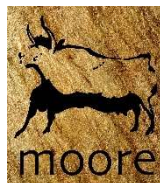


Report for the purposes of
Appropriate Assessment Screening

Ballinahinch Residential Development

Prepared by: Moore Group – Environmental Services

14 March 2024



On behalf of Wicklow County Council

Project Proponent	Wicklow County Council
Project	Ballinahinch Residential Development
Title	Report for the purposes of Appropriate Assessment Screening Ballinahinch Residential Development


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Abbreviations

AA	Appropriate Assessment
ABP	An Bord Pleanála
CEMP	Construction Environmental Management Plan
EEC	European Economic Community
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EU	European Union
FWPM	Freshwater Pearl Mussel
GIS	Geographical Information System
LAP	Local Area Plan
NHA	Natural Heritage Area
NIS	Natura Impact Statement
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
OSI	Ordnance Survey Ireland
pNHA	proposed Natural Heritage Area
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SPA	Special Protection Area
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage System
UÉ	Uisce Éireann
WFD	Water Framework Directive

1. Introduction

1.1. General Introduction

This report for the purposes of Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening has been prepared to support a Part 8 Planning Application for the Proposed Development (described in Section 3 below). The report contains information required for the competent authority to undertake screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) in respect of the construction and operation of residential development at Ballinahinch, Ashford, Co. Wicklow (hereafter referred to as the Proposed Development) to determine whether it is likely individually or in combination with other plans or projects to have a significant effect on any European sites, in light of best scientific knowledge.

Having regard to the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 – 2021 (the “Planning Acts”) (section 177U), the purpose of a screening exercise under section 177U of the PDA 2000 is to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect on a European site.

If it cannot be *excluded* on the basis of objective information that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site then it is necessary to carry out a Stage 2 appropriate assessment under section 177V of the Planning Acts.

When screening the project, there are two possible outcomes:

- the project poses no potential for the possibility of a significant effect and as such requires no Stage 2 assessment; or
- the project has potential to have a significant effect (or this is uncertain and therefore cannot be excluded) and therefore a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment of the project is necessary.

This report has been prepared by Moore Group - Environmental Services to enable the competent authority to carry out AA screening in relation to the Proposed Development. The report was compiled by Ger O’Donohoe B.Sc. Applied Aquatic Sciences (ATU Galway, 1993) & M.Sc. Environmental Sciences (TCD, 1999) who has 30 years’ experience in environmental impact assessment and has completed numerous Appropriate Assessment Screening Reports and Natura Impact Statements on terrestrial and aquatic habitats for various development types.

1.2. Legislative Background - The Habitats and Birds Directives

Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive are transposed into Irish Law inter alia by the Part XAB of the Planning Acts (in particular section 177U and 177V) which governs the requirement to carry out appropriate assessment screening and appropriate assessment, where required, per Section 1.1 above.

The Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora) is the main legislative instrument for the protection and conservation of biodiversity in the European Union (EU). Under the Habitats Directive, Member States are obliged to designate Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) which contain habitats or species considered important for protection and conservation in a EU context.

The Birds Directive (Council Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds), transposed into Irish law by the Bird and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011 as amended, and the Wildlife Act 1976, as amended, is concerned with the long-term protection and management of all wild bird species and their habitats in the EU. Among other things, the Birds Directive requires that Special Protection Areas (SPAs) be established to protect migratory species and species which are rare, vulnerable, in danger of extinction, or otherwise require special attention.

SACs designated under the Habitats Directive and SPAs, designated under the Birds Directive, form a pan-European network of protected sites known as Natura 2000. The Habitats Directive sets out a unified system for the protection and management of SACs and SPAs. These sites are also referred to as European sites.

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the requirement for an assessment of proposed plans and projects likely to have a significant effect on Natura 2000 sites.

Article 6(3) establishes the requirement to screen all plans and projects and to carry out an appropriate assessment if required (Appropriate Assessment (AA)). Article 6(4) establishes requirements in cases of imperative reasons of overriding public interest:

Article 6(3): *“Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subjected to an appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.”*

2. Methodology

The Commission's methodological guidance (EC, 2002, 2018, 2021 see Section 2.1 below) promotes a four-stage process to complete the AA and outlines the issues and tests at each stage. An important aspect of the process is that the outcome at each successive stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required.

