



AA Screening Report & Determination in respect of Letterkenny 2040-Reimagined Market Square

STEP 1. Description of the project/proposal and local site characteristics:

(a) File Reference No:	LK2040/RMS
(b) Brief description of the project or plan:	<p>The proposed Part 8 scheme entitled 'Market Square Reimagined' provides for the redevelopment of an existing area of public realm to create an enhanced public space that is visually and physically open and accessible and which has the capacity to be used as a dynamic, multi-user space. Specifically, it involves:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">i. Demolition and removal of existing public realm environment at Market Square inclusive of removal of existing bandstand and adjoining embankment at rear, steps, walls, trees, shrubbery and planting.ii. Construction of a new public realm environment inclusive of a new shared surface, traffic calming, stepped access to Main Street, 2 no. public plaza's including water feature, connecting accessibility infrastructure and integrated low-level planting, modified carriageways/junctions/footpaths, new public seating, lighting, street furniture and cycle stands delivering an enhanced capacity for civic events and social purpose and to ensure all abilities access.iii. Installation of public art inclusive of Letterkenny 2040 brand logo and historical/heritage and place-related information.iv. Relocation of existing sculpture known as 'the Rabble Children' within the new public realm environment.v. Removal of existing car parking/loading bays/taxi ranks from within Market Square and replacement with enhanced pedestrian civic spaces throughout the scheme.vi. Removal of 2 no. existing disabled car parking spaces located in front of Market Square and construction of 3 no. replacement disabled car parking spaces located to the front of Market Centre.vii. Removal of existing taxi rank located in front of Market Centre and construction of new

	<p>replacement taxi rank on Main Street in lieu of 6 no. existing on-street parking spaces.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> viii. Revised parking arrangements on Main Street ix. All associated ancillary works to include regrading of existing profiles, enhancements to public lighting, drainage and utilities, connection to services, landscaping, development related signage & public art within the overall development area <p>All works shall be located in Market Square, Castle Street and Main Street, Letterkenny in the townland of Letterkenny and in the Letterkenny & Milford Municipal District.</p>
<p>(c) Brief description of site characteristics:</p>	<p>The site for the proposed development comprises 0.4ha in area and is located in Letterkenny, County Donegal. The site is a town centre location in the historic core of the urban area and located adjoining Main Street, Market Square and Castle Street. The site is an existing public realm area comprising (i) paved areas, bandstand, rubble children sculpture, walls, steps, seating, public lighting, trees and shrubbery (ii) a number of roadways (iii) car parking, loading bays, taxi ranks (iv) existing surface water drainage.</p> <p>There are no other naturally occurring watercourses on the site.</p> <p>The site slopes downward generally from Northwest to South East i.e. from Mountsouthwell Terrace to Main Street.</p> <p>The site is surrounded on all boundaries by built-up, long established urban infrastructure in terraced streetscape form of mixed-use type including commercial, residential, retail, service, financial and entertainment, reflective of its town centre location.</p> <p>The subject site is not located within or immediately adjacent to any Natura/European site.</p>
<p>(d) Relevant prescribed bodies consulted: e.g. DHLGH (NPWS), EPA, OPW</p>	<p>--</p>
<p>(e) Response to consultation:</p>	<p>--</p>

STEP 2. Identification of relevant Natura 2000 sites using Source-Pathway-Receptor model and compilation of information on Qualifying Interests and conservation objectives.

European Site (code)	List of Qualifying Interest/Special Conservation Interest ¹	Distance from proposed development ² (km)	Connections (Source-Pathway-Receptor)	Considered further in screening Y/N
Lough Swilly SAC [002287]	<p>Habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [1130] Estuaries ▪ [1150] Coastal lagoons ▪ [1330] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) ▪ [6410] <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) ▪ [91A0] Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles <p>Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [1355] Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) <p>https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002287.pdf</p>	1.5km	<p>Yes</p> <p>Weak hydrological connection exists through:</p> <p>(i) Location of the site within the same hydrological catchment as the Lough Swilly SAC.</p> <p>and</p> <p>(ii) Surface water and wastewater from the site passes through Letterkenny Wastewater Treatment Plant which discharges via outfall to the upper reaches of Lough Swilly Estuary.</p>	Yes- see step 3
Leannan River SAC [002176]	<p>Habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [3110] Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) ▪ [3130] Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or <i>Isoeto-Nanojuncetea</i> <p>Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [1029] Freshwater Pearl Mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>) ▪ [1106] Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) ▪ [1355] Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) ▪ [1833] Slender Naiad (<i>Najas flexilis</i>) <p>https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002176.pdf</p>	6.8km	<p>No</p> <p>Leannan River SAC lies in a separate hydrological sub catchment and groundwater area to the proposed works area and is remote from the proposed site and separated by existing roads, buildings and agricultural lands therefore no pathway exists for direct or indirect effects.</p>	No
Ballyarr Wood SAC [000116]	<p>Habitats</p> <p>[91A0] Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles</p> <p>https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000116.pdf</p>	8.4km	<p>No</p> <p>Due to distance of the Ballyarr Woods SAC from the proposed works area and its</p>	No

			separation from the proposed works area by existing roads, buildings and agricultural lands and the nature of designated Qualifying Interests as terrestrial only, no pathway exists for direct or indirect effects.	
Cloghernagore Bog And Glenveagh National Park SAC [002047]	<p>Habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [3110] Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) ▪ [3260] Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation ▪ [4010] Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> ▪ [4030] European dry heaths ▪ [4060] Alpine and Boreal heaths ▪ [6410] <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) ▪ [7130] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) ▪ [7150] Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> ▪ [91A0] Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles <p>Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [1029] Freshwater Pearl Mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>) ▪ [1106] Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) ▪ [1355] Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) ▪ [1421] Killarney Fern (<i>Trichomanes speciosum</i>) <p>https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002047.pdf</p>	12.6km	No	No
River Finn SAC [002301]	<p>Habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [3110] Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) ▪ [4010] Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> ▪ [7130] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) ▪ [7140] Transition mires and quaking bogs <p>Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [1106] Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) ▪ [1355] Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) <p>https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002301.pdf</p>	12.6km	No	No

