



Forestry, Ecology & Environment

Remedial Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

Upgrading and Repair Works
Newtowncashel, Cashel, Co. Longford

Compiled by: Sara Sheridan MSc BSc, Veon Ecology

Prepared for: Will Design Associates

On behalf of: GALRO Unltd

Completion Date: 16/10/2023



Table of Contents

Table of Figures	3
Table of Tables.....	3
Table of Photographs	3
Section 1: INTRODUCTION.....	5
Section 2: PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	6
2.1 Project Location	6
2.2 Description of Works	6
2.3 Environmental Sensitivity of the Project Site	8
Section 3: BACKGROUND.....	10
3.1 Introduction.....	10
3.2 Relevant Legislation	10
3.3 Methodology	11
3.4 Preliminary examination in context of the project	11
Section 4: MANDATORY EIAR THRESHOLD REVIEW	12
Section 5: PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION	14
5.1 Preliminary Examination	14
5.2 Nature of the development.....	14
5.3 Size of the development	15
5.4 Location of the development	15
5.5 Preliminary Examination Conclusion.....	15
Section 6: SCREENING	16
6.1 Overview of Schedule 7 & Annex III	16
6.2 Schedule 7A information	16
6.3 Review of Schedule 7 Criteria.....	17
6.4 Review under other relevant EU environmental legislation.....	21
Section 7: CONCLUSION	22
Section 8: REFERENCES.....	23
Section 9: APPENDICES.....	24
Appendix 1. Maps & Figures	24
Appendix 2. PHOTOGRAPHS	29

Table of Figures

Figure 2.1: Project site location and layout.	7
Figure 2.2: Natura 2000 sites within the 15km Zol.	9
Figure 3.1: Extract from the OPR Guidance Note, Step-by-Step Approach to EIA Screening (Step 1).	11
Figure 4.1: Steps of the EIA Screening process.	13
Figure 9.1: Project site location.	24
Figure 9.2: Works completed on the Project site in 2021.	25
Figure 9.3: Project site and Natura 2000 sites in the Zol.	26
Figure 9.4: Works completed onsite and the relevant Natura 2000 sites.	27
Figure 9.5: Details of new fencing.	28

Table of Tables

Table 6.1: Schedule 7A information.	16
Table 6.2: Review of the Schedule 7 criteria with regard to the subject Project.	17
Table 6.3: Summary of potential effects and their significance.	20
Table 6.4: Other relevant EU environmental legislation.	21

Table of Photographs

Photograph 9.1: Widened entrances to the subject site.	29
Photograph 9.2: Earth mounds produced by the widening of the entrance.	30
Photograph 9.3: Upgraded fencing inside original fenceline.	30
Photograph 9.4: Upgraded fencing on Project site.	31
Photograph 9.5: Repaired rock harbour on Lough Ree.	31
Photograph 9.6: Lough Ree and repaired rock harbour.	32

General Details

Details of Author(s)

Name: Sara Sheridan MSc BSc

Address: Office 17, Oran House, Oran Town Centre, Station Road, Oranmore, Co. Galway

Company name: Veon Ltd. Veon Ecology

Phone: M: +353 87 1127182

E-mail: ssheridan@veon.ie

**Details of relevant qualifications/
affiliations/years of experience**

MSc in Ecological Management & Conservation Biology from Queen's University Belfast
BSc (Hons) in Environmental Science from University of Galway
MSc earned in 2022 from Queen's University Belfast. Extensive experience in ornithology, with practical experience as a member of a field ecology team conducting various surveys. Experience in the completion of ecological reports including Natura Impact Statements and Ecological Impact Assessment. Deep knowledge of environmental legislation and ecological assessment.

Describe scope of contribution in preparing this report

Desktop survey, Phase 1 habitat survey, remedial Ecological assessment, Final report compilation.

Document Quality Control Sheet

Veon Ltd. Veon Ecology							
Revision	Description	Author	Date	Reviewed By	Date	Authorised by	Doc Ref No.
1	Draft Report	SS	10/10/23	DP	11/10/23	-	-
2	Final Report	SS	16/10/23	DP	16/10/23	-	-

Section 1: INTRODUCTION

Veon Ltd. (Veon Ecology) has been appointed by Will Design Associates, on behalf of Joseph Sheahan and GALRO Unlimited, to carry out a remedial Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report for repair and upgrading works completed without consent on lands at Cashel, Newtowncashel, Co. Longford. The location of the works is presented in **Figure 2.1**. This remedial EIA screening was prepared in support of the application to An Bord Pleanála for leave to apply for Substitute Consent under Section 177C of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

This report has been prepared to form an opinion as to whether or not the project should have been subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) prior to its completion and if so, whether a remedial Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) should be prepared in respect of that.

This remedial EIA screening assesses the project with reference to the relevant EIA legislation including the EIA Directive, and Planning and Development Regulation and Roads Act and Regulations. The methodology has particular regard to the '3-Step' assessment process set out in the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Practice Note PN02 (June 2021). European and National guidance documents were also heavily referred to during the completion of this report.

A remedial EIA Screening of the project has been prepared and is provided in **Section 6**. The screening assessment concluded as follows:

It is considered that the project Cashel, Newtowncashel would not have had significant negative effects on the environment and would not have been subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and no remedial Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) is required for it.

This remedial EIA Screening Report is structured to assess the relevant project and environmental criteria as follows:

- Description of project site location.
- Description of the works completed.
- The legislative basis for EIA.
- Mandatory EIAR threshold review.
- Preliminary examination.
- Screening.
- Conclusion.

Section 2: PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Project Location

The project site is located at Cashel, Newtowncashel, Co. Longford. The site of the completed operations was located on the eastern shore of Lough Ree in County Longford, approximately 19.7 kilometres southwest of Longford town. The village of Newtowncashel lies approximately 3 kilometres east of the site of the completed operations (see **Figure 2.1**). The site of the completed operations lies in the Cashel townland, which is flanked by Loughfarm, Elfeet, Glebe and Ballynahinch townlands.

The site on which the works were completed is approximately 7.67 acres in size and is bounded by improved agricultural pastures, scrub and a freshwater lake. There is an existing unoccupied dwelling on the site, which sits at an elevation of 43 meters with the land sloping moderately southwest towards Lough Ree, and a slight slope northeast away from the existing dwelling. The southwestern boundary of the site runs along the shore of Lough Ree for approximately 196 meters. The local road L1157 runs along the northern boundary of the site. A number of residential dwellings are scattered across the rural locality surround the site.

The project site adjoins Lough Ree (European code: IE_SH_26_750a) to the southwest. The wider landscape surrounding the project site is comprised of improved agricultural grassland, scrub, semi-natural grassland and scattered buildings. There are large areas of cutover bog to the east and northeast of the proposed development site. A scattered settlement pattern is evident throughout the landscape with working farms and residential dwellings. The project site was comprised of an existing dwelling, areas of semi-natural woodland, semi-natural grassland and hedgerows prior to the operations were conducted. No drainage ditches or watercourses occur within the site.

2.2 Description of Works

An application is being made to An Bord Pleanála for Substitute Consent under Section 177E of the Planning and Development Act 2000 for works undertaken in Cashel, Newtowncashel, Co. Longford. The development on the site which is the subject of the current application for substitute consent consists of the following:

The re-fencing of the site was commenced on the 2nd of November 2021. The new fencing was placed inside the original fence. The original fence was a traditional barbed wire fence which had become eroded and completely broken down and/or removed in places prior to GALRO's purchasing of the site. Approximately 370m of new fencing was installed along the northeast and southeast boundaries of the site. Metal grid rail fencing was installed instead of barbed wire fencing in the interest of Health and Safety, as the new fencing type reduced and/or eliminates the risk of injury to the potential future services users of the planned rest-bite home. This is common practice for GALRO, as health and safety is a fundamental consideration for their respite homes and service users.

