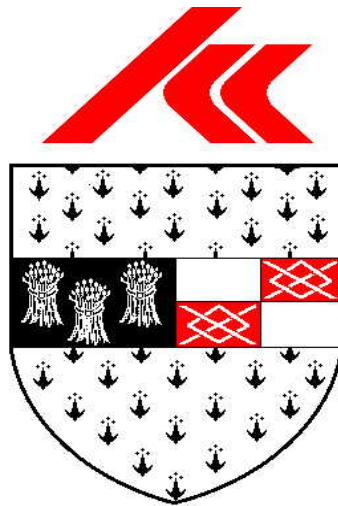


KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL
Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh



**Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act, 1994 as amended by the Public Transport
Regulation Act, 2009 (Section 46)**

EXPLANATORY BOOKLET

Inistioge Traffic Management & Village Enhancement Scheme

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND PRINCIPLE FEATURES

1.0 Brief description of the proposed works

The proposal put forward provides for the following:-

- Public Realm upgrading of the existing streetscape using high quality paving materials;
- Delineation of the Main Street (R700), High Street (L4216) and The Square junction;
- Construction of new footpaths and the introduction of at-grade courtesy crossing points using materials in keeping with historical built-heritage of the village;
- Regularisation and delineation of designated parking bays;
- Provision of ornate street lighting and furniture including seating, bollards and tree guards;
- Landscaping provision with the planting of semi-mature trees at appropriate locations within the paved areas;
- Up-grading of existing road markings and signage.

Refer to proposed drawing layout in Appendix 2.

2.0 Background and reasons for scheme

It was identified in the Inistioge Local Area Plan 2004 that the full potential of the area around The Square was not realised as there is a lack of directional stability and insecurity due to the expanse of tarmac and the existing road pattern. It was also noted there was a lack of definition for the movement of vehicular traffic and for pedestrian movement.

To address the above shortcomings, Kilkenny County Council, as the Project Promoter, proposes to undertake a public realm enhancement and traffic management scheme within the core of the village. These works will complement the refurbishment of the monuments and metal work within the village green and the enhancement works in the green area along the River Nore, both of which will be completed over the summer. The realisation of these projects will further enhance the reputation of Inistioge as one of the finest villages in the South-east which in turn will make for a better living environment for the residents and help promote business & tourism in the area.

The primary aim is to address the above and realise the following benefits on completion of the works:-

- The introduction of additional traffic management measures will remove the current uncertainty with respect to the layout of the High Street junction with the R700 and remove the current hap-hazard parking which fails to utilise the maximum benefit from the space available.
- The village improvements will promote a sense of place, a new pride within the local rural community, encourage tourism in the area and support local

commercial enterprises by making the village a safer, nicer place to visit and live.

- The proposed modifications to the existing kerb-lines to provide defined junctions, footpaths and designated parking along with the introduction of at-grade crossings will reduce traffic speeds through the village. This will ensure safer pedestrian movement within the village and reduce the dominance of motor vehicles over pedestrians.
- The proposed layout will maximise the road space available in terms of parking and pedestrian requirements. Thereby making the area more accessible and convenient for all road users.
- The enhanced delineation of the streetscape using materials sensitive to the historical built heritage of village will showcase the buildings and the green area.
- Improved commercial environment within the village arising from increased foot traffic to local shops and businesses as a result of the new safer pedestrian orientated facilities providing enhanced connectivity along pedestrian desire lines.
- Provision of additional landscaping & planting will improve the visual appearance of the area and compliment the planting in the Square.
- The improvements arising from the scheme will in turn rejuvenate and support the local business & commercial enterprises and will also promote tourism in the area.

3.0 Design Criteria

The scheme shall be designed in accordance with the NRA Design Manual for Roads and Bridges and the DTTAS Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets.

4.0 Funding

Part funding for the project was secured via the Town and Village Renewal Scheme under the Dept. of Rural & Community Development's "Rural Development Investment Programme, Project Ireland 2040. The enhancement works at The Square and river area are also being funded under this scheme.

Unfortunately, the available remaining grant funding is insufficient to cover the full scope of the works prescribed in this document. Thus, it is proposed that elements of the proposal will be completed in a phased basis as funding becomes available. It is intended that priority will be given to the delineation of the R700 / High Street (L4216) junction in this regard.

5.0 Habitats Directive Project Screening Assessment

The Screening for Appropriate Assessment was undertaken by Moore Group – Environmental Services in April 2020, refer to Appendix 3, Planners report also provided.

6.0 Submissions

Submissions or observations with respect to the proposed development dealing with the proper planning and development of the area in which the development will be carried out may be made online at <https://consult.kilkenny.ie>; in writing to Tim Butler, Director of Services, Kilkenny County Council, County Hall, John Street, Kilkenny or sent to the following email address Inistiogevillage@kilkennycoco.ie.

The latest time and date for receipt of submissions on the above scheme is 4pm Friday 10th July 2020. Submissions should be clearly marked **“Inistioge Traffic Management & Village Enhancement Scheme”**.

**T. Butler
Director of Services
Kilkenny County Council
County Buildings
John Street
Kilkenny**

Appendix 1

COPY OF PUBLIC NOTICE



Public Notice in Compliance with the Road Traffic Act, 1994 (Section 38) as amended by the Public Transportation Regulation Act, 2009 (Section 46).

Inistioge Traffic Management & Village Enhancement Scheme

Kilkenny County Council, in exercise of the powers conferred on it under Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act, 1994 as amended by the Public Transport Regulation Act, 2009 (Section 46), hereby gives notice of proposals pertaining to the following development:

- Public Realm upgrading of the existing streetscape using high quality paving materials;
- Delineation of the Main Street (R700), High Street (L4216) and The Square junction;
- Construction of new footpaths and the introduction of at-grade courtesy crossing points using materials in keeping with historical built-heritage of the village;
- Regularisation and delineation of designated parking bays;
- Provision of ornate street lighting and furniture including seating, bollards and tree guards;
- Landscaping provision with the planting of semi-mature trees at appropriate locations within the paved areas;
- Up-grading of existing road markings and signage.

Plans and particulars of the proposed development will be available for inspection or purchase for a fee not exceeding the reasonable cost of making a copy during office hours from **Friday 12th June 2020 until Friday 3rd July 2020**, at the following office by appointment:

- Area office of Thomastown Municipal District, Lady's Well Street, Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny from 9am to 1pm & 2pm to 4pm Monday to Friday (excluding weekends and Bank Holidays) by appointment only. To make an appointment please contact 056-7794340 or email Thomastowoffice@kilkennycoco.ie.
- Online at <https://consult.kilkenny.ie/> and www.kilkennycoco.ie

In accordance with the current COVID-19 restrictions and advice, all face to face project public consultations and meetings have been postponed until further notice.

Given that the COVID-19 restrictions are continuing, we are seeking the public's engagement through the following means;

