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APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT & NATURA IMPACT STATEMENT

December 2025

Prepared for
Thawside Ltd.

Site Address
Friar's Court, Ballina, Co. Mayo

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Statement of Authority

This report was authored by Larry Manning has over 14 years' experience as an ecologist, working across consultancy, research, and regulatory environments. He demonstrates high professional standards through rigorous application of environmental legislation, ethical practice, and clear scientific reporting. He maintains a strong CPD record, including specialist training in bat ecology, marine mammal mitigation, and acoustic fisheries research. Larry's expertise includes Appropriate Assessment, EclA, EIAR (biodiversity chapters), and a wide range of specialist surveys (ornithology, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, bats, aquatic ecology). Larry has led ecological assessments for large-scale infrastructure, offshore renewable energy, and conservation projects, ensuring compliance with Irish and EU legislation. He is skilled in data management, statistical analysis, and the design of mitigation and monitoring strategies to achieve robust, evidence-based outcomes.

As a Principal Ecologist, Larry has developed new ecological service offerings, prepared winning tenders, and contributed to business growth through strategy and client engagement. He has led successful stakeholder consultations with developers, agencies, NGOs, and local communities. Larry applies leadership and diplomacy to achieve project objectives while maintaining biodiversity protection as a core priority.

This report was co-authored by Marie Greaney (B.Sc (Hons), M.Sc). Marie is an ecologist at OMC with a background in zoology (B.Sc.) and conservation (M.Sc.) She is experienced in conducting field surveys in ecological consultancy including habitat assessments, bird, and mammal surveys, with particular expertise in bat ecology. She is accomplished in report writing both academically and professionally in consultancy and has experience in preparing Appropriate Assessments, Natura Impact Statements, and Ecological Impact Assessment Reports.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

OMC has been commissioned by Thawside Ltd. to complete an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and a Natura Impact Statement for a proposed development located Ballina, Co. Mayo. The proposed project is for the construction of 47 no. houses consisting of 32 no. 3 bed semi-detached houses, 6 no. 2 bed semi-detached houses and 9 no. 4 bed detached houses including all ancillary site works and connection to public services at Friars Court, Laghtadawannagh, Killala Road, Ballina, Co Mayo (Planning ref: 2560372).

The site is located within 15km of and is hydrologically connected a number of Natura 2000 sites. As such, the potential impacts of the proposed works must be assessed by the competent authority, in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (Assessment of Plans and Projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites). This report provides the necessary information for the completion of an Appropriate Assessment regarding the potential impact of the proposed works on sites of European importance.

1.2 Requirement for Appropriate Assessment

Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, commonly referred to as the 'Habitats Directive', and Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament, and of the Council on the conservation of wild birds (codified version of Directive 79/409/EEC as amended), hereon referred to as the 'Birds Directive' are European Community Legislations established for the conservation of biodiversity and natural habitats. Sites, species and habitats under protection of Directive 92/43/EEC (Habitats Directive) and Directive 2009/147/EC (Birds Directive) are referred to as Natura 2000 sites (also referred to as European sites in the 2011 Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations).

The term Natura 2000 sites will be used in this report. Two types of Natura 2000 site designation exist and are categorised as follows:

- the Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which is designated for the conservation of flora, fauna and habitats of European ecological importance under the Habitats Directive.
- the Special Protection Area (SPA), which is designated for the conservation of bird species and habitats of European ecological importance under the Birds Directive.

These 2 categories of sites collectively comprise a network of European protected areas, "Natura 2000". The term 'Qualifying Interests' (QI) refers to the specific named habitats and/or non-bird species which require protection and for which an SAC or SPA is designated. The term Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) refers to the named bird species which require protection and for which an SPA is designated. However, the terminology of QI is predominantly used in practice for non-bird and bird species alike. The term Qualifying Interests is used throughout this report.

Habitats which require protection are listed in Annex I of the Habitats Directive and include lakes, rivers, heaths and turloughs, as well as raised bogs and active blanket bogs. Species whose habitats require protection are listed in Annex II (Habitats Directive) and include Lesser Horseshoe Bat, Salmon and Otter. Endangered and migratory species which require SPAs are listed in Annex I of the Birds Directive. Naturally, protection is given on the basis of priority, with specific/heightened protection strategies pertaining to certain habitats/species.

2 Methodology

2.1 Screening

Articles 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive outline the testing mechanisms which underpin the decision-making process for the consideration of plans and projects that could significantly impact the ecological integrity of a Natura 2000 site. The Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government guidelines (DOELHG, 2009) indicates the European Commission's methodological guidance (EC 2000, 2002, 2006, 2018), outlining the approach of how plans and projects should be carried out within Natura 2000 sites. This is categorised as a 4-stage process. Whether a further stage is required is dependent on the outcome of each successive stage.

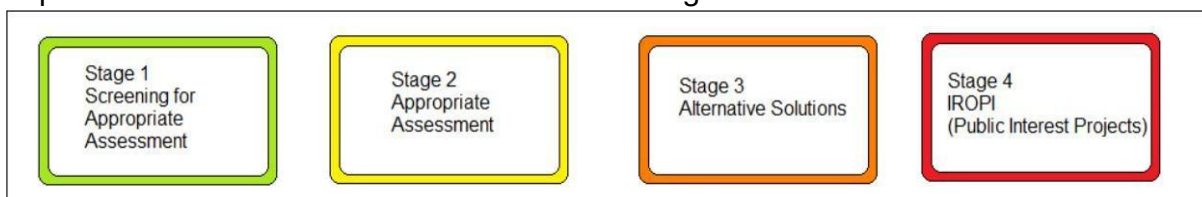


Figure 2.1 Stages of Appropriate Assessment

The screening process examines the likely effects of a project or plan on a Natura 2000 site and determines whether it can be objectively concluded that these effects will not be significant. There are four steps involved in this process which are outlined as follows.

- It must be considered whether the project or plan is inherently connected to or necessary to the management of the site.
- A description of the project or plan, in conjunction with other projects or plans which, together, could possibly have a significant effect on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site.
- Identification of the possible ecological effects on the Natura 2000 site.
- An assessment of the significance of the potential effects.

2.2 Scope

The objective of the screening exercise is to determine the possible implications of the project, alone or in conjunction with other plans or projects on the conservation objectives and ecological integrity of Natura 2000 sites. This report has been prepared in accordance with the European Commission guidance document 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/EEC (EC, 2001) and the Department of the Environment's Guidance on the Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland (Amended 2010).

Following the preliminary screening, if effects are deemed significant or indeterminate on the conservation objectives and the general integrity of Natura 2000 sites, further assessment under Article 6(3) is necessary and it is recommended that a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) be completed.

2.3 Information Sources and Surveys

This report was prepared with reference to the following information sources:

- The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2010) Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland. Guidance for Planning Authorities.
- European Commission (2002) Management of Plans and Projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites. Methodological guidance on the provision of Articles 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. Office for Official Publications for the European Communities, Luxembourg.
- Aerial photographs and maps of designated sites, information on habitats and species

within these sites and information on protected plant or animal species, conservation objectives, site synopses and standard data forms for relevant designated sites.

- NPWS Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland Guidance for Planning Authorities, 10 December 2009 (as revised 11 February 2010).
- Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites (2001)
- Managing Natura 2000 sites: The provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive (2018).
- NPWS (2013). The Status of Protected EU Habitats and Species in Ireland.
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)- Information pertaining to water quality, geology and licensed facilities within the area.
- Myplan.ie – Map-based information.
- National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) – Information pertaining to protected plant and animal species within the study area.
- National Planning Application Database.

3 Description of Development

3.1 Background

The description of the development is the first step in identifying any potential impacts. This should include all features of the project, that each can be individually considered in respect of the conservation objectives of nearby Natura 2000 sites.

3.2 Site Location

The proposed development site is located approximately 2km North of Ballina, Co. Mayo (IG Ref: G 23729 20291). The site is situated to the west of the existing Friar's Court housing estate on the Killala Road and is accessed by the existing local roads. The Sruffaunbrogue stream, which flows South into the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC, is located along the western and southern borders of the proposed site (Figure 3.1).

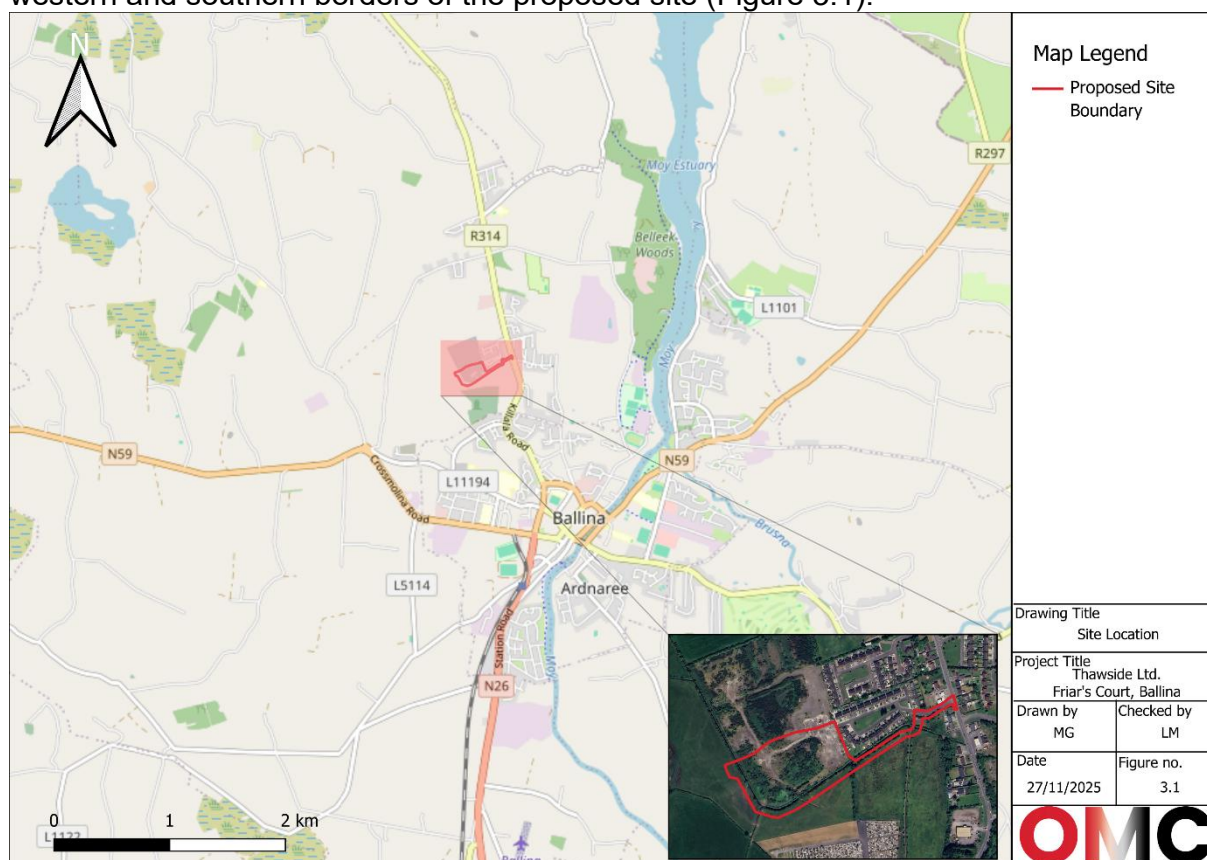


Figure 3.1 Location of the proposed development in relation to Ballina town.

3.3 Project Description

This appropriate assessment is to inform the construction of 47 no. houses consisting of 32

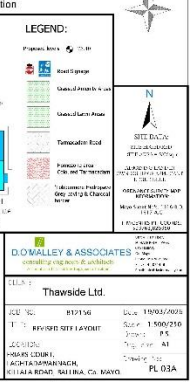
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Figure 3.2 Site Layout (Full size version submitted with application)



Figure 3.3 Site layout of temporary road and swale pond as per Inland Fisheries Ireland request.

3.4 Relationship to Designated Sites

Natura 2000 sites within 15km radius of the proposed site location were considered, as per NPWS guidelines, and are listed in table 3.1 below. Six Natura sites were identified within the initial 15km zone of influence are shown in (Figure 3.3). Considering all the factors involved in the Construction and Operational phases and their possible interactions with the ecology of the sites identified within this map, it is concluded that the Source – Pathway – Receptor (SPR) model must be adopted to ensure scientifically robust analysis.

Table 3.1: Natura 2000 sites within 15km of the proposed development site.

Natura 2000 Site	Code	Distance from proposed site
River Moy SAC	002298	1.5 km
Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC	000458	2.1 km
Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA	004036	2.1 km
Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA	004228	6.5 km
Lough Hoe Bog SAC	000633	11.0 km
Ox Mountains Bogs SAC	002006	12.7 km

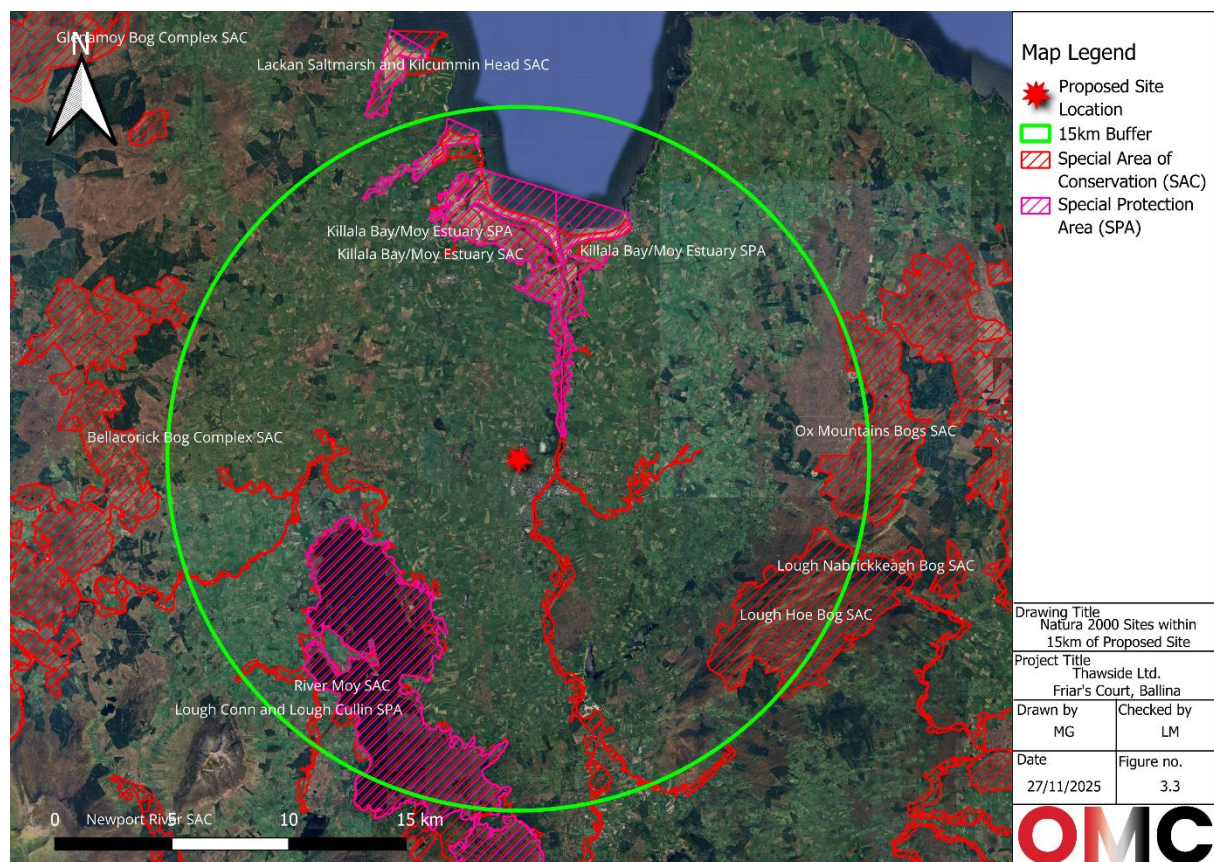


Figure 3.4 Location of proposed development in relation to Natura 2000 sites within 15km.

3.5 Zone of Influence & Source-Pathway-Receptor Analysis

The “Zone of Influence” can be defined as the difference between the spatial footprint of a project or development and the extent of the developments’ effects on the surrounding environment, in relation to habitat and species populations. When assessing effects on wildlife habitats and populations we must consider light, noise and hydrological connections. National guidance (DEHLG 2009) states that “*Although a distance of 15km is currently recommended in the case of plans...[however] for projects, the distance*

could be much less than 15km, and in some cases less than 100m, but this must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis" Thus the Zone of Influence requires to be defined for each project. When defining the zone of influence, it is important to consider;

- The location of Natura 2000 sites
- The area extent to which downstream habitats could be polluted
- To what degree could noise and light impact ecological receptors

Components of the SPR Model are as follows:

Source

The 'source' refers to the origin of a potential stressor or pressure. In AA terms this can be a pollutant discharge (point or diffuse), habitat disturbance, hydrological change (e.g. drainage, abstraction), nutrient loading, noise, light, etc. Characterisation of the source requires quantification where possible: type of substance or disturbance, magnitude/volume, timing, spatial extent, and persistence. In Ireland, for example in groundwater protection or nutrient risk assessment, source characterisation includes contaminant type, loading, hydraulic load, depth of release.

Pathway

The pathway is the route by which the source's impact may travel to the receptor. This can involve physical, chemical, biological transport or transmission mechanisms: groundwater flow, surface runoff, overland flow, soil leaching, atmospheric dispersion, hydrological connectivity. It also includes attenuation, delay, or transformation along the route. The pathway determination involves understanding soil, subsoil, geology, hydrology, connectivity, etc. Ireland's groundwater vulnerability mapping, studies such as "PATHWAYS" and the development of Pollution Impact Potential (PIP) maps reflect this component.

Receptor

The receptor is the ecological or human target which may be affected by the source via one or more pathways. In AA this often means the Qualifying Interests or Species Conservation Interests of European Sites, their habitats, species, hydrological features (e.g. groundwater bodies, surface water bodies), ecosystem functions, etc. The receptor's sensitivity, location, spatial extent, ecological requirements, thresholds, exposure susceptibility are critical elements. For example, in groundwater protection the receptor may be the aquifer itself, or springs, wells, or Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems.