<p>Meentygrannagh Bog SAC [000173]</p>	<p>Habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [7130] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) ▪ [7140] Transition mires and quaking bogs ▪ [7230] Alkaline fens <p>Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [6216] Slender Green Feather-moss (<i>Hamatocaulis vernicosus</i>) <p>https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000173.pdf</p>	<p>14.4km</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Due to distance of the Meentygrannagh Bog SAC from the proposed works area and its separation from the proposed works area by existing roads, buildings and agricultural lands and the nature of designated Qualifying Interests as terrestrial only, no pathway exists for direct or indirect effects.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Lough Swilly SPA [004075]</p>	<p>Birds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [A005] Great Crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>) ▪ [A028] Grey Heron (<i>Ardea cinerea</i>) ▪ [A038] Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) ▪ [A043] Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>) ▪ [A048] Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) ▪ [A050] Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) ▪ [A052] Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) ▪ [A053] Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>) ▪ [A056] Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) ▪ [A062] Scaup (<i>Aythya marila</i>) ▪ [A067] Goldeneye (<i>Bucephala clangula</i>) ▪ [A069] Red-breasted Merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>) ▪ [A125] Coot (<i>Fulica atra</i>) ▪ [A130] Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) ▪ [A143] Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) ▪ [A149] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) ▪ [A160] Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) ▪ [A162] Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) ▪ [A164] Greenshank (<i>Tringa nebularia</i>) ▪ [A179] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) ▪ [A182] Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) ▪ [A191] Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>) ▪ [A193] Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) ▪ [A395] Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) <p>Habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [A999] Wetland and Waterbirds <p>https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO004075.pdf</p>	<p>2.4km</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Weak hydrological connection exists through:</p> <p>(iii) Location of the site within the same hydrological catchment as the Lough Swilly SAC.</p> <p>And</p> <p>(ii) Surface water and wastewater from the site passes through Letterkenny Wastewater Treatment Plant which discharges via outfall to the upper reaches of Lough Swilly Estuary.</p> <p>In addition, there is no habitat connection as there is no supporting habitat for the SCI species of the SPA on or surrounding the site of the proposed development.</p>	<p>Yes- see step 3</p>

<p>Lough Fern SPA [004060]</p>	<p>Birds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [A059] Pochard (<i>Aythya ferina</i>) <p>Habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [A999] Wetland and Waterbirds <p>https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO004060.pdf</p>	<p>9.9km</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Lough Fern SPA lies in a separate hydrological sub catchment and groundwater area to the proposed works area and is remote from the proposed site and separated by existing roads, buildings and agricultural lands therefore no pathway exists for direct or indirect effects.</p> <p>In addition, there is no habitat connection as there is no supporting habitat within the footprint of the works area for SCI species associated with this SPA.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Derryveagh And Glendowan Mountains SPA [004039]</p>	<p>Birds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [A001] Red-throated Diver (<i>Gavia stellata</i>) ▪ [A098] Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>) ▪ [A103] Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>) ▪ [A140] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) ▪ [A466] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina schinzii</i>) <p>https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO004039.pdf</p>	<p>11.4km</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Derryveagh And Glendowan Mountains SPA lies in a separate hydrological sub catchment and groundwater area to the proposed works area and is remote from the proposed site and separated by existing roads, buildings and agricultural lands therefore no pathway exists for direct or indirect effects.</p> <p>In addition, there is no habitat connection as there is no supporting habitat within the footprint of the proposed works area for SCI species associated with the Derryveagh And Glendowan Mountains SPA.</p>	<p>No</p>

¹ Short paraphrasing and/or cross reference to NPWS is acceptable – it is not necessary to reproduce the full text on the QI/SCI.

² If the site or part thereof is within the European site or adjacent to the European site, state here.

STEP 3. Assessment of Likely Significant Effects

(a) Identify all potential direct and indirect impacts that may have an effect on the conservation objectives of a European site, taking into account the size and scale of the project under the following headings:

Impacts:	Possible Significance of Impacts: (duration/magnitude etc.)
<p>Construction phase e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation clearance • Demolition • Surface water runoff from soil excavation/infill/landscaping (including borrow pits) • Dust, noise, vibration • Lighting disturbance • Impact on groundwater/dewatering • Storage of excavated/construction materials • Access to site • Pests 	<p>Having regard to the location of the proposed works within an urban environment, at a remove from the Lough Swilly SAC and SPA and served by urban drainage systems together with the absence of any other naturally formed watercourse on the site with the potential to have hydraulic connectivity to any sensitive watercourses, it is concluded that the construction phase will not result in significant environmental impacts that could affect the Lough Swilly SAC or SPA or European Sites within the wider catchment area.</p> <p>In addition, the construction phase will be carried out in accordance with detailed design methodologies to ensure that any potential impacts on water by any construction activities are either eliminated, or, if such an event were to occur are reduced to low levels. As a consequence, potential impacts on water quality are imperceptible due to the absence of naturally occurring watercourses onsite with the potential to have hydraulic connectivity to any sensitive watercourses. While detailed design methodologies will be engaged during the construction phase, these are not required to avoid or reduce any effects on a European site. These measures are not relied upon to reach a conclusion of no likely significant effects on any European site during the construction phase.</p>
<p>Operational phase e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct emission to air and water • Surface water runoff containing contaminant or sediment • Lighting disturbance • Noise/vibration • Changes to water/groundwater due to drainage or abstraction • Presence of people, vehicles and activities • Physical presence of structures (e.g. collision risks) • Potential for accidents or incidents 	<p>All surface water runoff once the development is occupied and operational will be contained on site and discharged to urban drainage systems. In addition, the proposed development is to enhance an existing urban environment of public realm typology therefore there will be no change in the operational phase.</p> <p>The development will provide a public realm/civic space and as a result no wastewater discharge will occur.</p> <p>The hydrological connections are therefore indirect and weak such that there is no ecological pathway or functional link between the proposed development and European sites that would result in the potential for significant effects during the operational phase.</p>
<p>In-combination/Other</p>	<p>All extant developments and future phase(s) of development permitted or planned under the Councils wider Letterkenny 2040 Regeneration programme for the town centre are or will be similarly served by urban drainage systems and the Letterkenny Wastewater Treatment Plant.</p> <p>An NIR was prepared for the County Donegal Development Plan 2018-2024 which included a 'town centre' zoning objective for the subject site. No likely</p>

significant effects on any European site were identified.

No likely significant in-combination effects are identified.

(b) Describe any likely changes to the European site:

Examples of the type of changes to give consideration to include:

- Reduction or fragmentation of habitat area
- Disturbance to QI species
- Habitat or species fragmentation
- Reduction or fragmentation in species density
- Changes in key indicators of conservation status value (water or air quality etc.)
- Changes to areas of sensitivity or threats to QI
- Interference with the key relationships that define the structure or ecological function of the site

None.

