

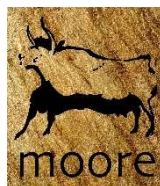
Report for the purposes of Appropriate Assessment Screening

as required under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive
(Council Directive 92/43/EEC)

Wicklow County Enterprise Hub
Wicklow County Campus
Clermont House, Rathnew, Co. Wicklow

Prepared by: Moore Group – Environmental Services

26th November 2019



On behalf of
Wicklow County Council

Project Proponent	Wicklow County Council
Project	Wicklow County Enterprise Hub Wicklow County Campus Clermont House, Rathnew, Co. Wicklow
Title	Report for the purposes of Appropriate Assessment Screening Wicklow County Enterprise Hub Wicklow County Campus Clermont House, Rathnew, Co. Wicklow


Project Number	19285	Document Ref	19285 Wicklow County Enterprise Hub AAS1 Rev0.docx
Revision	Description	Author	Date
Rev0	Issued for client review	G. O'Donohoe 	26 th November 2019
Moore Archaeological and Environmental Services Limited			

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Appendix A – Finding of No Significant Effects Report

Abbreviations

AA	Appropriate Assessment
EEC	European Economic Community
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EU	European Union
GIS	Geographical Information System
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
WFD	Water Framework Directive

1. Introduction

1.1. General Introduction

This Appropriate Assessment screening report has been prepared to support a Part 8 Proposal for the proposed Project. This report contains information required for the competent authority to undertake screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) on the potential for the construction and operation of an Enterprise Hub at Wicklow County Campus, Clermont House, Rathnew, Co. Wicklow (hereafter referred to as the proposed Project) to significantly affect European sites.

Screening is the process that addresses and records the reasoning and conclusions in relation to the first two tests of Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (as amended) (referred to as the Habitats Directive):

- I). whether a plan or project is directly connected to or necessary for the management of the site, and
- II). whether a plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, is likely to have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site in view of its conservation objectives.

Having regard to the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (section 177U and 177V), the purpose of a screening exercise under section 177U of the PDA 2000 is to determine whether it is necessary to carry out an “appropriate assessment” of the implications for a European site of the proposed project. The trigger for the requirement for an “appropriate assessment” is that the project, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, is “likely to have a significant effect” on the European site.

If the effects are deemed to be significant, potentially significant, or uncertain, or the screening process becomes overly complicated, then the process must proceed to Stage 2 (AA). Screening should be undertaken without the inclusion of mitigation. If potential impacts clearly can be avoided through the modification or redesign of the plan or project, then the screening process is repeated on the altered plan or project.

When screening the project, there are two possible outcomes:

- the project poses no risk of a significant effect and as such requires no further assessment; and
- the project has potential to have a significant effect (or this is uncertain) and AA of the project is necessary.

This desktop report has been prepared by Moore Group - Environmental Services for Wicklow County Council and assesses the potential for the proposed Project to impact on sites of European-scale ecological importance in accordance with Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive. The report was compiled by Ger O’Donohoe (B.Sc. Applied Aquatic Sciences (GMIT, 1993) & M.Sc. Environmental Sciences (TCD, 1999)) who has 25 years’

experience in environmental impact assessment and has completed numerous Appropriate Assessment Screening Reports and Natura Impact Statements on terrestrial and aquatic habitats.

1.2. Legislative Background - The Habitats and Birds Directives

It is necessary that the proposed Project has regard to Article 6 of the Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (as amended) (referred to as the Habitats Directive). This is transposed into Irish Law by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 (S.I. 477) (referred to as the Habitats Regulations).

The Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC 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 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 79/409/EEC and Council Directive 2009/147/EC on the Conservation of Wild Birds), is concerned with the long-term protection and management of all wild bird species and their habitats in the EU. Among other things, the 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.

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas, 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 affect Natura 2000 sites.

Article 6(3) establishes the requirement to screen all plans and projects and to carry out a further assessment if required (Appropriate Assessment (AA)):

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.”*

Article 6(4): *“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 a social or economic nature, Member States 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 the beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest.”*

2. Methodology

The Commission’s methodological guidance (EC, 2002) 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 there are not likely to be significant effects on a Natura 2000 site. Mitigation measures (i.e., measures intended to avoid or reduce the harmful effects of the project on the site concerned) cannot be taken into account at this stage.

Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment: In this stage, there is a consideration of the impact of the project with a view to ascertain whether there will be any adverse effect on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, with respect to the site’s structure and function and its conservation objectives. Additionally, where there are predicted impacts, an assessment of the potential mitigation of those impacts is considered.

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 Project complies fully with the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive and all relevant Irish transposing legislation, Moore Group compiled this report to inform the screening for AA

of the proposed Project to be undertaken by the competent authority to determine if the next stage (Stage 2) of the AA process is required.

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.
- 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 (European Commission Environment Directorate-General, 2001); hereafter referred to as the EC Article Guidance Document.
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC (EC Environment Directorate-General, 2000); hereafter referred to as MN2000.
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2018).

