Article 6 (3) Appropriate Assessment Screening Report
Manorhamilton, Public Realm Improvements
Client: Leitrim County Council

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

MKO has been appointed to provide the information necessary to allow the competent authority to conduct an Article 6(3) Screening for Appropriate Assessment of a proposed public realm improvement scheme for the town of Manorhamilton in Co. Leitrim.

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). Where it cannot be excluded that a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, would have a significant effect on a European Site then same shall be subject to an appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives. The current project is not directly connected with, or necessary for, the management of any European Site consequently the project has been subject to the Appropriate Assessment Screening process.

The assessment in this report is based on a desk study and field surveys undertaken during May 2019. It specifically assesses the potential for the proposed development to effects on European sites.


In addition to the guidelines referenced above, the following relevant guidance was considered in preparation of this report:


1.2 Appropriate Assessment

1.2.1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment

Screening is the process of determining whether an Appropriate Assessment is required for a plan or project. Under Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, screening must be carried out by the Competent Authority. As per Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended ‘A screening for
Appropriate Assessment shall be carried out by the competent authority to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if that land use plan or proposed development, individually or in combination with another plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on the European site. The Competent Authority’s determination as to whether an Appropriate Assessment is required must be made on the basis of objective information and should be recorded. The Competent Authority may request information to be supplied to enable it to carry out screening.

Consultants or project proponents may provide for the competent authority, the information necessary for them to determine whether an Appropriate Assessment is required and provide advice to assist them in the Article 6(3) Appropriate Assessment Screening decision.

Where it cannot be excluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt at the Screening stage, that a proposed plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, would have a significant effect on the conservation objectives of a European site, an Appropriate Assessment is required.

Where an Appropriate Assessment is required, the Competent Authority may require the applicant to prepare a Natura Impact Statement.

The term Natura Impact Statement (NIS) is defined in legislation. An NIS, where required, should present the data, information and analysis necessary to reach a definitive determination as to 1) the implications of the plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, for a European site in view of its conservation objectives, and 2) whether there will be adverse effects on the integrity of a European site. The NIS should be underpinned by best scientific knowledge, objective information and by the precautionary principle.

This Article 6(3) Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been prepared in compliance with the provision of section 177U of the Planning & Development Act 2010 as amended.

1.2.2 Statement of Authority

A site visit was carried out by Laoise Kelly [B. Sc. Env.] on the 29th May 2019. Laoise has over four years consultancy experience and is a competent expert in undertaking habitat and ecological assessments. The report was reviewed by Pat Roberts B.Sc. [Env.] MCIEEM.

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1 As defined in Section 177T of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended, an NIS means a statement, for the purposes of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, of the implications of a proposed development, on its own and in combination with other plans and projects, for a European site in view of its conservation objectives. It is required to include a report of a scientific examination of evidence and data, carried out by competent persons to identify and classify any implications for the European site in view of its conservation objectives.
2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Site Location

The proposed public realm improvement works are located within the urban area of Manorhamilton Town. There are three discreet areas for works within the town:

- Public Realm Church Street (Grid Ref to centre of site E188621 N339430)
- Market Square (E188620 N339498). Junction of Main St, New Line, Sligo Road and Castle Street (E188545 N339580).
- Car Park and Exit to Sligo Road (Grid Ref to centre of site E188473 N339576).
- Enterprise Lands (Grid Ref to centre of site E188636 N339864)

These proposed elements are shown in Figure 2.1.

2.2 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

2.2.1 Description of the project

The proposed development can be broken down into 3 constituent elements as outlined in the public notices. The scheme drawings are provided in Appendix 1.

1. To undertake a Public Realm Improvement Scheme within the town centre to enhance the existing streetscapes of Old Church Street from the junction of Commons Lane / Monks Row to the junction of Main Street / Church Lane, the area in front of the Market House (A Protected Structure) on Main Street and the junction of Main Street, Sligo Road / the New Line (N16) and Sráid Sheáin Mhic Dhiarmada. The nature of the Public Realm Improvement Scheme includes, inter alia, the widening of footpaths, introduction of shared surface space at identified locations, to provide enhanced pedestrian crossings, to replace existing road surfaces, to replace existing street lights, the provision of soft and hard landscaping measures, street furniture and to alter the existing on street car parking provision.

