

SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS- ADVISORY NOTE

The following represents what is expected to be contained in Appropriate Assessment Screening Reports which are submitted in support of planning applications. It represents Carlow County Councils understanding of the current requirements, having regard to case law, national and EU legislation and national and EU guidance documents. However, applicants should have regard, in the first instance, to legislation and guidance documents (National and European) when submitting reports. Applicants should also be familiar with relevant National and European case law, which has clarified aspects of existing legislation.

Screening for Appropriate Assessment should be submitted as a standalone document and should not rely on information contained in other technical reports.

Consultation on report requirements can only take place within the formal planning process, through the Planning Section in writing. It will not be possible to facilitate informal submission of queries or draft reports to the Environment Section for comment.

Details to be addressed include:

- Project details (as per planning application description).
- Project location.
- Site map and location maps which show all watercourses in the vicinity of the proposal and links to the Natura 2000 site(s). Ecological links should be described where these are relevant.
- Identification of all Natura 2000 sites within 15km of the project boundary or otherwise within the Zone of Influence of the project.
- Identification of the relevant Natura 2000 site(s) which may have a Source-Pathway-Receptor (SPR) pathway to the project site.
- Ecological or hydrologic connectivity from the development site to the Natura 2000 site(s) (including distance along SPR pathways).
- Baseline ecological conditions where these are relevant to the Natura 2000 Qualifying Interests.
- Flood zone identification where the application site is within Flood Zone A or B.
- Water Framework 2018 Status and Third-cycle WFD Risk for connection waterbodies (www.catchments.ie).
- Identification of all Qualifying Interests for the identified Natura 2000 site(s) and check if any are within the Zone of Influence of the project as shown in Appendix A (example shown for Slaney River Valley SAC).
- List of Qualifying Interests which are within the Zone of Influence of the project. To include a table listing all such Qualifying Interests, all detailed Conservation Objectives for all QI's (NPWS, 2011 and 2019), Pressures and Threats (NPWS, 2019), key Environmental Conditions and potential impacts from the development. This should include site-specific information on the location of Qualifying Interests in the SAC relative to the application site (for example, where are Alluvial Forests located in the SAC, relative to the application site location). An example is shown in Appendix B.
- List of all project elements which have been examined for relevance to possible effects on the Natura 2000 site (alone or in combination) in the absence of mitigation (such as demolition, wastewater treatment, abstraction, earthworks etc.).
- List of potential changes to the Natura 2000 site arising from reduction in habitat area, disturbance to key species, habitat or species fragmentation, reduction in species density and changes in key indicators of conservation value.

- List of indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects in terms of loss, fragmentation, disruption, disturbance changes to key elements of the site such as water quality.
- Check is the project directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site.
- Check if there are other projects that, together with the project being assessed, could affect the site (in-combination effects).
- Confirmation that mitigation measures have not been considered in the assessment (check there is no implicit mitigation in other technical reports such as CEMP's). Note: if mitigation measures are required a Natura Impact Statement will be required.
- The conclusion where this has been clearly established through the screening assessment should state that there will be no likely significant effects on the identified Natura 2000 site(s) (or that there will be likely significant effects, leading to Appropriate Assessment).

Appendix A: All Qualifying Interests (Example)

| <i>Qualifying Interests (list all)</i> | <i>Location in the Natura 2000 site relative to Application Site</i> | <i>Potential for Impacts from the Development</i> | <i>Listed for Further Examination in Appendix B</i> |
|--|--|---|---|
| <i>1029 Freshwater Pearl Mussel</i> | | | |
| <i>1095 Sea Lamprey</i> | | | |
| <i>1096 Brook Lamprey</i> | | | |
| <i>1099 River Lamprey</i> | | | |
| <i>1103 Twaité Shad</i> | <i>Not present upstream of Clohamon Weir which is *** distant from the development and is outside the zone of influence</i> | <i>None</i> | <i>No</i> |
| <i>1106 Atlantic Salmon</i> | | | |
| <i>1130 Estuaries</i> | | | |
| <i>1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide</i> | | | |
| <i>1355 Otter</i> | | | |
| <i>1365 Harbour Seal</i> | | | |
| <i>3260 Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation</i> | | | |
| <i>91A0 Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles</i> | | | |
| <i>91E0 * Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior</i> | | | |

Appendix B: Qualifying Interests within the Project Zone of Influence (Example)

| <i>Conservation Objectives (NPWS, 2011) (see: note 1)</i> | <i>Threats and Pressures (NPWS, 2019) (See: note 2)</i> | <i>Key Environmental Conditions</i> | <i>Potential Impacts from the Development</i> |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1099 river lamprey | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater than 75% of main stem and major tributaries down to second order accessible from estuary • At least three age/size groups present for brook/river lamprey • Mean catchment juvenile density of brook/river lamprey of at least 2 per sq. metre. • No decline in extent and distribution of spawning habitats • More than 50% of sample sites positive for juvenile habitat availability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hydropower (dams, weirs, run-off-the-river), including infrastructure • Increases or changes in precipitation due to climate change • Application of natural fertilisers on agricultural land • Application of synthetic (mineral) fertilisers on agricultural land • Drainage for use as agricultural land • Shipping lanes, ferry lanes and anchorage infrastructure (e.g. canalisation, dredging) • Temperature changes (e.g. rise of temperature & extremes) due to climate change • Droughts and decreases in precipitation due to climate change | | |

Notes:

Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (2019) *The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland, Volumes 1-3 (note 2).*

Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (2011) *Conservation Objectives Series Slaney River Valley SAC 000781 (note 1).*

Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (2011) *Conservation Objectives Series River Barrow and River Nore SAC 002162 (note 1).*

Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (2019) *Conservation Objectives Series Blackstairs Mountains SAC 000770 (note 1).*