12km. Having regard to the separation distance and given the nature and scale of the works proposed within an established urban area, and furthermore, with no direct catchment, ecological or hydrological connectivity to Fin Lough, it is considered that there will be no significant impacts arising from this development on this SAC. Therefore, this European site will not be considered any further as part of the Screening for AA process.
Lough Ree SAC. Co Westmeath / Roscommon	000440	Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition - type vegetation [3150] Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites) [6210] Active raised bogs [7110] Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] Alkaline fens [7230] Limestone pavements [8240] Bog woodland [91D0] Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0] Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355]	1.16 km	None. This SAC is located North of the proposed works. No discharge from foul or surface water is proposed to interact with this SAC which is situated upstream from the proposed site. All surface water and foul water on site are adequately treated and therefore no impact is envisaged for surface or ground water quality as a result of the proposed development. There is no direct groundwater hydrological link between the site Therefore, this European site will not be considered any further as part of the Screening for AA process.

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<p>River Shannon Callows SAC. Co Westmeath / Roscommon / Offaly</p>	<p>000216</p>	<p>Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae) [6410]</p> <p>Lowland hay meadows (Alopecurus pratensis, Sanguisorba officinalis) [6510]</p> <p>Alkaline fens [7230]</p> <p>Limestone pavements [8240]</p> <p>Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0]</p> <p>Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355]</p>	<p>0.44 km</p>	<p>None. This SAC is located South of the proposed works.</p> <p>Although the proximity to this SAC is relatively close, the nature of the existing dwelling on site and the proposed development town, it is considered that there will be no significant impacts arising from this development.</p> <p>No discharge from foul or surface water is proposed to interact with this SAC which is situated upstream from the proposed site. There is no direct groundwater hydrological link between the site.</p> <p>Multiple site visits were undertaken in quarter 2 and 3 of 2023.</p> <p>Therefore, this European site will not be considered any further as part of the Screening for AA process.</p>
<p>Lough Ree SPA. Co Westmeath / Roscommon</p>	<p>004064</p>	<p>Little Grebe (Tachybaptus ruficollis) [A004]</p> <p>Whooper Swan (Cygnus cygnus) [A038]</p> <p>Wigeon (Anas penelope) [A050]</p> <p>Teal (Anas crecca) [A052]</p> <p>Mallard (Anas platyrhynchos) [A053]</p> <p>Shoveler (Anas clypeata) [A056]</p> <p>Tufted Duck (Aythya fuligula) [A061]</p> <p>Common Scoter (Melanitta nigra) [A065]</p> <p>Goldeneye (Bucephala clangula) [A067]</p> <p>Coot (Fulica atra) [A125]</p> <p>Golden Plover (Pluvialis apricaria) [A140]</p> <p>Lapwing (Vanellus vanellus) [A142]</p> <p>Common Tern (Sterna hirundo) [A193]</p> <p>Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</p>	<p>1.16 km</p>	<p>None. This SAC is located North of the proposed works.</p> <p>No discharge from foul or surface water is proposed to interact with this SAC which is situated upstream from the proposed site. All surface water and foul water on site are adequately treated and therefore no impact is envisaged for surface or ground water quality as a result of the proposed development. There is no direct groundwater hydrological link between the site.</p> <p>There will be no direct loss of habitat or species due to site works due to the preexisting urban dwellings on the proposed site. There is no evidence of nesting within this preexisting urban developed site.</p> <p>Multiple site visits were undertaken in quarter 2 and 3 of 2023.</p> <p>Therefore, this European site will not be considered any further as part of the Screening for AA process.</p>