2. To provide a public car park to the rear and side of the former’s Priest’s House (Sráid Sheáin Mhic Dhiarmada) with access / exit from the N16 Sligo Road and Sráid Sheáin Mhic Dhiarmada. It is also proposed to set back the boundary wall in front of the Intreo office / Garda station and provide a footpath along the Sligo Road.

3. To realign the existing access road serving the enterprise and employment zoned lands off Park Road inclusive of altering the location of the access, reconfiguring existing car parking areas, extending access road to serve the undeveloped zoned lands to the north east of Merenda Ltd. / The Manor Hub, landscaping and all associated site development works.

The proposed development will also include necessary services and utility provision and associated site works. The site is located within the urban envelop of Manorhamilton (Manorhamilton Land Use Zoning Strategy Leitrim County Development Plan 2015-2021). The site is fully service from a piped water perspective.

2.2.2 Description of the Baseline Ecological Environment

All of the proposed works are located within the urban centre of Manorhamilton Town.

The public realm improvements are located entirely within the existing urban streetscape of Manorhamilton Town at three locations where the habitats include only
Buildings and Artificial Surfaces (BL3) with some small areas of Amenity Grassland (GA2). There are no natural watercourses present and all areas are drained by the existing public storm sewers within the town which will be retained unaltered. The sites of the proposed works are shown in Plates 2.1 – 2.3.

Plate 2.1. Location of proposed works at Old Church Street

Plate 2.2. Market Square area
The works proposed as part of the realignment and reconfiguring of the employment and enterprise lands will all be undertaken on existing car parking, roadways and amenity planting and grasslands. These habitats are classified as Buildings & Artificial Surfaces (BL3), Flowerbeds and Borders (BC4) and Amenity Grassland (GA2) [Plate 2.4]. The works will also include the extension of a short section (approximately 20 metres) of roadway to connect with zoned lands to the north and east. This section of road will be located on the agricultural grasslands that surround the existing enterprise lands.
Plate 2.4. Enterprise Lands where reconfiguration is to be undertaken

The proposed car parking is to be located in an overgrown garden of a property that is known as the Priest’s House and is located within the urban centre of the town. It is surrounded on all sides by Buildings and Artificial Surfaces (BL3) and is dominated by rank overgrown grasses (GS2), garden shrubs, hedges and treelines (WL1 and WL2). A small garage building will be demolished to facilitate the proposed car park. This area is shown in Plate 2.5. This development also includes the setting back of a boundary wall in front of the Garda station and along the Intreo Offices on the Sligo Road.
Plate 2.5. Lands where car park is proposed with Priest’s House and garage to be demolished
3 IDENTIFICATION OF RELEVANT EUROPEAN SITES

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

The most up to date GIS spatial datasets for European designated sites were downloaded from the NPWS website (www.npws.ie) on the Provide Date. Using the GIS software, MapInfo (Version 10.0), European sites within the zone of likely impact of the project were identified. The following rationale was used to identify the Zone of likely impact. Initially, sites within a 15km radius of the proposed development were identified (as per the DoEHLG Guidance [2010]). Any sites within this radius were then assessed to determine which, if any are located within the Likely Zone of Impact of the proposed development. In addition, using the precautionary principle, European Sites located outside the 15km buffer zone were also considered but no pathway for effects on sites outside the 15km buffer distance were identified.

Figure 3.1 shows the location of the proposed development in relation to all European sites within 15km of the proposed development.

Table 3.1 lists all European Sites within 15km and assesses which are within the likely Zone of Impact. The site synopses and conservation objectives of these sites, as per the NPWS website (www.npws.ie), were considered at the time of preparing this report. Details of these sites, including their distance from the proposed development, are provided in Table 3.1.
Figure 3.1 Works in Relation to European Sites

- Manorhamilton Public Realm
- Lough Melvin SAC
- Sligo/Leitrim Uplands SPA
- Arroo Mountain SAC
- Ben Bulben, Gleniff and Glenade Complex SAC
- Glenade Lough SAC
- Lough Gill SAC
- Corratirrim SAC
- Boleybrack Mountain SAC
- Cuilcagh - Anierin Uplands SAC
- Sligo Bay SAC
- Drumcliff Bay SPA
- Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) SAC
- Cummeen Strand SPA
- Sallysadare Bay SAC
- Union Wood SAC

Map Legend
- SPA
- SAC
- Location of Proposed Works

Ordnance Survey Ireland Licence No. AR 0021818 © Ordnance Survey Ireland/Government of Ireland