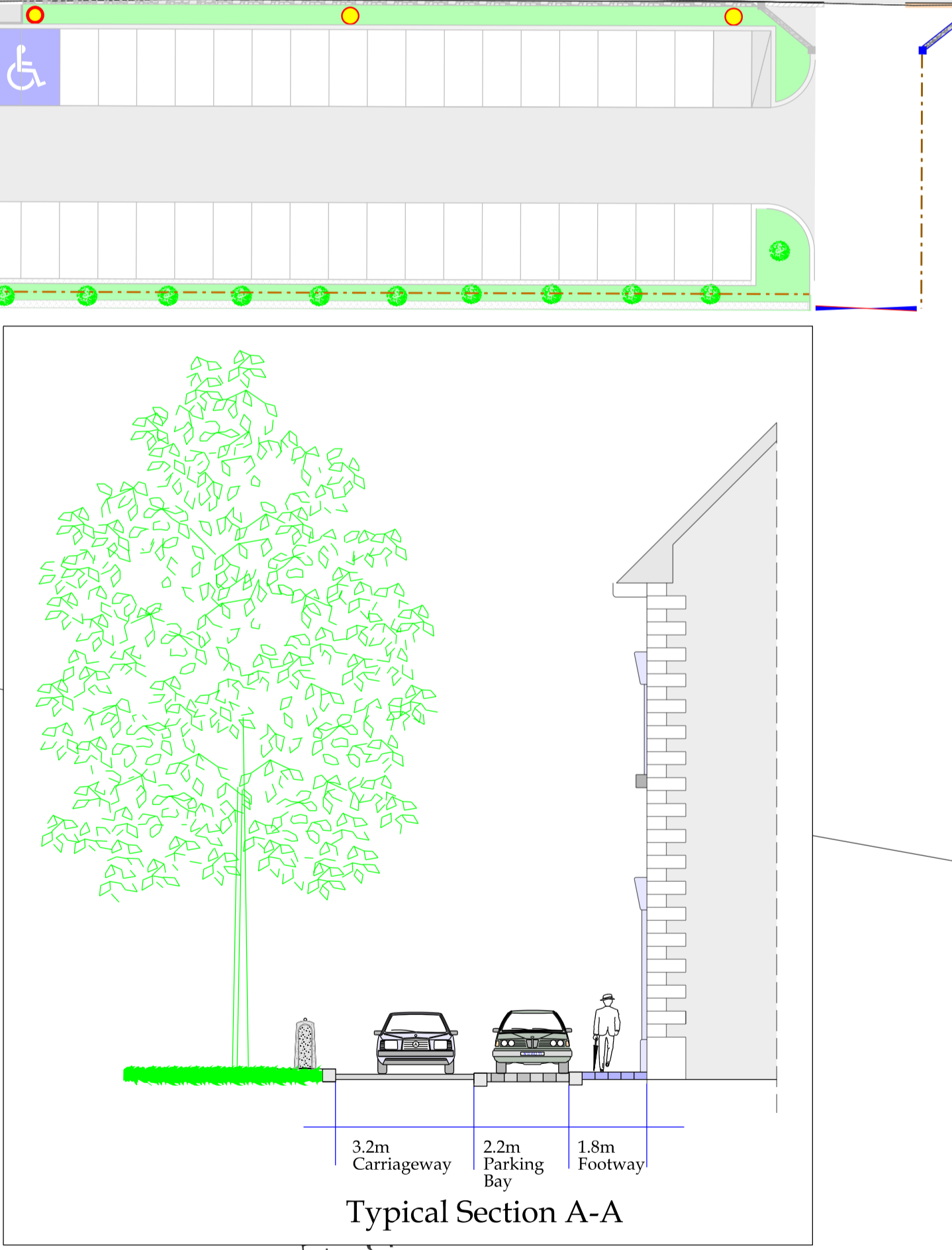
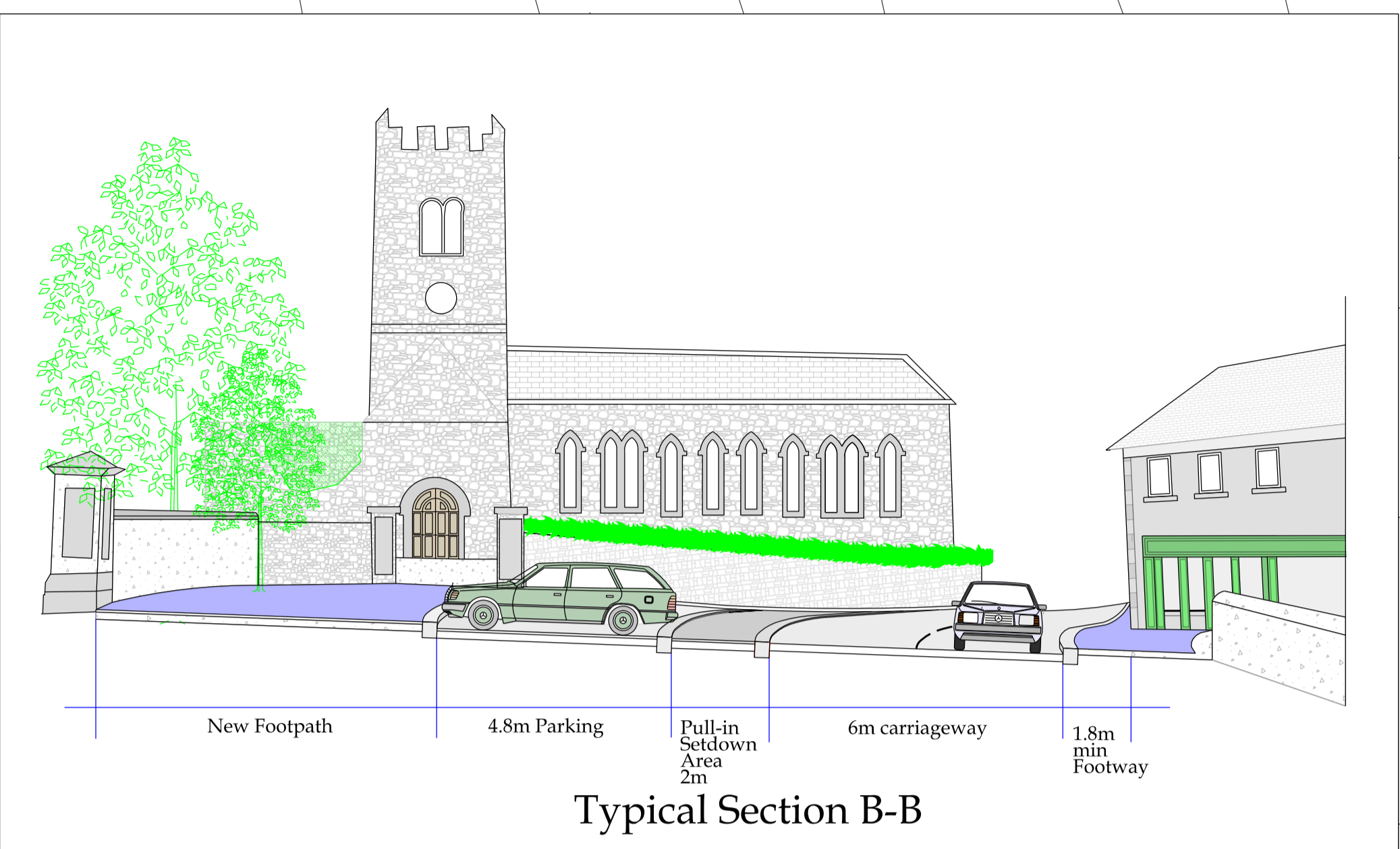
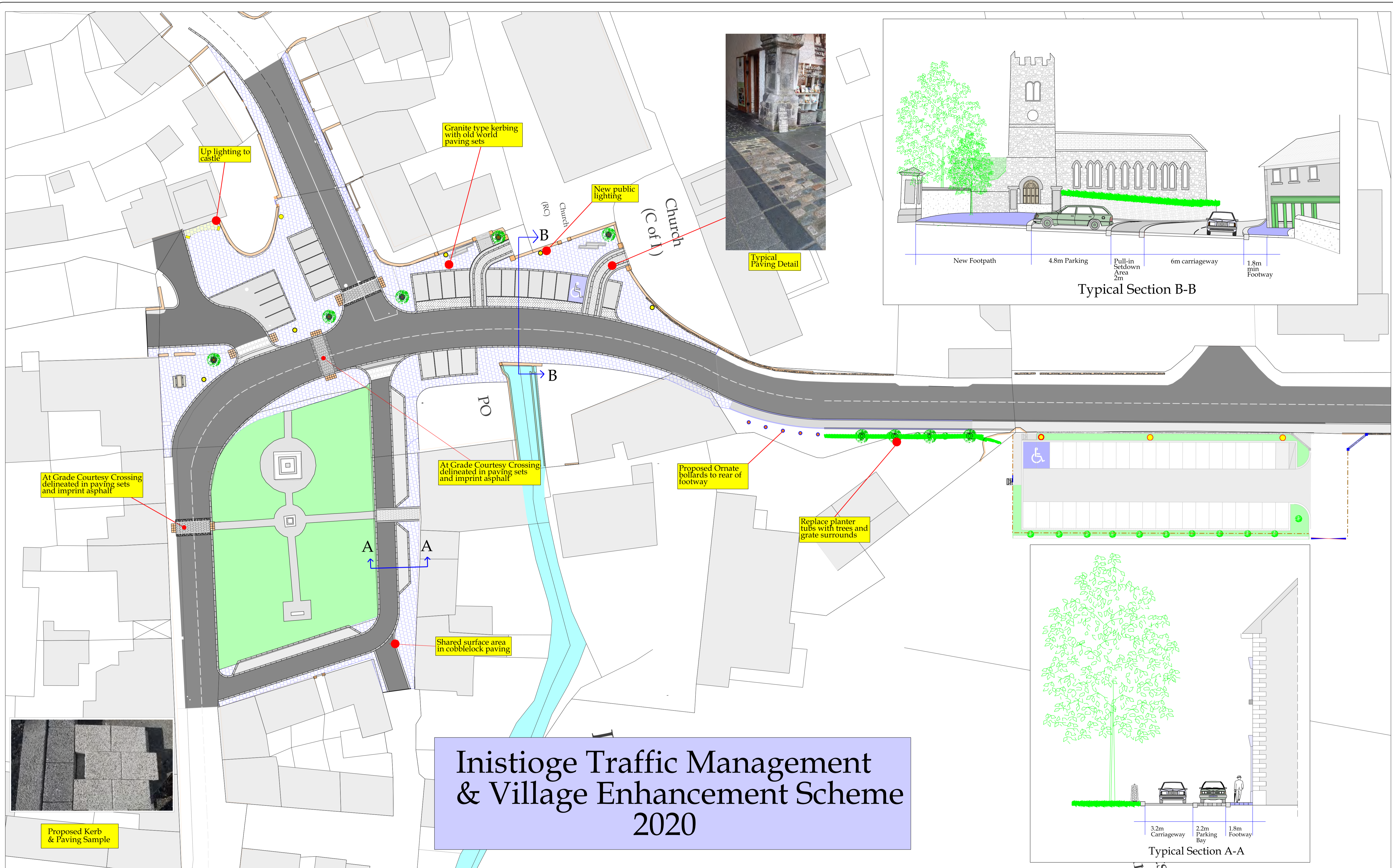
Submissions or observations with respect to the proposed development dealing with the proper planning and development of the area in which the development will be carried out may be made online at <https://consult.kilkenny.ie>;; in writing to Tim Butler, Director of Services, Kilkenny County Council, County Hall, John Street, Kilkenny or sent to the following email address Inistiogevillage@kilkennycoco.ie.

The latest time and date for receipt of submissions on the above scheme is 4pm Friday 10th July 2020. Submissions should be clearly marked **“Inistioge Traffic Management & Village Enhancement Scheme”**.

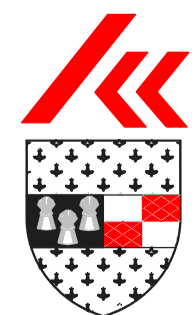
**T. Butler
Director of Services
Kilkenny County Council
County Buildings
John Street
Kilkenny**

Appendix 2

Proposed Plan Layout Drawing



Inistioge Traffic Management & Village Enhancement Scheme 2020



KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL
Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh
ROAD DESIGN SECTION,
1 DEAN STREET
KILKENNY.