Widening of existing entrance gateway to greater than that permitted under the parent permission. Existing entrance gateway was narrow and the works to re-fence the site and re-gravel the driveway required machinery which could not access the site through the existing entrance. The existing pillars/ piers on either side of the site entrance were removed in order to gain access to carry out these works.

Commencement of the re-surfacing of the existing driveway with fresh gravel due to the existing driveway having become very overgrown, and with the existing gravel surfacing having been worn down to soil in places.

Repairs to the rock harbour on the Lough Ree shore. Rocks were protruding from the top of the harbour and therefore Joe Sheahan asked the contractor to track out onto the harbour with a track digger to level the protruding stones. However, misunderstanding between parties meant that the contractor instead commenced moving some stones from the waterside end of the harbour, placing them in the water near the shoreline. Approximately a third of the rock harbour was removed before the misunderstanding was established and the works ceased.



Figure 2.1: Project site location and layout.

2.3 Environmental Sensitivity of the Project Site

Hydrology

The most immediate hydrological feature in the vicinity of the project site is Lough Ree (European code: IE_SH_26_750a) which adjoins the site to the southwest. There are no drainage ditches, minor streams or rivers on the site or within the vicinity of the site. The results of the 2nd cycle (2016-2021) of the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) assessment reported that ecological and chemical water quality status of Lough Ree (EU code: IE_SH_26_750a) as 'Good'.

The rivers Shannon, Inny and Hind are the main inflowing rivers into Lough Ree and the River Shannon is the main outflowing river. The EPA also assessed the ecological water quality of the River Shannon in 2020 at the Athlone: Burgess Park (LHS) station (Station code: RS26S021720) which is just downstream of where the Shannon exits Lough Ree and approximately 19km south of the project site. In 2020 the Shannon was assigned a Q Value of 4, 'Good' quality at the Athlone station.

Groundwater

Groundwater vulnerability is a term used to represent the intrinsic geological and hydrogeological characteristics that determine the ease with which groundwater may be contaminated by human activities. Where the rock depth is less than 3 meters and depending on the subsoil type and thickness, the vulnerability is rated as 'Extreme'. The project site is classified as 'Extreme Vulnerability' with karst rock near the surface and due to the watercourse (i.e., the Lough) (GSI, 2017). There are no significant springs or groundwater discharges recorded or mapped in the immediate vicinity of the site (GSI, 2017).

Air Quality

The EPA Air Zone designation for the site is 'Zone D' 'Rural Ireland'. The Air Quality Index Regions scored the air quality of the site as 'Good' with a score of 3 in 2021 (EPA Maps, 2023).

Soils and Geology

The project site is positioned on the Visean Limestone bedrock formation which consists of undifferentiated limestone and an Aquifer of regional importance (GSI, 2016). The soil that underlays the project site is comprised of deep well drained mineral brown earths (BminDW) and shallow well drained mineral brown earths derived from mainly calcareous parent materials (BminSW) (Teagasc, EPA & GSI, 2006).

Designated Sites

Six Natura 2000 sites fall with the proposed site's Zol: Lough Ree SAC, Fortwilliam Turlough SAC, Corbo Bog SAC, Lough Funshinagh SAC, Mount Jessop Bog SAC and Lough Ree SPA (see **Figure 2.2**). Two of these sites, Lough Ree SAC (000440) and Lough Ree SPA (004064), are physically and/or hydrologically connected to the proposed development site. The Lough Ree SAC directly overlaps the development site, and the Lough Ree SPA intersects with the site. Based on the direct connection between the site and the aforementioned Natura 2000 sites, these two sites have been screened in for potential impacts based on the rationale. There are no hydrological and/or physical connections between the other Natura 2000 sites within the Zol and the proposed development site. Based on this rationale these sites are not at risk of being impacted by the proposed works, this screening them out.

A remedial Appropriate Assessment (AA) screening and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) was completed to accompany this application.

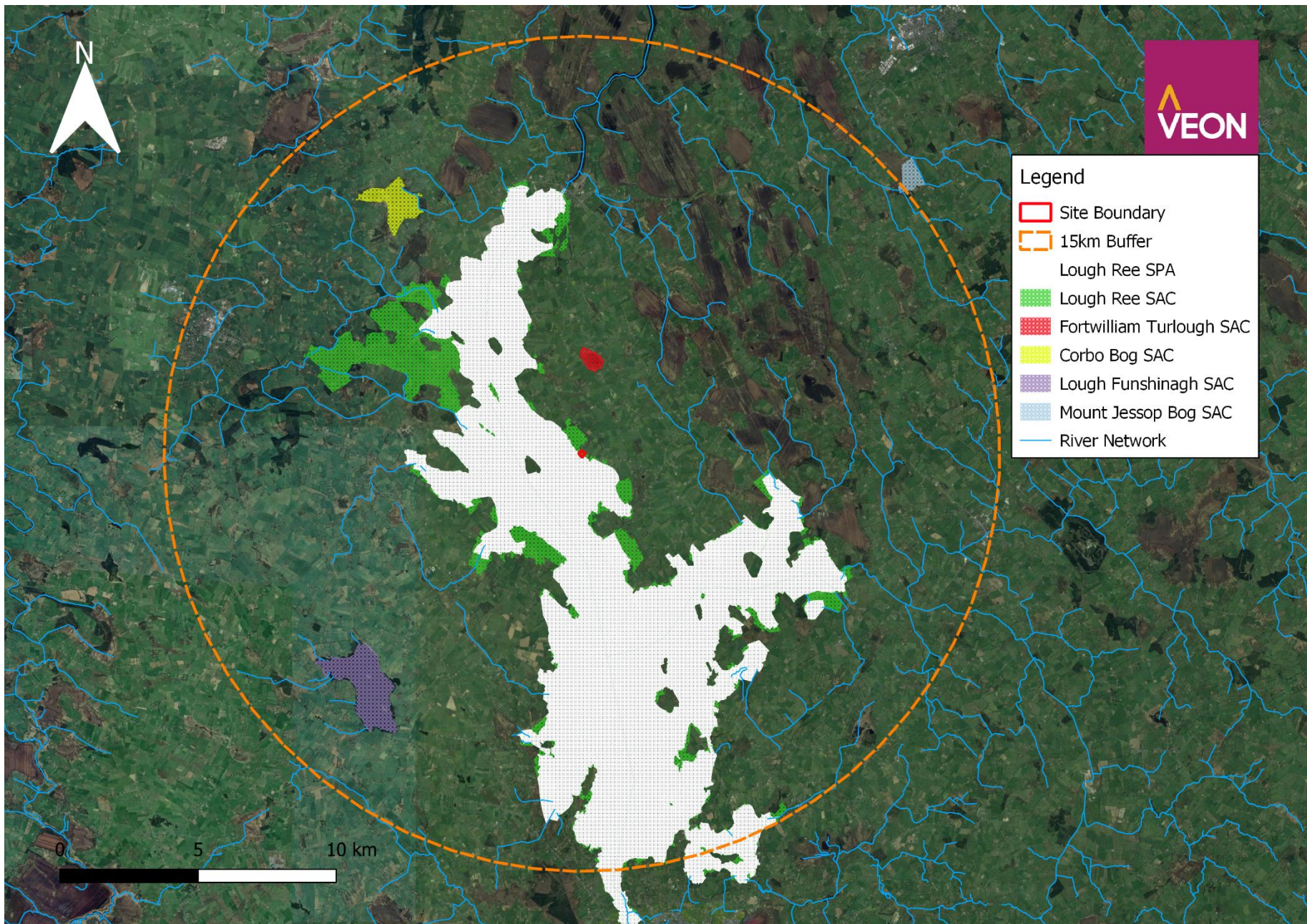


Figure 2.2: Natura 2000 sites within the 15km Zol.