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;
 - Open Street Maps;
 - Digital Elevation Model over Europe (EU-DEM);
 - Google Earth and Bing aerial photography 1995-2019;
- 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 in neighbouring areas;
 - Wicklow County Development Plan 2016-2022

3. Description of the proposed Project

This report presents a screening assessment for the construction and operation of an Enterprise Hub at Wicklow County Campus, Clermont House, Rathnew, Co. Wicklow. The proposed Project is to consist of:

- Alteration and refurbishment of courtyard cottages and conversion to office use. Alterations include formation of additional window openings and enclosing the carriage arch to create a new stairwell;
- Upgrading of storage outbuildings including construction of new roof structure;
- Demolition of redundant farm outbuildings to facilitate construction of new 2 storey office building with main entrance to Enterprise Hub and link element to the refurbished courtyard accommodation.
- Associated services, car parking, hard and soft landscaping;
- Refurbishment of former dormitory at 2nd. floor level of School Block and conversion to office use;
- Refurbishment of former school chapel and conversion to conference centre;
- New foul effluent pumping station to serve Clermont Campus with rising main to the public sewer via adjoining lands; and
- New measures for the management of surface water will be dealt with on site via attenuation and soak pits.

Figure 1 shows the proposed Project location and Figure 2 shows a detailed view of the proposed Project boundary on recent aerial photography. Figure 3 is a plan of the proposed Project.

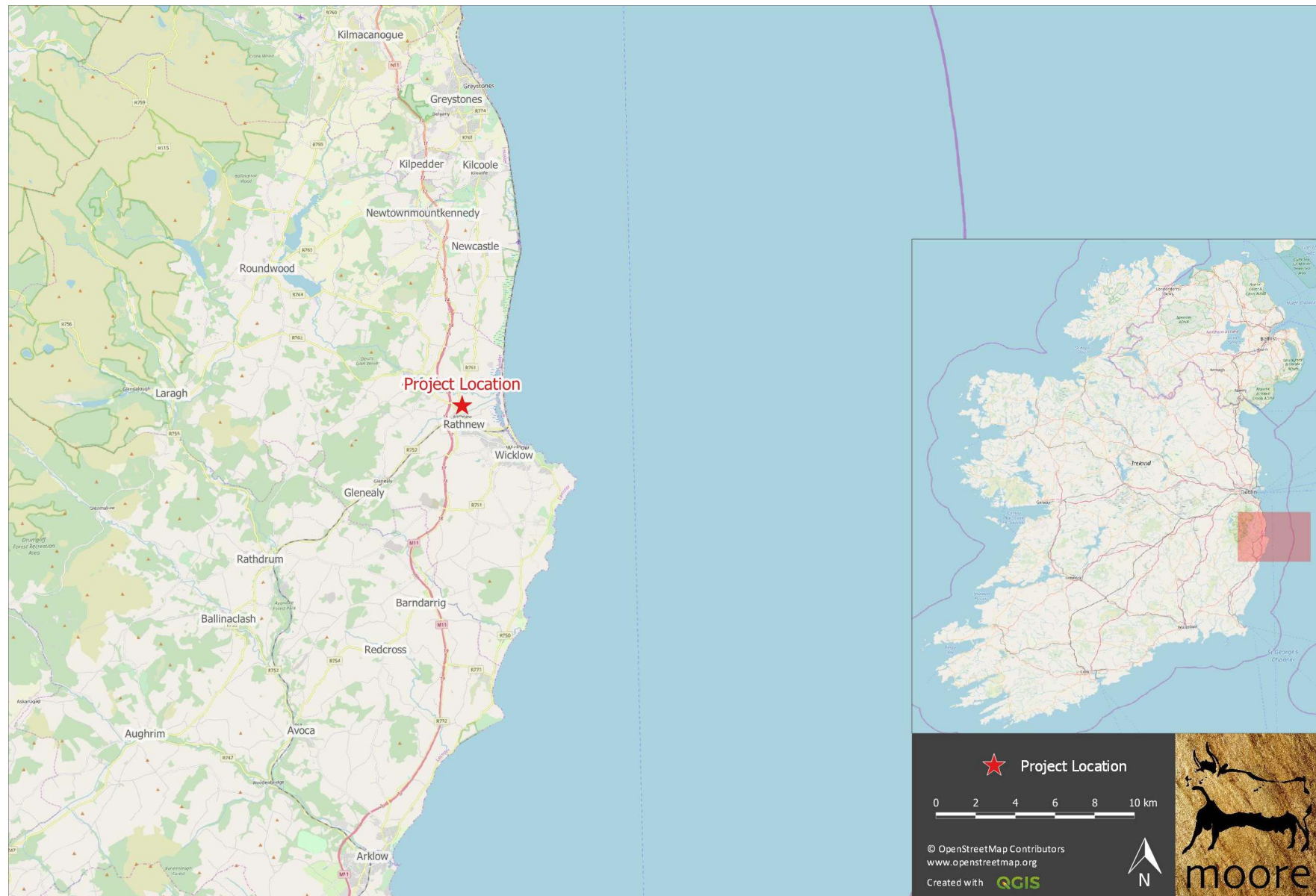


Figure 1. Showing the proposed Project location to the north of Rathnew.



Figure 2. Showing the proposed Project boundary on recent aerial photography.



4. Identification of Natura 2000 Sites

4.1. Description of Natura Sites Potentially Affected

Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2009) Guidance on Appropriate Assessment recommends an assessment of European sites within a zone of impact of 15 km. This distance is a guidance only and the zone of impact has been identified taking consideration of the nature and location of the proposed Project to ensure all European sites with connectivity to it are considered in terms of a catchment-based assessment.

