

MWP

**Screening for Appropriate Assessment
Report
Stable Lane Carpark**

Tipperary County Council

December 2023

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. Summary of Findings | 1 |
| 1.1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment | 1 |
| 2. Introduction | 2 |
| 2.1 Legislative Context..... | 2 |
| 2.2 Stages of Appropriate Assessment | 2 |
| 3. Assessment Methodology | 3 |
| 3.1 Appropriate Assessment Guidance..... | 3 |
| 3.2 Desk Study..... | 3 |
| 3.3 Site Visit..... | 3 |
| 4. Screening for Appropriate Assessment | 4 |
| 4.1 Management of Natura 2000 Sites..... | 4 |
| 4.2 Description of the Scheme | 4 |
| 4.3 Purpose of the Project..... | 7 |
| 4.4 Site Location..... | 7 |
| 4.5 Site Description..... | 10 |
| 4.6 Habitats | 11 |
| 4.6.1 Invasive Species..... | 14 |
| 4.7 Characteristics of the Project..... | 15 |
| 4.8 Identification of Other Projects or Plans or Activities..... | 18 |
| 4.9 Identification of Natura 2000 Sites..... | 18 |
| 4.9.1 Zone of Impact Influence | 18 |
| 4.9.2 Characteristics of Natura 2000 Sites | 20 |
| 4.9.3 Conservation Objectives | 21 |
| 4.10 Identification of Potential Impacts | 23 |
| 4.11 Assessment of Significance of Potential Impacts..... | 24 |
| 4.11.1 European sites outside the zone of potential impact influence..... | 24 |
| 4.11.2 European sites within the zone of potential impact influence..... | 24 |
| 4.11.2.1 Water Quality | 25 |
| 4.11.2.2 Habitat Loss and Alteration | 26 |
| 4.11.2.3 Disturbance and/or Displacement of Species | 27 |
| 4.11.2.4 Habitat or Species Fragmentation | 28 |
| 4.11.2.5 Cumulative/In-combination Impacts | 28 |
| 4.12 Conclusion of Screening Stage | 29 |
| 5. References | 30 |

Tables

| | |
|---|----|
| Table 4-1: Natura 2000 Sites within zone of potential impact influence of the proposal site | 20 |
| Table 4-2: Natura 2000 sites with qualifying features of Special Conservation Interest. | 20 |
| Table 4-3: European Sites excluded from further assessment..... | 24 |
| Table 4-4: European sites within the zone of potential impact influence | 25 |

Figures

| | |
|--|----|
| Figure 4-1: Site Layout Plan | 6 |
| Figure 4-2: Site location | 8 |
| Figure 4-3: Site Location Plan | 9 |
| Figure 4-4: Habitat map of proposed development site..... | 11 |
| Figure 4-5: Natura 2000 sites within the zone of potential influence | 22 |

Plates

| | |
|--|----|
| Plate 4-1: Buildings and Artificial Surfaces BL3 is the dominant habitat on the proposed development site..... | 12 |
|--|----|

Plate 4-2: Dense cover of ivy on part of the garage roof that could potentially be used by bats and nesting birds during the summer season 13

Plate 4-3: Single Japanese Knotweed plant growing from a stone wall to the south of the shed at the centre of the proposed development site. 14

| Project No. | Doc. No. | Rev. | Date | Prepared By | Checked By | Approved By | Status |
|-------------|----------|------|---------------|-------------|------------|-------------|--------|
| 23920 | 6004 | A | December 2023 | RP | ÁR | MK | Issue |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |

MWP, Engineering and Environmental Consultants

Address: Park House, Bessboro Road, Blackrock, Cork, T12 X251

www.mwp.ie



1. Summary of Findings

1.1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Project Title | Screening for Appropriate Assessment Report |
| Project Proponent | Tipperary County Council |
| Project Location | The townland of Townparks, between Chapel St.(identified as L6711 New Lane on GIS system) and Stable Lane, North of Main St. Carrick on Suir, Co. Tipperary |
| Screening for Appropriate Assessment | The Screening for Appropriate Assessment is undertaken to determine the potential for likely significant effects of the proposed project, individually, or in combination with other plans or projects, in view of the conservation objectives of the site on a Natura 2000 Site. |
| Conclusion | It has been objectively concluded during the screening process that the Natura 2000 sites within the zone of influence of the proposed development site will not be significantly impacted by the proposed project at Stable Lane, Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Tipperary. These sites are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lower River Suir SAC – 0.13km• Comeragh Mountains SAC - 11.1km• Hugginstown Fen SAC - 14.8km |

2. Introduction

A Part 8 Planning Application is being lodged by Tipperary County Council (TCC) hereafter referred to as the “applicant” for the development of a car park at the townland of Townparks, between Chapel St.(identified as L6711 New Lane on GIS system) and Stable Lane, North of Main St. Carrick on Suir, Co. Tipperary hereafter referred to as the “proposed development”. The proposed development includes for a carpark in Carrick-on-Suir, located between Chapel Street to the west and Stable Lane to the east. This carpark is in close proximity to Main Street hereafter referred to as the “proposed development site”.

The purpose of the proposed development is to provide convenient off-street parking in close proximity to Main St. This parking will alleviate the reduction in parking to Main St. resulting from the Carrick-on-Suir Regeneration Plan. The aim of the Carrick-on-Suir Development plan is improvements in active travel, sense of place, and pedestrian and vulnerable road users use. The development of Stable Lane car park aligns with the Carrick-on-Suir Redevelopment Plan by providing separate off street parking area and ensuring that parking is provided within a 5-minute walk of main street and the towns attractions.

MWP has been engaged by TCC to undertake a Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) Report of the proposed development to accompany the application. This screening for AA Report has been undertaken to determine whether the proposal is likely to have a significant effect on any European site (i.e. Natura 2000 Sites), in view of the sites’ conservation objectives.

This Screening for AA has been undertaken by an Environmental Consultant from MWP.

MWP has also prepared a Screening for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report for the proposed development.

2.1 Legislative Context

The Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) seeks to conserve natural habitats and wild fauna and flora by the designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)¹ seeks to protect birds of special importance by the designation of Special Protected Areas (SPAs). It is the responsibility of each member state to designate SPAs and SACs, both of which form part of Natura 2000, a network of protected sites throughout the European Community. Further information is available at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/habitatsdirective/>

<http://www.npws.ie/planning/appropriateassessment/>

The current assessment was conducted within this legislative framework and also the DoEHLG (2009) guidelines. As outlined in these, it is the responsibility of the proponent of the project, in this case TCC, to provide a comprehensive and objective screening for Appropriate Assessment, which can then be used by the competent authority, in order to conduct the Appropriate Assessment (DoEHLG, 2009).

2.2 Stages of Appropriate Assessment

The Appropriate Assessment process is a four-stage process with issues and tests at each stage. The purpose of the screening assessment is to record in a transparent and reasoned manner the likely effects on Natura 2000 sites of a proposed development. An important aspect of the process is that the outcome at each successive stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required. The stages are set out in **Appendix 1**.

¹ This is the codified version of Directive 79/409/EEC as amended (see http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/birdsdirective/index_en.htm)

3. Assessment Methodology

3.1 Appropriate Assessment Guidance

This screening for Appropriate Assessment, or Stage 1, has been undertaken in accordance with the European Commission Methodological Guidance on the provision of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2001), the European Commission Guidance 'Managing Natura 2000 Sites' Brussels, 21.11.2018 C (2018) 7621 final (EC, 2000), and *Appropriate Assessment of Plans & Projects - Guidance for Planning Authorities* prepared by the NPWS (DoEHLG, 2009 (rev. 2010) and the *Planning Regulator: - Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management, OPR Practice Note PN01* Office of the Planning Regulator, 2021.

3.2 Desk Study

In order to complete the screening for AA certain information on the existing environment is required. A desk study was carried out to collate available information on the subject site's natural environment. This comprised a review of the following publications, data and datasets:

- OSI Aerial photography and 1:50000 mapping
- National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS)
- National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) (on-line map-viewer)
- BirdWatch Ireland
- Teagasc soil area maps (NBDC website)
- Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) area maps
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) water quality data
- South Eastern River Basin District (SWRBD) datasets (Water Framework Directive)
- Other information sources and reports footnoted in the course of the report

3.3 Site Visit

An ecological field survey was conducted by a senior ecologist from MWP on 7th November 2023. The aim of this survey was to characterise the site and environs and establish the ecological features and resources at the site, particularly in relation to the features of interest of the Lower River Suir SAC which is situated approximately 130m south of the proposed development site.