Section 3: BACKGROUND

3.1 Introduction

The legislative background is detailed within this section of the report, in order for the Competent Authority, to review the information presented and determine if the project required the preparation of an EIAR prior to the completion of the works.

3.2 Relevant Legislation

The requirements for an EIA derive from Council Directive 85/337/EEC (as amended by Directives 97/11/EC, 2003/35/EC and 2009/31/EC) as codified and replaced by Directive 2011/92/EU, of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU; referred to in this report as the EIA Directive. The EIA Directive has been transposed into Irish law under the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended and the associated Planning and Development Regulations 2001 and the European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018.

This legislation and regulations identify developments by type and thresholds of scale, for which an EIAR is considered mandatory. Annex I of the EIA Directive identifies projects which require a mandatory EIAR, and Annex II identifies thresholds for projects in which an EIAR is required. These are identified under Parts 1 and 2 under Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulation 2001.

The basis for this assessment is whether the proposed project exceeds mandatory “thresholds” or is considered to have a potential impact on “sub-threshold” criteria set out under legislation.

The EIA Screening Report has had regard to the following legislation:

- Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.
- Roads Act 1993 as amended.
- Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended.
- Directive 2014/52/EU of 16 April 2014 amending Directive 2011/92/EU.
- The European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 (S.I. No. 296 of 2018).
- European Union (Roads Act 1993) (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations, 2019 (S.I. 279/2019).
- Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects: Guidance on Screening, European Commission, 2017.
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development 2003.
- Circular Letter: PL 05/2018 27th August 2018 Transposition into Planning Law of Directive 2014/52/EU amending Directive 2011/92/EU on the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (the EIA Directive) and Revised Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment.
- Circular Letter: PL 10/2018 22 November 2018 Public notification of timeframe for application to An Bord Pleanála for screening determination in respect of local authority or State authority development.
- Office of the Planning Regulator (May 2021) Environmental Impact Assessment Screening- Practice Note.

3.3 Methodology

Screening is the initial stage in the process to determine whether or not an EIAR is required. This determination is made through review of the mandatory and threshold projects outlined within the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended. The report considered in preparation of this report guidance from the following documents and legislation:

- Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment. August 2018. Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.
- Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports. May 2022. Environmental Protection Agency.
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA): Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development. August 2003. Government of Ireland.
- Guidance on EIA Screening. June 2001. European Commission.

3.4 Preliminary examination in context of the project

The Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) has issued guidance in the form of the Environmental Impact Assessment Screening- Practice Note, May 2021 which aids Planning Authorities as the Competent Authority in this area. This report has had regard to the OPR guidance and methodology which sets out a 3 Step Process (See **Figure 3.1** below).

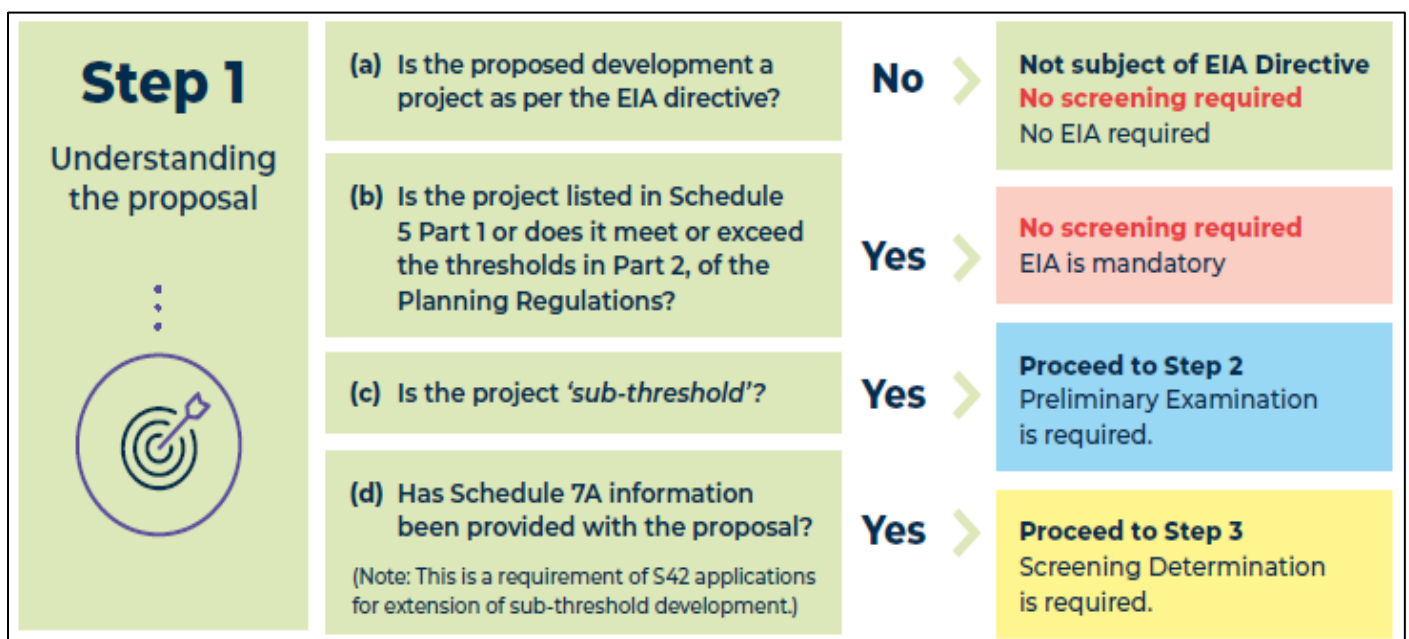


Figure 3.1: Extract from the OPR Guidance Note, Step-by-Step Approach to EIA Screening (Step 1).

Section 4: MANDATORY EIAR THRESHOLD REVIEW

Article 4(1) of Annex I of the EU's EIA Directive (2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU) outlines the types of projects that automatically require mandatory EIA. The environmental effects of these projects are presumed to be significant. The types of projects that require mandatory EIA is provided in Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, (Regulations) as amended.

Annex II lists the project that need close consideration on whether or not EIA is needed but for which EIA is not necessarily mandatory. Article 4(2) of Annex II of the Directive refers to these project types, which include:

1. Agriculture, Silviculture & Aquaculture
2. Extractive Industry
3. Energy Industry
4. Production & Processing of Metals
5. Mineral Industry
6. Chemical Industry
7. Food Industry
8. Textile Industry
9. Rubber Industry
10. Infrastructure Projects
11. Other Projects
12. Tourism & Leisure

Annex II is broadly transposed by the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, Schedule 5, Part 2. The Projects outlined in Annex II of the Directive and Schedule 5, Part 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations (2001) that meet or exceed thresholds set out therein require mandatory EIA. Projects that do not meet or exceed thresholds or limits require further assessment. Part 10 'Environmental Impact Assessment', Chapter 1 of the EIA Directive states that: *"sub-threshold development" means development of a type set out in Schedule 5 which does not exceed a quantity, area or other limit specified in that Schedule in respect of the relevant class of development.'*

Sub-threshold Projects that require further screening for EIA then proceed to Preliminary Examination when they are considered with regard to the 'Source-Pathway-Target' model and the criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the 2001 Regulations and Annex III of the EU EIA Directive.

