



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report ABP-322172-25

Development	Levelling and relocation of pitch with all associated site works. A NIS was submitted with the application
Location	Fourmilewater GAA club, Ballymacarbry, Ballymacarbry Co. Waterford, E91 F7A4
Planning Authority	Waterford City and County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	2460286
Applicant(s)	Fourmilewater GAA Club
Type of Application	Permission
Planning Authority Decision	Grant Permission
Type of Appeal	Third Party
Appellant(s)	Neill Doocey
Observer(s)	None
Date of Site Inspection	30 th June 2025
Inspector	Bernadette Quinn

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The appeal site, with a stated area of 2.3 hectares is located in the settlement of Ballymacarbry on the northern side of the Regional Road R671 and the Nire River. Pinewood Healthcare adjoins the site to the east and shares an access to the appeal site via a bridge over the Nire River. An area of car parking separates the appeal site from the Pinewood premises. The parking area is outside of the appeal site boundary.
- 1.2. The site contains a grassed GAA pitch located towards the south east and centre of the site, a smaller grass pitch to the northwest and a club house with a gfa of 154 sq.m. adjoining the eastern boundary. The site is generally flat with a gradual slope towards the southwest. The site is bound by agricultural fields to the northwest, woodlands to the northeast, Pinewood Healthcare facility to the southeast and a hedgerow and the River Nire to the south and southwest. Residential properties are located on the opposite side of the R671.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. It is proposed to level and relocate an existing full sized GAA pitch from the southeast to the northwest boundary of the site and replace the existing training pitch with a 3,090m² all weather pitch to be located at the south east of the site adjoining the club house.
- 2.2. Permission is also sought for an astro pitch with hurling wall at the northern part of the site, a 2 metre wide perimeter walking track together with perimeter fencing and low-level lighting, ground works for the future floodlighting of all pitches, solar panels to existing dressing rooms and all associated ancillary site works including soakaways.
- 2.3. The application was accompanied by a Natura Impact Statement.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

On 05th March 2025 Waterford City and County Council issued notification of a decision to grant permission subject to 11 conditions.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. Planning Reports

The planning officer's report dated 10/07/2024 can be summarised as follows:

- Details of a proposed 2.4m high wall are unclear and appears to directly conflict with proposals to maintain a right of way. The existing right of way as detailed is not free from obstruction.
- No levels have been provided for the proposed playing pitches or Astro area. Part of the site falls within Flood Zones A and B and any alterations to levels need to be considered as part of a commensurate Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment.
- Confirmation of proposed levels is required to determine if import or export of materials will be required.
- Clarification is required in relation to phasing of elements of development indicated on drawings and detailed drawings are required in relation to elements of the proposal which are unclear.
- Surface Water proposals are based on the area of the training pitch only and not the Astro area.
- Existing vehicular or pedestrian access arrangements for patrons of the club are not proposed to be altered.
- The proposal seeks to reorder existing facilities with some additional facilities also indicated. Clarification is required to ensure there is sufficient car parking for normal use of the club and on match days such that the proposal will not lead to traffic safety issues on the adjoining regional road.

- Clarification is required in relation to third party rights.

Following a request for further information the planning officers report dated 05/03/2025 can be summarised as follows:

- The applicant has confirmed there will be no impediment or obstruction to the existing right of way. Engineering details submitted confirm the proposal would be accessible for agricultural vehicles.
- The proposed Astro surface will be positioned at a level above potential flood levels. A site specific flood risk assessment has been submitted which finds that the proposal will not alter the flood volume for the site and will not generate any flood impact in the surrounding area. The findings of the flood risk assessment indicate that the proposal would not be vulnerable to flooding.
- Revised drawings have been submitted which clarify the proposed development which includes a training pitch, all weather pitch, hurling wall and netting, shed structure, solar panels and ball stop netting which are considered acceptable.
- There are concerns that the proposal to include flood lights was not adequately advertised and that these should be omitted from any grant of permission.
- Revised drawings clarify details relating to proposed boundary treatments and that the right of way is maintained free from obstruction.
- Revised details relating to surface water disposal have been submitted.
- The applicant's response relating to carparking arrangements outlines that car parking spaces are available to the club to use generally at a time when the car park is not in use and that the proposal does not result in an intensification of the existing use.

3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

None on file.

3.2.3. Conditions

Condition 1(b): The erection of floodlights, indicated as part of the proposed development by details submitted on the 27th of January 2025, is expressly omitted from this grant of planning permission which provides for “groundworks for the future floodlighting of all pitches” only. Reason: To clarify the documents to which the permission relates and for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Condition 11: The right of way illustrated on the site layout plans submitted to the Planning Authority on the 27th of January 2025 shall be provided and maintained free from obstruction. Reason: In the interests of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

None on file.

3.4. Third Party Observations

One no. third party observation was received. The issues raised are similar to those raised in the third party appeal.

4.0 Planning History

Appeal Site:

PA reference 11/353: Permission granted to Ballymacarbry GAA Field Development Committee to build a single storey extension to the side of the existing structure consisting of a new dressing room, shower area and public toilets, with all associated ancillary works and associate site works.

PA reference 84/53: Nier + Fourmilewater GAA were granted permission for dressing rooms.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Development Plan

- 5.1.1. The Waterford City and County Development Plan 2022 – 2028 is the relevant development plan for the area within which the appeal site is zoned Rural Village (RV) - Protect and promote the character of the Rural Village and promote a vibrant community appropriate to available physical and community infrastructure.
- 5.1.2. Recreational and Sporting Facilities Policy Objectives are outlined in Chapter 7: Housing and Sustainable Communities wherein policy objectives SC30 to SC43 inclusive relate to recreational and sporting facilities and open space.
- 5.1.3. The site contains Development Plan Objective DO9 Ballymacarbry which states 'This site shall be reserved for open space purposes'. The western edge of the appeal site is situated within Flood Zones A and B and a small area in the north of the site is in Flood Zone B. The Regional Road passing the site is designated a 'Scenic Route' in the Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment as per the Development Plan and the appeal site is in an area designated 'Low Sensitive'.

