



APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT FOR PLANNING APPLICATION

Screening is used to determine if an AA is necessary by examining:

- *If the plan / project is directly connected with / necessary to the management of the European site.*
- *If the effects will be significant on a European site in view of its conservation objectives, either alone / in combination with other plans / projects.*

Planning Authority : Offaly County Council

Planning Application: Proposed Part VIII,

Edenderry Municipal District - February 2017

(A) BACKGROUND SITE INFORMATION :			
Nature of Project:	Street Enhancement Scheme on JKL Street And O Connell Square; Includes paving works, provision of 2 courtesy crossings, and relocation of bus shelter and provision of new bus shelter; provision of lighting around the square and public realm improvements. (For full description of development see copy of public notice attached)		
Site location:	JKL St. and O Connell Square, Edenderry, Co Offaly.		
Site Area:	1.077 ha	Floor Area	N/A
Identification of nearby European Site(s):	European site(s): The Long Derries, Edenderry SAC 925		
Distance to European Site(s):	5km.		
The characteristics of existing, proposed or other approved plans / projects which may cause interactive / cumulative impacts with the project being assessed and which may affect the European site:	Given the scale and nature of the development in question, it is not considered that it will have any interactive / cumulative impacts with any other plan or project in the vicinity.		
(B) IDENTIFICATION OF THE RELEVANT EUROPEAN SITE(S):			
The reasons for the designation of the European site(s):			
The Long Derries is of botanical importance due to the presence of good quality dry, calcareous grassland, an interesting gravel pit flora and the presence of three rare plant species, two of which are legally protected. The presence of an interesting transition habitat from Esker to peatland, and a varied bird population, including the rare Nightjar and Partridge, adds to the site's importance.			
The conservation objectives / qualifying interests of the site and the factors that contributes to the conservation value of the site: (which are taken from the Natura 2000 site synopses and, if applicable, a Conservation Management Plan; all available on www.npws.ie) (ATTACH INFO.)			
An important aspect of this site is the presence of the rare, Red Data Book species, Blue Fleabane (<i>Erigeron acer</i>), and the legally protected (Flora Protection Order, 1987), Basil Thyme (<i>Acinos arvensis</i>)			

and Green-winged Orchid (*Orchis morio*). A large population of the latter species occurs in the grassland communities, including those in the transition to peatland zone. Blue Fleabane is found in grassland and gravel pits on the site, the latter habitat also supporting Basil Thyme.

The summer birdlife of this area includes Sand Martin, Whinchat, Whitethroat and Cuckoo. Nightjar, a rare species listed in Annex I of the EU Birds Directive, breeds on the site. Partridge, an endangered species in Ireland and one listed in the Red Data Book, is known from the site. Badgers have setts along some of the mature hedgerows.

(C) NPWS ADVICE:

Advice received from NPWS over phone:	None Received
Summary of advice received from NPWS in written form (ATTACH SAME):	None Received

(D) ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS:

*(The purpose of this is to identify if the effect(s) identified could be significant – if **uncertain** assume the effect(s) are significant).*

If the answer is ‘yes’ to any of the questions below, then the effect is significant.
(Please justify your answer. ‘Yes’ / ‘No’ alone is insufficient)

Would there be... ... any impact on an Annex 1 habitat? (Annex 1 habitats are listed in Appendix 1 of AA Guidance).	Not likely due to the location and type of development. The site is sufficient distance from the European site.
... a reduction in habitat area on a European site(s)?	There will be no reduction in the habitat area.
... direct / indirect damage to the physical quality of the environment (e.g. water quality and supply, soil compaction) in the European Site(s)?	Not likely due to the location and type of development. The site is sufficient distance from the European site.
... serious / ongoing disturbance to species / habitats for which the European site is selected (e.g. because of increased noise, illumination and human activity)?	Not likely due to the location and type of development. The site is sufficient distance from the European site.
... direct / indirect damage to the size, characteristics or reproductive ability of populations on the European site?	Not likely to have an adverse impact due to its location, scale and characteristics.

<p>Would the project interfere with mitigation measures put in place for other plans / projects. [Look at <i>in-combination effects</i> with completed, approved but not completed, and proposed plans / projects. Look at projects / plans within and adjacent to European sites and identify them]. Simply stating that there are no cumulative impacts' is insufficient.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>(E) SCREENING CONCLUSION:</p>	
<p>Screening can result in:</p>	
<p>1.</p>	<p><i>AA is not required</i> because the project is directly connected with / necessary to the nature conservation management of the site.</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p><i>No potential for significant effects / AA is not required.</i></p>
<p>3.</p>	<p><i>Significant effects are certain, likely or uncertain.</i> (In this situation seek a Natura Impact Statement from the applicant, or reject the project. Reject if too potentially damaging / inappropriate.</p>
<p>Therefore, does the project fall into category 1, 2 or 3 above? Category 2</p>	
<p>Justify why it falls into relevant category above: <i>Given the location and the nature and size of the development applied for and the characteristics of European sites in the vicinity and the appropriate assessment guidelines it is considered that the development will be unlikely to have significant effects on any European sites.</i></p>	
<p>Signed: <u>Declan Meehan</u></p>	<p>Date: 21/02/2017</p>



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING



The proposed development is sub-threshold when examined against the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended, Schedule 5, PART 2, 10. *Infrastructure project, (b) (iv) Urban development which would involve an area greater than 2 hectares in the case of a business district, 10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 20 hectares elsewhere.*

The area of the proposed works is 1.077 ha; accordingly I deem that EIA is not required in this instance.

Article 103 (1) of the 2001 Planning and Development Regulations requires that where a Planning Authority considers that the sub-threshold development is likely to have significant effects on the environment, it shall request the applicant to submit an EIS. As specified by Article 103 (1), (2) and (3) and Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended, and also the DoEHLG publication; *'Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) - Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development'* 2003, it is considered that the proposed development would be unlikely to have significant effects on the environment and will therefore not require an EIS. It is considered that there are no sensitivities relating to the characteristics and location of the proposed development, nor are there potential impacts, that would result in a likely significant impact on the environment.

Signed:

	D. Meehan		
Signed:	 Executive Planner	Date:	21/02/2017