When considering whether or not a sub-threshold Project should be made subjected to an EIA, the Project is considered on a *case-by-case examination or thresholds or criteria* set by the Member State or a combination of the two approaches. A case-by-case examination method is by nature discretionary, compared to thresholds and/or criteria.

The criteria outlined in Annex III include, but are not limited to:

1. Characteristics of projects
 - a. The size and design of the whole project
 - b. The use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity
 - c. Pollution and nuisances
2. Location of projects - The environmental sensitivity of the geographical area likely to be affected by projects are considered with regard to:
 - a. The existing and approved land use
 - b. The relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (soil, land, water, biodiversity)
 - c. The absorption capacity of the natural environment

3. Type and characteristics of the potential impact
 - a. The magnitude and spatial extent of the impact
 - b. The nature if the impact
 - c. The probability of the impact

The subject project type does not fall under Annex I or II of the EIA Directive, therefore excluding it from mandatory EIA and non the of the thresholds described above have been exceeded. However, the project qualifies as a 'Sub-threshold Project' under the EIA Directive definition. Article 2(3) of the EIA Directive outlines the need for coordinated procedure between EIA and the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive states the requirement for Appropriate Assessment of projects or developments that have the potential to have significant impacts on Natura 2000 sites, and therefore the environment also.

Due to the location of the subject project in relation to the Natura 2000 site(s) and ecologically sensitive areas, the project was therefore subjected to remedial Appropriate Assessment with a remedial Natura Impact Assessment completed for the works. The subsection of the project to Appropriate Assessment means that the project had the potential to have significant impacts on the environment and therefore screening for EIA is necessary, and so the screening process should proceed to Step 2: Preliminary Examination.

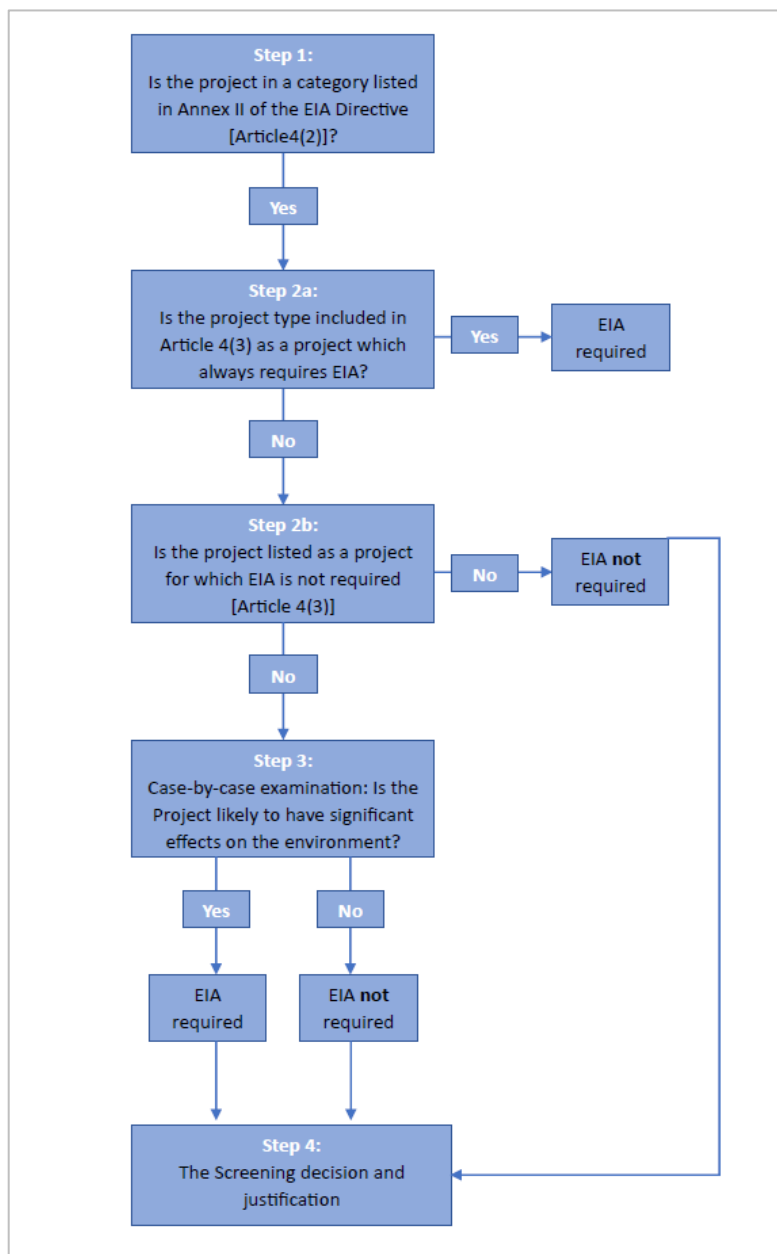


Figure 4.1: Steps of the EIA Screening process.

Section 5: PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

5.1 Preliminary Examination

Article 120(a)(1) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, requires that:

- (a) *Where a local authority proposes to carry out a sub-threshold development, the authority shall carry out a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the development.*
- (b) *Where the local authority concludes, based on such preliminary examination, that:*
 - (i) *there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall conclude that an EIA is not required,*
 - (ii) *there is significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, the information specified in Schedule 7A for the purposes of a screening determination, or*
 - (iii) *there is a real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall:*
 - (I) conclude that the development would be likely to have such effects, and*
 - (II) prepare, or cause to be prepared, an EIAR in respect of the development*

The European Commission published a guidance document in 2017 for EIA screening (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU). This guidance document includes a checklist of questions to aid in the screening of Projects for EIA. This checklist was explored with regard to the subject Project in the following sections of this report.

5.2 Nature of the development

Will construction, operation, decommissioning, or demolition works of the Project involve actions that will cause physical changes in the locality (topography, land use, changes in waterbodies, etc.)?

The Project in question did not result in physical changes to the locality. The works competed to the rock harbour which sits in Lough Ree may have resulted in temporary and localised disruption to the water of Lough Ree, but this did not materialise into physical changes to the locality.

Will the Project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters, or the sea?

The Project did result in the minor sedimentation and siltation of the water of Lough Ree as a result of the movement of rocks that formed part of the stone harbour. However, this sedimentation and siltation was temporary and remained very localised and did not result in the deterioration of water quality.

5.3 Size of the development

Are there any other factors that should be considered such as consequential development which could lead to environmental impacts or the potential for cumulative impacts with other existing or planned activities in the locality?

The factors of the Project are not considered consequential and there is not considered to be the potential for the Project to result in cumulative impacts with other activities occurring in the area at the time.

5.4 Location of the development

Is the project located within or close to any areas which are protected under international, EU, or national or local legislation for their ecological, landscape, cultural or other value, which could be affected by the Project?

The Project falls within the boundary of the Lough Ree Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the Lough Ree Special Protection Area (SPA), both of which are part of the Natura 2000 network of sites and protected under the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and EU Habitats Directive (2009/147/EC).

Is the Project in a location in which it is likely to be highly visible to many people?