Aerial photography was used together with GPS to accurately enable field navigation. Notes were made on all habitats encountered, including notes on dominant and indicative vegetation. An assessment was also made of the topography and drainage, disturbance, and management of the area. The presence of any invasive plant species was also noted.

4. Screening for Appropriate Assessment

As set out in the NPWS guidance (DoEHLG, 2009), the task of establishing whether a plan or project is likely to have an effect on a Natura 2000 Site is based on a preliminary impact assessment using available information and data, including that outlined above, and other available environmental information, supplemented as necessary by local site information and ecological surveys. This is followed by a determination of whether there is a risk that the effects identified could be significant. The precautionary principle approach is required.

Once the potential impacts that may arise from the proposal are identified the significance of these is assessed through the use of key indicators:

- Habitat loss
- Habitat alteration
- Habitat or species fragmentation
- Disturbance and/or displacement of species
- Water quality and resource.

Screening for Appropriate Assessment (Stage 1) determines the need for a full Appropriate Assessment (Stage 2) and consists of a number of steps, each of which is addressed in the following sections of this report:

- 4.1 Establish whether the proposed development works necessary for the management of a Natura 2000 Site
- 4.2 Description of the proposed development
- 4.3 Identification of Natura 2000 Sites potentially affected
- 4.4 Identification and description of potential individual and cumulative impacts of the works
- 4.5 Assessment of the significance of the impacts on the integrity of Natura 2000 Sites
- 4.6 Conclusion of screening stage

The purpose of the screening assessment is to record in a transparent and reasoned manner the likely effects, on relevant Natura 2000 Sites, of the proposed development.

4.1 Management of Natura 2000 Sites

The proposal is not connected with or necessary to the conservation management of a Natura 2000 Site.

4.2 Description of the Scheme

The nature and extent of the proposed development, which will take approximately 20 weeks to complete, is as follows:

- The proposals involve works in the town's Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) and in the vicinity of a number of protected structures.
- Provision of primary vehicular entrance to the West from Chapel St.(identified as L6711 New Lane on GIS system)
- Vehicle exit point to Stable Lane to the east

- Demolition of existing walls, two sheds and concrete yard within the proposed site.
- Demolition of existing boundary wall with Chapel St. and North boundary wall adjacent to Chapel St. to allow reconfiguration of the existing vehicle and pedestrian access points onto Chapel St..
- Demolition of boundary wall with Stable Lane.
- Drainage works to carpark.
- Street lighting to carpark.
- Construction of new Boundary wall to the east of the site along Stable Lane – including vehicle exit point and pedestrian access point.
- Construction of new boundary to the North of the site adjacent to the Chapel St entrance.
- New asphalt surface finishes to carpark, laid to falls and surface water run-off will be directed to gulleys.
- Car park with 33 parking spaces, including two number accessible parking bays and two number electrical vehicles charging bays.
- Bicycle Parking Shelter.
- Signage and Linemarking.
- Landscaping.
- All associated site works.

The total area within the site boundary is 1500m². Refer to **Figure 4-1** for a site layout plan.

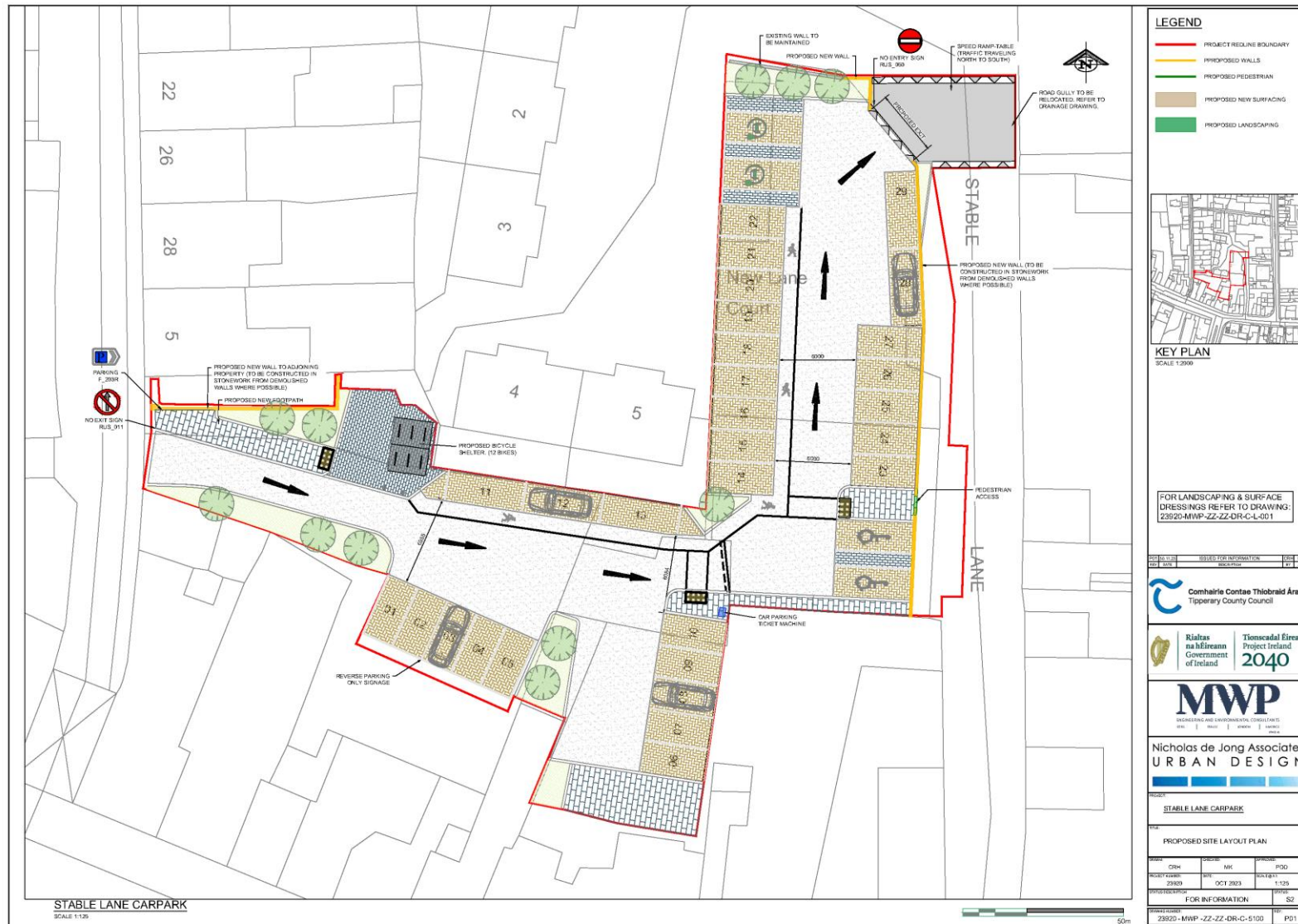


Figure 4-1: Site Layout Plan

4.3 Purpose of the Project

As part of the Carrick-on-Suir Regeneration Plan, some on-street parking was removed from Main Street. The proposed carpark will provide replacement parking for the parking spaces removed from Main Street.

4.4 Site Location

The proposed development site is located in Carrick-on-Suir town center between Chapel Street to the west and Stable Lane to the east. A project description is provided in **Section 4.7** below. Site Location Maps are provided in **Figures 4-2** and **4-3**, below.

The town of Carrick-on-Suir is located on the River Suir in Co. Tipperary at the foothills of the Comeragh Mountains and it lies 21 km east of Clonmel and 27 km northwest of Waterford. The town is serviced by the N24 National Road and by rail links. The proposed development site is located approximately 130m north of the River Suir and the Lower River Suir SAC (Side Code: 002137).