Rev	By	Date	Description

Project:	Inistioge Traffic Calming & Village Enhancement Scheme		
Component:	Section 38		
Title:	Plan Layout		
Designed By:	HS	File Name:	
Drawn By:	HS	Scale:	NTS
Checked By:	FS	Date:	May 2020
		Drawing No.:	IVRS-000-01

Appendix 3

Habitats Directive **Project Screening Assessment**

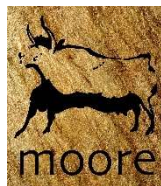
Report for the purposes of Appropriate Assessment Screening

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

Inistioge Town and Village Renewal Public Realm Works

Prepared by: Moore Group – Environmental Services

29 April 2020



On behalf of
Kilkenny County Council

Project Proponent	Kilkenny County Council
Project	Inistioge Town and Village Renewal Public Realm Works
Title	Report for the purposes of Appropriate Assessment Screening Inistioge Town and Village Renewal Public Realm Works


Project Number	20090	Document Ref	20090 Inistioge Town & Village Renewal AAS1 Rev0.docx
Revision	Description	Author	Date
Rev0	Issued for client review	G. O'Donohoe 	29 April 2020
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

1. Introduction

1.1. General Introduction

This Appropriate Assessment screening report has been prepared to support a Planning Application for the proposed Project. This report contains information required for the competent authority to undertake screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) on the potential for a development consisting of Public Realm Works at part of the Inistioge Town and Village Renewal Project (hereafter referred to as the proposed Project), to significantly affect Natura 2000 sites (also referred to as a “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 (also referred to as a “European 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.

In order to screen out a project, it must be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site.

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 Kilkenny 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 over 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, as amended by 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.

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

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

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

Article 6(3): *“Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subjected to an appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the*

implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.”

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.”*

These obligations in relation to Appropriate Assessment have been implemented in Ireland under Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and in particular Section 177U and Section 177V thereof.

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 1-2 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: The process which identifies the likely impacts upon a Natura 2000 site of a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant.

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.

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, Kilkenny County Council, to determine if the next stage (Stage 2) of AA 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.

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 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 1995-2020;
- 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:
 - Kilkenny County Development Plan 2020-2026

3. Description of the proposed Project

This report presents a screening assessment for a proposed Project consisting of the installation of the provision of enhancements to the public realm in Inistioge, these works shall include the following:

- Upgrading of the existing streetscape using high quality paving / kerbing materials and street furniture.
- Provision of new, decorative street lighting.
- Revisions to existing traffic management measures including the installation of Pedestrian crossings.
- Landscaping to include planters, hedging and trees.

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.

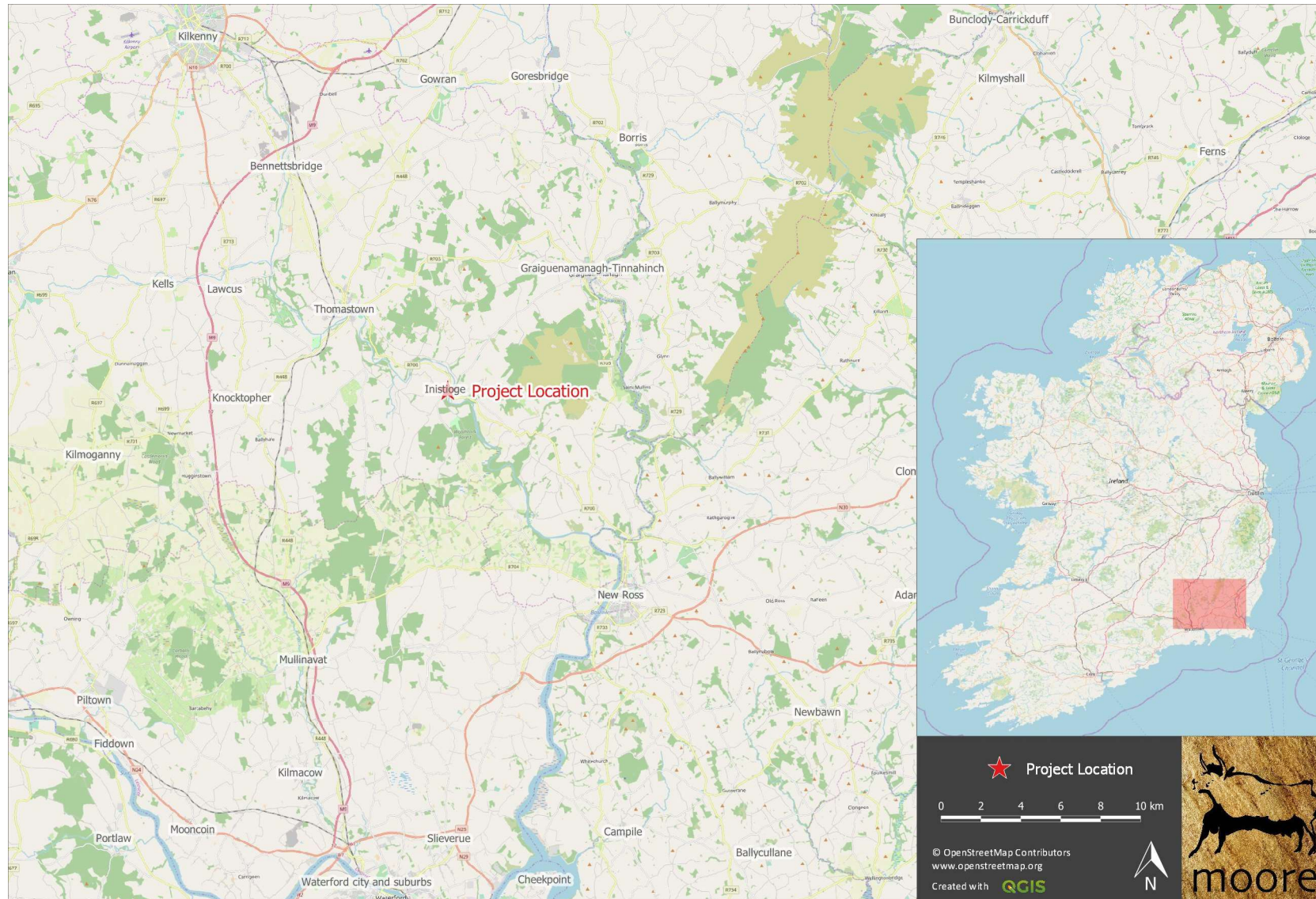


Figure 1. Showing the proposed Project location at Inistioge, County Kilkenny.



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

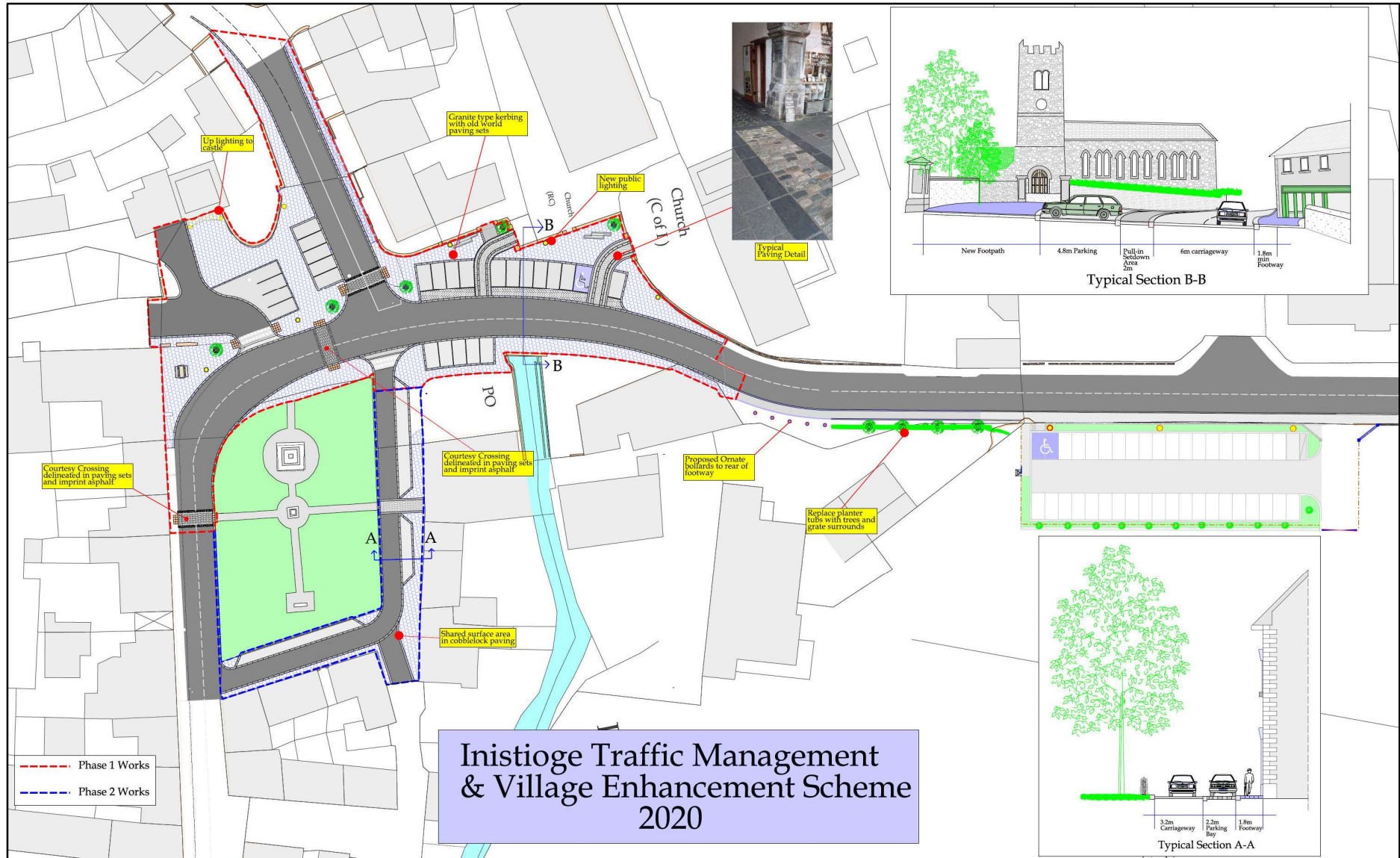


Figure 3. Plan showing locations of new equipment.

