Report for the purposes of Appropriate Assessment Screening

as required under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive
(Council Directive 92/43/EEC)

Canal Ave. Friars Mill Rd. Residential Development

Prepared by: Moore Group – Environmental Services

10 February 2021

On behalf of
Westmeath County Council

Proponent	Westmeath County Council
Project	Canal Ave. Friars Mill Rd. Residential Development
Title	Report for the purposes of Appropriate Assessment Screening Canal Ave. Friars Mill Rd. Residential Development

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Moore Archaeological and Environmental Services Limited				

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Abbreviations

AA	Appropriate Assessment
EEC	European Economic Community
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EU	European Union
GIS	Geographical Information System
NHA	Natural Heritage Area
NIS	Natura Impact Statement
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
OSI	Ordnance Survey Ireland
pNHA	proposed Natural Heritage Area
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SPA	Special Protection Area

1. Introduction

1.1. General Introduction

This Appropriate Assessment screening report has been prepared to support a Part 8 application for planning permission for the Proposed Development. The report contains information required for the competent authority to undertake screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) for a proposed residential development at Canal Ave. & Friars Mill Rd., Mullingar, Co. Westmeath (hereafter referred to as the Proposed Development) to significantly affect European sites.

Screening is the process that addresses and records the reasoning and conclusions in relation to the first two tests of Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (as amended) (referred to as the Habitats Directive):

i) whether a plan or project is directly connected to or necessary for the management of the site, and
ii) whether a plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, is likely to have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site (also referred to as a "European site") in view of its conservation objectives.

Having regard to the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (section 177U and 177V). The purpose of a screening exercise under section 177U of the PDA 2000 is to determine whether it is necessary to carry out an "appropriate assessment" of the implications for a European site of the Proposed Development. The trigger for the requirement for an "appropriate assessment" is that the 'project', either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, is "likely to have a significant effect" on the European site.

In order to screen out a project, it must be *excluded*, on the basis of objective information, that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

If the effects are deemed to be significant, potentially significant, or uncertain, or the screening process becomes overly complicated, or if it cannot be excluded, then the process must proceed to Stage 2 (AA). Screening should be undertaken without the inclusion of mitigation. If potential impacts clearly can be avoided through the modification or redesign of the plan or project, then the screening process is repeated on the altered plan or project.

When screening the project, there are two possible outcomes:

- the project poses no risk of a significant effect and as such requires no further assessment; and
- the project has potential to have a significant effect (or this is uncertain) and AA of the project is necessary.

This report has been prepared by Moore Group - Environmental Services to support an application for planning permission for the Proposed Development to allow Westmeath County Council to carry out AA screening in relation to the Proposed Development. The report was compiled by Ger O'Donohoe (B.Sc. Applied Aquatic Sciences (GMIT, 1993) & M.Sc. Environmental Sciences (TCD, 1999)) who has 25 years' experience in environmental impact assessment and has completed numerous Appropriate Assessment Screening Reports and Natura Impact Statements on terrestrial and aquatic habitats.

1.2. Legislative Background - The Habitats and Birds Directives

It is necessary that the Proposed Development has regard to Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. This is transposed into Irish Law by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 – 2015 (referred to as the Habitats Regulations).

The Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora) is the main legislative instrument for the protection and conservation of biodiversity in the European Union (EU). Under the Habitats Directive, Member States are obliged to designate Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) which contain habitats or species considered important for protection and conservation in an EU context. The Planning and Development Act 2000 (section 177U and 177V) govern the requirement to carry out appropriate assessment.

The Birds Directive (Directive 2009/147/EC on the Conservation of Wild Birds) is concerned with the long-term protection and management of all wild bird species and their habitats in the EU. Among other things, the Birds Directive requires that Special Protection Areas (SPAs) be established to protect migratory species and species which are rare, vulnerable, in danger of extinction, or otherwise require special attention.

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), designated under the Birds Directive, form a pan-European network of protected sites known as Natura 2000. The Habitats Directive sets out a unified system for the protection and management of SACs and SPAs. These sites are also referred to as European sites.

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the requirement for an assessment of proposed plans and projects likely to affect Natura 2000 sites.

Article 6(3) establishes the requirement to screen all plans and projects and to carry out a further assessment if required (Appropriate Assessment (AA)). Article 6(4) establishes requirements in cases of imperative reasons of overriding public interest:

> **Article 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 subjected to an appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the*

site's conservation objectives. In 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."

Article 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, Member States shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted. Where the site concerned 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 the beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest."*

2. Methodology

The Commission's methodological guidance (EC, 2002 & 2018) promotes a four-stage process to complete the AA and outlines the issues and tests at each stage. An important aspect of the process is that the outcome at each successive stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required.

Stages 1 and 2 deal with the main requirements for assessment under Article 6(3). Stage 3 may be part of Article 6(3) or may be a necessary precursor to Stage 4. Stage 4 is the main derogation step of Article 6(4).

Stage 1 Screening: This stage examines the likely effects of a project either alone or in combination with other projects upon a Natura 2000 site and considers whether it can be objectively concluded that these effects will not be significant. In order to screen out a project, it must be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment: In this stage, there is a consideration of the impact of the project with a view to ascertain whether there will be any adverse effect on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, with respect to the site's structure and function and its conservation objectives. Additionally, where there are predicted impacts, an assessment of the potential mitigation of those impacts is considered.

Stage 3 Assessment of Alternative Solutions: This stage examines alternative ways of implementing the project that, where possible, avoid any adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site.

Stage 4 Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain: Where imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) exist, an assessment to consider whether compensatory measures will or will not effectively offset the damage to the sites will be necessary.

To ensure that the Proposed Development complies fully with the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and all relevant Irish transposing legislation, Moore Group compiled this report to support an application for planning permission for the Proposed Development to allow Westmeath County Council to carry out AA screening in relation to the proposed development to determine whether the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with another plan or project will have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site.

2.1. Guidance

This report has been compiled in accordance with guidance contained in the following documents:

- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities. (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2010 rev.).
- Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities. Circular NPWS 1/10 & PSSP 2/10.
- 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 (European Commission Environment Directorate-General, 2001); hereafter referred to as the EC Article Guidance Document.
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC (EC Environment Directorate-General, 2000); hereafter referred to as MN2000.
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2018).

2.2. Data Sources

Sources of information that were used to collect data on the Natura 2000 network of sites, and the environment within which they are located, are listed below:

- The following mapping and GIS data sources, as required:
    - National Parks & Wildlife (NPWS) protected site boundary data;
    - Ordnance Survey of Ireland (OSI) mapping and aerial photography;
    - OSI/ Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rivers and streams, and catchments;
    - Open Street Maps;
    - Digital Elevation Model over Europe (EU-DEM);
    - Google Earth and Bing aerial photography 1995-2020;
- Online data available on Natura 2000 sites as held by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) from www.npws.ie including:
    - Natura 2000 - Standard Data Form;

  - Conservation Objectives;
  - Site Synopses;
- National Biodiversity Data Centre records;
  - Online database of rare, threatened and protected species;
  - Publicly accessible biodiversity datasets.
- Status of EU Protected Habitats in Ireland. (National Parks & Wildlife Service, 2019); and
- Relevant Development Plans:
  - Westmeath County Development Plan 2014-2020
  - Draft Westmeath County Development Plan 2021-2027

3. Description of the Proposed Development

The Proposed Development comprises a proposed residential development at Canal Ave. & Friars Mill Rd., Mullingar, Co. Westmeath. The proposed development will include the placement of a precast concrete bridge over the narrow channel of the River Brosna at the entrance to the site. The bridge has been designed to be placed on existing supporting berms set back from the water course and will clear span the channel thus avoiding contact with the water course.

The proposed development is to be connected to existing Irish Water sewers for both surface water and foul water which will be appropriately treated at Mullingar WWTP.

All surface water runoff from the proposed development is to be collected and discharge treated to facilitate attenuated flows to the public surface water drainage network.