The zone of impact may be determined by connectivity to the proposed Project in terms of:

- Nature, scale, timing and duration of works and possible impacts, nature and size of excavations, storage of materials, flat/sloping sites;
- Distance and nature of pathways (dilution and dispersion; intervening 'buffer' lands, roads etc.); and
- Sensitivity and location of ecological features.

The guidance provides that, at the screening stage, it is necessary to identify the sites and compile information on their qualifying interests and conservation objectives. In preparation for this, the potential for source pathway receptor connectivity is firstly identified and detailed information is then provided on sites with connectivity. European sites that are located within 15 km of the Project are listed in Table 1 and presented in Figures 4 & 5, below. Spatial boundary data on the Natura 2000 network was extracted from the NPWS website (www.npws.ie) on the 26th of November 2019.

Table 1 European Sites located within 15km or the potential zone of impact¹ of the Project.

Site Code	Site name	Distance (km) ²
000716	Carriggower Bog SAC	12.40
000717	Deputy's Pass Nature Reserve SAC	6.84
000719	Glen of The Downs SAC	14.18
000729	Buckroneys-Brittis Dunes and Fen SAC	11.24
000733	Vale of Clara (Rathdrum Wood) SAC	9.41
001766	Magherabeg Dunes SAC	8.15
002122	Wicklow Mountains SAC	11.80
002249	The Murrough Wetlands SAC	0.96
002274	Wicklow Reef SAC	6.00
004040	Wicklow Mountains SPA	13.63

¹ All European sites potentially connected irrespective of the nature or scale of the proposed Project.

² Distances indicated are the closest geographical distance between the proposed Project and the European site boundary, as made available by the NPWS. Connectivity along hydrological pathways may be significantly greater.

Site Code	Site name	Distance (km) ²
004127	Wicklow Head SPA	4.66
004186	The Murrough SPA	0.96

Based on a review of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Water Framework Directive (WFD) catchment data the proposed Project is located on the sub-catchment boundary between the Vartry River, to the north, and Newrath Stream, to the south. These watercourses are located respectively 450 to the north and 150 m to the south of the proposed Project boundary. There is no connectivity between the proposed Project and these watercourses.

The nearest European sites are associated with The Murrough and include The Murrough Wetlands SAC (Site Code 002249) and The Murrough SPA (Site Code 004186), which are located just under 1 km to the east of the proposed Project.

There is no potential for connectivity to any other European sites.

It has been noted that the proposed Project is to include a new foul effluent pumping station to serve Clermont Campus with rising main to the public sewer via adjoining lands and that any surface water is to be attenuated on site.

In light of the above, it is evident that there is no meaningful connectivity to any European sites.

There are no predicted effects on any European sites given:

- The distance between the proposed Project and any European Sites, approximately 1km;
- The lack of connectivity between the proposed Project and any hydrological pathways; there are no watercourses within the proposed Project boundary and there is no connectivity between the proposed Project and the Vartry River, approximately 450 m to the north, or Newrath Stream, approximately 150 m to the south;
- The project is to include a new foul effluent pumping station to serve Clermont Campus with rising main to the public sewer via adjoining lands; and
- New measures for the management of surface water will be dealt with on site via attenuation and soak pits.

Having considered the above, significant effects on any European sites as a result of the proposed Project can be ruled out and potential significant effects on European sites can be excluded at a preliminary screening stage.