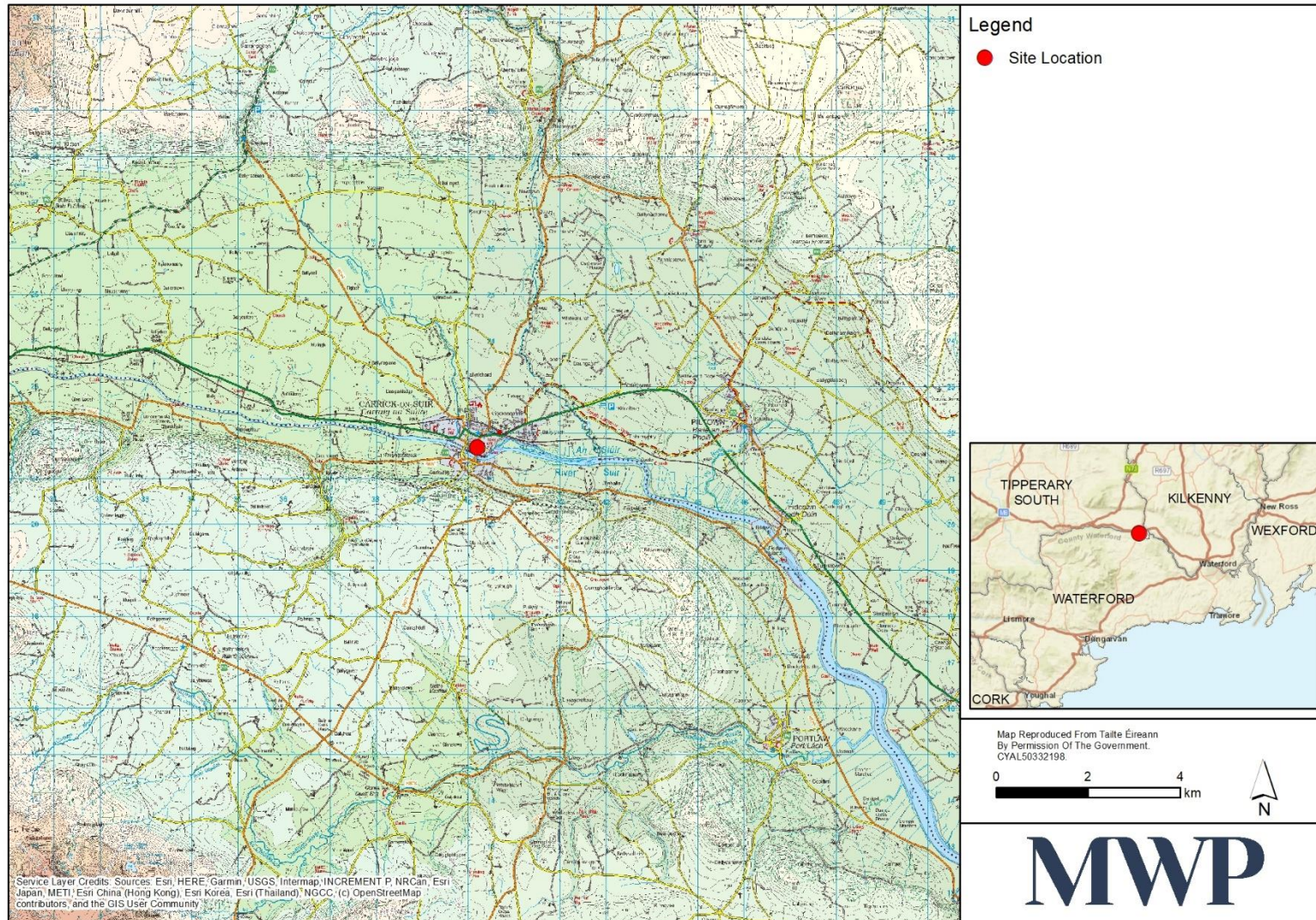


Figure 4-2: Site location

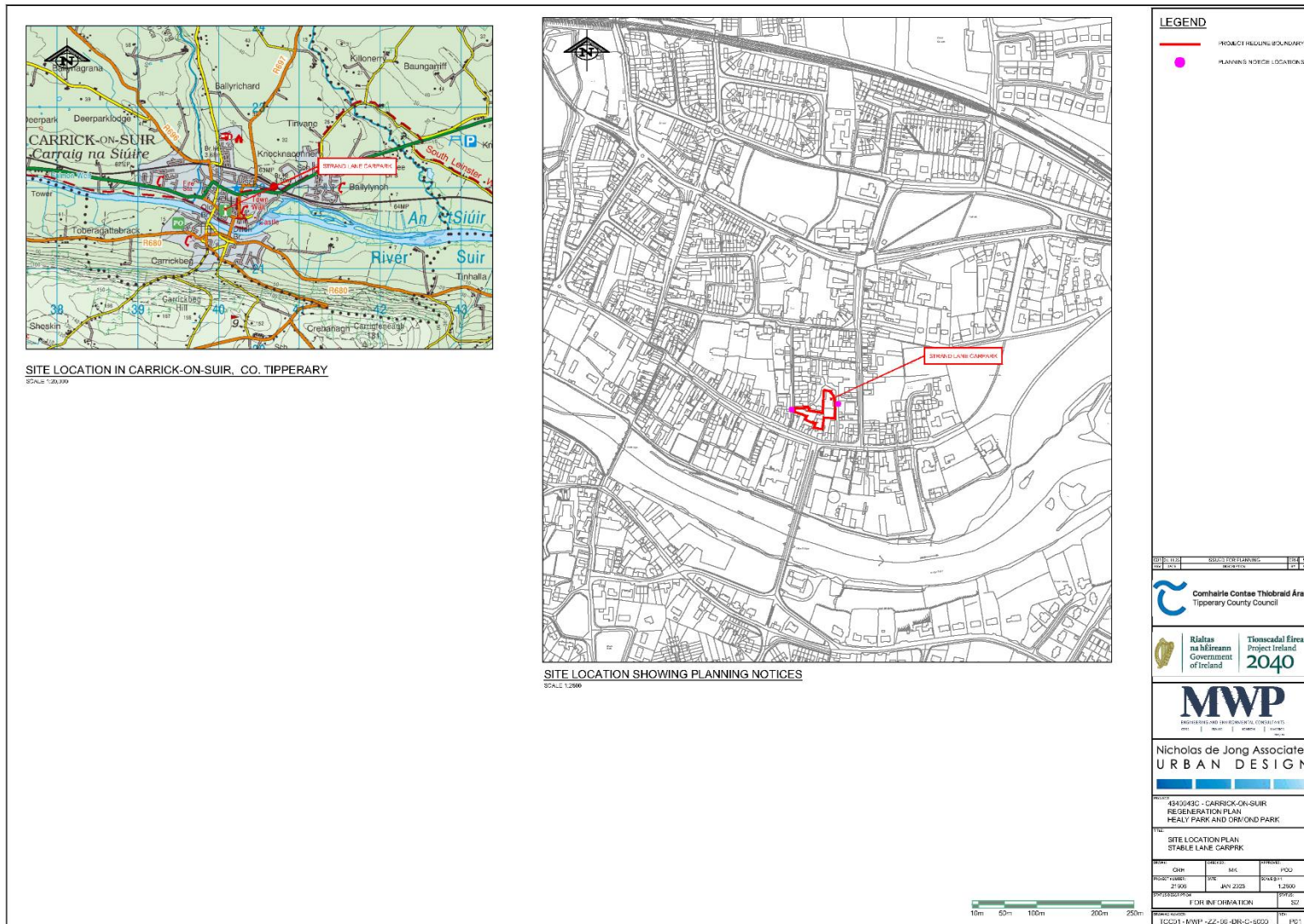


Figure 4-3: Site Location Plan

4.5 Site Description

The proposed development site is located within the Electoral Division (ED) of 'Carrick-on-Suir Urban'. CSO data indicates that, in 2022, this ED had a total population of 4,444.

The Corine Landcover (2018)² Category at the subject site is classed as 'Continuous Urban Fabric' (111) and Discontinuous Urban Fabric' (112) and in the surrounding area the dominant land use is 'Agricultural Areas' (231).