McCarthy Keville O'Sullivan Ltd., Block 1, G.F.S.C, Moneenageisha Road, Galway, Ireland. Email: info@mccarthykos.ie Tel: +353 (0)91 735611 Fax: +353 (0)91 771279
### Table 3.1 Designated sites within the Likely Zone of Impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>European Sites and distance from proposed development</th>
<th>Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, <a href="http://www.npws.ie">www.npws.ie</a> on the Date)</th>
<th>Conservation Objectives reviewed 18/06/2019</th>
<th>Likely Zone of Impact Determination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lough Gill SAC Adjacent to proposed works at Old Church Street</td>
<td>3150 Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition - type vegetation 6210 Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates [Festuco-Brometalia] [* important orchid sites] 91A0 Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles 91EO Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior [Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae] * 1092 White-clawed Crayfish [Austropotamobius pallipes] 1095 Sea Lamprey [Petromyzon marinus] 1096 Brook Lamprey [Lampetra planer] 1099 River Lamprey [Lampetra fluviatilis] 1106 Salmon [Salmo salar] 1355 Otter [Lutra lutra]</td>
<td>This site has the generic conservation objective: ‘To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitats and/or Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected’</td>
<td>Following the precautionary principle, this European Site is considered to be within the Likely Zone of Impact due to its proximity to the works that are proposed at Old Church Street. This site is within the Likely Zone of Impact and further assessment is required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Sites and distance from proposed development</td>
<td>Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, <a href="http://www.npws.ie">www.npws.ie</a> on the Date 18/06/2019)</td>
<td>Conservation Objectives reviewed 18/06/2019</td>
<td>Likely Zone of Impact Determination</td>
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| Arroo Mountain SAC 4.6km                             | 4010 Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix  
4030 European dry heaths  
4060 Alpine and Boreal heaths  
7130 Blanket bogs (if active bog)  
7220 Petrifying springs with tufa formation [Cratoneurion]*  
8120 Calcareous and calcshist scree of the montane to alpine levels [Thlaspietea rotundifolii]  
8210 Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation | This site has Site Specific Conservation Objectives | This site is located over four kilometres upstream of the proposed works and the qualifying interests are terrestrial in nature. There is no pathway for effect on this European Site as a result of the works proposed. This site is outside the Likely Zone of Impact |
| Boleybrack Mountain SAC 5.7km                        | 3160 Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds  
4010 Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix  
4030 European dry heaths  
6410 Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils [Molinion caeruleae]  
7130 Blanket bogs (if active bog) | This site has Site Specific Conservation Objectives | This site is located over five kilometres upstream of the proposed works with no potential for upstream effects. There is no pathway for effect on this European Site as a result of the works proposed. This site is outside the Likely Zone of Impact |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>European Sites and distance from proposed development</th>
<th>Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, <a href="http://www.npws.ie">www.npws.ie</a> on the Date 18/06/2019)</th>
<th>Conservation Objectives reviewed 18/06/2019</th>
<th>Likely Zone of Impact Determination</th>
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</table>
| Lough Melvin SAC 7.4km | 3130 Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflora and/or Isoeto-Nanojuncetea 6410 Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae) 1106 Salmon (*Salmo salar*) 1355 Otter (*Lutra lutra*) | This site has the generic conservation objective:  ‘To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitats and/or Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected’ | This SAC is in a separate hydrological catchment and is located over 7km from the proposed works. There is no potential pathway for effect on this SAC resulting from the proposed works.  
This site is outside the Likely Zone of Impact |
| Glenade Lough SAC 7.9km | 3150 Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition - type vegetation 1092 White-clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*) 1833 Slender Naiad (*Najas flexilis*) | This site has the generic conservation objective:  ‘To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitats and/or Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected’ | This site is located over seven kilometres upstream of the proposed works with no potential for upstream effects. There is no pathway for effect on this European Site as a result of the works proposed.  
This site is outside the Likely Zone of Impact |
| Benbulben, Gleniff and Glenade Complex SAC 8.1km | 3260 Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitricho-Batrachion vegetation 4010 Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix 4030 European dry heaths 4060 Alpine and Boreal heaths | This site has the generic conservation objective:  ‘To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the Annex I habitats and/or Annex II species for which the SAC has been selected’ | This site is located over eight kilometres upstream of the proposed works with no potential for upstream effects. There is no pathway for effect on this European Site as a result of the works proposed.  
This site is outside the Likely Zone of Impact |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>European Sites and distance from proposed development</th>
<th>Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated</th>
<th>Conservation Objectives reviewed 18/06/2019</th>
<th>Likely Zone of Impact Determination</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, <a href="http://www.npws.ie">www.npws.ie</a> on the Date]</td>
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<tr>
<td>5130 Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands</td>
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<tr>
<td>6210S Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) [* important orchid sites]</td>
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<tr>
<td>6230 Species-rich Nardus grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe)*</td>
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<tr>
<td>6430 Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels</td>
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<tr>
<td>7140 Transition mires and quaking bogs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7220 Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion)*</td>
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<tr>
<td>7230 Alkaline fens</td>
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<tr>
<td>8110 Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (Androsacetalia alpinae and Galeopsietalia ladani)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8120 Calcareous and calcshist screes of the montane to alpine levels (Thlaspietea rotundifolia)</td>
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<tr>
<td>European Sites and distance from proposed development</td>
<td>Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European site has been designated (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, <a href="http://www.npws.ie">www.npws.ie</a>)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8210 Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1013 Geyer’s Whorl Snail (Vertigo geyeri)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1355 Otter (Lutra lutra)</td>
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<td>SPA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sligo/Leirim Uplands SPA</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.5km</td>
<td>A103 Peregrine (Falco peregrinus)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A346 Chough (Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>This site has the generic conservation objective:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests of this SPA</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This SPA is located over 9.5 km from the proposed works and is in a separate surface water catchment. No pathway for effect between the proposed work and this SPA was identified.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>This site is outside the Likely Zone of Impact</strong></td>
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</table>
3.2 Assessment of potential for Significant Effects on European Sites within the Likely Zone of Impact