5.2. Natural Heritage Designations

The southwestern boundary of the site is located within the Lower River Suir SAC (site code 002137) and the northeastern boundary adjoins this SAC. The site is 1.3km west of the Nire Valley Woodlands SAC (Site Code 000668), 6km north of the Blackwater River SAC (Site Code 002170) and 7 km west of the Comeragh Mountains SAC (Site Code 001952).

5.3. EIA Screening

The proposed development is not a class for the purposes of EIA as per the classes of development set out in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended (or Part V of the 1994 Roads Regulations). No mandatory requirement for EIA therefore arises and there is also no requirement for a screening determination. Refer to Form 1 in Appendix 1 of report.

6.0 The Appeal

6.1. Grounds of Appeal

One no. third party appeal has been received from Neill Doocey and includes a map and photographs. The grounds of appeal can be summarised as follows:

- The third party appellant owns the agricultural lands adjoining the appeal site and enjoys a full legal and beneficial right of way across the appeal site. A map is attached indicating the right of way.
- Works have previously been carried out along the north to east boundary of the site removing the physically defined and agreed boundary lines.
- The 'slightly re-aligned' swept path assessment appears to encroach onto neighbouring property and brings the applicants proposed right of way into disrepute.
- The proposed swept path assessment does not correlate with the right of way and does not take into consideration widths and turning circles of agricultural vehicles passing the right of way. The applicant cannot align or materially alter the third party's right of way without permission of the third party or the neighbouring property owner.
- The development intersects the third party's right of way resulting in a health and safety concern for farm machinery passing.
- No trunked surface is provided on the right of way to negate ruts developing and damaging farm machinery passing from soft clay to hardcore walking paths of differing levels and resulting in potential pedestrian injury.
- The proposed surface water drainage retention system appears to go under and beside the third party right of way possibly resulting in rain water flowing towards the right of way resulting in subsidence as farm machinery passes leading to possible collapse of pipes impacting on the third party right of way. Farm roadway specifications or proposed levels of right of way have not been provided to counter this.

- There is no legal agreement in place relating to the use of the car park and restrictions to access to the car park have previously resulted in cars parking in the vicinity obstructing access to neighbouring properties.
- Bus access to the car park is restricted resulting in potential traffic safety issues on the adjoining regional road.
- This right of way has been blocked on many occasions by members of the GAA club. Unimpeded access to the third party's lands is required.
- The proposal will intensify the use of the site. There is no traffic system in the car park which is poorly lit, and the proposal is dangerous for pedestrians and traffic.
- It is requested that permission is refused.

6.2. **Applicant Response**

A response from the applicant can be summarised as follows:

- The issues raised are legal issues that have no place in the planning process.
- The applicants have made every effort to address the matters raised which do not relate to the proper planning and development of the site and the Board is asked to dismiss the appeal as vexatious.
- The proposal includes a slight re-alignment of the existing right of way to provide easier access for the appellant for agricultural vehicles.
- It is not disputed that a right of way exists and details of engagement between the GAA club, Pinewood Laboratories and the third party are outlined.
- Temporary access arrangements will be made during construction to ensure the third party rights are secured.
- No works have taken place which resulted in removal of physically defined and agreed boundary lines.
- An adjoining land owner through whose land the right of way also passes has raised no issues.

- The applicants are committed to ensuring safe access for the third party and it is proposed to surface the right of way in a suitable hardcore material.
- The proposal does not seek to intensify the use on the site, it seeks to provide better quality sporting and recreational facilities to the local community.
- Spaces within the Pinewood Laboratories car park are available to the club to use and are required in evenings and weekends when the car park is not in use and this arrangement has been in place for some time with no issues encountered.
- Buses are not allowed and the club has a key to the barrier when needed.

6.3. **Planning Authority Response**

None received.

6.4. **Observations**

None on file.

7.0 **Assessment**

7.1. Having examined the application details and all other documentation on file, including all of the submissions received in relation to the appeal, the reports of the local authority, and inspected the site, and having regard to relevant local/regional/national policies and guidance, I consider that the main issue in this appeal are as follows:

- Impact on Right of Way
- Traffic Safety and Car Parking
- Surface Water Drainage
- Other Matters

7.2. **Impact on Right of Way**

7.2.1. Concerns are raised in relation to the impact of the proposal on the appellants right of way and that the proposal realigns an existing right of way. Having assessed the

proposed development I note that a right of way is indicated within the appeal site along its northern boundary and extending outside of the appeal site through the adjoining car park. The site layout plan indicates 'existing right of way to be amended to provide easier access' and the first party response states a slight realignment of the right of way is proposed. I note that the proposed site layout plan drawings submitted with the planning application provide for a right of way and the first party's response confirms that the right of way will be kept free from obstruction during construction and operation. Whilst I note the concerns of the third party relating to realignment of the right of way and issues relating to the right of way being blocked during use of the pitch in the past, I consider that any alterations to rights of way are a matter between the party's concerned and are not a matter for the Board. Section 5.13 of the Development Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (June 2007), states the planning system is not designed as a mechanism for resolving disputes about title to land or premises and these are ultimately matters for resolution in the Courts. Section 34(13) of the Planning Act (as amended) states that a person is not be entitled solely by reason of a permission to carry out any development. Having regard to the above I do not consider the proposed development should be refused on these grounds.

- 7.2.2. I note that the PA attached Condition 11 which states that the right of way illustrated on the site layout plans submitted to the Planning Authority on the 27th of January 2025 shall be provided and maintained free from obstruction. As outlined above I consider that matters relating to the right of way are not relevant to the consideration of this appeal. If the Board decides to grant permission, I do not consider it appropriate to attach a condition to this effect.

7.3. Traffic Safety and Car Parking

- 7.3.1. The appeal site is accessed via an existing vehicular access off the R671 which serves the GAA club and the neighbouring Pinewood premises. Car parking is located in front of the Pinewood building and an access road off the car park provides access to the GAA pitch.
- 7.3.2. The third party raises concerns that the proposal will intensify the use of the site, that there is no legal agreement in place relating to the use of the car park and restrictions to access to the car park have previously resulted in cars parking in the

vicinity obstructing access to neighbouring properties. Concerns are also raised in relation to restrictions to bus access resulting in potential traffic safety issues on the adjoining regional road.