The application site is not located adjacent or within a European site, therefore there is no risk of habitat loss or fragmentation or any effects on QI species directly or ex-situ.

The existing environment includes a WWTP and urban drainage systems and there are no watercourses on the site.

The location of the proposed development is within an established built-up town centre urban environment that currently functions as an area of existing paved public realm and surrounding public roads which taken together with the separation distance between the proposed development and any European Sites and the absence of any watercourse on or in the vicinity of the site, results in a weak and indirect ecological pathway such that the proposal will not result in any likely changes to the European sites that comprise part of the Natura 2000 network.

(c) Are 'mitigation' measures necessary to reach a conclusion that likely significant effects can be ruled out at screening?

Yes No

No

While detailed design methodologies will be engaged during the construction phase, these are not required to avoid or reduce any effects on a European site. These measures are not relied upon to reach a conclusion of no likely significant effects on any European site during the construction phase.

Step 4. Screening Determination Statement



The assessment of significance of effects:

Describe how the proposed development (alone or in-combination) is/is **not likely** to have **significant** effects on European site(s) in view of its conservation objectives.

On the basis of the information on file, which is considered adequate to undertake a screening determination and having regard to:

- the nature and scale of the proposed development on fully serviced urban lands,
- the nature and scale of the proposed development as an enhancement of an existing paved public realm area and associated infrastructure,
- the intervening land uses and distance from European sites,
- the lack of direct connections with regard to the Source-Pathway-Receptor model,

it is concluded that the proposed development, individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, would not be likely to have a significant effect on the above listed European sites or any other European site, in view of the said sites' conservation objectives. An appropriate assessment is not, therefore, required.

Conclusion:		
	Tick as Appropriate:	Recommendation:
(i) It is clear that there is no likelihood of significant effects on a European site.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The proposal can be screened out: Appropriate assessment not required.
(ii) It is uncertain whether the proposal will have a significant effect on a European site.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Request further information to complete screening <input type="checkbox"/> Request NIS <input type="checkbox"/> Refuse planning permission
(iii) Significant effects are likely.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Request NIS <input type="checkbox"/> Refuse planning permission
Signature and Date of Recommending Officer:	 4th July 2022	
Signature and Date of the Decision Maker:	 4th July 2022	



**Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall**
Donegal County Council

Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report of proposed Part 8 development 'Reimagined Market Square, Letterkenny.'

In Line with the Requirements of Article 6 (3) of the EU
Habitats Directive

Regeneration and Development Team
Directorate of Community Development & Planning Services
July 2022

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Donegal County Council proposes to carry out a local authority own development in the townland of Letterkenny in Letterkenny town centre in accordance with the provisions of Part XI of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

The proposed Part 8 scheme entitled 'Market Square Reimagined' provides for the redevelopment of an existing area of public realm to create an enhanced public space that is visually and physically open and accessible and which has the capacity to be used as a dynamic, multi-user space. The location of the proposed development is at Market Square, Castle Street and Main Street, Letterkenny.

Screening for Appropriate Assessment is required under Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive). Where it cannot be excluded that a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, would have a significant effect on a European Site then same shall be subject to an appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. The current project is not directly connected with, or necessary for, the management of any European Site consequently the project has been subject to the Appropriate Assessment Screening process.

This Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been prepared in accordance with the European Commission's Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological Guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2021) and Managing Natura 2000 Sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2018) as well as the Department of the Environment's Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG, 2010) and the OPR Practice Note PN01 on Appropriate Assessment, 2021.

In addition to the guidelines referenced above, the following relevant documents were also considered in the preparation of this report:

1. Council of the European Commission (1992) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. Official Journal of the European Communities. Series L 20, pp. 7-49.
2. EC (2000) Managing Natura 2000 Sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.
3. EC (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 interest, compensatory measures, overall coherence. Opinion of the commission.
4. EC (2013) Interpretation Manual of European Union Habitats. Version EUR 28. European Commission.

This document comprises the information necessary to enable a screening determination as regards Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (92/443/EEC) screening for Appropriate Assessment of the proposed development entitled 'Reimagined Market Square' at Letterkenny town centre.

Natura 2000 sites are protected habitats for flora and fauna of European importance and comprise Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC).

1.2 Legislative Context

1.2.1 Habitats Directive and Appropriate Assessment

The aim of the EU Habitats Directive is to promote the maintenance of biodiversity, taking account of economic, social, cultural and regional requirements. The Directive recognises that in the European territory of the Member States, natural habitats are continuing to deteriorate and an increasing number of wild species are seriously threatened. In order to ensure the restoration or maintenance of natural habitats and species of Community interest at a favourable conservation status, it is necessary for Member States to designate special areas of conservation in order to create a coherent European ecological network. Criteria for site designation are set out in the Directive. The network of sites is referred to as Natura 2000 and includes SACs (including candidate SACs) and SPAs (including proposed SPAs).

The Natura 2000 network of European sites is comprised of sites of highest biodiversity importance for rare and threatened habitats and species across the EU. SACs are selected for the conservation of habitats listed in Annex I of the Habitats Directive, and for species of animals (other than birds) and plants listed in Annex II. SPAs are selected for the conservation of birds listed in Annex I of the Birds Directive (Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (codified version of Council Directive 79/409/EEC as amended)) and other regularly occurring migratory birds and their habitats. The annexed habitats and species for which each site has been selected are the qualifying interests of the sites, and the conservation objectives of the site are based on these qualifying interests.

Crucially, the Habitats Directive requires that an AA must be made of any plan or programme that is likely to have a significant effect on the conservation objectives of designated sites i.e. on SACs or SPAs, before any decision can be made to allow that plan or project to proceed. Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive states that:

“Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the [Natura 2000] 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.”

Screening is the process of determining whether an Appropriate Assessment is required for a plan or project. Under Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, screening must be carried out by the Competent Authority. As per Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended 'A screening for appropriate assessment shall be carried out by the competent authority to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if that Land use plan or proposed development, individually or in combination with another plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on the European site'.

The Competent Authority's determination as to whether an Appropriate Assessment is required must be made on the basis of objective information and should be recorded. Where it cannot be excluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt at the Screening stage, that a proposed plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, would have a significant effect on the conservation objectives of a European site, an Appropriate Assessment is required.