Given the size and scale of the proposed project, in conjunction with its proximity and connectivity to ecological pathways and receptors, the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC and SPA (site codes: 004036, 000458), the River Moy SAC (site code: 002298) and the Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA (site code: 004228) are being considered further. It has been identified that the construction of the proposed development may have direct and indirect impacts on aquatic species within the River Moy SAC due to the connectivity of the on-site stream to the river. The proposed development occurs within the foraging core foraging range of two of the avian QIs of the Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA. As this SPA overlaps with the River Moy SAC, it is also hydrologically connected with the proposed development and therefore there is potential for indirect construction related impacts on the qualifying interests of this site. The Site is also hydrologically connected to the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC and SPA.

The other sites within 15km were assessed and no pathway to these ecological receptors was identified. Therefore, these sites will not be impacted by the proposed development. This NIS assesses the qualifying interests of the European sites that have been identified and evaluates the potential adverse impacts of the proposed works on these sites.

4 Receiving Environment

When assessing the receiving environment, it is important to consider which classifications of habitats are present on the proposed site, as well as hydrology in the surrounding area and the presence of invasive species. The receiving environment describes the ecological setting into which the proposed development may discharge effects and provides the baseline context for screening.

A desk study was conducted to provide an overview of the current ecological baseline conditions prior to the proposed site works, where baseline conditions refer to those which exist in the absence of proposed activities (CIEEM 2018). The desk study included a review of available ecological data including a review of online web-mappers including those provided by the National Park and Wildlife Service (NPWS), National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC), Water Framework Directive (WFD), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of Public Works (OPW Flood Maps), Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) and topographical maps. A review of the NPWS Article 17 maps was also included.

4.1 Habitats and Invasive Species

Desk Study

A review of the publicly available NBDC web-mapper (accessed 26/11/2025) provided 138 records of vascular plants within the 1km of the proposed site (Appendix 1).

A review of the NPWS Flora (Protection) Order 2022 Map Viewer web application returned no records for Vascular Plants, Charophytes and Lichens that are listed in and legally protected under the Flora (Protection) Order 2022 within 1 km of the application site (accessed 26/11/2025).

The NPWS online map viewer for bryophytes was accessed to assess bryophytes recorded within 5km of the development site. No records of bryophytes were recorded within 5 km of the proposed site (accessed 26/11/2025).

Field Survey

A multi-disciplinary site survey was carried out to classify the habitats and species present on site on the 21st November 2025. This survey was carried out in accordance with NRA *Guidelines in Ecological Surveying Techniques for Protected Flora and Fauna* on National Road Schemes (NRA, 2009), and habitats were classified in accordance with 'A Guide to Habitats in Ireland' (Fossitt, 2000), which designates habitat classifications based on the plant species present and management history of the area. This survey also included a search for Invasive Alien Species as listed under The European Union (Invasive Alien Species) Regulations 2024 (S.I. No. 374 of 2024).

The proposed site is accessed via an existing road west of the Killala Road R314 which runs west through Friars Court housing estate. The proposed development site is described as a brownfield site, with evidence of previous works carried out in the form of construction materials, ESB substation and stockpiled fill material from work carried out under previous planning reference P03/2432. The site is uneven ground due to previous works and slopes down to the stream on the west and south boundaries.

The site can be primarily classified as Recolonising Bare Ground (ED3), with areas of Spoil and Bare Ground (ED2), and Scrub (WS1) (Figure 4.1). A Lowland River (FW2), the Sruffaunbrogue stream (Code: IE_WE_34M021100), borders the Western and Southern boundaries of this site. On the west site boundary, flow direction is north to south, and on the south site boundary, flow direction is west to east. Flow is strongest along the western boundary and becomes more slow-flowing on the southern site boundary. A retaining

concrete wall forms the Western and Southern Riverbank. The opposite bank of the river, where the temporary haul road and bridges are to be constructed, has a natural riverbank. The adjoining habitat can be classified as three fields of Improved agricultural grassland (GA1) separated by Hedgerows (WL1).

The primary habitat, Recolonising Bare Ground (ED3), is characterised by species such as Colt’s Foot (*Tussilago farfara*), Dandelion (*Taraxacum vulgaria*), Plantains (*Plantago spp.*), and grasses (*Poa spp.*) which are dominant throughout. Areas of Scrub (WS1) are prevalent throughout the site and consist mainly of Gorse (*Ulex spp.*), Brambles (*Rubus spp.*), and Grey Willow (*Salix spp.*), which have colonised soil heaps and are now well-established. Areas of Spoil and Bare Ground (ED2) are confined to the low-lying areas that are regularly disturbed. Areas of this habitat, particularly to the West near the existing housing estate, are littered with construction materials and anthropogenic waste, which, if left unmanaged, may contaminate the land. A full list of species identified on site is available in Table 4.1.

Butterfly bush (*Buddleja davidii*) was identified on site and appropriate control measures will be taken for the eradication and control of this species (Figure 4.2). Japanese knotweed was also identified on site in previous surveys associated with the current planning application. A specific management plan has been completed and will be implemented as part of the planning conditions as per the method statement accompanying the planning application (Appendix 2).

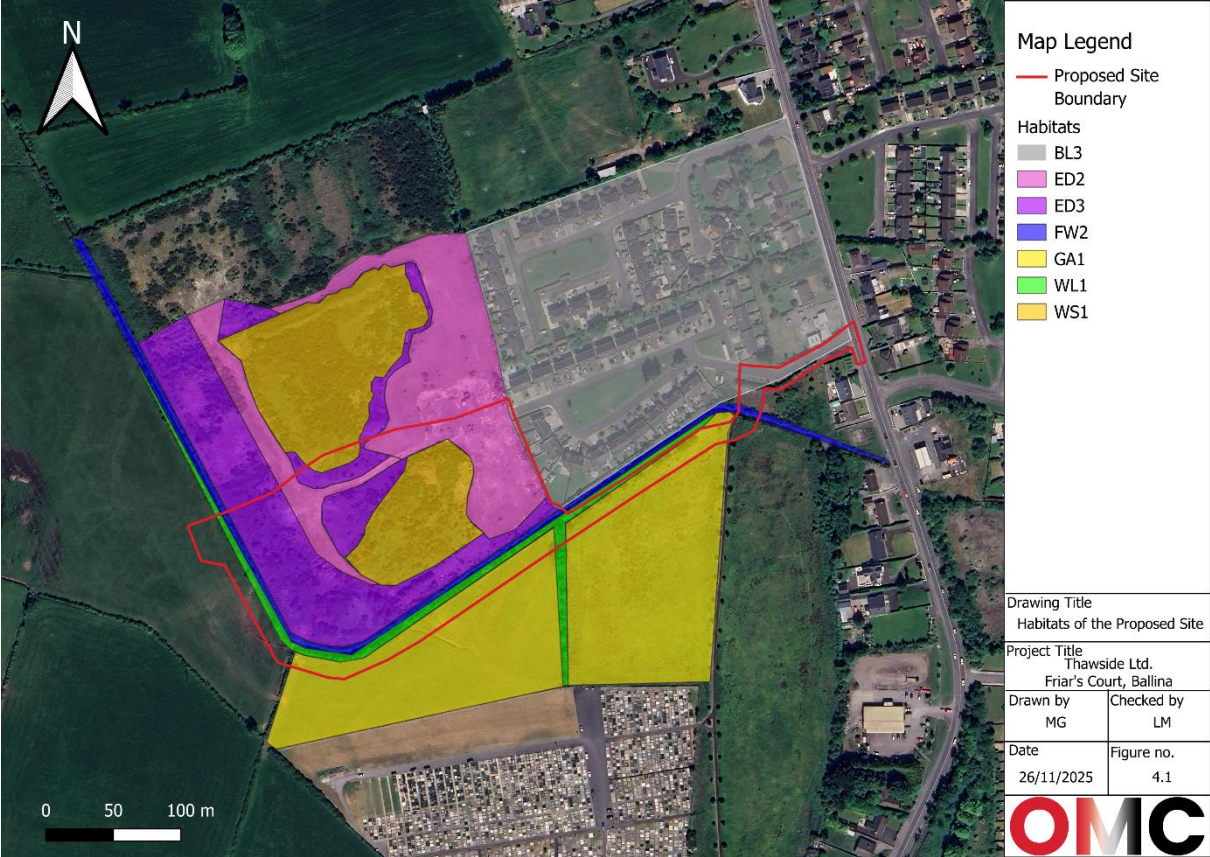


Figure 4.1 Habitats of the proposed site.



Figure 4.2 Invasive species location.

Table 4.1 Vascular plants identified within the application site boundary.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Ash tree	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Least Concern
Bramble	<i>Rubus spp.</i>	Least Concern
Bush Vetch	<i>Vicia sepium</i>	Least Concern
Butterbur	<i>Petasites hybridus</i>	Least Concern
Butterfly-bush	<i>Buddleja davidii</i>	Invasive Medium Risk
Carlina Thistle	<i>Carlina vulgaris</i>	Least Concern
Clover	<i>Trifolium spp.</i>	Least Concern
Coltsfoot	<i>Tussilago farfara</i>	Least Concern
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum vulgaria</i>	Least Concern
Gorse	<i>Ulex spp.</i>	Least Concern
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Least Concern
Heath star moss	<i>Campylopus introflexus</i>	Least Concern
Hemlock	<i>Conium maculatum</i>	Least Concern
Hogweed	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	Least Concern
Ivy	<i>Hedera hibernica</i>	Least Concern
Meadowsweet	<i>Filipendula ulmaria</i>	Least Concern
Orchid	<i>Ophrys apifera</i>	Least Concern
Oxe eye daisy	<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	Least Concern
Plantain	<i>Plantago spp.</i>	Least Concern

Ragwort	<i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>	Least Concern
Sedge	<i>Carex spp.</i>	Least Concern
Square-stalked St. John's wort	<i>Hypericum tetrapterum</i>	Least Concern
Thistle	<i>Cirsium spp.</i>	Least Concern
Tusset grass	<i>Poa spp.</i>	Least Concern
Tutsen	<i>Hypericum androsaemum</i>	Least Concern
Vetch	<i>Vicia spp.</i>	Least Concern
Wild Carrot	<i>Daucus carota</i>	Least Concern
Willow	<i>Salix spp.</i>	Least Concern

4.2 Hydrology

Hydrology assumes a critical role in the ecological evaluation of a site. Water pollution is one of the main factors responsible for indirect impacts on Natura 2000 sites through the migration of pollution (sediments and hydrocarbons) downstream where they come into contact with conservation objectives.

Water quality information and individual waterbody status for all river districts and coastal waters in Ireland is available via the online EPA map viewer. The topography of the site was reviewed using the Open Topographic Data Viewer by Geological Survey Ireland (GSI). A review of this data for the proposed development was conducted on the 26th November 2025.

The proposed development is located in the Water Framework Directive catchment ID 34, Moy & Killala Bay. It is further classified within the WFD sub-catchment Moy_SC_100. The Sruffaunbrogue stream (Code: IE_WE_34M021100), which flows South into the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC, is located along the western and southern borders of the proposed site (Figure 4.3). A review of topographical maps revealed a downward gradient towards this river. The water quality status of this river is classified as 'Good' and the associated groundwater waterbody (Code: IE_WE_G_0035) has a status of 'Not at Risk' (WFD 2019). Urban run-off has been identified as a potential pressure for this waterbody (EPA).

A review of the OPW flood maps (accessed 16/12/2025) was conducted to assess the flood risk of the proposed site. Predictive flood event maps are available for the Sruffaunbrogue stream. CFRAM fluvial flood maps W34BLN_EXFCB_F3_03 and W34BLN_EXFCB_F3_04 (Appendix 3) show that the site has no risk of flooding, but areas of land south and west of the stream, where the proposed temporary road and bridges will be located, has a low-high risk of flooding. The site is low risk for groundwater flooding and there is no history of flooding on the lands.

The associated transitional and coastal waterbody, the Moy Estuary, is classified as 'At Risk'. Pressures identified for this waterbody include agriculture, urban wastewater, and domestic wastewater.

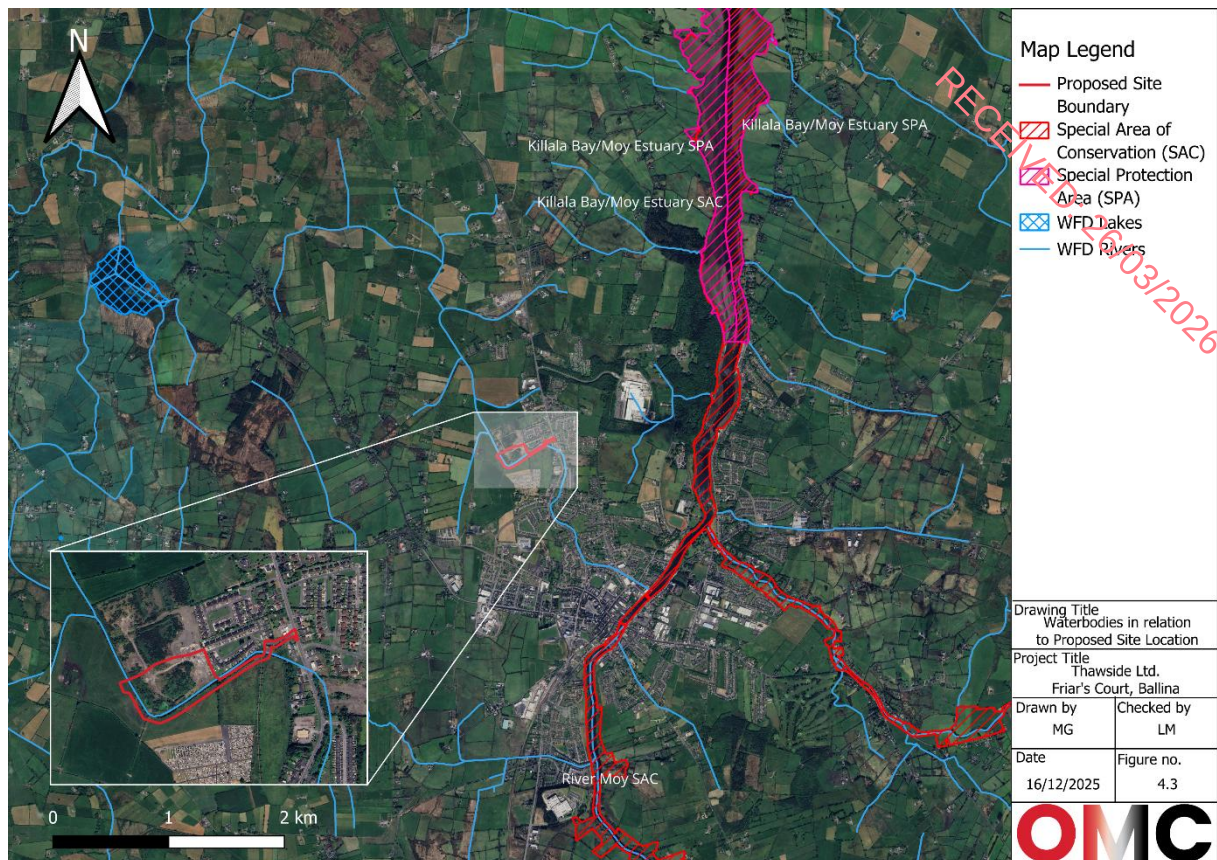


Figure 4.3 Location of waterbodies in relation to proposed site location.

4.3 Fauna

4.3.1 Birds

Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA

Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA is located approximately 2.1km Northeast of the proposed development. The species of qualifying interest for this site are Ringed Plover, Golden Plover, Grey Plover, Sanderling, Dunlin, Bar-tailed Godwit, Curlew and Redshank. This SPA is also very important for wintering waterfowl and provides excellent feeding grounds for the birds, as well as high-tide roosts (NPWS 2014a).

Lough Conn and Lough Cullen SPA

Lough Conn and Lough Cullen SPA is located approximately 6.5km Southeast from the proposed site and overlaps with the River Moy SAC which is approximately 1.5km from the site. It is recommended that the conservation objectives for this SPA be used in conjunction with those for overlapping sites as appropriate (NPWS 2014b).

The species of qualifying interest for this site are the Tufted Duck, Common Scoter, Common Gull, and Greenland White-Fronted Goose. The proposed site is within the estimated maximum foraging range of 5-8km for the Greenland White-Fronted Goose, and 50km for the Common Gull and is outside the core foraging range for all other qualifying species.

Field Survey

During a multi-disciplinary site survey on 21st November 2025 and subsequent site visit on the 28th November 2025, twelve species of bird were observed on or around the proposed site (Table 4.2). Ten species are green-listed in Ireland, one species, the Common Gull (*Larus canus*) is Amber Listed, and one species, Snipe (*Gallinago Gallinago*) is red-listed.

The majority of species were observed in the scrub areas of the site or flying over the site. The Common Gull is a qualifying interest of the Lough Conn & Lough Cullen SPA which overlaps with the River Moy SAC. One individual was observed on site over the stream.

Common Gulls are known to require regular and efficient access to freshwater and terrestrial habitats ecologically connected to the colony in order to forage as well as to engage in other maintenance behaviours (NPWS 2025). Therefore, the Sruffaunbrogue stream located on site is considered suitable habitat for this species and appropriate mitigation measures should be employed to maintain the integrity of this feature.

No qualifying species of the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA were observed on site, and no significant habitat of breeding, roosting, or foraging potential for these species was recorded.

Table 4.2 Bird species recorded on site (*indicates QI species) (November 2025).

Common Name	Scientific Name	Observed	Conservation Status
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	1	Green Listed
Common Gull*	<i>Larus canus</i>	1	Amber Listed
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	1	Green Listed
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	6	Green Listed
Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	2	Green Listed
Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	6	Green Listed
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	1	Green Listed
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	2	Green Listed
Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	1	Red Listed
Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	1	Green Listed
Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	1	Green Listed
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	1	Green Listed

4.3.2 Annex II Species

River Moy SAC

The River Moy SAC is designated for the following Annex II species; White Clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*), Sea Lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*), Brook Lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*), Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*), and Otter (*Lutra lutra*).

Salmon are widely distributed in the River Moy SAC. The many 1st to 5th order tributaries are large enough to support young salmon while being too small to hold significant adult trout populations which would otherwise outcompete the young salmon. Therefore, the River Moy is a highly productive catchment for salmon fisheries.

Sea lamprey tend to remain in the transitional water of major river estuaries. The River Moy population have historically been recorded remaining primarily in the lower reaches of the river around Ballina. Conversely, Brook Lamprey occur in the upper reaches of the river historically being noted on the tributaries Owengarve, Deel, Einagh and Mullaghnoe (O'Connor, 2004). The Otter and White-clawed Crayfish are widespread throughout the system. Information on otter habitat assessment is detailed in section 4.3.3 below.