- 7.3.3. The first party response states that the proposal does not seek to intensify the use on the site but rather to provide better quality sporting and recreational facilities to the local community. The response notes that parking spaces within the Pinewood Laboratories car park are available to the club to use and that these spaces are required in evenings and weekends when the car park is not in use and this arrangement has been in place for some time with no issues encountered. It is further noted that buses are not permitted to access the car park and that the club have a key to the barrier when needed.
- 7.3.4. The appeal site relates to an existing sports ground where it is stated parking arrangements are in place with the adjoining premises, Pinewood Laboratories in relation to the use of car parking facilities. The parking area is not included within the appeal site boundary. I note that the proposed development is stated to accommodate the existing needs of Ballymacarbry and I am of the view that there is unlikely to be any significant increase in traffic levels above that which currently exists. I note that no issue was raised by the PA in regard to car parking capacity. I also note the proximity of the appeal site to the village centre and its accessibility by public footpath. I consider the proposed development will not result in any changes to the existing parking arrangement which is located outside of the appeal site boundary. If the Board decides to grant permission, I recommend inclusion of a condition requiring bicycle parking to be provided within the appeal site and agreed with the PA prior to commencement of development.
- 7.3.5. The appeal raises concerns that the proposed swept path assessment does not take into consideration widths and turning circles of agricultural vehicles passing the right of way and that the proposal will result in a health and safety concern for farm machinery, and that the surface on the right of way is not appropriate for farm machinery and has the potential to result in pedestrian injury.
- 7.3.6. A 'Proposed Swept Path Assessment' drawing for a tractor and trailer has been submitted which demonstrates access for agricultural vehicles within the appeal site boundary as well as through the adjoining car park. The PA noted in their

assessment that the applicant has not proposed to alter existing vehicular or pedestrian access arrangements for patrons of the club and did not raise concerns in relation to the swept path analysis. Having reviewed the drawings submitted I am satisfied that the applicant has demonstrated that vehicular access can be accommodated for farm vehicles via the right of way. I note that proposed levels of the right of way and perimeter walking track are indicated on drawings submitted with the further information response and I am satisfied that these area acceptable.

- 7.3.7. As the proposal is for the replacement of an existing pitch, I am of the opinion that the subject proposal will not result in traffic above and beyond what already exists as associated with facilities and activities already in place and therefore do not consider matters relating to roads, parking and traffic to be a reason for refusal.

7.4. Surface Water Drainage

- 7.4.1. The appeal raises concerns that the proposed surface water drainage retention system appears to go under and beside the third party right of way possibly resulting in rain water flowing towards the right of way resulting in subsidence as farm machinery passes leading to possible collapse of pipes and that farm roadway specifications or proposed levels have not been provided to counter this.
- 7.4.2. It is proposed that surface water run-off from the proposed grass pitch will percolate to ground and surface water runoff from the proposed training pitch and astro turf pitch will be directed to soakaways. Engineering drawings and reports submitted with the planning application and the response to further information show two proposed soakaways located in the vicinity of the right of way and proposed storm sewer pipes as well as proposed levels for the pitches and the right of way. Soakaway test results submitted with the application conclude that the ground conditions are suitable for a soakaway. Following a request for further information in relation to surface water drainage the PA raised no concerns. The first party response to the appeal states that the right of way will be surfaced in suitable hardcore material.
- 7.4.3. I note that the site is partly located within Flood Zone A and Flood Zone B. The site slopes gently towards the southwest corner with existing levels generally from 49.18 to 52.05 metres OD. A site-specific flood risk assessment submitted in response to the further information request notes that it is proposed to install two soakaways within the site boundary to manage surface water and reduce flood risk to

surrounding lands. It is noted that there is no increase in impermeable area associated with the development and that the proposed pitches will be positioned at a level above potential flood levels. Proposed ground levels indicated limited changes in ground levels in the vicinity of the right of way and walking route.

- 7.4.4. Having regard to the details submitted in relation to surface water drainage and proposed levels, I do not consider the proposal is likely to result in impacts on ground stability as raised by the third party and I am satisfied that the proposed surface water drainage infrastructure is adequate to serve the proposed development.

7.5. Other Matters

- 7.5.1. The appeal raises concerns in relation to works carried out in recent years which removed physically defined and agreed boundary lines. I consider that these matters are outside the scope of the appeal and are not matters for the consideration of the Board.
- 7.5.2. I note the planning authority included condition 1(b) which omitted the erection of floodlights having regard to the description of the proposed development which relates to “groundworks for the future floodlighting of all pitches.” The reason for this condition is for the stated purpose of clarifying the permission, noting that the development description refers to ‘ground works for the future floodlighting of all pitches’. I note that the first party has not appealed this condition and I consider it appropriate that a condition to this effect be attached if the Board decides to grant permission. Furthermore, I note that proposed floodlighting has the potential to have indirect impacts on bats potentially foraging/roosting in adjacent woodland and/or along the adjacent river corridor. If the Board decides to omit this condition I recommend the inclusion of a condition requiring the floodlights shall be directed and cowed such as to ensure minimal overspill on these habitats and that details in this regard shall be agreed with the Planning Authority in advance of commencement of development in the interests of protection of biodiversity.

7.6. Water Framework Directive Assessment

- 7.6.1. I have assessed the proposed development and have considered the objectives as set out in Article 4 of the Water Framework Directive which seek to protect and, where necessary, restore surface and ground water waterbodies in order to reach

good status (meaning both good chemical and good ecological status), and to prevent deterioration. Having considered the nature, scale and location of the project, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because there is no conceivable risk to any surface and/or groundwater water bodies either qualitatively or quantitatively (refer to Appendix 4).

8.0 AA Screening

- 8.1. The applicant submitted an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and Natura Impact Statement as part of the planning application. The Stage 1 AA Screening Report provided a description of the proposed development, identified European Sites within a possible zone of influence of the development, assessed effects and gave a screening determination.
- 8.2. In screening the need for Appropriate Assessment, it was determined that the proposed development could result in significant effects on the Lower River Suir SAC (site code 002137) in view of the conservation objectives of those sites and that Appropriate Assessment under the provisions of S177U was required.
- 8.3. Following an examination, analysis and evaluation of the NIS and all associated material submitted I consider that adverse effects on site integrity of the Lower River Suir SAC (site code 002137) can be excluded in view of the conservation objectives of these sites and that no reasonable scientific doubt remains as to the absence of such effects.
- 8.4. My conclusion is based on the following:
 - Detailed assessment of construction impacts.
 - Effectiveness of mitigation measures proposed.
 - Application of planning conditions to ensure application of these measures.
 - The proposed development will not affect the attainment of the conservation objectives for the Lower River Suir SAC.

