Article 6(3) Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

Carrick-on-Shannon, Public Realm Improvement Scheme, Co. Leitrim
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

McCarthy Keville O’Sullivan Ltd. (MKO) has been appointed to provide the information necessary to allow the competent authority to conduct an Article 6(3) Screening for Appropriate Assessment of the proposed Public Realm Improvement Scheme in Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim.

The current project is not directly connected with, or necessary for, the management of any European Site, consequently the project has been subject to the Appropriate Assessment Screening process.

The assessment in this report is based on a desk study and field surveys undertaken in 2018. It specifically assesses the potential for the proposed development to impact on European sites.


In addition to the guidelines referenced above, the following relevant guidance was considered in preparation of this report:


1.2 Appropriate Assessment

1.2.1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment

Screening is the process of determining whether an Appropriate Assessment is required for a plan or project. Under Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, screening must be carried out by the Competent Authority to
assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if a land-use plan or proposed development, individually or in combination with another plan or project, is likely to have a significant effect on a European site. The Competent Authority’s determination as to whether an Appropriate Assessment is required must be made on the basis of objective information and should be recorded. The competent authority may request information to be supplied to enable it to carry out screening.

Consultants or project proponents may undertake a form of screening to establish if an Appropriate Assessment is required and provide advice or may submit the information necessary to allow the Competent Authority to conduct a screening with an application for consent. Where it cannot be excluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt, that a proposed plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, would have a significant effect on the conservation objectives of a European site, an Appropriate Assessment (Natura Impact Statement (NIS)) of the plan or project is required.

1.2.2 Appropriate Assessment (Natura Impact Statement)

The term Natura Impact Statement (NIS) is defined in legislation\(^1\). An NIS, where required, should present the data, information and analysis necessary to reach a definitive determination as to 1) the implications of the plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, for a European site in view of its conservation objectives, and 2) whether there will be adverse effects on the integrity of a European site. The NIS should be underpinned by best scientific knowledge, objective information and by the precautionary principle.

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\(^1\) As defined in Section 177T of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended, an NIS means a statement, for the purposes of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, of the implications of a proposed development, on its own and in combination with other plans and projects, for a European site in view of its conservation objectives. It is required to include a report of a scientific examination of evidence and data, carried out by competent persons to identify and classify any implications for the European site in view of its conservation objectives.
2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

2.1 Site Location

As part of the proposed improvement scheme for the town of Carrick-on-Shannon, a number of upgrade works are proposed for the town’s existing infrastructure. A layout of the overall Public Realm Improvement Scheme for Carrick-on-Shannon is provided in Figure 2.1. Some of the locations shown on this drawing are indicative of potential future proposals and are not part of the current Part VIII planning application. For clarification purposes, a layout of the proposed works included in the current Part VIII planning application is provided as Figure 2.2 as shown in Appendix I of this report.

More detail on the works proposed at each location as provided in the overall improvement scheme for Carrick-on-Shannon is provided in Section 2.2 and listed below:

- A1: Main Street West and Church Lane
- A2: Flynn’s Field
- B: Main Street East
- C1 – C3: Marina Boardwalk and Boatyards
- D: St. George’s Terrace and Market Square
- E and E1: The Bridge and Boardwalk Lighting
- F and G: Future Housing Projects

Location C2-C3 on Figure 2.1 relates to potential future developments at the commercial boatyard and F and G relate to potential future housing developments. All such developments at these locations will be subject to their own Article 6(3) screening assessment should developments go ahead. Location E and E1 relating to lighting upgrades on the bridge and boardwalk have also been assessed though these are not part of the current Part VIII planning application.

2.2 Characteristics of Proposed Development

The following paragraphs provide a brief description of the works proposed (current and future proposals) at each location as shown on Figure 2.1.

A1: Main Street West and Church Lane

The project begins along the length of the Main Street and will seek to improve conditions for pedestrians by widening footpaths and reducing on street car parking places. Church Lane will become a stop-off public space along this route, developed in the same materials as the main axis. The proposed works along this street include the narrowing of the road to facilitate a single lane of traffic, widening of the footpath to approximately 2m sharing a level surface with the road, creation of pedestrian crossings and selected tree planting in places.