As the proposed site borders one of the tributaries of the River Moy SAC, and it is known that five Annex II species occur within the Moy and its associated system, it is possible that the proposed works may negatively impact these species and their associated habitats. Potential impacts include the deposition of sediment, concrete or hydrocarbons generated during the construction into the associated tributary, and the migration of construction materials downstream into the River Moy SAC itself. Appropriate mitigation is necessary to protect any negative impact on these species and their associated habitats.

4.3.3 Non -Volant Mammals

A walkover survey was carried out on the 21st November 2025 to assess the presence of a

range of protected animal species and their associated habitats. As it is known that otters occur in the River Moy and associated rivers, the site and adjoining watercourse was searched for evidence of otter presence, including holts, couches, spraints, droppings or tracks. Mammal runs were observed on the bank of the Sruffaunbrogue stream and otter droppings were identified on-site. It is presumed that otters may use this watercourse for commuting or foraging purposes and so it is recommended that mitigation measures be implemented to protect this species (see Section 7).

Numerous mammal tracks were observed throughout the site and were prevalent in the scrub and thickets bordering the stream. The site was searched for evidence of badgers including setts, latrines, shuffle holes, badger paths, tufts of hair, and prints. Badger scat was identified in two locations on-site along with a latrine and snuffle hole. No setts were identified within the site boundary, however thick gorse and bramble made some areas of the scrub habitat inaccessible for investigation. A camera trap was deployed to monitor a well-used mammal run which accessed the inaccessible scrub. No badger activity was captured.

A burrow was located on site and a camera trap was deployed for one week to confirm if it is being actively used. No mammals were confirmed to be using this burrow. The nature of the burrow suggests it is used by a terrestrial mammal such as mink or hare.

The site was searched for evidence of species which are protected under the Irish Wildlife Act 1976-2018, including Irish hare, Irish stoat and pygmy shrew. These species are widespread in Ireland and are likely to be found in the broader area. Foxes were captured on multiple nights on both camera traps, indicating the use of this site by at least one mammal species.

4.3.4 Volant Mammals

A review of the publicly available NBDC web-mapper data revealed records of five bat species within 10km of the proposed development (Table 4.3). All bat species in Ireland are designated protection under Annex IV of the Habitats Directive, and one species the Lesser Horseshoe bat (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*) is designated further protection under Annex II of the directive. The nearest SAC designated for this species is approximately 42km South and the site does not lie within the predicted distribution or foraging range for this species according to the Article 17 guidelines.

The site was assessed for the presence of bats. Following a ground-level preliminary roost assessment, no features with the potential to support roosting or hibernating opportunities were identified on site. The stream and associated treelines and hedgerows as well as the edge habitat of the scrub were identified as potential commuting or foraging corridors for all bat species. Mitigation measures are recommended to limit the extent of impacts on water features and linear vegetation. Therefore, it is unlikely that the proposed development will have any significant effects on these species.

Table 4.3 NBDC records for bat species within 10km (accessed 03/12/2025).

Hectad	Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
G21, G22	Brown Long-eared Bat	<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	Habitats Directive Annex IV
G21, G22	Common Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	Habitats Directive Annex IV
G21, G22	Daubenton's Bat	<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>	Habitats Directive Annex IV
G21, G22	Leisler's Bat	<i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>	Habitats Directive Annex IV
G21	Natterer's Bat	<i>Myotis nattereri</i>	Habitats Directive Annex IV

4.3.5 Reptiles and Amphibians

Reptile and amphibian records within the vicinity of the application site were reviewed using

the National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) “Biodiversity Maps” platform, supplemented by published information from the Herpetological Society of Ireland and the Irish Wildlife Trust. Ireland supports a limited native herpetofauna, with only one widespread reptile species, the common lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*), and three amphibians: the smooth newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*), common frog (*Rana temporaria*), and natterjack toad (*Epidalea calcarata*), the latter of which is restricted to parts of Kerry and not recorded in the Mayo region.

NBDC records indicate that common frog and lizard occur within 10km of the site. These records show that common frog and smooth newt are widely distributed across Mayo, typically associated with wetlands, drainage ditches, and small waterbodies, while common lizard has a broad distribution across upland and coastal habitats in western Ireland. These sources provide presence data only and do not represent systematic survey coverage; therefore, absence of records does not confirm absence of species at site level. It is unlikely that the proposed development will have any negative effects on these taxonomic groups at the local level.

5 Stage 1: Appropriate Assessment Screening

5.1 Description of the Natura 2000 Sites

The primary objective of the Habitats Directive is the upkeep of biodiversity across the European Union through the conservation of natural habitats and wild flora and fauna species. This is achieved through the Natura 2000 network which comprises special areas of conservation (SAC) designated by EU countries under this directive, and special protection areas (SPA) classified under the Birds Directive (Directive 2009/147/EC). Each Natura 2000 site has its own site-specific conservation objectives (SSCO) which aim to guarantee the conservation of habitats in these areas and avoid their deterioration and any significant disturbance to species. In Ireland, the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) is responsible for the designation and management of Natura 2000 sites to ensure favourable conservation status at a national level.

The Habitats Directive states “*Any plan or project not directly connected 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 implication for the site in view of the sites conservation objectives ...the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site...*”

The conservation objectives form the basis of the Appropriate Assessment as it is against these objectives that the assessment is made. In the event that significant negative effects on the conservation objectives of the Natura 2000 site are anticipated, the conservation condition of qualifying interests should be taken into account, and it should be noted that to “restore” favourable conservation condition is more difficult than to “maintain”.

5.2 Natura 2000 Sites Identified

Table 5.1 provides analysis of the Natura 2000 designated site/sites identified in the Source Pathway Receptor analysis. The table includes a screening conclusion based on the likely significant effects which might occur to any of the Qualifying Interests or Special Scientific Interests of the designated sites.

Table 5.1 Natura 2000 sites identified within 15km of the proposed development.

Site Name	Proximity	Qualifying Interests	Screening Assessment
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River Moy SAC (002298)	C. 1.5 km West of proposed development	[6510] Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>, <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>) [7110] Active raised bogs [7120] Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7150] Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7230] Alkaline fens [91A0] Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91E0] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>) [1092] White-clawed Crayfish (<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>) [1095] Sea Lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>) [1096] Brook Lamprey (<i>Lampetra planeri</i>) [1106] Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) [1355] Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>)	Screened In Having regards to the close proximity of the proposed development site and the hydrological connectivity to this SAC, significant effects upon the qualifying interests of this site arising during the construction and/or operation of the development cannot be ruled out.
Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC (000458)	C. 1.4 km East of proposed development	[1130] Estuaries [1140] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1210] Annual vegetation of drift lines [1230] Vegetated Sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1310] <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1330] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritima</i>) [2110] Embryonic shifting dunes [2120] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2130] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)	Screened In Having regards to the close proximity of the proposed development site, it's medium to large size and scale and the hydrological connectivity to this SAC, significant effects upon the qualifying interests of this site arising during the construction and/or operation of the development cannot be ruled out.

		[2190] Humid dune slacks [1014] Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo angustior</i>) [1095] Sea Lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>) [1365] Harbour Seal (<i>Phoca vitulina</i>)	RECEIVED: 26/03/2026
Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA (004036)	C. 2.1 km Northeast of proposed development	[A137] Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>) [A140] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A141] Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>) [A144] Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A149] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A157] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A160] Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A162] Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A999] Wetland and Waterbirds	Screened In Having regards to the close proximity of the proposed development site and the hydrological connectivity to this SPA, significant effects upon the qualifying interests of this site arising during the construction and/or operation of the development cannot be ruled out.
Lough Conn and Lough Cullin SPA (004228)	C. 6.5 km Southwest of proposed development	[A061] Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>) [A065] Common Scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>) [A182] Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A395] Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A999] Wetland and Waterbirds	Screened Out Potential impacts on this SAC are unlikely. No pollution pathways have been identified and there is no predicted loss or disturbance to any habitat within this SAC.
Lough Hoe Bog SAC (000633)	C. 11.0 km Southeast of proposed development	[3110] Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [7130] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [1013] <i>Vertigo geyeri</i> (Geyer's Whorl Snail) [1092] <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> (White-clawed Crayfish)	Screened Out Potential impacts on this SAC are unlikely. No pollution pathways have been identified and there is no predicted loss or disturbance to any habitat within this SAC.
Ox Mountains Bog SAC (002006)	C. 12.7 km West of proposed development	[3110] Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3160] Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds	Screened Out Potential impacts on this SAC are unlikely. No pollution pathways have been identified and there is no predicted loss

		[4010] Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4030] European dry heaths [7130] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7140] Transition mires and quaking bogs [7150] Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [1013] Geyer's Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo geyeri</i>) [1528] Marsh Saxifrage (<i>Saxifraga hirculus</i>)	or disturbance to any habitat within this SAC. RECEIVED: 26/03/2026
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5.3 Impact Prediction and Assessment

Following a description of the proposed project and of the nearby Natura 2000 sites, an assessment for possible impacts can be carried out. This is in compliance with the "Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites- Methodology guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, European Commission, 2002".

The proposed development will occur on lands that are hydrologically connected to the River Moy SAC, the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC and the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA via the Sruffaunbrogue stream. Therefore, taking a conservative approach and considering a worst-case scenario in the absence of mitigation, an accidental pollution event, prolonged rainfall, or an extreme weather event, of a sufficient magnitude during the construction or operational phases of this development, could potentially affect the water quality of the local watercourses and, in turn, the associated Natura 2000 sites. A reduction in water quality of this stream has the potential to impact the habitats and species that are required to maintain or achieve the conservation objectives of the qualifying interests of the screened-in European sites.

Therefore, following a review of the relevant information pertaining to the characteristics of the proposed development, the likelihood of significant effects on any European site, and exercising a precautionary approach, it is not possible to exclude that the proposed development will have a likely significant effect on any European site.

5.4 Screening Conclusions

It cannot be excluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt, on the basis of objective relevant information, and with regard to the conservation objectives of the identified associated European sites, that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other projects or plans, would be likely to have a significant effect on the following European sites:

- River Moy SAC (002298)
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC (000458)
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA (004036)

Therefore, an Appropriate Assessment is required and a Natura Impact Statement will be prepared in respect to the proposed development.

6 Stage 2: Natura Impact Statement

6.1 Introduction

The potential for likely significant effects, in the absence of mitigation, on the following European sites was identified in the screening stage of this Appropriate Assessment:

- River Moy SAC (002298)
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC (000458)
- Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA (004036)

The main objective of the following Natura Impact Statement is to determine whether the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans and/or projects, will have a significant effect on the aforementioned European sites. It aims to achieve this by identifying which individual qualifying features may be adversely affected by the proposed development, and describing the sites further with regard to the Conservation Objectives and site-specific pressures and threats for the identified features. This stage also outlines the mitigation measures that should be implemented to avoid any significant effects on the European sites identified.

6.2 Natura 2000 Sites Identified

6.2.1 River Moy SAC (002298)

Site Summary

The River Moy SAC comprises almost the entire freshwater element of the River Moy and its tributaries including both Loughs Conn and Cullin. There are many towns adjacent to but not within the site including Ballina, Crossmolina, Foxford, Swinford, Kiltimagh and Charlestown.

Oak woodlands are found on the slopes and rising ground around the southern shores of Loughs Conn and Cullin. Alluvial woodland occurs at several locations along the shores of the lakes but is particularly well developed along the river at Coryosla Bridge. Blanket bog occurs on higher ground adjacent to the woodlands, and a number of raised bogs also occur within the site. Alkaline fen is considered to be well developed within the site. This site is one of the most important in the country for the habitat 'lowland hay meadow'.

The Moy system is one of Ireland's premier salmon waters and it also encompasses two of Ireland's best lake trout fisheries in Loughs Conn and Cullin. Although the Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*) is still fished commercially in Ireland, it is considered to be endangered or locally threatened elsewhere in Europe and is listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive. The Moy is a most productive catchment in salmon terms. The site is also important for the presence of four other species listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive, namely Sea Lamprey, Brook Lamprey, Otter and White-clawed Crayfish (NPWS 2020).

Potential Significant Effects

Table 6.1 Impact assessment of the individual qualifying features of the River Moy SAC (002298).

Code	Qualifying Interest	Conservation Objectives	Impact Assessment	Potential for Likely Significant Effects (Y/N)
6510	Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i> , <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>)	To maintain the favourable conservation condition	The SAC is approximately 1.5km hydrologically downstream of the proposed development. However, detailed habitat maps for this QI indicates a distance of 12.4km over-land South from the proposed site.	No

			Therefore, the proposed development is unlikely to give rise to impacts upon the attributes, measures or targets that have been set for the maintenance of this habitat within the SAC.	
7110	Active raised bogs	To restore the favourable conservation condition	The SAC is approximately 1.5km hydrologically downstream of the proposed development. However, detailed habitat maps for this QI indicates a distance of 23.0km over-land Southeast from the proposed site. Therefore, the proposed development is unlikely to give rise to impacts upon the attributes, measures or targets that have been set for the restoration of this habitat within the SAC.	No
7120	Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration	To restore the favourable conservation condition	The SAC is approximately 1.5km hydrologically downstream of the proposed development. Detailed conservation objectives have not yet been set for this habitat but are considered as an integral part of the Active Raised Bogs habitat. Therefore, the proposed development is unlikely to give rise to impacts upon the attributes, measures or targets that have been set for the restoration of this habitat within the SAC.	No
7150	Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i>	To restore the favourable conservation condition	The SAC is approximately 1.5km hydrologically downstream of the proposed development. Detailed conservation objectives have not yet been set for this habitat but are considered as an integral part of the Active Raised Bogs habitat. Therefore, the proposed development is unlikely to give rise to impacts upon the attributes, measures or targets that have been set for the restoration of this habitat within the SAC.	No
7230	Alkaline fens	To maintain the favourable conservation condition	The SAC is approximately 1.5km hydrologically downstream of the proposed development. However, detailed habitat maps for this QI indicates a distance of 6.3km over-land South from the proposed site. Therefore, the proposed development is unlikely to give rise to impacts upon the attributes, measures or targets that have been set for the maintenance of this habitat within the SAC.	No
91A0	Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i>	To maintain the favourable	The SAC is approximately 1.5km hydrologically downstream of the	No

	and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles	conservation condition	proposed development. However, detailed habitat maps for this QI indicates a distance of 14.2km over-land South from the proposed site. Therefore, the proposed development is unlikely to give rise to impacts upon the attributes, measures or targets that have been set for the maintenance of this habitat within the SAC.	
91E0	Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>)	To maintain the favourable conservation condition	The SAC is approximately 1.5km hydrologically downstream of the proposed development. However, Map 6 of the conservation objectives for this SAC indicates a distance of C. 14.2km over-land South for this QI from the proposed site. Therefore, the proposed development is unlikely to give rise to impacts upon the attributes, measures or targets that have been set for the maintenance of this habitat within the SAC.	No
1092	White-clawed Crayfish (<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>)	To maintain the favourable conservation condition	The SAC is approximately 1.5km hydrologically downstream of the proposed development. Taking a precautionary approach, there is potential for negative impacts on this species via deterioration of water quality associated with the construction phase of the development.	Yes
1095	Sea Lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>)	To maintain the favourable conservation condition	The SAC is approximately 1.5km hydrologically downstream of the proposed development. Taking a precautionary approach, there is potential for negative impacts on this species via deterioration of water quality associated with the construction phase of the development.	Yes
1096	Brook Lamprey (<i>Lampetra planeri</i>)	To maintain the favourable conservation condition	The SAC is approximately 1.5km hydrologically downstream of the proposed development. Taking a precautionary approach, there is potential for negative impacts on this species via deterioration of water quality associated with the construction phase of the development.	Yes
1106	Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>)	To maintain the favourable conservation condition	The SAC is approximately 1.5km hydrologically downstream of the proposed development. Taking a precautionary approach, there is potential for negative impacts on this species via deterioration of water quality associated with the construction phase of the	Yes

			development.	
1355	Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>)	To maintain the favourable conservation condition	The SAC is approximately 1.5km hydrologically downstream of the proposed development. Taking a precautionary approach, there is potential for negative impacts on this species via deterioration of water quality associated with the construction phase of the development.	Yes

Site Specific Pressures and Threats

Site specific pressures, threats, and activities with the potential to impact the European Site are outlined in the Natura 2000 data form. These were reviewed in relation to the proposed development and a summary is provided in Table 6.2. The majority of pressures and threats identified are not associated with the current project and will therefore will not impact the SAC further. Diffuse pollution (H01) and Invasive alien species (I01) have the potential to be associated with the current project. Mitigation measures outlined in section 7 will be implemented to ensure that the proposed development will not impact or exacerbate any of the threats or pressures identified for this site.

Table 6.2 Site-specific pressures for River Moy SAC (002298)

Negative Impacts			
Rank	Threats and Pressures		Inside/Outside/Both
H	H01.05	Diffuse pollution to surface waters due to agricultural and forestry activities	Both
M	D04.02	Aerodrome, heliport	Both
H	B01	Afforestation	Both
M	C01.03	Peat extraction	Both
H	I01	Invasive alien species	Both
H	B05	Use of fertilizers (forestry)	Both
H	A02.01	Agricultural intensification	Both

[1092] White-clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*)

According to the site synopsis for the River Moy SAC, White-clawed Crayfish are widespread throughout the system. It is generally more widespread in the upper tributaries of the River Moy and the rivers which feed Loughs Conn and Cullin. The overall assessment of conservation status is 'Bad', and the overall trend is 'Deteriorating' as per the Article 17 report (NPWS 2019). A distribution map is available for the species in the Site-Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCO) document (Map 7) which indicates that the closest record is approximately 4km overland from the proposed development. The individual targets and attributes of this species are listed in table 6.3 below.

Table 6.3 Targets and attributes associated with the SSCO for White-clawed crayfish.

Attribute	Target
Distribution	No reduction from baseline
Population structure: Recruitment	Juveniles and/or females with eggs in all occupied tributaries
Negative indicator species	No alien crayfish species
Disease	No instances of disease
Water quality	At least Q3-4 at all sites sampled by EPA
Habitat quality: Heterogeneity	No decline in heterogeneity or habitat quality

[1095] Sea Lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*)

According to the site synopsis for the River Moy SAC, the Sea Lamprey is regularly

encountered in the lower stretches of the river around Ballina. The adjacent Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC encompasses the estuarine elements of sea lamprey habitat (NPWS 2016). The overall assessment of conservation status is 'Bad', and the overall trend is 'Stable' as per the Article 17 report (NPWS 2019). The individual targets and attributes of this species are listed in table 6.4.