9.0 Recommendation

I recommend that permission is granted, subject to conditions.

10.0 Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the provisions of the Waterford City and County Development Plan 202, within which the subject site is zoned Rural Village and Objective DO9 which states that the site shall be reserved for open space purposes, to the planning history of the site and its established use for sport and recreational purposes and given the nature, extent and design of the development proposed, it is considered that subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, that the proposed development would provide valuable sports facilities for the community, would be acceptable in terms of surface water drainage and road and traffic safety and would be in keeping with the established character of the area. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

11.0 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 such conditions require details to be agreed with the planning authority, the developer shall agree such details in writing with the planning authority prior to commencement of development and the development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the agreed particulars.

Reason: In the interests of clarity.

2. The mitigation measures contained in the submitted Natura Impact Statement (NIS), shall be implemented.

Reason: To protect the integrity of European Sites.

3. The proposed development shall be amended as follows:

(a) The proposed flood lighting shall be omitted.

(b) Safe and secure bicycle parking spaces shall be provided within the site.

Details of the layout and marking demarcation of these spaces shall be

submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development.

Revised drawings showing compliance with these requirements shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development.

Reason: In the interests of proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

4. Site development and building works shall be carried out only between the hours of 0800 to 1900 Mondays to Fridays inclusive, between 0800 to 1400 hours on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays and public holidays. Deviation from these times will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances where prior written approval has been received from the planning authority.

Reason: In order to safeguard the residential amenities of property in the vicinity.

5. Water supply and drainage arrangements, including the attenuation and disposal of surface water, shall comply with the requirements of the planning authority for such works and services.

Reason: In the interest of public health

6. Prior to the commencement of any works associated with the development hereby permitted, the developer shall submit a detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) for the written agreement of the planning authority. The CEMP shall incorporate details for the following: collection and disposal of construction waste, surface water run-off from the site, on-site road construction, and environmental management measures during construction including working hours, noise control, dust and vibration control and monitoring of such measures. A record of daily checks that the construction works are being undertaken in accordance with the CEMP shall be kept at the construction site office for inspection by the planning authority. The agreed CEMP shall be implemented in full in the carrying out of the development.

Reason: In the interest of environmental protection.

I confirm that this report represents my professional planning assessment, judgement and opinion on the matter assigned to me and that no person has influenced or sought to influence, directly or indirectly, the exercise of my professional judgement in an improper or inappropriate way.

Bernadette Quinn
Planning Inspector

02nd July 2025

Form 1 - EIA Pre-Screening

Case Reference	ABP-322172-25
Proposed Development Summary	Levelling and relocation of pitch with all associated site works.
Development Address	Fourmilewater GAA club, Ballymacarbry, Ballymacarbry Co. Waterford, E91 F7A4
	In all cases check box /or leave blank
1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA? (For the purposes of the Directive, "Project" means: - The execution of construction works or of other installations or schemes, - Other interventions in the natural surroundings and landscape including those involving the extraction of mineral resources)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, it is a 'Project'. Proceed to Q2.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No, No further action required.
2. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 1, Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, it is a Class specified in Part 1. EIA is mandatory. No Screening required. EIAR to be requested. Discuss with ADP.	State the Class here
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Class specified in Part 1. Proceed to Q3	
3. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) OR a prescribed type of proposed road development under Article 8 of Roads Regulations 1994, AND does it meet/exceed the thresholds?	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, the development is not of a Class Specified in Part 2, Schedule 5 or a prescribed type of proposed road	

<p>development under Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994.</p> <p>No Screening required.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class and meets/exceeds the threshold.</p> <p>EIA is Mandatory. No Screening Required</p>	<p>State the Class and state the relevant threshold</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class but is sub-threshold.</p> <p>Preliminary examination required. (Form 2)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>If Schedule 7A information submitted proceed to Q4. (Form 3 Required)</p>	<p>State the Class and state the relevant threshold</p>

<p>4. Has Schedule 7A information been submitted AND is the development a Class of Development for the purposes of the EIA Directive (as identified in Q3)?</p>	
<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Pre-screening determination conclusion remains as above (Q1 to Q3)</p>

Inspector: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 2 - AA Screening Determination

Screening for Appropriate Assessment Test for likely significant effects ABP-322172-25

Step 1: Description of the project and local site characteristics

Brief description of project	Levelling and relocation of pitch with all associated site works (see Section 2 of Inspector's Report for full description).
Brief description of development site characteristics and potential impact mechanisms	<p>The appeal site, with an area of 2.3ha, contains existing GAA pitches. It is proposed to level and relocate an existing full sized GAA pitch from the southeast to the northwest boundary of the site and replace the existing training pitch with a 3,090m² artificial pitch to be located at the south east of the site adjoining the club house. Permission is also sought for an astro pitch, hurling wall, 2 metre wide perimeter walking track, perimeter fencing and low-level lighting.</p> <p>The site is generally flat with a gradual slope towards the west. The site is bound by agricultural fields to the northwest, woodlands to the northeast, Pinewood Healthcare facility to the southeast and a hedgerow and the River Nire to the southwest.</p> <p>The appeal site is partly located within the Lower River Suir SAC along its southern boundary with the river Nire. The area of the SAC located within the appeal site comprises dense planting along the southern boundary of the site which separates the site from the Nire river. The western corner of the site is within flood zone A and B and a small part of the north of the site is within flood zone B.</p>
Screening report	Y
Natura Impact Statement	Y Prepared by Panther Ecology Limited
Relevant submissions	None

Step 2. Identification of relevant European sites using the Source-pathway-receptor model

The NIS identifies five European sites potentially in the zone of influence of the project. I note that the applicant included a greater number of European sites in their initial screening consideration with sites within 40km of the development site considered. There is no ecological justification for consideration of the sites beyond those listed below, and I have only included those sites with any possible ecological connection or pathway in this screening determination.