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 relevant Natura 2000 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 and 5, below. Spatial boundary data on the Natura 2000 network was extracted from the NPWS website (www.npws.ie) on the 31 March 2020.

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

Site Code	Site name	Distance (km) ²
000404	Hugginstown Fen SAC	13.04
000770	Blackstairs Mountains SAC	12.54
002162	River Barrow and River Nore SAC	0.01
002252	Thomastown Quarry SAC	7.23
004233	River Nore SPA	0.08

The proposed Project is located c. 80m from the River Nore at Inistioge. The River Nore here, is designated as part of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC (Site Code 002162) and the River Nore SPA (Site Code 004233).

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.

There is no potential for connectivity to the other European site within 15 km; Thomas town Quarry SAC to the north, Hugginstown Fen SAC to the southwest or the Blackstairs Mountains SAC to the east.

The only European site downstream of the proposed Project is the Lower River Suir SAC (Site Code 002137), and it is noted the nearest point of potential connectivity for this site, the mouth of the River Suir, is located approximately 23.8km to the south of the proposed Project.

Given the nature and scale of the proposed Project and the distances of removal these later sites are ruled out at this preliminary screening stage.

Details of the qualifying interests of River Barrow and River Nore SAC (Site Code 002162) are listed in Table 2 and the River Nore SPA (Site Code 004233) in Table 3 below, and Site Synopses are available from the NPWS website (www.npws.ie).

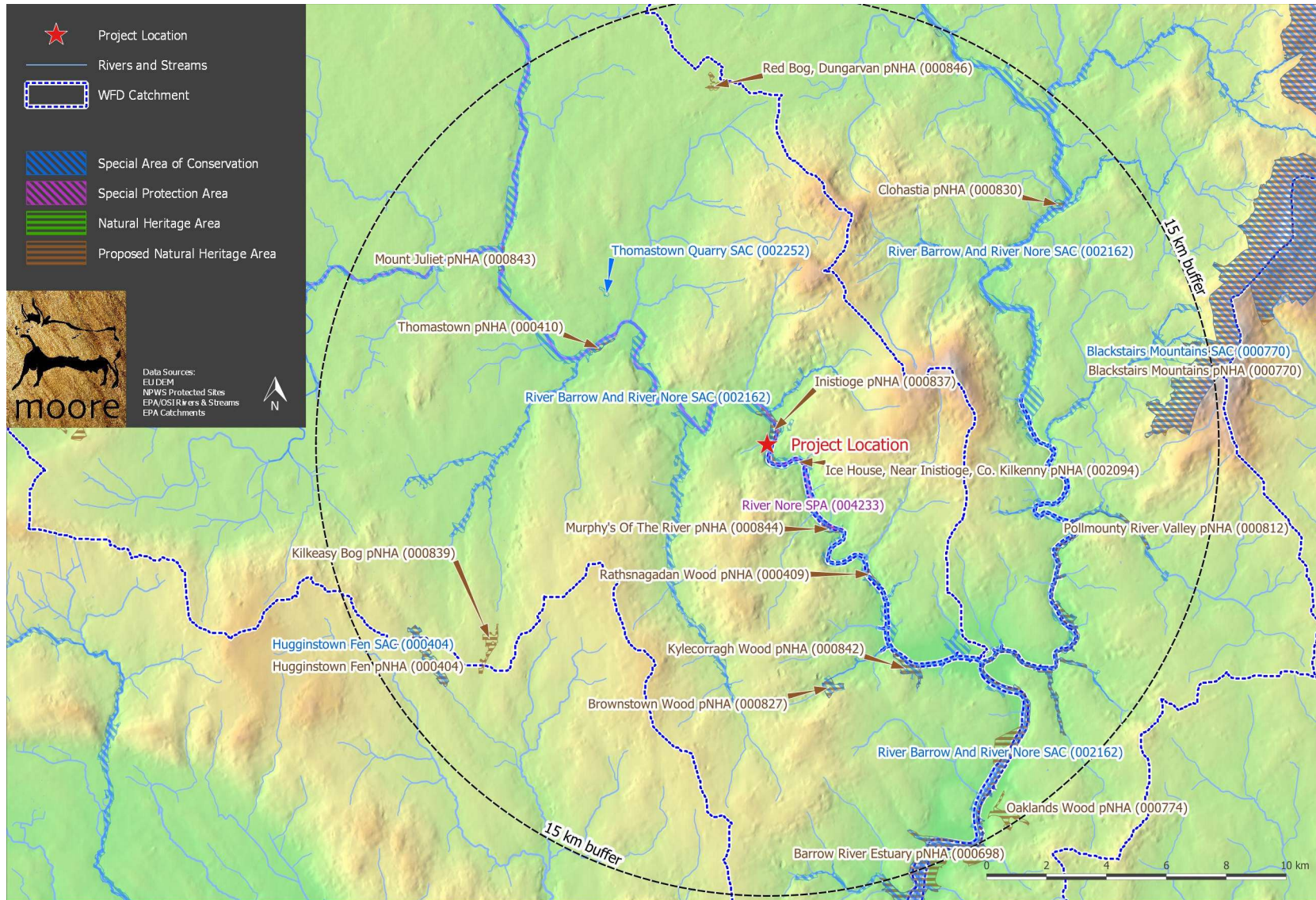


Figure 4. Showing European sites and NHAs/pNHAs within 15 km of the proposed Project.

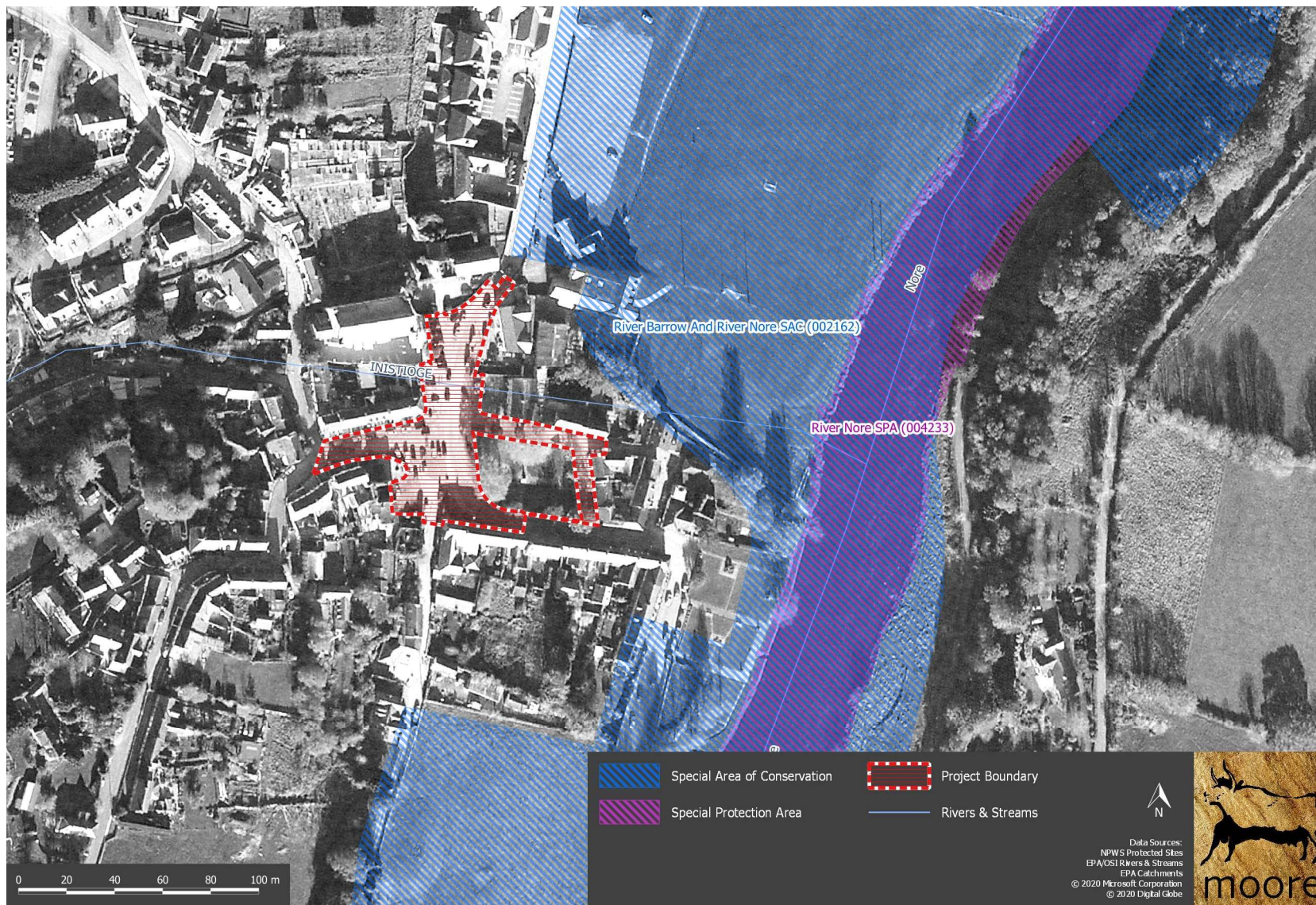


Figure 5. Detailed view of European sites in the vicinity of the proposed Project.

