



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report ABP-312973-22

Development	Moone Bridge remediation works
Location	Moone, Co. Kildare
Local Authority	Kildare County Council
Type of Application	Application for approval made under Section 177(AE) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (local authority development requiring appropriate assessment)
Prescribed Bodies	Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport & Media
Observer(s)	Department of Environment, Climate & Communications
Date of Site Inspection	20 th September 2022
Inspector	Donal Donnelly

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1. Kildare County Council is seeking approval from An Bord Pleanála to undertake remediation works to Moone Bridge, which carries the L8102 local road over Timolin Stream between the villages of Moone and Timolin, Co. Kildare. Timolin Stream is a tributary of the River Greese and this river flows into the River Barrow at a point within the River Barrow and River Nore SAC (site code: 002162). This SAC is 15.6km downstream of the proposed development site.
- 1.2. A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) and application under Section 177AE of the Planning and Development act 2000 (as amended) was lodged by the Local Authority on the basis of the proposed development's hydrological connection and potential pathway between the development site and downstream aquatic features of interest for which the SAC is designated.
- 1.3. Section 177AE states that where an appropriate assessment is required in respect of development by a local authority, the authority shall prepare a NIS and the development shall not be carried out unless the Board has approved the development with or without modifications. Furthermore, Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, (as amended) requires that the appropriate assessment shall include a determination by the Board as to whether or not the proposed development would adversely affect the integrity of a European Site and the Appropriate Assessment shall be carried out by the Board before consent is given for the proposed development.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. The proposed remediation works will consist of the following:
 - Replacement of soft grass verges with concrete rubbing strips.
 - Installation of stainless-steel drainage integrated into concrete rubbing strip.
 - De-vegetation of parapet/spandrel walls and repointing of joints as a result.
 - Repair of missing/ damaged sections of the parapet wall and copping.
 - De-vegetation and Debris removal on embankments.
 - All loose friable mortar of the arch barrel to be raked and repointed.

- Installation of fencing.
- Removal of material that has built up in the downstream riverbed.
- Installing reflective flexible bollards.

2.2. **Accompanying documents:**

- Public Notices,
- Application Report,
- Appropriate Assessment Screening Report,
- Natura Impact Statement,
- Kildare Bridges Inventory Gathering and Principal Inspections Report: Moone Village Bridge,
- Bat & Bird Survey (with other ecological observations),
- EIAR Screening Assessment,
- Remediation Methodology Report,
- Moone Bridge photos,
- Works drawings,
- Circulation list – prescribed bodies & letters to prescribed bodies

3.0 **Site and Location**

- 3.1. Moone Bridge located to the north of the village of Moone in south-eastern Co. Kildare. The bridge carries the L8102 local road over Timolin Stream. The village of Timolin is located approximately 500m to the north of the bridge and the built-up area of Moone village is immediately to the south. There are residential properties bounding the proposed development site boundary to the north-east and south-west and agricultural fields to the north-west and south-east.
- 3.2. The subject bridge comprises a single span masonry structure with rubble and square cut limestone arch facing walls, parapets and spandrels, and a rubble masonry arch barrel. The bridge is approximately 6.5m wide and the span has a

length of 2.5m. The date of the bridge is unknown; however, the road and bridge are evident at this location on the earliest historic 6-inch ordnance survey mapping. The bridge is not a protected structure and is not listed within the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

4.0 Planning History

4.1. No relevant planning history.

5.0 Legislative and Policy Context

5.1. **The EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC):** This Directive deals with the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora throughout the European Union. Article 6(3) and 6(4) requires an appropriate assessment of the likely significant effects of a proposed development on its own and in combination with other plans and projects which may have an effect on a European Site (SAC or SPA).

5.2. **European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011:** These Regulations consolidate the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997 to 2005 and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) (Control of Recreational Activities) Regulations 2010, as well as addressing transposition failures identified in CJEU judgements. The Regulations in particular require in Reg. 42(21) that where an appropriate assessment has already been carried out by a 'first' public authority for the same project (under a separate code of legislation) then a 'second' public authority considering that project for appropriate assessment under its own code of legislation is required to take account of the appropriate assessment of the first authority.

5.3. **National nature conservation designations:** The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the National Parks and Wildlife Service are responsible for the designation of conservation sites throughout the country. The three main types of designation are Natural Heritage Areas (NHA), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and the latter two form part of the European Natura 2000 Network.

5.4. European sites located in proximity to the subject site include:

- River Barrow and River Nore SAC (Site code: 002162) hydrologically connected c 15.6km to the south-west.
- Slaney River Valley SAC (Site code: 000781) located 7.6km to the east.
- Holdenstown Bog SAC (Site code: 001757) located 11.4km to the south-east.

5.5. **Planning and Development Acts 2000 (as amended):** Part XAB of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2017 sets out the requirements for the appropriate assessment of developments which could have an effect on a European site or its conservation objectives.

- 177(AE) sets out the requirements for the appropriate assessment of developments carried out by or on behalf of local authorities.
- Section 177(AE) (1) requires a local authority to prepare, or cause to be prepared, a Natura impact statement in respect of the proposed development.
- Section 177(AE) (2) states that a proposed development in respect of which an appropriate assessment is required shall not be carried out unless the Board has approved it with or without modifications.
- Section 177(AE) (3) states that where a Natura impact assessment has been prepared pursuant to subsection (1), the local authority shall apply to the Board for approval and the provisions of Part XAB shall apply to the carrying out of the appropriate assessment.
- Section 177(V) (3) states that a competent authority shall give consent for a proposed development only after having determined that the proposed development shall not adversely affect the integrity of a European site.
- Section 177AE (6) (a) states that before making a decision in respect of a proposed development the Board shall consider the NIS, any submissions or observations received and any other information relating to:
 - The likely effects on the environment.
 - The likely consequences for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
 - The likely significant effects on a European site.