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

2 Description of the Proposed Works

2.1 Site Location

The proposed works area is located in Letterkenny town centre adjoining Main Street, Market Square and Castle Street, in the townland of Letterkenny. The site is located in within the historic centre of the town and is surrounded by mixed use urban development. Images 1 and 2 show the location of the site.

Image 1: Site location and site extent

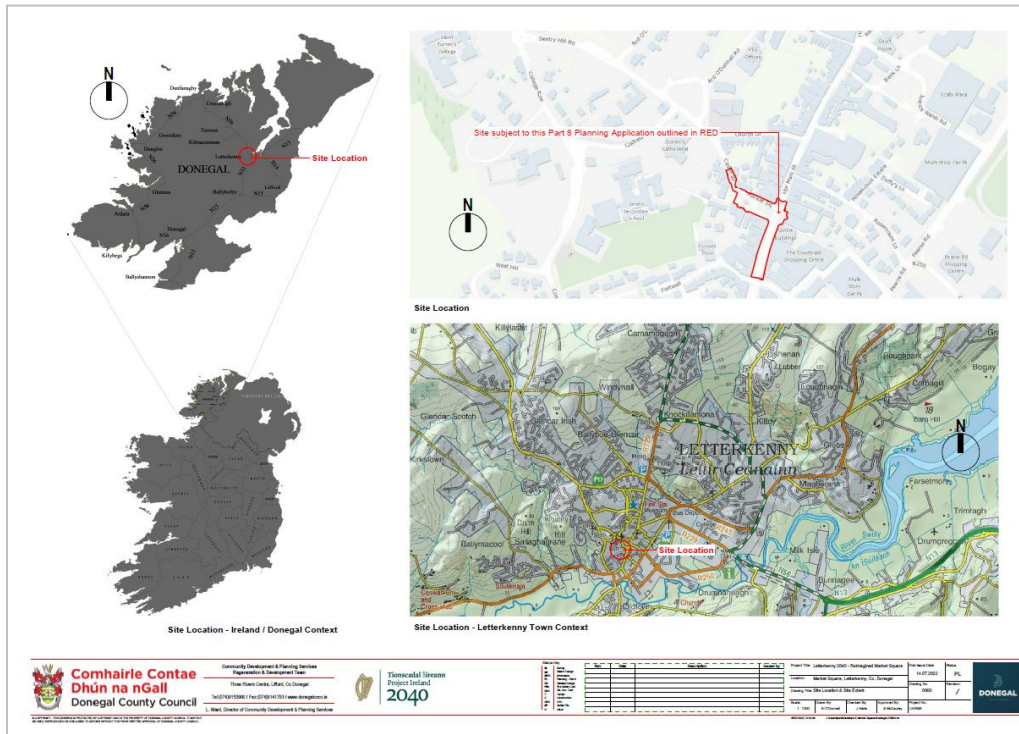
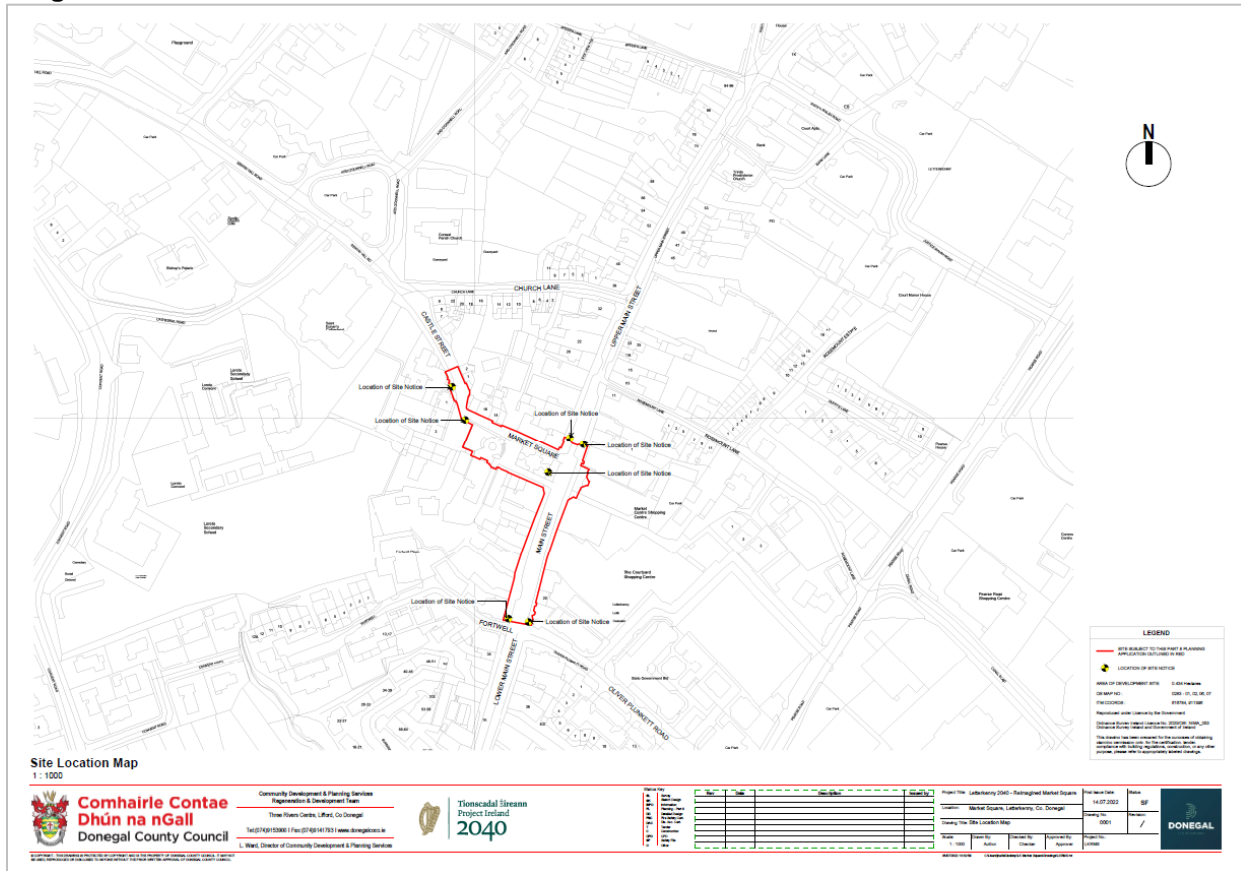