Stages 1 and 2 deal with the main requirements for assessment under Article 6(3). Stage 3 may be part of Article 6(3) or may be a necessary precursor to Stage 4. Stage 4 is the main derogation step of Article 6(4).

Stage 1 Screening: This stage examines the likely effects of a project either alone or in combination with other projects upon a Natura 2000 site and considers whether it can be objectively concluded that these effects will not be significant. In order to screen out a project, it must be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment: This stage examines whether it is likely that the project, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, will have a significant effect upon a European site. In order to 'screen out' a project (i.e. in order to conclude that it is not necessary to move to the 'Stage 2' appropriate assessment stage (see immediately below), the possibility that the Proposed Development (individually or in combination with other plans or projects), will have a significant effect on a European site must be excluded on the basis of objective information.

Stage 3 Assessment of Alternative Solutions: This stage examines alternative ways of implementing the project that, where possible, avoid any adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site.

Stage 4 Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain: Where imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) exist, an assessment to consider whether compensatory measures will or will not effectively offset the damage to the sites will be necessary.

To ensure that the Proposed Development complies fully with the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and all relevant Irish transposing legislation, Moore Group compiled this report to enable the competent authority to carry out AA screening in relation to the Proposed Development to determine whether it can be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site(s).

2.1. Guidance

This report has been compiled in accordance with guidance contained in the following documents:

- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities. (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2010 rev.).
- Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities. Circular NPWS 1/10 & PSSP 2/10.
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2018).
- Guidance document on the strict protection of animal species of Community interest under the Habitats Directive (EC, 2021).
- Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2021).
- Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) Practice Note PN01 Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management (OPR, 2021).

2.2. Data Sources

Sources of information that were used to collect data on the Natura 2000 network of sites, and the environment within which they are located, are listed below:

- The following mapping and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) data sources, as required:
 - National Parks & Wildlife (NPWS) protected site boundary data;
 - Ordnance Survey of Ireland (OSI) mapping and aerial photography;
 - OSI/Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rivers and streams, and catchments;
 - Digital Elevation Model over Europe (EU-DEM);
 - Google Earth and Bing aerial photography 1995-2024;
- Online data available on Natura 2000 sites as held by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) from www.npws.ie including:
 - Natura 2000 - Standard Data Form;
 - Conservation Objectives;
 - Site Synopses;
- National Biodiversity Data Centre records;
 - Online database of rare, threatened and protected species;
 - Publicly accessible biodiversity datasets.
- Status of EU Protected Habitats in Ireland. (National Parks & Wildlife Service, 2019); and
- Relevant Development Plans;
 - Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028

3. Description of the Proposed Development

The Proposed Development consists of the construction and operation of a Residential Development and all associated and ancillary development. Wastewater from the proposed development will be directed to the Wicklow WWTP which has the capacity (>15,000P.E.) to assimilate the proposed additional load (EPA Wicklow D0012-01; 2020).

It is proposed to retain all surface water on site as per 'Nature-based solutions to the Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Runoff in Urban Areas, Best Practice Interim Guidance Document' so as to infiltrate all surface water to ground. There will be no attenuation tank or discharge of surface water directly to the river.

Proposed surface/rainwater strategy. 'Nature-based solutions to the Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Runoff in Urban Areas, Best Practice Interim Guidance Document', published by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, while preparing a surface/rainwater management strategy.

It should be noted that reducing the impermeable area of a site is the first step in creating a sustainable rainwater management plan, this will be considered throughout the design of the project.

It is proposed to infiltrate surface water runoff to ground. The following are proposed in order to allow surface water to drain to ground;

- Soakpits in individual gardens, draining the roofs of the dwellings,
- Permeable paving and/or grasscrete at driveways and parking spaces, draining roads, footpaths and driveways,
- Swales and infiltration trenches, draining roads and footpaths, and
- Soakaways/Ponds/Basins in areas of Public Open Space.

Figure 1 shows the Proposed Development location and Figure 2 shows a detailed view of the Proposed Development boundary on recent aerial photography. Figure 3 shows the layout of the Proposed Development.