5.6. Kildare County Development Plan, 2017-2023

- 5.6.1. Ballintore/ Timolin/ Moone/ Crookstown are designated villages in the county settlement hierarchy. The subject site adjoins the Moone Village Plan boundary.
- 5.6.2. It is an objective of the Council to: *“T1 Construct a footpath/cycle track between Timolin and Moone, given the interdependency of services between the settlements.”*
- 5.6.3. Policy NH 5 seeks to *“prevent development that would adversely affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 site located within and immediately adjacent to the county and promote favourable conservation status of habitats and protected species including those listed under the Birds Directive, the Wildlife Acts and the Habitats Directive.”*
- 5.6.4. The subject bridge is not a protected structure and is not located within the Moone Architectural Conservation Area. It is a policy of the Council (HF1) to *“secure the identification, protection and conservation of historic items and features of interest throughout the county including street furniture, surface finishes, roadside installations, items of industrial heritage and other stand alone features of interest (items not listed on the RMP or RPS).”* It is also an objective (HFO1) to *“ensure that development within the county including Council development seeks to retain, refurbish and incorporate features of historical interest.”*

6.0 The Natura Impact Statement and Associated Documents

- 6.1.1. The application for approval was accompanied by a Natura Impact Statement for the proposed bridge remediation works dated December 2021. An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report was also prepared in April 2021. Other documents that accompany the planning application include a Bat and Bird Survey (with other ecological observations), an Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report, Inventory Gathering and Preliminary Inspection Report, Remediation Methodology and a design drawing package.
- 6.1.2. In general, I am satisfied that the NIS for the proposed bridge remediation works adequately describes the proposed development, the project site and the surrounding area. The Stage 1 Screening concluded that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (NIS) was required. The NIS outlined the methodology used for assessing potential impacts on the habitats and species within the European Sites

that have the potential to be affected by the proposed development. It predicted the potential impacts for the site and its conservation objectives, suggested mitigation measures, assessed in-combination effects with other plans and projects and identified any residual effects on the European sites and their conservation objectives.

6.1.3. The Appropriate Assessment Screening and NIS were informed by the following studies, surveys and consultations:

- Desk review including the following:
 - Consultation with NPWS publicly available sources,
 - Consultation with National Biodiversity Data Centre online database,
 - Scientific data on water quality and waterbodies from websites of EPA and catchments.ie,
 - Online aerial imagery,
- Field surveys undertaken in April 2021 to include the following:
 - Bat and bird surveys,
 - General walkover survey 50m upstream and 50m downstream of the subject bridge,
 - Habitat surveys,
 - Aquatic habitat survey including any potential salmonid or lamprey spawning habitat, as well as any protected Annex I Habitats of the EU Habitats Directive.
 - Mammal usage and dwelling checks, in particular otter.
 - Identification of invasive species.
 - Survey of any other features of particular ecological interest.

6.1.4. The conclusion reached in the NIS is that there is potential for likely significant effects to the River Barrow and River Nore SAC arising from impacts on water quality and some aquatic species such as Salmon, Otter, White Clawed Crayfish, River Lamprey, Brook Lamprey and Sea Lamprey. However, with implementation of mitigation measures in full, it is considered, beyond reasonable scientific doubt, that

no adverse effect will result to the integrity of the European site in light of the conservation objectives of that site.

- 6.1.5. Having reviewed the NIS and the supporting documentation, I am satisfied that it provides adequate information in respect of the baseline conditions, clearly identifies the potential impacts, and uses best scientific information and knowledge. Details of mitigation measures are provided, and they are summarised in the NIS. I am satisfied that the information is sufficient to allow for appropriate assessment of the proposed development (see further analysis below).

7.0 Consultations

7.1. The application was circulated by the applicant to the following bodies:

- Office of Public Works
- Health & Safety Authority
- National Transport Authority
- Fáilte Ireland
- An Taisce
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland
- Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
- Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage
- Department of Environment, Climate and Communications
- Geological Survey of Ireland
- Inland Fisheries Ireland
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Department of Transport
- An Chomhairle Ealaíon

- The Heritage Council

7.2. The following responses were received by the Board:

7.3. **Department of Environment, Climate & Communications (GSi):**

7.3.1. Geological Survey Ireland has no specific observations to make.

7.4. **Department of Environment, Climate & Communications (Waste - Plastics Remediation and Producer Responsibility Division):**

7.4.1. Division would be obliged if the Local Authority would consult directly with their respective Regional Waste Management Planning Office regarding development of their final plans.

7.5. **Public Submissions:**

7.5.1. None received.

8.0 **Assessment**

8.1. **The likely consequences for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area:**

8.1.1. Moone Bridge is a small scale single span stone bridge that carries a local road over Timolin Stream in south-eastern Co. Kildare. The bridge is a historic structure but is neither protected nor listed in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

8.1.2. Kildare County Council is seeking permission from the Board for remediation works to Moone Bridge. The purpose of the approval project is to carry out maintenance and refurbishment works to the bridge to prolong its design life and to ensure the serviceability of the structure as part of the road infrastructure within the County.

8.1.3. The proposed works will include removal of vegetation growing between masonry units and repointing of masonry; masonry repair to parapets and coping; excavation of existing grass verges and construction of concrete 'rubbing strips' with integrated stainless steel drainage; installation of fencing at parapet ends; removal of material

that has built up in the downstream riverbed; and installation of reflective bollards. It is expected that the proposed works will take approximately one month.