Image 2: Site location



2.2 Characteristics of the Proposed Works

2.2.1 Description of the project

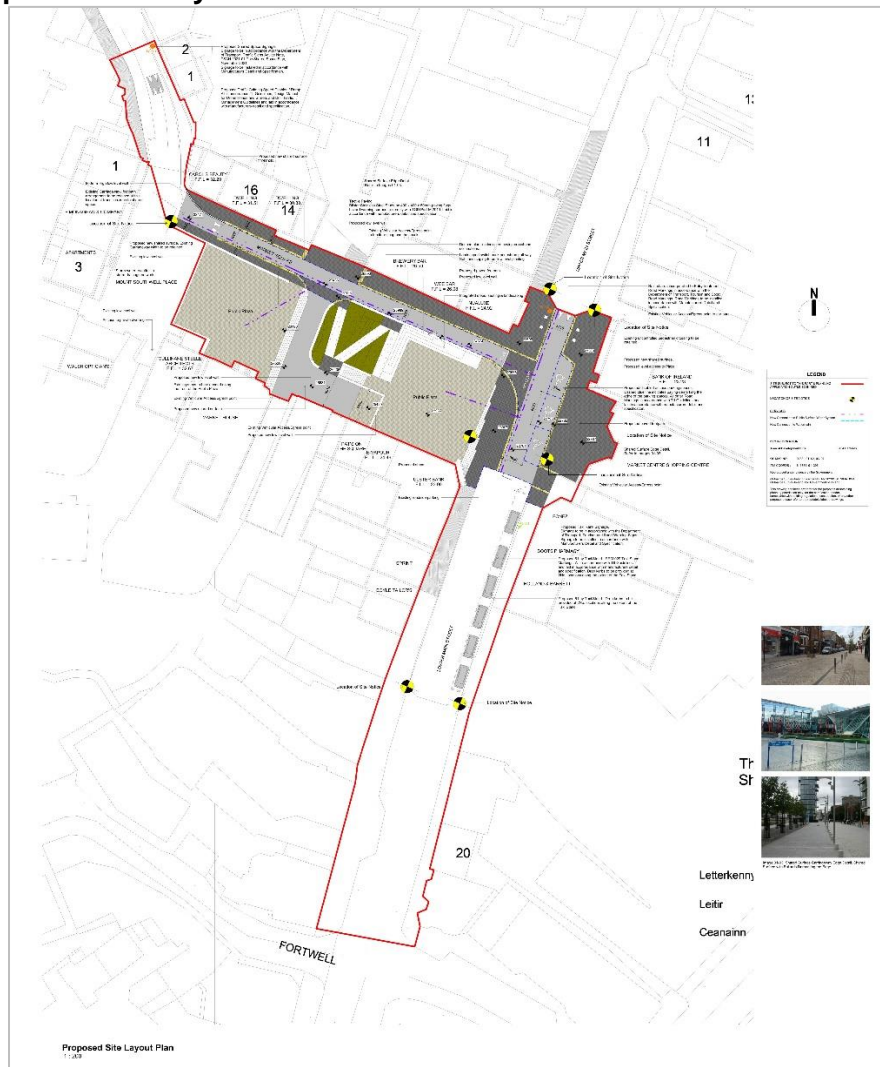
The proposed Part 8 scheme entails a site area of 0.43 hectares. It provides for the redevelopment of an existing area of public realm known as 'Market Square,' to create an enhanced public space that is visually and physically open and accessible and which has the capacity to be used as a dynamic, multi-user space. The location of the proposed development is at Market Square, Castle Street and Main Street, Letterkenny. Specifically, the works proposed are:

- i. Demolition and removal of existing public realm environment at Market Square inclusive of removal of existing bandstand and adjoining embankment at rear, steps, walls, trees, shrubbery and planting.
- ii. Construction of a new public realm environment inclusive of a new shared surface, traffic calming, stepped access to Main Street, 2 no. public plaza's including water feature, connecting accessibility infrastructure and integrated low-level planting, modified carriageways/junctions/footpaths, new public seating, lighting, street furniture and cycle stands delivering an enhanced capacity for civic events and social purpose and to ensure all abilities access.
- iii. Installation of public art inclusive of Letterkenny 2040 brand logo and historical/heritage and place-related information.

- iv. Relocation of existing sculpture known as ‘the Rabble Children’ within the new public realm environment.
- v. Removal of existing car parking/loading bays/taxi ranks from within Market Square and replacement with enhanced pedestrian civic spaces throughout the scheme.
- vi. Removal of 2 no. existing disabled car parking spaces located in front of Market Square and construction of 3 no. replacement disabled car parking spaces located to the front of Market Centre.
- vii. Removal of existing taxi rank located in front of Market Centre and construction of new replacement taxi rank on Main Street in lieu of 6 no. existing on-street parking spaces.
- viii. Revised parking arrangements on Main Street
- ix. All associated ancillary works to include regrading of existing profiles, enhancements to public lighting, drainage and utilities, connection to services, landscaping, development related signage & public art within the overall development area

Image 3 and Appendix 1 shows the proposed site layout plan.

Image 3: Proposed Site Layout Plan



2.2.2 Nature of the works

The proposed works involve the removal/demolition of the existing above ground public realm infrastructure. A new public realm is proposed comprising public plazas, seating, limited planting, public lighting, integration of public art and associated public realm infrastructure and services.

No buildings are proposed as part of the development therefore there are no proposed connections to the Public Foul Sewer System arising from the proposed development. Surface water drainage arrangements are designed for the direction of surface water drainage to existing drainage network.

2.2.3 Description of the Baseline Ecological Environment

The baseline ecological condition of the site in its current state as per the habitat classifications and codes set out in 'A Guide to Habitats in Ireland' (Fossitt, 2000) are categorized as Built Land, specifically Buildings and Artificial Surfaces (BL3), Stonewalls and other Stonework (BL1) and Flowers and Border (BC4) within the category of Cultivated Land. The images below show the existing baseline ecological environment.

There are no naturally formed water courses with the proposed works area.

Images 4-7 showing the existing baseline ecological environment made up of Buildings and Artificial Surfaces (BL3), Stonewalls and Other Stonework (BL1) and Flower beds and borders (BC4).





3.0 Identification of relevant European Sites

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

The European sites within the Likely Zone of Impact of the proposed works were identified as follows:

- GIS spatial datasets for European designated sites and water catchments were downloaded from the NPWS website (www.npws.ie) and the EPA website (www.epa.ie) using the EPA Appropriate Assessment tool.
- All European Sites within a distance of 15km surrounding the works area were identified and are shown on the map image below. In addition, the potential for connectivity with European Sites at distances of greater than 15km from the proposed works was also considered in this initial assessment. In this case, no potential connectivity with sites located at a distance of over 15km from the proposed works was identified.