The proposed development site is located in the townland of Townparks. The surrounding townlands in the area are Ballylynch, Ballyrichard and Knocknaconnery to the east, Ballynagrana to the north and Deerpark and Deerparklodge to the west

According to Geological Survey Ireland (GSI)³ the geology underlying the proposed development site is limestone of the 'Ballysteen Formation' which is described as 'Dark muddy limestone, shale'. The soil type at the proposed development site is classified as 'Urban' surrounded by areas of 'Till derived from Devonian sandstones', and 'Alluvium', and Gravels derived from Devonian sandstones south of the River Suir.

The proposed development site is located within the 'Suir' (Catchment ID_16) and the 'Suir_SC_160' and 'Lingaun_SC_010' sub-catchments which all fall within the Hydrometric Area 16. As part of the national characterisation programme undertaken for the second lifecycle of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) river basin management planning, assessments of individual sub-catchments have been undertaken. This assessment has been led by the EPA with input from Local Authorities and other public bodies.

The Upper Suir Estuary (European code: IE_SE_100_0600) transitional waterbody is located south of the proposed development site. Its WFD Status for the 2016-2021 period is 'Bad' and it is 'At risk' of not meeting its WFD objectives. A waterbody that is At Risk means that either the waterbody is currently not achieving its WFD environmental objective of Good or High Ecological Status or that there is an upward trend in nutrients or ammonia and if this trend continues the waterbody Status will decline by the end of Cycle 3 and will fail to meet its environmental objective.

Aside from the Suir river itself, there are several other river water bodies within the vicinity of the proposed development site, the nearest of which is the Glen river (EPA_Code 16G04), a 3rd order waterbody which flows in a southerly direction through the town into the River Suir. The Lingaun river (EPA_Code 16L01), a 4th order river is located approximately 2km to the east of the town centre and flows in a south-easterly direction into the Suir river. Another 1st order stream, named 'Fire Station Carrick on S' (EPA_Code 16F41), which flows south into the Suir is located approximately 500m west of the town centre. There are several other 1st and 2nd order streams located to the south of the Suir.

According to the GSI mapping, the entirety of the site is underlain by a Locally Important Aquifer - Bedrock which is Moderately Productive only in Local Zones. There are no existing boreholes or wells within the site.

Vulnerability of a groundwater body is the term used to describe the intrinsic geological and hydrogeological characteristics which determine the ease with which a groundwater body may be contaminated by human activities.

The vulnerability is determined by the permeability and thickness of the overlying deposits. For example, bedrock with a thick, low permeability overburden is less vulnerable than bedrock with a thin high permeability, gravel overburden. Groundwater vulnerability maps have been produced by the GSI. The vulnerability is classified as High over the entirety of the site.

A review of the Historic Environment Viewer, provided by the National Monuments Service indicates that no historic monuments are located on the site. There are several historic monuments within the vicinity of the site.

² <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>

³ <https://dcenr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=a30af518e87a4c0ab2fbde2aac3c228>

The closest historic monuments to the site are the Bank House, a bank/financial institution which is located a short distance south of the site (Reg. No. 22123014) and Taaffe and Company, a historically significant house located a short distance to the south (Reg. No. 22123013). There are numerous other monuments of historical significance located within the greater Carrick-on-Suir area.

4.6 Habitats

Habitats within the footprint of the proposed project were surveyed and classified according to Fossitt, 2000. See **Figure 4-4** for a habitat map of the proposed development site.



Figure 4-4: Habitat map of proposed development site

Buildings and Artificial Surfaces BL3

The dominant habitat within the footprint of the proposed development site is comprised of artificial surfaces, such as roads, paths, walls, and buildings (**Plate 4-1**). These are of negligible ecological value. Part of the garage roof has dense cover of ivy that could potentially be used by bats and nesting birds during the summer season (See **Plate 4-2**). If the ivy is removed during the winter period, there should be no impacts on nesting bats or birds.



Plate 4-1: Buildings and Artificial Surfaces BL3 is the dominant habitat on the proposed development site.



Plate 4-2: Dense cover of ivy on part of the garage roof that could potentially be used by bats and nesting birds during the summer season

4.6.1 Invasive Species

Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), an invasive alien plant species was the only invasive species recorded during the ecological survey.

Japanese knotweed is listed under the Third Schedule to the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (regulations 49 and 50).

A single Japanese knotweed plant was observed on the proposed development site (See **Plate 4-3**). This plant will be eradicated from the site by a qualified and competent contractor in accordance with best practices.



Plate 4-3: Single Japanese Knotweed plant growing from a stone wall to the south of the shed at the centre of the proposed development site.

4.7 Characteristics of the Project

The proposal is described below and has been confirmed with the project engineer.

| | |
|--|--|
| <p><i>Size, scale, area, land-take</i></p> | <p>The total area within the site boundary is 1500m²</p> |
| <p><i>Details of physical changes that will take place during the various stages of implementing the proposal</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of primary vehicular entrance to the West from Chapel St.(identified as L6711 New Lane on GIS system) • Vehicle exit point to Stable Lane to the east • Demolition of existing walls, two sheds and concrete yard within the proposed site. • Demolition of existing boundary wall with Chapel St. and North boundary wall adjacent to Chapel St. to allow reconfiguration of the existing vehicle and pedestrian access points onto Chapel St.. • Demolition of boundary wall with Stable Lane. • Drainage works to carpark. • Street lighting to carpark. • Construction of new Boundary wall to the east of the site along Stable Lane – including vehicle exit point and pedestrian access point. • Construction of new boundary to the North of the site adjacent to the Chapel St entrance. • New asphalt surface finishes to carpark, laid to falls and surface water run-off will be directed to gulleys. • Car park with 33 parking spaces, including two number accessible parking bays and two number electrical vehicles charging bays. • Bicycle Parking Shelter • Signage and Linemarking. • Landscaping. • All associated site works. |
| <p><i>Description of resource requirements for the construction/operation and decommissioning of the proposal (water resources, construction material, human presence etc)</i></p> | <p>The proposed development will be within an urban environment, which has been significantly modified by human activity.</p> <p>Soil cover is absent within the proposed development site, and the town centre site constitutes Made Ground. The Suir River forms part of the Lower River Suir SAC and is located approximately 130m south of the proposed development site at its closest point.</p> <p>There will be no requirement for water abstraction for the proposed development as water requirements will be met by the public water supply.</p> <p>Construction: Estimate 8 people on site. Daily water requirement. Welfare facilities on site – consumption of water. Materials required: Stone Fill, Asphalt,</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| | <p>Ducting, Drainage materials, White lining paint, Light stands, Boundary Wall materials (finishes to be finalised). EV charger units, Ticket machine unit.</p> <p>Operation: Electrical power for lights, EV Chargers, Ticket machine. Facilities for personnel not required as Traffic Warden already in place. (extension of existing duties)</p> <p>Decommissioning: Removal of EV Charger, Ticket machine, lights.</p> |
| <p><i>Description of timescale for the various activities that will take place as a result of implementation (including likely start and finish date)</i></p> | <p>Approximately 20 weeks to complete the construction & demolition of the proposed development.</p> <p>Start and Finish date currently unknown.</p> |
| <p><i>Description of wastes arising and other residues (including quantities) and their disposal</i></p> | <p>Stone from existing walls - assuming 400mm thick</p> <p>Wall 1: Boundary wall facing Chapel St. - 50 tonnes</p> <p>Wall 2: North Boundary Wall adjacent to Chapel St. - 62 tonnes</p> <p>Wall 3: Small planter wall - 0.4 tonnes</p> <p>Wall 4: Internal Walls - 128 tonnes</p> <p>Wall 5: Boundary Wall to Stable Lane -92 tonnes</p> <p>Removal of stoned/soil surface - assuming 300mm depth to excavate - 340 tonnes</p> <p>Removal of concrete yard - assuming 300mm - 251 tonnes</p> <p>Removal of Brick Paving - 8 tonnes</p> <p>Shed roofing - galvanised</p> <p>Shed 1 - 3 tonnes</p> <p>Shed 2 - 1 tonnes</p> <p>Shed walls</p> <p>Shed 1 - 372 tonnes</p> <p>Shed 2 - 141 tonnes</p> <p>Shed foundation/floor slab - assuming 300mm</p> <p>Shed 1 - 176 tonnes</p> <p>Shed 2 - 43 tonnes</p> <p>Oil tank – 800 litres</p> <p>Perspex roofing from greenhouse 0.12</p> <p>All waste will be managed in accordance with the Construction & Demolition Resource & Waste Management Plan (RWMP) which will form part of the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) which will be prepared and updated by the appointed contractor.</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>Waste will be transferred from the site by a licensed haulier and disposed of in a suitably licensed waste recovery/disposal facility.</p> |
| <p><i>Identification of wastes arising and other residues (including quantities) that may be of particular concern in the context of the Natura 2000 network</i></p> | <p>Potential for Asbestos. A Refurbishment / Demolition Asbestos Survey was carried out at the proposed development site and an Asbestos Survey Report was prepared by Phoenix Environmental Safety Ltd. During the asbestos survey of the proposed development site asbestos containing material was identified around the lid of the oil tank in the yard. The asbestos containing textile material will be removed by an asbestos removal contractor and disposed of as asbestos waste before the works commence.</p> <p>If Asbestos or Asbestos Containing Material (ACMs) are identified in the ground or on other parts of the site during the construction works, the removal of asbestos will only be carried out by a suitably permitted waste contractor in accordance with S.I. No. 386 of 2006 Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Exposure to Asbestos) Regulations 2006-2010. All asbestos will be taken to a suitably licensed waste facility.</p> <p>Other hazardous materials (fuels, oils, and chemicals) may be present in the council workshop. These wastes (if encountered) will be stored in appropriate receptacles in designated areas of the site pending collection by an authorised waste contractor.</p> <p>As part of the Construction & Demolition RWMP individual waste streams will be identified at source and stored in dedicated skips for subsequent disposal to licensed landfill or to recycling.</p> |
| <p><i>Description of any additional services required to implement the project or plan, their location and means of construction</i></p> | <p>None known at present.</p> |