- 8.1.4. It is a policy as set out in the Kildare County Development Plan, 2017-2023 (LR1) to *“ensure that the safety and capacity of the local road network is maintained and improved where funding allows and to ensure that local streets and roads within the county are designed to a suitable standard to accommodate the future needs of the county. The design of these roads and streets should balance the needs of place and movement with providing a safe street environment for all road users.”* The proposed works are essential and necessary to safeguard the structural condition of a river crossing on this local road. Subject to an assessment of the proposal on the surrounding environment and European sites, I consider that the proposed bridge remediation works are acceptable in principle and in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

8.2. The likely effects on the environment

- 8.2.1. Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development, I consider that the main environmental effects to be assessed, other than those covered under the Appropriate Assessment, are as follows:

- EIA Screening Determination
- Biodiversity
- Cultural Heritage
- Roads and Traffic

EIA Screening Determination

- 8.2.2. The proposed development, described as remediation works on Moone Bridge, is not of a development type for the purposes of Part 10 listed in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended). Furthermore, the proposal does not fall under any prescribed type of road development pursuant to Section 50 Roads Act, 1993 (as amended) that requires the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report.

- 8.2.3. Section 2.3.3 of the “Environmental Impact of National Road Schemes – Practical Guide” in relation to the Consideration of Environmentally Sensitive Sites states that if a proposed sub-threshold road scheme would be located on an environmentally sensitive site, the road authority shall decide whether it would or would not be likely to have significant environmental impacts. In this regard, it is stated that in cases *“where the road authority concludes that significant environmental impacts are likely, it informs An Bord Pleanála, and, where the Board concurs, it issues a direction to the road authority to prepare an EIS. It is important to note that where the road authority considers that significant environmental effects are not likely, there is no requirement to inform the Board. However, in such circumstances, the grounds for the road authority’s conclusion should be recorded.”*
- 8.2.4. An EIAR Screening Assessment has been prepared on behalf of the Kildare County Council to determine whether an EIAR is warranted for the proposed project. This document investigates whether the project has significant negative impacts on the environment having regard to its characteristics, location and type and characteristics of the potential impact. It is considered within the screening decision of the report that the proposed project, by itself and in combination with other plans and projects, will have an overall low impact on the receiving environment. It is not therefore considered that an EIAR for the project is required.
- 8.2.5. Notwithstanding the above, further consideration of the following matters relating to the environment of the proposed development are set out hereunder:

Biodiversity

- 8.2.6. The planning application is accompanied by an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report, a Natura Impact Assessment and a Bird & Bat Survey (with other ecological observations). The Board is advised that an Appropriate Assessment is carried out in Section 8.4, which considers if the proposed bridge remediation works, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, would adversely affect the integrity of any European site in view of each relevant site’s Conservation Objectives.
- 8.2.7. A field survey was conducted in April 2021 and this included a general walkover survey within 50m upstream and 50m downstream of the bridge where riverbanks were assessed for suitability/ presence of foraging, roosting and nesting habitat. A daytime bat and bird survey was carried out and other features of ecological interest

were noted. No bird nests were recorded in the bridge and there were no signs of otter activity. There were no notable observations/ potential for aquatic invertebrates, salmonids, lamprey, non-native invasive species or Annex I Habitats. Crevices are present within the bridge that may be of use to bats. However, it is concluded that the bridge is unlikely to be used due the fact that the bridge arch is very low and crevices on parapets and suboptimal and obstructed.

- 8.2.8. Potential impacts on biodiversity could occur from removal of vegetation overgrowth; spread of invasive species; disturbance of otter; increase in suspended solids and accidental spillages impacting on water quality; disturbance of bat commuting and roosting; and disturbance of birds during construction.
- 8.2.9. Mitigation measures will be set out within the CEMP, which will include information on timing of works, limiting access outside of works area, biosecurity protocols and water quality protection measures. The bridge shall also be surveyed for bats prior to commencement of works and vegetation removal shall not take place during the bird breeding season. Strict mitigation measures will be required to protect water quality and aquatic ecology to include bunded storage for oils and fuels; silt fencing; measures for storage and stockpiling; and on-site monitoring.
- 8.2.10. Subject to the compliance with the mitigation measures put forward within the Natura Impact Assessment, I am satisfied that the proposed development will not give rise to any significant effects on biodiversity. A CEMP for project works will be prepared and the Ecological Clerk of Works will monitor works and to ensure that all mitigation measures are properly implemented. The Ecological Clerk of Works will also have the power to suspend works if mitigation is not functioning adequately to minimise the potential impact on local ecology.

Cultural Heritage

- 8.2.11. Moone Bridge is not a protected structure and is not listed in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. However, the structure appears to be present on Ordnance Survey mapping dating from 1837-1842. It is an objective (HFO1) of the Development Plan to *“ensure that development within the county including Council development seeks to retain, refurbish and incorporate features of historical interest.”*
- 8.2.12. Repointing will be carried out using appropriate lime mortar to match the existing. Any missing stones within the bridge structure will be replaced with stone of similar

type and size. Where any trees or roots are imbedded in the masonry, it may be necessary to take down the masonry and replace dislodged stones.

- 8.2.13. Overall, I am satisfied that the proposed works are essential to maintain the structural integrity of a historic bridge. Proposed works and alterations will be locally invasive; however, efforts have been made to ensure that the least possible structural damage is caused to the bridge. Following the completion of work, the remediated bridge with vegetation removed will highlight its historic characteristics and comply with Objective HFO1.

Roads and Traffic

- 8.2.14. The purpose of the proposed work is to prolong its design life of the bridge and to ensure the serviceability of the road infrastructure within the County. The proposed works will take place over a period of approximately one month. I consider that if the Board is minded to grant permission, the construction of the development shall be managed in accordance with a Construction Management Plan that shall *inter alia* provide alternative arrangements for pedestrians and vehicles in the case of the closure of any public road or footpath during the course of site development works.

8.3. The likely significant effects on a European site (Appropriate Assessment)

- 8.3.1. The areas addressed in this section are as follows:

- Compliance with Articles 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive
- Geographical Scope and Main Characteristics
- Screening the need for Appropriate Assessment
- Appropriate Assessment of implications of the proposed development on European Site

- 8.3.2. **Compliance with Articles 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive:** The Habitats Directive deals with the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora throughout the European Union. Article 6(3) of this Directive requires that any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. The competent

authority must be satisfied that the proposal will not adversely affect the integrity of the European site.