Table 6.4 Targets and attributes associated with the SSCO for Sea Lamprey.

Attribute	Target
Distribution: extent of anadromy	Greater than 75% of main stem length of rivers accessible from estuary
Population structure of juveniles	At least three age/size groups present
Juvenile density in fine sediment	Mean catchment juvenile density at least 1/m ²
Extent and distribution of spawning habitat	No decline in extent and distribution of spawning beds
Availability of juvenile habitat	More than 50% of sample sites positive

[1096] Brook Lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*)

According to the site synopsis for the River Moy SAC, site is important for the presence Brook Lamprey. Silting habitat is essential for larval lamprey and they can be severely impacted by sediment removal, and Artificial barriers can block lampreys' migration both up- and downstream, thereby possibly limiting species to specific stretches, restricting access to spawning areas and creating genetically isolated populations. The overall assessment of conservation status is 'Favourable', and the overall trend is 'Stable' as per the Article 17 report (NPWS 2019). The individual targets and attributes of this species are listed in table 6.5 below.

Table 6.5 Targets and attributes associated with the SSCO for Brook Lamprey.

Attribute	Target
Distribution	Access to all watercourses down to first order streams
Population structure of juveniles	At least three age/size groups present
Juvenile density in fine sediment	Mean catchment juvenile density at least 2/m ²
Extent and distribution of spawning habitat	No decline in extent and distribution of spawning beds
Availability of juvenile habitat	More than 50% of sample sites positive

[1106] Salmon (*Salmo salar*)

According to the site synopsis for the River Moy SAC, the Moy system is one of Ireland's premier salmon waters. Although the Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*) is still fished commercially in Ireland, it is considered to be endangered or locally threatened elsewhere in Europe and is listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive. The Moy is a most productive catchment in salmon terms and this can be attributed to its being a fingered system with a multiplicity of 1st to 5th order tributaries which are large enough to support salmonids < 2 years of age while at the same time being too small to support significant adult trout numbers and are therefore highly productive in salmonid nursery terms. Salmon run the Moy every month of the year (NPWS 2016). The overall assessment of conservation status is 'Inadequate', and the overall trend is 'Stable' as per the Article 17 report (NPWS 2019). The individual targets and attributes of this species are listed in table 6.6 below.

Table 6.6 Targets and attributes associated with the SSCO for Salmon.

Attribute	Target
Distribution: extent of anadromy	100% of river channels down to second order accessible from estuary
Adult spawning fish	Conservation Limit (CL) for each system consistently exceeded

Salmon fry abundance	Maintain or exceed 0+ fry mean catchment-wide abundance threshold value.
Out-migrating smolt abundance	No significant decline
Number and distribution of redds	No decline in number and distribution of spawning redds due to anthropogenic causes
Water quality	At least Q4 at all sites sampled by EPA

[1355] Otter (*Lutra lutra*)

According to the site synopsis for the River Moy SAC, Otter are widespread throughout the system. It is generally more widespread in the upper tributaries of the River Moy and the rivers which feed Loughs Conn and Cullin. The overall assessment of conservation status is 'Favourable', and the overall trend is 'Improving' as per the Article 17 report (NPWS 2019). A distribution map is available for the species in the Site-Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCO) document (Map 8) which indicates that the closest record is approximately 2km overland from the proposed development. The individual targets and attributes of this species are listed in table 6.7.

Table 6.7 Targets and attributes associated with the SSCO for White-clawed Crayfish.

Attribute	Target
Distribution	No significant decline
Extent of terrestrial habitat	No significant decline
Extent of freshwater (lake) habitat	No significant decline
Extent of freshwater (river) habitat	No significant decline
Couching sites and holts	No significant decline
Fish biomass available	No significant decline
Barriers to connectivity	No significant increase

6.2.2 Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC (000458)

Site Summary

The River Moy flows to the sea via a long, narrow estuarine channel. After approximately 8 km, the estuary widens to form a north-facing triangular bay, with the towns of Inishcrone (Co. Sligo) and Killala (Co. Mayo) situated on the eastern and western shores, respectively. The estuary is generally in a natural state and is considered to be one of the best examples of a largely unpolluted system in Ireland.

Although much of the fixed dune area has been developed as golf course or improved for agriculture, the site still contains a relatively large area of intact fixed dunes, a priority habitat listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive. Saltmarshes are present in sheltered parts of the site, some of which occur in association with the dune systems.

The site holds populations of three species listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive: Common Seal (*Phoca vitulina*), Sea Lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*) and Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail (*Vertigo angustior*). The site is also very important for wintering waterfowl, with eight species having populations of national importance (NPWS 2015).

Potential Significant Effects

Table 6.8 Impact assessment of the individual qualifying features of the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC (000458).

Code	Qualifying Interest	Conservation Objectives	Impact Assessment	Potential for Likely Significant Effects (Y/N)
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1130	Estuaries	To maintain the favourable conservation condition	The SAC is approximately 1.4km hydrologically downstream of the proposed development. Taking a precautionary approach, there is potential for negative impacts on this habitat via deterioration of water quality associated with the construction phase of the development.	Yes
1140	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide	To maintain the favourable conservation condition	The SAC is approximately 1.4km hydrologically downstream of the proposed development. Taking a precautionary approach, there is potential for negative impacts on this habitat via deterioration of water quality associated with the construction phase of the development.	Yes
1210	Annual vegetation of drift lines	To maintain the favourable conservation condition	The SAC is approximately 1.4km hydrologically downstream of the proposed development. However, map 6 of the conservation objectives indicates that this habitat occurs further downstream and is coastal in nature. Therefore, the proposed development is unlikely to give rise to impacts upon the attributes, measures or targets that have been set for the maintenance of this habitat within the SAC.	No
1230	Vegetated Sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts	To maintain the favourable conservation condition	The SAC is approximately 1.4km hydrologically downstream of the proposed development. Although no detailed habitat maps exist for this habitat, it is coastal in nature and therefore occurs further downstream. Therefore, the proposed development is unlikely to give rise to impacts upon the attributes, measures or targets that have been set for the maintenance of this habitat within the SAC.	No
1310	<i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonising mud and sand	To maintain the favourable conservation condition	The SAC is approximately 1.4km hydrologically downstream of the proposed development. However, map 6 of the conservation objectives indicates that this habitat occurs further downstream and is coastal in nature. Therefore, the proposed development is unlikely to give rise to impacts upon the attributes, measures or targets that have been set for the maintenance of this habitat within the SAC.	No
1330	Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia</i>)	To maintain the favourable conservation condition	The SAC is approximately 1.4km hydrologically downstream of the proposed development. However, map 6 of the conservation objectives	No

	<i>maritimae</i>)		indicates that this habitat occurs further downstream and is coastal in nature. Therefore, the proposed development is unlikely to give rise to impacts upon the attributes, measures or targets that have been set for the maintenance of this habitat within the SAC.	
2110	Embryonic shifting dunes	To restore the favourable conservation condition	The SAC is approximately 1.4km hydrologically downstream of the proposed development. However, map 7 of the conservation objectives indicates that this habitat occurs further downstream and is coastal in nature. Therefore, the proposed development is unlikely to give rise to impacts upon the attributes, measures or targets that have been set for the maintenance of this habitat within the SAC.	No
2120	Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes)	To restore the favourable conservation condition	The SAC is approximately 1.4km hydrologically downstream of the proposed development. However, map 7 of the conservation objectives indicates that this habitat occurs further downstream and is coastal in nature. Therefore, the proposed development is unlikely to give rise to impacts upon the attributes, measures or targets that have been set for the maintenance of this habitat within the SAC.	No
2130	Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)	To restore the favourable conservation condition	The SAC is approximately 1.4km hydrologically downstream of the proposed development. However, map 7 of the conservation objectives indicates that this habitat occurs further downstream and is coastal in nature. Therefore, the proposed development is unlikely to give rise to impacts upon the attributes, measures or targets that have been set for the maintenance of this habitat within the SAC.	No
2190	Humid dune slacks	To maintain the favourable conservation condition	The SAC is approximately 1.4km hydrologically downstream of the proposed development. However, map 7 of the conservation objectives indicates that this habitat occurs further downstream and is coastal in nature. Therefore, the proposed development is unlikely to give rise to impacts upon the attributes, measures or targets that have been set for the maintenance of this habitat within the SAC.	No
1014	Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail	To maintain the favourable	The SAC is approximately 1.4km hydrologically downstream of the	No

	(<i>Vertigo angustior</i>)	conservation condition	proposed development. However, map 8 of the conservation objectives indicates that this species occurs in only one area of the SAC approximately 4.2km overland from the proposed development. Due to the terrestrial nature of this species the proposed development is unlikely to give rise to impacts upon the attributes, measures or targets that have been set for the maintenance of this species within the SAC.	
1095	Sea Lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>)	To maintain the favourable conservation condition	The SAC is approximately 1.4km hydrologically downstream of the proposed development. Taking a precautionary approach, there is potential for negative impacts on this habitat via deterioration of water quality associated with the construction phase of the development.	Yes
1365	Harbour Seal (<i>Phoca vitulina</i>)	To maintain the favourable conservation condition	The SAC is approximately 1.4km hydrologically downstream of the proposed development. Taking a precautionary approach, there is potential for negative impacts on the breeding and haul-out sites for this species via deterioration of water quality associated with the construction phase of the development.	Yes

Site Specific Pressures and Threats

Site specific pressures, threats, and activities with the potential to impact the European Site are outlined in the Natura 2000 data form. These were reviewed in relation to the proposed development and a summary is provided in Table 6.9. The majority of pressures and threats identified are not associated with the current project and will therefore will not impact the SAC further.

Urbanization and human habitation (E01) and diffuse pollution (H01) have the potential to be associated with the current project. Mitigation measures outlined in section X will be implemented to ensure that the proposed development will not impact or exacerbate any of the threats or pressures identified for this site.

Table 6.9 Site-specific pressures for Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC (000458).

Negative Impacts			
Rank	Threats and Pressures		Inside/Outside/Both
H	G02.02	Skiing complex	Both
H	E01	Urbanisation and human habitation	Both
M	M01.03	Flooding and rising precipitations	Inside
H	H01.08	Diffuse pollution to surface waters due to household sewage and waste waters	Both
H	G02.08	Camping and caravans	Both
L	F02.03	Leisure fishing	Inside
H	G01.02	Walking, horseriding and non-motorised vehicles	Inside

[1130] Estuaries

According to the SSCO for the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC, the habitat area was estimated as 736ha using OSI data and the defined Transitional Water Body area under the Water Framework Directive. The overall assessment of conservation status is 'Inadequate', and the overall trend is 'Deteriorating' as per the Article 17 report (NPWS 2019). A distribution map is available for the species in the Site-Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCO) document (Map 3) which indicates that this habitat is approximately 2km overland from the proposed development. The individual targets and attributes of this habitat are listed in table 6.10.

Table 6.10 Targets and attributes associated with the SSCO for Estuaries.

Attribute	Target
Habitat area	The permanent habitat area is stable or increasing, subject to natural processes
Community extent	Maintain the extent of the <i>Zostera</i> -dominated community, subject to natural processes
Community structure: <i>Zostera</i> density	Conserve the high quality of the <i>Zostera</i> -dominated community, subject to natural processes
Community distribution	Conserve the following community types in a natural condition: Muddy sand to fine sand dominated by <i>Hydrobia ulvae</i> , <i>Pygospio elegans</i> and <i>Tubificoides benedii</i> community complex; Estuarine muddy sand dominated by <i>Hediste diversicolor</i> and <i>Heterochaeta costata</i> community complex; and Fine sand dominated by <i>Nephtys cirrosa</i> community complex

[1140] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide

According to the site synopsis for the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC, Extensive sandflats and mudflats are exposed in the estuary and bay at low tide. For the most part, these flats are unvegetated, but mats of Eelgrass (*Zostera* spp.), Beaked Tasselweed (*Ruppia maritima*) and green algae (*Enteromorpha* spp.) occur which provide important feeding material for birds. The overall assessment of conservation status is 'Inadequate', and the overall trend is 'Deteriorating' as per the Article 17 report (NPWS 2019). The individual targets and attributes of this habitat are listed in table 6.11.

Table 6.11 Targets and attributes associated with the SSCO for Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide.

Attribute	Target
Habitat area	The permanent habitat area is stable or increasing, subject to natural processes
Community extent	Maintain the extent of the <i>Zostera</i> -dominated community, subject to natural processes
Community structure: <i>Zostera</i> density	Conserve the high quality of the <i>Zostera</i> -dominated community, subject to natural processes
Community distribution	Conserve the following community types in a natural condition: Muddy sand to fine sand dominated by <i>Hydrobia ulvae</i> , <i>Pygospio elegans</i> and <i>Tubificoides benedii</i> community complex; Estuarine muddy sand dominated by <i>Hediste diversicolor</i> and <i>Heterochaeta costata</i> community complex; and Fine sand dominated by <i>Nephtys cirrosa</i> community complex

[1095] Sea Lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*)

According to the site synopsis for the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC, this site holds populations of Sea Lamprey. The Sea Lamprey is regularly encountered in the lower stretches of the river around Ballina, entering the estuary. The Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC encompasses the estuarine elements of sea lamprey habitat (NPWS 2016). The overall assessment of conservation status is 'Bad', and the overall trend is 'Stable' as per the Article

17 report (NPWS 2019). The individual targets and attributes of this species are listed in table 6.12 below.

Table 6.12 Targets and attributes associated with the SSCO for Sea Lamprey.

Attribute	Target
Distribution: extent of anadromy	No barriers for migratory life stages of lamprey moving from freshwater to marine habitats and vice versa
Population structure of juveniles	At least three age/size groups present
Juvenile density in fine sediment	Mean catchment juvenile density at least 1/m ²

[1365] Harbour Seal (*Phoca vitulina*)

According to the site synopsis for the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC, this site holds populations of Harbour Seal (maximum count of 108 in the all-Ireland survey of 2003). A distribution map is available for the species in the Site-Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCO) document (Map 9) which shows that the SAC supports, breeding, moulting, and resting sites for this species (NPWS 2016). The overall assessment of conservation status is 'Favourable', and the overall trend is 'Stable' as per the Article 17 report (NPWS 2019). The individual targets and attributes of this species are listed in table 6.13 below.

Table 6.13 Targets and attributes associated with the SSCO for Harbour Seal.

Attribute	Target
Access to suitable habitat	Species range within the site should not be restricted by artificial barriers to site use.
Breeding behaviour	Conserve the breeding sites in a natural condition.
Moulting behaviour	Conserve the moult haul-out sites in a natural condition.
Resting behaviour	Conserve the resting haul-out sites in a natural condition.
Disturbance	Human activities should occur at levels that do not adversely affect the harbour seal population at the site.

6.2.3 Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA (004036)

Site Summary

The Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA comprises the estuary of the River Moy and the inner part of Killala Bay, including Lackan Bay and Rathfran Bay, in Counties Mayo and Sligo. The site is a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the E.U. Birds Directive, of special conservation interest for the following species: Ringed Plover, Golden Plover, Grey Plover, Sanderling, Dunlin, Bar-tailed Godwit, Curlew and Redshank. The E.U. Birds Directive pays particular attention to wetlands and, as these form part of this SPA, the site and its associated waterbirds are of special conservation interest for Wetland & Waterbirds. The site is very important for wintering waterfowl and provides excellent feeding grounds for the birds, as well as high-tide roosts. Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA is of high ornithological importance as it supports eight species that have populations of national importance (NPWS 2014).

Potential Significant Effects

Table 6.14 Impact assessment of the individual qualifying features of the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA (004036).

Code	Special Conservation Interest (SCI)	Conservation Objectives	Impact Assessment	Potential for Likely Significant Effects (Y/N)
A999	Wetland and Waterbirds	To maintain the favourable conservation condition of	The SAC is approximately 2.1km hydrologically downstream of the proposed development. Taking a precautionary approach, there is	Yes

		wetland habitat as a resource for the regularly occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it	potential for negative impacts on this habitat and associated species via deterioration of water quality associated with the construction phase of the development.	
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Site Specific Pressures and Threats

Site specific pressures, threats, and activities with the potential to impact the European Site are outlined in the Natura 2000 data form. These were reviewed in relation to the proposed development and a summary is provided in Table 6.15. The majority of pressures and threats identified are not associated with the current project and will therefore will not impact the SAC further.

Urbanization and human habitation (E01) has the potential to be associated with the current project. Mitigation measures outlined in section 7 will be implemented to ensure that the proposed development will not impact or exacerbate any of the threats or pressures identified for this site.

Table 6.15 Site-specific pressures for Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA (004036).

Negative Impacts			
Rank	Threats and Pressures		Inside/Outside/Both
M	E01	Urbanisation and human habitation	Outside
M	A08	Fertilisation in agriculture	Outside
M	G01.02	Walking, horseriding and non-motorised vehicles	Inside
M	F02.03	Leisure fishing	Inside

[A999] Wetland and Waterbirds

According to the site synopsis for the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA, the wetland habitat area was estimated as 3204ha. This site is very important for wintering waterfowl and provides excellent feeding grounds for the birds, as well as high-tide roosts. It is of high ornithological importance as it supports eight species that have populations of national importance, including a very substantial population of Grey Plover. The individual targets and attributes of this habitat is listed in table 6.15 below.

Table 6.15 Targets and attributes associated with the SSCO for Wetlands and Waterbirds.

Attribute	Target
Habitat area	The permanent area occupied by the wetland habitat should be stable and not significantly less than the area of 3204 hectares, other than that occurring from natural patterns of variation

6.3 Summary of Direct and Indirect Ecological Impacts

6.3.1 Introduction

In order to properly assess the impact of a project on the conservation objectives of the selected natura 2000, the site must examined be in respect of both direct and indirect impacts. Loss of habitats or loss of nesting/den sites are examples of direct impacts. Water pollution, noise pollution or light pollution are all examples of indirect impacts.

6.3.2 Impacts on Habitats

Habitat Loss and Fragmentation

As the proposed site occurs outside the boundaries of any SAC or SPA, this development

will not result in the direct habitat loss of any European site within the Natura 2000 network. No direct impacts have been identified.