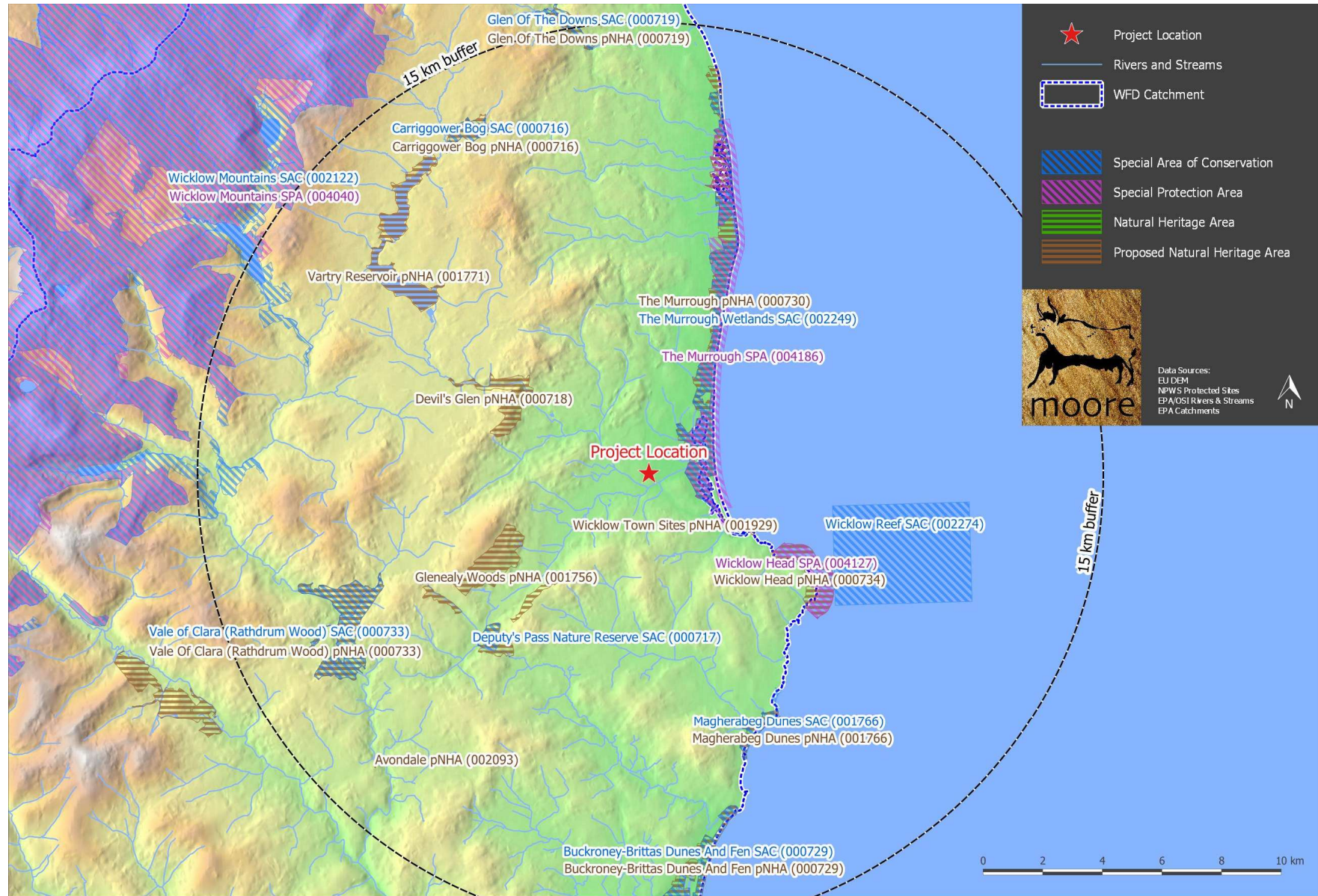


Figure 4. Showing European sites and NHAs/pNHAs within 15 km of the proposed Project.