8.3.3. The proposed development comprises remediation works at Moone Bridge over Timolin Stream. This stream is a tributary of the River Greese which in turn is a tributary of the River Barrow. The River Barrow is within the River Barrow and River Nore SAC (site code: 002162). The proposal is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of any European site and is therefore subject to the provisions of Article 6(3).

8.3.4. **Geographical Scope and Main Characteristics**

8.3.4.1. Moone Bridge is situated at the northern edge of the built up area of Moone Village. The bridge is a stone structure with a single low arch that carries a local road providing access to Timolin village to the north. The bridge is situated over the 1st order Timolin_14 stream. The River Barrow and River Nore SAC is approximately 15.6km downstream of the bridge via the Timolin Stream, the River Greese and the River Barrow. The River Greese, which is 500m downstream of the Moone Bridge, has populations of Atlantic Salmon and European Eel.

8.3.4.2. The proposed bridge remediation works will include the replacement of a soft verge on the surface of the bridge with rubbing strips; vegetation removal and masonry repairs and repointing on parapets; cutting of vegetation on embankments; vegetation removal and masonry repointing on wing/ spandrel/ retaining walls; masonry repointing of abutments; structural repair of deck/ slab/ arch barrel; and removal of vegetation and debris within riverbed. A sealed working platform (crash deck) containing a filtration membrane will be installed around all areas to be repointed to capture particles, thus preventing them from entering the watercourse. Debris will be removed from the crash deck at the end of each working day. Repair work will include the use of spray concrete.

8.3.5. **Screening the need for Appropriate Assessment**

8.3.6. The first test of Article 6(3) is to establish if the proposed development could result in likely significant effects to a European site. This is considered stage 1 of the appropriate assessment process, i.e., *screening*. The screening stage is intended to be a preliminary examination. If the possibility of significant effects cannot be

excluded on the basis of objective information, without extensive investigation or the application of mitigation, a plan or project should be considered to have a likely significant effect and Appropriate Assessment shall be carried out.

8.3.7. Having regard to the information and submissions available, the nature, size and location of the proposed development and its likely direct, indirect and cumulative effects, the source pathway receptor principle and sensitivities of the ecological receptors, the European Sites set out in Table 1 below are considered relevant to include for the purposes of initial screening for the requirement for Stage 2 appropriate assessment on the basis of likely significant effects. A 15km study area from the proposed development is applied for this purpose, wherein a total of three European Sites are included (3 SAC's).

Table 1: European sites considered for Stage 1 screening:

European site (SAC/SPA)	Site code	Distance to subject site	Connections (source, pathway, receptor)	Considered further in Screening (Y/N)
River Barrow and River Nore SAC	002162	15.6km downstream	Potential connections	Y
Slaney River Valley SAC	000781	7.6km	No potential connection – different WFD catchment	N
Holdenstown Bog SAC	001757	11.4km	No potential connection – different WFD catchment	N

Table 1 – Summary Table of European Sites considered in Screening for Appropriate Assessment

8.3.8. Based on my examination of the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and NIS, together with other supporting information, the NPWS website, aerial and satellite imagery, the scale of the proposed development and likely effects, separation distances and functional relationships between the proposed works and the European sites, their conservation objectives, and taken in conjunction with my assessment of the subject site and the surrounding area, I conclude that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is required for the following European Site in view of the conservation objectives of those sites:

- River Barrow and River Nore SAC

8.3.9. Table 2 below provides a screening summary matrix where there is a possibility of significant effects, or where the possibility of significant effects cannot be excluded without further detailed assessment.

Site name Qualifying Interest feature	Is there a possibility of significant effects in view of the conservation objectives of the site? General impact categories presented		
River Barrow and River Nore SAC	Habitat loss/ modification	Water quality and water dependent habitats (pollution)	Disturbance/ displacement barrier effects
Special Conservation Interests: Estuaries [1130] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Reefs [1170] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260] European dry heaths [4030]	Yes Potential for invasive species to spread or be introduced to downstream habitats.	Yes Potential for release of contaminated surface water run-off and/ or accidental spillage or pollution event during construction.	Yes Temporary increase in noise/ vibration and human activity during construction could disturb/ displace fauna, e.g., Otter.

<p>Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels [6430]</p> <p>Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220]</p> <p>Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0]</p> <p>Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0]</p> <p><i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> (Desmoulin's Whorl Snail) [1016]</p> <p><i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029]</p> <p><i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092]</p> <p><i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) [1095]</p> <p><i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey) [1096]</p> <p><i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> (River Lamprey) [1099]</p> <p><i>Alosa fallax fallax</i> (Twaiite Shad) [1103]</p> <p><i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106]</p> <p><i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]</p> <p><i>Trichomanes speciosum</i> (Killarney Fern) [1421]</p>			
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Margaritifera durrovensis (Nore Pearl Mussel) [1990]			
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Table 2 Screening summary matrix: European Sites for which there is a possibility of significant effects (or where the possibility of significant effects cannot be excluded without further detailed assessment)

8.3.10. I am satisfied that no additional sites other than those assessed in the NIS (River Barrow and River Nore SAC) need to be brought forward for Appropriate Assessment. I confirm that no mitigation has been taken into account at the screening stage.

8.4. **Appropriate Assessment of implications of the proposed development on each European Site**

8.4.1. The following is an assessment of the implications of the project on the relevant conservation objectives of the European site using the best scientific knowledge in the field. All aspects of the project which could result in significant effects are identified and mitigation measures designed to avoid or reduce any adverse effects are examined and assessed.

8.4.2. I have relied on the following guidance:

- DoEHLG (2009). Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities. Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, National Parks and Wildlife Service.
- EC (2002) Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites. Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EC
- EC (2018) Managing Natura 2000 sites. The provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC

8.4.3. Relevant European site: The following site is subject to appropriate assessment.

- River Barrow and River Nore SAC (Site code: 002162)

8.4.4. A description of this site and its Conservation Objectives and Qualifying Interests, including any relevant attributes and targets for these sites, are set out in the NIS and outlined in Table 3 below. I have also examined the Natura 2000 data forms as relevant and the Conservation Objectives supporting documents for these sites available through the NPWS website (www.npws.ie).