European Site (code)	Qualifying interests ¹ Link to conservation objectives (NPWS, date)	Distance from proposed development (km)	Ecological connections ²	Consider further in screening ³ Y/N
Lower River Suir SAC (site code 002137)	https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002137.pdf Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330] 1410 Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260] Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels [6430] Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0] <i>Taxus baccata</i> woods of the British Isles [91J0] <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092] <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) [1095] <i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey) [1096] <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> (River Lamprey) [1099] <i>Alosa fallax fallax</i> (Twait Shad) [1103] <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106] <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]	Appeal site is partially located within this SAC.	No works are proposed within the SAC and no habitat removal is proposed within the SAC. Likely significant impacts during construction cannot be ruled out at this stage due to potential water quality impacts. Operational impacts are unlikely due to the absence of a pathway due to the nature and scale of development and the existing use on site.	Y
Nire Valley Woodlands SAC (Site Code 000668)	Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0]	1.3km	No spatial overlap, therefore no direct	N

			connection with this SAC. No hydrological or ecological connection via air or land.	
Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC (Site Code 002170)	<p>Estuaries [1130]</p> <p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]</p> <p>Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220]</p> <p>Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]</p> <p>Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330]</p> <p>Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]</p> <p>Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260]</p> <p>Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0]</p> <p>Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0]</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>	6 km	<p>No spatial overlap, therefore no direct connection with this SAC.</p> <p>No hydrological or ecological connection via air or land.</p> <p>The appeal site is not of interest for mobile species relevant to this SAC.</p>	N

	Vandenboschia speciosa (Killarney Fern) [6985]			
Comeragh Mountains SAC (Site Code 001952)	<p>Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae) [3110]</p> <p>Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitricho-Batrachion vegetation [3260]</p> <p>Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix [4010]</p> <p>European dry heaths [4030]</p> <p>Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060]</p> <p>Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]</p> <p>Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (Androsacetalia alpinae and Galeopsietalia ladani) [8110]</p> <p>Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210]</p> <p>Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220]</p> <p>Hamatocaulis vernicosus (Slender Green Feather-moss) [6216]</p>	7km	No spatial overlap, therefore no direct connection with this habitat. No hydrological or ecological connection via air or land.	N

¹ Summary description / **cross reference to NPWS website** is acceptable at this stage in the report

² Based on source-pathway-receptor: Direct/ indirect/ tentative/ none, via surface water/ ground water/ air/ use of habitats by mobile species

³if no connections: N

Step 3. Describe the likely effects of the project (if any, alone or in combination) on European Sites

Sources of impact and likely significant effects are detailed in the Table below.

AA Screening matrix

Site name Qualifying interests	Possibility of significant effects (alone) in view of the conservation objectives of the site*		
	Impacts	Effects	
Lower River Suir SAC (site code 002137)	<p>Outlined in Section 6 of AA Screening Report and summarized as follows:</p> <p>The site is hydrologically linked to this SAC. Due to proximity of construction works to river Nier potential</p>		

	<p>construction related impacts resulting in deterioration in water quality can arise through the release of suspended solids during soil disturbance works, the release of uncured concrete and the release of hydrocarbons (fuels and oils) resulting in potential significant impacts on the QI of this SAC, particularly QI which have conservation objectives relating to water quality, such as floating river vegetation, White-clawed Crayfish and Atlantic Salmon as well as potential impacts on otter resulting in potential indirect impacts.</p> <p>No construction works will take place within the River Nier or any drainage ditch. No direct impacts are likely.</p>	Potential effect on otter prey availability and potential loss of other water quality dependent QI species as a result of reduction in water quality as outlined in section 6 of AA Screening Report.
	Likelihood of significant effects from proposed development (alone): YES	
	If No, is there likelihood of significant effects occurring in combination with other plans or projects?	
	Possibility of significant effects (alone) in view of the conservation objectives of the site* YES	

* Where a restore objective applies it is necessary to consider whether the project might compromise the objective of restoration or make restoration more difficult.

Further Commentary / discussion

The NIS outlines in Section 6.3 Potential Impacts on Water Quality which can be summarised as follows:
It is not considered that the proposed development would have a significant impact upon the Lower River Suir SAC due to flooding. A small area to the south-west and north are located within a low to medium pluvial or fluvial flood zone. The boundary walkways will be used by pedestrians with no contaminating materials that could impact upon water quality. Proposed ground levels would be at least 2m above the watercourse along the western boundary with elevation increasing to the east. There is no history of flooding at the proposed development according to online OPW records and local knowledge and the risk of flooding at the proposed development would be considered low.

During the construction phase of the project, a deterioration in water quality can arise through the release of suspended solids during soil disturbance works, the release of uncured concrete and the release of hydrocarbons (fuels and oils). A deterioration in water quality has the potential to have a significant impact upon the qualifying interests of the Lower River Suir SAC, particularly qualifying interests which have conservation objectives relating to water quality, such as White-clawed Crayfish and Atlantic Salmon, and on prey availability for otter. The nearest construction works to the River Nier are approximately 2.5m for installation of a new fence along the south-west boundary and construction of a walkway within the existing pitch site. The proposed development will not require any works along the banks of the River Nier and will retain all existing boundary vegetation. This boundary vegetation will act as a buffer zone between the development and the River Nier. The vegetation between the fenced boundary and the existing GAA pitch is comprised of recolonising species with no protected flora or plants associated with a protected site recorded during the site assessment. No works will take place beyond the boundary fence.

While it is considered that a majority of the surface water run-off from the proposed development will percolate to ground during the construction phase, due to the close proximity of some construction works to the watercourse, there is the potential of an impact due to the release of suspended solids and hydrocarbons during the construction phase of the proposed development such as the installation of the new pathway and new fence. Therefore, measures would be required to prevent any impact upon qualifying interests of the Lower River Suir SAC due to a deleterious effect on water quality during the construction phase.

Section 6.4 of the NIS outlines a screening conclusion as follows:

The proposed development site is hydrologically connected to the Lower River Suir SAC (Site Code: 002137) via the River Nier located outside the south-western boundary. It is not considered that the proposed development would result in any significant risk to the protected habitats and species of the Lower River Suir SAC due to habitat fragmentation or loss, reduction in species density or species diversity, or due to the potential introduction of invasive species as no trees or hedgerows are to be removed and the proposed development will not require the importation of topsoil.