- Catchment mapping derived from the EPA Appropriate Assessment Tool was used to establish or discount potential hydrological connectivity between the site of the proposed works and any European Sites.
- Table 1 provides details of all relevant European Sites as identified in the preceding steps and assesses which are within the likely Zone of Impact. The assessment considers any likely direct or indirect impacts of the proposed works, both alone and in combination with other plans and projects, on European Sites by virtue of the following criteria: size and scale, land-take, distance from the European Site or key features of the site, resource requirements, emissions, excavation requirements, transportation requirements and duration of construction, operation and decommissioning were considered in this screening assessment
- Where potential pathways for Significant Effect are identified, the site is included within the Likely Zone of Impact and further assessment is required.

Image 11 shows the European Sites within 15km of the proposed works area.

Image 11: European Designated Sites within 15km of the proposed works site

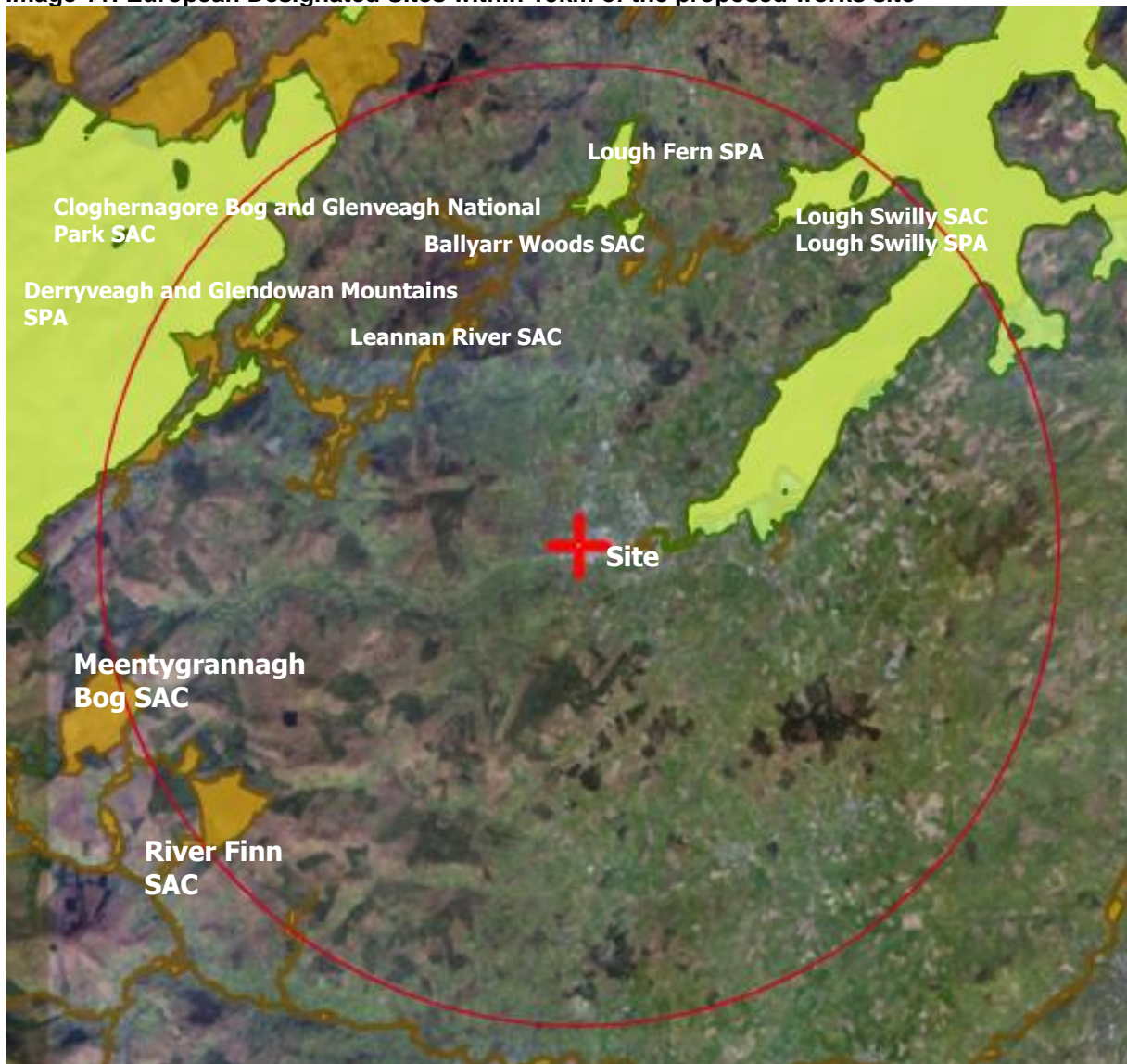


Table 1: Identification of Designated sites within the Likely Zone of Impact

European Site (code)	List of Qualifying Interest/Special Conservation Interest <small>Derived from the EPA Appropriate Assessment Tool on 4th July 2022)</small>	Conservation Objectives	Potential Connections; Source- Pathway-Receptor
Lough Swilly SAC [002287] Distance: 1.5km	<p>Habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [1130] Estuaries ▪ [1150] Coastal lagoons ▪ [1330] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) ▪ [6410] <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) ▪ [91A0] Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles <p>Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [1355] Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) <p>https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002287.pdf</p>	Detailed conservation objectives for this site (Version 1, July 2011) were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at www.npws.ie .	Yes A weak hydrological connection exists through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Location of the site within the same hydrological catchment as the Lough Swilly SAC. And <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (ii) Surface water and wastewater from the site passes through Letterkenny Wastewater Treatment Plant which discharges via outfall to the upper reaches of Lough Swilly Estuary.
Leannan River SAC [002176] Distance: 6.8km	<p>Habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [3110] Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) ▪ [3130] Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or <i>Isoeto-Nanojuncetea</i> <p>Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [1029] Freshwater Pearl Mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>) ▪ [1106] Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) ▪ [1355] Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) ▪ [1833] Slender Naiad (<i>Najas flexilis</i>) <p>https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002176.pdf</p>	Detailed conservation objectives for this site (Version 1, August 2019) were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at www.npws.ie	No Leannan River SAC lies in a separate hydrological sub catchment and groundwater area to the proposed works area and is remote from the proposed site and separated by existing roads, buildings and agricultural lands therefore no pathway exists for direct or indirect effects.