The proposed surface water drainage network is to be carefully designed to minimise the risk of blockage throughout the network, mainly through the following;

1. Sustainable Drainage Systems shall be provided in all paved and parking areas with an adequate sub-base that will limit and restrict the size of pollutants entering the network. The engineered proposal will reduce the risk of localised flooding and downstream flooding, recharge the groundwater table and trap pollutants and prevent them from being carried into the River Brosna/Canal. This sustainable drainage proposal will facilitate biological decomposition of trapped pollutants and have a flexible impermeable base liner under parking areas preventing fuel contaminants from entering the soil. This sustainable solution will be used to reduce the size of the required on-site attenuation.
2. Trapped road gullies
   On impermeable tarmac/concrete surfaces, all road gullies serving the proposed development are to be trapped, to help prevent sediment and gross pollutants from entering the surface water network, and thus improving the water quality discharging from site.

3. Silt trap manholes

   All manholes upstream of the proposed attenuation systems are to contain a 600mm sump, below invert level of outlet pipe, in order to trap sediment and other gross pollutants, and prevent from entering the downstream watercourse; thus improving the water quality discharging from site.

4. Flow Control Device

   Flow Control devices are to be provided immediately downstream of attenuation systems, in order to restrict the surface water discharge from site to a flow rate equivalent, or below, the natural greenfield runoff rate.

The proposed surface water network already provides sufficient measures, through the provisions listed previously (principally trapped road gullies, silt trap manholes and an engineered gravel filtration sub-base under all permeable paved areas to trap potentially harmful pollutants).

These Sustainable Drainage System design features are included in order to ensure that uncontaminated surface water is discharged to the Brosna system in support of sustainable development with regard to the River Brosna locally.

There will be no instream works and the Contractor will prepare a Biosecurity Management Plan under guidance from an Ecologist with regard to the precautionary avoidance of accide4ntal transfer of Crayfish Plague to the Brosna water course on site.

The plan will include general good housekeeping to prevent interaction between the site equipment and the Brosna water course.

Figure 1 shows the Proposed Development location and Figure 2 shows a detailed view of the Proposed Development site on recent aerial photography. Figure 3 is a plan of the Proposed Development.

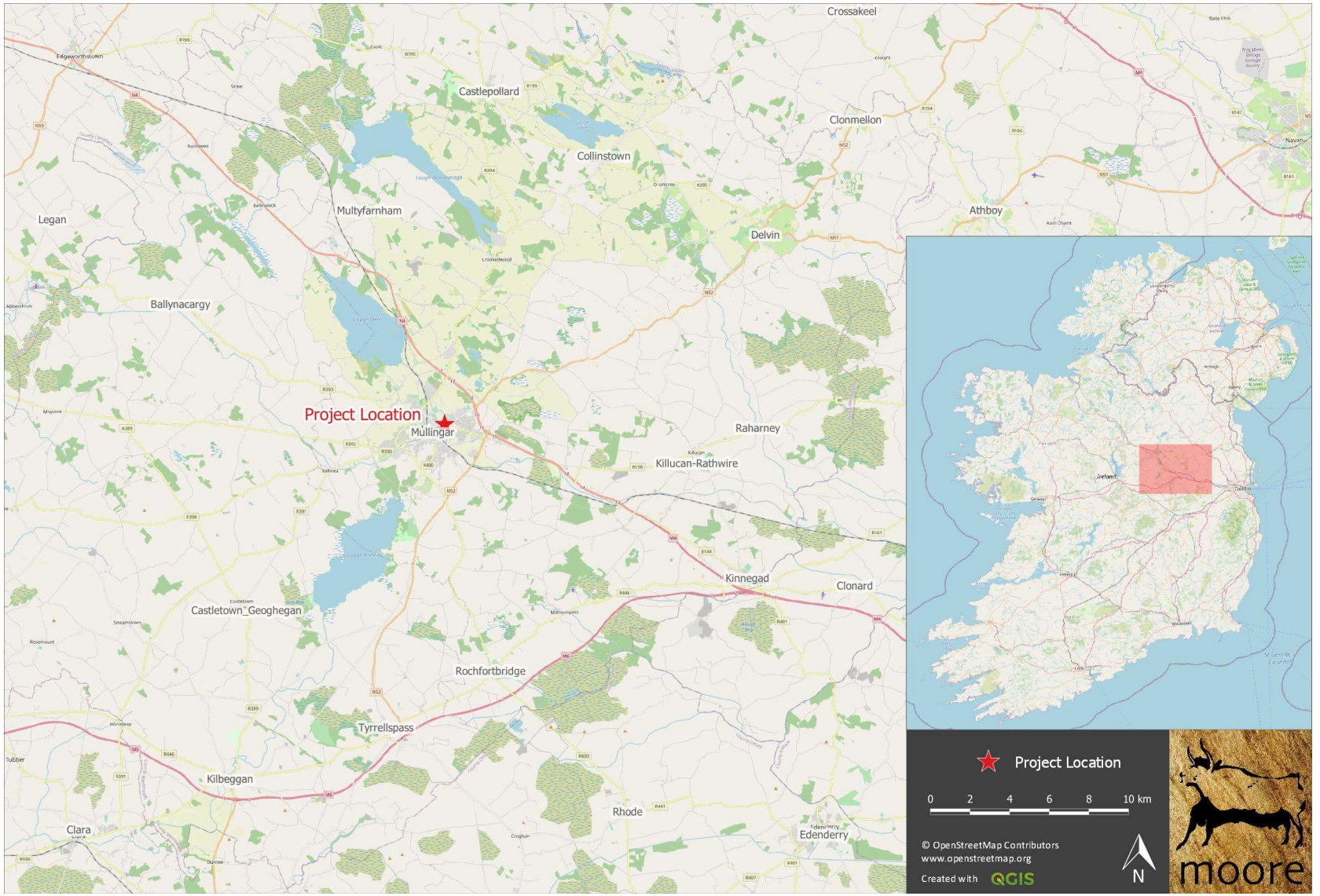

Figure 1. Showing the Proposed Development location at Mullingar.