However, during construction works, the proposed development has the potential to impact upon the qualifying interests / special conservation interests of the Lower River Suir SAC due to a potential deterioration in water quality. I consider that due to the sites location partly within the SAC and proximity to the watercourse and having regard to likely presence of QI species in the vicinity of the appeal site as identified in the AA Screening report, mitigation measures beyond what would be considered standard mitigation measures are likely to be required.

Therefore, a Natura Impact Statement is required.

Step 4 Conclude if the proposed development could result in likely significant effects on a European site

In accordance with Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and on the basis of the information considered in this AA screening, I conclude that it is not possible to exclude that the proposed development alone will give rise to significant effects on the Lower River Suir SAC in view of the site's conservation objectives.

It is therefore determined that appropriate assessment (stage 2) under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, of the proposed development is required.

Proceed to AA.

Appendix 3 – Appropriate Assessment Determination

Appropriate Assessment

The requirements of Article 6(3) as related to appropriate assessment of a project under part XAB, sections 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) are considered fully in this section.

Taking account of the preceding screening determination, the following is an appropriate assessment of the implications of the proposed development of the levelling and relocation of an existing sports pitch, proposed all weather training pitch and astro pitch with all associated site works in view of the relevant conservation objectives of the Lower River Suir SAC (site code 002137) based on scientific information provided by the applicant.

The information relied upon includes the following:

- Stage 1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment prepared by Panther Ecology Ltd
- Natura Impact Statement prepared by Panther Ecology Ltd

I am satisfied that the information provided is adequate to allow for Appropriate Assessment.

I am satisfied that all aspects of the project which could result in significant effects are considered and assessed in the NIS and mitigation measures designed to avoid or reduce any adverse effects on site integrity are included and assessed for effectiveness.

Submissions/observations

None in relation to designated sites.

NAME OF SAC/ SPA (SITE CODE): Lower River Suir SAC (site code 002137)

Summary of Key issues that could give rise to adverse effects (from screening stage):			
(i) Water quality degradation during construction (ii) Spread of invasive species			
Qualifying Interest features likely to be affected	Conservation Objectives Targets and attributes	Potential adverse effects	Mitigation measures (summary)
Lower River Suir SAC (site code 002137)			
<i>Following an examination of all QIs of this SAC, the table below provides details of those QI's in which there is any likely feasible pathway/QIs likely to be affected.</i>	To maintain or restore the favourable conservation conditions A full list of conservation objectives, targets and attributes is available on the following link: https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002137.pdf	Refer to NIS Table 7.1	
Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculus fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation [3260]	Conservation Objective: To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculus fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation The development site is located within the current distribution, current range and favourable reference range of this qualifying interest. The Conservation Objectives for this qualifying interest include water quality attributes. Little is known of the habitat's distribution or its sub-types in Lower River Suir SAC.	Potential impact due to a potential deterioration in water quality during construction.	Refer to NIS Section 8.1 Best practice measures for the protection of watercourses from hydrological, hydrogeological and air/land pathways will be applied and specific mitigation measures for the protection of these species are detailed in Section 8.1 of the NIS.
Margaritifera margaritifera (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029]	Conservation Objective: To restore the favourable conservation condition of Freshwater Pearl Mussel.	Potential impact due to a potential deterioration in	

	<p>An indirect impact could occur due to a deterioration in water quality.</p> <p>The development is located outside the current known distribution, current range and favourable reference range of this qualifying interest. The SAC Conservation Objectives report notes that the conservation objective of Margaritifera margaritifera applies to the Clodiagh Catchment approximately 53km (hydrologically) downstream of the proposed development. There are NBDC records for pearl mussel along the River Suir upstream of River Nier and downstream (EPA River Biologists, 2006).</p>	<p>water quality during construction.</p> <p>Pearl Mussel are sensitive to sedimentation and nutrient enrichment. Furthermore, as the larval stages rely on salmonid fish hosts, any potential impact on salmonids can have an impact upon the Freshwater Pearl Mussel. While there is currently no evidence to suggest that populations exist within the vicinity of or immediately downstream of the development site, there remains a possibility, although slight, that Freshwater Pearl Mussel are present within the area. Therefore, precautionary protective measures would need to be undertaken during construction works</p>	
Austropotamobius pallipes (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092]	<p>Conservation Objective: To maintain the favourable conservation condition of White-clawed Crayfish</p>	<p>Potential impact due to a potential deterioration in</p>	Refer to NIS Section 8.1

	The conservation status of crayfish in the SAC is dependent on good water quality status, as this species requires clean water (Q3-4).	water quality during construction	Best practice measures for the protection of watercourses from hydrological, hydrogeological and air/land pathways will be applied and specific mitigation measures for the protection of these species are detailed in Section 8.1 of the NIS.
Petromyzon marinus (Sea Lamprey) [1095]	<p>Conservation Objective: To restore the favourable conservation condition of Sea Lamprey</p> <p>The proposed development is located outside the current known distribution but within the current range of the Sea Lamprey (NPWS, 2019b). The SAC Conservation Objectives report notes that upstream migration may be inhibited by artificial barriers, and that artificial barriers are currently preventing juvenile lampreys from accessing the full extent of suitable habitat. A complete survey of the River Suir in 2006 found that Sea Lamprey were found in the Suir catchment as far upstream as the River Tar but not beyond Cahir (O'Connor, W., 2007). There are no recent NBDC records of sea lamprey within the River Suir however a complete absence within the River Suir channel cannot be ruled out due to the migratory behaviour of this species.</p>	<p>Potential impact due to a potential deterioration in water quality during construction.</p> <p>Changes in water quality have the potential to impact on the population of Sea Lamprey,</p>	
<p>Lampetra planeri (Brook Lamprey) [1096]</p> <p>Lampetra fluviatilis (River Lamprey) [1099]</p>	<p>Conservation Objectives:</p> <p>To restore the favourable conservation condition of Brook Lamprey</p> <p>To restore the favourable conservation condition of River Lamprey</p> <p>None in relation to water quality.</p> <p>The proposed development is located within the current known distribution and current range of brook lamprey, and within the current distribution and current range of river lamprey (NPWS, 2019c).</p> <p>The SAC Conservation Objectives report notes that diffuse source pollution may be having localised impacts on</p>	<p>Whilst there are no CO's relating to water quality, a potential deterioration in water quality may impact upon this species. An indirect impact could occur due to a deterioration in water quality during construction.</p>	<p>Refer to NIS Section 8.1</p> <p>Best practice measures for the protection of watercourses from hydrological, hydrogeological and air/land pathways will be applied and specific mitigation measures for the protection of these species are detailed in Section 8.1 of the NIS.</p>

