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**APEM** Group

## **GLENTIES OLD FIRE STATION SITE DEVELOPMENT**

**Screening for Appropriate Assessment**



**Report by Woodrow Sustainable Solutions Ltd.  
On behalf of Donegal County Council**

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## DOCUMENT CONTROL

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## STATEMENT OF AUTHORITY

This report has been written by Conn Barry, a Graduate Ecologist with Woodrow APEM Group. Conn holds an MSc in Environmental Resource Management. His academic background has made him familiar with environmental law & policy, ecosystem services, GIS and data analysis. Conn has also undertaken field work concerning hen harriers and red grouse, both of which are priority conservation species in the Republic of Ireland. Since joining Woodrow, Conn has been involved in a wide range of projects such as bat surveys, habitat surveys and community outreach programmes. He is a Qualifying member of CIEEM and is undertaking a course in wildflower identification with Atlantic Technological University Sligo.

This report has been checked and approved by Philip Doddy. Philip is a Senior Ecologist at Woodrow. He has completed a PhD in Aquatic Sciences, a BSc (Hons) in Freshwater & Marine Biology, and a Diploma in Amenity Horticulture. He is an Associate member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). Philip carries out botanical monitoring, site surveys and habitat mapping, and compiles Ecological Impact Assessments (EciAs), Appropriate Assessment (AA) screening reports, subsequent Natura Impact Reports (NISs), and vegetation monitoring reports. He has also carried out research on calcareous lakes and pools, microbial communities, and ecological succession. Philip regularly supports local community groups in their biodiversity conservation and enhancement projects. He has been instrumental in the successful application for EU conservation and environmental funding for local community groups, such as the EU Carra LIFE Project.

### **Conn Barry - Qualifications:**

MSc – Environmental Resource Management, University College Dublin, 2021.

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# Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 Legislative Context.....	1
1.2.1 Requirement for Appropriate Assessment Screening.....	1
1.2.2 Requirement for a Natura Impact Statement.....	1
1.3 Main Sources of Information .....	2
1.3.1 Desk Study .....	2
<b>2. Description and Features of the Project Area</b> .....	<b>4</b>
2.1 Location .....	4
2.2 Description of the Proposed Development .....	4
<b>3. Potential Impact on European Sites</b> .....	<b>7</b>
3.1 Zone of Influence .....	7
3.2 Conclusion of assessment of effects.....	15
<b>4. Consideration of In-Combination Impacts</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>5. Site Visit</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>6. Screening Conclusions</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>REFERENCES &amp; GUIDANCE</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>Appendix 1 – SITE PHOTOGRAPHS</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b>Appendix 2 – DETAILS OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT</b> .....	<b>20</b>

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

Woodrow Sustainable Solutions Ltd. ('Woodrow') was commissioned by Donegal County Council to undertake a Screening for Appropriate Assessment for the development of the site of the old fire station in Glenties, Co Donegal.

This Statement provides the information necessary to fulfil the requirements of Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive 1992 and Regulation 42 of the (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 in determining the potential impacts on European Sites (also known as Natura 2000 Sites) of the proposal.

## 1.2 Legislative Context

### 1.2.1 Requirement for Appropriate Assessment Screening

An Appropriate Assessment Screening provides the information necessary to fulfil the requirements of Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive<sup>1</sup> 1992 and Regulation 42 of the (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 in determining the potential impacts on European Sites of the proposal. The European Directive 92/43/EEC (The Habitats Directive) was transposed into Irish law by the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997 and European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (Habitats Regulations).

Regulation 42(1) of the 2011 Regulations requires that:

*"A screening for Appropriate Assessment of a plan or project for which an application for consent is received, or which a public authority wishes to undertake or adopt, and which is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site as a Natura 2000 site, shall be carried out by the public authority to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge and in view of the conservation objectives of the site, if that plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect on the Natura 2000 site."*

The Guidance document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitats Directive' states that:

*"Any uncertainty over the precise nature and/or magnitude of the adverse effects should be thoroughly tested. Where appropriate, a precautionary approach should be adopted, and the assessment of adverse effect based on a worse-case scenario."*<sup>2</sup>

Case law<sup>3</sup> has demonstrated that measures which are 'intended to avoid or reduce' the harmful effects of the proposed development on any relevant European Site, i.e., mitigation (such as pollution control measures), cannot be considered at the screening stage of the Appropriate Assessment process.

### 1.2.2 Requirement for a Natura Impact Statement

The Appropriate Assessment test assesses whether, in view of best scientific knowledge and applying the precautionary principle, and in light of the conservation objectives of the relevant

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<sup>1</sup> Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, as amended by Council Directive 97/62/EC. See [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/habitatsdirective/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/habitatsdirective/index_en.htm)

<sup>2</sup> European Commission (2007) Available at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/guidance\\_art6\\_4\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/guidance_art6_4_en.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> People Over Wind and Peter Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta (C-323/17); and, Heather Hill Management Company clg v An Bord Pleanála [2019] IEHC 450.

