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Appropriate Assessment Stage 1: Screening

Passlands Bridge (KE-R424-B-010) repair at Monasterevin, Co. Kildare.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Flynn Furney Environmental Consultants have been appointed to provide the information necessary to allow the competent authority to conduct an Article 6(3) Screening for Appropriate Assessment for the proposed maintenance of the Passlands bridge (KE-R424-B-010) in Monasterevin, Co. Kildare. A full description of the proposed works is given in Section 2 below.

Screening for Appropriate Assessment is required under Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive). This Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been prepared in accordance with the European Commission's Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological Guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2021) and Managing Natura 2000 Sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2018) as well as the Department of the Environment's Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG, 2010).

1.2 Relevant Legislation and overall Screening Methodology

The methodology for this screening statement is set out in a document prepared for the Environment DG of the European Commission entitled 'Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6*(3)* and 6*(4)* of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC' *(European Commission, 2019, amended 2021)*. This report and any contributory fieldwork were carried out in accordance with guidelines given by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government *(2009, amended 2010)*.

The process is given in Articles 6*(3)* and 6*(4)* of the Habitats Directive and is commonly referred to as 'Appropriate Assessments' *(which in fact refers to Stage 2 in the sequence under the Habitats Directive Article 6 assessment)*. Article 6 of the Habitats Directive sets out provisions which govern the conservation and management of Natura 2000 sites. Articles 6*(3)* and 6*(4)* of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-

making tests for plans and projects likely to affect Natura 2000 sites *(Annex 1.1)*. Article 6*(3)* establishes the requirement for Appropriate Assessment:

"Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the (Natura 2000) site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subjected to 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 implication 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."

Article 6*(4)* of the same directive states:

"If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of social or economic nature, the Member State shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted. Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest."

It is the responsibility of the proponent of the plan or project to provide the relevant information *(ecological surveys, research, analysis etc.)* for submission to the 'competent national authority'. Having satisfied itself that the information is complete and objective, the competent authority will use this information to screen the project, i.e. to determine if an AA is required and to carry out the AA, if one is deemed necessary. The competent authority shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned. The appropriate assessment process has four stages. Each stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required. If, for example, the conclusions at the end of Stage One are that there will be no significant impacts on the Natura 2000 site, there is no requirement to proceed further. The four stages are:

1. Screening to determine if an appropriate assessment is required.
2. Appropriate assessment
3. Consideration of alternative solutions
4. Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest/Derogation

Table 1: The stages of AA.

Stage 1: Screening for AA
The aim of screening is to assess firstly if the plan or project is directly connected with or necessary to the management of Designated Site*(s)*; or in view of best scientific knowledge, if the plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, is likely to have a significant effect on a Designated Site. This is done by examining the proposed plan or project and the conservation objectives of any Designated Sites that might potentially be affected. If screening determines that there is potential for significant effects or there is uncertainty regarding the significance of effects then it will be recommended that the plan or project is brought forward to the next stage of the AA process.
Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment
The aim of stage 2 of the AA process is to identify any adverse impacts that the plan or project might have on the integrity of relevant Designated Sites. As part of the assessment, a key consideration is 'in combination' effects with other plans or projects. Where adverse impacts are identified, mitigation measures can be proposed that would avoid, reduce or remedy any such negative impacts and the plan or project should then be amended accordingly, thereby avoiding the need to progress to Stage 3.
Stage 3: Assessment of Alternative Solutions
If it is not possible during Stage 2 of the AA process to conclude that there will be no adverse effects on site integrity, Stage 3 of the process must be undertaken which is to objectively assess whether alternative solutions exist by which the objectives of the plan or project can be achieved. Explicitly, this means alternative solutions that do not have adverse impacts on the integrity of a Designated Site. It should also be noted that EU guidance on this stage of the process states that, 'other assessment criteria, such as economic criteria, cannot be seen as overruling ecological criteria' *(EC, 2002)*. In other words, if

alternative solutions exist that do not have adverse impacts on Designated Sites; they should be adopted regardless of economic considerations. This stage of the AA process should result in the identification of the least damaging options for the plan or project.
Stage 4: Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI)/Derogation
This stage of the AA process is undertaken when it has been determined that a plan or project will have adverse effects on the integrity of a Designated Site, but that no alternatives exist. At this stage of the AA process, it is the characteristics of the plan or project itself that will determine whether or not the competent authority can allow it to progress. This is the determination of 'overriding public interest'. It is important to note that in the case of Designated Sites that include in their qualifying features 'priority' habitats or species, as defined in Annex I and II of the Directive, the demonstration of 'overriding public interest' is not sufficient and it must be demonstrated that the plan or project is necessary for 'human health or safety considerations'. Where plans or projects meet these criteria, they can be allowed, provided adequate compensatory measures are proposed. Stage 4 of the process defines and describes these compensation measures.