	populations of <i>L. fluviatilis</i> . Water quality impacts from runoff have the potential to impact on the populations of both species.		
<i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106]	<p>Conservation Objective: To restore the favourable conservation condition of Atlantic Salmon</p> <p>Water quality (EPA Q value): At least Q4 at all sites sampled by EPA. An indirect impact could occur due to a deterioration in water quality.</p> <p>The proposed development is located within the current known distribution, current range and favourable reference range of this qualifying interest (NPWS, 2019c). Salmon are present throughout much of the Suir catchment. Inland Fisheries Ireland undertook fish survey of the River Suir in 2018 and found that Atlantic Salmon are abundant within the River Suir. It is probable that Atlantic Salmon are present within the vicinity of the proposed development.</p>	There is potential for the proposed development to have an impact upon this qualifying interest due to a potential deterioration in water quality during construction.	Refer to NIS Section 8.1 Best practice measures for the protection of watercourses from hydrological, hydrogeological and air/land pathways will be applied and specific mitigation measures for the protection of these species are detailed in Section 8.1 of the NIS.
<i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]	<p>Conservation Objective: To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Otter</p>	A potential deterioration in water quality may affect fish populations and availability.	Refer to NIS Section 8.1 Best practice measures for the protection of

	<p>The proposed development is located within the current distribution, current range and favourable reference range of otter (NPWS, 2019c). The NBDC has otter records within the vicinity of proposed development site. The National Otter Survey of Ireland 2010/12 (Reid et al., 2013) report noted that the occurrence of otter within survey sites for the south-eastern river basin district was 70.8%. While no evidence of otter (including spraints and tracks) was recorded during the site assessment, given the proximity of the River Nier to the development site and given the most recent NBDC records for otter within the River Nier approximately 60m upstream, a significant impact on water quality could indirectly impact upon this qualifying interest by causing a reduction in prey populations and availability.</p>	<p>An indirect impact could occur due to a deterioration in water quality during construction.</p>	<p>watercourses from hydrological, hydrogeological and air/land pathways will be applied and specific mitigation measures for the protection of these species are detailed in Section 8.1 of the NIS.</p>
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The above table is based on the documentation and information provided on the file and I am satisfied that the submitted NIS has identified the relevant attributes and targets of the Qualifying Interests.

Assessment of issues that could give rise to adverse effects in view of conservation objectives

I have undertaken a site visit and examined the documentation received, including the submitted NIS and associated documentation.

The applicant's AA screening concluded that there is potential for effects on the Lower River Suir SAC (site code 002137) at construction stage due to a potential deterioration in water quality on the species listed above. It is therefore concluded that there is potential for likely significant effects on a number of QI's of this SAC as outlined in the above table. In relation to the remaining QI's it is noted that the proposal is located outside of the current known distribution, current range and favourable reference range of these qualifying interests and therefore a potential deterioration in water quality during construction works would not be anticipated to have a significant adverse impact upon these qualifying interests and mitigation measures are not required in relation to these QI.

Potential Water Quality Impacts:

The proposed development has the potential to impact upon the qualifying interests of the Lower River Suir SAC due to a potential deterioration in water quality during the construction phase through (section 7.0 of NIS):

- Release of suspended solids during soil disturbance works. Suspended solids could become entrained in surface water run-off and could affect aquatic qualifying interests / special conservation interests through deposition. An increase in sediments has the potential to impact upon fish species by damaging gravel beds required for spawning, smothering fish eggs and in extreme cases, by interfering with the gills of fish. An increase in suspended solids also has the potential to reduce water clarity, which can impact the light penetration of water and may also affect certain behaviours of aquatic fauna such as foraging success.
- A potential source of chemical contamination would be from the release of hydrocarbons (oils, fuels) from construction plant, equipment.
- Potential release of uncured concrete which, if entered a waterbody, would alter the pH locally, potentially leading to the death of aquatic flora and fauna and an alteration to the waterbody substrate.

No works will take place within a watercourse or drainage ditch however, construction works will take place adjacent to the River Nier for the construction of a pedestrian walkway, installation of a new boundary fence and levelling of existing pitches for redevelopment. While it is unlikely that the proposed development would have a significant direct impact upon protected species, the development could have an indirect impact via a deterioration in water quality. Therefore, measures to ensure that there would be no significant impacts to the listed habitats or species, as listed above, of the Lower River Suir SAC, due to a potential deterioration in water quality should be employed as outlined in Section 8.1 of the NIS.

Invasive Species:

The risk of invasive species being introduced onto the site during the construction phase of the project is considered to be low, with no import of materials with the potential to contain invasive flora species. The proposed development will require the importation of certified building aggregates, with no importation of topsoil required. Soils excavated during construction works would be stockpiled and re-used for site levelling, therefore no importation of topsoil or subsoil would be required as part of the development works. Any excess soils would be used for landscaping or exported offsite via a licenced contractor. Therefore, it is considered that there would be no significant risk to protected habitats and species as a result of invasive species from the site.

There are no direct and/or indirect adverse effects anticipated during the operational phase of the Proposed Development.

Mitigation measures and conditions:

The focus of the mitigation measures proposed are at preventing ingress of pollutants and silt into receiving watercourses. This is to be achieved via design (avoidance) and application of mitigation measures. Detail is provided on sediment control, concrete and hydrocarbon control. Measures include:

- Management of silt including installation of silt fencing.
- Management of construction pollutants in terms of standard and best practice.
- General guidelines on preventing accidental introduction or spreading of invasive species.