Invasive Species

The spread of invasive species has the potential to occur during the construction phase of the proposed development. Invasive alien plant species (IAPS) can negatively impact freshwater habitats by growing along river banks, which can then affect bank slippage causing bankside erosion leading to suspended solids and siltation impacting substratum quality which can impact spawning habitat and water quality. The unintentional spread of IAPS can also impact overall site integrity. Measures must be taken to eradicate and prevent the spread of the IAPS identified on site, and to prevent to introduction of any IAPS on site. Mitigation measures have been outlined in section 7 and will be implemented to negate any potential negative impacts on any Natura 2000 habitat.

Natura 2000 Habitats Identified

The proposed development is located hydrologically downstream of the River Moy SAC, the Killala/Moy Estuary SAC, and the Killala/Moy Estuary SPA and their associated habitats. The following QI habitats have been identified as having the potential for adverse effects in the absence of mitigation:

[1130] Estuaries

[1140] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide

[A999] Wetland and Waterbirds

The construction stage of this project has the potential to cause adverse changes in water quality which may indirectly impact these habitats which are hydrologically connected to the proposed development via the Sruffaunbrogue stream. These changes may arise from silt-laden run-off, the use of cement and hydrocarbons, and the use of other potentially polluting chemicals or materials during construction. Polluting events may result in changes to the habitat and water quality, which could indirectly result in a change of integrity on at least a temporary basis. It is considered that the use of good construction practice and both standard and site-specific mitigation measures will significantly reduce the likelihood of such adverse changes in water quality within the associated European sites.

Subject to the application of mitigation measures, the requirement for outlined above, it is considered that the project will not impact on the integrity of any habitat within the River Moy SAC, the Killala/Moy Estuary SAC, and the Killala/Moy Estuary SPA either during the construction phase.

6.3.3 Impacts on Hydrology

The Sruffaunbrogue stream (Code: IE_WE_34M021100), which flows South into the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC, is located along the western and southern borders of the proposed site. Therefore, this watercourse has the potential to carry pollutants off-site into the surrounding areas of ecological sensitivity. Mitigation is outlined in Section 7 for the protection of downstream ecological receptors which represent the Qualifying Interests of this Natura 2000 site. Another potential impact pathway is the deterioration of groundwater due to percolation of polluting materials (e.g. hydrocarbons, fuel, sedimentation, cement). With the precautionary principal in mind, best practice environmental control measures have been incorporated in the design of the development to prevent significant impacts on water quality and downstream aquatic ecological receptors.

6.3.4 Impacts on Fauna

Activities related to the construction phase of the development including excavation, building, and associated movement of machinery and site personnel have the potential to impose a degree of localised disturbance on local animal species. Similarly, anthropogenic activity during the operational phase is also likely to cause a degree of localised disturbance to

faunal species.

The proposed development site is located adjacent to an existing residential housing estate, in an area already populated with many residential and commercial developments, and less than 1km from the town centre. Therefore, local wildlife species are likely to be habituated to local levels of anthropogenic activity which is unlikely to be significantly different during the operational phase. Mitigation in relation to noise is outlined in Section 7.

The species for which the proposed development has the potential to indirectly impacts are as follows;

- [1092] White-Clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*)
- [1095] Sea Lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*)
- [1096] Brook Lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*)
- [1106] Salmon (*Salmo salar*)
- [1355] Otter (*Lutra lutra*)
- [1365] Harbour Seal (*Phoca vitulina*)
- [A999] Wetland and Waterbirds

The construction stage of this project has the potential to cause adverse changes in water quality which may indirectly impact aquatic species that may be present in the Sruffaunbrogue stream which is located along the western and southern borders of the proposed site and flows into the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC. These changes may arise from silt-laden run-off, the use of cement and hydrocarbons, and the use of other potentially polluting chemicals or materials during construction. Polluting events may result in changes to the habitat and water quality, which could indirectly result in a change of habitat integrity or population structure of the aforementioned species on at least a temporary basis.

Activities related to the construction phase of the development including excavation, building, and associated movement of machinery and site personnel have the potential to impose a degree of localised disturbance to otters which may be using the watercourse for foraging or commuting purposes. Mitigation measures related to noise are outlined in Section 7.

It is considered that the use of good construction practice and both standard and site-specific mitigation measures will significantly reduce the likelihood of any adverse changes in water quality within the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC, downstream of the proposed construction. Therefore, subject to the application of mitigation measures, the requirement for outlined above, it is considered that the project will not impact on the integrity of the QI species with respect to the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC.

6.4 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts are alterations to the environment arising from the combined impact of past, present and future anthropogenic activities and natural processes. When examining cumulative impacts, it is important to look at activities causing disturbance or pollution to the same Natura 2000 sites. Pressures on the ecosystem can be listed and evaluated on the basis of pressure positive, negative or neutral on the designated sites that are under consideration for the proposed project.

A review of other projects and/or plans was conducted to assess the potential of cumulative impacts on European sites, with a focus on the sites where potential for adverse effects was identified. This includes a review of local development plans, online planning registers for local planning applications within the last 5 years, and any other relevant available information that served to identify any potential in-combination effects with the proposed development. The dominant land use of the area was also considered in this assessment. The results of this review are summarised in table 6.16.

Table 6.16 Cumulative assessment.

Plans /	Relevance / Description
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Activities in the Area	
Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028	Biodiversity, Designated and Non-Designated Sites Policies NEP 1 To support the protection, conservation and enhancement of the natural heritage and biodiversity of County Mayo, including the protection of the integrity of European sites, that form part of the Natura 2000 network, the protection of Natural Heritage Areas, proposed Natural Heritage Areas Ramsar Sites, Nature Reserves and Wild Fowl Sanctuaries (and other designated sites including any future designations). NEP 2 To protect and enhance the county's natural heritage and biodiversity by supporting the implementation of the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021, the National Pollination Plan 2015-2020 and County Mayo Biodiversity Plan 2015- 2020 and any future editions, in partnership with relevant stakeholders, subject to available resources. NEP 3 To protect and enhance the county's natural heritage and biodiversity through supporting the implementation, in partnership with the County Mayo Heritage Forum, relevant stakeholders and the community, of the objectives and associated actions in the County Mayo Heritage Plan and future editions thereof, which relate to the remit and functions of Mayo County Council. NEP 4 To conserve and enhance the county's biodiversity and ecological connectivity, identified areas of local biodiversity importance (Local Biodiversity Areas) in the towns and villages in Mayo. Biodiversity, Designated and Non-Designated Sites Objectives NEO 4 To protect and enhance biodiversity and ecological connectivity in County Mayo, including woodlands, trees, hedgerows, semi-natural grasslands, rivers, streams, natural springs, wetlands, stonewalls, geological and geo morphological systems, other landscape features and associated wildlife, where these form part of the ecological network. NEO 6 To protect surface waters, aquatic and wetland habitats and freshwater and water-dependent species through the implementation of all appropriate and relevant Directives and transposed legislation and seek to protect and conserve the quality, character and features of inland waterways by controlling developments close to navigable and non-navigable waterways. NEO 7 To seek the protection of the riparian zones of watercourses throughout the county, recognising the benefits they provide in relation to flood risk management, their protection of the ecological integrity of watercourse systems and the role they play in the enhancement of the county's natural heritage and biodiversity NEO 8 To maintain, protect and where possible enhance the natural heritage and biodiversity of bogs, fens and turloughs, where appropriate, in County Mayo. Invasive Species Policy NEP 8 To support measures for the prevention and/or eradication of invasive species as appropriate within the county. Invasives Species Objective

	NEO 16 To ensure that where the presence of invasive species is identified at the site of any proposed development or where the proposed activity has an elevated risk of resulting in the presence of these species, details of how these species will be appropriately managed and controlled will be required. Water Quality Objectives NEO 37 To ensure that the Water Framework Directive, the River Basin Management Plan and any subsequent Water Management Plans are fully considered throughout the planning process. NEO 38 To ensure, through the implementation of the River Basin Management Plan(s) and the associated Programmes of Measures and any other associated legislation or revised plans, with all relevant stakeholders, the protection and improvement of all drinking waters, surface water, coastal and transitional waters and ground waters throughout the county. NEO 39 To manage in a sustainable manner, the existing groundwater sources and aquifers in the county and manage development in a manner consistent with the sustainable management of these resources, in conformity with the EU Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations 2010 and the second cycle National River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021, and any subsequent plans and the Groundwater Protection Scheme. NEO 40 To protect groundwater sources through the implementation of the Groundwater Protection Scheme and Source Protection Zones. Development proposals within these zones which have the potential to pose a risk to groundwater will be required to demonstrate that no reasonable alternative site is available, and that groundwater quality will be protected to the satisfaction of the Council.
Planning Applications	Planning Application: 221085 Demolish existing semi-detached two-storey dwellinghouse, construct replacement semi-detached two-storey dwellinghouse, together with all associated site works. Address: 21 Friarscourt , Laghtadawannagh, Ballina Application Status: Granted Planning Application: 2350 Demolish existing semi-detached two storey dwelling house and construct replacement semi-detached two storey dwelling house including all other ancillary site works and services Address: 40 Friarscourt, Killala Road, Laghtadawannagh Application Status: Granted Planning Application: 20612 Partial demoliton of the building, the erection of single storey extensions to the side and rear, amendments to the elevations and internal layout, proposed garden landscaping and all associated site works. Address: The Whitehouse, Laghtadawannagh, Ballina Application Status: Granted Planning Application: 20519 Construct 6 single storey dwelling houses, connection to public sewer and all associated services and site works. Address: Lachtadwannagh, Killala Road, Ballina

Application Status: Withdrawn

Planning Application: 22235

Convert existing out building into residential accommodation and erect new extension to the rear of the existing dwelling house, the extension will also link up the proposed converted outbuilding with the existing dwelling house.

Address: Lachtadwannagh, Killala Road, Ballina

Application Status: Granted

Planning Application: 22531

Demolition of existing petrol filling station, convenience shop and ancillary site features, construction of a part two storey building (c.529 sqm) comprising of retail area with ancillary off-licence use, ancillary food offer counter, and seating area.

Address: Killala Road, Ballina

Application Status: Granted

Planning Application: 2360261

The existing circuit is located in the townlands of Gorteen, Ardoughan, Kilemoremoy, Belleek, Ballina, Quignalecka, Quignashee, Ballyholan, Behy More, Corimla South, Carrownlabaun, Bunnyconnellan West, Rathreedaun, Drumsheen and Bunnyconnellan East, Co. Mayo. The proposed development will consist of: (i) The replacement ("restringing") of the existing overhead line circuit conductor wires with a new higher capacity conductor including installation of a new fibre communication connection. (ii) The replacement of 20 no. of the 63 no. existing Intermediate Polesets (IMPs) with similar polesets. Any replacement polesets will be constructed at, or immediately adjacent to the existing structures that they will replace, will be along the same alignment as the existing line, with a height difference of between 1-2 metres, with the exception of IMP52 where the height difference will be 4 metres. (iii) The relocation of IMP49 on the Behy Road (townland of Ballyholan), to be replaced with 2 no. new polesets (IMP49 and IMP49A) to the east and west of the existing poleset, along the route of the existing line. (iv) The replacement of 3 of the 13 no. existing steel towers (angle masts) with similar structures. (v) The carrying out of civil works for tower foundation strengthening at 3 no. locations and monopole-foundation strengthening at 1 no. location and bar member replacement works at 3 no. locations. (vi) The replacement of hardware and fittings at all locations. (vii) The replacement of crossarms at 20 no. locations. (viii) All associated works within the existing Glenree and Moy substations to accommodate the uprated 110kV overhead line. (ix) Other temporary associated and ancillary development works required for the purpose of the uprate, including construction compounds, the installation of silt traps, silt fences, access tracks, ground protection mats and temporary watercourse crossings. (x) All associated site development works above and below the ground to gain access to the existing structures including vegetation clearance, remedial works on concrete shear blocks, replacement of individual tower members and bolts, replacement of hardware and insulators, replacement of dampers, installation of line identification and danger notices and anti-climbing guards, the provision of temporary access routes and other ancillary works necessary to facilitate the proposed development. The planning application is accompanied by a Natura Impact Statement.

Address: Townlands of Gorteen Ardoughan Kilemoremoy Belleek Ballina Quignalecka Quignashee Ballyholan Behy More Corimla South Carrownlabaun Bunnyconnellan West Rathreedaun Drumsheen and

Bunnyconnellan East Co. Mayo, County, Mayo
Application Status: Granted

Planning Application: 2460282

The development will consist of a solar PV farm on a total site area of 16.5 hectares (ha.), to include the following elements: • linear solar photovoltaic (PV) panel arrays, providing an output of up to 23MW, ground mounted on steel supported structures with associated cabling and ducting; • 42 no. ground mounted inverters; • 3 no. transformer substations; • 9 no. battery storage containers (providing up to 16MW of battery storage); • construction of culverts along an existing drain; • a new site access; • Upgrades to an existing site entrance, including the removal of existing wall and piers, resurfacing to TII standards, and the installation of double security gates; • pole mounted CCTV cameras at 12 no. locations; • 2.4m high security fencing; • permeable gravel access tracks; • demolition of 2 no. existing derelict structures (a cottage and a shed), and the installation of a temporary construction compound/material storage area; • a temporary construction stage wheelwash system; • a 38kV underground cable connecting to the existing factory site; and • all associated ancillary development services.

Address: Belleek, Ballina, Co. Mayo
Application Status: Granted

Planning Application: 23504

Demolish existing semi-detached two storey dwelling house, construct a replacement semi-detached two storey dwelling house together with all associated site works

Address: 38 Woodville Estate, Kilmoremoy, Ballina
Application Status: Granted

Planning Application: 2360467

Planning permission for the re-design of the replacement dwelling house previously granted under Planning Ref. 22/926

Address: No.39 Woodville, Killala Road Ballina, Co Mayo
Application Status: Granted

Planning Application: 2360084

full planning permission for the following: (1) Demolish existing semi-detached two storey dwelling house, (2) Construct replacement semi-detached two storey dwelling house, together with all associated site works at 29 Woodville, Kilmoremoy, Ballina, Co. Mayo.

Address: 29 Woodville, Kilmoremoy, Ballina, Co. Mayo.
Application Status: Granted

Planning Application: 25116

Section 5 Declaration: demolish existing dwelling and rebuild incorporating an extension to the rear as set out in drawings. Replace existing pebble dash finish with nap plaster finish, replace existing built in brick with a stick-on brick

Address: 28 Woodville, Kilmoremoy, Ballina, Co. Mayo.
Application Status: Finalised

Planning Application: 2360111

Full planning permission for the following: (1) Demolish existing semi-detached two storey dwelling house, (2) Construct replacement semi-detached two storey dwelling house, together with all associated site works

	Address: 57 Woodville , Kilmoremoy , Ballina Application Status: Granted Planning Application: 2360006 Full planning permission for the following; (1) Demolish existing semi-detached two storey dwelling house, (2) Construct replacement semi-detached two storey dwelling house, together with all associated site works at 58 Woodville, Kilmoremoy, Ballina, Co. Mayo. Address: 58 Woodville, Kilmoremoy, Ballina Co. Mayo. Application Status: Granted Planning Application: 2460282 The development will consist of a solar PV farm on a total site area of 16.5 hectares (ha.), to include the following elements: • linear solar photovoltaic (PV) panel arrays, providing an output of up to 23MW, ground mounted on steel supported structures with associated cabling and ducting; • 42 no. ground mounted inverters; • 3 no. transformer substations; • 9 no. battery storage containers (providing up to 16MW of battery storage); • construction of culverts along an existing drain; • a new site access; • Upgrades to an existing site entrance, including the removal of existing wall and piers, resurfacing to TII standards, and the installation of double security gates; • pole mounted CCTV cameras at 12 no. locations; • 2.4m high security fencing; • permeable gravel access tracks; • demolition of 2 no. existing derelict structures (a cottage and a shed), and the installation of a temporary construction compound/material storage area; • a temporary construction stage wheelwash system; • a 38kV underground cable connecting to the existing factory site; and • all associated ancillary development services. Address: Belleek, Ballina, Co. Mayo Application Status: Granted
Housing	A dense housing pattern can be observed in Ballina town. The surrounding locality hosts a discontinuous urban fabric of dense housing estates and dispersed individual dwellings.
Agriculture	Agricultural land usage of the locality consists mainly of low-intensity grazing of cows, sheep, and horses. Associated practices such as land fertilization, drainage, and herbicide and pesticide use can contribute to both point sources and diffuse (non-point source) pollution into waterways.

6.5 Cumulative Assessment Conclusion

A cumulative impact assessment has been conducted as part of this Natura Impact Statement to evaluate whether the proposed development, in combination with other existing or permitted plans and projects, could give rise to significant effects on the River Moy SAC and the Killala/Moy Estuary SAC, and the Killala/Moy Estuary SPA in relation to their respective conservation objectives. The assessment considered both spatial and functional ecological connectivity, with particular attention to potential shared impact pathways such as hydrological linkages, surface-water runoff, pollution risk, air and dust deposition, and habitat disturbance.

The review of relevant plans and projects within the local and regional context identified no other ongoing or proposed developments that would likely interact cumulatively with the current proposal through shared impact pathways. The proposed development is limited in scale and scope, and all potential adverse effects have been addressed through robust avoidance and mitigation measures (see Section 7).

Therefore, based on the available information and the implementation of all prescribed mitigation measures, it is concluded that the proposed development will not contribute to

cumulative or in-combination effects on any Natura 2000 site, nor will it give rise to any adverse impacts on the integrity of these sites, either individually or collectively. The project is consequently considered to be consistent with the conservation objectives of the relevant European sites and compliant with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.

7 Mitigation

Once potential negative impacts on Natura 2000 sites have been identified through the impact assessment process, the development and refinement of mitigation processes can begin. Mitigation, in this context, refers to the specific, targeted actions designed to avoid, reduce, or remedy predicted adverse effects on the qualifying interests (QIs) and special conservation interests (SCIs) of a designated site. These measures must be directly linked to the identified impact pathways and must be sufficiently detailed, practical, and enforceable to ensure their effectiveness throughout the construction, operational, and, where relevant, decommissioning phases of the project.

The implementation of mitigation measures represents a critical stage in the Appropriate Assessment (AA) process, as established under Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). The purpose of these measures is to ensure that any identified adverse effects are either fully avoided or reduced to a level where they no longer have the potential to affect the integrity of a Natura 2000 site, having regard to its structure, function, and conservation objectives.

A project may only proceed where, following the incorporation of mitigation, it can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed development will not result in significant adverse effects on the integrity of any Natura 2000 site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. In practice, this requires that mitigation measures are not only technically feasible but also effectively implemented, monitored, and maintained over time, under the supervision of a suitably qualified ecologist (ECOW) or environmental manager.