Table 2 SACs located within the potential zone of influence of the Project (*indicates priority habitat).

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Interests
002162	River Barrow and River Nore SAC	<p>Species:</p> <p>1016 Desmoulin's whorl snail <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i></p> <p>1029 Freshwater pearl mussel <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i></p> <p>1092 White-clawed crayfish <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i></p> <p>1095 Sea lamprey <i>Petromyzon marinus</i></p> <p>1096 Brook lamprey <i>Lampetra planeri</i></p> <p>1099 River lamprey <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i></p> <p>1103 Twaite shad <i>Alosa fallax</i></p> <p>1106 Atlantic salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) (only in fresh water)</p> <p>1355 Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i></p> <p>1421 Killarney fern <i>Trichomanes speciosum</i></p> <p>1990 Nore freshwater pearl mussel <i>Margaritifera durrovensis</i></p> <p>Habitats:</p> <p>1130 Estuaries</p> <p>1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide</p> <p>1310 <i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonizing mud and sand</p> <p>1330 Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>)</p> <p>1410 Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>)</p> <p>3260 Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation</p> <p>4030 European dry heaths</p> <p>6430 Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels</p> <p>7220 * Petrifying springs with tufa formation (<i>Cratoneurion</i>)</p> <p>91A0 Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles</p> <p>91E0 * Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>)</p>

Table 3 SPAs located within the potential zone of influence of the Project (*indicates priority habitat).

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Interests
004233	River Nore SPA	<p>Species:</p> <p>A229 Kingfisher <i>Alcedo atthis</i></p>

4.2. Conservation Objectives of the Natura 2000 Sites

4.2.1. River Barrow and River Nore SAC (002062) - Version 1; 19th July 2011

The following Conservation Objectives are set out for the River Barrow and River Nore SAC. Specific attributes, measures and targets are presented in the relevant Conservation Objectives documents and will be addressed in more detail if required after potential impacts have been determined.

1016 Desmoulin's whorl snail *Vertigo moulinsiana*

To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Desmoulin's whorl snail in the River Barrow and River Nore SAC.

1029 Freshwater pearl mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera*

The status of the freshwater pearl mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*) as a qualifying Annex II species for the River Barrow and River Nore SAC is currently under review. The outcome of this review will determine whether a site-specific conservation objective is set for this species. Please note that the Nore freshwater pearl mussel (*Margaritifera durrovensis*) remains a qualifying species for this SAC.

1092 White-clawed crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes*

To maintain the favourable conservation condition of White-clawed crayfish in the River Barrow and River Nore SAC.

1095 Sea lamprey *Petromyzon marinus*

To restore the favourable conservation condition of Sea lamprey in the River Barrow and River Nore SAC.

1096 Brook lamprey *Lampetra planeri*

To restore the favourable conservation condition of Brook lamprey in the River Barrow and River Nore SAC.

1099 River lamprey *Lampetra fluviatilis*

To restore the favourable conservation condition of River lamprey in the River Barrow and River Nore SAC.

1103 Twaite shad *Alosa fallax*

To restore the favourable conservation condition of Twaite shad in the River Barrow and River Nore SAC.

1106 Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) (only in fresh water)

To restore the favourable conservation condition of Salmon in the River Barrow and River Nore SAC.

1130 Estuaries

To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Estuaries in the River Barrow and River Nore SAC.

1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide

To maintain the favourable conservation condition of the Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide in the River Barrow and River Nore SAC.

1310 *Salicornia and other annuals colonizing mud and sand*

To maintain the favourable conservation condition of *Salicornia* and other annuals colonizing mud and sand in the River Barrow and River Nore SAC

1330 *Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae)*

To restore the favourable conservation condition of Atlantic salt meadows in the River Barrow and River Nore SAC.

1355 *Otter Lutra lutra*

To restore the favourable conservation condition of Otter in the River Barrow and River Nore SAC.

1410 *Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi)*

To restore the favourable conservation condition of Mediterranean salt meadows in the River Barrow and River Nore SAC.

1421 *Killarney fern Trichomanes speciosum*

To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Killarney Fern in the River Barrow and River Nore SAC.

1990 *Nore freshwater pearl mussel Margaritifera durrovensis*

To restore the favourable conservation condition of the Nore freshwater pearl mussel in the River Barrow and River Nore SAC.

3260 *Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation*

To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitriche-Batrachion* vegetation in the River Barrow and River Nore SAC.

4030 *European dry heaths*

To maintain the favourable conservation condition of European dry heaths in the River Barrow and River Nore SAC.

6430 *Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels*

To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels in the River Barrow and River Nore SAC.

7220 * Petrifying springs with tufa formation (*Cratoneurion*)

To maintain the favourable conservation condition of Petrifying springs with tufa formation (*Cratoneurion*) in the River Barrow and River Nore SAC.

91A0 Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles

To restore the favourable conservation condition of Old oak woodland with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the River Barrow and River Nore SAC.

91E0 * Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion*, *Alnion incanae*, *Salicion albae*)

To restore the favourable conservation condition of Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion*, *Alnion incanae*, *Salicion albae*) in the River Barrow and River Nore SAC.

4.2.1. River Nore SPA (004233) - Generic Version 6.0; 21st of February 2018

The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives and Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas are designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them. These two designations are collectively known as the Natura 2000 network.

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain habitats and species in the Natura 2000 network at favourable conservation condition. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations that will ensure the ecological integrity of these sites.

The maintenance of habitats and species within Natura 2000 sites at favourable conservation condition will contribute to the overall maintenance of favourable conservation status of those habitats and species at a national level.

Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

- its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing, and
- the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and
- the conservation status of its typical species is favourable.

The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

- population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
- there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

Objective: To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA.

4.3. Assessment Criteria

4.3.1. Examples of Direct, Indirect or Secondary Impacts

In order to identify those sites that could be potentially affected, it is necessary to describe the Natura 2000 site in the context of why it has been designated i.e. in terms of its Qualifying Interests and the environmental and ecological conditions that maintain the condition of these features. The underpinning conditions that are required to maintain the 'health' of these features are listed in Table 4 below.

Table 4 Qualifying Interests and Key environmental conditions supporting site integrity.

Qualifying Interests	Key environmental conditions supporting site integrity	Current Threats to Qualifying Interests	Potential Impacts
* Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>)	Riparian/lacustrine habitat prone to flooding.	Grazing, Invasive Species, Drainage, Planting of nonnative conifers, felling of native tree species.	This habitat does not occur in the zone of influence of the project and will not be affected.
Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>)	Marine and groundwater dependent. Medium sensitivity to hydrological change. Changes in salinity and tidal regime. Overgrazing, erosion and accretion.	Overgrazing; erosion; invasive species, particularly common cordgrass (<i>Spartina anglica</i>); infilling and reclamation.	This habitat does not occur in the zone of influence of the project and will not be affected.
Brook Lamprey (<i>Lampetra planeri</i>)	Surface water dependent Highly sensitive to hydrological change.	Channel maintenance, barriers, passage obstruction, gross pollution and specific pollutants.	There will be no instream works and no direct impacts on this species. Potential indirect impacts are unlikely given the enclosed nature and small scale of the Project.
Desmoulin's whorl snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>)	Stable wetland water table. Emergent vegetation. Groundwater supply.	Climate Change, Flooding, Urbanisation (Habitat Encroachment, Pesticides, Fertilised, Grazing, Undergrazing, Afforestation, Stock Feeding, Burning, Peat Extraction, Communications	This species does not occur in the zone of influence of the project and will not be affected.

Qualifying Interests	Key environmental conditions supporting site integrity	Current Threats to Qualifying Interests	Potential Impacts
		Networks, Paths & Tracks, Walking/horse riding & non-motorised vehicles, Water Pollution, Landfill, Drainage, Modifying structures of inland watercourses.	
Estuaries	Surface and marine water dependent. Low sensitivity to hydrological changes. Aquaculture, fishing and pollution.	Aquaculture, fishing, dumping of wastes and water pollution.	This habitat does not occur in the zone of influence of the project and will not be affected.
European dry heaths	Dry heaths occur on a range of slopes, in both upland and lowland areas, though most usually on slopes of 5-20° or more, often on upper slopes of hills and mountains, and are usually reported as being concentrated towards the drier south and east of the country.	Overgrazing, Abandonment of pastoral systems, General Forestry management, Forestry planting, Burning, Fertilisation, Agricultural improvement, Sand and gravel extraction	This habitat does not occur in the zone of influence of the project and will not be affected.
Freshwater Pearl Mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>)	Surface water dependent Highly sensitive to hydrological change Very highly sensitive to pollution.	Poor substrate quality due to increased growth of algal and macrophyte vegetation as a result of severe nutrient enrichment, as well as physical siltation.	There will be no instream works and no direct impacts on this species. Potential indirect impacts are unlikely given the enclosed nature and small scale of the Project.
Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels	Habitats are formed on gleyed soils, rich in nutrients, sand, silty and sand-silty ones with a high ground water level. Usually these nitrophilous communities are located in the form of the narrow strips near riverbeds and channels and occupy a small area.	Change of hydrological regime, adjustment of river channels, expansion of neophyte species, farming.	This habitat does not occur in the zone of influence of the project and will not be affected. .
Killarney fern (<i>Trichomanes speciosum</i>)	Sensitive to desiccation and are not adapted to reduce or control water loss.	Human disturbance, Grazing, Woodland clearance, Natural processes such as wind felling of trees, competition from other plants, unusual weather conditions such as a prolonged frost or drought, and rock falls, Modifications to hydrology, Water pollution by nitrogenous waste,	This habitat does not occur in the zone of influence of the project and will not be affected.
Kingfisher (<i>Alcedo atthis</i>)	Marine/freshwater food availability. Undisturbed soft substrate riparian nest sites. Regularity of extreme weather. Water quality.	Disturbance from riverside recreation, loss of nest sites due to bankside interference. Loss of riparian scrub and woodland.	There will be no instream works and no direct impacts on this species. Potential indirect impacts are unlikely given the enclosed nature and small scale of the Project.
Mediterranean salt meadows	Marine and groundwater dependent. Sensitivity to hydrological change. Changes	Overgrazing; erosion; invasive species, particularly common	This habitat does not occur in the zone of influence of the