European Sites, the Proposed Development, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, may adversely affect the integrity of any European Sites.

If, following the screening process, a potential significant effect is predicted or cannot be ruled out, under Regulation 42(6) of the 2011 Habitats Regulations an Appropriate Assessment is required in order to determine the potential for impact on the integrity of a European Site.

In the case of a Screening for Appropriate Assessment having determined that potential significant effects on European Sites could not be ruled out, a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) is required under Regulation 42(6) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011. This Natura Impact Statement provides an assessment of the proposal considering potential impacts on Qualifying Interests within European Sites and provides mitigation proposals to avoid impacts on the integrity of European Sites. This allows for an audit trail through Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive to facilitate an Appropriate Assessment by a Competent Authority. As described above, case law<sup>4</sup> has illustrated that mitigation which is *'intended to avoid or reduce'* any impacts upon European Sites cannot be considered at the screening stage. Where such mitigation is required, the plan or project will 'Screen in' and there is a requirement to provide an NIS to come to a final determination. The final determination in the Appropriate Assessment process is the responsibility of the relevant Competent Authority.

## 1.3 Main Sources of Information

### 1.3.1 Desk Study

A desk study was conducted prior to the site visit to identify any European Sites and/or Qualifying Interest (QI) habitats and/or species in the vicinity of, or hydrologically connected to, the Proposed Development. The following information sources were consulted:

- National Parks and Wildlife Services Online Designation Map Viewer<sup>5</sup>;
- National Parks and Wildlife Service data (GIS datafiles<sup>6</sup>);
- EPA Online Map Viewer<sup>7</sup>;
- Donegal County Council Online Planning Map Viewer<sup>8</sup>;
- Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG, 2010 rev.). Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities;
- Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities. Circular NPWS 1/10 & PSSP 2/10;
- European Community Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) – The Habitats Directive (European Commission 1992);
- European Commission (2021) Commission Notice - Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC<sup>9</sup>;

<sup>4</sup> Case C-323/17, People Over Wind and Peter Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta Judgement 12 April 2018; Kelly v An Bord Pleanála & Anor (Aldi Stores) [2019] IEHC 84; and, Heather Hill Management Company Clg v An Bord Pleanála [2019] IEHC 450

<sup>5</sup> NPWS Designation Map Viewer [NPWS Designations Viewer \(arcgis.com\)](https://www.npws.ie/maps-and-data) (Accessed February 2023)

<sup>6</sup> NPWS Maps and Data <https://www.npws.ie/maps-and-data> (Accessed February 2023)

<sup>7</sup> EPA Map Viewer <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/> (Accessed February 2023)

<sup>8</sup> Donegal CoCo Map Viewer. Available at:

<https://donegal.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8be91e332a8f47bfbbe83add1550c666> (Accessed: February 2023)

<sup>9</sup> European Commission Notice: [https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/pdf/methodological-guidance\\_2021-10/EN.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/pdf/methodological-guidance_2021-10/EN.pdf) (Accessed December 2022)

- European Commission (2021) ANNEX to the Commission Notice - Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC<sup>10</sup>;
- European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997 (European Commission 1997);
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC (EC Environment Directorate-General, 2000);
- Managing Natura 2000 Sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2018);
- Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) (2021) OPR Practice Note PN01 Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management<sup>11</sup>;

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<sup>10</sup> European Commission Notice ANNEX: [EN annex.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>11</sup> OPR (2021): [OPR Launches its First Practice Note on Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management - The Office of the Planning Regulator](#)

## 2. DESCRIPTION AND FEATURES OF THE PROJECT AREA

### 2.1 Location

The proposed development site is located in Glenties, Co. Donegal, just off the R253 and adjacent to the N56, which runs through the town. The site comprises a disused fire station, with a recycling centre and a parking bay with capacity for 3-4 vehicles. The total area of the site is 0.05 Ha. The geographic context of the Site is shown in **Figure 1**, while an overview of the Site is presented in **Figure 2**. Site photographs are attached in **Appendix 1**.

### 2.2 Description of the Proposed Development

The proposed works are to demolish the existing structure and replace it with three two-storey houses. The proposed works comprise the following:

- Demolition of the fire station
- Construction of three two-storey houses
- Front lawns and rear gardens
- Planting of trees on the east side of the site

Further details of the Proposed Development are given in **Appendix 2**.