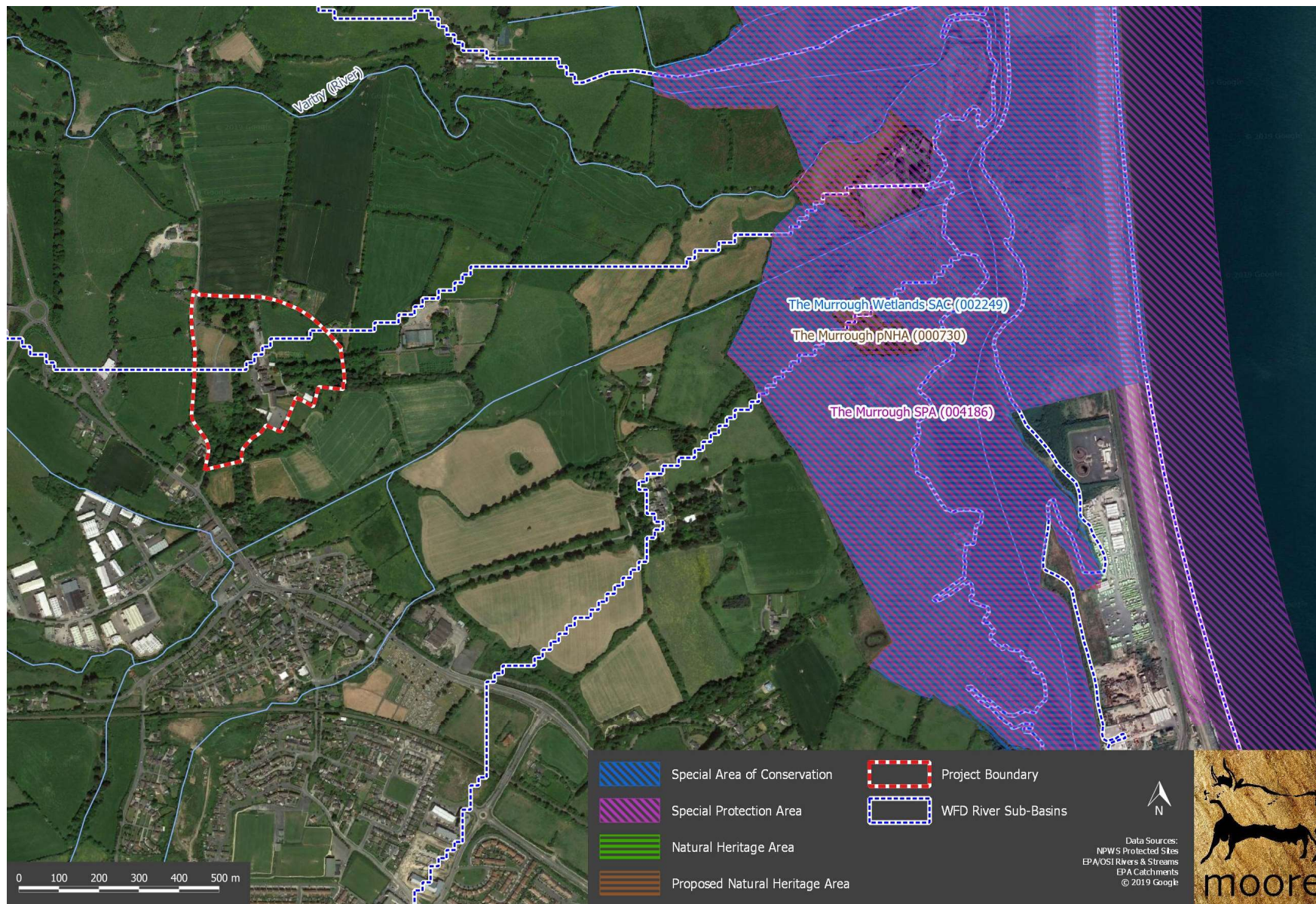


Figure 5. Detail of European sites and NHAs/pNHAs within 15 km of the proposed Project.

4.2. Ecological Network Supporting Natura 2000 Sites

An 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. It was assumed that these supporting roles mainly related to mobile fauna such as mammals and birds which may use pNHAs and NHAs as “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 during the rest of the AA process.

There are no other sites of conservation concern or areas of semi-natural habitat that will be affected by the proposed Project.

5. Identification of Potential Impacts & Assessment of Significance

The proposed Project 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. Potential Impacts

Based on a review of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Water Framework Directive (WFD) catchment data the proposed Project is located on the sub-catchment boundary between the Vartry River, to the north, and Newrath Stream, to the south. These watercourses are located respectively 450 to the north and 150 m to the south of the proposed Project boundary. There is no connectivity between the proposed Project and these watercourses.

The nearest European sites are associated with The Murrough and include The Murrough Wetlands SAC (Site Code 002249) and The Murrough SPA (Site Code 004186), which are located just under 1 km to the east of the proposed Project.

There is no potential for connectivity to any other European sites.

It has been noted that the proposed Project is to include a new foul effluent pumping station to serve Clermont Campus with rising main to the public sewer via adjoining lands and that any surface water is to be attenuated on site.

In light of the above, it is evident that there is no meaningful connectivity to any European sites.

There are no predicted effects on any European sites given:

- The distance between the proposed Project and any European Sites, approximately 1km;
- The lack of connectivity between the proposed Project and any hydrological pathways; there are no watercourses within the proposed Project boundary and there is no connectivity between the proposed Project and the Vartry River, approximately 450 m to the north, or Newrath Stream, approximately 150 m to the south;
- The project is to include a new foul effluent pumping station to serve Clermont Campus with rising main to the public sewer via adjoining lands; and
- New measures for the management of surface water will be dealt with on site via attenuation and soak pits.

Having considered the above, significant effects on any European sites as a result of the proposed Project have been ruled out and potential significant effects on European sites have been excluded at a preliminary screening stage.

5.2. Assessment of Potential In-Combination Effects

Cumulative impacts or effects are changes in the environment that result from numerous human-induced, small-scale alterations. Cumulative impacts 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 Project, 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.

The planning section of the Wicklow County Council website was consulted, and Table 2 presents a list of applications that were granted permission in the vicinity of the proposed Project within the past three years.

Table 2. Recent planning applications to FCC in the locality of the proposed development site.

Planning Ref.	Development	Discussion
161431 / 18784	revisions to new filling station development as granted planning permission under 16/1431. The proposed revisions to the development shall include: revisions to site boundaries as granted so as to extend site area, and incorporating revisions to single storey filling station building location and layout to include retail sales area (100 sqm), food counters and circulation (179 sqm) rest / seating area (82 sqm) back of house (97 sqm) customer toilets and circulation (76 sqm) and associated ancillary areas (106 sqm). Permission is also sought for miscellaneous revisions to site layout including reorientation of canopy and relocation of car wash, all together with associated site works and features as granted under Planning Reg Ref 16/1431 including all ancillary miscellaneous contingent works	Planner's Report - The application site is not located on or within close proximity to a natura 2000 site. The Murrough SPA and the Murrough Wetlands SAC are located c1.5km to east of the site however there does not appear to be streams / watercourses connecting the application site to the designated sites. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would be unlikely to give rise to any adverse impacts on the qualifying interests and conservation objectives of natura sites and therefore the proposed development would not necessitate the carrying out of an Appropriate Assessment in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive
18521	dwelling house, site entrance, access driveway, on site sewage treatment system and ancillary site works	The proposed development was the subject of a site characterisation report and includes a WWTP to be installed in accordance with relevant codes of practice. There are predicted in-combination effects.
161444	1-3 storey village centre scheme (5076 sqm) comprising retail convenience food store, cafe, 26 no dwelling house units, 134 car parking spaces. The development shall also deliver the second phase of the new Rathnew Inner Relief Road (delivered in compliance with Road Objective RP2) comprising a 2 lane 6m carriageway with 2m footpaths, 2m wide cycletracks and 1.5m verge on both sides, the realignment of the R761, the upgrade of the R761 / 772 junction, a new roundabout, new access junction, future dev access junction servicing lands at Clermont Campus. Retail convenience food store (1608 sqm) comprising retail sales floor area (incl alcohol sales area), warehouse, chiller & freezer rooms, loading bay & loading area, internal & external plant space, staff room, meeting room, office, lobby, toilet area, external ESB point, entrance & exit lobbies, overhead building canopy, trolley space, cafe, incl indoor & outdoor seating areas, kitchen area, servery & customer toilet facilities, bin storage, 74 car parking spaces & 74 bicycle parking spaces. 26 no 2 & 3 storey dwelling (10 3 bed units & 16 4 bed units) in the form of 22 no semi detached units & 4 detached units (Types A1, A1A, A1B, A2, A2A, B1, B1A, B1B, C1, C1A & C1B), 60 car parking spaces. 1.7 ha of public open space in form of village square, new woodland areas & kickabout area to south, cycle & pedestrian paths / linkages, landscaping works, incl boundary treatment & retaining wall, pedestrian access points from R761 and R772, partial demolition & rebuilding of existing wall along R761 & R772, internal residential access	The proposed application included an appropriate assessment screening report which concluded that 'Having regard to the scale, location and nature of works associated with the development proposal, we may conclude that there will be no adverse impact on any Natura 2000 site as a result of the proposed development. We do however defer to the consenting Authority on this issue and would welcome the Council screen for the requirement for an Appropriate Assessment.'