Qualifying Interests	Key environmental conditions supporting site integrity	Current Threats to Qualifying Interests	Potential Impacts
<i>(Juncetalia maritimi)</i>	in salinity and tidal regime. Overgrazing, erosion and accretion	cordgrass (<i>Spartina anglica</i>); infilling and reclamation.	project and will not be affected.
Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide	Surface and marine water dependent. Low sensitivity to hydrological changes. Aquaculture, fishing and pollution.	Aquaculture, fishing, dumping of wastes and water pollution.	This habitat does not occur in the zone of influence of the project and will not be affected.
Nore freshwater pearl mussel (<i>Margaritifera durrovensis</i>)	Surface water dependent Highly sensitive to hydrological change Very highly sensitive to pollution.	Poor substrate quality due to increased growth of algal and macrophyte vegetation as a result of severe nutrient enrichment, as well as physical siltation.	This species does not occur in the zone of influence of the project and will not be affected.
Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles	Changes in management. Changes in nutrient or base status. Introduction of alien species.	The introduction of alien species; sub-optimal grazing patterns; general forestry management; increases in urbanisation and human habitation adjacent to oak woodlands; and the construction of communication networks through the woodland.	This habitat does not occur in the zone of influence of the project and will not be affected.
Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>)	Prey availability. Water Quality. Riparian vegetation for breeding sites. Unhindered passage along waterways.	Decrease in water quality: Use of pesticides; fertilization; vegetation removal; professional fishing (including lobster pots and fyke nets); hunting; poisoning; sand and gravel extraction; mechanical removal of peat; urbanised areas; human habitation; continuous urbanization; drainage; management of aquatic and bank vegetation for drainage purposes; ; and canalization or modifying structures of inland water course.	There will be no instream works and no direct impacts on this species. Potential indirect impacts are unlikely given the enclosed nature and small scale of the Project.
* Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion)	Groundwater dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Changes in nutrient or base status.	Peat or turf cutting; arterial drainage; local drainage; water abstraction and agricultural reclamation.	This habitat does not occur in the zone of influence of the project and will not be affected.
River Lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>)	Surface water dependent Highly sensitive to hydrological change.	Channel maintenance, barriers, passage obstruction, gross pollution and specific pollutants.	There will be no instream works and no direct impacts on this species. Potential indirect impacts are unlikely given the enclosed nature and small scale of the Project.
Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) (only in fresh water)	Surface water dependent Highly sensitive to hydrological change	Numerous threats impact upon this species. Some of these include: cultivation, pesticides; fertilization; pollution; water pollution; biocenotic evolution;	There will be no instream works and no direct impacts on this species. Potential indirect impacts are unlikely given the enclosed nature and small scale of the Project.

Qualifying Interests	Key environmental conditions supporting site integrity	Current Threats to Qualifying Interests	Potential Impacts
		accumulation of organic material; eutrophication; over-fishing; forest-related pressures; parasites.	
Sea Lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>)	Surface water dependent Highly sensitive to hydrological change.	Obstructions to movement; gross pollution; and specific pollutants.	There will be no instream works and no direct impacts on this species. Potential indirect impacts are unlikely given the enclosed nature and small scale of the Project.
<i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonizing mud and sand	Marine water dependent. Medium sensitivity to hydrological change. Changes in salinity and tidal regime. Infilling, reclamation, invasive species.	Invasive Species; erosion and accretion.	This habitat does not occur in the zone of influence of the project and will not be affected.
Twaite shad (<i>Alosa fallax</i>)	Surface water dependent Sensitive to hydrological change	Threats include: pesticides; fertilization; pollution; water pollution; accumulation of organic material; eutrophication; forest-related pressures.	There will be no instream works and no direct impacts on this species. Potential indirect impacts are unlikely given the enclosed nature and small scale of the Project.
Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation	Surface and groundwater dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological changes. Highly sensitive to pollution.	Eutrophication; overgrazing, excessive fertilisation; afforestation; and the introduction of invasive alien species.	There will be no instream works and no direct or indirect impacts on this habitat.
White-clawed Crayfish (<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>)	Surface water dependent. Highly sensitive to hydrological change, Very highly sensitive to pollution.	Introduction of diseases transmitted by introduced American crayfish.	There will be no instream works and no direct impacts on this species. Potential indirect impacts are unlikely given the enclosed nature and small scale of the Project.

4.2. Ecological Network Supporting Natura 2000 Sites

An analysis of the proposed Natural Heritage Areas and designated Natural Heritage Areas 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 a number of proposed Natural Heritage Areas designated downstream along the River Barrow, however, for the purposes of this screening report these areas are dealt with under their higher conservation status designations as European sites.

5. Identification of Potential Impacts & Assessment of Significance

The proposed Project is not directly connected with or necessary for the management of the sites considered in the assessment and therefore potential impacts must be identified and considered.

5.1. Potential Impacts

This section uses the information collected on the sensitivity of each European site considered and describes any likely significant effects of implementation of the Project. This assumes the absence of any controls, conditions or assumption mitigation measures.

The likely significant effects of the proposed Project are presented in Table 6 (Section 5.3), both in isolation and potentially in combination with other plans and projects.

There will be no direct impacts on the River Nore European sites and there will be no habitat loss or fragmentation as a result of the proposed Project.

Having considered direct impacts and ruling them out, indirect impacts are then considered.

A worst-case scenario may be considered whereby the Project would be the source of a significant detrimental change in water quality in the River Nore either alone or in combination with other projects or plans as a result of indirect pollution. The effect would have to be considered in terms of changes in water quality which would affect the species and/or habitats or food sources for which the River Nore European site's species are designated. However, this is unlikely.

Although the proposed Project is located in close proximity to the River Nore (approximately 80m away), it has been noted that there are to be no discharges from the proposed Project site to the River Nore during the works.

Having regard for the nature and small scale of the proposed works, effects on the European sites considered are unlikely and significant effects can be ruled out.

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.

A review of the National Planning Application Database was undertaken. The first stage of this review confirmed that there were no data outages in the area where the proposed Project is located. The database was then queried for developments granted planning permission within 50m of the proposed Project within the last three years, these are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 Planning applications granted permission in the vicinity of the proposed Project.

Planning Ref.	Description of development	Comments
16741	for demolition of storage shed, construction of terrace of 3 no. 2 storey holiday houses, (2 no. 3 bedroom units and 1 no. 2 bedroom unit), parking forecourt, improved vehicular access, landscaped open space and service connections	There are no predicted in-combination effects given the nature and scale of the proposed works.
17680	for a change of design to previously granted domestic studio (Pin.Ref.09-621) to reduce the originally proposed area from 75 sqm to 56 sqm, new connection to town sewage and water mains and all associated site development works	There are no predicted in-combination effects given the nature and scale of the proposed works.
18338	Retention of development in a Protected Structure C160 and Permission for change of use from Takeaway and Bed and Breakfast to 2 Dwellings and other associated works	There are no predicted in-combination effects given the nature and scale of the proposed works.
19295	for the restoration of an existing building for the construction of a house	There are no predicted in-combination effects given the nature and scale of the proposed works.
19356	is sought to comprise of the following: 1. Material change of use of part of ground floor from retail to café/restaurant use. 2. Material change of use of first floor from restaurant to 2 no. 1 bedroom studio apartment for short term letting, holiday accommodation use. 3. Material change of use of second floor from stores and toilets to 2 no. 1 bedroom studio apartment for short term letting, holiday accommodation use. 4. Internal and elevational modifications of existing building and all associated site developments works. This is a listed / protected building for conservation under the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage Reg. No. 12323026 and ref C546 - Kilkenny County Council	There are no predicted in-combination effects given the nature and scale of the proposed works.

There are no predicted in-combination effects with the proposed Project given the reasons discussed in the comments column of Table 5 and given that it has been concluded that the proposed Project is unlikely to have any effects on any European sites.

The Kilkenny 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, 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 initially assessed on a case by case basis by Kilkenny County Council which will determine the requirement for AA Screening as per the requirements of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive.

5.3 Summary of Potential Impacts

Table 6. Outlining the potential impacts in the absence of mitigation of the Project.

Site	Potential Direct Impacts e.g. Habitat Loss	Potential Indirect Impacts e.g. alteration to hydrological regime	Surface or Groundwater Contamination	Disturbance to Protected Species (Habitats Directive Annex II & IV)	Stage 2 AA Required
002162 River Barrow and River Nore SAC	No	No	No	No	No
004233 River Nore SPA	No	No	No	No	No

6. Conclusion

There will be no direct impacts on the River Nore European sites and there will be no habitat loss or fragmentation as a result of the proposed Project.

Having considered direct impacts and ruling them out, indirect impacts are then considered.

A worst-case scenario may be considered whereby the Project would be the source of a significant detrimental change in water quality in the River Nore either alone or in combination with other projects or plans as a result of indirect pollution. The effect would have to be considered in terms of changes in water quality which would

affect the species and/or habitats or food sources for which the River Nore European site's species are designated. However, this is unlikely.

Although the proposed Project is located in close proximity to the River Nore (approximately 80m away), it has been noted that there are to be no discharges from the proposed Project site to the River Nore during the works.

Having regard for the nature and small scale of the proposed works, effects on the European sites considered are unlikely and significant effects can be ruled out.