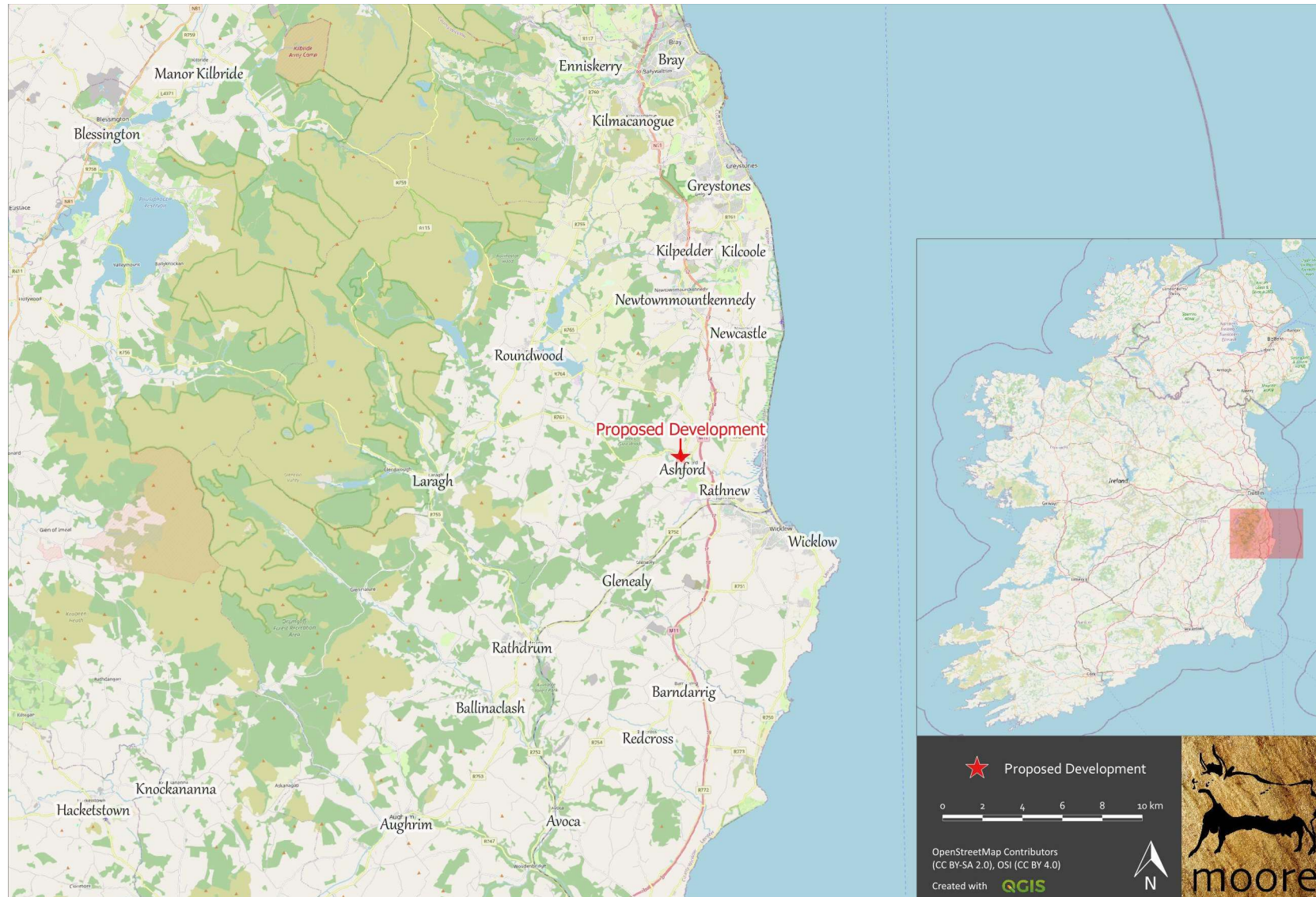


Figure 1. Showing the Proposed Development location at Ashford, Co. Wicklow.



Figure 2. Showing the Proposed Development boundary on recent aerial photography.



Figure 3. Showing the boundary of the Proposed Development with indicative layout.

4. Identification of Natura 2000 Sites

4.1. Description of Natura Sites Potentially Significantly Affected

A Zone of Influence (Zoi) of a proposed development is the geographical area over which it could affect the receiving environment in a way that could have significant effects on the Qualifying Interests of a European site. In accordance with the OPR Practice Note (2021), PN01, the Zoi should be established on a case-by-case basis using the Source-Pathway-Receptor framework.