Mitigation should be distinguished from compensatory measures, which are only considered under Article 6(4) of the Directive in circumstances where residual adverse effects cannot be avoided. In the case of this project, the emphasis remains firmly on preventive and protective mitigation designed to ensure full compliance with the precautionary principle and the conservation objectives of the relevant Natura 2000 network sites.

Mitigation methods can be divided into three classifications as follows:

1. Avoid
2. Manage
3. Physical Mitigation

Tabulated mitigations are included below for ease of reference.

Table 7.1 Summary of mitigation methods.

Phase	Impact Pathway/Risk	Mitigation Measure	Implementation Details / Best Practice	Monitoring / Responsibility
Design & Planning	Habitat Loss / Encroachment	Avoidance by design	Locate all permanent infrastructure outside the mapped polygon.	Design team Ecologist verification before

			Maintain ≥10m buffer wherever possible, 5m at a minimum	planning submission
		Habitat zoning	Identify 'No-Go' areas on drawings & incorporate in CEMP and tender docs	Contractor to respect demarcation at pre-start meeting
Pre-construction	Uncontrolled site setup / trampling	Pre-start demarcation	Erect sturdy fencing (2m high steel wall hoarding) with mammal entry/exit points enclosing buffer before any machinery mobilises	ECoW inspection and sign-off before ground works.
Construction	Sediment / pollution runoff	Erosion & sediment control	Use double silt fences, check dams, or sediment traps along flow paths.	Daily visual check by Site Manager; weekly audit by ECoW.
			Install silt socks around drains & maintain during rainfall events.	
	Hydrocarbon / concrete contamination	Fuel & chemical control	All refuelling >50 m from buffer; bunded tanks (110 % capacity); drip trays; emergency spill kits on-site.	CEMP requirement; ECoW audit.
			Prohibit concrete washout within 50 m of watercourse.	
	Dust deposition	Dust suppression	Use dampening (clean water only) on haul roads; cover stockpiles; halt works in high winds.	Site Manager monitoring.
			Avoid chemical suppressants.	
	Trampling / machinery	Physical exclusion	Maintain fencing throughout works. Use boardwalks/mats for any authorised ecological access.	Review by engineer + ecologist before construction.
	Extreme Flooding Events	Physical exclusion	Build a berm to contain excess water from worst-case scenario flooding events	Review by engineer + ecologist before construction.
			Keep hydrocarbon filter pillows, excess silt trap and post material, and straw bales available at short notice.	

			Silt trap fencing must withstand pressure from water deluge.	
Operational Phase – Physical Protection	Unauthorised access, pets, trampling	Sensitive reinstatement	Regrade any disturbed edges manually; avoid heavy machinery.	ECoW supervision.
			If seeding is required, use local provenance heath seed or translocate intact turves from donor area.	
	Garden creep, mowing, fertiliser drift	Buffer management	Maintain 5–10 m un-managed buffer between lawns and heath.	Annual inspection
			Prohibit fertiliser, compost, or pesticide use within buffer. Include in homeowner / site management pack.	
Operational Phase – Hydrology & Water Quality	Nutrient / sediment runoff	SuDS and filter strips	Capture roof / paved runoff via permeable paving, vegetated swales, infiltration trenches.	Routine maintenance.
			Addition of hydrocarbon interceptors in the drainage design	
			Direct flows away from watercourse.	
	Storm overflow / flooding	Water-sensitive design	Maintain designed attenuation capacity; no discharge pipes entering buffer.	Engineer + ecologist joint review.
			Temporary attenuation ponds designed and sized to adequately reduce suspended solid run-off.	
			Monitor flow direction annually.	
Operational Phase – Ecological Management	Invasive species	Early detection & control	Annual inspection for <i>Rhododendron ponticum</i> , <i>Juncus effusus</i> , <i>Ulex europaeus</i> , <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> and <i>Crocasmia x crocosmiiflora</i> Immediate removal under ecological supervision.	Annual inspection (May–August).

	Vegetation succession	Selective cutting	If scrub encroachment occurs, cut by hand in late winter (Oct–Feb) to avoid nesting season.	Every 2–3 yrs; ECoW oversight.
			Avoid vehicles.	
	Lighting disturbance	Lighting control	Downward-facing, low-intensity, warm LED (<3000 K). Timers / PIR sensors.	Visual check at night. adjust fittings as needed.
			Avoid spilling into buffer.	
Monitoring & Review	Degradation of habitat quality	Condition monitoring	Baseline and periodic (year 1, 3, 5, then 5-yearly) vegetation surveys.	Ecologist report to planning authority.
			Compare to NPWS condition targets.	
		Adaptive management	If condition declines (e.g. loss of characteristic species, drying, eutrophication), trigger remedial plan: review drainage, re-wetting, reseeded, renewed fencing.	Site manager + ecologist.

7.1 Avoid

Recommendations for this site include the following:

7.1.1 Introduction of Invasive Species on site

The introduction and subsequent spread of invasive species on site must be avoided. To avoid the introduction and spread of non-native invasive species, construction methodology shall adhere to best practice guidelines outlined in "The Management of Noxious Weeds and Non-Native Invasive Plant Species on National Roads" (NRA, 2010). Control measures include, but are not limited to:

- High-pressure steam cleaning with water > 40°C for machinery, and the use of Virkon antiseptic, as recommended in the 'IFI Biosecurity Protocol for Field Survey Work'.
- All gravels/surface fill are to be acquired from certified invasive species and noxious weed free sources to minimise the chances of site contamination.
- Good construction site hygiene will be practiced preventing the introduction and spread of problematic invasive alien plant species.
- All machinery will be thoroughly cleaned before arriving on the site to avoid spreading invasive species from other locations. Although no IAPS have been identified on site, it is good practice to ensure machinery will be thoroughly cleaned before exiting the site to prevent spreading invasive species elsewhere.
- Before entering and leaving the site, all boots and clothing will be thoroughly brushed down to remove any potential contaminated material.
- Any soil and topsoil required on the site will be sourced from a supply that has been screened for the presence of invasive species, ensuring none are present.

7.1.2 Unnecessary Disturbance to Wildlife

Any unnecessary disturbance to wildlife should be avoided. To prevent this, construction

should be carried out only during daylight hours to reduce risk of disturbance to local wildlife. Where possible, construction works should take place away from the southern boundary to minimize disturbance to otters that may be present in the watercourse. All removal of scrub, hedgerows, and/or trees necessary to accommodate the proposed works should be carried out outside of bird nesting season (March 1st to August 31st).

7.2 Manage

In respect of development in areas of ecological importance, proper site management is a key aspect of maintaining the integrity of local Natura 2000 sites. Ensuring correct procedures at all stages of development can greatly limit or eradicate impacts to sites of European importance.

7.2.1 Environmental Site Officer

An Environmental Site Officer/Ecological Clerk of Works (EcOW) will be designated by the Contractor, who is independent from the Principal Contractor. The Environmental Site Officer should be an appropriately qualified and suitably experienced ecologist. It is the duty of the Environmental Site Officer to engage and liaise with parties which include the Mayo County Council, the Environment Agency and also with the Construction manager, while ensuring the implementation of all mitigation and as part of the monitoring process. This will be achieved through observations made throughout all stages of the building. Any and all deviations from the mitigation measures outlined will be logged in a logbook, in conjunction with the action taken and the general conditions at the time. Following identification of issues, the Applicant will be notified of any such deviations and associated corrective measures.

7.2.2 Site Set Up and Fencing

The minimum necessary works area will be fenced off and no construction access will be permitted outside of this fenced area. All construction activities and commuting of on-site personnel will be confined within the fencing. Silt trap fencing will be erected along the southern boundary to prevent run-off from the development site entering the watercourse. Further information on silt-trap fencing is contained in Section 7.3.

Access routes will be clearly marked. Access during the construction phase will be strictly regulated to ensure compliance with the designated pathways and minimize disturbance outside the fenced area.

7.2.3 Water Quality

As part of standard practice, appropriate mitigation measures to prevent water pollution will be implemented during all of the construction phases and will include referral to CIRIA (Construction Industry Research and Information Association) Publications including C532 - Control of Water Pollution from Construction, Guidance for Consultants and Contractors. These measures will be implemented as required to restrict the release of suspended solids and contaminants (e.g. cement and oil) during construction and prevent pollutants from entering watercourses.

Reduction & Prevention of Suspended Solids Pollution

The following measures for erosion and sediment control shall be adhered to by the Contractor appointed to undertake the works and implemented in full.

- There will be no direct discharge of surface water from any element of the works without suitable attenuation and treatment.
- Silt fences, silt traps, or settlement ponds shall be provided for the protection of the watercourse during construction and will adhere to IFI (2016) Guidelines.
- Silt control measures will be installed correctly and monitored regularly to ensure their effectiveness (EirGrid, 2020).
- The level of suspended solids in any discharges to fisheries waters as a consequence of

- construction works shall not exceed 25mg/l33 nor result in the deposition of silts on gravels or any element of aquatic flora and fauna (as per IFI (2016) guidelines);
- Excavations for foundations will be carried out so as to minimise sediment runoff (e.g. soil excavation will not be completed during periods of prolonged or heavy rain). Stockpiles within 200m of watercourses will be covered.
 - Clearly defined working areas, delineated by temporary protective fencing where required, are essential and will be implemented to ensure there is a sufficiently large buffer zone between the working area and nearby watercourses and to avoid accidental incursion by personnel, materials or equipment. A vegetated buffer zone of 10m shall be implemented where it is possible to further stop sediment and nutrients from entering local watercourses (EirGrid, 2020).
 - All works and storing of machinery or materials in the buffer zone will be avoided because compaction of the ground can provide flow paths for sediment and contaminants into local watercourses (EirGrid, 2020);
 - Any ground damage to buffer areas will be reported to the EcoW and remediated by, for example rolling, rotavating and re-seeding, or any alternatives as deemed necessary. Where this occurs in semi-natural or natural habitat, consultation with the relevant conservation agency will be undertaken.
 - The contractor will monitor weather forecasts. Construction processes that pose a risk of activating sediment laden runoff, such as excavation, will be halted during periods of extreme rainfall. A review of all work practices for periods of heavy rainfall will be undertaken. The magnitude of rainfall which would prompt a review will depend on local conditions.
 - Run-off from stockpiles will be collected via a shallow toe drain which will discharge to a settlement pond. Temporary settlement ponds will be designed and sized to adequately attenuate suspended solid run-off from stockpile areas.
 - An Environmental Incident and Emergency Response Plan detailing the steps to be undertaken in the event of spillage of chemical, fuel or other hazardous wastes (e.g. concrete) will be in place prior to commencement of construction and will prescribe the process from investigation of the spillage to generating a plan to avoid a future incident occurring

Reduction or Elimination of Pollution from other Substances

The following guidelines, based on Chilibeck et al (1992), NRA (2005), and IFI (2016) will be followed by the contractor for the protection of all watercourses from pollution with other substances.

- Raw or uncured waste concrete will be removed from the construction site and disposed of in accordance with the relevant waste management legislation.
- Wash down water from concrete trucks, cast in place concrete etc., will be collected in a suitable containment structure and then taken off-site for appropriate disposal.
- Fuels, lubricants and hydraulic fluids for equipment used in the construction site will be carefully handled to avoid spillage, properly secured against unauthorised access or vandalism, and provided with spill containment according to current best practice.
- Appropriate spill control equipment, including oil booms and oil soakage pads. will be kept within the construction site to deal with any accidental spillage.
- Any spillage of fuels, lubricants or hydraulic oils will be immediately contained and the contaminated soil removed from the construction site and disposed of in accordance with all relevant waste management legislation.
- Prior to any work commencing all construction equipment will be checked to ensure that it is mechanically sound, to avoid leaks of oil, fuel, hydraulic fluids and grease.
- All fueling of machinery will be undertaken at least 100m set-back from all watercourses.
- The contractor will be required to have available on-site spill kits and hydrocarbon absorbent packs; and spill-kits and hydrocarbon absorbent packs will be stored in the cabin of vehicles working near watercourse and operators must be fully trained in the use of this equipment.

Cement

Concrete and cement are used during the construction phases and will be required on site. Unmanaged, these materials can cause serious pollution to both surface and groundwater due to the highly alkaline and corrosive properties of fresh concrete (EirGrid, 2020). Where the transportation and use of concrete near water cannot be avoided, (e.g. for in situ stitching), the following control measures will be employed;

- Concrete will be delivered by the supplier to the closest convenient point in order to reduce any unnecessary movement of it within the site.
- Any plant operating close to the water will require special consideration of the transport of concrete from the point of discharge from the mixer to final discharge into the delivery pipe (tremie). Care will be exercised when slewing concrete skips or mobile concrete pumps near surface waters.
- The preferred method for delivering concrete during construction is to dispatch the concrete directly from the concrete truck into the foundation or trench excavation. This allows for the most environmentally suitable management of the concrete as it is contained within the concrete truck until it arrives directly at the point of use.
- This method may not always be possible or desirable in sensitive locations. Concrete may need to be transferred from the concrete truck to a smaller 6T dumper truck where access is difficult.
- There will be no hosing of concrete, cement, grout or similar material spills into surface water bodies/drains. Such spills shall be contained immediately and run off prevented from entering the watercourse.
- Machinery and equipment participating in concreting operations on site will require washout and clean up after use. A dedicated concrete washout area will be provided at the site compound and shall be maintained regularly.
- Washouts will be carried out at designated locations only. These locations will be signposted. The concrete plant and all delivery drivers will be informed of their location with the order information and on arrival on site.
- Washout locations will be provided with appropriate designated, contained impermeable area and treatment facilities including adequately sized settlement tanks.
- Raw or uncured waste concrete will be disposed of by removal from the site; and
- The clear water from the settlement tanks shall be pH corrected prior to discharge (which shall be by means of one of the construction stage settlement facilities) or alternatively disposed of as waste to a licensed facility.

Dust Suppression

Fine dust particles can contribute to air and water pollution. Additionally, dust can settle on vegetation, harming plant life, and can contribute to soil erosion. The following measures should be implemented to manage dust on site;

- Wheel washes will be self-contained systems that do not require discharge of the wastewater to water bodies and water misting or sprays shall be used as required if particularly dusty activities are necessary during dry or windy periods.
- A speed limit of 20km/h will be introduced for all relevant plant and machinery in and around the site. Site roads shall be cleaned and maintained as appropriate.
- Hard surface roads shall be swept to remove mud and aggregate materials from their surface while any un-surfaced roads shall be restricted to essential site traffic only.
- Any site roads with the potential to give rise to dust will be watered, as appropriate, during dry and/or windy conditions (also applies to vehicles delivering material with dust potential).
- Stockpiling of materials shall be designed and laid out to minimise exposure to wind.

7.2.4 Lighting

Construction Phase

No lighting will be necessary during the construction phase. Works will be confined to daylight hours to limit disturbance to nocturnal fauna such as otters. In the event that lighting is required during the construction phase, permission should be sought from the local authority in advance.

Operational Phase

The lighting used during the operational phase will be directional, which will ensure that there is no light spill outside of the development footprint. High-power LEDs warm white (3000K) will be used to reduce blue light components and thereby ensure that there is no lighting disturbance to wildlife species. The light plan should include the use of specialist bollard and low-level downward directional luminaires (Midipoll ERCO or similar). The lens will effectively project the luminous flux onto the target surface, without causing glare and is compatible with dark sky requirements. The layout and spacing of the lighting should ensure minimal light spill. There will be no upward tilt of any of the lighting.

7.2.5 Noise

Construction Phase

Any works on the project site will be compliant with the contents and recommendations of British Standard 5228: Code of Practice for Noise Control on Construction and Demolition Sites, as well as the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007. All plant and machinery used during the work will be the quietest of its type available for carrying out the work required and will be maintained in good condition with regard to minimising noise output.

The degree of impact of noise on species can vary slightly between sites, depending on existing ambient noise conditions. Figure 7.1 presents a table of noise levels at the source and models how they attenuate over distance to the receptor. Noise levels are categorised into high, moderate, or low impact bands. Noise levels up to 70 dB(A)—shaded in green—are generally considered acceptable, with dark green indicating levels unlikely to cause any disturbance, and pale green representing levels that may occasionally trigger a low-level behavioural response. Yellow to orange shading indicates a higher likelihood of behavioural disturbance, though this may be mitigated through appropriate measures. Pale red zones reflect a level at which mitigation may reduce but not eliminate the risk of disturbance, while dark red represents noise levels likely to cause flight responses, with limited effectiveness of basic mitigation (e.g. screening), and where temporary cessation of work during sensitive periods may be necessary. This model is used for assessing bird species, but can be used as a proxy here for otters.

The BS 5228-1:2009+A1:2014 Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites provides typical noise levels for various construction equipment. Tables 7.2 and 7.3 list the assumed plant items used during the main construction phases, along with their corresponding source noise levels. Using this data, the predicted noise levels affecting wildlife during the construction phases are approximately 72–73 dB. This corresponds to an intermittent 'Moderate' disturbance level, for which mitigation measures are recommended.

Metres from Source	dB(A)										
0.67	120	110	100	95	90	85	80	75	70	65	60
1.33	114	104	94	89	84	79	74	69	64	59	54
2.67	108	98	88	83	78	73	68	63	58	53	48
5.33	102	92	82	77	72	67	62	57	52	47	42
10.67	96	86	76	71	66	61	56	51	46	41	36
20.67	90	80	70	65	60	55	50	45	40	35	30
42.67	84	74	64	59	54	49	44	39	34	29	24
85.33	78	68	58	53	48	43	38	33	28	23	
170.67	72	62	52	47	42	37	32	27	22		
341.33	66	56	46	41	36	31	26	21			
682.66	60	50	40	35	30	25	20				
1365.32	54	44	34	29	24						

Figure 7.1: Noise Level Effects relating to noise at the receptor (using standard decay formulae) and categorising this as high, moderate or low impact (Waterbird Disturbance Mitigation Toolkit, 2013).