A2: Flynn’s Field

The redevelopment of this back land site will provide significant off-street parking potential [105 no. spaces proposed] close to the heart of the town centre. It also provides opportunities for a multi-functional public space for concerts or festivals etc. It is the intention that the car park will be accessed through to Main Street via the Archway Apartments. A flood risk assessment was carried out in relation to Flynn’s Field and is summarised in the paragraphs below.
Figure 2.1
Flood Risk Assessment
A flood risk assessment report has been prepared by Jacobs Engineering and is submitted as a separate report as part of this application. The findings of this report are summarised in the following paragraph.

The OPW Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Study has assessed flood risk along the River Shannon. According to the CFRAM mapping presented in the Flood Risk Assessment report the site of the proposed new car park at Flynn’s Field is located within an area at risk of flooding in a 0.1% AEP [1 in 1000 year] fluvial event. The site is not at risk from flooding for the 1% AEP [1 in 100] fluvial event. Potential for groundwater flooding at the site has also been assessed. It is proposed to elevate the site by approximately 1.2m from the existing ground levels to tie in with the adjacent Primary Care Centre to the south. As a result, potential flooding due to groundwater at the newly constructed site is concluded to below.

The proposed new car park development will result in the creation of a large impermeable surface area. The proposed development includes the indicative design of a new runoff attenuation tank (210m³) to maintain existing runoff rates from the site. Flows from the drainage network will discharge into the local storm sewer.

The design of the car park to elevate it above the 0.1% AEP flood level means it will be located in Flood Zone C and at a low risk of flooding. The risk of fluvial flooding will increase to moderate (Flood Zone B) due to future climate change and will result in the site being at risk for the 0.1% AEP flood in the future. The designation of the site as a ‘less vulnerable development’ in the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities means that this can be accepted, as the proposed car park will still be located in the appropriate flood zone (Flood Zone B, moderate risk).

B: Main Street East
The logical next step is the extension of the public realm improvements towards the entrance end of the town, encompassing arrival points from the Dublin and Leitrim roads which could benefit from some improvement. This will include works similar to those proposed for Main Street West and Church Lane as described above.

C1 – C3: Marina Boardwalk and Boatyards
Carrick-on-Shannon is traditionally a river-edge town, an important point of landfall along the Shannon artery. This part of the project addresses the river edge with a proposal for a new floating public boardwalk with better links to the river edge and town centre. It is proposed to remove the existing walkway at this location and create a new floating boardwalk approximately 2.5m wide. The new walkway will comprise continuous concrete units fixed to piles on the shore side of the marina [see Figure 2.3].

Potential future proposals at the marina include development of the existing commercial boatyards. Should these works be carried out, these will be subject to a separate Article 6(3) screening assessment.

D: St. George’s Terrace and Market Square
It is proposed to extend the public realm further west to include Carrick’s Georgian quarter which lends itself to a shared surface treatment. This will include its junction with Bridge St. and Main St. and Market Square, containing the town clock. The road
Existing Marina berths to be retained

New 2.5m wide Floating Boardwalk of Continuous Concrete Units fixed to shore side support piles

New Landing Pontoons & 10m Gangways

Restricted access beyond proposed gates

Existing Marina berths to be retained

Indicative piling locations as shown (e.g. shore side support for new boardwalk)

Restricted access beyond proposed gates

Existing Marina berths to be retained

Existing Marina berths to be retained

Existing Walkway to be removed

New 2.5m wide Floating Boardwalk of Continuous Concrete Units fixed to shore side support piles

Connection location to existing public car park

New Landing Pontoons & 10m Gangways

Figure 2.3

General Notes:
This is a computer generated map, produced under licence from
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Licence No: 2010/16 CCMA Leitrim.
will be narrowed, car parking spaces removed, footpath widened to 2m comprising a shared surface with the road and selected tree planting added in places.

**E and E1: The Bridge and Boardwalk Lighting**
This proposal will improve the town’s visibility at night time from the river while highlighting the town’s key piece of historic infrastructure - its mid-nineteenth century arched bridge. A pedestrian walkway adjoins the main bridge leading into Carrick-on-Shannon. This walkway has lighting on the edge of the footbridge to allow safe pedestrian access. The main stone bridge itself is already lit on the sides of bridge wall between the arches. These lights comprise an upward facing shield which directs light up onto the pedestrian walkway above it. It is proposed to upgrade these lights so that the walkway is more visible and safer for people accessing the town.