4.8 Identification of Other Projects or Plans or Activities

The proposed development is within Carrick-on-Suir Town Centre, which is subject to ongoing retail, commercial and residential development. Current grants of permission include works such as demolition, remediation and extensions to existing private dwellings and commercial buildings in Carrick-on-Suir town (Tipperary County Council on-line planning enquiry system).

Other proposed projects within Carrick-on-Suir include Sean Kelly Square, Castle Street/New Street Public Realm, Castle Park Biodiversity Plan and Carrick-on-Suir Regeneration Plan. These projects have all been granted planning.

Upgrade works to the N24 are in progress and are expected to be complete in Q1 2024. An overlap between the N24 upgrade works and the proposed development is not expected. No significant additional impacts are anticipated due to this proposal.

Construction of Carrick-on-Suir Regeneration Plan has commenced. Carrick-on-Suir Regeneration Plan Construction Phasing includes Sean Kelly Square, Castle Street/New Street Public Realm and Castle Park Biodiversity Plan. Carrick-on-Suir Regeneration Construction Plan is divided into five Phases. Phase 1 of Carrick-on-Suir Regeneration Plan, Ormond Park (including Strand Walk) and Healy Park, is in Construction and is expected to be complete in Q2 2024. Phase 1 will be followed by Phase 2 of Carrick-on-Suir Regeneration Plan; Phase 2 – Chapel St., Castle St. Castle Lane and the Quays East of Dillon Bridge; Phase 3 - The HUB Building; Phase 4 - Main St. West Gate, Sean Kelly Square, Greystone St. and Bridge St; and Phase 5 – Barrack St. and the Quays west of Dillon bridge to Healy Park will follow.

The Stable Lane works will be coordinated with the phasing of the Carrick-on-Suir Regeneration Plan Project. No significant additional impacts are anticipated.

A Construction Traffic Management Plan (TMP) will be developed for the proposed development prior to works commencing in order to minimise as far as possible any potential impact on Carrick-on-Suir.

4.9 Identification of Natura 2000 Sites

4.9.1 Zone of Impact Influence

The screening stage of AA involves compiling a 'long list' of Natura 2000 sites within a zone of potential impact influence for later analysis which may or may not be significantly impacted upon by the proposal.

The "zone of influence" for a project is the area over which ecological features may be subject to significant effects as a result of the proposed project and associated activities (CIEEM, 2018). This is likely to extend beyond the site where there are ecological or hydrological connection(s) beyond the site boundaries.

The subject site and a distance of 15km is recommended as a potential zone of influence (Scott Wilson et al., 2006). However, NPWS guidance (NPWS, 2009) advises that this zone of influence be assessed on a case-by-case basis with consideration of the nature, size, and location of the project, the sensitivities of the ecological receptors and the potential for cumulative effects. As such, Natura 2000 sites beyond 15km may also be considered based on the potential for an ecological and/or hydrological to the project site, bearing in mind the precautionary principle and using the Source-Pathway-Receptor framework.

Following this, the potential impacts associated with the proposal will be identified before an assessment is made of the likely significance of these impacts.

As described above, the test for the screening for Appropriate Assessment is to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if the development, individually or in combination with other plans/project is likely to have a

significant effect on a Natura 2000 site. If there are any significant, potentially significant, or uncertain effects, it will be necessary to proceed to Appropriate Assessment and submit an NIS.

The locations of Natura 2000 sites within the zone of potential significant impact influence of the proposal site, bearing in mind the precautionary principle, are shown on a map in **Figure 4-5**. Natura 2000 sites within the zone of potential significant impact influence of the proposal site, including their proximity are shown in below. Site synopses for these sites are included in **Appendix 2**.

Table 4-1: Natura 2000 Sites within zone of potential impact influence of the proposal site

| Designated Site | Site Code | Proximity of Site to Nearest Point of Designated Site | Hydrological/Ecological Connection? (Yes/No) |
|------------------------|-----------|---|--|
| Lower River Suir SAC | 002137 | 0.13km | Yes. Indirect connection. This SAC is situated a short distance to the south of footprint of the proposed development site. Surface water runoff from the proposed development site will be directed to the existing combined drainage system after passing through silt traps located in existing gullies. The discharge will be to Carrick-on-Suir Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) Register Number D0148-01 where it will undergo treatment before discharging to the River Suir. As such, there is a potential hydrological link between the proposed development site and this SAC. |
| Comeragh Mountains SAC | 001952 | 11.1km | No. There is a lack of hydrological and ecological connection between the proposed development and this SAC. |
| Hugginstown Fen SAC | 000404 | 14.8km | No. There is a lack of hydrological and ecological connection between the proposed development and this SAC. |

4.9.2 Characteristics of Natura 2000 Sites

Table 4-2 lists the qualifying features of Special Conservation Interest for the Natura 2000 sites that lie within the zone of potential impact influence of the subject site. Information pertaining to the Natura 2000 sites is from site synopses, conservation objectives and other information available on www.npws.ie.

Table 4-2: Natura 2000 sites with qualifying features of Special Conservation Interest.

| Natura 2000 Site | Qualifying features of Special Conservation Interest |
|----------------------|--|
| Lower River Suir SAC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330] • Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] • Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260] • Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels [6430] • Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0] • Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0] • <i>Taxus baccata</i> woods of the British Isles [91J0] • <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] • <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092] • <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) [1095] • <i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey) [1096] • <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> (River Lamprey) [1099] • <i>Alosa fallax fallax</i> (Twait Shad) [1103] • <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106] • <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355] |

| Natura 2000 Site | Qualifying features of Special Conservation Interest |
|------------------------|--|
| Comeragh Mountains SAC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110] • Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260] • Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010] • European dry heaths [4030] • Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] • Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130] • Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladani</i>) [8110] • Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210] • Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220] • <i>Hamatocaulis vernicosus</i> (Slender Green Feather-moss) [6216] |
| Hugginstown Fen SAC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alkaline fens [7230] |

4.9.3 Conservation Objectives

According to the Habitats Directive, the *conservation status of a natural habitat* will be taken as 'favourable' within its biogeographic range when:

- its natural range and areas it covers within that range are stable or increasing, and
- the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and
- the conservation status of its typical species is favourable as defined below.