1.3 Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

This report provides stage one: screening for appropriate assessment. It aims to establish whether a plan or project is likely to have any significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites. The study is based on a preliminary impact assessment using both publicly available data and data collected during site visits and ecological surveys. This is followed by a determination of whether there is a risk that the effects identified could significantly impact any Natura 2000 sites, and if an AA is required. The need to apply the precautionary principle in making any key decisions in relation to the tests of AA has been confirmed by the European Court of Justice case law. Therefore, where significant effects are likely, possible or uncertain at the screening stage, AA will be required.

1.4 Reference Documents

The following relevant documents were considered in preparation of this report.

Table 2: Reference Documents.

Name / Number	Description
Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities	National guidance on Appropriate Assessment for planning authorities. Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, (2010 revision)
Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities	Circulars issued by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government with guidance relating to Appropriate Assessment. Circular NPWS 1/10 & PSSP 2/10 (2010)
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	The guidance within this document provides a non-mandatory methodology for carrying out assessments required under Articles 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive European Commission Environment Directorate-General, (2001 and updates April 2015 and September 2021).
Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC	Publication to the Member States with an interpretation of certain concepts in Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. EC Environment Directorate-General (2018)
Communication from the Commission on the precautionary principle.	Publication relating to the use of the precautionary principle. European Commission (2000)
Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management. Practice Note PN01.	Publication from the Office of the Planning Regulator relating to screening for Appropriate Assessment. OPR (March 2021)
Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities	National guidance on Appropriate Assessment for planning authorities. Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, (2010 revision)

Name / Number	Description
Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities	Circulars issued by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government with guidance relating to Appropriate Assessment. Circular NPWS 1/10 & PSSP 2/10 (2010);
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	The guidance within this document provides a non-mandatory methodology for carrying out assessments required under Articles 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive European Commission Environment Directorate-General, (2001 and updates April 2015 and September 2021).
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Communication from the Commission on the precautionary principle.	Publication relating to the use of the precautionary principle. European Commission (2000)

1.5 Statement of Authority

Flynn Furney EC have over 20 years of experience working on national infrastructure projects (including roads, drainage & sewerage schemes) and community-based projects. Provided services include Ecological Impact Assessments (EcIAs), Appropriate Assessment (AA), Ecological Surveys, On-site Ecology, Site Supervision & Management Plans, with extensive experience in consulting on planning and design for greenways and other walking and cycling trails, and in preparing Biodiversity Action Plans.

The field assessment survey was undertaken by C. Doyle BSc., who has several years' experience in the area of habitat mapping and AA screening, and M. Ragusa MSc. on the 15th of March 2024. This report has been prepared by M. Ragusa MSc. and C. Doyle.

2 Description of Proposed Works

The project involves the rehabilitation of the Passlands Bridge (KE-R424-B-010) over the River Barrow (IE_EA_07B040400). Proposed works on the bridge are likely as follows:

- **Repointing:** Removal of deteriorated mortar from the joints between the bricks or stones and refilling them with new mortar.
- **Crack Repair:** Methods may include injecting cracks with epoxy or installing tie rods or steel plates to reinforce the affected area.
- **Stone Replacement:** Damaged or eroded stones are removed and replaced with new stones that match the originals in terms of size, material, and appearance.
- **Addressing Any Water Issues:** Water seepage can be tackled by repairing cracks, clearing drainage channels, and applying waterproofing materials. Vegetation growth on the bridge should also be removed as it can trap moisture and damage the masonry.
- **Metal Component Repairs:** Metal bridge railings, expansion joints, and other components may require repair or replacement to ensure safety and functionality.

The main structural problem requiring repairs is the Masonry repairs needed for the damaged section of the upstream parapet and stitching repairs is required for the adjacent cutwater. Photographs of the bridge in the damaged sections are shown in the Appendix A.

3 Methodology

3.1 Desk Study

A desktop study was carried out as part of this screening process. This included a review of available literature on the site and its immediate environs. Sources of information included the National Parks and Wildlife Service databases on protected sites and species data, and from the Environmental Protection Agency on watercourses.