The location of the Project was not highly visible. The most visibility of the site is from the lake, Lough Ree, looking in on the site. The nature of the works completed did not leave a considerable permanent physical change to the landscape. The changes to the rock harbour, upgraded fence, widening of the entrance and resurfacing of the driveway are minor alterations to the site and are not highly visible from outside the site.

5.5 Preliminary Examination Conclusion

Following the preliminary examination of the Project, considering the location of the site works in relation to protected sites, it was concluded that the EIA screening must proceed. The Project will be considered with regard to the criteria outlined in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 and Annex III of the EIA Directive.

Section 6: SCREENING

6.1 Overview of Schedule 7 & Annex III

Annex III of the EIA Directive (2011/92/EU, as amended), as transposed into Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2011, sets out criteria for review of projects to determine if whether or not a Project would likely have significant effects on the environment. The criteria for deciding whether or not a project would be likely to have significant effects on the environment are grouped under three headings which correspond to the Schedule 7.

1. Characteristics of the proposed development.
2. Location of the proposed development.
3. Characteristics of potential impacts.

6.2 Schedule 7A information

Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations sets out 'Information to be provided by the Applicant or Developer for the Purposes of Screening Sub-threshold Development for Environmental Impact Assessment'. Article 120 of the Regulations of 2001 (as amended) confirms that this requirement applies local authority developments.

The specified Schedule 7A information is listed below in **Table 6.1**, the right-hand column shows where the information is provided in this report.

Table 6.1: Schedule 7A information.

Schedule 7A requirement	Section the information is provided in
1. A description of the proposed development	Section 2 of this report, also accompanying drawings
2. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.	Section 6 of this report
3. A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the proposed development on the environment	Section 6 of this report
4. The compilation of the information at paragraphs 1 to 3 shall take into account, where relevant, the criteria set out in Schedule 7	Section 6 of this report
Additional requirement	
Any further relevant information on the characteristics of the proposed development and its likely significant effects on the environment, including, where relevant, information on how the available results of other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment carried out pursuant to European Union legislation other than the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive have been taken into account.	<p>Because no significant adverse effects are found to be likely, no further information on the characteristics of the proposed scheme and its likely significant effects on the environment is relevant or required.</p> <p>Relevant assessments of potential effects on the environment carried out pursuant to European Union legislation other than the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive are set out in the Section 6.4 of this report.</p>
Optional Information	
A description of the features, if any, of the proposed development and the measures, if any, envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment of the development.	Because no significant adverse effects are found to be likely, no such features or measures are necessary.

6.3 Review of Schedule 7 Criteria

Table 6.2: Review of the Schedule 7 criteria with regard to the subject Project.

Schedule 7 Criteria	Commentary
1. Characteristics of Proposed Development The characteristics of proposed development, in particular:	
(a) the size and design of the whole of the Project.	<p>The Project works took place on a site approximately 7.67 acres in size, at Cashel, Newtowncashel, Co. Longford. The works consisted of the upgrading of approx. 370m of fencing along the northeast and southeast boundary of the site, the widening of the existing site entrance, the commencement of the resurfacing of the existing driveway and the removal of approximately one third of the rock harbour on the shore of Lough Ree.</p> <p>Site maps and location of the works are provided in Appendix 1.</p>
(b) cumulation with other existing development and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other Enactment.	<p>There were a various existing planning applications either pending or granted in the vicinity of the site at the time of the works.</p> <p>The extent, nature and location of the other projects in the vicinity of the project site would not have resulted in the cumulative impacts on the environment in combination with the subject Project.</p>
(c) the nature of any associated demolition works.	The demolition works completed on-site were very minor and consisted of the removal of stone pillars at the site entrance in order to widen the entrance.
(d) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity.	No significant natural resources were used.
(e) the production of waste.	No significant waste streams were generated during the works completed. Waste generated during works was small scale.
(f) pollution and nuisances.	<p>The works completed likely generated a low level of noise from the machinery on-site, however the noise would have been brief. Some minor levels of dust may have been generated by the widening of the site entrance.</p> <p>Any noise, dust or other nuisances produced by the Project would have been minor and temporary.</p>
(g) the risk of major accidents, and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge.	The Project would not have had an influence on the risk of major accidents and/or disasters, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge.
h) the risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution).	The Project did not result in any water contamination or water pollution, or other instances that would pose a risk to human health.

Schedule 7 Criteria	Commentary
2. Location of proposed development The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development, with particular regard to:	
(a) the existing and approved land use.	The land-uses of the surrounding area are mainly agricultural with some residential dwellings also. The Project did not alter the exiting land-use in the area and does not impinge on the use of land for agriculture.
(b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground.	The most sensitive natural resource in the area is the freshwater lake (Lough Ree). Due to the minor nature of the works completed, it is not likely that the Project results in significant impacts on the natural resources in the area and/or the regenerative capacity of the natural resources were not exceeded.
(c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:	
(i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;	Due to the nature of the works completed and the extent of the relevant wetland habitats, no wetland habitat would have been affected beyond the habitat's absorption capacity.
(ii) coastal zones and the marine environment;	Not applicable due to scale and location of the Project.
(iii) mountain and forest areas;	Not applicable due to scale and location of the Project.
(iv) nature reserves and parks;	Not applicable due to scale and location of the Project.
(v) areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive;	The accompanying remedial Natura Impact Statement completed by Veon Ecology confirms that the Project is not likely to have results in significant impacts on the relevant Natura 2000 sites.
(vi) areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the European Union and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure;	The Project did not impact on an area where there had already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the European Union.
(vii) densely populated areas;	The Project site is located in a rural area, with few residential dwellings in the vicinity and some agriculture buildings. The Project did not impact on the population of the area.
(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.	The Project did not have any negative impact on landscapes or views, material assets or cultural/heritage artefacts of significance.

Schedule 7 Criteria	Commentary
3. Types and characteristics of potential impacts The likely significant effects on the environment of the Project in relation to the criteria set out under paragraphs 1 and 2, with regard to the impact of the project on the factors specified in paragraph (b)(i)(I) to (V) of the definition of 'environmental impact assessment report' in section 171A of the Act, taking into account:	
(a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example, geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).	The completed works occupied a small percentage of the Project site which is approx. 7.67 acres in size. Approx. 370m of fencing was upgraded, the entrance was widened by approx. 2m in total and approx. one third of the rock harbour was reduced. The minor extent of the Project would not impact in any meaningful way on the greater geographical area.
(b) the nature of the impact.	<p>The primary likely impact as a result of the Project is on water quality as a result of sedimentation and siltation from the repairs to the rock harbour. The nature of the works on the rock harbour mean that the impact on water quality would have been minor and temporary.</p> <p>Minor levels of noise from the works completed onsite may have impacted on the local fauna however the impacts would have been low and temporary as the works did not go on for a prolonged amount of time.</p> <p>The upgrading of the fencing on-site would not have had an impact on the receiving environment or local fauna.</p>
(c) the transboundary nature of the impact.	Not applicable due to scale and location of the Project.
(d) the intensity and complexity of the impact.	The likely impacts from the works completed were temporary, of low intensity, possibly even imperceptible and were not complex.
(e) the probability of the impact.	The probability of the Project having resulted in the aforementioned impacts is strong. Although as previously mentioned although there is a strong probability that impacts occurred, the impacts were minor and temporary.
(f) the expected onset, duration, frequency, and reversibility of the impact.	The impacts that likely occurred as a result of the Project were once-off and temporary. The impacts are not reoccurring and are no longer detectable.
(g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment.	Due to the nature of the works completed on the Project site and the type and location of other consented developments likely occurring in the area at the time works, it can be assumed that the works did not result in cumulative impacts on the receiving environment.
(h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.	<p>As the impacts that resulted from the Project were temporary and are no longer detectable there is no requirement for the implementation of methods for reducing the impacts.</p> <p>Reduction of the impacts at the time of the works would have been difficult as the impacts were minor and low significance and therefore it is likely not possible to reduce the impacts further.</p>

Table 6.3: Summary of potential effects and their significance.