Planning Ref.	Development	Discussion
	roads, surface upgrade works, turning circle, service & drainage connections, public lighting and all assoc site dev works	
171053	single storey dwelling house and domestic garage, upgrade of existing site entrance, access driveway, on site sewage treatment system and ancillary site works	Planner's Report - Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development, the nature of the receiving environment, and the fact that there is no direct links between the site and any European site, no Appropriate Assessment issues arise and it is not considered that the proposed development would be likely to have a significant effect individually or in combination with other plans or projects on a European site
181047	finger post sign	There are no predicted in-combination effects given the nature and scale of the proposed development.
181098	modifications to development previously permitted under Reg Ref 16/1444 to consist of (a) the removal of an entrance and exit lobby serving the permitted retail convenience food store (revised GFA 1587 sqm) and associated modifications to elevations (b) reduction in floor area of the permitted café building (revised GFA c199 sqm) and associated modifications to elevations (c) relocated pedestrian connection from R761 serving the café building (d) revised levels/ ramped access arrangements across the site and (e) all associated site development works	Planner's Report - The Rathnew River located to the south of the site runs to The Murrough Wetlands SAC located 1.5km to east. Having regard to the nature, location and scale of the proposed development within a serviced urban area, it is not considered that the proposed development would give rise to any adverse impacts on the qualifying interests and conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 sites.

There are no predicted in-combination effects with the developments in Table 2 given the reasons outlined in the discussion column of the table and given that it is predicted that the proposed Project will have no effect on any European site.

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 zone of impact of the Project 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 development area and surrounding townlands in which the development site is located, would be avoided.

Any new applications for the Project area will be assessed on a case by case basis 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

Based on a review of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Water Framework Directive (WFD) catchment data the proposed Project is located on the sub-catchment boundary between the Vartry River, to the north, and Newrath Stream, to the south. These watercourses are located respectively 450 to the north and 150 m to the south of the proposed Project boundary. There is no connectivity between the proposed Project and these watercourses.

The nearest European sites are associated with The Murrough and include The Murrough Wetlands SAC (Site Code 002249) and The Murrough SPA (Site Code 004186), which are located just under 1 km to the east of the proposed Project.

There is no potential for connectivity to any other European sites.

It has been noted that the proposed Project is to include a new foul effluent pumping station to serve Clermont Campus with rising main to the public sewer via adjoining lands and that any surface water is to be attenuated on site.

In light of the above, it is evident that there is no meaningful connectivity to any European sites.

There are no predicted effects on any European sites given:

- The distance between the proposed Project and any European Sites, approximately 1km;
- The lack of connectivity between the proposed Project and any hydrological pathways; there are no watercourses within the proposed Project boundary and there is no connectivity between the proposed Project and the Vartry River, approximately 450 m to the north, or Newrath Stream, approximately 150 m to the south;
- The project is to include a new foul effluent pumping station to serve Clermont Campus with rising main to the public sewer via adjoining lands; and
- New measures for the management of surface water will be dealt with on site via attenuation and soak pits.

Having considered the above, significant effects on any European sites as a result of the proposed Project have been ruled out and potential significant effects on European sites have been excluded at a preliminary screening stage.

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

1. The proposed Project is not directly connected with, or necessary to the conservation management of the European sites considered in this assessment.
2. The proposed Project is unlikely to indirectly significantly affect the Qualifying interests or Conservation Objectives of the European sites considered in this assessment.
3. The proposed Project, alone or in combination with other projects, is not likely to have significant effects on the European sites considered in this assessment in view of their conservation objectives.
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.

It is the view of Moore Group Environmental Services that it is not necessary to undertake any further stage of the Appropriate Assessment process.

A finding of no significant effects report is presented in Appendix A in accordance with the EU Commission's methodological guidance (European Commission, 2002).

7. References

Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2010) Guidance on Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland (as amended February 2010).

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

European Commission Environment DG (2002) 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. European Commission, Brussels.

European Commission (2007) Guidance document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitats Directive' 92/43/EEC: Clarification of the concepts of: alternative solutions, imperative reasons of overriding public interests, compensatory measures, overall coherence and opinion of the Commission. European Commission, Brussels.