According to the Habitats Directive, the conservation status of a species means the sum of the influences acting on the species concerned that may affect the long-term distribution and abundance of its populations. The conservation status will be taken as 'favourable' within its biogeographic range when:

- population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
- there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

Site-specific conservation objectives are available for the following sites:

- Lower River Suir SAC (002137) (Version 1.0, produced March 2017)
- Hugginstown Fen SAC (000404) (Version 1.0, produced July 2019)
- Comeragh Mountains SAC (001952) (Version 1.0, produced November 2021).

These have been accessed on the 9th November 2023. All conservation objectives together with other designated site information are available on <http://www.npws.ie/protectedsites/>.

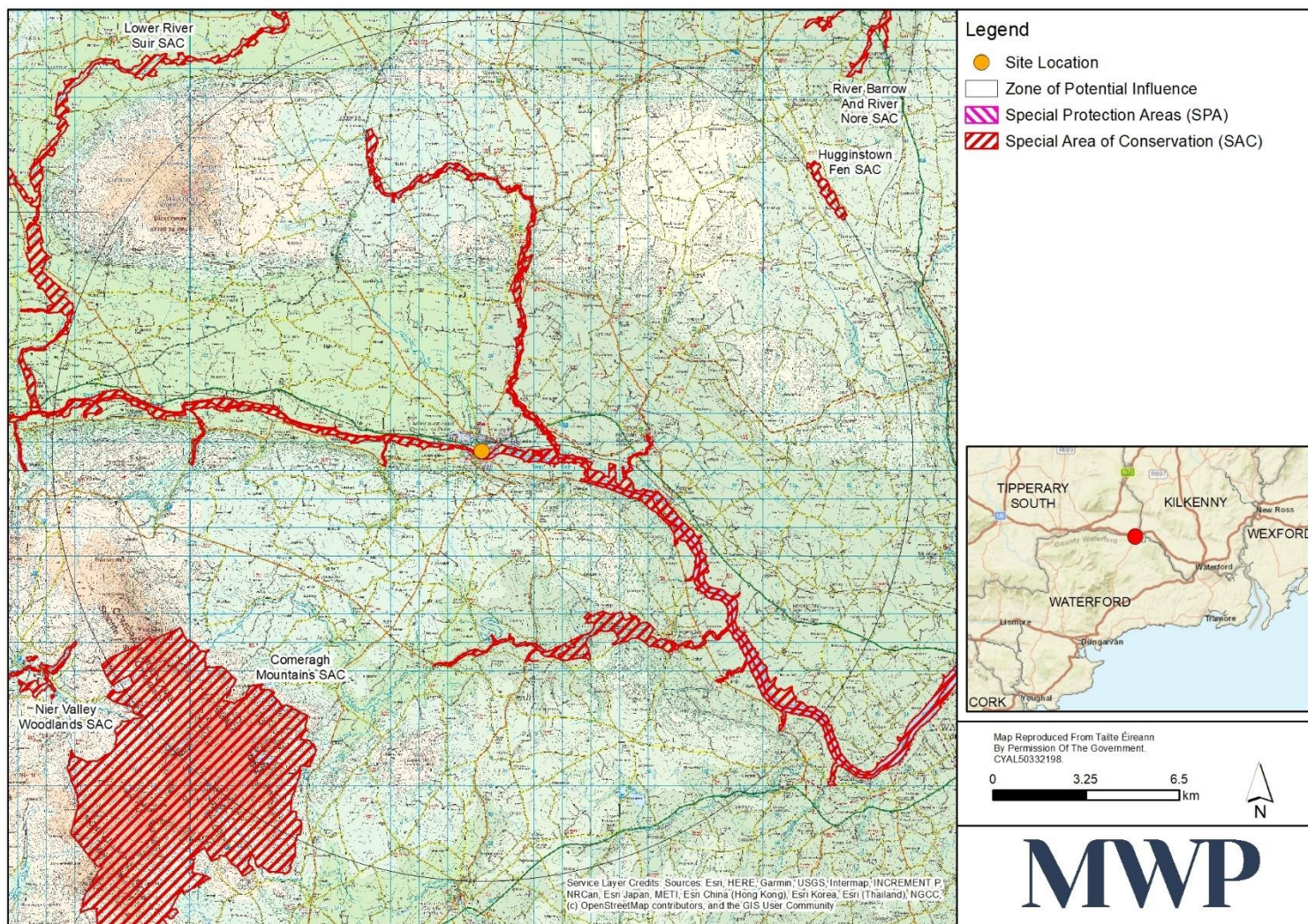


Figure 4-5: Natura 2000 sites within the zone of potential influence

4.10 Identification of Potential Impacts

Potential likely ecological impacts arising from the project are identified in this section.

| | |
|---|--|
| <p><i>Description of elements of the project likely to give rise to potential ecological impacts.</i></p> | <p>Surface water runoff from the proposed development site will be directed to the existing combined drainage system after passing through silt traps located in existing gullies. The discharge will be to Carrick-on-Suir WWTP Register Number D0148-01 where it will undergo treatment before discharging to the River Suir. As such, there is a potential indirect ecological link between the proposed development site and this SAC.</p> |
| <p><i>Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary ecological impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) by virtue of:</i></p> <p><i>Size and scale;</i></p> <p><i>Land-take;</i></p> <p><i>Distance from Natura 2000 Site or key features of the Site;</i></p> <p><i>Resource requirements;</i></p> <p><i>Emissions;</i></p> <p><i>Excavation requirements;</i></p> <p><i>Transportation requirements;</i></p> <p><i>Duration of construction, operation etc.; and</i></p> <p><i>Other.</i></p> | <p>The total area within the site boundary is 1500m².</p> <p>The proposed development will be within an urban environment, which has been significantly modified by human activity. The proposed development is not located within any Natura 2000 site; there will be no land-take from any Natura 2000 site.</p> <p>There are three Natura 2000 sites within the zone of potential influence of the proposed development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower River Suir SAC (002137) – 0.13km • Comeragh Mountains SAC (001952) – 11.1km • Hugginstown Fen SAC (000404) - 14.8km <p>There is no hydrological or ecological connection between the site of the proposed development and Comeragh Mountains SAC (001952), and Hugginstown Fen SAC (000404). Due to the proximity of the proposed development to Lower River Suir SAC (002137) (0.13km), there is a potential for impacts on this site.</p> <p>Water abstraction will not be required as part of the proposed project.</p> <p>There is potential for surface water run-off during the proposed construction phase.</p> <p>There is potential for sediment to enter the watercourse during the demolition of stone walls and buildings.</p> <p>The proposed project will be in an urban area already subject to regular traffic noise.</p> <p>There will be no requirement to traverse through any Natura 2000 site.</p> <p>Construction works will be temporary and short-term in nature. The start and finish dates are currently unknown. The construction of the proposed development will take approximately 20 weeks to complete. The operational phase of the project will continue indefinitely. No impact is envisaged as a result of the duration of this project.</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| | There are no other potential sources of impacts associated with the proposed development works. |
|--|---|

4.11 Assessment of Significance of Potential Impacts

This section considers the list of sites identified in **Table 4-1**, above, together with the potential ecological impacts identified in the previous section and determines whether the project is likely to have significant effects on a European site. When assessing impact, European sites are only considered relevant where a credible or tangible source-pathway-receptor link exists between the proposed development and a protected species or habitat type. In order for an impact to occur there must be a risk initiated by having a 'source' (e.g. excavation), and an impact pathway between the source and the receptor (e.g. a waterbody which connects the proposal site to the protected species or habitats). An evaluation based on these factors to determine which European sites are the plausible ecological receptors for potential impacts of the proposed development will be conducted in **Sections 4.11.1** and **4.11.2**, below. The evaluation takes cognisance of the scope, scale, nature and size of the project, its location relative to the European sites listed in **Table 4-1** above, and the degree of connectedness that exists between the project and each European site's potential ecological receptors.