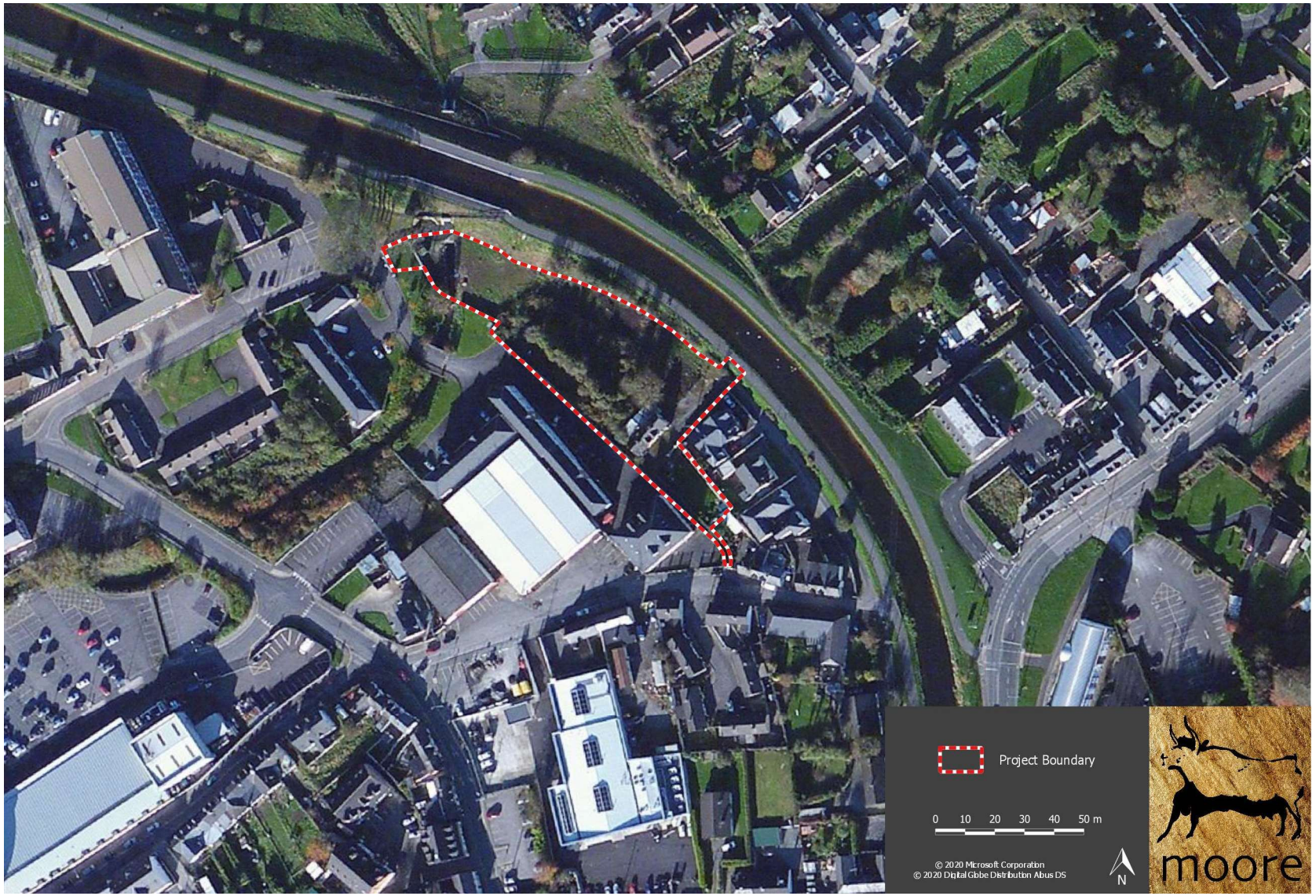

Figure 2. Showing the Proposed Development on recent aerial photography.

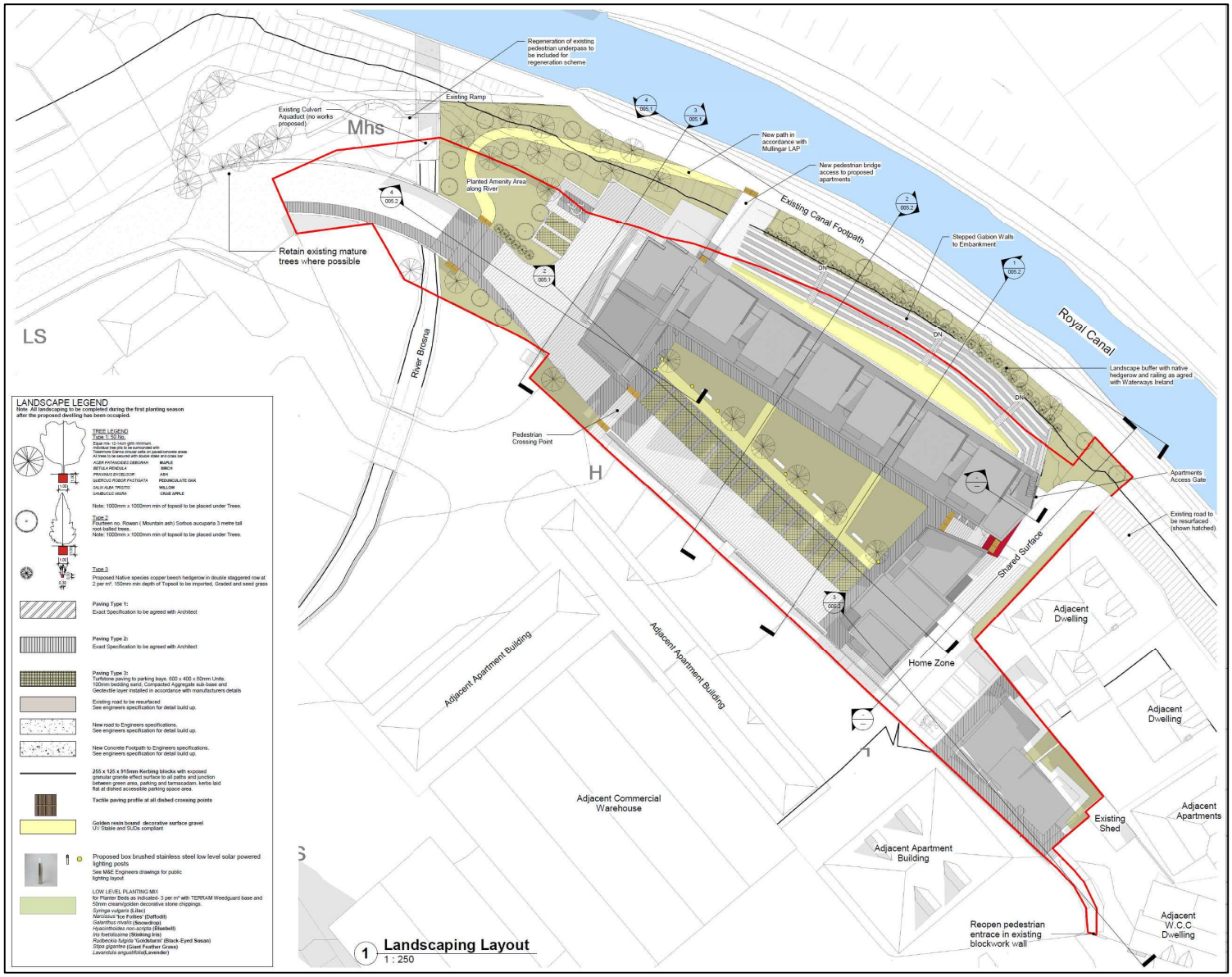

Figure 3. Plan of the Proposed Development.

4. Identification of Natura 2000 Sites

4.1. Description of Natura Sites Potentially Affected

Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2009) Guidance on Appropriate Assessment suggests an assessment of European sites within a zone of impact of 15 km. This distance is a guidance only and the Zone of Impact (ZoI)[1] has been identified taking consideration of the nature and location of the Proposed Development to ensure all European sites with connectivity to it are considered in terms of a catchment-based assessment.

The zone of impact may be determined by connectivity to the Proposed Development in terms of:

- Nature, scale, timing and duration of works and possible impacts, nature and size of excavations, storage of materials, flat/sloping sites;
- Distance and nature of pathways (dilution and dispersion; intervening 'buffer' lands, roads etc.); and
- Sensitivity and location of ecological features.

The guidance provides that, at the screening stage, it is necessary to identify the relevant European sites and compile information on their qualifying interests and conservation objectives. In preparation for this, the potential for source – pathway – receptor connectivity is firstly identified and detailed information is then provided on sites with connectivity. European sites that are located within 15 km of the Proposed Development site are listed in Table 1 and presented in Figures 4 and 5, below.

Table 1 European Sites located within 15km or the potential zone of impact of the Proposed Development.

Site Code	Site name	Distance (km)[2]
000685	Lough Ennell SAC	3.65
000688	Lough Owel SAC	3.57
000692	Scragh Bog SAC	5.34
002205	Wooddown Bog SAC	3.75
002299	River Boyne And River Blackwater SAC	11.57
004043	Lough Derravaragh SPA	9.37
004044	Lough Ennell SPA	4.09
004046	Lough Iron SPA	10.06
004047	Lough Owel SPA	3.56
004232	River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA	14.67

[1] All European sites potentially connected irrespective of the nature or scale of the Proposed Development.
[2] Distances indicated are the closest geographical distance between the Proposed Development and the European site boundary, as made available by the NPWS. Connectivity along hydrological pathways may be significantly greater.

Spatial boundary data on the Natura 2000 network was extracted from the NPWS website (www.npws.ie) on the 2 November 2020 and reviewed on 10 February 2021.