Table 7.2 Indicative construction noise calculations during site preparation

Site Clearance and Preparation (BS 5228 Ref)	Calculated LAeq, T at Distance from Road (m)			
	50m	80m	100m	40m
Wheeled loader (C2.26)	63	59	57	54
Tracked excavator (loading dump truck) (C1.10)	69	65	63	60
Dozer (C.2.10)	64	60	58	55
Dump Truck (C2.30)	63	59	57	54
Combined LAeq	72	68	66	62

Table 7.3 Indicative construction noise calculations during excavation and fill works

Excavation and Fill works (BS 5228 Ref)	Calculated LAeq, T at Distance from Road (m)			
	50m	80m	100m	40m
Tracked excavator (loading dump truck) (C1-10)	69	65	63	60
Articulated dump truck (dumping rubble) (C1-11)	64	60	58	55

Wheeled loader(C2-26)	63	59	57	54
Dozer (C.2.10)	64	60	58	55
Dump truck tipping fill (C2.30)	63	59	57	54
Combined LAeq	73	68	66	63

Environmental noise generated by construction activities will be managed in accordance with the standards set out in BS 5228 and the guidelines published by the Institute of Acoustics for Ireland (2019). Mitigation measures to be adopted are as follows:

- All construction plant and equipment used on site will comply with the European Communities (Construction Plant and Equipment) (Permissible Noise Levels) Regulations 1996 (Statutory Instrument No. 359 of 1996).
- Noise levels during construction will adhere to the requirements of BS 5228-1:2009+A1:2014 Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites – Noise
- To protect residential amenities, and avoid disturbance to local wildlife species, construction practices will take place only within daylight hours. It may on occasion during certain stages of construction be necessary to work outside of the permitted working hours. In the event that these hours need to be extended, agreement will be sought from the Local Authority in advance.
- An on-site speed limit of 20 Kph will be enforced for all construction traffic.
- The contractor will ensure the use of quiet working methods will be selected, and the most suitable plant will be selected for each activity, having due regard to the need for noise control.
- All plant will be maintained in good working order. Where practicable, machinery will be operated at low speeds and will be shut down when not in use.
- Mechanical plant used on site will be fitted with effective exhaust silencers.
- Vehicle reverse alarms will be silenced appropriately to minimise noise breakout from the site while still maintaining their effectiveness.
- If required, compressors will be of the “noise reduced” variety and fitted with properly lined and sealed acoustic covers.
- All pneumatic percussive tools will be fitted with mufflers or silencers as recommended by the equipment manufacturers. All static mechanical construction plant will be enclosed by acoustic screens.
- Employees working on the site will be informed about the requirement to minimise noise and undergo training on the proper use and maintenance of tools and equipment, the positioning of machinery on-site to reduce the emission of noise to the noise sensitive receptors, avoidance of unnecessary noise when carrying out manual operations and when operating plant and equipment, and the use and maintenance of sound reduction equipment fitted to power pressure tools and machines.
- It is recommended that complaints should be received from nearby residential properties periodic noise monitoring be undertaken during construction works to determine noise levels at noise sensitive receptors. Based on the findings of such noise monitoring, appropriate noise mitigation measures will be implemented to further reduce noise impacts. Where excessive noise levels are recorded, further mitigation measures will be employed, which may include temporary screening of the nearest receptor to on-site activities.
- Public Liasson - It is recommended that the Contractor will appoint a responsible and trained person who will be present on site and who will be willing to answer and act upon complaints and queries from the local public.

Operational phase

The proposed development site is located adjacent to an existing residential housing estate, in an area already populated with many residential and commercial developments, and less than 1km from the town centre. Therefore, local wildlife species are likely to be habituated to local levels of anthropogenic activity which is unlikely to be significantly different during the operational phase. Therefore, no mitigation is proposed for this stage of the development.

7.2.6 Plant Management

- All plant will be checked, and active monitoring carried out to prevent leaking of hydrocarbons/chemicals.
- Stationary plant machinery will have drip trays located beneath if located within an environmentally sensitive area.
- When refuelling, care will be taken to prevent spills by using appropriate equipment and
- Where feasible, refuelling will take place at least 50-100m away from watercourses.

7.2.7 Waste Disposal

- All waste generated on site will be transported by a permitted waste carrier and suitably disposed of at a licensed waste facility.
- No waste will be buried, burnt, dumped on-site or in land adjacent to the site as this will be considered as unauthorised waste management; and
- In the event of unauthorised waste management, the cause and impact will be assessed, and all appropriate steps will be undertaken.

7.2.8 Damage to Flora and Fauna

In the event of damage, or imminent potential damage occurring to protected flora/fauna, particularly those listed as qualifying interests of the local Natura 2000 sites, the cause of the incident will be identified.

- If on-site vehicles or personnel were the cause of the incident, all works will cease until the Health and Safety declares the site a safe working area.
- When the site is declared secure, an assessment of the incident will be carried out.
- In the event of the death of any faunal species, species details, photographs, and any other available information will be recorded.
- OMC and a county council representative will be informed of the incident.
- The NPWS will be notified of the incident; and
- Suitable incident-specific mitigation measures will be put in place to manage the incident.

7.3 Physical Mitigation

7.3.1 Invasive Species Removal

The treatment and control of invasive alien species will follow guidelines issued by the National Roads Authority - The Management of Noxious Weeds and Non-native Invasive Plant Species on National Roads (NRA 2010) and IFI (2016) Information and Guidance Document on Japanese Knotweed. It is recommended that control and/or management of any IAPS should be undertaken in four phases (NRA 2010):

1. Undertake a detailed site assessment
2. Create a detailed IAPS Management Plan
3. Implement biosecurity and appropriate control measures
4. Undertake post control monitoring

Where the removal of IAPS is taking place on site, the following best practice guidelines will be followed:

- High-pressure steam cleaning with water > 40°C for machinery, and the use of Virkon antiseptic, as recommended in the 'IFI Biosecurity Protocol for Field Survey Work' prior to arrival and departure from site.
- All contractors and staff will be informed about the presence and significance of any IAPS on site before the commencement of removal works.

- Areas of Japanese Knotweed will be clearly demarcated by fencing and access within the area strictly avoided. A minimum buffer of 7m will be implemented to prevent disturbance to lateral rhizomes.
- Works to be carried out within the buffer zone will be supervised by an appropriately qualified environmental site officer or ECoW.
- Any removal of Japanese knotweed off-site will be conducted under the supervision of an appropriately qualified ecologist in line with NPWS licencing.
- Any contaminated soils will be sent for disposal to an authorised facility under licence from the NPWS.
- A suitable barrier will be erected between the watercourse and the invasive species to prevent the spread of IAPS into the watercourse.

Where the use of pesticides is required for the removal of IAPS on site, the following measures will be implemented:

- Physical barriers will be erected to prevent pesticide run-off into the watercourse.
- Overuse of pesticides will be avoided to reduce the likelihood of run-off into the watercourse. Caution will be exercised to avoid overspray or spillage.
- All equipment used in the treatment of IAPS will be thoroughly cleaned to prevent any pesticide residue contaminating the watercourse or adjoining habitats.
- Excess pesticides and containers will be disposed of in accordance to local guidance and regulations.
- The treated land and watercourse will be monitored for any signs of pesticide run-off or adverse effects to water quality and/or aquatic life. In the event of accidental contamination, immediate corrective actions will be taken to mitigate and prevent further impact. Any and all incidents of contamination will be recorded and the appropriate persons notified immediately.
- Detailed records of any and all pesticide use and application will be kept, including the date, time, weather conditions, product used, and application rate.
- Pesticide application will be planned during period of favourable weather conditions. Weather forecast predictions should be of calm conditions and no rainfall for at least 24-48 hours. Application should be avoided during conditions of high wind or rainfall to prevent spread into the watercourse.

Species specific control measures for the IAPS identified on site are listed below as per The Management of Invasive Alien Plant Species on National Roads – Technical Guidance (TII 2020).

Japanese Knotweed

It is recommended that a suitably qualified ecologist or horticulturalist with sufficient training, experience and knowledge in the control of IAPS should be employed to assist in the planning and execution of control measures in relation to Japanese knotweed. In addition, it is recommended that those involved in the control of Japanese knotweed have access, where appropriate, to the advice of a Registered Pesticide Advisor on the register established by the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine pursuant to Regulation 4 of the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Regulations. All pesticide users must be registered and have the appropriate training necessary to carry out the proposed method of control.

Due to the highly invasive nature of the plant species, the primary objective of control should be eradication by targeting the underground rhizome and not simply the aerial parts. It should be noted that none of the methods outlined in the following sections guarantee eradication. Japanese knotweed is highly invasive and extremely difficult to eradicate completely. All control measures will require follow-up treatments to minimise the possibility of rhizome regrowth, which should be undertaken for a minimum of three growing seasons (and up to four growing seasons) after control.

Chemical control: The current most widely recommended active ingredient for Japanese knotweed control is glyphosate, which breaks down in the soil relatively quickly. Glyphosate is a broad-spectrum herbicide and, as such, is potentially damaging to non-target plants. Great care is, therefore, necessary when applying this herbicide and it may be appropriate to

seek advice from a Registered Pesticide Advisor.

Physical control: Where feasible, preference should be given to treating Japanese knotweed in its original location to limit the risk of further spread of the plant. A number of physical control methods have been developed to deal with Japanese knotweed, which are all based on the mechanical excavation of the rhizome material and its subsequent containment either at depth, within an impermeable membrane, or its disposal off-site.

Butterfly-bush

It is recommended that a suitably qualified ecologist or horticulturalist with sufficient training, experience and knowledge in the control of IAPS should be employed to assist in the planning and execution of control measures in relation to Butterfly-bush. In addition, those involved in the control of this species may be advised to have access to the advice of a Registered Pesticide Advisor on the register established by the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine pursuant to Regulation 4 of the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Regulations. All pesticide users must be registered and have the appropriate training necessary to carry out the proposed method of control.

As Butterfly-bush is a plant that favours disturbed sites, physical removal of plants can provide ideal conditions for the germination of seeds that are present in the soil. For this reason, care needs to be taken to ensure that revegetation of treated areas is undertaken swiftly. The branches of this species are capable of rooting as cuttings, so care should also be taken to ensure material is disposed of in a manner to avoid this risk.

Chemical control: Foliar application of herbicide is capable of providing control with young plants and small infestations but should be followed up at six-monthly intervals as regrowth is common.

Physical control: Removal of the flower heads before seed set (June or even July) is an important control method as it reduces the volume of seeds that are available to spread. Hand-picking of young plants will provide control, but it is very tedious and should be undertaken with care to avoid soil disturbance, which can give rise to a flush of new seedling. Digging out plants is only practical with relatively minor infestations, at the initial stage of invasion, or where a site is to be excavated for development or road construction purposes. Mowing of young plants does not provide effective control as they re-sprout with vigour. The physical removal of mature stands is not recommended for the same reason. After uprooting, it is essential to plant the ground in order to prevent a flush of new seedling growth.

Combined control: Effective control can be achieved by cutting Buddleia plants to a basal stump during active growth (late spring to early summer) and immediately treating the total cut surface with herbicide concentrate. Monitoring will be required and retreatment, as necessary. Do not leave cut stems and branches on the ground as they will re-root and produce new plants.

7.3.2 Protective Fencing Plan: Silt Trap Fencing

Silt fences are required between works areas and water features to prevent potentially contaminated surface water run-off from works areas reaching the surface water feature. Silt fences have low permeability rates, which make them suitable to form temporary detention storage areas allowing sediment to settle and water to pass through slowly. When used correctly, silt fencing can be up to 98 percent effective in trapping sediment (Britton et al. 2000, 2001; Wishowski et al. 1998, Wyant 1980). Silt fencing should be installed, prior to the commencement of any construction works, as per figure 7.2 and 7.3. It is recommended that silt trap fencing be put in place at least one to two weeks before the start of construction activities. This allows sufficient time for inspection and adjustment of the fencing to ensure it is properly installed and functioning as intended. The following measures will be adhered to for the duration of the construction phase to ensure correct installation and maintenance of silt fencing on site.

- Silt fences will be installed downgradient of the potential source of the silt /sediment.

- The ground will be prepared to ensure proper installation and the fabric will be secured to the supporting joint posts.
- Erect sturdy hoarding (1.5-2m high steel) enclosing buffer before any machinery mobilises. Access points will be clearly marked and all construction activities and commuting of on-site personnel will be confined within the fencing.
- Hoarding should be flush with the ground and no gaps underneath.
- The existing embankment will be utilised as an additional physical barrier between the construction works and the watercourse.
- Gaps in the existing embankment will be filled before the erection of silt fencing.
- Silt fences will be constructed using permeable filter fabric (Hy-Tex Terrastop silt fence or similar) rather than a mesh material.
- High-quality wire-backed silt fencing is recommended for enhanced durability and strong performance in high winds, helping to prevent failure during worst-case scenario extreme flooding events.
- Its base shall be embedded at least 15cm into the ground and staked at 1m intervals.
- Strong metal posts should be used in lieu of wooden posts for increased strength and added rigidity.
- The vegetated turves shall be peeled back and not detached from the ground, the materials inserted and the turves replaced to hold the base in place.
- The bottom of the fabric will be folded and backfill will be placed over it. Each section of fence turned up wards to prevent runoff from the end cutting.
- The silt fence will be inspected regularly by the contractor during the working day and weekly during construction, and in particular following heavy rainfall.
- Silt fences shall remain in-situ until the vegetation on the disturbed ground is re-established.
- The fence shall not be pulled from the ground but cut at ground level and the stakes / posts removed.
- Should water build up behind the fences, the sediment will settle to the bottom. Water can be released, but sediments will remain.
- Areas which may be subject to increased sediment deposition should be noted. If significant runoff or sediment deposition is anticipated, or in areas of increased flood risk, a second fence parallel to the original one for added capacity will be installed.
- Additional silt trap fencing should be added if necessary.
- Checks and maintenance in these areas will be carried out daily.
- Silt fences will not be a replacement for good housekeeping and measures to minimise runoff from the site will be carried out, e.g. covering of materials and spoil, checking and maintaining equipment, working in dry weather conditions etc.
- Silt-fence systems will provide sufficient room for sediment to be deposited behind the silt fence and for sediment removal equipment to access the deposits.
- The silt fence will remain until all the site has been stabilised or until all construction works are completed.
- All construction personnel will be made aware of the sensitivity of the surrounding environment and are advised to behave with the protection of the conservation objectives of the local SACs in mind.



Figure 7.2 Proposed silt trap fencing and protective barrier layout for the proposed development.

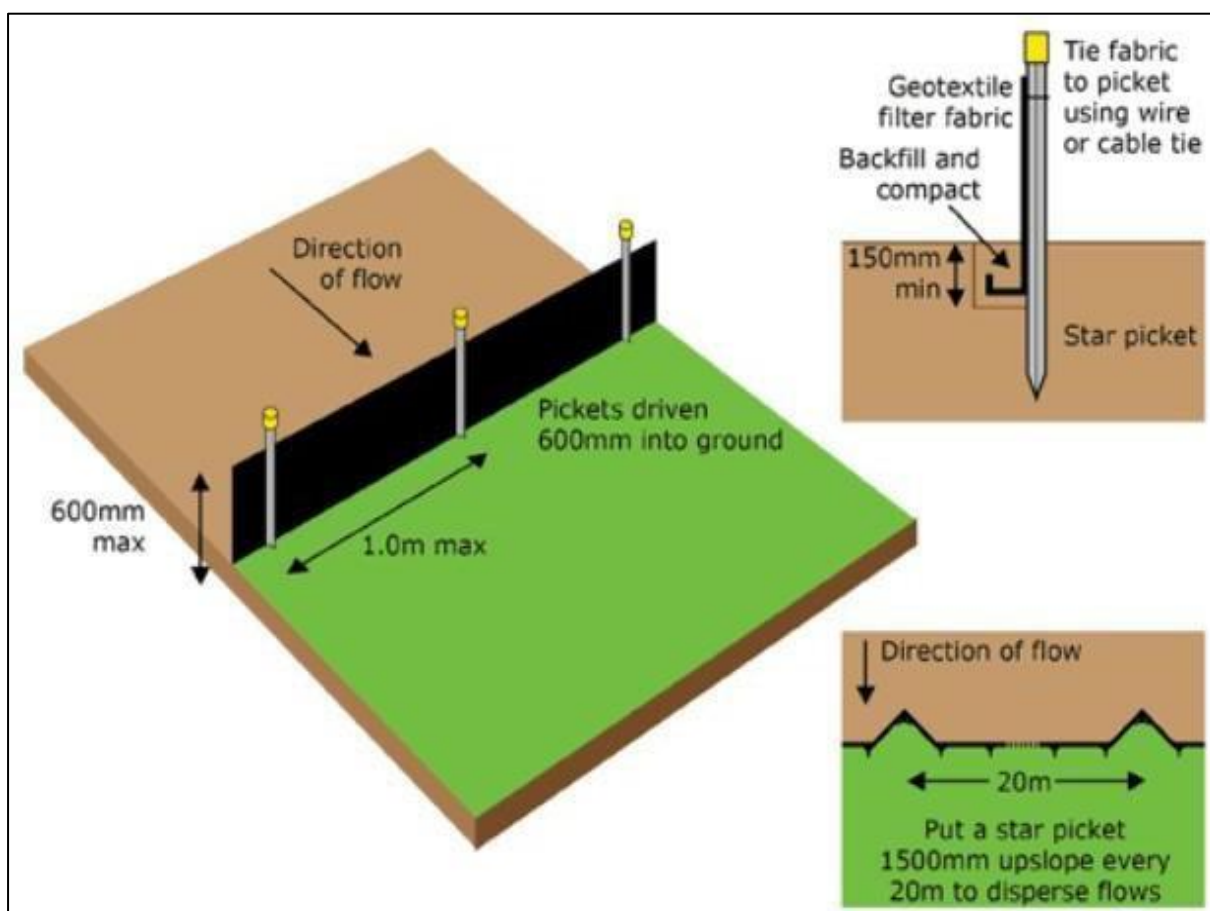


Figure 7.3 Proposed silt trap installation guide.

8 Conclusion

Following a comprehensive assessment of the potential impacts of the proposed development on Natura 2000 sites, including detailed consideration of all possible impact pathways and receptor sensitivities relevant to qualifying interests (QIs) and special conservation interests (SCIs), it is concluded that the project, when implemented in strict

accordance with the mitigation measures outlined in this Natura Impact Statement (NIS), will not give rise to any significant adverse effects on the integrity of any Natura 2000 site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, in view of the sites' conservation objectives.

The proposed development site lies entirely outside the boundaries of any designated Natura 2000 site, thereby precluding any potential for direct habitat loss or direct impact. Potential impact pathways to the screened-in European sites were identified and comprehensively evaluated in the context of both historical and proposed construction activities, as well as the subsequent operational phase of the development. These include potential pathways associated with hydrological alteration, contamination via surface runoff or groundwater flow, dust or airborne deposition, and indirect disturbance effects arising from construction activity. Following this analysis, it is concluded that all potential significant effects can be avoided through the incorporation of embedded design measures and specific mitigation.