The European Commission's "Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Methodological Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC" published 28 September 2021 states at section 3.1.3, that:

"Identifying the Natura 2000 sites that may be affected should be done by taking into consideration all aspects of the plan or project that could have potential effects on any Natura 2000 sites located within the zone of influence of the plan or project. This should take into account all of the designating features (species, habitat types) that are significantly present on the sites and their conservation objectives. In particular, it should identify:

- *any Natura 2000 sites geographically overlapping with any of the actions or aspects of the plan or project in any of its phases, or adjacent to them;*
- *any Natura 2000 sites within the likely zone of influence of the plan or project Natura 2000 sites located in the surroundings of the plan or project (or at some distance) that could still be indirectly affected by aspects of the project, including as regards the use of natural resources (e.g. water) and various types of waste, discharge or emissions of substances or energy;*
- *Natura 2000 sites in the surroundings of the plan or project (or at some distance) which host fauna that can move to the project area and then suffer mortality or other impacts (e.g. loss of feeding areas, reduction of home range);*
- *Natura 2000 sites whose connectivity or ecological continuity can be affected by the plan or project".*

The range of Natura 2000 sites to be assessed, i.e. the zone in which impacts from the plan or project may arise, will depend on the nature of the plan or project and the distance at which effects may occur. For Natura 2000 sites located downstream along rivers or wetlands fed by aquifers, it may be that a plan or project can affect water flows, fish migration and so forth, even at a great distance. Emissions of pollutants may also have effects over a long distance. Some projects or plans that do not directly affect Natura 2000 sites may still have a significant impact on them if they cause a barrier effect or prevent ecological linkages. This may happen, for example, when plans affect features of the landscape that connect Natura 2000 sites or that may obstruct the

movements of species or disrupt the continuity of a fluvial or woodland ecosystem. To determine the possible effects of the plan or project on Natura 2000 sites, it is necessary to identify not only the relevant sites but also the habitats and species that are significantly present within them, as well as the site objectives.

The Zone of Influence may be determined by considering the Proposed Development's potential connectivity with European sites, in terms of:

- Nature, scale, timing and duration of all aspects of the proposed works and possible impacts, including the nature and size of excavations, storage of materials, flat/sloping sites;
- Distance and nature of potential pathways (dilution and dispersion; intervening 'buffer' lands, roads etc.); and
- Location of ecological features and their sensitivity to the possible impacts.

The potential for source pathway receptor connectivity is firstly identified through GIS interrogation and detailed information is then provided on sites with connectivity. European sites that are located within a potential Zone of Influence of the Proposed Development are listed in Table 1 and presented in Figures 4 and 5, below. Spatial boundary data on the Natura 2000 network was extracted from the NPWS website (www.npws.ie) on 14 March 2024. This data was interrogated using GIS analysis to provide mapping, distances, locations and pathways to all sites of conservation concern including pNHAs, NHA and European sites.

Table 1 European Sites located within the potential Zone of Influence¹ of the Proposed Development.

Site Code	Site name	Distance (km) ²
002249	The Murrrough Wetlands SAC	3.03
004186	The Murrrough SPA	3.22

The Proposed Development is located in the hydrological catchment of the Vartry River at Ashford. Approximately 4.6 river km downstream the waters of the Vartry River enter the Murrrough Wetlands with its European sites, The Murrrough Wetlands SAC (Site Code 002249) and The Murrrough SPA (Site Code 004186).

The Qualifying Interests (QIs) and Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) of the European sites in the Zone of influence of the Proposed Development are provided in Table 2 below.

¹ All European sites potentially connected irrespective of the nature or scale of the Proposed Development.

² Distances indicated are the closest geographical distance between the Proposed Development and the European site boundary, as made available by the NPWS.