The Proposed Development is located is located within the suburban environment of Mullingar. The River Brosna connects Lough Owel to the north and Lough Ennell to the south of Mullingar and wastewater is treated at Mullingar WWTP.

Lough Owel is located c. 3.6 km to the northwest of the Proposed Development site. The River Brosna can be traced north from the Proposed Development Site where it is culverted under the Royal Canal and on to the vicinity of Mullingar Town AFC pitches where it splits with one branch leading to Lough Sheever c. 2km upstream and Slevin's Lough a further 2km upstream. The other branch leads to St. Bridget's Well beside the former IFI Cullion Fish Farm where it is interconnected with the Royal Canal Feeder and on to Lough Owel which is designated as the Lough Owel SAC (Site code 000688) and the Lough Owel SPA (Site code 004047).

Lough Ennell located c. 4.5 river km to the south is designated as the Lough Ennell SAC (Site code 000685) and the Lough Ennell SPA (Site code 004044).

There is no connectivity any other European sites.

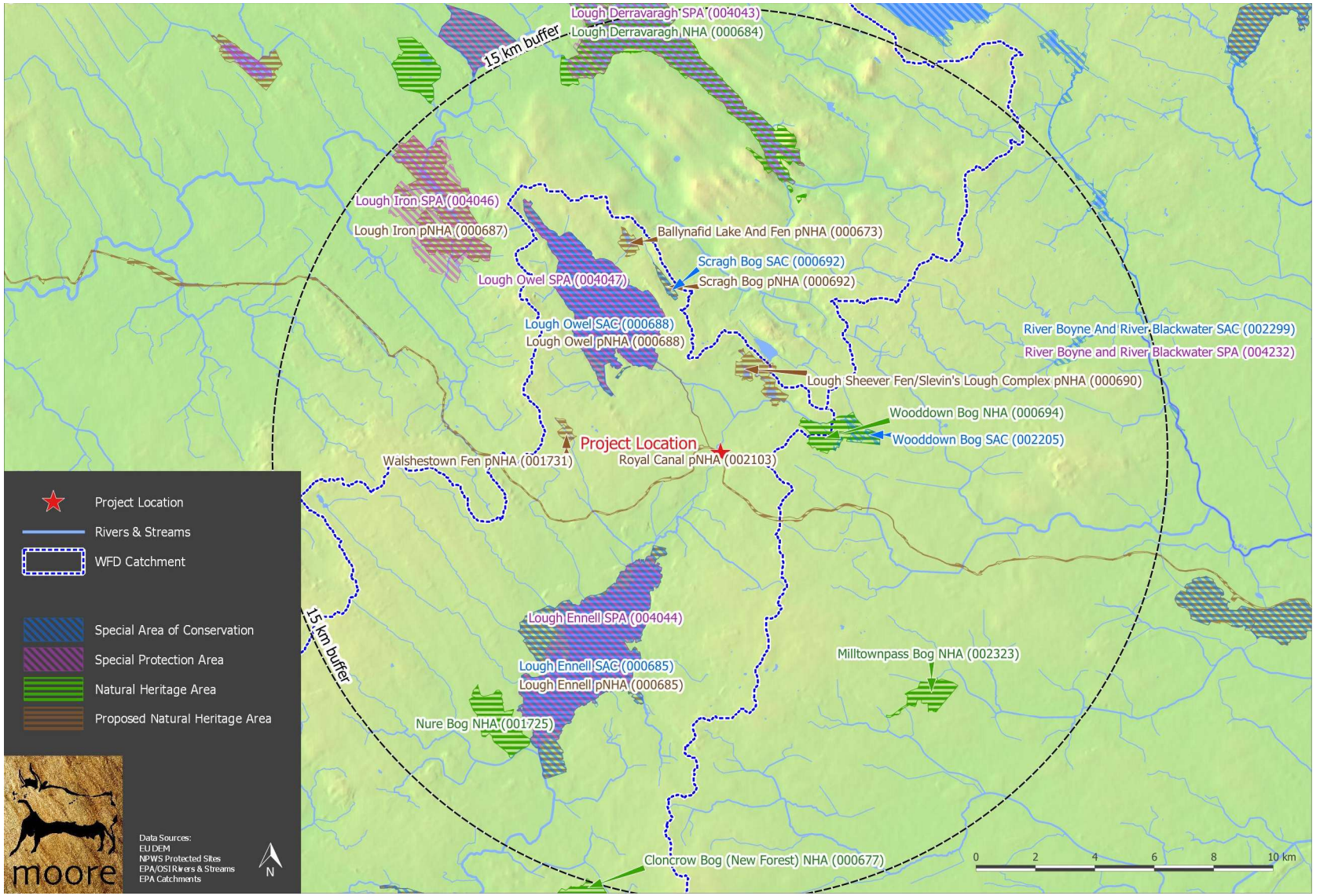

Figure 4. Showing European sites and NHAs/pNHAs within 15 km of the Proposed Development.

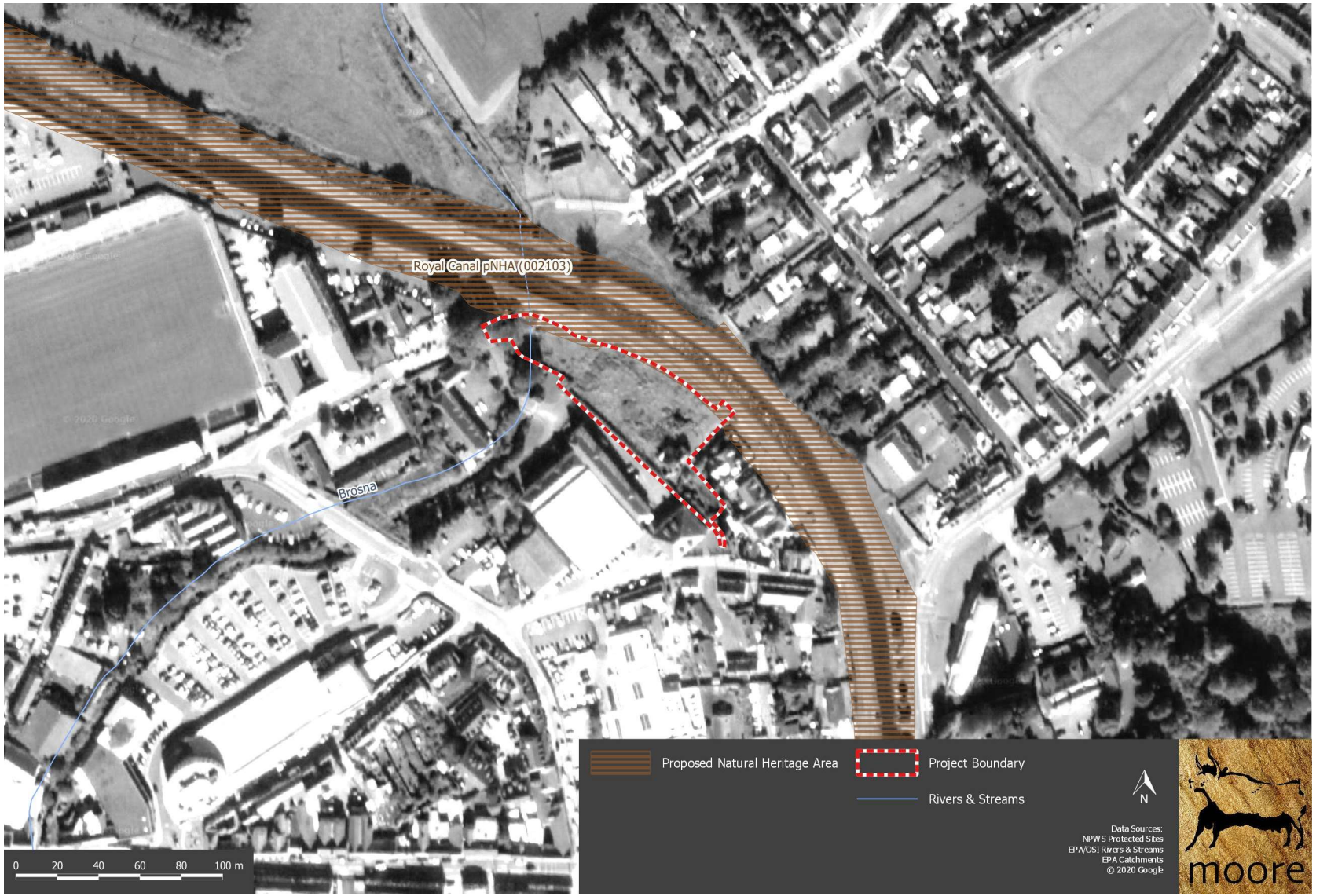

Figure 5. Detail of conservation sites within the potential zone of impact of the Proposed Development.