Aspect	Potential Effect	Extent	Probability	Significance of Effect	Quality of Effect	Duration
Landscape	None Predicted.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Visual	Repairs to the rock harbour may have resulted in a visual change to the Lough Ree shoreline onsite. The widening of the entrance and upgrading of the fence did not result in detectable visual effects.	Local	Not Likely	Imperceptible	Neutral	Permanent
Biodiversity	Loss of <2m of hedgerow/earth bank as a result of the widening of the entrance.	Local	Likely	Imperceptible	Negative	Temporary
Land & Soil	None predicted.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Human Health	None predicted.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Water	Sedimentation and siltation of the water from the removal of one third of the rock harbour and the deposition of the stone near the shoreline.	Local	Likely	Moderate	Negative	Temporary
Air Quality & Climate	None Predicted.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Noise	Noise disturbance from machinery on-site and works completed.	Local	Likely	Low	Negative	Temporary
Cultural Heritage: Built Heritage	None Predicted	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Cultural Heritage: Archaeology	None Predicted.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Based on review against the Schedule 7/ Annex III criteria, it can be concluded that the environmental impacts as a result of the subject Project were insignificant/slight and temporary. These effects are not likely to be significant according to the threshold, guidance and definitions of the 2011 Regulations and EIA Directive.

Article 120 of the Regulations of 2011, as amended, states that the Schedule 7A information:

- a) 'shall be accompanied by any further relevant information on the characteristics of the proposed development and its likely significant effects on the environment, including, where relevant, information on how the available results of other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment carried out pursuant to European Union legislation other than the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive have been taken into account' and
- b) 'may be accompanied by a description of the features, if any, of the proposed development and the measures, if any, envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment of the development.'

A review of other relevant assessments was carried out and summarised in **Table 6.4** below. This shows that none of the findings of these assessments affect the Schedule 7 screening considerations for this proposal. In relation to (b), key measures associated with the proposal are referred to at the final row (h) in part 3 of **Table 6.2** above.

6.4 Review under other relevant EU environmental legislation

Other relevant EU environmental legislation may include:

- Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC)
- SEA Directive (2001/42/EC)
- Birds and Habitats Directives (79/409/EEC, 2009/147/EC & 92/43/EEC)
- Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)
- Floods Directive (2007/60/EC)
- Noise Directive (2002/49/EC)
- Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC)

Table 6.4: Other relevant EU environmental legislation.

Directive	Comments
Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC)	There was no air emissions of significance from the Project. As a result, no assessment is required pursuant to this Directive.
EU Birds and Habitats Directives (79/409/EEC, 2009/147/EC & 92/43/EEC)	A remedial Natura Impact Assessment was prepared by Veon Ecology and accompanies this report for the Project. The rNIS concluded that the works completed did not result in significant impacts on the relevant Natura 2000 sites.
Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)	The Project did not have significant effects on any relevant watercourse and so there is no requirement for any specific assessment pursuant to this Directive.
Floods Directive (2007/60/EC)	A review of the OPW's flood maps showed that the Project area is not within river or coastal flooding extents.
Noise Directive (2002/49/EC)	Construction was noise will be local, short term and insignificant. No significant noise effects likely occurred during the works completed. As a result, no assessment is required pursuant to this Directive.

Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC)	The Project did not generate any significant quantities of waste during the completion of works. No assessment is considered to be required pursuant to this Directive.
--	--

This review of assessments of potential effects on the environment carried out pursuant to the European Legislation finds that no results arising from such assessments affect the findings of this EIA screening.

Section 7: CONCLUSION

The scale of the subject project, when viewed individually and cumulatively, is very small in the context of both the EIA threshold criteria and types of projects listed in the regulations which require EIA.

It is considered that the works completed at a site on lands in Newtowncashel, Co. Longford, likely did not have significant negative effects on the environment and therefore does not need to be subject to a remedial Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and no remedial Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) is required for it.

This conclusion is based on an objective review of the Project, including its characteristics, location, and the likelihood of it causing significant environmental effects. This screening has followed the relevant legislation and has had regard to the relevant guidance.

The accompanying remedial Appropriate Assessment (AA) Natura Impact Assessment (NIS) confirms that there was no significant effect to Natura 2000 sites as a result of the works completed, alone or in combination with any other permitted or proposed project at the time.

Section 8: REFERENCES

- CIEEM (2018) *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine*. Version 1.2. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora. *The Habitats Directive*. The European Union
- Council Directive 2009/147/EC on the Conservation of Wild Birds. *The Birds Directive*. The European Union
- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, (2000) Planning and Development Act.
- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, (2001) Planning and Development Regulations 2001 – 2022.
- Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government. (2018) *Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment*.
- Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, (2003) *Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development*.
- Environmental Protection Agency, (2022) *Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports*.
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Mapping Tool. Available at: <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/default>
- European Commission (2001) Guidance Document on EIA Screening.
- European Commission (2011) Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and the Council of 13 December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment.
- European Commission (2014) Directive 2014/52/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 amending Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment.
- European Union (2018) European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018.
- Fossitt, J.A. (2000). *A Guide to Habitats in Ireland*. The Heritage Council.
- NRA (2009) Guidelines for the Assessment of Ecological Impacts. National Roads Authority. Available Online at: <http://www.tii.ie/technical-services/environment/planning/Guidelines-for-Assessment-of-Ecological-Impacts-of-National-Road-Schemes.pdf>.
- Office of Public Works Flood Maps. Mapping Tool. Available at: <https://www.floodinfo.ie/map/floodmaps/>
- Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) (2021) *Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management*.
- Office of the Planning Regulator issued a practice note on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening for development proposals (Office of the Planning Regulator, 2021).