3.2 Data Used to Carry Out the Assessment

The following sources of data were employed:

- Environmental Protection Agency *(EPA)* Appropriate Assessment Tool
- EPA Maps (to identify watercourses, hydrology and Natura 2000 site boundaries)
- NPWS protected species database and online mapping
- National Biodiversity Data Centre
- Inland Fisheries Ireland
- An Bord Pleanála's online database

3.3 SPR Model

This assessment was carried out with regard to the source-pathway-receptor (SPR) approach, a standard tool in environmental assessment. The SPR concept in ecological impact assessment relates to the idea that for the risk of an impact to occur, a source is needed (a development site); an environmental receptor is present (SPA SAC); and finally, there must be a pathway between the source and the receptor (a watercourse linking the development site to the SPAs/SACs). Even though there might be a risk of an impact occurring, that does not necessarily mean that it will occur, and even if it does occur, it may not be significant. Identification of a risk means that there is a possibility of ecological or environmental damage occurring, with the level and significance of the impact depending upon the nature and exposure to the risk and the characteristics of the receptor.

In this instance, the most relevant receptors are any relevant Natura 2000 sites with connectivity to the proposed works. These were considered during the desktop study stage of this screening assessment in order to assess the potential for significant effects upon their Qualifying Interests *(QIs)*, Sites of Community Importance *(SCIs)* and Conservation Objectives *(COs)*. This stage of the process is used to determine whether any of the Natura sites may be 'screened out'. That is, that they can be regarded as not being relevant to the process, having no potential to be significantly affected or impacted upon.

3.4 Field Survey

The field survey was carried out on March 15, 2024. Baseline ecological conditions were assessed. Where applicable, the habitat types were recorded (Smith et al., 2011; Scannell & Synnott, 1987; Wyse Jackson et al., 2016). Habitats were classified, and dominant plant species were noted according to the guidelines given by the JNCC (2010) with reference to Smith et al. (2011) and Scannell and Synnott *(1987)*.

4 Results

4.1 Desk Study

4.1.1 Surface and Groundwater

The bridge proposed for repairs is situated within the Barrow Catchment (Catchment ID: 14), Barrow Subcatchment (Subcatchment ID: 14_20). The KE_R424_B_010 bridge is located over the Barrow_90 River (IE_SE_14B011000) and has an overall WFD status of 'Poor' based on the 'Surface Waterbody WFD Status 2016-2022' and is considered 'At Risk' by the 'Surface Waterbody WFD Risk 2016-2022'. The ground waterbody (code: IE_SE_G_048) in the area has an overall WFD status of 'Good' based on the 'Ground Waterbody WFD Status 2016-2021'. The groundwater vulnerability within the area of the works is classified as 'Not at risk'. The river is also considered Nutrient Sensitive, given the agricultural activities and farmlands surrounding the area.

4.2 Field Study Results

4.2.1 Habitat Assessment

Annex I habitats, identified as of utmost conservation importance under the Habitats Directive, receive legal protection within the Irish framework through the transposition of the Directive into national law, primarily under the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations (S.I. 94 of 1997), which mandates the designation and conservation of Special Areas of Conservation to safeguard these critical habitats. The surrounding habitat is typical of agricultural and urban landscapes with Agricultural grassland (GA1), Hedgerows (WL1) and Built Environment (BL3). None of these habitats have links to the Annex I Habitats

Directive.

4.2.2 Significance of Habitats

There are no habitats listed on Annex I of Directive 92/43/EEC (Habitats Directive) within the survey area. No species of rare, threatened or protected species of plants as per the Red Data List (Wyse Jackson et al., 2016) and no species listed on the Flora (Protection) Order 2022 were present.

4.2.3 Invasive Species

The European Union Regulation (No. 1143/2014) on Invasive Alien Species (IAS) lists 37 species (23 animals and 14 plants) whose potential adverse impacts are such that concerted action across Member States is required. Member States are required to provide for early detection and eradication of these species and must manage those species already widespread within their jurisdiction. The EU recently updated its list of invasive alien species of Union concern. The Convention on Biological Diversity defines Invasive Alien Species (IAS) as "a species that is established outside of its natural past or present distribution, whose introduction and/or spread threatens biological diversity". No invasive species were observed in the proximity of the bridge at the time of the survey.