*Table 2 SACs located within the potential ZoI of the Proposed Development (*indicates priority habitat).*

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Interests
000685	Lough Ennell SAC	**Habitats:** 7230 Alkaline fens
000688	Lough Owel SAC	**Species** 1092 White-clawed Crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes* **Habitats:** 3140 Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of *Chara* spp. 7140 Transition mires and quaking bogs 7230 Alkaline fens

Table 3 SPAs located within the potential ZoI of the Proposed Development *(*indicates priority habitat).*

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Interests
004044	Lough Ennell SPA	**Species** A059 Pochard *Aythya ferina* A061 Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula* A125 Coot *Fulica atra* **Habitats** A999 Wetlands & Waterbirds
004047	Lough Owel SPA	**Species** A056 Shoveler *Anas clypeata* A125 Coot *Fulica atra* **Habitats** A999 Wetlands & Waterbirds

4.2. Conservation Objectives of Natura 2000 Sites

4.2.1. Lough Ennell SAC (000685) - Version 1; 12 January 2018

The following Conservation Objective is set out for the Lough Ennell SAC. Specific attributes, measures and targets are presented in the relevant Conservation Objectives documents and will be addressed in more detail if required after potential impacts have been determined.

7230 - Alkaline fens

To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Alkaline fens in Lough Ennell SAC.

4.2.2. Lough Owel SAC (000688) - Version 1; 03 May 2018

The following Conservation Objective is set out for the Lough Ennell SAC. Specific attributes, measures and targets are presented in the relevant Conservation Objectives documents and will be addressed in more detail if required after potential impacts have been determined.

1092 White-clawed Crayfish Austropotamobius pallipes

To maintain the favourable conservation condition of White-clawed Crayfish Austropotamobius pallipes in Lough Owel SAC.

3140 - Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp.

To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of *Chara* spp. in Lough Owel SAC.

7140 - Transition mires and quaking bogs

To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Transition mires and quaking bogs in Lough Owel SAC.

7230 - Alkaline fens

To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Alkaline fens in Lough Owel SAC.

4.2.3. Lough Ennell SPA (004044) – Generic Version 7, 7th April 2020

The following Conservation Objectives are set out for the Lough Ennell SPA. Specific attributes, measures and targets are presented in the relevant Conservation Objectives documents and will be addressed in more detail if required after potential impacts have been determined.

To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.

To acknowledge the importance of Ireland's wetlands to wintering waterbirds, "Wetland and Waterbirds" may be included as a Special Conservation Interest for some SPAs that have been designated for wintering waterbirds and that contain a wetland site of significant importance to one or more of the species of Special Conservation Interest. Thus, a second objective is included as follows:

To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat at Lough Ennell SPA as a resource for the regularly-occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it.

4.2.4. Lough Owel SPA (004047) – Generic Version 7, 07 April 2020

The following Conservation Objectives are set out for the Lough Owel SPA. Specific attributes, measures and targets are presented in the relevant Conservation Objectives documents and will be addressed in more detail if required after potential impacts have been determined.

To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.

To acknowledge the importance of Ireland's wetlands to wintering waterbirds, "Wetland and Waterbirds" may be included as a Special Conservation Interest for some SPAs that have been designated for wintering waterbirds and that contain a wetland site of significant importance to one or more of the species of Special Conservation Interest. Thus, a second objective is included as follows:

To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat at Lough Owel SPA as a resource for the regularly-occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it.

4.3. Assessment Criteria

4.3.1. Examples of Direct, Indirect or Secondary Impacts

In order to identify those sites that could be potentially affected, it is necessary to describe the Natura 2000 site in the context of why it has been designated i.e. in terms of its Qualifying Interests and the environmental and ecological conditions that maintain the condition of these features. The underpinning conditions that are required to maintain the 'health' of these features are listed in Table 4 below along with a preliminary assessment of potential impacts.

Table 4 Qualifying Interests, Key environmental conditions supporting site integrity and Potential Impacts.

Qualifying Interests	Key environmental conditions supporting site integrity	Current Threats to Qualifying Interests	Potential Impacts
Alkaline fens	High water table. Ground surface water supply. Calcium-rich conditions.	Groundwater dependant. Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Changes in nutrient or base status	The Alkaline fen habitats located upstream in Lough Owel are highly unlikely to be affected by the Proposed Development. The Alkaline fen habitats for which the Lough Ennell SAC is designated occur at a distance of over 4 river km downstream and it is unlikely that significant impacts on water quality will occur from the construction or operation phases of the Proposed Development.
Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of *Chara* spp.	Surface and groundwater dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Highly sensitive to pollution.	Nutrient enrichment arising from intensification of agriculture and urban developments.	This habitat refers to Lough Owel and being located upstream, it is highly unlikely to be affected by the Proposed Development.
Transition Mires	Surface and groundwater dependent. Low sensitivity to hydrological changes. Erosion, land-use changes.	Drainage; burning; peat extraction; overgrazing; afforestation; erosion; and climate change.	This habitat refers to Lough Owel and being located upstream, it is highly unlikely to be affected by the Proposed Development.
Wetlands & Waterbirds	Highly sensitive to hydrological changes and loss of wetland	A number of pressures have been identified by Crowe (2005). These	The wetland habitats in located upstream in Lough Owel are highly

Qualifying Interests	Key environmental conditions supporting site integrity	Current Threats to Qualifying Interests	Potential Impacts
	habitat. Sensitive to disturbance.	pressures include: the modification of wetland sites, particularly for industry or housing and increased levels of disturbance, largely related to recreational activity. Eutrophication at a number of wetland sites as a result of nutrient inputs from a range of polluting activities were also identified as a potential pressure. However this latter pressure is now being alleviated through stricter control of activities associated with water discharge/runoff etc. Climate change was also noted as a significant factor underlying changes in trends of wintering waterbirds in Ireland.	unlikely to be affected by the Proposed Development. The Wetlands & Waterbird species for which the Lough Ennell SPA is designated occur at a distance of over 4 river km downstream and it is unlikely that significant impacts on water quality will occur from the construction or operation phases of the Proposed Development.
White-clawed Crawfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*)	Surface water dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological change, Very highly sensitive to pollution.	Introduction of diseases transmitted by introduced American crayfish.	White-clawed Crawfish are known to be present in Lough Owel, the River Brosna and Lough Ennell. There will be no instream works and no discharges to the River Brosna and the Contractor will prepare a Biosecurity Management Plan under guidance from an Ecologist with regard to the precautionary avoidance of accidental transfer of Crayfish Plague to the Brosna water course on site.

4.2. Ecological Network Supporting Natura 2000 Sites

An analysis of the proposed Natural Heritage Areas and designated Natural Heritage Areas in terms of their role in supporting the species using Natura 2000 sites was undertaken. It was assumed that these supporting roles mainly related to mobile fauna such as mammals and birds which may use pNHAs and NHAs as "stepping stones" between Natura 2000 sites.