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<p>Middle Shannon Callows SPA. Co Westmeath / Roscommon / Offaly</p>	<p>004096</p>	<p>Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) [A038] Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) [A050] Corncrake (<i>Crex crex</i>) [A122] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142] Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) [A156] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]</p>	<p>0.44 km</p>	<p>None. This SPA is located South of the proposed works.</p> <p>Although the proximity to this SPA is relatively close, the nature of the existing dwelling on site and the proposed development town, it is considered that there will be no significant impacts arising from this development.</p> <p>No discharge from foul or surface water is proposed to interact with this SAC which is situated upstream from the proposed site. There is no direct groundwater hydrological link between the site.</p> <p>There will be no direct loss of habitat or species due to site works due to the preexisting urban dwellings on the proposed site. There is no evidence of nesting within this preexisting urban developed site.</p> <p>Multiple site visits were undertaken in quarter 2 and 3 of 2023.</p> <p>Therefore, this European site will not be considered any further as part of the Screening for AA process.</p>
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7.2 Likely Impact to the Natura 2000 Sites

The possible impacts that might arise from the proposed development have been examined in the context of the factors that could potentially affect the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites. As part of the screening stage process the proximity and qualifying interests of the Natura 2000 sites in the wider hinterland of the 2 No social housing units & 1 No Retail unit within the existing vacant dwelling at 59 Connaught Street, Athlone, Co Westmeath

In assessing the sites that could potentially be impacted by the proposed development a source-pathway-receptor model was used. All sites potentially impacted were considered in relation to the size and nature of the proposed development and the sensitivity of the receptors in the wider locality. If a Natura 2000 site of particular significance/relevance exists beyond a nominal screening area this was also included in the screening appraisal. Accordingly, all potential pathways for impact on designated sites were included in this screening exercise both within and outside a nominal 15km zone which was chosen to display the location and discuss sites most proximate to the proposed development.

Table 7.4 summarises the location and qualifying interests of designated sites in the area.

7.3 SAC Sites

The nearest SAC within the 15km distance from the proposed development site lies at a distance of 0.44 km from the proposed site, however they are not hydrologically or directly linked by habitat connectivity to the area of the proposed development site at 59 Connaught Street, Athlone, Co Westmeath. It is therefore highly improbable that a project of this nature and scale will have any measurable impact on the qualifying interests of these SACs i.e. Carrickynaghtan Bog NHA, Clonydonnin Bog NHA, Carn Park Bog SAC, Crosswood Bog SAC, Castlesampson Esker SAC, Ballynamona Bog and Corkip Lough SAC, Lough Funshinagh SAC, Pilgrim's Road Esker SAC, Mongan Bog SAC, Fin Lough (Offaly) SAC, Lough Ree SAC / SPA, River Shannon Callows SAC / SPA.

For these European sites there will be no reduction in habitat area of qualifying interest, no disturbance to key species or habitats, no reduction in species density or no changes in key indicators of conservation value.

Table 7.1 summarises the location and qualifying interests of designated sites in the within a 15km radius of the proposed development site.

Table 7.4 outlines a screening matrix for potential impacts to the SAC sites.

All surface water and foul water on site are adequately treated and therefore no impact is envisaged for surface or ground water quality as a result of the proposed development.

7.4 Table 7.4 - Summary

Site Name	Reduction in Habitat Area of Habitat of Qualifying Interest	Disturbance to Key Habitats or Species	Habitat or Species Fragmentation	Reduction in Species Density	Changes in Key Indicators of Conservation Value
	Possible Potential Impacts	Possible Potential Impacts	Possible Potential Impacts	Possible Potential Impacts	Possible Potential Impacts
Carrickynaghtan Bog NHA	No	No	No	No	No
Clonydonnin Bog NHA	No	No	No	No	No
Carn Park Bog SAC	No	No	No	No	No
Crosswood Bog SAC	No	No	No	No	No
Castlesampson Esker SAC	No	No	No	No	No
Ballynamona Bog and Corkip Lough SAC	No	No	No	No	No
Lough Funshinagh SAC	No	No	No	No	No
Pilgrim's Road Esker SAC	No	No	No	No	No
Mongan Bog SAC	No	No	No	No	No
Fin Lough (Offaly) SAC	No	No	No	No	No
Lough Ree SAC	No	No	No	No	No
River Shannon Callows SAC	No	No	No	No	No
Lough Ree SPA	No	No	No	No	No
River Shannon Callows SPA	No	No	No	No	No

7.5 Cumulative Impact

A requirement of the AA process is to take into consideration any cumulative impacts as a result of other plans in the area. It is considered that because of the small scope and scale of the proposed development and the fact that it is highly unlikely to lead to any adverse impact to any Natura 2000 sites within a 15km radius of the site, no cumulative impact will result from the proposed development in combination with any other proposals in the Connaught Street area.