I am satisfied that the preventative measures which are aimed at interrupting the source-pathway-receptor are targeted at the key threats to protected aquatic flora and fauna and by arresting these pathways or reducing possible effects to a non-significant level, adverse effects can be prevented.

In-combination effects

I am satisfied that in-combination effects has been assessed adequately in the NIS. The applicant has demonstrated satisfactorily that no significant residual effects will remain post the application of mitigation measures and there is therefore no potential for in-combination effects.

Findings and conclusions

The applicant determined that following the implementation of mitigation measures the construction and operation of the proposed development alone, **or in combination with other plans and projects**, will not adversely affect the integrity of this European site.

Based on the information provided, I am satisfied that adverse effects arising from aspects of the proposed development can be excluded for the European sites considered in the appropriate Assessment. No direct impacts are predicted. Indirect impacts would be temporary in nature and mitigation measures are described to prevent ingress of silt laden surface water and other construction related pollutants. I am satisfied that the mitigation measures proposed to prevent adverse effects have been assessed as effective and can be implemented.

Reasonable scientific doubt

I am satisfied that no reasonable scientific doubt remains as to the absence of adverse effects.

Site Integrity

The proposed development will not affect the attainment of the Conservation objectives of the Lower River Suir SAC (site code 002137). Adverse effects on site integrity can be excluded and no reasonable scientific doubt remains as to the absence of such effects.

Appropriate Assessment Conclusion: Integrity Test

In screening the need for Appropriate Assessment, it was determined that the proposed development could result in significant effects on the Lower River Suir SAC (site code 002137) in view of the conservation objectives of those sites and that Appropriate Assessment under the provisions of S177U was required.

Following an examination, analysis and evaluation of the NIS and all associated material submitted I consider that adverse effects on site integrity of the Lower River Suir SAC (site code 002137) can be excluded in view of the conservation objectives of these sites and that no reasonable scientific doubt remains as to the absence of such effects.

My conclusion is based on the following:

- Detailed assessment of construction impacts.
- Effectiveness of mitigation measures proposed.
- Application of planning conditions to ensure application of these measures.
- The proposed development will not affect the attainment of the conservation objectives for the Lower River Suir SAC.

Appendix 4: WFD IMPACT ASSESSMENT STAGE 1: SCREENING

Step 1: Nature of the Project, the Site and Locality

An Bord Pleanála ref. no.	ABP-322172-25	Townland, address	Fourmilewater GAA club, Ballymacarbry, Ballymacarbry Co. Waterford, E91 F7A4
Description of project		It is proposed to level and relocate an existing full sized pitch from the southeast to the northwest boundary of the site and replace the existing training pitch with a 3,090m ² artificial pitch to be located at the south east of the site adjoining the club house. Permission is also sought for an astro pitch, installation of hurling wall and a 2 metre wide perimeter walking track together with perimeter fencing and low-level lighting, ground works for the future floodlighting of all pitches, solar panels to existing dressing rooms and all associated ancillary site works including soakaway	
Brief site description, relevant to WFD Screening,		<p>The site has an area of 2.3 hectares and is located within the settlement of Ballymacarbry on the northern side of the Regional Road R671 and the Nire River. The site contains a grass GAA pitch located towards the south east and centre of the site, a smaller grass pitch to the northwest and a changing room facility to the east.</p> <p>The site is bound by agricultural fields to the northwest, woodlands to the northeast, commercial development to the southeast and a hedgerow and the River Nire to the southwest beyond which is the regional road R671.</p> <p>The site is generally flat with a gradual slope towards the south west with levels generally from 49.18 to 52.05 metres OD. The River Nire adjoins the sites southern boundary and this river flows into the River Suir, approximately 4.1km west of the site.</p> <p>Part of the site at its western boundary is located within an area identified as Flood Zone A and B and an area in the north of the site is in Flood Zone B.</p> <p>The Soakaway design report identifies the soil as brown sandy gravel and ground water was not met at a depth of 1.2m. The National Soils Hydrology Map identifies the site as having alluvium soils of various texture.</p>	

Proposed surface water details		Two soakaways are proposed to provide for surface water drainage of the artificial pitch surface with soakaway designed in accordance with BRE Digest 365. Soakaway test carried out on site produced results showing that the subsoil on site is highly permeable and is suitable for on-site stormwater infiltration. On-site stormwater infiltration is proposed for the grass pitch.				
Proposed water supply source & available capacity		Existing connection to public water supply				
Proposed wastewater treatment system & available capacity, other issues		Existing on site waste water treatment plant				
Others?						
Step 2: Identification of relevant water bodies and Step 3: S-P-R connection						
Identified water body	Distance to (m)	Water body name(s) (code)	WFD Status	Risk of not achieving WFD Objective e.g.at risk, review, not at risk	Identified pressures on that water body	Pathway linkage to water feature (e.g. surface run-off, drainage, groundwater)

River Nire		Adjoins site boundary	NIER_030 IE_SE_16N010400	Good	Not at risk	None	Yes – potential surface water run-off
Groundwater Waterbody		Underlying site	Comeragh IE_SE_G_154	Good	Not at risk	None	Well drained soil conditions
Step 4: Detailed description of any component of the development or activity that may cause a risk of not achieving the WFD Objectives having regard to the S-P-R linkage.							
CONSTRUCTION PHASE							
No.	Component	Water body receptor (EPA Code)	Pathway (existing and new)	Potential for impact/ what is the possible impact	Screening Stage Mitigation Measure*	Residual Risk (yes/no) Detail	Determination** to proceed to Stage 2. Is there a risk to the water environment? (if ‘screened’ in or ‘uncertain’ proceed to Stage 2.
1.	Site clearance /construction	NIER_030	This watercourse adjoins the sites southern boundary	Siltation, Ph (Concrete), Hydrocarbon Spillages	Standard construction practice CEMP	No	Screened out

2.	Site clearance /construction	Comeragh IE_SE_G_154	Drainage through soil/bedrock	Hydrocarbon spillages	Standard construction measures /conditions	No	Screened out
OPERATIONAL PHASE							
3.	Surface water run-off	NIER_030	None	None	None	No	Screened out
4.	Groundwater discharge	Comeragh IE_SE_G_154	None	None	None	No	Screened out
DECOMMISSIONING PHASE							
5.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