Article 10 of the Habitats Directive and the Habitats Regulations 2011 place a high degree of importance on such non-Natura 2000 areas as features that connect the Natura 2000 network. Features such as ponds, woodlands and important hedgerows were taken into account during the preparation of this AA Screening report.

There is no direct hydrological connection linking the Site of the Proposed Development to the Royal Canal pNHA; with the land elevation decreasing in gradient from the Canal and tow path to the Site lands. Although the Site does lie within proximity to the Canal, it is not considered that the proposed works have the capacity to

cause any significant impacts to this waterbody in terms of direct structural damage and/or water quality reduction.

There will be no discharges to water in the Royal Canal pNHA and there will be no light spill over the canal ecological corridor that could affect bats commuting along the Royal Canal pNHA. The Proposed Development includes a landscaped buffer with the Royal Canal with native hedgerow and railing as agreed with Waterways Ireland.

There will be no direct or indirect impacts on any species occurring in the Royal Canal pNHA including:

- *Austropotamobius pallipes* (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092]
- *Lampetra planeri* (Brook Lamprey) [1096];

or Annex II & IV species:

- *Lutra lutra* (Otter) [1355]
- any bat species.

5. Identification of Potential Impacts & Assessment of Significance

The Proposed Development is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the sites considered in the assessment and therefore potential impacts must be identified and considered.

5.1. Potential Impacts

This section uses the information collected on the sensitivity of each European site considered and describes any likely significant effects of implementation of the Proposed Development. This assumes the absence of any controls, conditions or assumption mitigation measures.

The likely significant effects of the Proposed Development are presented in Table 6 (Section 5.3), both in isolation and potentially in combination with other plans and Proposed Developments.

There will be no direct impacts on Lough Ennell or Lough Owel and there will be no habitat loss or fragmentation as a result of the Proposed Development.

Having considered direct impacts and ruling them out, indirect impacts are then considered.

A worst-case scenario may be considered whereby the Proposed Development would be the source of a significant detrimental change in water quality in the River Brosna and/or Lough Ennell downstream either alone or in combination with other projects or plans as a result of indirect pollution. The effect would have to be

considered in terms of changes in surface water quality which would affect the species and/or habitats or food sources for which Lough Owel and Lough Ennell are designated. However, this is unlikely.

There is no possibility for significant effects on any European sites through surface water pollution to arise as a result of the proposed development for the following reasons:

- The proposed bridge has been designed to be placed on supporting berms set back from the water course and will clear span the channel thus avoiding contact with the water course.
- There will be no instream works and no discharges to the River Brosna.
- The Contractor will prepare a Biosecurity Management Plan under guidance from an Ecologist with regard to the precautionary avoidance of accidental transfer of Crayfish Plague to the Brosna water course on site.
- Lough Ennell is located over 4 river km downstream of the proposed development site.
- There is therefore a water buffer separating the designated sites from the proposed development over which it is anticipated that any potential pollutants would be absorbed and diluted to an extent that they would not be perceptible at the designated sites.
- The proposed development design includes SuDS features that will address effects on surface water.

The presence of Japanese Knotweed on site has been identified by Westmeath County Council and a management plan for treatment will be prepared to ensure no spreading of this invasive species.

Having considered the above, it is evident that potential adverse effects on the Lough Owel SAC/SPA or the Lough Ennell SAC/SPA are unlikely and significant effects on any European sites as a result of the Proposed Development are ruled out.

5.2. Assessment of Potential In-Combination Effects

In-combination effects are changes in the environment that result from numerous human-induced, small-scale alterations. In-combination effects can be thought of as occurring through two main pathways: first, through persistent additions or losses of the same materials or resource, and second, through the compounding effects as a result of the coming together of two or more effects.

As part of the Screening for an Appropriate Assessment, in addition to the Proposed Development, other relevant plans and projects in the area must also be considered at this stage. This step aims to identify at this early stage any possible significant in-combination effects of the Proposed Development with other such plans and projects on European sites.

A review of the National Planning Application Database was undertaken. The first stage of this review confirmed that there were no data outages in the area where the Proposed Development is located. The database was

then queried for developments granted planning permission within 100m of the Proposed Development within the last three years, these are presented in Table 5 below.

Table 5.Planning applications granted permission in the vicinity of the Proposed Development.

Planning Ref.	Description of development	Comments
166296	amendments to existing post office shopfront to provide a new glazed entrance lobby with illuminated signage	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
176151	Change of use of ground floor shop unit to use as dental surgery	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
176165	demolition of existing corridor and associated lobbies at first floor level and second floor. Construction of replacement glazed link corridor, platform lift and 3 no. new stairs serving the first and second floor level (33 sqm) and new roof garden (76 sqm) at first floor level. Internal alterations to amalgamate separate office rooms	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
176241	installation of a 3m high "lamp post" style relief vent stack servicing the existing below ground natural gas pressure reduction unit with all ancillary services and associated site works.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
176345	construction of a new single and two storey extension to the rear and side of the existing house, minor internal alterations and renovations and all associated site works and services.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
176365	Change of use of existing ground floor nightclub area to retail use with access from Castle Street and Spoutwell Lane, (2) Amalgamation of existing retail unit into proposed retail unit, (3) Alterations to existing front elevation facing onto Castle Street, (4) Demolish existing 1st and 2nd floor offices while retaining front façade wall facing onto castle street, (5) construct new first floor extension to be used as a sit down restaurant to include kitchen, toilet, storage and staff area and provision for ventilation stack to the rear. (6) change of use of existing 1st floor nightclub area to storage, office and staff area to be used in conjunction with proposed ground floor retail unit and all associated site works	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
186056	to construct a first floor rear extension (24.6 msq) to existing dwelling	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
186062	change of use from retail use to coffee shop use, the erection of new signage consisting of individually mounted lettering, the installation of downlights externally	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.

Planning Ref.	Description of development	Comments
186153	demolish existing two storey extension to the rear of our existing dwelling and to construct a new two storey extension at rear	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
186166	to Construct a 142sqm single store extension at the south eastern side of the existing school	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
186313	single storey building comprising of two changing rooms with showers, toilets and store room and all associated site works	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
186314	to construct a two storey rear to existing dwelling including internal changes to layout	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
186386	new single storey extension to side and rear of existing dental practice	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
196038	retain the rear first floor bedroom space consisting of 29sqm together with domestic garage of 40sqm	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
196254	repairing and decorating plywood fascia and fitting conservation logo pod, all illuminated by new trough lighting.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
196324	change of use from existing retail unit to two number residential town houses. Alter the existing street façade window and door design and for the removal of all signage. Demolish the existing two storey structure located at the rear to allow space for a proposed single storey extension and rear private green area and together with permission connect to all existing site services and all associated site works	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
206011	Change of use from retail use to Healthcare use of the former post office (area A 116sqm) and part of the existing Pharmacy premises (area B 24sqm). The proposed development comprises of Internal alterations to provide level access entrance corridor, reception, waiting area, consultation rooms, WC's, Minor external alterations to the entrance of the former Post Office to provide a separate entrance door to the consultation rooms, All associated site works	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
206025	to extend existing dwelling at rear to include two storey extension with dining room on ground floor and bedroom on first floor and to demolish existing side extension and construct a new side extension to include a utility and playroom with all ancillary site works	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.

These developments are of a relatively small scale, e.g. structural alterations and extensions to existing buildings and do not present potential for in-combination effects.

The Westmeath County Development Plan in complying with the requirements of the Habitats Directive requires that all Projects and Plans that could affect the Natura 2000 sites in the same zone of impact of the Proposed Development site would be initially screened for Appropriate Assessment and if requiring Stage 2 AA, that appropriate employable mitigation measures would be put in place to avoid, reduce or ameliorate negative impacts. In this way any, in-combination impacts with Plans or Projects for the development area and surrounding townlands in which the development site is located, would be avoided.