Appendix 1. Maps & Figures

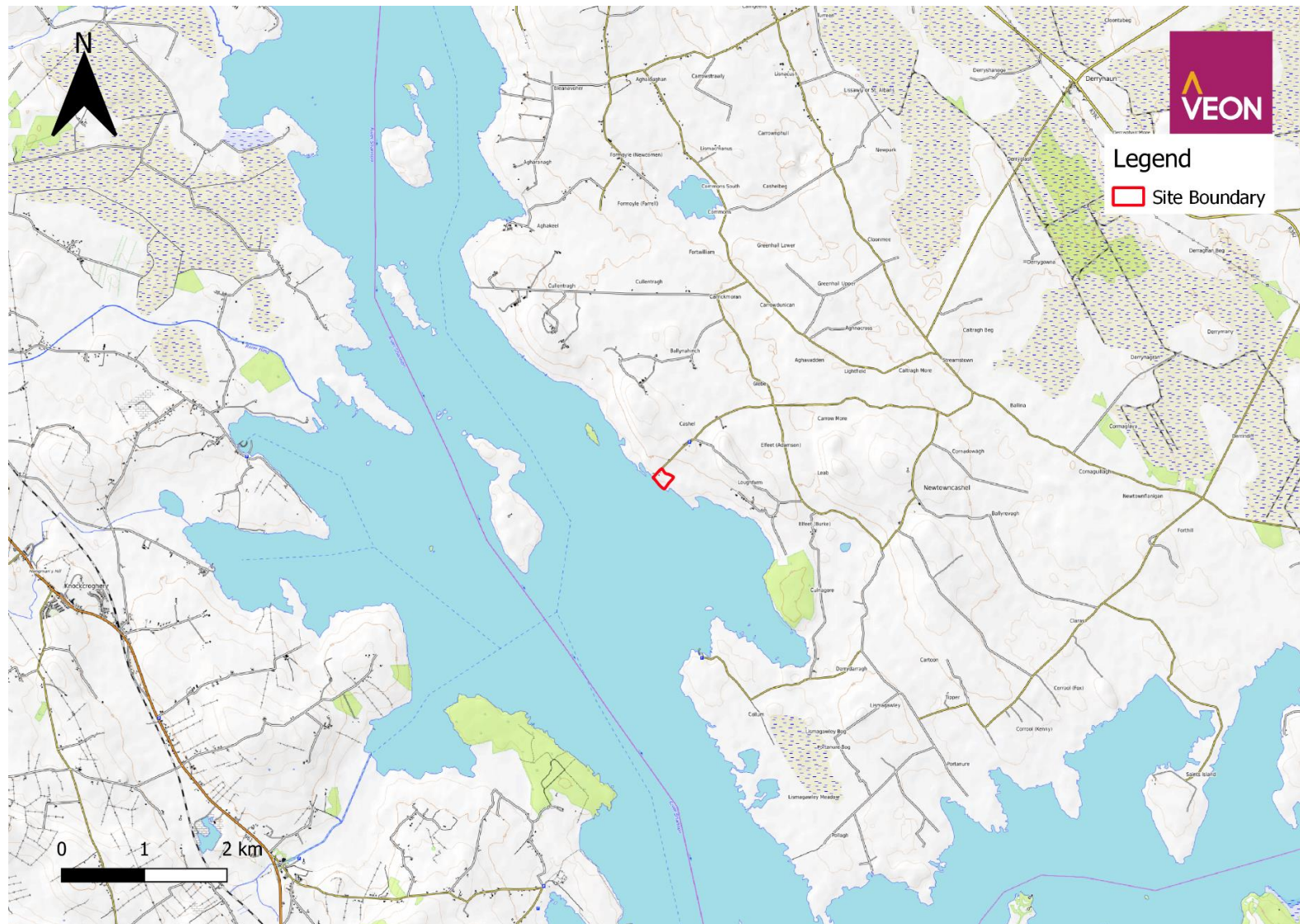


Figure 9.1: Project site location.



Figure 9.2: Works completed on the Project site in 2021.

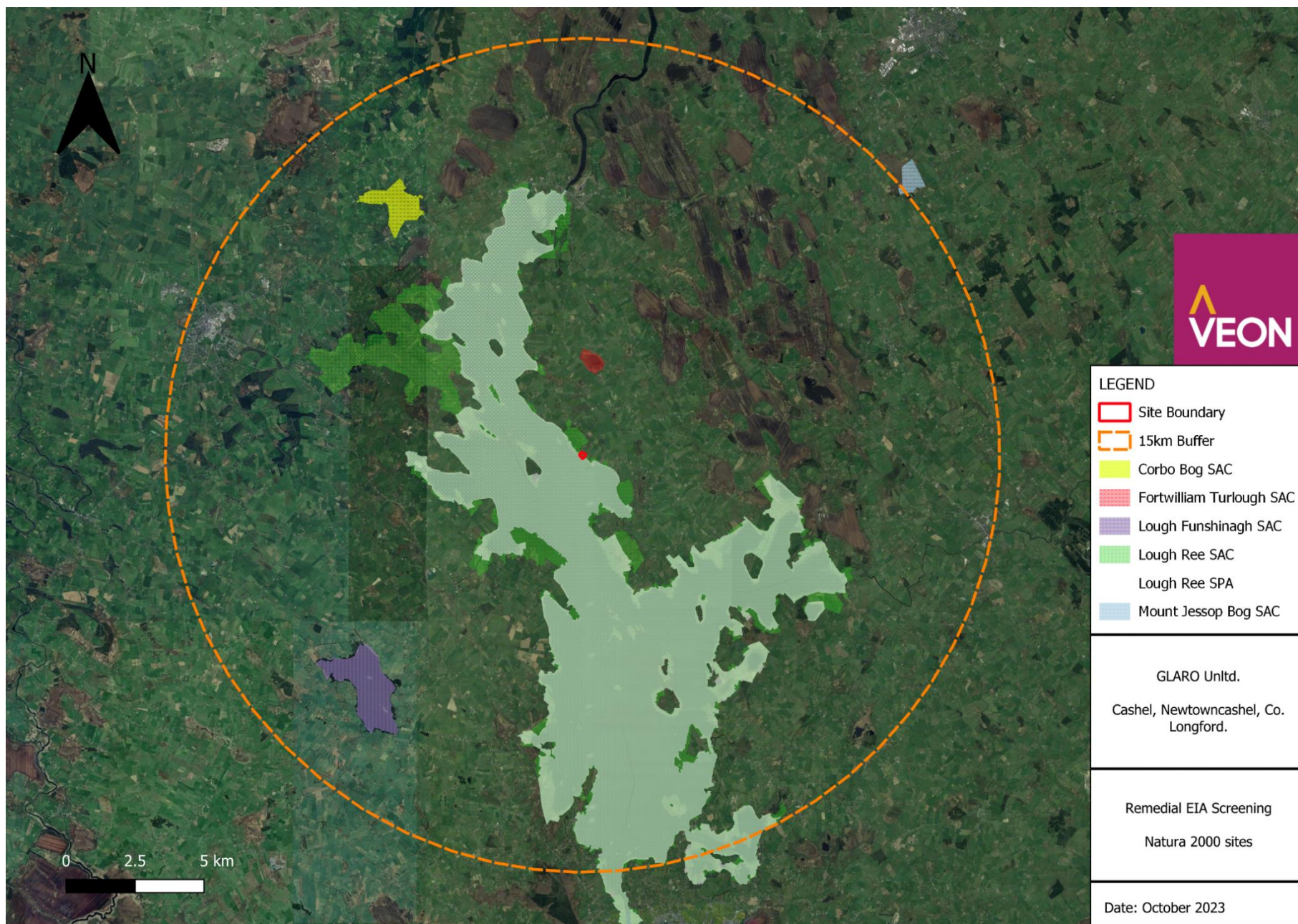


Figure 9.3: Project site and Natura 2000 sites in the Zol.