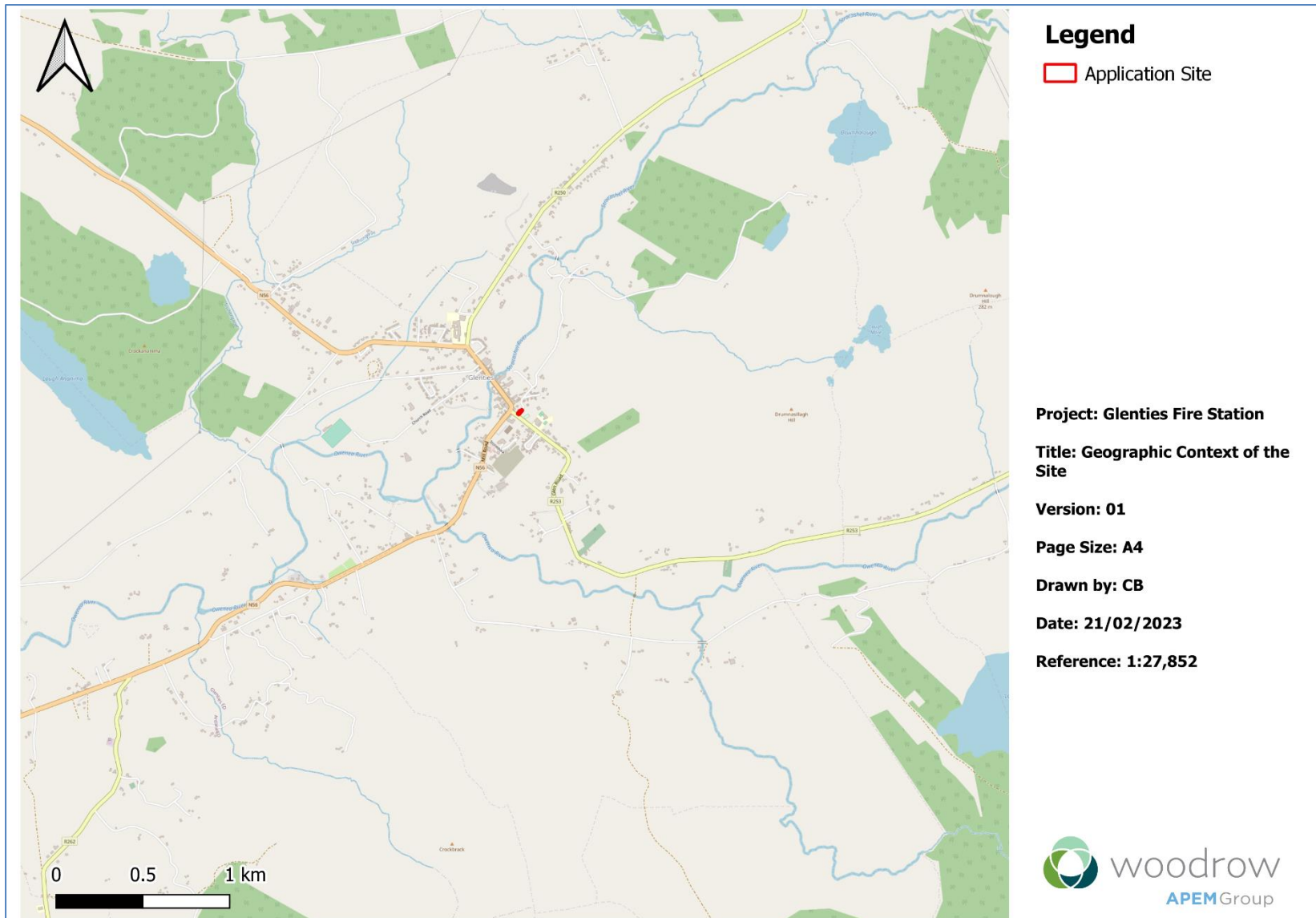


Figure 1 - Geographic context of Site



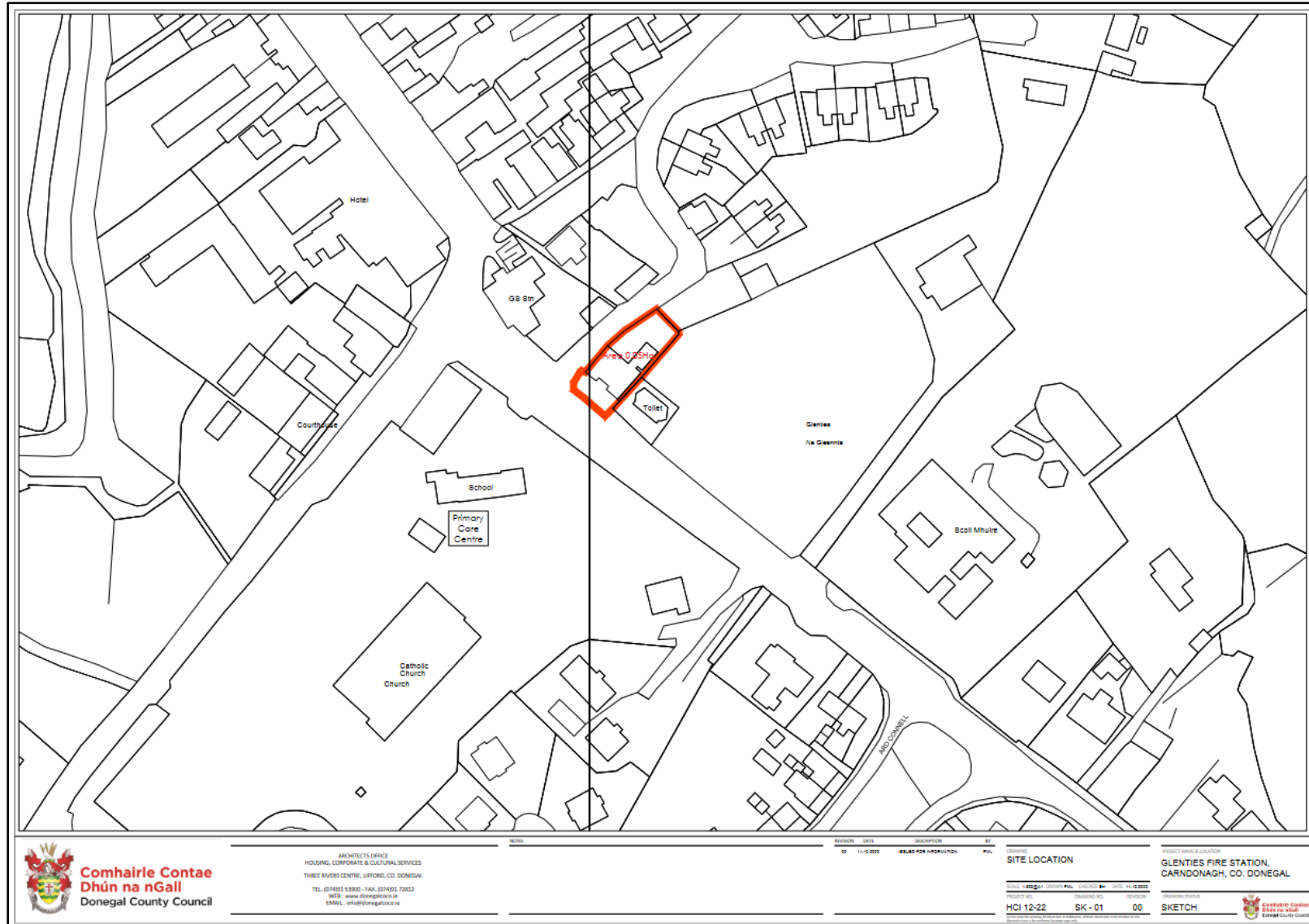


Figure 2 – Map of site location relative to surrounding urban environment (Source: Donegal County Council)

### 3. POTENTIAL IMPACT ON EUROPEAN SITES

The following sections provide information on any surrounding or connected European Sites. These are then assessed based on factors such as proximity to the proposal, their qualifying features and their conservation status. A screening matrix is then provided regarding the potential impacts and likely significant effects of the planned proposal on these designated sites.

Within each section, the sites' conservation objectives are laid out, the potential for the proposal to affect them is considered and a conclusion on the potential for the proposal to have a significant effect on the qualifying features (and therefore on the European Site) is made.

#### 3.1 Zone of Influence

The following section provides information on the European Sites in the vicinity of the proposed works which have the potential to be within the zone of influence of the proposal (all European Sites within 15 km of the proposed works are shown in **Figure 3**).

Potential impacts on designated sites are dependent on their locations, the topography and environment at the Application Site, the nature of impacts arising, the sensitivity of receptors, and the causal links and conduits. In many cases the potential Zone of Influence could be relatively small (for example when considering noise and airborne pollution), while in other cases the potential Zone of Influence could be extensive, for example if there is a hydrological connection or if a QI / SCI species ranges over areas outside a European Site for which it is a listed feature of interest (OPR, 2021).