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

1. The Project is not directly connected with, or necessary to the conservation management of the European sites considered in this assessment.
2. The Project, alone or in combination with other projects, is not likely to have significant effects on the European sites considered in this assessment.
3. It is possible to rule out likely significant impacts on any European sites considered in the assessment.
4. It is possible to conclude that there would be no significant effects, no potentially significant effects and no uncertain effects if the Project were to proceed.

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, 2001).

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 (2001) 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.

NPWS (2011) Conservation Objectives: River Barrow and River Nore SAC 002162. Version 1.0. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

NPWS (2018) Conservation objectives for River Nore SPA [004233]. Generic Version 6.0. Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

NPWS (2019) The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

NPWS (2020) 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

Inistioge Town and Village Renewal Public Realm Works

Name and location of the Natura 2000 site(s)

The proposed Project is located c. 80m from the River Nore at Inistioge. The River Nore here, is designated as part of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC (Site Code 002162) and the River Nore SPA (Site Code 004233).

There is no potential for connectivity to the other European site within 15 km; Thomas town Quarry SAC to the north, Hugginstown Fen SAC to the southwest or the Blackstairs Mountains SAC to the east.

The only European site downstream of the proposed Project is the Lower River Suir SAC (Site Code 002137), and it is noted the nearest point of potential connectivity for this site, the mouth of the River Suir, is located approximately 23.8km to the south of the proposed Project.

Given the nature and scale of the proposed Project and the distances of removal these later sites are ruled out at this preliminary screening stage.

Description of the project or plan

This report presents a screening assessment for a proposed Project consisting of the installation of the provision of enhancements to the public realm in Inistioge, these works shall include the following:

Upgrading of the existing streetscape using high quality paving / kerbing materials and street furniture.

Provision of new, decorative street lighting.

Revisions to existing traffic management measures including the installation of Pedestrian crossings.

Landscaping to include planters, hedging and trees.

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

A review of the National Planning Application Database was undertaken. The first stage of this review confirmed that there were no data outages in the area where the proposed Project is located. The database was then queried for developments granted planning permission within 50 m of the proposed Project within the last three years, these are presented in the Table below.

Planning Ref.	Description of development	Comments
16741	for demolition of storage shed, construction of terrace of 3 no. 2 storey holiday houses, (2 no. 3 bedroom units and 1 no. 2 bedroom unit), parking forecourt, improved vehicular access, landscaped open space and service connections	There are no predicted in-combination effects given the nature and scale of the proposed works.
17680	for a change of design to previously granted domestic studio (Pin.Ref.09-621) to reduce the originally proposed area from 75 sqm to 56 sqm, new connection to town sewage and water mains and all associated site development works	There are no predicted in-combination effects given the nature and scale of the proposed works.
18338	Retention of development in a Protected Structure C160 and Permission for change of use from	There are no predicted in-combination effects given the nature and scale of the proposed works.

Planning Ref.	Description of development	Comments
	Takeaway and Bed and Breakfast to 2 Dwellings and other associated works	
19295	for the restoration of an existing building for the construction of a house	There are no predicted in-combination effects given the nature and scale of the proposed works.
19356	is sought to comprise of the following: 1. Material change of use of part of ground floor from retail to café/restaurant use. 2. Material change of use of first floor from restaurant to 2 no. 1 bedroom studio apartment for short term letting, holiday accommodation use. 3. Material change of use of second floor from stores and toilets to 2 no. 1 bedroom studio apartment for short term letting, holiday accommodation use. 4. Internal and elevational modifications of existing building and all associated site developments works. This is a listed / protected building for conservation under the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage Reg. No. 12323026 and ref C546 - Kilkenny County Council	There are no predicted in-combination effects given the nature and scale of the proposed works.

There are no predicted in-combination effects with the proposed Project given the reasons discussed in the comments column of the Table above and given that it has been concluded that the proposed Project is unlikely to have any effects on any European sites.

The Carlow 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, 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 initially assessed on a case by case basis by Carlow 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.

There will be no direct impacts on the River Nore European sites and there will be no habitat loss or fragmentation as a result of the proposed Project.

Having considered direct impacts and ruling them out, indirect impacts are then considered.

Explain why these effects are not considered significant.

A worst-case scenario may be considered whereby the Project would be the source of a significant detrimental change in water quality in the River Nore either alone or in combination with other projects or plans as a result of indirect pollution. The effect would have to be considered in terms of changes in water quality which would affect the species and/or habitats or food sources for which the River Nore European site's species are designated. However, this is unlikely.

Although the proposed Project is located in close proximity to the River Nore (approximately 80m away), it has been noted that there are to be no discharges from the proposed Project site to the River Nore during the works.

Having regard for the nature and small scale of the proposed works, effects on the Europeans sites considered are unlikely and significant effects can be ruled out.

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

The requirement for Appropriate Assessment Screening was determined by Kilkenny 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

Kilkenny County Council Planning Section.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

There will be no direct impacts on the River Nore European sites and there will be no habitat loss or fragmentation as a result of the proposed Project.

Having considered direct impacts and ruling them out, indirect impacts are then considered.

A worst-case scenario may be considered whereby the Project would be the source of a significant detrimental change in water quality in the River Nore either alone or in combination with other projects or plans as a result of indirect pollution. The effect would have to be considered in terms of changes in water quality which would affect the species and/or habitats or food sources for which the River Nore European site's species are designated. However, this is unlikely.

Although the proposed Project is located in close proximity to the River Nore (approximately 80m away), it has been noted that there are to be no discharges from the proposed Project site to the River Nore during the works.

Having regard for the nature and small scale of the proposed works, effects on the Europeans sites considered are unlikely and significant effects can be ruled out.

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

1. The Project is not directly connected with, or necessary to the conservation management of the European sites considered in this assessment.
2. The Project, alone or in combination with other projects, is not likely to have significant effects on the European sites considered in this assessment.
3. It is possible to rule out likely significant impacts on any European sites considered in the assessment.
4. It is possible to conclude that there would be no significant effects, no potentially significant effects and no uncertain effects if the Project were to proceed.

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.

Habitats Directive Project Screening Assessment

Table 1: Project Details

Development Consent Type	Section 38 road traffic act 1945 as amended
Development Location	Inistioge
Planning ref	Town and village renewal works
Description of the project	Upgrading of the existing streetscape using high quality paving / kerbing materials and street furniture. <input type="checkbox"/> Provision of new, decorative street lighting. <input type="checkbox"/> Revisions to existing traffic management measures including the installation of Pedestrian crossings. <input type="checkbox"/> Landscaping to include planters, hedging and trees.

Table 2: Identification of Natura 2000 sites (SACs and SPAs) which may be impacted by the proposed development

Please answer the following five questions in order to determine whether there are any Natura 2000 sites which could potentially be impacted by the proposed development. If the answer to all of these questions is no, significant impacts can be ruled out for habitats and bird species. No further assessment is required. Please refer to tables 3 and 4 where the answer to any of these questions is yes.

		Y/N
1	ONE- OFF HOUSE /SMALL EXTENSION/ ALTERATION TO EXISTING BUILDING	Y
1a	Is the development a one- off house/small extension/alternation to existing building within an SAC/SPA or within 100m of an SAC/SPA and likely to discharge pollutants or nutrients of a significant nature and amount to surface water within catchments of and SAC/ SPA as part of its construction or operational phase (including the installation of waste water treatment systems; percolation areas; septic tanks within SAC/SPA or very close proximity)? If the answer to the above question is: - no, then no appropriate assessment required - yes, then an appropriate assessment is required - not sure, then an appropriate assessment is required in accordance with the precautionary principle	No
2	DEVELOPMENTS OTHER THAN THOSE DESCRIBED IN 1 ABOVE	No
2a	Impacts On Freshwater Habitats <i>Is the development within a Special Area of Conservation whose qualifying interests include freshwater habitats, or in the catchment of same and does the development propose to discharge water to or abstract water from the habitat?</i> Sites to consider: Lower River Suir, River Barrow, River Nore. Habitats to consider: Alluvial Wet Woodland, (Lower River Suir), Dry Heath (some steep slopes along River Barrow and its tributaries) Rivers, Streams, Lakes and Lagoons, Old Oak Woodland, floating river vegetation,	N/A

		Y/N
	<p>Species to consider: River Lamprey, Brook Lamprey, Freshwater Pearls Mussel, Nore Freshwater Pearl Mussel, Crayfish, Twaite Shad, Atlantic Salmon, Otter, Vertigo Moulinsiana,</p>	
2b	<p>Impacts On Wetland Habitats <i>Is the development within a Special Area of Conservation whose qualifying interests include wetland habitats, or likely to discharge water to or abstract water from the wetland?</i></p> <p>Sites to consider: Hugginstown Fen, Galmoy Fen, The Loughans, Flood Plain wetlands</p> <p>Habitats to consider: Bogs, Alkaline Fens (Hugginstown and Galmoy), Turloughs (The Loughans)</p>	N/A
2c	<p>Impacts on Intertidal and Marine Habitats <i>Is the development located within a Special Area of Conservation whose qualifying interests include intertidal and marine habitats and species, or within the catchment of same and likely to discharge water to or abstract water from the habitats.</i></p> <p>Sites to consider: Lower River Suir</p> <p>Habitats to consider: <i>Atlantic Salt meadows, Mudflats, sandflats, saltmarsh, estuary</i></p> <p>Species to consider: Sea Lamprey, River Lamprey, Brook Lamprey, Freshwater Pearl Mussel, Crayfish, Twaite Shad, Atlantic Salmon, Otter.</p>	N/A
2d	<p>Impacts On Woodlands And Grasslands <i>Is the development within a Special Area of Conservation whose qualifying habitats include terrestrial habitats, or in close proximity to same with a likely ecological impact?.</i></p> <p>Sites to consider: Spa hill and Clomantagh Hill, Cullahil Mountain, River Barrow, River Nore, Lower River Suir</p> <p>Habitats to consider: <i>Alluvial Wet Woodlands</i> (River Nore below Inistioge and River Suir at Fiddown Island and Carrick on Suir), <i>Eutropic tall herb vegetation</i> (River Suir at Fiddown Island and Carrick on Suir), and <i>grasslands</i> (Spa hill and Clomantagh Hill, Cullahil Mountain)</p> <p>Oak Woodlands in old estates next to the Nore and Barrow</p> <p>Species to consider: Greenwinged, Frog and Bee Orchids (Cullahill and Clomantagh Hill), Nettle Leaved Bellflower and Autumn Crocus</p>	N/A
2e	<p>Impacts On Birds <i>Is the development within a Special Protection Area, or likely to discharge water to same or likely to have another significant impact on the habitats of Birds in same?.</i></p> <p>Sites to consider: <i>River Nore</i></p> <p>Species to consider: River Nore: Kingfisher (Alcedo Atthis) – Nesting in river banks</p>	N/A

Table 3: Determination of possible impacts on Natura 2000 sites.