There is similarly already lighting on the aisle of the walkway of the boardwalk opposite the Landmark Hotel. These lights have been rendered inoperable following a flooding event and it is proposed to replace these with lights attached to the handrails.

**F and G: Future Housing Projects**
The future housing projects marked as F and G on the layout drawing will be subject to their own Article 6[3] screening assessment should development plans go ahead at these locations.

**Site Setup and Clearance**
- A site compound shall be established in Flynn’s Field at the site of the proposed new car park and another in the boatyard adjacent to the marina. The compounds will be clearly fenced and kept tidy throughout the proposed works.
- A pre-commencement survey of Bohemian Knotweed at Flynn’s Field will be carried out and all stands of Knotweed including a 7m buffer from the plant fenced off. No works will take place within this 7m Knotweed buffer until a site-specific management plan has been prepared.
- Trees felled at Flynn’s Field will be done so outside of the bird breeding season [March 1st – August 31st] in line with the Wildlife Act 1976/2017. If trees are felled during this period they will be subject to a pre-commencement survey carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist to account for nesting birds potentially using the site.
- Areas along the main street where works are proposed will be blocked off to the public and adequately signed to ensure public safety.
- Any surface water run-off created during construction will be pumped to the existing drainage network.

**Boardwalk Construction**
- A site compound will be set up within the existing boatyard. The compound will be clearly fenced and kept tidy throughout the proposed works.
- A new landing pontoon and 10m gangway will be constructed opposite each of the existing marina berths. Gates will be installed at the marina berths to prevent public access at these locations.
- The existing steel piles at the marina boardwalk will be replaced. This will be done with a machine working either from the adjacent boatyard hard standing area of from a floating pontoon within the River Shannon.
- The new boardwalk will be constructed immediately adjacent to the existing walkway within the confines of the existing marina infrastructure and the existing walkway will be removed.
- All waste will be temporarily stored within the site compound or immediately
removed off site to a licensed waste facility.

**Flynn’s Field - Car Park**
- The construction site of the proposed new car park will be adequately secured using heras panels to prevent public access during construction works.
- Waters encountered during excavation activities will be pumped to the existing drainage network.
- Form work will be constructed with an adequate capacity and additional freeboard to prevent any spillage.
- The weather forecast will be checked prior to the pouring of the concrete and no such works will be undertaken when bad weather is forecast. Concrete will not be poured at times when rain is predicted as this may lead to run off and over spillage of the form work.
- If chutes of concrete truck require wash out, this will be undertaken at a designated wash out tank located in the site compound. Washings will be collected and tankered off site to a designated waste facility.

In addition to the above, the following environmental best practice measures will be followed when carrying out the proposed construction activities:

### 2.2.1 Hydrocarbons and Waste Material
- During the construction phase, spill kits and other appropriate equipment will be available on-site at all times.
- All construction vehicles will be regularly checked and maintained prior to arrival at the site to prevent hydrocarbon leakage.
- Hoses and valves will be checked regularly for signs of wear and will be closed and securely locked when not in use.
- 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.
- Vehicles will never be left unattended during refuelling.
- Mobile storage such as fuel bowers will be bunded to 110% capacity to prevent spills. Tanks for bowers and generators shall be double skinned. When not in use, all valves and fuel trigger guns from fuel storage containers will be locked. All pumps using fuel or containing oil will be locally and securely bunded where there is the possibility of discharge to waters.
- All plant refuelling will take place using mobile fuel bowers. Only dedicated trained and competent personnel will carry out refuelling operations. The plant refuelling procedures shall be detailed in the contractor’s method statements.
- Waste oils and hydraulic fluids will be collected in leak-proof containers and removed from the site for disposal or recycling.

### 2.2.2 Noise Control and Timing of Works
- All plant and equipment for use will comply with Statutory Instrument No 359 of 1996 “European Communities (Construction Plant and Equipment) (Permissible Noise Levels) Regulations 1996”.
- Plant machinery will be turned off when not in use.
- Operating machinery will be restricted to the proposed development site boundary.
- Work will be completed during daylight hours. No artificial lighting will be utilised to illuminate the works area.
2.2.3 Biosecurity
Regulations 49 and 50 of the European Communities [Birds and Natural Habitats] Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011) include legislative measures to deal with the dispersal and introduction of invasive alien species:

**Regulation 49**
’a person shall be guilty of an offence if they: plant; disperse; allow or cause to disperse; spread or cause to grow the plant in the Republic of Ireland’. The list of species in the Third Schedule includes Japanese Knotweed, Giant Knotweed and their hybrid Bohemian Knotweed.