The Steps to follow when identifying which Natura 2000 Sites may be affected by a plan or project are available from the European Commission Guidance (2021) *Commission Notice - Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*. In particular, the assessment should identify:

- Any Natura 2000 sites geographically overlapping with any of the actions or aspects of the plan or project in any of its phases, or adjacent to them;
- Any Natura 2000 sites within the likely zone of influence of the plan or project. Natura 2000 sites located in the surroundings of the plan or project (or at some distance) that could still be indirectly affected by aspects of the project, including as regards the use of natural resources (e.g., water) and various types of waste, discharge or emissions of substances or energy;
- Natura 2000 sites in the surroundings of the plan or project (or at some distance) which host fauna that can move to the project area and then suffer mortality or other impacts (e.g., loss of feeding areas, reduction of home range); and,
- Natura 2000 sites whose connectivity or ecological continuity can be affected by the plan or project.

Further information on this is also available from the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) (2021) *OPR Practice Note PN01 Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management*.

On consideration of the scale, design and location of these works, the Zone of Influence of this proposal is not considered to be greater than 0.5 km terrestrially, and potentially less. Any sites with downstream hydrological connections, if applicable, may be impacted.

European Sites within 15 km of the proposal and those within the potential zone of influence are shown in **Table 1** below. **Figure 3** illustrates the proximity of these European Sites to the proposed works.