8.4.5. **Aspects of the proposed development:** The main aspects of the proposed development that could adversely affect the conservation objectives of the European sites include:

- Loss of, or disturbance to habitats or species,
- Potential Impairment of water quality,
- Introduction of invasive species.

8.4.6. **Tables 3** summarises the appropriate assessment and site integrity test. The conservation objectives, targets and attributes as relevant to the identified potential significant effects are examined and assessed in relation to the aspects of the project (alone and in combination with other plans and projects). Mitigation measures are examined, and clear, precise and definitive conclusions reached in terms of adverse effects on the integrity of European sites.

8.4.7. Supplemental to the summary tables, any key issues that arose through consultation and through my examination and assessment of the NIS are expanded upon in the text below:

Table 3

River Barrow and River Nore SAC (Site code: 002162)

Key Issues:

- Loss of, or disturbance to habitats or species
- Potential impairment of water quality
- Introduction of invasive species

Conservation Objectives: [Site specific cons obj \(npws.ie\)](http://npws.ie)

		Summary of Appropriate Assessment			
Conservation Objective: To maintain the favourable conservation condition of the following:	Targets & Attributes (as relevant)	Potential adverse effects	All Mitigation Measures	In-combination effects	Can adverse effects on site integrity be excluded?
White Clawed Crayfish [1092]	No reduction from baseline distribution, juveniles and/ or females with eggs in at least 50% of positive samples, no alien crayfish and no instances of disease, sampling of water quality by EPA, no decline in habitat	Unlikely to be present due to outbreaks of Crayfish Plague in Barrow catchment but occurred in downstream in the past. Potential pathway for water quality and invasive species to be transferred which could affect this qualifying interest species.	<i>Construction Environmental Management Plan</i> detailing site compound set up; refuelling operations; checks for leaks; storage and spill kits; measures for ensuring construction and demolition waste does not enter stream; measures to mitigate silt mobilisation and subsequent potential for run-off; and detail on roles and responsibilities.	Potential for in-combination impacts in terms of pressures from modifying structures of inland watercourses, agricultural intensification, surface water pollution, erosion and dykes and flood defences on inland watercourses. Medium pressures from other human alterations to natural river systems,	Yes Due to mitigation measures, best practice measures and implementation of monitoring scheme, no adverse effects water quality or the designated conservation interests of the European sites will occur.

	heterogeneity or habitat quality.	Shown to be present throughout the Barrow and Nore and tributaries within conservation objective mapping.	<p><i>Construction/ rehabilitation phase:</i> To prevent small spillages or loose debris falling into watercourse, scaffolding and a bearing shelf with polythene sheeting canopy should be erected under scaffolds.</p> <p><i>Silt Management:</i> Minimisation of silt laden run-off and prevention from entering sensitive habitats. All works should be located within confines of fencing, excavation in good weather, backfilling as work proceeds, minimisation of stripped vegetation, avoidance of stockpiles and silt fencing.</p> <p><i>Ecological supervision:</i> Suitably qualified ecologist should be appointed to act as Ecological Clerk of Works.</p> <p><i>Invasive species:</i> Methods for the prevention and spread of Invasive Alien Species following guidelines.</p> <p><i>Fuel and oils control:</i> Carried out using mobile, double skinned bowser by trained operatives and reviewed by ECoW.</p>	forestry related impacts, peat extraction, cattle grazing, change in abiotic conditions, fishing and harvesting aquatic resources and invasive species (Standard data Natura 2000 form).	Proposed works are limited in scale and, subject to mitigation, will not adversely affect the conservation objectives of the SAC.
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			<i>Site drainage:</i> No direct discharges to water, preservation of natural vegetation, procedures for stockpiling, monitoring of weather, installation of silt fencing adjacent to bridge, and regular monitoring of run-off.		
Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitricho-Batrachion vegetation [3260]	No decline in habitat distribution; stable/ increasing habitat area; maintain appropriate hydrological regime; groundwater flow to habitat should be permanent and sufficient to maintain tufa formation; maintain appropriate substratum, water chemistry, water quality, typical species and floodplain connectivity.	Main known area of interest located in King's tributary of the Nore (NPWS, 2011). Floating river vegetation well represented in the Barrow and its tributaries. Potential pathway for water quality and invasive species impacts.	As above	As above	
To restore the favourable conservation condition of the following:					
Sea Lamprey [1095]	Greater than 75% of main stem length of rivers accessible	Brook and River Lamprey likely to be present in the	As above	As above	

<p>Brook Lamprey [1096]</p> <p>River Lamprey [1099]</p>	<p>from estuary (Sea Lamprey), access to all watercourses down to 1st order streams (Brook Lamprey) and greater than 75% of main stem and major tributaries down to second order accessible from estuary (River Lamprey); at least 3 age/ size groups present; juvenile density at least 1/m² (Sea Lamprey) and 2/m² (Brook and River Lamprey); no decline in extent and distribution of spawning beds; more than 50% of sample sites positive.</p>	<p>River Grease c. 500m downstream.</p> <p>Sea lamprey unlikely to occur at the subject bridge site but could occur downstream in the River Barrow.</p> <p>Potential pathway for water quality and invasive species impacts to be transferred.</p>			
<p>Atlantic Salmon [1106]</p>	<p>100% of river channels down to 2nd order accessible from estuary, conservation limit for each system consistently exceeded, maintain or exceed 0+ fry mean catchment-wide abundance</p>	<p>Present downstream of subject bridge – known spawning habitat present in River Grease (Delaney et. al. 2017)</p> <p>Potential pathway for water quality and invasive species impacts to be transferred.</p>	<p>As above.</p>	<p>As above.</p>	

	threshold value-currently set at 17 salmon fry/5 minutes sampling, no significant decline in out-migrating smolt abundance, no decline in no. & distribution of spawning redds due to anthropogenic causes, water quality at least Q4 at all sampled sites.				
Otter [1355]	No significant decline in distribution or extent of terrestrial, marine and freshwater habitat; no significant decline in couching sites and holts; available fish biomass; no significant decline in available fish biomass.	Likely to be present in River Greese c. 500m downstream. Potential pathway for water quality and invasive species impacts to be transferred.	As above	As above	

Overall Conclusion: Integrity test

Following the implementation of mitigation, the construction and operation of this proposed development will not adversely affect the integrity of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC in view of the site's conservation objectives. No reasonable scientific doubt remains as to the absence of such effects.