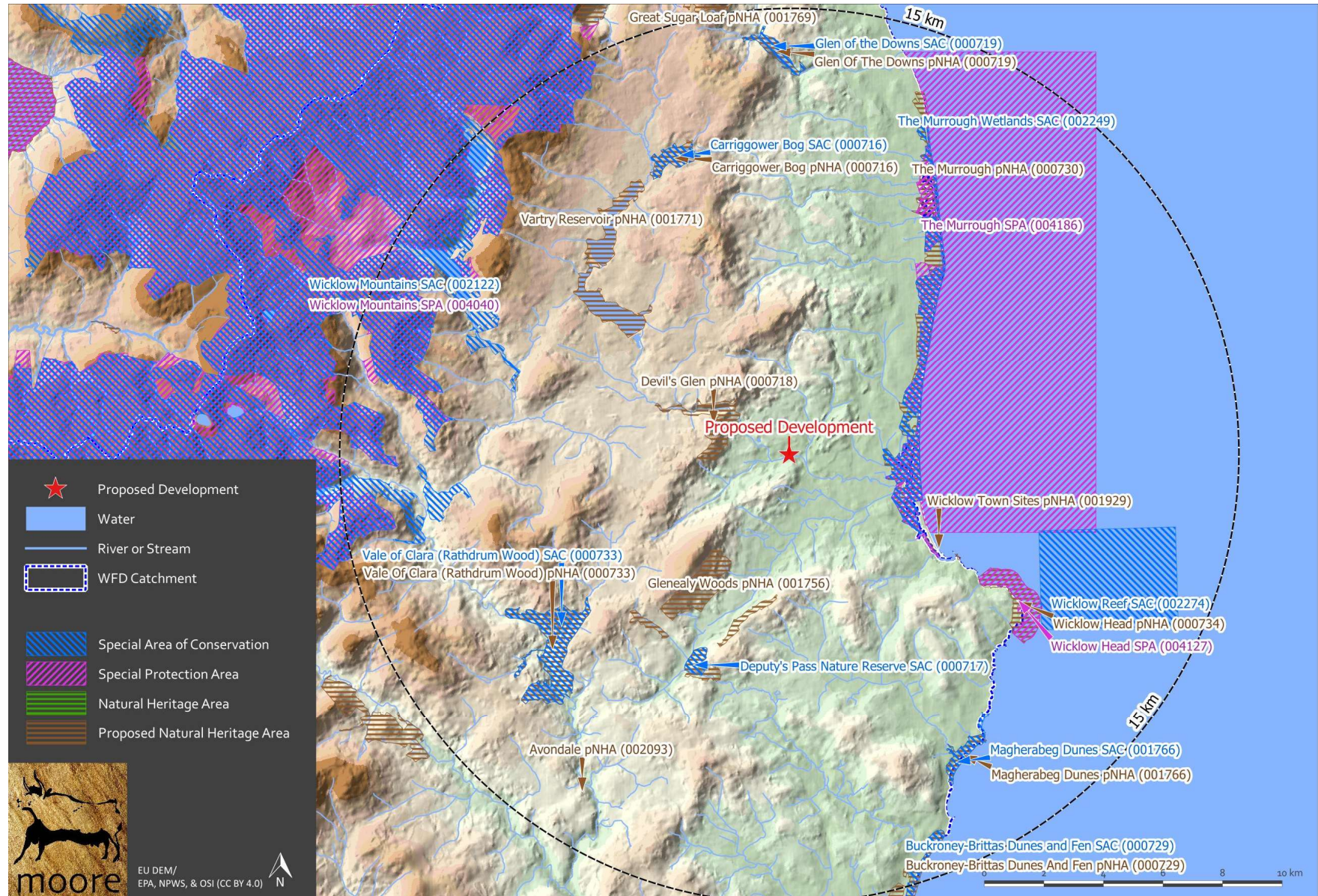


Figure 4. Showing European sites and NHAs/pNHAs within the wider Potential Zone of Influence of the Proposed Development.



Figure 5. Detailed view of European sites in the nearer Potential Zone of Influence of the Proposed Development.

Table 2 Identification of relevant European sites using Source-Pathway-Receptor model and compilation of information QIs and conservation objectives. *Priority Habitats

European site name & Site code	Location Relative to the Proposed Development Site	Connectivity – Source-Pathway-Receptor	Considered further in Screening – Y/N
<p>The Murrrough Wetlands SAC (002249)</p> <p>The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest:</p> <p>1210 Annual vegetation of drift lines</p> <p>1220 Perennial vegetation of stony banks</p> <p>1330 Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>)</p> <p>1410 Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>)</p> <p>7210 Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the Caricion davallianae*</p> <p>7230 Alkaline fens</p> <p>NPWS (2021) Conservation Objectives: The Murrrough Wetlands SAC 002249. Version 1. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.</p>	4.6 river km downstream of the Proposed Development	There are no direct pathways or connectivity to the habitats or species of this site.	Yes, see Table 3 below.
<p>The Murrrough SPA (004186)</p> <p>The overall aim of the Birds Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest:</p> <p>A001 Red-throated Diver <i>Gavia stellata</i></p> <p>A043 Greylag Goose <i>Anser anser</i></p> <p>A046 Light-bellied Brent Goose <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i></p> <p>A050 Wigeon <i>Anas penelope</i></p> <p>A052 Teal <i>Anas crecca</i></p> <p>A179 Black-headed Gull <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i></p> <p>A184 Herring Gull <i>Larus argentatus</i></p> <p>A195 Little Tern <i>Sterna albifrons</i></p> <p>A999 Wetlands</p> <p>NPWS (2022) Conservation objectives for The Murrrough SPA [004186]. First Order Site specific Conservation Objectives Version 1.0. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage</p>	4.6 river km downstream of the Proposed Development	There are no direct pathways or connectivity to the habitats or species of this site.	Yes, see Table 3 below.