The listed developments have been granted permission in most cases with conditions relating to sustainable development by the consenting authority in compliance with the relevant Local Authority Development Plan and in compliance with the Local Authority requirement for regard to the Habitats Directive. The development cannot have received planning permission without having met the consenting authority requirement in this regard. There are no predicted in-combination effects given that it is predicted that the Proposed Development will have no effect on any European site.

Any new applications for the Proposed Development area will be assessed on a case by case basis *initially* by Westmeath County Council which will determine the requirement for AA Screening as per the requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.

5.3. Summary of Potential Impacts

Table 6 Outlining the potential impacts in the absence of mitigation of the Proposed Development.

Site	Potential Direct Impacts e.g. Habitat Loss	Potential Indirect Impacts e.g. alteration to hydrological regime	Surface or Groundwater Contamination	Disturbance to Protected Species (Habitats Directive Annex II & IV)	Stage 2 AA Required
000685 Lough Ennell SAC	No	No	No	No	No
000688 Lough Owel SAC	No	No	No	No	No
004044 Lough Ennell SPA	No	No	No	No	No
004047 Lough Owel SPA	No	No	No	No	No

6. Conclusion

There is no possibility for significant effects on any European sites through surface water pollution to arise as a result of the proposed development for the following reasons:

- The proposed bridge has been designed to be placed on supporting berms set back from the water course and will clear span the channel thus avoiding contact with the water course.
- There will be no instream works and no discharges to the River Brosna.
- The Contractor will prepare a Biosecurity Management Plan under guidance from an Ecologist with regard to the precautionary avoidance of accidental transfer of Crayfish Plague to the Brosna water course on site.
- Lough Ennell is located over 4 river km downstream of the proposed development site.
- There is therefore a water buffer separating the designated sites from the proposed development over which it is anticipated that any potential pollutants would be absorbed and diluted to an extent that they would not be perceptible at the designated sites.
- The proposed development design includes SuDS features that will address effects on surface water.

It has been objectively concluded by Moore Group Environmental Services that:

1. The Proposed Development is not directly connected with, or necessary to the conservation management of the European sites considered in this assessment.
2. The Proposed Development is unlikely to significantly affect the Qualifying interests or Conservation Objectives of the European sites considered in this assessment.
3. The Proposed Development, alone or in combination with other projects, is not likely to have significant effects on the European sites considered in this assessment in view of their conservation objectives.
4. It is possible to conclude that there would be no significant effects, no potentially significant effects and no uncertain effects if the Proposed Development were to proceed.

It can be *excluded*, on the basis of objective information, that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

It is the view of Moore Group Environmental Services that it is not necessary to undertake any further stage of the Appropriate Assessment process.

A finding of no significant effects report is presented in Appendix A in accordance with the EU Commission's methodological guidance (European Commission, 2001).

7. References

Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2010) Guidance on Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland (as amended February 2010).

European Commission (2000) Managing Natura 2000 sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC.

European Commission (2001) 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 92/43EEC. European Commission, Brussels.

European Commission (2018) Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC.

European Commission (2007) Guidance document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitats Directive '92/43/EEC: Clarification of the concepts of: alternative solutions, imperative reasons of overriding public interests, compensatory measures, overall coherence and opinion of the Commission. European Commission, Brussels.

European Commission (2018) Managing Natura 2000 sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC.

NPWS (2018) Conservation Objectives: Lough Owel SAC 000688. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

NPWS (2018) Conservation Objectives: Lough Ennell SAC 000685. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

NPWS (2019) The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin.

NPWS (2020) Conservation objectives for Lough Owel SPA [004047]. Generic Version 7.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

NPWS (2020) Conservation objectives for Lough Ennell SPA [004044]. Generic Version 7.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

NPWS (2021) National Parks and Wildlife Service Metadata available online at https://www.npws.ie/maps-and-data.

Appendix A

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS REPORT

Finding no significant effects report matrix

Name of project or plan

Canal Ave. Friars Mill Rd. Residential Development

Name and location of the Natura 2000 site(s)

The Proposed Development is located is located within the suburban environment of Mullingar. The River Brosna connects Lough Owel to the north and Lough Ennell to the south of Mullingar and wastewater is treated at Mullingar WWTP.

Lough Owel is located c. 3.6 km to the northwest of the Proposed Development site. The River Brosna can be traced north from the Proposed Development Site where it is culverted under the Royal Canal and on to the vicinity of Mullingar Town AFC pitches where it splits with one branch leading to Lough Sheever c. 2km upstream and Slevin's Lough a further 2km upstream. The other branch leads to St. Bridget's Well beside the former IFI Cullion Fish Farm where it is interconnected with the Royal Canal Feeder and on to Lough Owel which is designated as the Lough Owel SAC (Site code 000688) and the Lough Owel SPA (Site code 004047).

Lough Ennell located c. 4.5 river km to the south is designated as the Lough Ennell SAC (Site code 000685) and the Lough Ennell SPA (Site code 004044).

There is no connectivity any other European sites.

Description of the project or plan

The Proposed Development comprises a proposed residential development at Canal Ave. & Friars Mill Rd., Mullingar, Co. Westmeath. The proposed development will include the placement of a precast concrete bridge over the narrow channel of the River Brosna at the entrance to the site. The bridge has been designed to be placed on supporting berms set back from the water course and will clear span the channel thus avoiding contact with the water course.

The proposed development is to be connected to existing Irish Water sewers for both surface water and foul water which will be appropriately treated at Mullingar WWTP.

All surface water runoff from the proposed development is to be collected and discharge treated to facilitate attenuated flows to the public surface water drainage network.

The proposed surface water drainage network is to be carefully designed to minimise the risk of blockage throughout the network, mainly through the following;

1. Sustainable Drainage Systems shall be provided in all paved and parking areas with an adequate sub-base that will limit and restrict the size of pollutants entering the network. The engineered proposal will reduce the risk of localised flooding and downstream flooding, recharge the groundwater table and trap pollutants and prevent them from being carried into the River Brosna/Canal. This sustainable drainage proposal will facilitate biological decomposition of trapped pollutants and have a flexible impermeable base liner under parking areas preventing fuel contaminants from entering the soil. This sustainable solution will be used to reduce the size of the required on-site attenuation.

2. Trapped road gullies

On impermeable tarmac/concrete surfaces, all road gullies serving the proposed development are to be trapped, to help prevent sediment and gross pollutants from entering the surface water network, and thus improving the water quality discharging from site.

3. Silt trap manholes

All manholes upstream of the proposed attenuation systems are to contain a 600mm sump, below invert level of outlet pipe, in order to trap sediment and other gross pollutants, and prevent from entering the downstream watercourse; thus improving the water quality discharging from site.

4. Flow Control Device

Flow Control devices are to be provided immediately downstream of attenuation systems, in order to restrict the surface water discharge from site to a flow rate equivalent, or below, the natural greenfield runoff rate.

The proposed surface water network already provides sufficient measures, through the provisions listed previously (principally trapped road gullies, silt trap manholes and an engineered gravel filtration sub-base under all permeable paved areas to trap potentially harmful pollutants).

These Sustainable Drainage System design features are included in order to ensure that uncontaminated surface water is discharged to the Brosna system in support of sustainable development with regard to the River Brosna locally.

There will be no instream works and the Contractor will prepare a Biosecurity Management Plan under guidance from an Ecologist with regard to the precautionary avoidance of accide4ntal transfer of Crayfish Plague to the Brosna water course on site.

The plan will include general good housekeeping to prevent interaction between the site equipment and the Brosna water course.

Is the project or plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site(s)

No

Are there other projects or plans that together with the projects or plan being assessed could affect the site

A review of the National Planning Application Database was undertaken. The first stage of this review confirmed that there were no data outages in the area where the Proposed Development is located. The database was then queried for developments granted planning permission within 100m of the Proposed Development within the last three years, these are presented in the Table below.