Relevant European site: River Barrow and River Nore SAC (Site code: 002162)

- 8.4.8. The site synopsis for the River Barrow and River Nore SAC states that the site is of considerable significance for the occurrence of good examples of habitat and populations of plant and animal species listed on Annexes I and II of the EU Habitats Directive.
- 8.4.9. It is noted that floating river vegetation is well represented in the River Barrow and that the water quality of the Barrow has improved since a vegetation survey was carried out by the EPA in 1996. Other habitats occurring throughout the SAC include wet grassland, marsh, reedswamp, coniferous plantations, deciduous woodland, scrub and ponds.
- 8.4.10. Freshwater Pearl Mussel, White-clawed Crayfish, Salmon, Twaite Shad, Lamprey, whorl snail and Otter have an important presence in the SAC. The Barrow/ Nore is mainly a grilse fishery and the upper section of the Barrow and Nore are very important for spawning.
- 8.4.11. It is noted that the main threats to the site and current damaging activities include high inputs of nutrients into the river system from agricultural run-off and several sewage plants, over-grazing within the woodland areas, and invasion by non-native species.

Baseline Ecological Conditions

- 8.4.12. Moone Bridge is located over Timolin Stream, a 1st order watercourse that is a tributary of the Greese River. Greese River, a tributary of the River Barrow which forms part of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC, is 500m downstream of Moone Bridge and has populations of Atlantic Salmon and Annex II species European Eel.
- 8.4.13. The area surrounding the proposed development site comprises residential and agricultural/ horticultural land uses. There is a grass verge on the eastern side of the road and a footpath on the west side at the location of the bridge. Steep overgrown embankments continue along both sides of the river. The river channel and bridge arch are shown on application drawings to be approximately 2m in width.
- 8.4.14. There are a number of trees that are causing structural issues to the bridge on its downstream side on both banks. Vegetation growth is occurring on the bridge

elevations on both sides. Debris has also accumulated on embankments and on the riverbed.

- 8.4.15. A field survey was conducted in April 2021. This included a general walkover survey within 50m upstream and 50m downstream of the bridge. Riverbanks were assessed for suitability/ presence of foraging, roosting and nesting habitat. A daytime bat and bird survey was carried out and other features of ecological interest were noted. No bird nests were recorded in the bridge and there were no signs of otter activity. There were no notable observations/ potential for aquatic invertebrates, salmonids or lamprey. No non-native invasive species or Annex I Habitats were recorded.
- 8.4.16. Overall, I consider that the level of surveying is appropriate having regard to the biodiversity of the area and adequate in terms of their content, duration and coverage. The baseline information is suitably up to date having regard to the lodgement dates of the planning application.

Factors that can adversely affect the achievement of conservation objectives

- 8.4.17. The conservation objectives for the River Barrow and River Nore SAC include the maintenance of the favourable conservation condition of white clawed crayfish and watercourses of plain to montane levels, with the *Ranunculus fluitans* and *Callitriche-Batrachion* vegetation. It is also the conservation objective to restore the favourable conservation objective of Sea Lamprey, Brook Lamprey, River Lamprey Salmon and Otter.
- 8.4.18. The favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when its natural range, and the area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing; the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future; and the conservation status of its typical species is favourable. The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when its population dynamics data indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats; the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future; and there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

- 8.4.19. There are factors arising from the proposed development, in-combination with other plans/ projects, that can adversely affect the achievement of the conservation objectives for which the River Barrow and River Nore SAC is designated. In the absence of mitigation measures, the proposed development alone, and in combination with other plans/ projects, has the potential to adversely affect the maintenance or restoration of the favourable conservation condition of certain habitats and species for which the River Barrow and River Nore SAC is designated through loss or disturbance of habitat/ species; potential impairment of water quality; and invasive species.
- 8.4.20. In an unmanaged situation, impacts could occur from disturbance to fish species and otter and from pollutants entering the Timolin Stream and travelling downstream to the Greese River and River Barrow. Pollutants from suspended solids, increased siltation and accidental spillages of oil/ fuel from machinery and/ or concrete could directly affect otter or fish species or indirectly through their food supply. Water quality impacts could also affect floating river vegetation. Disturbance to otter could occur from increased noise and light disturbance during the construction phase. Otter are likely to be present in the River Greese c. 500m downstream and this species is known to hold large territory ranges. Any introduction or mobilisation of invasive species could be carried downstream and could impact on qualifying interest habitat or species within the SAC or important habitat outside the SAC boundary that supports qualifying interest species, e.g. salmon spawning areas or otter foraging and commuting habitat. The proposed development also includes the removal of debris from the embankments and the downstream riverbed and this may result in mobilisation of sediments.
- 8.4.21. The potential for contamination during the construction phase will be mitigated by a range of measures, best practices, and monitoring. An Ecological Clerk of Works will be appointed to ensure implementation of the CEMP and to carry out regular inspection and monitoring of construction work. The CEMP will include details on site compound set up; refuelling operations; checks for leaks; storage and spill kits; measures for ensuring construction and demolition waste does not enter stream; measures to mitigate silt mobilisation and subsequent potential for run-off; and details on roles and responsibilities.