5 Identification of the European Sites within the Likely Zone of Impact

The following methodology was used to establish which European Sites are within the Likely Zone of Impact of the proposed development:

- The most recent Geographic Information System (GIS) spatial datasets for designated European sites and water catchments were acquired from the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) website (www.npws.ie) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) website (www.epa.ie). These datasets were employed to discern European Sites susceptible to potential impacts from the Proposed Development.
- An investigation into the work site characteristics and the risks to the environment with consideration for the potential zone of impact was carried out to determine all probable pathways

and risks to site conservation.

- A source-pathway-receptor model was utilised to identify European Sites within a 15km radius of the development site, providing contextual information on these sites based on site-specific conservation objectives. The assessment also considered European Sites beyond the 15km radius, employing a source-pathway-receptor approach to identify potential impacts. Hydrological catchment mapping facilitated the evaluation of potential hydrological connectivity between the Proposed Development site and European Sites.
- For Special Protection Areas (SPAs), lacking specific European or Irish guidance, the 'Assessing Connectivity with Special Protection Areas (SPA)' guidance from Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) (2016) was consulted.

All pertinent European Sites are considered, identifying those within the likely Zone of Impact. This screening assessment evaluates direct and indirect impacts of the Proposed Development, considering size and scale, land-take, distance, resource requirements, emissions, excavation, transportation, and construction/operation duration. Site synopses and conservation objectives from the NPWS website were reviewed as of the report's preparation.

5.1. Works, Site Characteristics and Risks to the Environment

The principal risks posed from the project relate to surface water discharge from the site during the proposed works that may impact the water quality of the receiving environment, leading to likely significant effects (LSE) on any QIs or Site(s) of Community Importance (SCI) species. Possible adverse impacts were identified for the SAC, which will be discussed more in details in the section 5.2.

Table 3: Potential Impacts, Effects and their zone of influence

Potential Impact and Effect	Description	Zone of Influence
Habitat loss and fragmentation	Movement of soil, vegetation removal damages to the riverbanks and loss of adequate burrowing areas (White-clawed crayfish).	Limited to the footprint of the maintenance works
Silt and pollutants runoff into the River Barrow.	Changes in surface water quality, impacts on local species.	Local watercourses or surface water bodies with reasonable overland or hydrological connectivity to the proposed development.
Noise, dust, vibration and or human presence resulting in disturbance.	Direct impact on species reducing their ability to forage or breed.	Limited to the proximity of the works area.
Spreading of infectious diseases to native species	Spreading of crayfish plague and decline in native, White-clawed Crayfish. It will also create over-competition with non-native crayfish species.	Further downstream and to other water bodies if the equipment that comes/has previously come into contact with water is not disinfected.

5.2 European Sites with the Potential to be Significantly Affected

The proposed works area is situated within the River Barrow and River Nore SAC, which will be discussed in more detail in the following sections. The potential Impacts are summarised in Table 4.

5.2.1 River Barrow and River Nore SAC (002162)

This site encompasses the freshwater stretches of the Barrow and Nore River catchments, extending from the Slieve Bloom Mountains to the tidal elements and estuary down to Creadun Head in Waterford. The site is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for the following Qualifying Interests (QIs) listed under the E.U. Habitats Directive:

- Estuaries [1130]
- Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]
- Reefs [1170]
- Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]
- Atlantic salt meadows (*Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae*) [1330]
- Mediterranean salt meadows (*Juncetalia maritimi*) [1410]
- Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation [3260]
- European dry heaths [4030]
- Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels [6430]
- Petrifying springs with tufa formation (*Cratoneurion*) [7220]
- Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles [91A0]
- Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and Fraxinus excelsior (*Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae*) [91E0]
- Desmoulin's Whorl Snail (*Vertigo moulinsiana*) [1016]
- Freshwater Pearl Mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*) [1029]
- **White-clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*) [1092]**
- Sea Lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*) [1095]
- **Brook Lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*) [1096]**
- **River Lamprey (*Lampetra fluviatilis*) [1099]**
- **Twaite Shad (*Alosa fallax fallax*) [1103]**
- **Salmon (*Salmo salar* Salmon) [1106]**
- **Otter (*Lutra lutra*) [1355]**
- Killarney Fern (*Trichomanes speciosum*) [1421]

Species in bold have been identified as at risk due to the proposed works.