The only European Site for which any pathway for significant effect was identified was:

- Lough Gill SAC

Following the desk and field surveys that were undertaken, the potential for the proposed works to result in significant effects on this site were further assessed. It is concluded that there are no works within or adjacent to any natural watercourses that could transmit silt, hydrocarbons or any other pollutants from the site of the proposed works and into the SAC. The majority of the works are located within the town itself and are separated from the SAC by urban developments that are serviced by the public storm water network. The only section that is adjacent to the SAC is located on existing public roads and there is no watercourse in the vicinity and thus, no direct connection to the SAC.

In addition to the above, the works proposed are of a nature and scale such that they are similar to the routine maintenance of public realm areas within the town centre or located in areas where they are separated from the SAC by physical barriers so that there is no potential for them to result in significant effects on the SAC.

3.3 Likely Cumulative Impact of the Proposed Works on European Sites, in-combination with other plans and projects

As the works are located entirely within the urban centre of Manorhamilton Town and do not represent a significant change to the existing land use or habitats in the area, there is no significant change to the ecological status of the area. Following, desk and field surveys, it is concluded that no pathway or mechanism for the proposed development to result in any significant effect on any European Site was identified when considered on its own and in the absence of any other developments. It is further concluded that they cannot, therefore, contribute to any such effects when considered cumulatively or in-combination with any other development.
4 **ARTICLE 6(3) APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING STATEMENT AND CONCLUSIONS**


4.1 **Data Collected to Carry Out Assessment**

In preparation of the report, the following sources were used to gather information:

- Review of NPWS Site Synopses, Conservation Objectives for the European Sites
- Review of specially requested records from the NPWS Rare and Protected Species Database for the hectads which overlap with the study area.
- Review of Bird Atlases: [Sharrock, 1976; Lack, 1986; Gibbons et al., 1993; Balmer et al., 2013].
- Review of the Bat Conservation Ireland [BCI] Private Database
- Inland Fisheries Ireland [IFI] Reports
- Review of OS maps and aerial photographs of the site of the proposed project.
- Review of relevant databases including National Biodiversity Ireland Database and available literature of previous surveys conducted in the area.
- Review of other plans and projects within the area.

4.2 **Concluding Statement**

It can be concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt, in view of best scientific knowledge, on the basis of objective information and in light of the conservation objectives of the relevant European sites, that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on any European Site.

As a result, an Appropriate Assessment of the proposed works is not required.
5 BIBLIOGRAPHY


EC (2001) Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Articles 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC.


EC (2007a) 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 interest, compensatory measures, overall coherence, opinion of the


NPWS Protected Site Synopses and maps available on http://www.npws.ie/en/ProtectedSites/.


Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) (July 2013) Assessing Connectivity with Special Protection Areas (SPA)


Appendix 1

Scheme Drawings