European Site (code)	List of Qualifying Interest/Special Conservation Interest <small>Derived from the EPA Appropriate Assessment Tool on 4th July 2022)</small>	Conservation Objectives	Potential Connections; Source- Pathway-Receptor
<p>Ballyarr Wood SAC [000116]</p> <p>Distance: 8.4km</p>	<p>Habitats [91A0] Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles</p> <p>https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000116.pdf</p>	<p>Detailed conservation objectives for this site (Version 1, January 2021) were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at www.npws.ie.</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Due to distance of the Ballyarr Woods SAC from the proposed works area and its separation from the proposed works area by existing roads, buildings and agricultural lands and the nature of designated Qualifying Interests as terrestrial only, no pathway exists for direct or indirect effects.</p>
<p>Cloghernagore Bog And Glenveagh National Park SAC [002047]</p> <p>Distance: 12.6km</p>	<p>Habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [3110] Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) ▪ [3260] Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation ▪ [4010] Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> ▪ [4030] European dry heaths ▪ [4060] Alpine and Boreal heaths ▪ [6410] <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) ▪ [7130] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) ▪ [7150] Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> ▪ [91A0] Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles <p>Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [1029] Freshwater Pearl Mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>) ▪ [1106] Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) ▪ [1355] Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) ▪ [1421] Killarney Fern (<i>Trichomanes speciosum</i>) 	<p>Detailed conservation objectives for this site (Version 1, July 2017) were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at www.npws.ie.</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Cloghernagore Bog And Glenveagh National Park SAC lies in a separate hydrological sub catchment and groundwater area to the proposed works area and is remote from the proposed site and separated by existing roads, buildings and agricultural lands therefore no pathway exists for direct or indirect effects.</p>

European Site (code)	List of Qualifying Interest/Special Conservation Interest Derived from the EPA Appropriate Assessment Tool on 4th July 2022)	Conservation Objectives	Potential Connections; Source- Pathway-Receptor
	https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002047.pdf		
River Finn SAC [002301] Distance: 12.6km	Habitats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [3110] Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) ▪ [4010] Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> ▪ [7130] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) ▪ [7140] Transition mires and quaking bogs Species <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [1106] Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) ▪ [1355] Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002301.pdf	Detailed conservation objectives for this site (Version 1, May 2017) were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at www.npws.ie.	No River Finn SAC lies in a separate hydrological sub catchment and groundwater area to the proposed works area and is remote from the proposed site and separated by existing roads, buildings and agricultural lands therefore no pathway exists for direct or indirect effects.
Meentygrannagh Bog SAC [000173] Distance: 14.4km	Habitats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [7130] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) ▪ [7140] Transition mires and quaking bogs ▪ [7230] Alkaline fens Species <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [6216] Slender Green Feather-moss (<i>Hamatocaulis vernicosus</i>) https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO000173.pdf	Detailed conservation objectives for this site (Version 1, May 2017) were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at www.npws.ie.	No Due to distance of the Meentygrannagh Bog SAC from the proposed works area and its separation from the proposed works area by existing roads, buildings and agricultural lands and the nature of designated Qualifying Interests as terrestrial only, no pathway exists for direct or indirect effects.
Lough Swilly SPA [004075] 2.4km	Birds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [A005] Great Crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>) ▪ [A028] Grey Heron (<i>Ardea cinerea</i>) ▪ [A038] Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) ▪ [A043] Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>) 	Detailed conservation objectives for this site, (Version 1, July 2011), were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at www.npws.ie	Yes Weak hydrological connection exists through: (iii) Location of the site within the same hydrological catchment as the Lough Swilly SAC.

European Site (code)	List of Qualifying Interest/Special Conservation Interest Derived from the EPA Appropriate Assessment Tool on 4th July 2022)	Conservation Objectives	Potential Connections; Source- Pathway-Receptor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [A048] Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) ▪ [A050] Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) ▪ [A052] Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) ▪ [A053] Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>) ▪ [A056] Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) ▪ [A062] Scaup (<i>Aythya marila</i>) ▪ [A067] Goldeneye (<i>Bucephala clangula</i>) ▪ [A069] Red-breasted Merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>) ▪ [A125] Coot (<i>Fulica atra</i>) ▪ [A130] Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) ▪ [A143] Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) ▪ [A149] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) ▪ [A160] Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) ▪ [A162] Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) ▪ [A164] Greenshank (<i>Tringa nebularia</i>) ▪ [A179] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) ▪ [A182] Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) ▪ [A191] Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>) ▪ [A193] Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) ▪ [A395] Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) <p>Habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [A999] Wetland and Waterbirds <p>https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO004075.pdf</p>		<p>And</p> <p>(ii) Surface water and wastewater from the site passes through Letterkenny Wastewater Treatment Plant which discharges via outfall to the upper reaches of Lough Swilly Estuary.</p> <p>In addition, there is no habitat connection as there is no supporting habitat for the SCI species of the SPA on or surrounding the site of the proposed development.</p>
Lough Fern SPA [004060]	<p>Birds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [A059] Pochard (<i>Aythya ferina</i>) <p>Habitats</p>	This site has the generic conservation objective: 'To maintain or restore	No Lough Fern SPA lies in a separate hydrological sub

European Site (code)	List of Qualifying Interest/Special Conservation Interest Derived from the EPA Appropriate Assessment Tool on 4th July 2022)	Conservation Objectives	Potential Connections; Source- Pathway-Receptor
Distance: 9.9km	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [A999] Wetland and Waterbirds https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO004060.pdf	<p><i>the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA'</i> and</p> <p><i>'To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the wetland habitat at Lough Fern SPA as a resource for the regularly-occurring migratory waterbirds that utilise it.'</i> (NPWS Generic version 8.0, 2021)</p>	<p>catchment and groundwater area to the proposed works area and is remote from the proposed site and separated by existing roads, buildings and agricultural lands therefore no pathway exists for direct or indirect effects.</p> <p>In addition, there is no habitat connection as there is no supporting habitat within the footprint of the works area for SCI species associated with this SPA.</p>
<p>Derryveagh And Glendowan Mountains SPA [004039]</p> <p>Distance: 11.4km</p>	<p>Birds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ [A001] Red-throated Diver (<i>Gavia stellata</i>) ▪ [A098] Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>) ▪ [A103] Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>) ▪ [A140] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) ▪ [A466] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina schinzii</i>) https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO004039.pdf	<p>This site has the generic conservation objective: 'To maintain or restore the favourable conservation condition of the bird species listed as Special Conservation Interests for this SPA' (NPWS Generic version 8.0, 2021)</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Derryveagh And Glendowan Mountains SPA lies in a separate hydrological sub catchment and groundwater area to the proposed works area and is remote from the proposed site and separated by existing roads, buildings and agricultural lands therefore no pathway exists for direct or indirect effects.</p> <p>In addition, there is no habitat connection as there is no supporting habitat within the footprint of the proposed works area for SCI species associated with the Derryveagh And Glendowan Mountains SPA.</p>