Existing threats to the river include high inputs of nutrients into the river system from agricultural run-off and several sewage plants, over-grazing within the woodland areas, and invasion by non-native species, for example, Cherry Laurel and Rhododendron. The water quality of the site remains vulnerable. Capital and

maintenance dredging within the lower reaches of the system pose a threat to migrating fish species such as lamprey and shad. Land reclamation also poses a threat to the salt meadows and the populations of legally protected species therein. Although no Annex I Habitats are located within the footprint of the works, it is

Table 4 Summary of the Natura 2000 sites in the proximity of the proposed Greenway works and potential impacts.

Natura 2000 site name	**Code**	**Potential Impacts**	**Likeliness of Impact**
River Barrow SAC	002162	Silt and pollutants runoff. Spread of invasive species.	Moderately likely to likely if no mitigation is put in place.

Given the nature of the proposed works, most of these QIs for the site will not be affected because they are at a significant distance from the bridge. However, there are still potential impacts that could negatively affect the aquatic QIs species:

- Releasees of any sediment/fines to the watercourse could negatively impact gravel spawning beds and water quality that are important to the above species in bold, namely Freshwater Pearl Mussels, fish species, and the Otter that feeds on them. No Otter holts or evidence thereof was found during the survey, though they are likely present in the river system.
- The Crayfish plague is a highly infectious disease caused by the water mould *Aphanomyces astaci*, which severely affects the native White-clawed crayfish. Originating from non-native crayfish species, the disease is almost always fatal to native species. It spreads rapidly through water, direct contact, and contaminated equipment, with infected crayfish dying within days to weeks. The spread of crayfish plague can lead to a significant decline in native white-clawed crayfish populations and create over-competition with non-native crayfish species. The disease can further spread downstream and to other water bodies if equipment that comes into contact with infected water is not properly disinfected.
- Habitat loss and fragmentation, caused by activities such as the movement of soil and damage to

riverbanks, can significantly impact the white-clawed crayfish (QI). These actions could lead to the loss of adequate burrowing areas within the footprint of the maintenance works. Moreover, silt and pollutants runoff into the River Barrow can degrade surface water quality, which can affect the white-clawed crayfish, which rely on clean, well-oxygenated waters. The effects of such runoff are especially concerning for local watercourses or surface water bodies, given the sensitivity of the river barrow to both pollutants and silt overload and its poor water quality (WDF Q-value: 3)