- 8.4.22. To prevent spillage and debris from falling into the watercourse, scaffolding and a bearing shelf with polythene sheeting canopy should be erected under scaffolds. A sealed working platform (crash deck) containing a filtration membrane will be installed around all areas to be repointed to capture particles, thus preventing them from entering the watercourse. Debris will be removed from the crash deck at the end of each working day. There will be no direct discharges to water, and other measures will include preservation of natural vegetation where possible, procedures for stockpiling, monitoring of weather, installation of silt fencing adjacent to bridge, measures to prevent silt mobilisation and regular monitoring. Methods will be put in place for the prevention and spread of Invasive Alien Species in accordance with guidelines.
- 8.4.23. The targets and attributes for the Special Conservation Interest species that potentially could be adversely affected by the proposed development are set out in Table 3 above. The above mitigation measures will ensure that the proposed development will not adversely impact on water quality. Measures will mitigate against any potential impact causing disturbance to fisheries species, including Lamprey and Salmon. It is noted that otter are capable of foraging over a wide area. Thus, there will continue to be a sufficiently large habitat in the wider area to maintain the Special Conservation Interest species on a long-term basis.
- 8.4.24. I am therefore satisfied that mitigation is clearly defined and appropriate in terms of the potential adverse impact on water quality. The proposed development will not interfere with the population dynamics and natural range of the Special Conservation Interest species.
- 8.4.25. The qualifying interests for the River Barrow and River Nore SAC include a number of other habitats such as estuaries, mudflats and sandflats, reefs, Salicornia and other annuals and Atlantic and Mediterranean salt meadows that are located significant distances downstream from the proposed works to an extent that there will be no impact on baseline conditions. Other habitats and species that are qualifying interests for the SAC do not occur in the vicinity of the proposed development site such as Hydrophilous Tall Herb Communities, Petrifying Springs, Old Oak Woodlands, Alluvial Forests, Desmoulin's Whorl Snail, Twaite Shad and Killarney Fern. Nore Freshwater Pearl Mussel is located within a different WFD catchment.

8.4.26. The status of Freshwater Pearl Mussel as a qualifying Annex II species for River Barrow and River Nore SAC is currently under review; however, this species remains a qualifying interest species for the SAC. Freshwater pearl mussel is not identified in the NIS as a species within the zone of influence of the proposed development. This species is not present within the Barrow and only occurs within the River Nore where there is no downstream hydrological connection.

8.4.27. In conclusion, I am satisfied that with full and proper implementation of the above mitigation measures, it can be determined, beyond all reasonable and reliable scientific doubt, that the proposed development will not result in adverse effects on the integrity of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC. The mitigation measures will address the source of any potential impacts and are adequate, in particular, to protect against disturbance and from sedimentation and pollutants entering the watercourse.

8.5. In-Combination Effects

8.5.1. There are no other planned or ongoing projects in the immediate vicinity of Moone Bridge that could act in combination with the proposed development to have adverse effects on the integrity of a European Site.

8.5.2. In an unmitigated situation, the proposed development could act in combination with other known pressures to have adverse effects on water quality. Agricultural intensification, surface water pollution, erosion, forestry related impacts and invasive species have the potential to act in combination with pollution related impacts from the proposed development works.

8.5.3. Notwithstanding the above, the potential for adverse effects due to in-combination effects with other projects and activities was excluded based on the following:

- The proposed bridge remediation works themselves will not lead to adverse impacts on the Special Conservation Interests of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC and therefore in-combination impacts will not arise.
- Mitigation measures will be implemented at the proposed development site to protect downstream water quality notwithstanding the existing water quality pressures affecting the River Barrow.

- There are no other planned or ongoing projects in the immediate vicinity of Moone Bridge that could act in combination with the proposed development to have adverse effects on the integrity of a European Site.
- Biosecurity measures will be put in place to prevent the spread of invasive species to/ from the site.

8.6. Appropriate Assessment Conclusions

- 8.6.1. Having carried out screening for appropriate assessment of the proposed Moone Bridge remediation works, it was concluded that these works would be likely to have a significant effect on the River Barrow and River Nore SAC. Consequently, an appropriate assessment was required of the implications of the project on the qualifying features of this site in light of its conservation objectives.
- 8.6.2. Following an appropriate assessment, it has been ascertained that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects would not adversely affect the integrity of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC, or any other European site, in view of the sites' Conservation Objectives. No reasonable scientific doubt remains as to the absence of such effects.
- 8.6.3. This conclusion is based on:
- A full and detailed assessment of all aspects of the proposed project and proposed mitigation measures in relation to the Conservation Objectives of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC.
 - Detailed assessment of in combination effects with other plans and projects.
 - No adverse effects to Special Conservation Interest habitat or species of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC following the application of mitigation measures.
 - The demonstration, beyond reasonable scientific doubt, that with full and proper implementation of mitigation measures, the proposed development will not result in adverse effects on the integrity of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC.

9.0 Recommendation

On the basis of the above assessment, I recommend that the Board approve the proposed development subject to the reasons and considerations below and subject to conditions including requiring compliance with the submitted details and with the mitigation measures as set out in the NIS.

Reasons and Considerations

In coming to its decision, the Board had regard to the following:

- (a) the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC),
- (b) the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC),
- (c) the likely consequences for the environment and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area in which it is proposed to carry out the proposed development and the likely significant effects of the proposed development on a European Site,
- (d) the conservation objectives, qualifying interests and special conservation interests for the River Barrow and River Nore SAC (site code: 002162)
- (e) the policies and objectives of the Kildare County Development Plan, 2017-2023,
- (f) the nature and extent of the proposed works as set out in the application for approval,
- (g) the information submitted in relation to the potential impacts on habitats, flora and fauna, including the Natura Impact Statement,
- (h) any submissions and observations received in relation to the proposed development,
- (i) the report and recommendation of the person appointed by the Board to make a report and recommendation on the matter.