**Regulation 50**
’an offence to or intend to; import; buy; sell; breed; reproduce or propagate; offer or expose for sale; advertise; publish a price list; transport; and distribute any plant species or vector material listed in the Third Schedule’.

Bohemian Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica x bohemica*) was recorded to the north east corner of Flynn’s Field where the new car park is proposed. Bohemian Knotweed is listed on the Third Schedule of the European Communities [Birds and Natural Habitats] Regulations (S.I. 477 of 2011).

The following will be adhered to in order to avoid the spread of invasive species within or outside the proposed development site.

- No works will take place within 7m of a stand of Bohemian Knotweed until a site-specific management plan has been prepared.
- Any material required on the site will be sourced from a stock that has been screened for the presence of any invasive species by a suitably qualified ecologist and where it is confirmed that none are present.
- All machinery will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected prior to arrival and departure from the site to prevent the spread of invasive species.

**Aquatic**
Bio-security in relation to works near the River Shannon will include the following:
- Thorough cleaning and disinfection of all machinery prior to arrival and departure from the site with Virkon biocide 1% solution (details of suppliers will be available through Waterways Ireland) will be carried out to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species.

2.2.4 Environmental Monitoring
The construction works will be monitored at several levels to ensure that the environmental best practice prescribed in this document is fully adhered to and is effective. The following system will be put in place to ensure compliance.

- Highest standards of site management will be maintained and utmost care and vigilance followed to prevent accidental contamination or unnecessary disturbance to the site and surrounding environment during construction. A named person will be given the task of overseeing the pollution prevention measures agreed for the site to ensure that they are operating safely and effectively. Any environmental incidents or non-compliance issues will immediately be reported to the project team.
- The project managers (client representatives) will be continuously monitoring the works and will be fully briefed and aware of the environmental constraints and protection measures to be employed.
General
All work completed should be in compliance with the Wildlife Acts, 1976 - 2017. IFI will be consulted prior to the beginning of instream works at the boardwalk and proceed only with their approval.

2.3 Characteristics of the Existing Environment

A dedicated habitat surveys of the area within and in the vicinity of the proposed works was undertaken on the 9th of November 2018. The habitat classifications and codes correspond to those described in ‘A Guide to Habitats in Ireland’ (Fossitt, 2000).

The River Shannon which flows through the town was categorized as Depositing/lowland river (FW2). The existing private dock which is currently used by two commercial boating companies comprises a tarmac surface categorized as Buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3) that is in a state of disrepair. Adjacent to the dock is a margin of Reed and large sedge swamp (FS1). Species within this habitat included Canary reed-grass (Phalaris arundinacea), Branched bur-reed (Sparganium erectum) and Floating sweet-grass (Glyceria fluitans). Immediately next to this was a Hedgerow (WL1) dominated by Willow (Salix spp.) and Dogwood (Cornus sanguinea) (Plate 4.1). The area within the boatyard at this location comprises Recolonising bare ground (ED3) with adjoining areas categorized as Flower beds and borders (BC4) and Amenity grassland (GA2) (Plate 4.2).

Plate 4.1 Depositing/lowland river (FW2), Reed and large sedge swamp (FS1) and Hedgerow (WL1) looking from the existing dock towards the town centre.
Where works are proposed within the town centre, these areas largely comprised **Buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3)** [Plate 4.3]. The location of the new car park is within an area of disturbed ground categorized as **Recolonising bare ground (ED3)** with **Dry meadow and grassy verge (GS2)** margins. The eastern boundary of this site is demarcated by **Tree line (WL2)** comprising Cypress (Cupressaceae spp.) and there are occasional individual trees of Ash (Fraxinus excelsior) and Sycamore (Acer pseudoplatanus) within the site [Plate 4.4]. Grassland species at this location included Crested Dog’s-tail (Cynosurus cristatus), Knapweed (Centurea nigra), Clover (Trifolium spp.), Creeping Thistle (Cirsium arvense), Dandelion (Taraxacum officinale agg.), Creeping Buttercup (Ranunculus repens), Ribwort Plantain (Plantago lanceolata), Bramble (Rubus fruticosus agg.) and Knapweed (Centurea nigra).