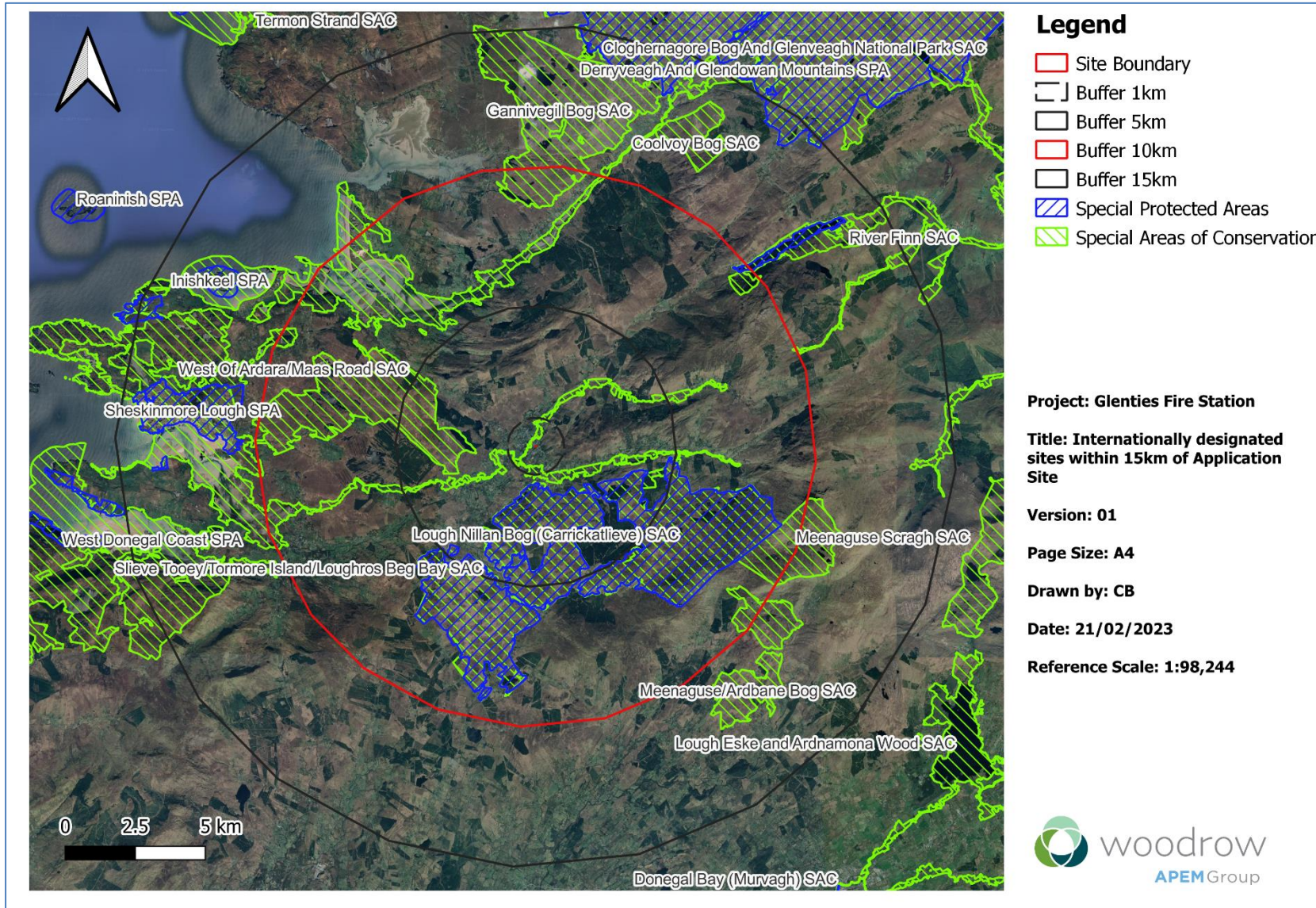


Figure 3 – Internationally designated sites within 15km of the Application Site

**Table 1 - European Sites potentially within the Zone of Influence**

Natura 2000 Site	Main features of interest * = A priority habitat – habitats which are in danger of disappearing within the EU territory, are highlighted with an asterisk	Distance from the proposal	Potential Site- Pathway-Receptor Linkage via proximity of site, and/or surface water connectivity? <sup>12</sup>
<b>Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)</b>			
<b>West of Ardara / Maas Road [000197]</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Estuaries [1130]</li> <li>• Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]</li> <li>• Large shallow inlets and bays [1160]</li> <li>• Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210]</li> <li>• Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330]</li> <li>• Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritim</i>) [1410]</li> <li>• Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]</li> <li>• Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120]</li> <li>• Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]</li> <li>• Decalcified fixed dunes with <i>Empetrum nigrum</i> [2140]</li> <li>• Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (<i>Calluno-Ulicetea</i>) [2150]</li> <li>• Dunes with <i>Salix repens</i> ssp. <i>argentea</i> (<i>Salicion arenariae</i>) [2170]</li> <li>• Humid dune slacks [2190]</li> <li>• Machairs (* in Ireland) [21A0]</li> <li>• Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110]</li> <li>• Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or <i>Isoeto-Nanojuncetea</i> [3130]</li> <li>• Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010]</li> <li>• European dry heaths [4030]</li> <li>• Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060]</li> </ul>	c. 165 m	No

<sup>12</sup> EPA Maps <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/> provides online mapping for rivers, streams, flow direction arrows, ground water vulnerability layers and designated sites for Ireland and parts Northern Ireland etc. – This website was used to assess the potential for connectivity of watercourses and ground water from the proposal to Natura 2000 sites.