Additional mitigation includes strict adherence to pollution prevention and sediment control protocols in line with EPA (2021) and Inland Fisheries Ireland (2022) guidance. This will include bunded storage of fuels and materials, designated refuelling areas at least 50 meters from watercourses, use of silt fencing and settlement traps, emergency spill response procedures, and routine inspection of control measures. Dust suppression, noise minimisation, and directional lighting design will also be implemented to prevent disturbance or deposition impacts. A strict adherence to mitigation with the aid of an ECoW will help to keep the standards high from the outset, prior to construction. Collectively, these measures will ensure that no pollutant or physical disturbance pathway exists that could negatively affect any European site either directly or indirectly.

The design team have engaged with OMC Ecology to ensure that any planning applications are carried out with ecological considerations as a first priority. In-person meetings were held on site between a representative of Inland Fisheries Ireland and Larry Manning of OMC to discuss the plans in detail and to discuss mitigation measures and the temporary bridge structures designed for transporting goods and materials to and from the site during the construction phase of proposed development. The footings of the temporary bridge span will be built a minimum of 2.5 meters away from the top of the riverbank. The level of the temporary road will be designed to allow for any excess water to runoff into the swale ponds away from the direction of the water course. Any further excess is to be pumped away from site. The site plans incorporate environmental best practice with extensive use of SUDS measures and inclusion of a 10-meter-wide riparian habitat, created to improve local water quality and habitats. Any suggestions from IFI have been incorporated into this NIS. The topography of the area indicates that a mass surface water runoff event after heavy rainfall is unlikely to impact the site and river. The surrounding lands are relatively low lying, and any hilly areas are intercepted by the river before they reach the proposed site. There are hills of deposited spoil and crushed rock on site which are highly porous. It is the opinion of the author and reviewer of this report, that it is highly unlikely that any surface water runoff from these hills would result in any surface water runoff impacts to the adjacent water course.

OMC Ecology have been supplied with up-to date detailed drawings and plans with which robust measures and analysis have been carried out. There are no headwalls designed to outflow into the nearby stream. Surface water runoff will be controlled on site and connected to the storm water network with inclusion of hydrocarbon interceptors.

Therefore, with consideration of the project design, the distance to the screened-in Natura 2000 sites, the intervening landscape, and the nature of hydrological linkages, in combination with the robust mitigation and monitoring proposed, it is concluded that the project will not result in adverse effects on the integrity of the any Natura 2000 site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. There will be no loss or degradation of qualifying habitats, no disturbance to species, and no deterioration in water quality or hydrological

function that could undermine the conservation objectives of these sites.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: NBDC records for vascular plant species within 1km (accessed 26/11/2025).

Hectad	Species
G2419	Amphibious Bistort (<i>Persicaria amphibia</i>)
G2419	Ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>)
G2419	Atlantic Ivy (<i>Hedera hibernica</i>)
G2419	Branched Bur-reed (<i>Sparganium erectum</i>)
G2419	Broad-leaved Dock (<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>)
G2419	Butterbur (<i>Petasites hybridus</i>)
G2419	Butterfly-bush (<i>Buddleja davidii</i>)
G2419	Cat's-ear (<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>)
G2419	Common Club-rush (<i>Schoenoplectus lacustris</i>)
G2419	Common Sedge (<i>Carex nigra</i>)
G2419	Common Spike-rush (<i>Eleocharis palustris</i>)
G2419	Enchanter's-nightshade (<i>Circaea lutetiana</i>)
G2419	Fool's-water-cress (<i>Apium nodiflorum</i>)
G2419	Great Bindweed (<i>Calystegia sepium</i> subsp. <i>sepium</i>)
G2419	Groundsel (<i>Senecio vulgaris</i>)
G2419	Hybrid Crack-willow (<i>Salix euxina</i> x <i>alba</i> = <i>S. x fragilis</i>)
G2419	Ivy-leaved Toadflax (<i>Cymbalaria muralis</i>)
G2419	Jointed Rush (<i>Juncus articulatus</i>)
G2419	Marsh Ragwort (<i>Jacobaea aquatica</i>)
G2419	Meadowsweet (<i>Filipendula ulmaria</i>)
G2419	Montbretia (<i>Crocasmia pottsii</i> x <i>aurea</i> = <i>C. x crocosmiiflora</i>)
G2419	Osier (<i>Salix viminalis</i>)
G2419	Perfoliate Pondweed (<i>Potamogeton perfoliatus</i>)
G2419	Procumbent Pearlwort (<i>Sagina procumbens</i>)
G2419	Purple-loosestrife (<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>)
G2419	Red Clover (<i>Trifolium pratense</i>)
G2419	Red Valerian (<i>Centranthus ruber</i>)
G2419	Reed Canary-grass (<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>)
G2419	Ribwort Plantain (<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>)
G2419	Silverweed (<i>Potentilla anserina</i>)
G2419	Sycamore (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>)
G2419	<i>Taraxacum</i> agg.
G2419	Tufted Hair-grass (<i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i>)
G2419	Water Figwort (<i>Scrophularia auriculata</i>)
G2419	Water Forget-me-not (<i>Myosotis scorpioides</i>)
G2419	Water Mint (<i>Mentha aquatica</i>)
G2419	White Clover (<i>Trifolium repens</i>)
G2419	Wild Angelica (<i>Angelica sylvestris</i>)
G2419	Wych Elm (<i>Ulmus glabra</i>)
G2419	Yellow Iris (<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>)

G2419	Yellow Loosestrife (<i>Lysimachia vulgaris</i>)
G2420	Annual Meadow-grass (<i>Poa annua</i>)
G2420	Atlantic Ivy (<i>Hedera hibernica</i>)
G2420	Aunt-Eliza (<i>Crocasmia paniculata</i>)
G2420	Autumn Hawkbit (<i>Scorzoneroide autumnalis</i>)
G2420	Bee Orchid (<i>Ophrys apifera</i>)
G2420	Bramble (<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.)
G2420	Broad-leaved Dock (<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>)
G2420	Bush Vetch (<i>Vicia sepium</i>)
G2420	Butterfly-bush (<i>Buddleja davidii</i>)
G2420	Cleavers (<i>Galium aparine</i>)
G2420	Cock's-foot (<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>)
G2420	Coltsfoot (<i>Tussilago farfara</i>)
G2420	Common Bird's-foot-trefoil (<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>)
G2420	Common Centaury (<i>Centaureum erythraea</i>)
G2420	Common Couch (<i>Elytrigia repens</i>)
G2420	Common Knapweed (<i>Centaurea nigra</i> sens. lat. (=nigra/debeauxii))
G2420	Common Ragwort (<i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>)
G2420	Common Spotted-orchid (<i>Dactylorhiza fuchsii</i>)
G2420	Common Whitebeam (<i>Sorbus aria</i>)
G2420	Creeping Bent (<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>)
G2420	Creeping Thistle (<i>Cirsium arvense</i>)
G2420	Crested Dog's-tail (<i>Cynosurus cristatus</i>)
G2420	Curled Dock (<i>Rumex crispus</i>)
G2420	Downy Birch (<i>Betula pubescens</i>)
G2420	Druce's Crane's-bill (<i>Geranium endressii</i> x <i>versicolor</i> = <i>G. x oxonianum</i>)
G2420	Early Pampas-grass (<i>Cortaderia richardii</i>)
G2420	Entire-leaved Cotoneaster (<i>Cotoneaster integrifolius</i>)
G2420	<i>Escallonia macrantha</i>
G2420	<i>Euphrasia</i> agg.
G2420	Fairy Flax (<i>Linum catharticum</i>)
G2420	False Oat-grass (<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>)
G2420	Fennel (<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>)
G2420	<i>Festuca rubra</i> agg.
G2420	<i>Fuchsia magellanica</i>
G2420	Garden Lady's-mantle (<i>Alchemilla mollis</i>)
G2420	Glaucous Sedge (<i>Carex flacca</i>)
G2420	Goat Willow (<i>Salix caprea</i>)
G2420	Gorse (<i>Ulex europaeus</i>)
G2420	Great Bindweed (<i>Calystegia sepium</i> subsp. <i>sepium</i>)
G2420	Great Willowherb (<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>)
G2420	Hairy Sedge (<i>Carex hirta</i>)
G2420	Hard Rush (<i>Juncus inflexus</i>)

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G2420	Hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>)
G2420	Hoary Willowherb (<i>Epilobium parviflorum</i>)
G2420	Honeysuckle (<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>)
G2420	Italian Alder (<i>Alnus cordata</i>)
G2420	Japanese Knotweed (<i>Fallopia japonica</i>)
G2420	Jointed Rush (<i>Juncus articulatus</i>)
G2420	Kidney Vetch (<i>Anthyllis vulneraria</i>)
G2420	Knotgrass (<i>Polygonum aviculare</i>)
G2420	Lesser Trefoil (<i>Trifolium dubium</i>)
G2420	Marsh Thistle (<i>Cirsium palustre</i>)
G2420	Marsh Woundwort (<i>Stachys palustris</i>)
G2420	Meadow Buttercup (<i>Ranunculus acris</i>)
G2420	Meadow Vetchling (<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>)
G2420	Meadowsweet (<i>Filipendula ulmaria</i>)
G2420	Montbretia (<i>Crocasmia pottsii</i> x <i>aurea</i> = <i>C. x crocosmiiflora</i>)
G2420	Osier (<i>Salix viminalis</i>)
G2420	Oxeye Daisy (<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>)
G2420	Perennial Rye-grass (<i>Lolium perenne</i>)
G2420	Prickly Sow-thistle (<i>Sonchus asper</i>)
G2420	Quaking-grass (<i>Briza media</i>)
G2420	Red Clover (<i>Trifolium pratense</i>)
G2420	Ribwort Plantain (<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>)
G2420	Rosebay Willowherb (<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>)
G2420	Rough Hawkbit (<i>Leontodon hispidus</i>)
G2420	Rowan (<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>)
G2420	<i>Rubus ulmifolius</i>
G2420	<i>Rumex crispus</i> subsp. <i>crispus</i>
G2420	<i>Rumex crispus</i> x <i>obtusifolius</i> = <i>R. x pratensis</i>
G2420	Rusty Willow (<i>Salix cinerea</i> subsp. <i>oleifolia</i>)
G2420	Selfheal (<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>)
G2420	Silver Birch (<i>Betula pendula</i>)
G2420	Silverweed (<i>Potentilla anserina</i>)
G2420	Slender St John's-wort (<i>Hypericum pulchrum</i>)
G2420	Smooth Hawk's-beard (<i>Crepis capillaris</i>)
G2420	Spear Thistle (<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>)
G2420	Spreading Meadow-grass (<i>Poa humilis</i>)
G2420	Sweet Vernal-grass (<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>)
G2420	Sycamore (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>)
G2420	Timothy (<i>Phleum pratense</i>)
G2420	Trailing Tormantil (<i>Potentilla anglica</i>)
G2420	Traveller's-joy (<i>Clematis vitalba</i>)
G2420	Tufted Hair-grass (<i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i>)
G2420	Tutsan (<i>Hypericum androsaemum</i>)

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G2420	Wall Cotoneaster (<i>Cotoneaster horizontalis</i>)
G2420	Water Figwort (<i>Scrophularia auriculata</i>)
G2420	Weld (<i>Reseda luteola</i>)
G2420	White Clover (<i>Trifolium repens</i>)
G2420	White Willow (<i>Salix alba</i>)
G2420	Wild Carrot (<i>Daucus carota</i> subsp. <i>carota</i>)
G2420	Wild Carrot (<i>Daucus carota</i>)
G2420	Wilson's Honeysuckle (<i>Lonicera nitida</i>)
G2420	Wood Dock (<i>Rumex sanguineus</i>)
G2420	Yellow Iris (<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>)
G2420	Yorkshire-fog (<i>Holcus lanatus</i>)

RECEIVED: 26/03/2026

Appendix 2: Method Statement.

Method Statement

Doc No: VRC-HS-07-1

Contractor: Thawside Ltd

Project: 47 Unit Development, Friars Court, Killala Road.

Contractor Thawside LTD	Name: Patrick Ruane	Address: Unit 3c, Behy Business Park, Behy Road, Ballina	Tel: (096) 54134 E-mail: thawside@outlook.com
Project Name	Construction of 47 No residential units, Friars Court, Killala Road, Ballina.		
Description of the Task/Activity	Establishment of working site, temporary site access, site development and grading, construction works and site works.		
Site Address/Location:	Friars court, Killala Rd, Ballina, County Mayo	Start Date/Time:	Date TBC (subject to PP) Start time 8am Mon – Sat 8am
		Finish Date/Time:	Date TBC (subject to PP) Finish time Mon – Sat 5:30pm
Personnel Involved	Name	Role/Trade	
	Patrick Ruane	Company Director / Project Manager	
	James Ruddy	Site foreman and general operative	
	Ambrose Tolan	General Operative and plant operative	
	Helen Ruane	Site and Contracts Administrator	
	Various subcontractors	TBC	
Site Supervisor:	Patrick Ruane	Tel:	(087) 981 0193
Safety Officer	Patrick Ruane	Tel:	(087) 981 0193
Key Plant & Tools	Excavator, Roller, Tipper truck, Teleporter,		
Key Materials	Majority of materials to be stored offsite and delivered as per construction programme requirement only.		
Other Essential Equipment:	Scaffolding – To be erected and certified by competent persons only		
Specific Identified Residual Hazards: (or refer to the task specific risk assessment(s))	Japanese knotweed Specific management plan to be addressed as part of planning conditions Overhead electricity lines and other existing services Existing services to be delineated – Refer to site establishment plan Plant movement / Interface with Public / Site noise Refer to site establishment plan Loading and unloading of materials and equipment will occur within the site confines only. Unloading plant to be operated by Thawside Ltd. only (unless otherwise approved by site supervisor). Materials to be delivered on a need only basis. The site shall be fully hoarded Site working hours will be during day time only with specific consideration given at all times to adjacent properties Construction waste will be removed often from site to prevent any excess build-up or scattering		

Method Statement

Contractor: Thawside Ltd

Doc No: VRC-HS-07-1

Project: 47 Unit Development, Friars Court, Killala Road.

	Proximity of adjacent watercourse Refer to site establishment plan. No materials or hydrocarbons to be stored adjacent to watercourse. Hydrocarbons to be stored in bunded containers Adjacent boundary walls to be expedited as part of construction methodology Working at heights Construction of single storey units only will substantially reduce the need for working at heights. All roof works will be undertaken with a scaffold surround to the building Excavations Shallow digs only as per design. Open trenches onsite to be limited to work zones and backfilled asap. Trade interfaces Main contractor to ensure daily briefing to all personnel to ensure safe work environment for all workers. Appropriate sequencing of trades etc.
Specific Staff Training	Typically all works will require a task specific risk analysis and all employees shall be trained into their companies job specific safety statement. Only ticketed operators will be allowed to operate plant onsite Daily supervision to ensure verification of competency / suitability of persons using power tools and carrying out manual handling tasks
Sequence of Operations: (include sketches if required)	1. Establishment of temporary site access as per attached layout 2. Site establishment and grading - o (hoarding, plant delivery, service identification, site clearing, bulk excavations) 3. Foundation installation 4. Superstructure works 5. Roads and services 6. Finishing works 7. Landscaping 8. Site demob
Temporary Supports and Props needed to facilitate the works:	Nil – No temporary structural works envisaged. However any temporary structural works will have a certified temporary works design in place prior to the activity occurring
Method of Access and Egress to the work area:	Refer to site establishment plan • Access to all works area will be via temporary road access (see attached plan). No access will be through the existing housing estate. • All superstructures will have a scaffold surround for gables and roof works
Fall Protection Measures: (Where work at height cannot be eliminated – consider both Personnel & Materials)	(e.g. Guard Rails/Toe Boards/Brick Guard/Safety Harnesses/Exclusion Zones, etc.) Thawside Ltd. will supply and erect all scaffolds as required

Method Statement

Doc No: VRC-HS-07-1

Contractor: Thawside Ltd

Project: 47 Unit Development, Friars Court, Killala Road.

Hazardous Substances: (Attach MSDS if required)	 Very Toxic	 Harmful/Irritant	 Corrosive	 Dangerous for the environment	 Oxidising	 Highly flammable	 Explosives
Applicable:	No	No Standard building Substances	No	Yes The contractor is mindful of the adjacent watercourse and need to oversee all elements imported to site accordingly	No	No	No
Storage Arrangements:	All materials will be stored in a locked container onsite but storage of material onsite will generally be avoided and delivered as required only						
Details of Permits to Work:	No works shall occur without daily prestart briefing with the Main Contractors site supervisor. Any works requiring permits will be reviewed and issued on a case-by-case basis						
SWL's:	No temporary works envisaged. All lifting gear is typically stored offsite. Machines will be all inspected as per industry standards						
Required Personnel Protective Equipment:	 Safety Boots	 Hard Hats	 Safety Gloves	 Hearing Protection	 Eye Protection	 Respiratory Protection	Other: 1. Hi-Viz 2. Covid PPE (if applicable) 3.
Emergency Procedures:	Refer to site plan for Muster point The emergency response plan will be available at all points of congregation onsite such as staff canteen etc. All incidents must be reported to the site supervisor for further action / record.						
 First Aid	Name of On-Site First Aider:	TBC					
	First Aid Box Location:	Site office – refer to site establishment plan					
	Location of Nearest Hospital:	Castlebar hospital					

Method Statement

Contractor: Thawside Ltd

Doc No: VRC-HS-07-1

Project: 47 Unit Development, Friars Court, Killala Road.

Welfare Requirements	Site canteen, Toilets, Tools store
Services to be supplied by Others	Subcontracts yet to be awarded
Other information & Comments	All employees and subcontractor personnel will sign onto site upon receipt of the major site risks from the site supervisor. All personnel will be offered the opportunity to contribute to the identification of the safety hazards associated with their works

All work will be undertaken by qualified competent persons with experience of the type of work described above and in all cases in full accordance with safety procedures specified in the company's health and safety policy.

Prepared by: Patrick Ruane

Position: Project Manager

Date: 31-Jan-2022

Items Attached:	Yes	No
Sketches	X	Site establishment plan
Certification of Plant etc.		X Digital file
Programme of Work	X	To be developed upon receipt of planning
Risk Assessments		X Site specific to be developed prior to undertaking works

Appendix 3: OPW CFRAM maps w34bln_exfcd_f3_03 & w34bln_exfcd_f3_04.