4.2. Ecological Network Supporting Natura 2000 Sites

A concurrent GIS analysis of the proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA) and designated Natural Heritage Areas (NHA) in terms of their role in supporting the species using Natura 2000 sites was undertaken along with GIS investigation of European sites. These supporting roles mainly relate to mobile fauna such as mammals and birds which may use pNHAs and NHAs as ecological corridors or “stepping stones” between Natura 2000 sites.

Article 10 of the Habitats Directive and the Habitats Regulations 2011 place a high degree of importance on such non-Natura 2000 areas as features that connect the Natura 2000 network. Features such as ponds, woodlands and important hedgerows were taken into account in the decision process and during the preparation of this AA Screening report.

The NHAs and pNHAs identified in Figure 4 are located outside the Zone of Influence, with the exception of the Murrough pNHA, which is considered under its higher European designations.

5. Identification of Potential Impacts & Assessment of Significance

The Proposed Development is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the sites considered in the assessment and therefore potential impacts must be identified and considered.

5.1. Assessment of Likely Significant Effects

The consideration of all potential direct and indirect impacts that may result in significant effects on the conservation objectives of a European site, taking into account the size and scale of the Proposed Development are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Assessment of Likely Significant Effects.

Identification of all potential direct and indirect impacts that may result in significant effects on the conservation objectives of a European site, taking into account the size and scale of the project.	
Impacts:	Significance of Impacts:
Construction phase e.g. Vegetation clearance Demolition	None The Proposed Development site is contained in fields of rank grassland and scrub and there are no direct pathways to the Vartry River.

<p>Surface water runoff from soil excavation/infill/landscaping (including borrow pits)</p> <p>Dust, noise, vibration</p> <p>Lighting disturbance</p> <p>Impact on groundwater/dewatering</p> <p>Storage of excavated/construction materials</p> <p>Access to site</p> <p>Pests</p>	<p>The potential for indirect effects from construction activity to occur are unlikely. Construction activity will take place within the dry upper and inner portion of the site with no discharges to the Vartry River.</p> <p>While pollution of the Vartry River will be avoided during the construction phase, best practice measures are not considered to be mitigation in an AA context as they are not being employed to reduce or minimise impacts to any Natura 2000 sites. In the absence of any mitigation or pollution prevention measures, no effects to Natura 2000 sites will occur.</p>
<p>Operational phase e.g.</p> <p>Direct emission to air and water</p> <p>Surface water runoff containing contaminant or sediment</p> <p>Lighting disturbance</p> <p>Noise/vibration</p> <p>Changes to water/groundwater due to drainage or abstraction</p> <p>Presence of people, vehicles and activities</p> <p>Physical presence of structures (e.g. collision risks)</p>	<p>All foul and surface water runoff, once the facility is operational, will be contained on site and discharged to urban drainage systems.</p> <p>It is proposed to retain all surface water on site as per 'Nature-based solutions to the Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Runoff in Urban Areas, Best Practice Interim Guidance Document' so as to infiltrate all surface water to ground which will cater for storm water and be put in place at the commencement of construction. There will be no attenuation tank or discharge of surface water directly to the river.</p> <p>There is no real likelihood of any significant effects on European Sites in the wider catchment area.</p> <p>The proposed development is located at a distance of removal such that there will be no disturbance to qualifying interest species in any European sites.</p>
<p>Describe any likely changes to the European site:</p>	
<p>Examples of the type of changes to give consideration to include:</p> <p>Reduction or fragmentation of habitat area</p> <p>Disturbance to QI species</p> <p>Habitat or species fragmentation</p> <p>Reduction or fragmentation in species density</p>	<p>None.</p> <p>The Proposed Development site is not located adjacent or within a European site, therefore there is no risk of habitat loss or fragmentation or any effects on QI habitats or species directly or ex-situ.</p> <p>It can be noted that the level of development recorded during fieldwork and</p>