Natura 2000 Site	Main features of interest * = A priority habitat – habitats which are in danger of disappearing within the EU territory, are highlighted with an asterisk	Distance from the proposal	Potential Site- Pathway-Receptor Linkage via proximity of site, and/or surface water connectivity? <sup>12</sup>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands [5130]</li> <li>• Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (* important orchid sites) [6210]</li> <li>• <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410]</li> <li>• Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>, <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>) [6510]</li> <li>• Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]</li> <li>• Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150]</li> <li>• Alkaline fens [7230]</li> <li>• <i>Vertigo geyeri</i> (Geyer's Whorl Snail) [1013]</li> <li>• <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029]</li> <li>• <i>Euphydryas aurinia</i> (Marsh Fritillary) [1065]</li> <li>• <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106]</li> <li>• <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]</li> <li>• <i>Phoca vitulina</i> (Harbour Seal) [1365]</li> <li>• <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (Petalwort) [1395]</li> <li>• <i>Najas flexilis</i> (Slender Naiad) [1833]</li> </ul>		
<b>Lough Nillan Bog (Carrickatlieve) SAC [000165]</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110]</li> <li>• Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]</li> </ul>	c. 1.25 km	No
<b>Slieve Tooley/Tormore Island/Loughros Beg Bay SAC [000190]</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]</li> <li>• Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330]</li> <li>• Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]</li> <li>• Embryonic shifting dunes [2110]</li> </ul>	c.10 km	No

Natura 2000 Site	Main features of interest * = A priority habitat – habitats which are in danger of disappearing within the EU territory, are highlighted with an asterisk	Distance from the proposal	Potential Site- Pathway-Receptor Linkage via proximity of site, and/or surface water connectivity? <sup>12</sup>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120]</li> <li>• Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130]</li> <li>• Decalcified fixed dunes with <i>Empetrum nigrum</i> [2140]</li> <li>• Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (<i>Calluno-Ulicetea</i>) [2150]</li> <li>• Dunes with <i>Salix repens</i> ssp. <i>argentea</i> (<i>Salicion arenariae</i>) [2170]</li> <li>• Humid dune slacks [2190]</li> <li>• Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060]</li> <li>• Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]</li> <li>• <i>Vertigo angustior</i> (Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail) [1014]</li> <li>• <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]</li> <li>• <i>Halichoerus grypus</i> (Grey Seal) [1364]</li> </ul>		
<b>Meenaguse/Ardbane Bog SAC [000172]</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]</li> </ul>	c.8.5 km	No
<b>Meenaguse Scragh SAC [001880]</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010]</li> </ul>	c. 8 km	No
<b>River Finn SAC [002301]</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110]</li> <li>• Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010]</li> <li>• Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]</li> <li>• Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140]</li> <li>• <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106]</li> <li>• <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]</li> </ul>	c. 13 km	No

Natura 2000 Site	Main features of interest * = A priority habitat – habitats which are in danger of disappearing within the EU territory, are highlighted with an asterisk	Distance from the proposal	Potential Site- Pathway-Receptor Linkage via proximity of site, and/or surface water connectivity? <sup>12</sup>
<b>Cloghernagore Bog and Glenveagh National Park SAC [002047]</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110]</li> <li>• Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260]</li> <li>• Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010]</li> <li>• European dry heaths [4030]</li> <li>• Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060]</li> <li>• Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinia caeruleae</i>) [6410]</li> <li>• Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]</li> <li>• Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150]</li> <li>• Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0]</li> <li>• <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029]</li> <li>• <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106]</li> <li>• <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]</li> <li>• <i>Trichomanes speciosum</i> (Killarney Fern) [1421]</li> </ul>	c. 14 km	No
<b>Gannivegil Bog SAC [000142]</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110]</li> <li>• Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010]</li> <li>• Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]</li> </ul>	c. 8.5 km	No
<b>Special Protection Areas (SPAs)</b>			
<b>Lough Nillan Bog SPA [004110]</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>) [A098]</li> <li>• Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140]</li> <li>• Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395]</li> </ul>	c. 1.25 km	No