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

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 (2019) National Parks and Wildlife Service Metadata available online at <https://www.npws.ie/maps-and-data>

Appendix A

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS REPORT

Finding no significant effects report matrix

Name of project or plan

Wicklow County Enterprise Hub, Wicklow County Campus, Clermont House, Rathnew, Co. Wicklow

Name and location of the Natura 2000 site(s)

Based on a review of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Water Framework Directive (WFD) catchment data the proposed Project is located on the sub-catchment boundary between the Vartry River, to the north, and Newrath Stream, to the south. These watercourses are located respectively 450 to the north and 150 m to the south of the proposed Project boundary. There is no connectivity between the proposed Project and these watercourses.

The nearest European sites are associated with The Murrough and include The Murrough Wetlands SAC (Site Code 002249) and The Murrough SPA (Site Code 004186), which are located just under 1 km to the east of the proposed Project.

There is no potential for connectivity to any other European sites.

Description of the project or plan

This report presents a screening assessment for the construction and operation of an Enterprise Hub at Wicklow County Campus, Clermont House, Rathnew, Co. Wicklow. The proposed Project is to consist of:

- Alteration and refurbishment of courtyard cottages and conversion to office use. Alterations include formation of additional window openings and enclosing the carriage arch to create a new stairwell;
- Upgrading of storage outbuildings including construction of new roof structure;
- Demolition of redundant farm outbuildings to facilitate construction of new 2 storey office building with main entrance to Enterprise Hub and link element to the refurbished courtyard accommodation.
- Associated services, car parking, hard and soft landscaping;
- Refurbishment of former dormitory at 2nd. floor level of School Block and conversion to office use;
- Refurbishment of former school chapel and conversion to conference centre;
- New foul effluent pumping station to serve Clermont Campus with rising main to the public sewer via adjoining lands; and
- New measures for the management of surface water will be dealt with on site via attenuation and soak pits.

Is the project or plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site(s)

No

Are there other projects or plans that together with the projects or plan being assessed could affect the site

The planning section of the Wicklow County Council website was consulted, and the Table below presents a list of applications that were granted permission in the vicinity of the proposed Project within the past three years.

Planning Ref.	Development	Discussion
161431 / 18784	revisions to new filling station development as granted planning permission under 16/1431. The proposed revisions to the development shall include: revisions to site boundaries as granted so as to extend site area, and incorporating revisions to single storey filling station building location and layout to include retail sales area (100 sqm), food counters and circulation (179 sqm) rest / seating area (82 sqm) back of house (97 sqm) customer toilets and circulation (76 sqm) and associated	Planner's Report - The application site is not located on or within close proximity to a natura 2000 site. The Murrough SPA and the Murrough Wetlands SAC are located c1.5km to east of the site however there does not appear to be streams / watercourses connecting the application site to the designated sites. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would be unlikely to give rise to any adverse impacts on the qualifying interests and conservation objectives of natura sites and therefore the proposed development would not necessitate the carrying out of

Planning Ref.	Development	Discussion
	ancillary areas (106 sqm). Permission is also sought for miscellaneous revisions to site layout including reorientation of canopy and relocation of car wash, all together with associated site works and features as granted under Planning Reg Ref 16/1431 including all ancillary miscellaneous contingent works	an Appropriate Assessment in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive
18521	dwelling house, site entrance, access driveway, on site sewage treatment system and ancillary site works	The proposed development was the subject of a site characterisation report and includes a WWTP to be installed in accordance with relevant codes of practice. There are predicted in-combination effects.
161444	1-3 storey village centre scheme (5076 sqm) comprising retail convenience food store, cafe, 26 no dwelling house units, 134 car parking spaces. The development shall also deliver the second phase of the new Rathnew Inner Relief Road (delivered in compliance with Road Objective RP2) comprising a 2 lane 6m carriageway with 2m footpaths, 2m wide cycletracks and 1.5m verge on both sides, the realignment of the R761, the upgrade of the R761 / 772 junction, a new roundabout, new access junction, future dev access junction servicing lands at Clermont Campus. Retail convenience food store (1608 sqm) comprising retail sales floor area (incl alcohol sales area), warehouse, chiller & freezer rooms, loading bay & loading area, internal & external plant space, staff room, meeting room, office, lobby, toilet area, external ESB point, entrance & exit lobbies, overhead building canopy, trolley space, cafe, incl indoor & outdoor seating areas, kitchen area, servery & customer toilet facilities, bin storage, 74 car parking spaces & 74 bicycle parking spaces. 26 no 2 & 3 storey dwelling (10 3 bed units & 16 4 bed units) in the form of 22 no semi detached units & 4 detached units (Types A1, A1A, A1B, A2, A2A, B1, B1A, B1B, C1, C1A & C1B), 60 car parking spaces. 1.7 ha of public open space in form of village square, new woodland areas & kickabout area to south, cycle & pedestrian paths / linkages, landscaping works, incl boundary treatment & retaining wall, pedestrian access points from R761 and R772, partial demolition & rebuilding of existing wall along R761 & R772, internal residential access roads, surface upgrade works, turning circle, service & drainage connections, public lighting and all assoc site dev works	The proposed application included an appropriate assessment screening report which concluded that 'Having regard to the scale, location and nature of works associated with the development proposal, we may conclude that there will be no adverse impact on any Natura 2000 site as a result of the proposed development. We do however defer to the consenting Authority on this issue and would welcome the Council screen for the requirement for an Appropriate Assessment.'
171053	single storey dwelling house and domestic garage, upgrade of existing site entrance, access driveway, on site sewage treatment system and ancillary site works	Planner's Report - Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development, the nature of the receiving environment, and the fact that there is no direct links between the site and any European site, no Appropriate Assessment issues arise and it is not considered that the proposed development would be likely to have a significant effect individually or in combination with other plans or projects on a European site