Foul water from the site is connected to an existing foul water system. There are no alterations to the foul and surface water networks and the proposed development will not generate any additional volume.

7.6 General Site Construction Environmental Measures Consistent with Best Practice, Standards, Design and Controls

General Measures

Raw or uncured waste concrete should be disposed of by removal from the site.

The amount of in-situ concreting required should be minimised by maximising the use of pre-cast or permanent formwork.

Ready-mix suppliers should be used in preference to on-site batching.

Washout of concrete trucks should occur off site at a designated, contained impermeable areas, however, if it is necessary to wash down the truck chutes it must be conducted in a dedicated bunded impermeable and signposted wash out area;

Prior to any work it should be ensured that all construction equipment is mechanically sound to avoid leaks of oil, fuel, hydraulic fluids and grease.

Foul drainage from site etc. should be removed to a suitable treatment facility or discharged to a septic tank system constructed in accordance with EPA guidelines.

All vegetation clearance shall be carried out in one period outside the breeding bird's period which runs from 1st March to the 31st of August.

Runoff and sediment control

Pollution control measures shall be implemented to ensure that pollutants and sediment are not deposited within any local drains.

Petrol interceptor to be installed within the site curtilage to the existing foul and surface water connections to ensure no contamination potential is possible during the lifetime of the building.

Fuel Management

Fuel management measures will be implemented which will incorporate the following elements: fuels, lubricants and hydraulic fluids for equipment used on the construction site should be carefully handled to avoid spillage, properly secured against unauthorised access or vandalism, and provided with spill containment according to current best practice (Enterprise Ireland BPGCS005)2.

Fuelling and lubrication of equipment should be carried out off site in appropriately contained sites.

Emergency fuel spill kits with oil boom, absorbers etc. will be kept on site in the event of an accidental spill. should be available on site, any spillage of fuels, lubricants or hydraulic oils should be immediately contained and the contaminated soil removed from the site and properly disposed of.

Waste oils and hydraulic fluids should be collected in leak-proof containers and removed from the site for disposal or re-cycling.

Procedures and contingency plans will be set up to deal with an emergency

Waste Management

Waste management measures shall be implemented to ensure that waste generated on site is managed appropriately:

During the construction phase of the project waste will be controlled and segregated appropriately on site by means of dedicated skips which will be disposed of off-site by a licensed waste operator.

It is also important to note that as all trucks transporting materials to and from the site to the site have no potential to transport alien invasive species to the nearby SAC habitats as part of the works. No invasive alien species have been recorded from the area of works so it is highly unlikely that any spread of invasive aliens will occur as a result of site works.

Construction Environmental Management Plan

All environmental measures must be discarded in a site Construction Environmental Management Plan and agreed prior to works.