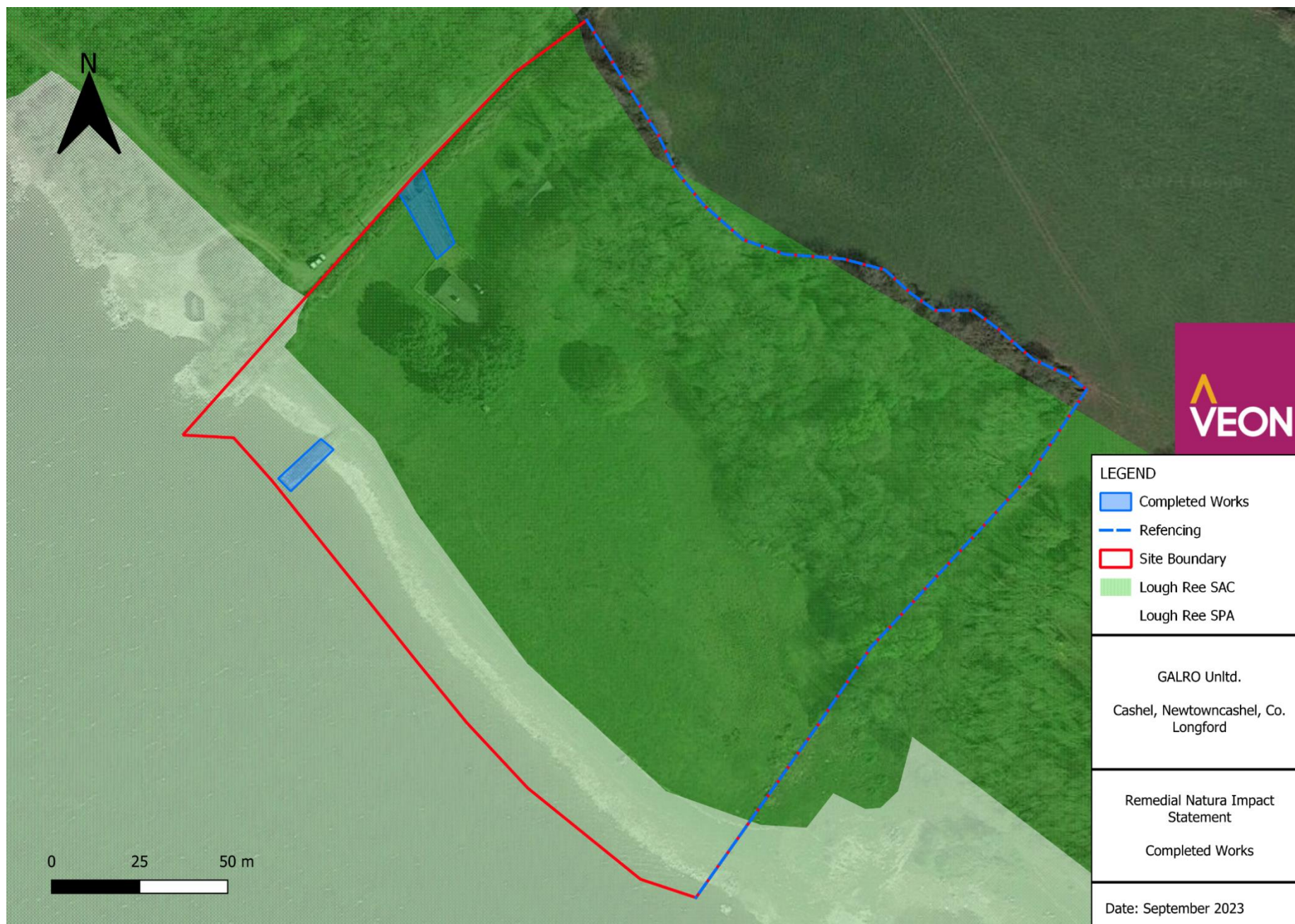


Figure 9.4: Works completed onsite and the relevant Natura 2000 sites.

FENCE DETAILS

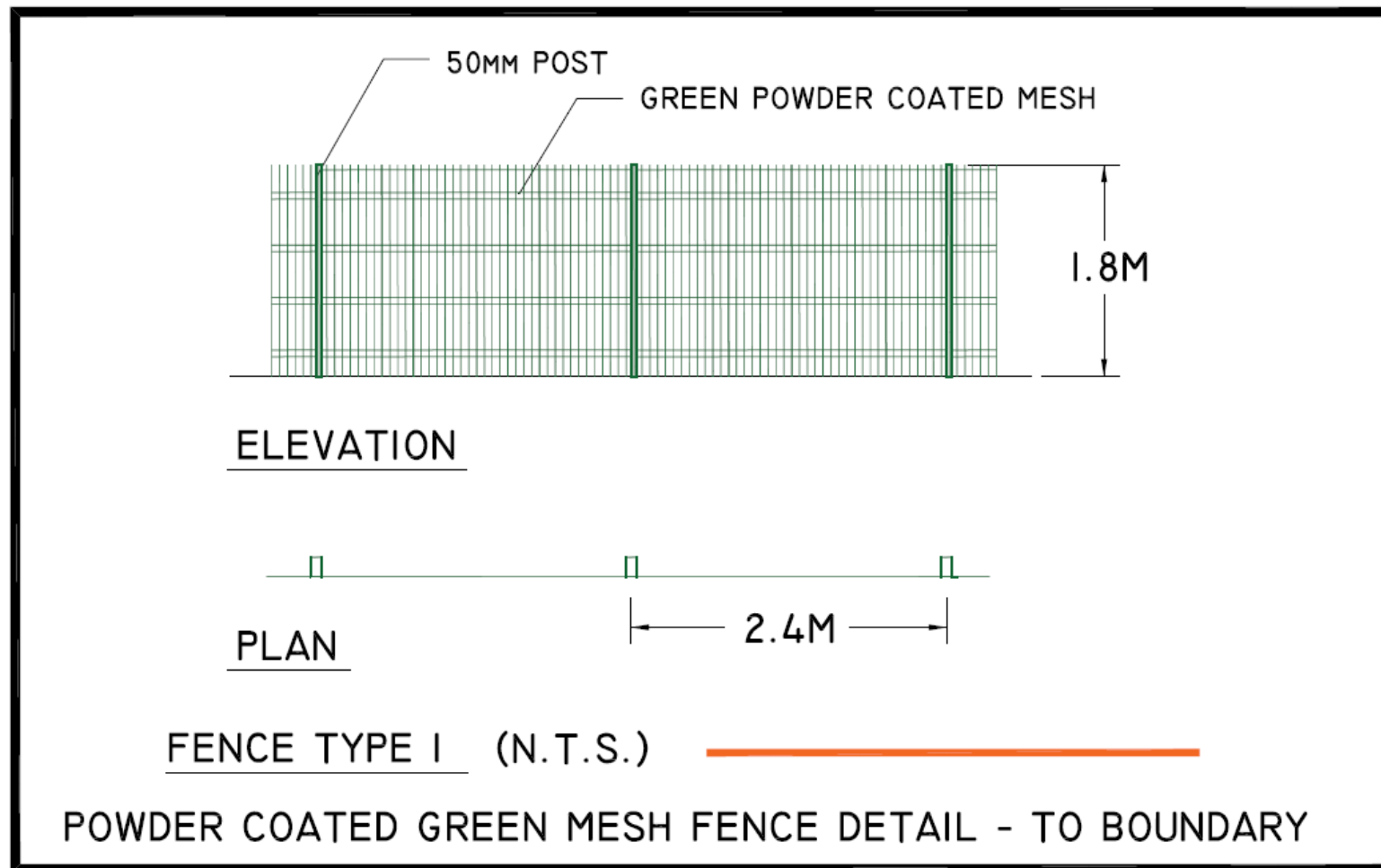


Figure 9.5: Details of new fencing.

Appendix 2. PHOTOGRAPHS



Photograph 9.1: Widened entrances to the subject site.





Photograph 9.2: Earth mounds produced by the widening of the entrance.



Photograph 9.3: Upgraded fencing inside original fenceline.



Photograph 9.4: Upgraded fencing on Project site.



Photograph 9.5: Repaired rock harbour on Lough Ree.

Photograph 9.6: Lough Ree and repaired rock harbour.