Natura 2000 Site	Main features of interest * = A priority habitat – habitats which are in danger of disappearing within the EU territory, are highlighted with an asterisk	Distance from the proposal	Potential Site- Pathway-Receptor Linkage via proximity of site, and/or surface water connectivity? <sup>12</sup>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina schinzii</i>) [A466]</li> </ul>		
<b>West Donegal Coast SPA [004150]</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) [A009]</li> <li>Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017]</li> <li>Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) [A018]</li> <li>Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>) [A103]</li> <li>Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184]</li> <li>Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188]</li> <li>Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>) [A200]</li> <li>Chough (<i>Pyrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>) [A346]</li> </ul>	c. 13 km	No
<b>Sheskinmore Lough SPA [004090]</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395]</li> </ul>	c. 10.5 km	No
<b>Derryveagh And Glendowan Mountains SPA [004039]</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Red-throated Diver (<i>Gavia stellata</i>) [A001]</li> <li>Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>) [A098]</li> <li>Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>) [A103]</li> <li>Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140]</li> <li>Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina schinzii</i>) [A466]</li> </ul>	c. 9.5 km	No

### 3.2 Conclusion of assessment of effects

The proposed works occur within 15 km of the boundary of twelve European Sites as listed in **Table 1** above. These sites are not considered to have hydrological or ecological connections with the Application Site.

## 4. CONSIDERATION OF IN-COMBINATION IMPACTS

Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive and Regulation 15 of the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations state that any plan or project that may, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, significantly affect a Natura 2000 site should be the subject of an Appropriate Assessment. The assessment of in-combination impacts is therefore an important part of the screening process.

In-combination impacts can be an issue when proposals have a small impact on European Sites as a result of factors such as disturbance or pollution. If other proposals also have a further small impact, the combined result can be a significant impact on the European Site.

**Table 2** below outlines planning applications in the vicinity of the proposed works.

**Table 2: Consideration of In-Combination Impacts**

Planning Reference	Description of works	Distance from proposed development	Grant date
1751349	replacement of a canopy over the main entrance. the proposed works will consist in the removal of the existing canopy and replacement with a new glass roof canopy with two supporting columns	c. 60m northwest	28/11/2017
1751595	development including the erection of a thatched canopy over the premises main entrance and a thatched roof to front elevation to the southeast gable projection	c. 60m north-northwest	29/08/2018
1851009	extension and renovation of existing dwelling house with connection to existing services and all associated site development works	c. 50m southeast	19/09/2018

A search of Donegal County Council's online planning application highlighted small developments near the proposed works at Glenties Fire Station which have received planning permission since 2016. Given the nature of other proposed developments in the locality, the majority of which are small and residential, and the absence of connectivity with European Sites, it is considered that there will be no likely significant in-combination effects arising from the proposed works.

## 5. SITE VISIT

A site visit was conducted on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023 to investigate the potential for the proposed development at the site to have a significant impact on any European designated sites. The area in the immediate vicinity of the site is built land, and no rivers or streams connecting the site to any European Sites were evident.

## 6. SCREENING CONCLUSIONS

According to DoHELG (2010), the Appropriate Assessment Stage 1: Screening exercise can result in one of three conditions:

- *An Appropriate Assessment is not required i.e., where the plan/proposal is associated with the management of the site;*
- *There is no potential for significant effects i.e., Appropriate Assessment is not required; or,*
- *Significant effects are certain, likely, or uncertain i.e., the project must either proceed to Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment or be rejected.*

The Proposal is not connected with or necessary for the management of any European Sites.

Due to the relatively small-scale nature of the proposed works, the absence of QI habitats and species at the works location, and the lack of hydrological and ecological pathways to any European Sites, it has been concluded that there is no potential for likely significant effects to occur in relation to European Sites.

**Following the precautionary principle, and in view of best scientific knowledge, it is determined that there is no potential for likely significant effects on any European Sites as a result of this proposal. The proposal is therefore considered to screen out, and it is considered that there is no requirement for further Appropriate Assessment, in the form of an NIS, in this case.**

## REFERENCES & GUIDANCE

- CIEEM (2018) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland – Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine. (Version 1.1. Updated 2019)
- CIRIA (2001) Control of water pollution from construction sites. Guidance for consultants and contractors.
- DoEHLG (2010) Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities.
- Donegal County Council Online Planning Map Viewer. Available at: <https://donegal.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8be91e332a8f47bfbbe83add1550c666> [Accessed: February 2023]
- EC 2021. Commission notice Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites – Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC 2021/C 437/01
- EPA Envision Mapping Tool. Available online at: <http://gis.epa.ie/Envision>
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- European Community Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) – The Habitats Directive.
- European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997.
- European Commission Environment DG (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.
- OPR (2021). OPR Practice Note PN01 Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management. Office of the Planning Regulator, March 2021