Appropriate Assessment:

The Board agreed with and adopted the screening assessment and conclusion carried out in the Inspector's report that the River Barrow and River Nore SAC is the only European Site for which there is a likelihood of significant effects.

The Board considered the Natura Impact Statement and all other relevant submissions and carried out an Appropriate Assessment of the implications of the proposal for the River Barrow and River Nore SAC (site code: 002162). The Board considered that the information before it was adequate to allow the carrying out of an Appropriate Assessment.

In completing the assessment, the Board considered, in particular:

- i. the likely direct and indirect impacts arising from the proposal both individually or in combination with other plans or projects, specifically upon the River Barrow and River Nore SAC (site code: 002162),
- ii. the mitigation measures which are included as part of the current proposal,
- iii. the Conservation Objectives for the European Site,
- iv. the views set out in submissions received.

In completing the appropriate assessment, the Board accepted and adopted the appropriate assessment carried out in the Inspector's report in respect of the potential effects of the proposed development on the integrity of the aforementioned European Site, having regard to the site's conservation objectives.

In overall conclusion, the Board was satisfied that the proposed development, by itself or in combination with other plans or projects, would not adversely affect the integrity of the European Site, in view of the site's conservation objectives.

Proper Planning and Sustainable Development/Likely effects on the environment:

It is considered that, subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, the proposed development would not have significant negative effects on the environment or the community in the vicinity, would not give rise to a risk of pollution, would not be detrimental to the amenities of the area, would not adversely impact on the cultural, archaeological and built heritage of the area and would not interfere with

the existing land uses in the area. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Conditions

1. The development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application, except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the following conditions. Where any mitigation measures set out in the Natura Impact Statement or any conditions of approval require further details to be prepared by or on behalf of the local authority, these details shall be placed on the file and retained as part of the public record.

Reason: In the interest of clarity and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and to ensure the protection of the environment.

2. The mitigation and monitoring measures outlined in the plans and particulars relating to the proposed development, including those set out in the Natura Impact Statement shall be implemented in full or as may be required in order to comply with the following conditions. Prior to the commencement of development, details of a time schedule for implementation of mitigation measures and associated monitoring shall be prepared by the local authority and placed on file and retained as part of the public record.

Reason: In the interest of protecting the environment, the protection of European Sites and in the interest of public health.

3. Prior to the commencement of development, details of measures to protect fisheries and water quality of the river systems shall be outlined and placed on file. Full regard shall be had to Inland Fisheries Ireland's published guidelines for construction works near waterways (Guidelines on Protection of Fisheries during Construction Works in and Adjacent to Waters, 2016). A programme of water quality monitoring shall be prepared in consultation with the contractor, the local authority and relevant statutory agencies and the programme shall be implemented thereafter.

Reason: In the interest of the protecting of receiving water quality, fisheries and aquatic habitats.

4. Prior to the commencement of development, the local authority, or any agent acting on its behalf, shall prepare in consultation with the relevant statutory agencies, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and a Water Management Plan incorporating all mitigation measures indicated in the Natura Impact Statement and a demonstration of proposals to adhere to best practice and protocols.

Reason: In the interest of protecting the environment, the landscape, European Sites, and sensitive receptors and in the interest of public health.

5. The County Council and any agent acting on its behalf shall ensure that all plant and machinery used during the works should be thoroughly cleaned and washed before delivery to the site and upon removal from the site to prevent the spread of hazardous invasive species and pathogens.

Reason: In the interest of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and to ensure the protection of the European sites.

6. The construction of the development shall be managed in accordance with a Construction Management Plan, which shall be placed on the file and retained as part of the public record. This plan shall provide details of intended construction practice for the development, including:

- (a) Location of the site and materials compound(s) including area(s) identified for the storage of construction refuse;
- (b) Location of areas for construction site offices and staff facilities;
- (c) Details of site security fencing and hoardings;
- (d) Details of the timing and routing of construction traffic to and from the construction site;
- (e) Measures to prevent the spillage or deposit of clay, rubble or other debris on the public road network;
- (f) Alternative arrangements to be put in place for pedestrians and vehicles in the case of the closure of any public road or footpath during the course of site development works;

- (g) Details of appropriate mitigation measures for noise, dust and vibration, and monitoring of such levels;
- (h) Containment of all construction-related fuel and oil within specially constructed bunds to ensure that fuel spillages are fully contained.
- (i) Off-site disposal of construction/demolition waste and details of how it is proposed to manage excavated soil;
- (j) Means to ensure that surface water run-off is controlled such that no silt or other pollutants enter local surface water sewers or drains.

A record of daily checks that the works are being undertaken in accordance with the Construction Management Plan shall be kept for inspection by the planning authority.

Reason: In the interest of amenities, public health and safety.

7. The County Council and any agent acting on its behalf shall facilitate the preservation, recording, protection or removal of archaeological materials or features that may exist within the site. A suitably qualified archaeologist shall be appointed by the County Council to oversee the site set-up and construction of the proposed development and the archaeologist shall be present on site during construction works. An Underwater Archaeological Impact Assessment shall be carried out in advance of works commencing and shall be placed on the file and retained as part of the public record.

Reason: In order to conserve the archaeological heritage of the site and to secure the preservation and protection of any remains that may exist within the site.

8. A suitably qualified ecologist shall be retained by the local authority to oversee the site set up and construction of the proposed development and implementation of mitigation measures relating to ecology set out in Natura Impact Statement. The ecologist shall be present during site construction works and shall ensure that the bridge is surveyed for bats prior to commencement of works and that vegetation removal shall not take place during the bird breeding season. Upon completion of works, an ecological

report of the site works shall be prepared by the appointed ecologist to be kept on file as part of the public record.

Reason: In the interest of nature conservation and the protection of terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity.

Donal Donnelly
Senior Planning Inspector

16th September 2022