Planning Ref.	Development	Discussion
181047	finger post sign	There are no predicted in-combination effects given the nature and scale of the proposed development.
181098	modifications to development previously permitted under Reg Ref 16/1444 to consist of (a) the removal of an entrance and exit lobby serving the permitted retail convenience food store (revised GFA 1587 sqm) and associated modifications to elevations (b) reduction in floor area of the permitted café building (revised GFA c199 sqm) and associated modifications to elevations (c) relocated pedestrian connection from R761 serving the café building (d) revised levels/ ramped access arrangements across the site and (e) all associated site development works	Planner's Report - The Rathnew River located to the south of the site runs to The Murrough Wetlands SAC located 1.5km to east. Having regard to the nature, location and scale of the proposed development within a serviced urban area, it is not considered that the proposed development would give rise to any adverse impacts on the qualifying interests and conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 sites.

There are no predicted in-combination effects with the developments in the above Table given the reasons outlined in the discussion column of the table and given that it is predicted that the proposed Project will have no effect on any European site.

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 zone of impact of the Project 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 development area and surrounding townlands in which the development site is located, would be avoided.

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

THE ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS

Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site.

Based on a review of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Water Framework Directive (WFD) catchment data the proposed Project is located on the sub-catchment boundary between the Vartry River, to the north, and Newrath Stream, to the south. These watercourses are located respectively 450 to the north and 150 m to the south of the proposed Project boundary. There is no connectivity between the proposed Project and these watercourses.

The nearest European sites are associated with The Murrough and include The Murrough Wetlands SAC (Site Code 002249) and The Murrough SPA (Site Code 004186), which are located just under 1 km to the east of the proposed Project.

There is no potential for connectivity to any other European sites.

It has been noted that the proposed Project is to include a new foul effluent pumping station to serve Clermont Campus with rising main to the public sewer via adjoining lands and that any surface water is to be attenuated on site.

In light of the above, it is evident that there is no meaningful connectivity to any European sites.

There are no predicted effects on any European sites given:

- The distance between the proposed Project and any European Sites, approximately 1km;
- The lack of connectivity between the proposed Project and any hydrological pathways; there are no watercourses within the proposed Project boundary and there is no connectivity between the proposed Project and the Vartry River, approximately 450 m to the north, or Newrath Stream, approximately 150 m to the south;

- The project is to include a new foul effluent pumping station to serve Clermont Campus with rising main to the public sewer via adjoining lands; and
- New measures for the management of surface water will be dealt with on site via attenuation and soak pits.

Having considered the above, significant effects on any European sites as a result of the proposed Project have been ruled out and potential significant effects on European sites have been excluded at a preliminary screening stage.

Explain why these effects are not considered significant.

See above

List of agencies consulted: provide contact name and telephone or e-mail address

The requirement for Appropriate Assessment Screening was determined by Wicklow County Council.

Response to consultation

N/A.

DATA COLLECTED TO CARRY OUT THE ASSESSMENT

Who carried out the assessment

Moore Group Environmental Services.

Sources of data

NPWS database of designated sites at www.npws.ie

National Biodiversity Data Centre database <http://maps.biodiversityireland.ie>

Level of assessment completed

Desktop Assessment.

Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed

Wicklow County Council Planning Section.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

Based on a review of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Water Framework Directive (WFD) catchment data the proposed Project is located on the sub-catchment boundary between the Vartry River, to the north, and Newrath Stream, to the south. These watercourses are located respectively 450 to the north and 150 m to the south of the proposed Project boundary. There is no connectivity between the proposed Project and these watercourses.

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In light of the above, it is evident that there is no meaningful connectivity to any European sites.

There are no predicted effects on any European sites given:

- The distance between the proposed Project and any European Sites, approximately 1km;
- The lack of connectivity between the proposed Project and any hydrological pathways; there are no watercourses within the proposed Project boundary and there is no connectivity between the proposed

Project and the Vartry River, approximately 450 m to the north, or Newrath Stream, approximately 150 m to the south;

- The project is to include a new foul effluent pumping station to serve Clermont Campus with rising main to the public sewer via adjoining lands; and
- New measures for the management of surface water will be dealt with on site via attenuation and soak pits.

Having considered the above, significant effects on any European sites as a result of the proposed Project have been ruled out and potential significant effects on European sites have been excluded at a preliminary screening stage.

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

1. The proposed Project is not directly connected with, or necessary to the conservation management of the European sites considered in this assessment.
2. The proposed Project is unlikely to indirectly significantly affect the Qualifying interests or Conservation Objectives of the European sites considered in this assessment.
3. The proposed Project, alone or in combination with other projects, is not likely to have significant effects on the European sites considered in this assessment in view of their conservation objectives.
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.

It is the view of Moore Group Environmental Services that it is not necessary to undertake any further stage of the Appropriate Assessment process.