Three stands of Third Schedule invasive species Bohemian Knotweed (Fallopia japonicus x bohemica) were recorded to the north eastern boundary of the proposed car park site. The location of these are shown in Plate 4.5 and Figure 4.2. Legislation governing this plant is detailed in Section 2.3.3. of this report. No works will take place within 7m of this stand of Knotweed prior to the preparation of a site-specific management plan in order to avoid the illegal spread of this species.

The Bridge (location E) is categorized as **Stone walls and other stone work (BL1)** [Plate 4.6]. The boardwalk (location E1) comprises a steel framed walkway with wooden boardwalk categorized as **Buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3)** [Plate 4.7].
Plate 4.3 Main Street comprising Built Land and Artificial Surfaces (BL3) and occasional Flower Beds and Borders (BC4).

Plate 4.4 Site of proposed car park showing Treeline (WL2) along the eastern boundary, Recolonising bare ground (ED3) to the centre along with areas of Dry meadows and grassy verge (GS2) and Scrub (WS1).
Plate 4.5. Bohemian Knotweed (*Fallopia japonicus x bohemica*) recorded to the north east corner of the proposed new car park site (see also Figure 4.2).

Plate 4.6. Bridge over the River Shannon leading into the town categorised as *Stone Walls and Other Stone Work* [BL1]
2.3.1 Significance of Habitats

The habitats within and adjacent to the development site were evaluated in accordance with the criteria developed by the National Roads Authority (NRA) —outlined in *Guidelines for Assessment of Ecological Impacts of National Road Schemes* (NRA, 2009) which classifies sites in terms of their ecological importance, i.e. International Importance, National Importance, County Importance, Local Importance (Higher Value) or Local Importance (Lower Value). The evaluation methodology also took cognisance of the geological context evaluation criteria outlined in Chapter 4 of CIEEM 2016.

The majority of habitats within the proposed public realm improvement scheme comprise typical examples of urban infrastructure. These areas categorised as **Buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3)** such as roads, footpaths and boardwalks, were assigned **Local Importance (Lower Value)** as they did not provide significant ecological habitat for flora or fauna.

The **Reed and large sedge swamp (FS1), Hedgerow (WL1), Flowerbeds and Borders (BC4), Recolonising Bare Ground (ED3), Amenity grassland (GA2)** and **Dry Meadows and Grassy Verges (GS2)**. These habitats were assigned **Local Importance (Lower value)** due to their low ecological significance in this urban town setting.

The River Shannon categorised as **Depositing/lowland River (FW2)** occurs adjacent to the proposed improvement scheme works. Locations E, E1 and C1 – C3 associated with the existing, bridge, boardwalk and jetty infrastructure are the areas located in closest proximity to the river. The River Shannon at its location in Carrick-on-Shannon is not designated under any European site. The river was assigned **County Importance** due to its potential to support regularly occurring protected species and its nature as an area of high amenity. The river provides potential habitat for a number of aquatic species and provides a potential pathway for such species to migrate up and down the river system.
2.3.2 Fauna

2.3.2.1 Mammals
No evidence of otter, badger or additional protected species was recorded during the site visit. However, the River Shannon provides suitable foraging and commuting habitat for otter.

2.3.2.2 Birds
During the site visit the following species were recorded in the surrounding area: Robin (Erithacus rubecula), Blackbird (Turdus merula) and Rook (Corvus frugilegus).

2.3.2.3 Fisheries
No suitable spawning habitat for salmonids was recorded, however the river is a potential commuting corridor for salmonids and eels as well as coarse fish.

2.3.3 Significance of Fauna
The majority of the proposed works are located in areas that are urban in nature and offer little significant habitat for fauna. Although the river provides high quality faunal habitat for aquatic species such as Otter, Salmon, Coarse Fish and Eel, the proposed works on the river’s edge are located within an existing marina environment.

Typical urban environment species, Robin (Erithacus rubecula), Blackbird (Turdus merula) and Rook (Corvus frugilegus) are not protected under the EU Habitats Directive and are green-listed in Ireland.