## APPENDIX 1 – SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



**Plate 1:** West side of old fire station



**Plate 2:** North side of old fire station



**Plate 3:** Recycling area on north side of old fire station







**Plate 4:** Narrow passage on east side of site.



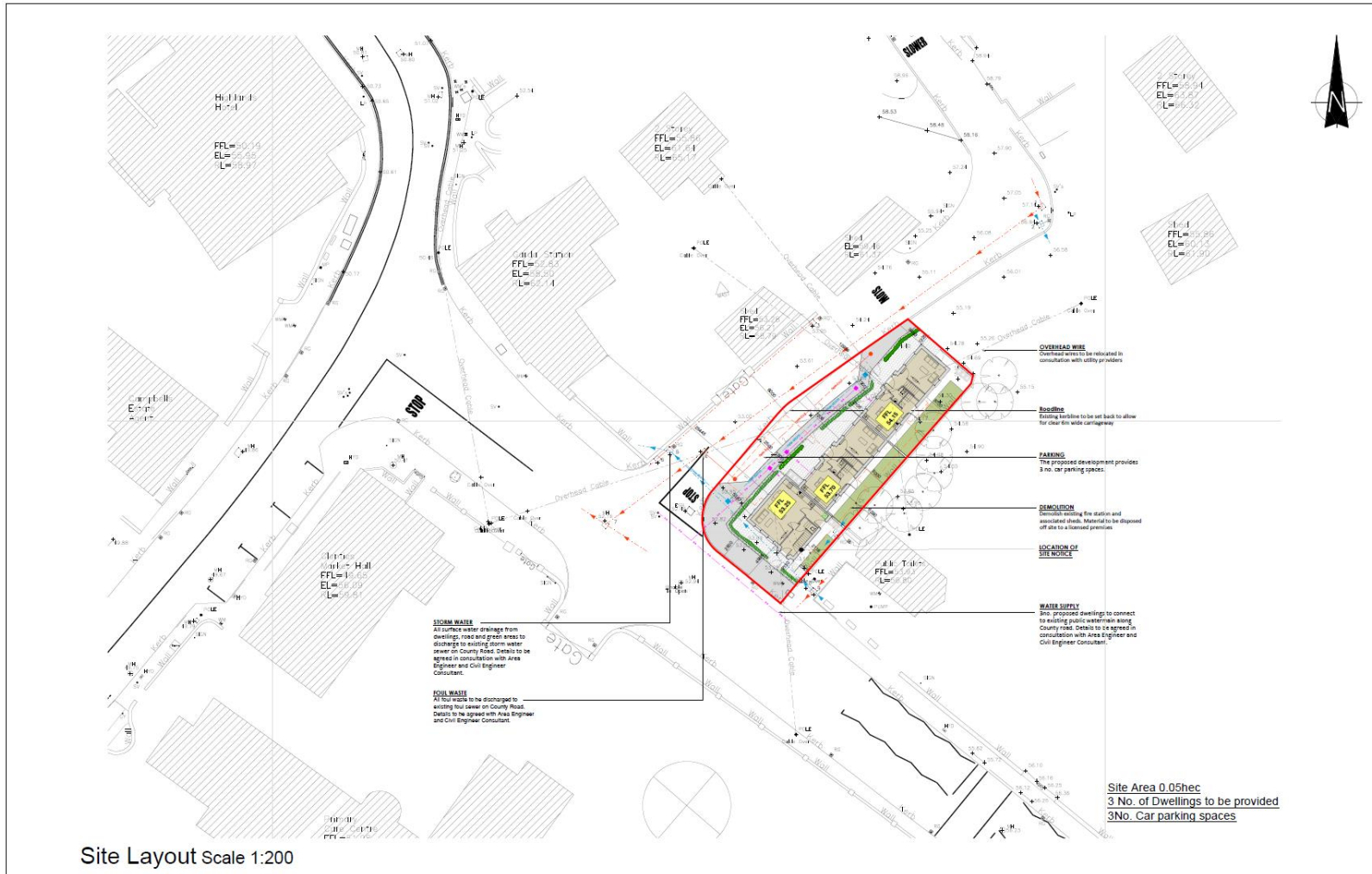
**Plate 5:** Road sloping south-westward on west side of site.



**Plate 6:** Main road sloping north-westward leading from site

	
<p><b>Plate 7:</b> Manhole in passage adjacent to fire station.</p>	<p><b>Plate 8:</b> Overview of Stracashel River, which forms part of West of Ardara / Maas Road SAC.</p>
	
<p><b>Plate 9:</b> Area around Stracashel River which has been converted into civic amenity area.</p>	<p><b>Plate 10:</b> Banks cut away and lined with stones.</p>

# APPENDIX 2 – DETAILS OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT



Site Layout Scale 1:200

<p><b>Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall</b> Donegal County Council</p>	<p>ARCHITECTS OFFICE HOUSING, CORPORATE &amp; CULTURAL SERVICES THREE RIVERS CENTRE LIFROOD, CO. DONEGAL TEL: (071) 21 2300 - FAX: (071) 31 7122 WEB: www.donegalcoo.ie EMAIL: info@donegalcoo.ie</p>	<p>NOTES</p>	<p>REVISION DATE DESCRIPTION BY</p>	<p>DRAWING</p>	<p>PROJECT NAME &amp; LOCATION Former Glenties Fire Station, Glenties Co. Donegal</p>
			<p>SCALE 1:200 DRAWN: NMS CHECKED: EN DATE: Feb 25</p>	<p>DRAWING NO. P8-03</p>	