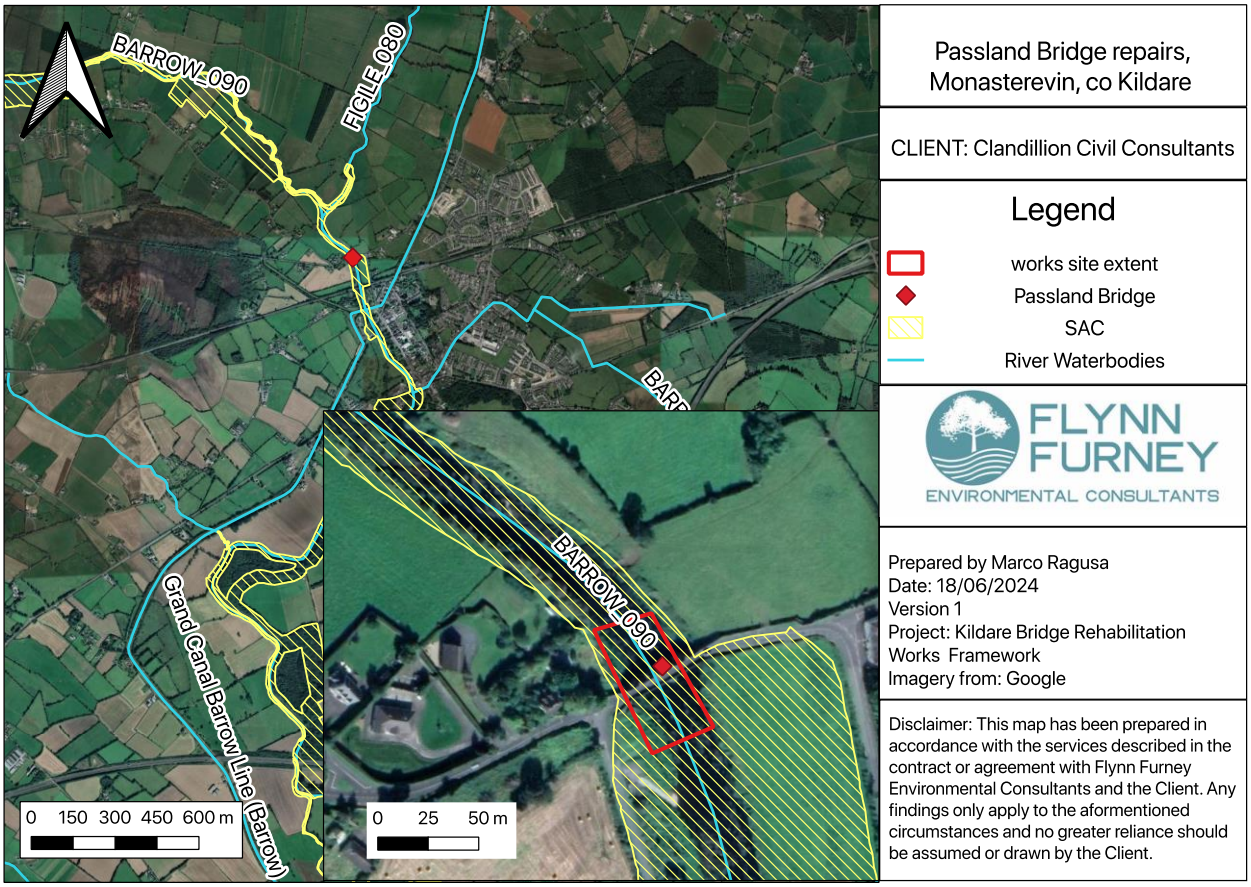

Figure 1. Location of Designated sites in relation to the location of proposed works

6 Assessment Criteria

6.1 Is The Project Necessary to the Management of the Designated Site(s)?

The proposed project is not necessary to or connected with the management of any Designated Sites.

6.2 Possible Direct, Indirect or Secondary Impacts

This report has assessed all impacts (both direct and indirect). The author concludes that significant impacts could be predicted as a result of the proposed development due to the site's sensitivity to pollution and silt runoff and the possible spreading of infectious diseases (Crayfish plague).

6.3 Cumulative and In-Combination Impacts

A search of the Kildare County Council planning registers was carried out on the 19th of June, 2024. Nearby projects were considered for any in combination or cumulative impacts. In the immediate vicinity, there are a few live development projects that have either received approval or are currently under consideration.

(Planning Reference: DZ24A/0017) the planning area is situated 2 km away. The development was registered on 12/01/2024 and plans the development of 8 two-story dwellings (2 and 3-bed, detached, semi-detached, and terraced) within the existing Ferns Bridge development in Monasterevin, County Kildare. This project, on a 0.23-hectare site, includes all associated site development works and follows previous permits under Refs. 15/1104, 21/267, and 15/1041. The development is located at Ferns Walk, Ferns Bridge, and will not have cumulative impacts as it is situated on the banks of the Grand Canal with no connectivity to the SAC.

It is important to note that these projects, while contributing to the local landscape, have no direct connection to each other and other major developing applications near the proposed Greenway are still on holdup to this date (19th of March 2024).

6.4 Conclusion

This report presents the information for the relevant authority, CCC, to carry out a screening for AA. A recommendation that a Stage II is required is made, based on the findings of this assessment. It is for the relevant authority to reach one of the following conclusions:

I. A Stage II AA of the proposed development is required 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 not have a significant effect on any European Designated Sites.

II. A Stage II AA of the proposed development is not required if it *can* be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not have a significant effect on any European Designated Sites.

This report concludes that the proposed development **would** have a significant effect on European Designated Sites and progression to a Stage II appropriate assessment is **required**. Accordingly, having carried out the Stage 1 Appropriate Assessment Screening, the competent authority may determine that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment of the proposed site investigation works is not required as it can be excluded, on the basis of objective scientific information following screening under Regulation 42 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, as amended, that the proposed works, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not have a significant effect on any European site.

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Appendix A: Pictures

Fig no.	Description	Picture
1.	View of the Passlands bridge form upstream (a) and downstream (b).	 

2.	Top of the left bank upstream parapet partially collapsed.	
3.	Crack on the upstream wedge requiring stitching.	

4.	Central Arch and downstream spandrel wall of the bridge.	
5.	Surrounding agricultural landscape with works on the bank (silt fence in place)	

6.	Signs of poaching on the right bank upstream of the bridge.