No evidence of faunal populations of ecological significance were recorded.
3 IDENTIFICATION OF RELEVANT EUROPEAN SITES

3.1 Background to European Sites

The Habitats Directive [92/43/EEC] (together with the Birds Directive [2009/147/EC]) forms the cornerstone of Europe’s nature conservation policy. It is built around two pillars: the Natura 2000 network of protected sites and the strict system of species protection. All in all, the Directive protects over 1,000 animal and plant species and over 200 “habitat types” (e.g. special types of forests, meadows, wetlands, etc.), which are of European importance.

With the introduction of the EU Habitats Directive and Birds Directive which were transposed into Irish law as S.I. No. 94/1997 European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997, the European Union formally recognised the significance of protecting rare and endangered species of flora and fauna, and also, more importantly, their habitats. The 1997 Regulations and their amendments were subsequently revised and consolidated in S.I. No. 477/2011- European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011. This legislation requires the establishment and conservation of a network of sites of particular conservation value that are to be termed ‘European Sites’.

Habitats Directive/Special Areas of Conservation

Articles 3 – 9 of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) provide the EU legislative framework of protecting rare and endangered species of flora and fauna, and habitats. Annex I of the Directive lists habitat types whose conservation requires the designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). Priority habitats, such as Turloughs, which are in danger of disappearing within the EU territory are also listed in Annex I. Annex II of the Directive lists animal and plant species (e.g. Marsh Fritillary, Atlantic Salmon, and Killarney Fern) whose conservation also requires the designation of SACs.

Birds Directive/Special Protection Areas

Council Directive 79/409/EEC of 2 April 1979 on the conservation of wild birds (Birds Directive) has been substantially amended several times. In the interests of clarity and rationality the said Directive was codified in 2009 and is now cited as Directive 2009/147/EC. The Directive instructs Member States to take measures to maintain populations of all bird species naturally occurring in the wild state in the EU (Article 2). Such measures may include the maintenance and/or re-establishment of habitats in order to sustain these bird populations (Article 3).

A subset of bird species have been identified in the Directive and are listed in Annex I as requiring special conservation measures in relation to their habitats. These species have been listed on account of inter alia: their risk of extinction; vulnerability to specific changes in their habitat; and/or due to their relatively small population size or restricted distribution. Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are to be identified and classified for these Annex I listed species and for regularly occurring migratory species, paying particular attention to the protection of wetlands (Article 4).
3.2 Identification of European Sites within the Likely Zone of Impact of the Proposed Development

The most up to date GIS spatial datasets for Surface Water Catchments and European designated sites were downloaded from the EPA website (www.epa.ie) and NPWS website (www.npws.ie), respectively, on the 26/11/2018. Using the GIS software, MapInfo (Version 10.0), European Sites within the likely zone of impact of the project were identified along with any potential surface water connectivity. The following rationale was used to identify the zone of impact. Initially, sites within a 15km radius of the proposed development were identified (as per the DoEHLG Guidance [2010]). In addition, using the precautionary principle, European Sites located outside the 15km buffer zone were also taken into account and assessed. In this case, no pathway for effects on any site that is further than 15km from the site was identified.

No European sites were recorded within 15km of the proposed works as shown in Figure 3.1. The River Shannon provides hydrological connectivity with a number of European sites downstream. The two European sites with the nearest hydrological proximity are Lough Forbes Complex SAC (001818), and Ballykenny-Fishertown SPA (004101) located approximately 32.8km hydrological distance from the proposed works. The potential for any effect on European Sites that are further down the catchment was excluded based on the nature and scale of the works and the distance and attenuation offered by the River Shannon and lakes that occur downstream.

Table 3.1 assesses the nearest European sites with potential to be within the Likely Zone Impact and provides details on the Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interest species for which these sites have been designated. In addition, the conservation objectives for each of these sites was also accessed on the NPWS database on the 26/11/2018 and taken into consideration during the preparation of this report. The site synopsis and conservation objectives of these sites, as per the NPWS website (www.npws.ie), were considered at the time of preparation of this report (26/11/2018). Details of these sites, including their distance from the proposed development, are provided in Table 3.1.