4.11.1 European sites outside the zone of potential impact influence

With regards to the proposed development in Carrick-on-Suir, it is considered that the works do not include any element that has the potential to significantly alter the conservation objectives for which certain Natura 2000 sites are designated. It is considered that the Natura 2000 sites listed in **Table 4-4** are outside the zone of potential impact influence of the proposal due to the absence of plausible impact pathways and/or the attenuating effect of the distance intervening. Therefore, it is objectively concluded that significant impacts on these sites are not reasonably foreseeable as a result of the programme of works described at **Section 4.2**. These sites, which are listed in **Table 4-3**, below, along with their distance and the rationale for exclusion, will not be considered further in this document. A Finding of No Significant Effects report (FONSE) is presented in **Appendix 3**.

Table 4-3: European Sites excluded from further assessment

| European Site | Proximity of subject site to nearest point of designated site (km) | Rationale for exclusion from assessment |
|------------------------|--|--|
| Comeragh Mountains SAC | 11.1km | No source-pathway-receptor present. Intervening distance of 11.1km |
| Hugginstown Fen SAC | 14.8km | No source-pathway-receptor present. Intervening distance of 14.8km |

4.11.2 European sites within the zone of potential impact influence

Of the European sites listed in **Table 4-2**, above, one is considered to have the potential to be impacted as a result of the proposal. Construction projects generally pose potential threats to Natura 2000 sites through habitat alteration, species disturbance/displacement and/or water quality impacts. Given the proximity of the proposed development works, there is potential for these impacts to occur within this European site. Therefore, the assessment of significance of potential impacts that follows focuses on the following European sites:

Table 4-4: European sites within the zone of potential impact influence

| European Site | Proximity of subject site to nearest point of designated site (km) | Rationale for inclusion in assessment |
|----------------------|--|--|
| Lower River Suir SAC | 0.13 | Proximity of site to proposed development works and identified indirect hydrological link via drainage network and WWTP. |

The likelihood of significant effects to a European site from the project was determined based on several indicators including:

- Water quality
- Habitat loss
- Habitat alteration
- Habitat or species fragmentation
- Disturbance and/or displacement of species

The likelihood of significant cumulative/in-combination effects is assessed in **Section 4.8**.

4.11.2.1 Water Quality

There are some elements of the proposed development which could potentially result in impairment of water quality. In general, where works are conducted within proximity to water bodies, impairment of water quality may potentially occur as a result of run-off of sediment/fines or accidental fuel/oil spills from machinery/equipment. These elements of the proposal could therefore potentially result in pollution of the aquatic environment. The River Suir runs adjacent to Carrick-on-Suir town, which forms part of the Lower River Suir SAC (Site Code 002137).

There is no direct hydrological connection between the proposed development site and the Lower River Suir SAC (Site Code 002137). However, surface water does enter the river through the town drainage system and WWTP, creating a minor indirect linkage between the proposed development and the river.

Waste from the demolition of the derelict building on Strand Lane will be managed in accordance with the Construction & Demolition RWMP. Individual waste streams will be identified at source and stored in dedicated skips for subsequent disposal to licensed landfill or to recycling. While there may be some generation of sediment from this element of works, there is no risk of direct run-off/ingress of sediment to the Lower River Suir SAC as runoff will be directed to the existing combined drainage system after passing through silt traps located in existing gullies. The discharge will be to Carrick-on-Suir WWTP where it will undergo treatment before discharging to the River Suir.

The Suir becomes tidal just before reaching Carrick-on-Suir (EPA, 2016). The assimilation of sediments deposited by the inflowing river systems and the movement of this load from upper reaches to lower are normal elements of the dynamics of any tidal cycle, as are fluctuations in the rates of sediment transfer from upper reaches to lower and patterns of deposition within the river. These processes are subject, not only to temporal effects but to significant variation caused by the normal dynamics of the waxing and waning in river flows to which the benthic habitats have an inherent resilience.

With regards to runoff, works will be localised, and the extents of excavated surface will be less than 500m² at all times. Runoff will be directed to the existing drainage system after passing through silt traps which are part of

existing gullies. Best practice measures for managing surface water on site will be included in the CEMP and implemented on site by the appointed contractor to further reduce any potential impacts.

All fuels will be stored within secure and impermeable storage areas. Re-fueling areas and the temporary site compound will be located at least 25 metres from any drains or other water features.

4.11.2.2 Habitat Loss and Alteration

The proposed development works are not located within any Natura 2000 sites and despite the proximity of the proposed development, there is no direct hydrological connection between the proposed development site and the Lower River Suir SAC. The majority of the habitats within proposed development site are artificial in nature and not representative of those for which the Lower River Suir SAC is designated (**Table 4-2**). As outlined previously in **Section 4.11.1** above, the proposed development will not result in a significant impact on water quality.

Only minor amounts of vegetation clearance will be required. Therefore, there will be no significant impacts to the Lower River Suir SAC by virtue of habitat loss and/or alteration.

4.11.2.3 Disturbance and/or Displacement of Species

The proposed development works are not located within any Natura 2000 sites and despite the proximity of the proposed development, there is no direct hydrological connection between the proposed development site and the Lower River Suir SAC.

As outlined in **Section 4.11.2.1**, the proposed development will not have an impact on water quality. Therefore, it is considered there will be no disturbance and/or displacement of the species for which the Lower River Suir SAC is designated by virtue of habitat loss and/or alteration.

Freshwater Pearl Mussel (*M. margaritifera*)

Current distribution mapping for this species indicates that the known distribution does not encompass the 10km grid squares, S32 and S42, in which the proposed development site is located (NPWS, 2019). There will be no in-stream works associated with the proposed development and as outlined in **Section 4.11.2.1**, the proposed development will not have a significant impact on water quality. Thus, no significant impact is envisaged on this species as a result of the proposed development works.

Sea lamprey (*P. marinus*), River lamprey (*L. fluviatilis*), Brook lamprey (*L. planeri*),

A review of the most recent species assessments determined that distribution mapping for river lamprey does not encompass the 10km grid squares S32 and S42, within which the proposed development site is located, for the species' current known distribution. This grid square is, however, included within the current distribution for brook lamprey and sea lamprey (NPWS, 2019). It is considered that suitable habitat sufficient to support the structure and function of the lamprey population resident within the SAC is abundantly available in the extensive river systems encompassed within the SAC site boundary. However, there will be no in-stream works associated with the proposed development, and as outlined in **Section 4.11.2.1**, the proposed development will not have a significant impact on water quality. Thus, no significant impact is envisaged on this species as a result of the proposed development.

Salmon (*S. salar*)

The current known range and distribution of the species does include S32 and S42, the 10km grid squares that encompasses the location of the proposed development, and it is considered that suitable habitat sufficient to support the structure and function of the population of salmon resident within the SAC is abundantly available in the extensive river systems which are incorporated within the SAC site boundary. However, there will be no in-stream works associated with the proposed development, and as outlined in **Section 4.11.2.1**, the proposed development will not have a significant impact on water quality. Thus, no significant impact is envisaged on this species as a result of the proposed development.

Otter (*L. lutra*)

The most recent assessment for this species determined that the 10km grid square, S32 and S42, within which the proposal is located, is included within the current known distribution for this species (NPWS, 2019). No signs of otter, including breeding signs were recorded during the site survey on 7th November 2023.

A review of on-line records held by the NBDC determined that the nearest on-line record for this species within the SAC relates to the sighting of a live otter along the northern quay. Water-quality impacts (as outlined in **Section 4.11.2.1**) can result in a reduction of aquatic species which comprise prey for otter.

While the works will result in increased human activity/noise levels this will be a temporary event only (expected duration of 20 weeks), are within an urban area already subject to regular noise, and will be restricted to daylight hours.

Therefore, with regard to potential disturbance/displacement of otter as a result of fugitive noise emissions and/or increased human activity associated with the works, the proposed development is not considered to pose any risk of significant impacts over the course of the proposed development.

In summary, bearing in mind the limited scope, scale and temporary duration of the proposed development, and the availability of habitat of similar or ecologically higher value within the SAC site boundary, it is objectively concluded that significant disturbance/displacement impacts to otter, which would adversely impact on the conservation objectives of the species are not considered likely to occur.

White-Clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*)

The most recent assessment for this species determined that the 10km grid squares, S32 and S42, within which the proposal is located, is included within the current known distribution for this species (NPWS, 2019). However, there will be no in-stream works associated with the proposed development, and as outlined in **Section 4.11.2.1**, the proposed development will not have a significant impact on water quality. Thus, no significant impact is envisaged on this species as a result of the proposed development.