Changes in key indicators of conservation status value (water quality etc.)	distance from the coastal SPA do not present opportunities to support the bird species (predominantly waders) for which the Murrough Wetlands SPA (c. 4km) is designated.
Changes to areas of sensitivity or threats to QI	
Interference with the key relationships that define the structure or ecological function of the site	
Climate change	

5.2. Assessment of Potential In-Combination Effects

In-combination effects are changes in the environment that result from numerous human-induced alterations. In-combination effects can be thought of as occurring through two main pathways: first, through persistent additions or losses of the same materials or resource, and second, through the compounding effects as a result of the coming together of two or more effects.

As part of the Screening for an Appropriate Assessment, in addition to the Proposed Development, other relevant plans and projects in the area must also be considered at this stage. This step aims to identify at this early stage any possible significant in-combination effects of the Proposed Development with other such plans and projects on European sites.

A review of the National Planning Application Database was undertaken. The database was then queried for developments granted planning permission within 500m of the Proposed Development within the last three years, these are presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Planning applications granted permission in the vicinity of the Proposed Development.

Planning Ref.	Description of development	Comments
201230	sunroom to side of dwelling, kitchen and utility room extension to rear of dwelling, side window in lieu of door, domestic garage / she with car port and associated works	No potential for in-combination effects given the proposed development will have no emissions to water or air that could affect the European sites located over 4km downstream.
201250	single storey detached garage (60.m.sq.) located to the north of the dwelling and associated driveway and site works	No potential for in-combination effects given the proposed development will have no emissions to water or air that could affect the European sites located over 4km downstream.
20191	importation of topsoil and subsoil for the purposes of creating a spectator viewing embankment to the north of the main playing pitch and the provision of an underage training area to the west of the grounds	No potential for in-combination effects given the proposed development will have no emissions to water or air that could affect the European sites located over 4km downstream.
20306	dwelling as constructed on site which was granted under planning ref 18/10, the changes include change of roof material from metal to black slate and roof angle, removal of attic room and roof, lowering of level of first	No potential for in-combination effects given the proposed development will have no emissions to water or air that could affect the European sites located over 4km downstream.

Planning Ref.	Description of development	Comments
	floor level floor and windows on first floor level and associate works	
20373	demolition of existing dwelling, garage and sheds, and proposed new replacement dwelling, garage, storage shed and gym, revised entrance and roadside boundary, revised site boundaries and associated works	No potential for in-combination effects given the proposed development will have no emissions to water or air that could affect the European sites located over 4km downstream.
20386	single storey extension to side of dwelling and associated works	No potential for in-combination effects given the proposed development will have no emissions to water or air that could affect the European sites located over 4km downstream.
20597	1) dwelling house as constructed and 2) permission for garage / garden store	No potential for in-combination effects given the proposed development will have no emissions to water or air that could affect the European sites located over 4km downstream.
20885	demolition of existing house, granny flat and workshop and the erection of 1 no. 2 storey terrace containing 4 no. 3-bedroom houses and 1 no. 4-bedroom house and also 1 no. 2 storey terrace containing 1 no. 4-bedroom house, 2 no. 3-bedroom houses and 1 no. 2-bedroom house and all associated siteworks and drainage connections etc.	No potential for in-combination effects given the proposed development will have no emissions to water or air that could affect the European sites located over 4km downstream.
211366	construction of a new detached dormer dwelling together with a new on-site waste water treatment system to current EPA standards, on-site surface water attenuation and a new site entrance and driveway, including all associated site works	No potential for in-combination effects given the proposed development will have no emissions to water or air that could affect the European sites located over 4km downstream.
21484	extension to existing garage, consisting of 1) work from home office for personal use only 2) and all associated site works	No potential for in-combination effects given the proposed development will have no emissions to water or air that could affect the European sites located over 4km downstream.
21795	alterations and extension to front and side of existing dwelling and all associated ancillary site works and services	No potential for in-combination effects given the proposed development will have no emissions to water or air that could affect the European sites located over 4km downstream.
221065	existing single storey side extension conservatory to existing two storey detached house as constructed and all associated site works	No potential for in-combination effects given the proposed development will have no emissions to water or air that could affect the European sites located over 4km downstream.
221144	4 no., 4 bedroom detached dwellings ranging in size from c.174sqm-c.189sqm each with private rear gardens and patios.	No potential for in-combination effects given the proposed development will have no emissions to water or air that could affect the European sites located over 4km downstream.
221201	conversion of existing garage with single storey extension to rear along with new window in North East façade in rear bedroom	No potential for in-combination effects given the proposed development will have no emissions to water or air that could affect the European sites located over 4km downstream.
221323	1. new 110sqm extension to provide a glazed display area fronting onto the R764 public road, 2. relocation of public entrance to building, 3. new car parking facility, 4. provision of new vehicular entrance off R764	No potential for in-combination effects given the proposed development will have no emissions to water or air that could affect the European sites located over 4km downstream.