Figure 3.1 shows the location of the proposed development in relation to all European sites as identified according to the criteria described above.
Figure 3.1 Designated Sites within 15km

Loughs SAC
Lough Arrow SAC
Lough Gara SPA
Callow Bog SAC
Lough Arrow SPA

Lough Forbes Complex SAC
Ballykenny-Fisherstown Bog SPA
Brown Bog SAC
Mullygollan Turlough SAC

Clooneen Bog SAC
Cloonshanville Bog SAC

Map Legend
- Special Area of Conservation
- Special Protection Area
- Site Location
- 15km Buffer

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<tr>
<td>Special Area of Conservation [SAC]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lough Forbes Complex SAC [001818]</td>
<td>▪ Natural eutrophic lakes with <em>Mnemopatemonor Hydrocharition</em> - type vegetation [3150]</td>
<td>Detailed conservation objectives for this site (Version 1, May 2018) were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at <a href="http://www.npws.ie">www.npws.ie</a></td>
<td>This European Site is located approximately 32.8km hydrologically downgradient of the proposed works. A potential pathway for effect was identified via the River Shannon, therefore, taking a precautionary approach, the site is considered to be within the Likely Zone of Impact of the proposed works.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance: 32.8km</td>
<td>▪ Active raised bogs [7110]</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120]</td>
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<td>▪ Depressions on peat substrates of the <em>Rhynchosporion</em> [7150]</td>
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<td></td>
<td>▪ Alluvial forests with <em>Alnus glutinosa</em> and <em>Fraxinus excelsior</em> (<em>Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicin albae</em>) [91E0]</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Protection Area [SPA]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ballykenny-Fishertown SPA [004101]</td>
<td>▪ Greenland White-fronted Goose (<em>Anser albifrons flavirostris</em>) [A395]</td>
<td>The generic conservation objective for this site is: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA (Version 6, February 2018).</td>
<td>This European Site is located approximately 32.8km hydrologically downgradient of the proposed works. A potential pathway for effect was identified via the River Shannon, therefore, taking a precautionary approach, the site is considered to be within the Likely Zone of Impact of the proposed works.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance: 32.8km</td>
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</table>
4 ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY EFFECTS ON EUROPEAN SITES

Any likely direct or indirect impacts of the proposed development, both alone and in combination with other plans and projects, on European Sites by virtue of the following criteria: size and scale, land-take, distance from the European Site or key features of the site, resource requirements, emissions, excavation requirements, transportation requirements and duration of construction, operation and decommissioning have been considered in this Screening Assessment.

4.1 Screening Assessment of European Sites within the Likely Zone of Impact of the Proposed Works

This section of the report provides the Screening Assessment with regard to each of the European Sites located within the Likely Zone of Impact. Lough Forbes Complex SAC [001818] and Ballykenny-Fishertown SPA [004101] were the only European sites considered to be within the Likely Zone of Impact.

Lough Forbes Complex SAC [001818] and Ballykenny-Fishertown SPA [004101] are located 32.8km hydrological distance from the proposed works. Taking a precautionary approach, a potential pathway for effect was identified via the River Shannon. The potential for sediment-laden surface water run-off resulting from the proposed works has been considered and is assessed below.

4.1.1 Potential for Effects Resulting from the Proposed Works

The majority of the proposed works will be restricted to the urban town centre of Carrick-on-Shannon and involve the modification of existing roads as outlined in Section 2.2. Works with regard to lighting will be small scale and do not have potential for significant effects on any European site. Two aspects of the proposed improvement scheme were assessed as having potential for significant effect and are assessed in more detail below.

Marina Boardwalk
The proposed works will take place within the existing marina associated with the currently operating commercial boatyards. All works will be conducted either from the hardstanding area of the boatyard or from a floating pontoon within the River Shannon. No works will take place in any of the adjacent habitats associated with the existing boardwalk. The nature and scale of the proposed works are such that any sediment that is released will be insignificant in the context of the normal functioning of the marina.

Flynn’s Field
Potential sediment-laden surface water run-off created during the construction of the car park at Flynn’s Field will be collected in the existing surface water drainage network. Consequently, there will be no potential for surface water to escape the site and enter the nearby River Shannon. Groundwaters encountered during excavation activities will similarly be pumped to the existing drainage network. Surface waters that result from the creation of the 4,440m² paved impermeable surface of the car park will be collected in a 210m³ attenuation tank that will be constructed beneath the new car park as described in Section 2.2 above. Consequently, there will be no potential for
sediment-laden surface water run-off during the construction or operation of the proposed development.