Twaite Shad (*Alosa fallax fallax*)

The most recent assessment for this species determined that the 10km grid squares, S32 and S42, within which the proposal is located, is included within the current known distribution for this species (NPWS, 2019). However, there will be no in-stream works associated with the proposed development, and as outlined in **Section 4.11.2.1**, the proposed development will not have a significant impact on water quality. Thus, no significant impact is envisaged on this species as a result of the proposed development.

4.11.2.4 Habitat or Species Fragmentation

As outlined in **Section 4.11.2.1**, the proposed development will not have an impact on water quality. The works will not result in any barrier to the movement of species upstream or downstream. Therefore, considering this and the absence of a direct source/pathway receptor between the proposed regeneration works and the SAC, there will be no fragmentation of the habitats or species for which the Lower River Suir SAC is designated. Thus, no significant impact will occur on the Lower River Suir SAC by virtue of habitat or species fragmentation.

4.11.2.5 Cumulative/In-combination Impacts

As well as singular effects, the potential for in-combination or cumulative impacts also need to be considered. A cumulative impact arises from incremental changes caused by past, present and proposed projects together with the proposed development considered in this document.

Relevant plans and projects that have been identified are described in **Section 4.8** above. The majority of other projects identified are primarily small, residential developments. There may be some overlap between the proposed development and the Regeneration Plan within the town which may result in elevated noise levels during construction. However, the existing environment is not pristine and is already subject to regular traffic noise. As such, the overlap of these projects will not result in significant cumulative impacts on Lower River Suir SAC.

No additional plans or projects within the immediate surrounds of the proposed development were noted. No significant effects are anticipated due to these proposals outlined in **Section 4.8** above.

The effect of the proposed development will be to provide an additional car park for Carrick-on-Suir. Any additional impact would be short-term and temporary, occurring only during the construction phase. Given the limited scale and scope of the proposed development, in-combination impacts to the identified Natura 2000 sites within this report as a result of the proposed development are not envisaged.

4.12 Conclusion of Screening Stage

This screening for appropriate assessment was undertaken to determine the potential for likely significant effects of the proposed development, individually, or in combination with other plans or projects, in view of the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 site. The proposed development described, are within the zone of potential influence of three Natura 2000 sites. It has been objectively concluded that the following sites are not likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development, and can therefore be screened out for appropriate assessment:

- Lower River Suir SAC
- Comeragh Mountains SAC
- Hugginstown Fen SAC

Reasons for Conclusion:

- There will be no impacts to water quality;
- There is no potential for impacts on the qualifying interests for which Natura 2000 sites are designated. As such, there would be no significant direct or indirect impact on qualifying habitat or species associated with Natura 2000 sites;
- The lack of significant in-combination effects arising from other proposed and permitted developments in the vicinity.

Measures intended to avoid or reduce negative effects on the European sites have not been relied upon in reaching this conclusion.

A FONSE has been prepared and is presented in **Appendix 3**.

5. References

Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG) (2009). *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities*. Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

Directorate General Environment (DGE), (2013), *Interpretation Manual of European Union Habitats- EUR 28*. The European Commission.

Directorate General Environment (DGE) (2007). *Interpretation Manual of European Union Habitats*, European Commission, Brussels.

European Commission (EC) (2000). *Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

European Commission (EC) (2001). *Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

Franklin, Alan B., Noon, Barry R. & Luke George T., (2002). What is Habitat Fragmentation?, *Studies in Avian Biology* No. 25: 20-29.

NPWS, 2013. The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Species Assessments Volume 3, Version 1.0., Dublin, Ireland: Unpublished report. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

Colhoun, K. & Cummins, S., 2013. Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland 2014-2019. *Irish Birds*, Volume 9, pp. 523-544.

DGE, 2013. *Interpretation Manual of European Union Habitats EUR28*, s.l.: European Commission Directorate General of Environment.

King, J. J. & Linnane, S. M., 2004. *The status and distribution of lamprey and shad in the Slaney and Munster Blackwater SACs*. *Irish Wildlife Manuals*, No. 14., Dublin, Ireland: National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

King, J. L. et al., 2011. *Ireland Red List No. 5: Amphibians, Reptiles and Freshwater Fish*, Dublin, Ireland: National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

NPWS, 2013a. *The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Habitats Assessment Volume 2. Version 1.1.*, Dublin, Ireland: Unpublished report, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

NPWS, 2013b. *The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Species Assessments Volume 3, Version 1.0.*, Dublin, Ireland: Unpublished report. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

NPWS (2017) Conservation Objectives: Comeragh Mountains SAC 001952. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

NPWS (2019) Conservation Objectives: Hugginstown Fen SAC 000404. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

NPWS (2017) Conservation Objectives: Lower River Suir SAC 002137. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

Appendix 1

Stages of Appropriate Assessment

Stage 1 - Screening

This is the first stage of the Appropriate Assessment process and that undertaken to determine the likelihood of significant impacts as a result of a proposed project or plan. It determines need for a full Appropriate Assessment.

If it can be concluded that no significant impacts to Natura 2000 Sites are likely then the assessment can stop here. If not, it must proceed to Stage 2 for furthermore detailed assessment.

Stage 2 - Natura Impact Statement (NIS)

The second stage of the Appropriate Assessment process assesses the impact of the proposal (either alone or in combination with other projects or plans) on the integrity of the Natura 2000 Site with respect to the conservation objectives of the site and its ecological structure and function. This is a much more detailed assessment than Stage 1. A Natura Impact Statement containing a professional scientific examination of the proposal is required and includes any mitigation measure to avoid, reduce or offset negative impacts.

If the outcome of Stage 2 is negative i.e. adverse impacts to the sites cannot be scientifically ruled out, despite mitigation, the plan or project should proceed to Stage 3 or be abandoned.

Stage 3 - Assessment of alternative solutions

A detailed assessment must be undertaken to determine whether alternative ways of achieving the objective of the project/plan exists.

Where no alternatives exist the project/plan must proceed to Stage 4.

Stage 4 - Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain

The final stage is the main derogation process examining whether there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) for allowing a plan or project to adversely affect a Natura 2000 Site where no less damaging solution exists.

Appendix 2

Site Synopses

Appendix 3

Finding of No Significant Effects Report

| FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS MATRIX | |
|--|--|
| European Site | Proximity of subject site to nearest point of designated site (km) |
| Name of project or plan | Stable Lane Carpark |
| Name and location of Natura 2000 site | Lower River Suir SAC – 0.13km Comeragh Mountains SAC – 11.1km Hugginstown Fen SAC – 14.8km |
| Description of the project | The proposed design for the carpark comprises of a primary vehicular entrance to the West from Chapel St.(identified as L6711 New Lane on GIS system, vehicle exit point to Stable Lane to the east, demolition of existing walls, two sheds and concrete yard within the proposed site, demolition of existing boundary wall with Chapel St. and North boundary wall adjacent to Chapel St. to allow reconfiguration of the existing vehicle and pedestrian access points onto Chapel St., demolition of boundary wall with Stable Lane, drainage works to carpark, street lighting to carpark, construction of new Boundary wall to the east of the site along Stable Lane – including vehicle exit point and pedestrian access point, construction of new boundary to the North of the site adjacent to the Chapel St entrance, new asphalt surface finishes to carpark, laid to falls and surface water run-off will be directed to gulleys. Car park with 33 parking spaces, including two number accessible parking bays and two number electrical vehicles charging bays. |
| Is the project or plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site? | No |
| Are there other projects or plans that together with the project or plan being assessed could affect the site | No |
| THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS | |
| Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site(s). | No significant impacts are envisaged as a result of the proposed development. |
| List of agencies consulted: provide contact name and telephone or e- mail address. | N/A |
| Response to consultation. | N/A |
| DATA COLLECTED TO CARRY OUT THE ASSESSMENT | |
| Who carried out the assessment? | Roman Puotkalis – Environmental Consultant Ger Hayes – Senior Ecologist |
| Sources of data | Refer to references. |
| Level of assessment completed | Desktop study and Field Study |