Planning Ref.	Description of development	Comments
166296	amendments to existing post office shopfront to provide a new glazed entrance lobby with illuminated signage	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
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176165	demolition of existing corridor and associated lobbies at first floor level and second floor. Construction of replacement glazed link corridor, platform lift and 3 no. new stairs serving the first and second floor level (33 sqm) and new roof garden (76 sqm) at first floor level. Internal alterations to amalgamate separate office rooms	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.

Planning Ref.	Description of development	Comments
176241	installation of a 3m high "lamp post" style relief vent stack servicing the existing below ground natural gas pressure reduction unit with all ancillary services and associated site works.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
176345	construction of a new single and two storey extension to the rear and side of the existing house, minor internal alterations and renovations and all associated site works and services.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
176365	Change of use of existing ground floor nightclub area to retail use with access from Castle Street and Spoutwell Lane, (2) Amalgamation of existing retail unit into proposed retail unit, (3) Alterations to existing front elevation facing onto Castle Street, (4) Demolish existing 1st and 2nd floor offices while retaining front façade wall facing onto castle street, (5) construct new first floor extension to be used as a sit down restaurant to include kitchen, toilet, storage and staff area and provision for ventilation stack to the rear. (6) change of use of existing 1st floor nightclub area to storage, office and staff area to be used in conjunction with proposed ground floor retail unit and all associated site works	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
186056	to construct a first floor rear extension (24.6 msq) to existing dwelling	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
186062	change of use from retail use to coffee shop use, the erection of new signage consisting of individually mounted lettering, the installation of downlights externally	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
186153	demolish existing two storey extension to the rear of our existing dwelling and to construct a new two storey extension at rear	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
186166	to Construct a 142sqm single store extension at the south eastern side of the existing school	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
186313	single storey building comprising of two changing rooms with showers, toilets and store room and all associated site works	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
186314	to construct a two storey rear to existing dwelling including internal changes to layout	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
186386	new single storey extension to side and rear of existing dental practice	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.

Planning Ref.	Description of development	Comments
196038	retain the rear first floor bedroom space consisting of 29sqm together with domestic garage of 40sqm	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
196254	repairing and decorating plywood fascia and fitting conservation logo pod, all illuminated by new trough lighting.	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
196324	change of use from existing retail unit to two number residential town houses. Alter the existing street façade window and door design and for the removal of all signage. Demolish the existing two storey structure located at the rear to allow space for a proposed single storey extension and rear private green area and together with permission connect to all existing site services and all associated site works	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
206011	Change of use from retail use to Healthcare use of the former post office (area A 116sqm) and part of the existing Pharmacy premises (area B 24sqm). The proposed development comprises of Internal alterations to provide level access entrance corridor, reception, waiting area, consultation rooms, WC's, Minor external alterations to the entrance of the former Post Office to provide a separate entrance door to the consultation rooms, All associated site works	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.
206025	to extend existing dwelling at rear to include two storey extension with dining room on ground floor and bedroom on first floor and to demolish existing side extension and construct a new side extension to include a utility and playroom with all ancillary site works	No potential for in-combination effects given the scale and location of the project.

These developments are of a relatively small scale, e.g. structural alterations and extensions to existing buildings and do not present potential for in-combination effects.

The Westmeath County Development Plan in complying with the requirements of the Habitats Directive requires that all Projects and Plans that could affect the Natura 2000 sites in the same zone of impact of the Proposed Development site would be initially screened for Appropriate Assessment and if requiring Stage 2 AA, that appropriate employable mitigation measures would be put in place to avoid, reduce or ameliorate negative impacts. In this way any, in-combination impacts with Plans or Projects for the development area and surrounding townlands in which the development site is located, would be avoided.

The listed developments have been granted permission in most cases with conditions relating to sustainable development by the consenting authority in compliance with the relevant Local Authority Development Plan and in compliance with the Local Authority requirement for regard to the Habitats Directive. The development cannot have received planning permission without having met the consenting authority requirement in this regard. There are no predicted in-combination effects given that it is predicted that the Proposed Development will have no effect on any European site.

Any new applications for the Proposed Development area will be assessed on a case by case basis *initially* by Westmeath County Council which will determine the requirement for AA Screening as per the requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.

THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS

Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site.

There will be no direct impacts on Lough Ennell and there will be no habitat loss or fragmentation as a result of the Proposed Development.

Having considered direct impacts and ruling them out, indirect impacts are then considered.

A worst-case scenario may be considered whereby the Proposed Development would be the source of a significant detrimental change in water quality in the River Brosna and/or Lough Ennell either alone or in combination with other projects or plans as a result of indirect pollution. The effect would have to be considered in terms of changes in surface water quality which would affect the species and/or habitats or food sources for which Lough Owel and Lough Ennell are designated. However, this is unlikely.

There is some potential for contaminants arising from the construction phase of the proposed development to enter the downstream receiving environment via the existing surface water drainage network.

Explain why these effects are not considered significant.

There is no possibility for significant effects on any European sites through surface water pollution to arise as a result of the proposed development for the following reasons:

The proposed bridge has been designed to be placed on supporting berms set back from the water course and will clear span the channel thus avoiding contact with the water course.

There will be no instream works and no discharges to the River Brosna.

The Contractor will prepare a Biosecurity Management Plan under guidance from an Ecologist with regard to the precautionary avoidance of accidental transfer of Crayfish Plague to the Brosna water course on site.

Lough Ennell is located over 4 river km downstream of the proposed development site.

There is therefore a water buffer separating the designated sites from the proposed development over which it is anticipated that any potential pollutants would be absorbed and diluted to an extent that they would not be perceptible at the designated sites.

The proposed development design includes SuDS features that will address effects on surface water.

The presence of Japanese Knotweed on site has been identified by Westmeath County Council and a management plan for treatment will be prepared to ensure no spreading of this invasive species.

Having considered the above, it is evident that potential adverse effects on the Lough Owel SAC/SPA or the Lough Ennell SAC/SPA are unlikely and significant effects on any European sites as a result of the Proposed Development are ruled out.

List of agencies consulted: provide contact name and telephone or e-mail address

The requirement for Appropriate Assessment Screening was determined by Westmeath County Council.

Response to

N/A.

DATA COLLECTED TO CARRY OUT THE ASSESSMENT

Who carried out the assessment

Moore Group Environmental Services.

Sources of data

NPWS database of designated sites at www.npws.ie

National Biodiversity Data Centre database http://maps.biodiversityireland.ie

Level of assessment completed

Desktop Assessment supported by Habitat Assessment

Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed

Westmeath County Council Planning Section.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

There is no possibility for significant effects on any European sites through surface water pollution to arise as a result of the proposed development for the following reasons:

- The proposed bridge has been designed to be placed on supporting berms set back from the water course and will clear span the channel thus avoiding contact with the water course.
- There will be no instream works and no discharges to the River Brosna.
- The Contractor will prepare a Biosecurity Management Plan under guidance from an Ecologist with regard to the precautionary avoidance of accidental transfer of Crayfish Plague to the Brosna water course on site.
- Lough Ennell is located over 4 river km downstream of the proposed development site.
- There is therefore a water buffer separating the designated sites from the proposed development over which it is anticipated that any potential pollutants would be absorbed and diluted to an extent that they would not be perceptible at the designated sites.
- The proposed development design includes SuDS features that will address effects on surface water.

It has been objectively concluded by Moore Group Environmental Services that:

1. The Proposed Development is not directly connected with, or necessary to the conservation management of the European sites considered in this assessment.
2. The Proposed Development is unlikely to significantly affect the Qualifying interests or Conservation Objectives of the European sites considered in this assessment.
3. The Proposed Development, alone or in combination with other projects, is not likely to have significant effects on the European sites considered in this assessment in view of their conservation objectives.
4. It is possible to conclude that there would be no significant effects, no potentially significant effects and no uncertain effects if the Proposed Development were to proceed.

It can be *excluded*, on the basis of objective information, that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

It is the view of Moore Group Environmental Services that it is not necessary to undertake any further stage of the Appropriate Assessment process.