The size and scale of the River Shannon and its associated lakes is such that the distance from the proposed works, 32.8km (hydrological distance) and the resulting dilution factor will not result in any significant effect on Lough Forbes Complex SAC (001818). In addition, there is no potential for disturbance related impacts to the Special Conservation Interest Species of Ballykenny-Fishertown SPA (004101), Greenland White-fronted Goose, as the works will take place within the existing urban infrastructure of Carrick-on-Shannon.
5 ARTICLE 6(3) SCREENING STATEMENT AND CONCLUSIONS


5.1 Assessment of Significance of Effects

Is the project directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site?

The project is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of any European Site.

Cumulative Impact Assessment - Are there any other projects or plans that together with the project being assessed could affect the site?

The potential for the proposed development to contribute to a cumulative impact on European Sites was considered. The online planning system for Leitrim County Council was consulted on the 26/11/2018.

Some of the additional projects identified in the townland of Carrick-on-Shannon in the last 5 years include;

- Development of a Primary Care Centre to the south of Flynn’s Field (currently under construction adjacent to the site of the proposed new car park). The development will consist of a new 3-storey building comprising a medical centre, an out of office hours medical centre and retail pharmacy at ground floor level with primary health care facilities provided at ground, first and second floor levels. The development will also comprise of a new access roadway to connect the existing roadway to the new Centre; a landscaped car park providing 69 no. car park spaces; connections to public utility and drainage services, along with all other ancillary site services and alterations to existing drainage layout in lieu of development on 0.526ha site (PL Ref.: 15192)
- Permission to retain change of use of existing ground floor retail unit no 1 from retail to office. (PL Ref.: 1455)
- Permission for the 1) internal alterations in connection with accessibility and sanitary upgrade; 2) the installation of new lift and associated modifications to existing roofscape; 3) replacement of external windows and doors; 4) demolition of existing temporary building; 5) provision of additional off-street car parking; 6) provision of new signage; and 7) associated site works & services. (PL Ref.: 13235)
- Permission for the retention and continued use of the rear most area known as the external stage area, with retractable type canopy roof structure and bar, also the removal of conditions no’s 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 relating to noise and its monitoring as outlined in grant Plan Ref. P.13/175 consisting of existing and all associated site development. (PL Ref.: 1590)
• Permission for the change of use from existing dwelling house to medical practice, together with associated works including site development works, signage and new pedestrian gateway. [Pl. Ref.: 17176]

The Leitrim County Development Plan 2015 - 2021 was also reviewed and considered as part of this assessment.

The proposed works are located within the urban environment of Carrick-on-Shannon town centre. The works as proposed have been assessed in Section 4.1.1. and it has been concluded that due to the distance from any European site and the small-scale nature of the proposed works within the existing urban environment of Carrick-on-Shannon town centre, there will be no significant effects on any European sites within the likely zone of impact of the proposed works. Potential pathways for small scale effects on the surrounding environment have also been assessed. Due to the nature, scale and location of the proposed works as described in Section 2.2 it has been concluded that there will be no cumulative impact on any European sites as a result of the proposed works.

Describe how the project is likely to affect the European Site
• There will be no direct effect on the QIs of any European sites and no pathways for significant indirect effects were identified.
• The project as proposed will not significantly affect any European Sites.

5.2 Data Collected to Carry Out Assessment

In preparation of the assessment, the following sources were used to gather information:

• Review of NPWS Site Synopses, mapping and Conservation Objectives for the various European Sites within the Likely Zone of Impact and EPA maps.
• Review of OS maps and aerial photographs of the site of the proposed development.
• Review of relevant databases including National Biodiversity Ireland Database
• Review of other plans and projects within the area.
• Liaison with the project team in relation to the design of the development.
• Site visits conducted by Laoise Kelly [B. Sc. Env.] on 9th of November 2018.
• Report prepared by Laoise Kelly and reviewed by Pat Roberts [B Sc. MCIIEEM], McCarthy Keville O’Sullivan Ltd.

5.3 Overall Conclusions

The proposed development, by itself or in combination with other plans and projects, in light of best scientific knowledge in the field, will not, in view of the sites’ conservation objectives, have significant effects on any European Site.

There is no requirement for Appropriate Assessment.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


EC (2001) Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Articles 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC.


Habitats Directive [92/43/EEC].


NPWS Protected Site Synopses and maps available on http://www.npws.ie/en/ProtectedSites/

Appendix I

Proposed Development Layout - Part VIII