7.7 Conclusion

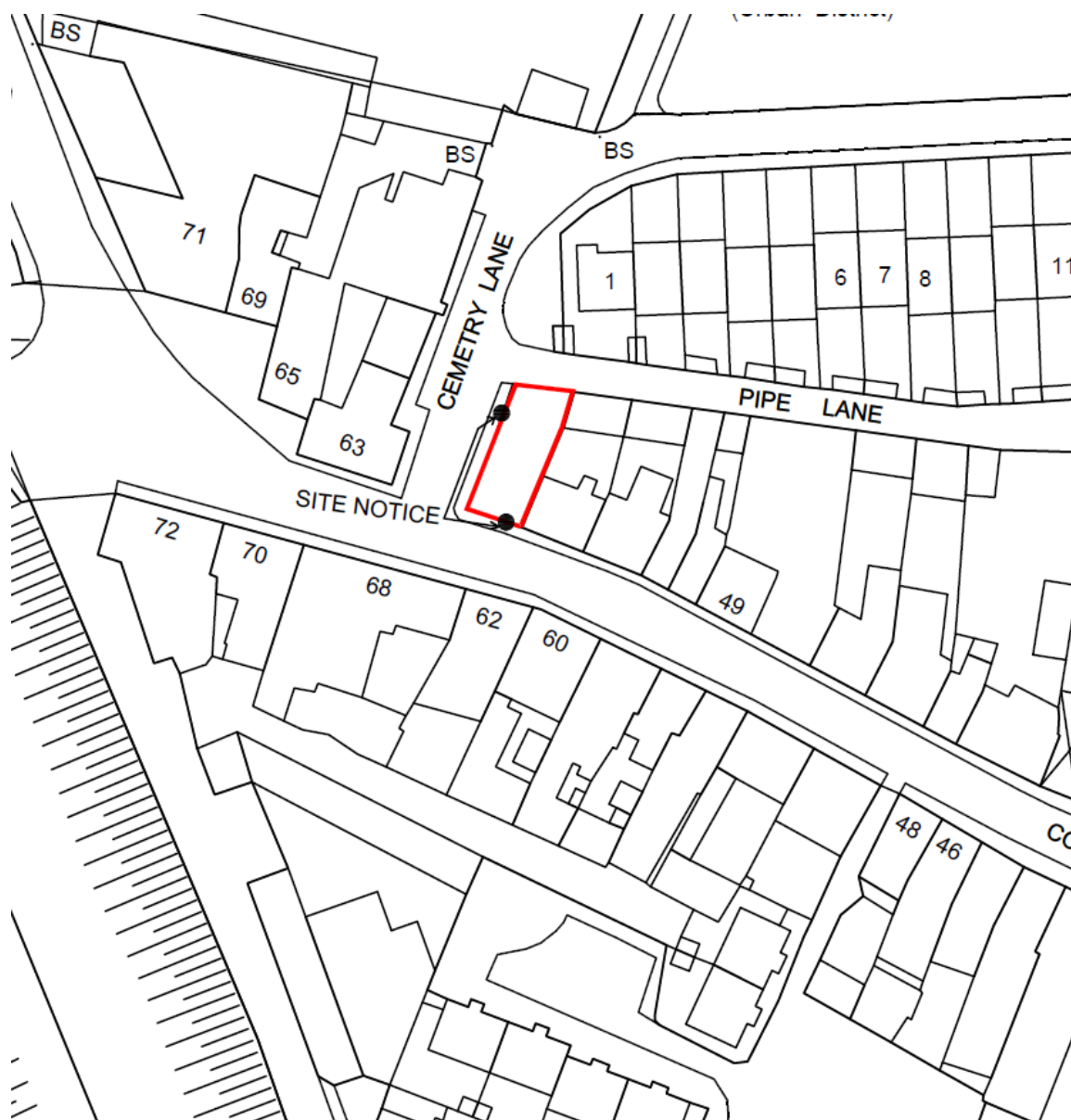
It is considered that the development works proposed to 2 No social housing units & 1 No Retail unit within the existing vacant dwelling at 59 Connaught Street, Athlone, Co Westmeath will not have any significant effects on any European sites.

8.0 Findings of No Significant Effects Report

The works proposed to develop 1 No housing unit within the existing derelict dwelling at 53 Connaught Street, Athlone, Co Westmeath are contained within the urban core area of the town and there are no European sites within the defined boundaries of the town. In this regard, it has been determined that these proposed works, if undertaken, will not result in adverse negative impacts to any European sites or on their qualifying interests. It can be concluded that there will be no significant effects arising from this development to any European site and the Natura 2000 network in its entirety.

Paul Hogan
Senior Architect MSc Spatial Planning

Appendix 1 – Site Location



Appendix 2 – Site Photos