Where it has been identified in table 2 that there is a Natura 2000 site within the potential impact zone of the proposed development, it is necessary to try to determine the nature of the possible impacts. Please answer the following questions as appropriate.

1.	<p>Impacts on designated freshwater habitats (rivers, lakes streams and lagoons).</p> <p><i>Please answer the following if the answer to question 2a in table 2 was yes.</i></p> <p><i>Does the development involve any of the following:</i></p>	
1.1	Impacts on watercourses (tributaries, streams, drains) which are remote from the SAC/SPA but may still impact on the SAC/SPA by reason of the nature or quantity of the discharge	N/A
1.2	Abstraction from surfacewater or groundwater within 1km of SAC/SPA.	N/A
1.3	Removal of topsoil within 100 m of watercourses with potential for surface water runoff.	N/A
1.4	Infilling or raising of ground levels within 100m of watercourses with potential for surface water runoff.	N/A
1.5	Construction of drainage ditches within 1km of SAC/SPA.	N/A
1.6	Construction within a floodplain or within an area liable to flood.	N/A
1.7	Crossing or culverting of rivers or streams within 1km of SAC/SPA.	N/A
1.8	Storage of chemicals hydrocarbons or organic wastes within 100 m of a watercourse.	N/A
1.9	Development of a large scale which involves the production of an EIS.	N/A
1.10	Development of quarries, particularly where abstraction is below water table.	N/A
1.11	Development of windfarms within 1km of an SAC or with the risk of runoff to an SAC/SPA, particularly during construction.	N/A
1.12	Development of pumped hydro electric stations.	N/A
2	<p>Impacts on designated wetland habitats (bog, heath, marsh, fen).</p> <p><i>Please answer the following if the answer to question 2b in table 2 was yes.</i></p> <p><i>Does the development involve any of the following:</i></p>	
2.1	Impacts on watercourses (tributaries, streams, drains) which are remote from the SAC/SPA but may still impact on the SAC/SPA by reason of the nature or quantity of the discharge.	N/A
2.2	Construction of roads or other infrastructure on peat habitats within 1km of a Natura 2000 site of which qualifying interests include peat, fen or marsh. (Only Peat habitat at Bruckana – consider Galmoy fen – impact unlikely	N/A

2.3	Development of a large scale within 1km within a Natura 2000 site, whose qualifying features include fen or marsh, which involves the production of an EIS.	N/A
3	<p>Impacts on designated intertidal and marine habitats (mudflats, sandflats, estuaries, reefs and sea cliffs).</p> <p><i>Please answer the following if the answer to question 2c in table 2 was yes.</i></p> <p><i>Does the development involve any of the following:</i></p>	
3.1	Impacts on intertidal and marine habitats from potential development which are remote from the SAC/SPA but may still impact on the SAC/SPA by reason of the nature or quantity of the discharge	N/A
3.2	Development of piers, slipways, marinas, pontoons or any other infrastructure within 5km of a Natura 2000 site whose qualifying features include intertidal or marine habitats.	N/A
3.3	Dredging within 5km of a Natura 2000 site whose qualifying features include intertidal or marine habitats.	N/A
3.4	Impacts on watercourses (tributaries, streams, drains) which are remote from the SAC/SPA but may still impact on the SAC/SPA by reason of the nature or quantity of the discharge.	N/A
3.5	Removal of topsoil or infilling within 100m of Natura 2000 sites whose qualifying features include intertidal or marine habitats where potential for surface water runoff exists.	N/A
3.6	Development of a large scale within 1km of Natura 2000 sites whose qualifying features include intertidal or marine habitats, which involves the production of an EIS.	N/A
4	<p>Impacts on other designated woodlands and grasslands (woodland, upland grassland, lowland grassland, coastal grassland including dunes).</p> <p><i>Please answer the following if the answer to question 2d in table 2 was yes.</i></p> <p><i>Does the development involve any of the following:</i></p>	
4.1	Works within the boundary of a Special Area of Conservation whose qualifying interests include woodland or grassland habitat types.	N/A
4.2	Development within 200m of Natura 2000 site with woodland or grassland habitats.	N/A
4.3	Development of a large scale within 1km of Natura 2000 site with woodland, grassland or coastal habitats which involves the production of an EIS.	N/A
5	<p>Impacts on birds in SPAs</p> <p><i>Please answer the following if the answer to question 2e in table 2 was yes.</i></p> <p><i>Does the development involve any of the following:</i></p>	
5.2	Erection of wind turbines within 1km of an SPA.	N/A

5.3	All construction works within 100m of SPA (River Nore), including the development of cycle ways or walking routes	N/A
5.4	Infilling of coastal habitats within 500m of intertidal SPA.	N/A
5.5	Works within 1km of coastal SPA which will result in discharges to rivers or streams that are directly connected to designated sites.	N/A

Conclusion: If the answer to question 1 and 2a-e are no or n/a, significant impacts on habitats within Natura 2000 sites and on SPAs can be ruled out. No further assessment is required in relation to habitats or birds. If the answer to any question in table 2 is yes, you may require further information, unless you are satisfied that the project proponents have incorporated adequate mitigation into their design to avoid impacts on the Natura 2000 site (eg water pollution protection measures). Such information should be provided in the form of a Natura Impact Statement which should address the particular issues of concern as identified through the above.

Table 4: Consideration of potential impacts on protected species

Many of our Special Areas of Conservation are designated for species as well as for habitats. These are listed below, alongside the sites for which they are designated. Included is a short list of the types of activities which could have an impact on these species. Please tick if you are concerned that the proposed development could have an impact on these species.

Species	Relevant Sites	Activities which could have impacts on species	Possible Impacts Identified? Y/N
Otter	River Nore River Barrow Lower River Suir Note: Otters are a strictly protected species. All breeding sites and resting places are protected regardless of whether or not they are within or external to Special Areas of Conservation.	Activities that interfere with river banks.	No
Atlantic Salmon	River Barrow River Nore Lower River Suir	Activities that interfere with water quality, levels or the river bed;	No
River Lamprey	River Barrow River Nore Lower River Suir	Activities that interfere with water quality, levels or the river bed;	No
Brook Lamprey	River Barrow River Nore Lower River Suir	Activities that interfere with water quality, levels or the river bed;	No
Sea Lamprey	River Barrow River Nore Lower River Suir	Activities that interfere with water quality or the river bed – estuarine areas;	No
Twaite Shad	Lower River Suir	Activities that interfere with water quality or the river bed – estuarine areas;	No

Species	Relevant Sites	Activites which could have impacts on species	Possible Impacts Identified? Y/N
Crayfish	Lower River Suir	Activities that interfere with water quality or the river bed;	No
Freshwater Pearl Mussel	River Barrow River Nore Lower River Suir	Activities that interfere with water quality, levels or the river bed ;	No
Nore Freshwater Pearl Mussel	River Nore	Activities that interfere with water quality, levels or the river bed ;	No

Conclusion: If the answer to all of the above is no, significant impacts on species can be ruled out. If the answer to any of the above is yes, then further information is likely to be required in relation to potential for impact on that particular species. Where potential impacts are identified on Otters or on Bats outside designated sites, then further information should be sought in the form of a species specific survey. In these cases, appropriate assessment is not required.

Habitats Directive Screening Conclusion Statement

Development Type	Section 38 road traffic act 1945 as amended
Development Location	<i>Inistioge</i>
Natura 2000 sites within impact zone	Nor/ barrow SAC and nore SPA 100m
Planning ref Inistioge town and village renewal	
Description of the project	
<p>Upgrading of the existing streetscape using high quality paving / kerbing materials and street furniture.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Provision of new, decorative street lighting.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Revisions to existing traffic management measures including the installation of Pedestrian crossings.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Landscaping to include planters, hedging and trees</p>	
Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) could affect Natura 2000 site(s).	
No impacts	
If there are potential impacts, explain whether you consider if these are likely to be significant.	
N/A	
<p>Conclusion of assessment</p> <p>Having regard to the precautionary principle, it is considered that:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Significant impacts can be ruled out or AA not required (if project is directly connected or necessary to Management</p> <p>of Natura 2000 site (determined in consultation with NPWS).</p> <p>or</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Significant impacts are certain, likely or uncertain (cannot be ruled out), Natura Impact Statement (NIS) is required.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Project must be subject to appropriate assessment.</p>	
Documentation reviewed for making of this statement.	
Appropriate Assessment Guidelines, 2009, screening report carried out by O more group, / Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2014 – 2020 and section 38 drawings submitted	
Completed By	C. Bambrick Executive Planner
Date	07/05/2020