Planning Ref.	Description of development	Comments
	public road to create a new 'in-out' system for item 3 above, 5. all associated signage, 6. connection to all public services	
22783	the construction of a single storey side extension conservatory to existing detached dormer house and all associated site works	No potential for in-combination effects given the proposed development will have no emissions to water or air that could affect the European sites located over 4km downstream.
SH202003	the provision of 133 residential units comprising 117 no. terraced, detached and semi-detached two storey houses (21 no. two bed units, 48 no. three bed units and 48 no. 4 bed units); 16 duplex apartments in 2 no. three storey blocks (8 no. two bed and 8 no. three bed apartments). Associated infrastructure site and drainage works include foul and surface water drainage, 2 no. attenuation tanks: 263 no. car parking spaces, 4 no. bin and cycle stores, 1 no. bin store, 2 no. ESB substations. The proposal includes all other landscaping, servicing and associated works above and below ground.	This project has been screened for likely significant effects to the Natura 2000 network under the appropriate methodology. Based on the conservation objectives of the SAC and SPA within the project's zone of influence, it has found that no significant effects are likely to arise, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects to either the Murrough SAC or SPA. This conclusion is based upon best scientific evidence. No mitigation measures are relied upon to make this assessment.

The Wicklow County Development Plan in complying with the requirements of the Habitats Directive requires that all Projects and Plans that could affect the Natura 2000 sites in the same potential Zone of Influence of the Proposed Development site would be initially screened for Appropriate Assessment and if requiring Stage 2 AA, that appropriate employable mitigation measures would be put in place to avoid, reduce or ameliorate negative impacts. In this way any, in-combination impacts with Plans or Projects for the proposed development area and surrounding townlands in which the proposed development site is located, would be avoided.

The listed developments have been granted permission in most cases with conditions relating to sustainable development by the consenting authority in compliance with the relevant Local Authority Development Plan and in compliance with the Local Authority requirement with regard to the Habitats Directive. The development cannot have received planning permission without having met the consenting authority requirement in this regard.

There are no predicted in-combination effects given that it is predicted that the Proposed Development will have no effect on any European site.

Any new applications for the Proposed Development area will be assessed on a case by case basis *initially* by Wicklow County Council which will determine the requirement for AA Screening as per the requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.

6. Conclusion

There is no direct connectivity to the Vartry River or to any European sites within or outside the potential Zone of Influence.

There are no predicted effects on any European sites given:

- The distance between the Proposed Development and any European Sites, over 4 river km downstream;
- The Proposed Development is to be connected to the existing public sewer network for the treatment of wastewater.
- There are no predicted emissions to air, water or the environment during the construction or operational phases that would result in significant effects.

It has been objectively concluded by Moore Group Environmental Services that:

1. The Proposed Development is not directly connected with, or necessary to the conservation management of the European sites considered in this assessment.
2. The Proposed Development is not likely to either directly or indirectly significantly affect the Qualifying interests or Conservation Objectives of the European sites considered in this assessment.
3. The Proposed Development, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, is not likely to have significant effects on a European site.
4. It is possible to conclude that significant effects can be excluded at the screening stage.

It can be *excluded*, on the basis of objective information, that the Proposed Development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

An appropriate assessment is not, therefore, required.

A final determination will be made by the competent authority in this regard.

7. References

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European Commission (2018) Managing Natura 2000 sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC.

European Commission (2021) Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, Brussels 28.9.21.

European Commission (2021) Guidance document on the strict protection of animal species of Community interest under the Habitats Directive, Brussels 12.10.21.

NPWS (2019) The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin.

NPWS (2024) National Parks and Wildlife Service Metadata available online at <https://www.npws.ie/maps-and-data>

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