3.2 Description of sites within 15km of the proposed works site.

The proposed development works at Market Square in Letterkenny town centre occur within 15km of 9 no. European Sites, comprising 6 SAC's and 3 SPA's, as listed in Table 1. Two European Sites are considered to lie within the potential Zone of Influence of the proposed development namely:

- Lough Swilly SAC (002287)
- Lough Swilly SPA

This is due to the location of the proposed development site within the same hydrological catchment as the Lough Swilly SAC and Lough Swilly SPA.

No habitat connection exists as there is no supporting habitat for the SCI species of the Lough Swilly SPA on or surrounding the site of the proposed development.

3.3 Assessment of the likely impacts affecting European Sites

Table 1 highlighted that Lough Swilly SAC and Lough Swilly SPA are considered to be within the Zone of Influence of the proposed development site, given the location of the proposed development site within the same hydrological catchment.

Having regard to the location of the proposed works within the urban environment of Letterkenny town centre, at a remove (2.4km) from the Lough Swilly SAC and SPA and served by urban drainage systems together with the absence of any other naturally formed watercourse on the site with the potential to have hydraulic connectivity to any sensitive watercourses, the construction phase will not result in significant environmental impacts that could affect the Lough Swilly SAC or SPA or European Sites within the wider catchment area. Any surface water from the site passes through Letterkenny WWTP which discharges by license via outfall to the upper reaches of the Lough Swilly Estuary. As a result, any hydrological connection that exists is weak in nature.

In addition, the construction phase will be carried out in accordance with detailed design methodologies to ensure that any potential impacts on water by any construction activities are either eliminated, or, if such an event were to occur are reduced to low levels. As a consequence, potential impacts on water quality are imperceptible due to the absence of naturally occurring watercourses onsite with the potential to have hydraulic connectivity to any sensitive watercourses. While detailed design methodologies will be engaged during the construction phase, these are not required to avoid or reduce any effects on a European site. These measures are not relied upon to reach a conclusion of no likely significant effects on any European site during the construction phase.

All surface water runoff once the development is occupied and operational will be contained on site and discharged to urban drainage systems. In addition, the proposed development is to enhance an existing urban environment of public realm typology therefore there will be no change in the operational phase.

The development will provide a public realm/civic space and as a result no wastewater discharge will occur.

The hydrological connections are therefore indirect and weak such that there is no ecological pathway or functional link between the proposed development and European sites that would result in the potential for significant effects during the operational phase.

The proposed works, in the absence of mitigation, do not have the potential to result in

significant effects on any European Site due to the nature, scale and location of the works, or the presence of any other identified pathway for likely significant effect.

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

The Donegal County Council online planning system was consulted on the 04/07/2022. The search was made within the Letterkenny area within the last 5 years. Results included:

- Permission to erect an extension to the side of an existing factory building, together with a turning and yard area, automated gates, relocation of existing car parking spaces and all associated site development works (Planning Ref: 1651705);
- Permission to construct a single storey car showroom and service workshop, incorporating small mezzanine office level, external works comprising customer car parking, stock vehicle parking, secure compound with car valeting facilities, a main showroom premises and all ancillary site services to incorporate storm and foul drainage, site lighting, landscaping and boundary treatment as well as internal site access from Neil T Blaney Road. (Planning Ref: 1651867);
- Permission to erect a temporary classroom, construction of 2 no. new permanent classrooms, multi-sensory room and ancillary accommodation, relocation of existing carparking on site and connection to existing site services (Planning Ref: 1651883);
- Permission to construct 2 no. residential blocks consisting of a total of 36 no apartments along with creche, bin stores and carparking with connection into a previously approved access road and services with all associated site works (Planning Ref: 1751883)
- Permission to erect 98 no. residential units with connection to public sewer and all associated ancillary site development works (Planning Ref: 1851939);
- Permission to construct an extension at the rear of the existing petrol station with ancillary storage space, staff and office accommodation, connection to existing services and all associated siteworks. (Planning Ref: 1950010);
- Permission to construct a new two storey glazed extension to the front of a dwelling with new porch area at ground floor and sitting area at first floor level. (Planning Ref: 1951935);
- Permission to construct 2 no. blocks containing 4 no. apartments at lower ground floor level with 4 no. dormer type dwellings at the upper ground floor level (8 no. residential units in total) and all associated site works previously granted and extended under planning refs 09/40080 and 14/40080. (Planning Ref: 1951991);
- Permission to construct 4 no. apartments (Planning Ref: 1952010);
- Permission to make internal alterations and change the use of a building from the former Saint Vincent de Paul charity unit to community recreational building to use as a youth club and ancillary activities with associated site works. (Planning Ref: 2051875);
- Permission to construct 1 no. apartment in basement level under existing building, connection to public services and all associated site works. (Planning Ref: 2051936);
- Permission to erect photovoltaic panels and associated works on the 10-acre site of the existing car park directly opposite the existing IT campus, consisting of erection of 50 double photovoltaic panels, a 2 metre fence enclosure, 2 no. car charging stations and all associated consumer shelter to the rear of the existing car park. (Planning Ref: 2150545).
- Permission for (1) demolition of existing toilet areas over three floors and construction of an extension to accommodate new sanitary facilities and lift area over three floors (2) removal of existing single window and replacement with new fire escape door and associated ramp access including all associated site development works (Planning ref: 1751121).

- Permission for construction of new carparking facilities at the existing adoration chapel including all associated site development works (Planning ref: 1751029).
- Permission for construction of a new permanent disability access ramp in lieu of existing temporary timber ramp to St. Eunan's cathedral, protected structure ref. 40501168 (no.011) (apd), with all associated site development works (Planning ref: 1751134).
- Permission for renovations to existing mid-terraced house (protected structure ref. No. 40801171) to provide 6 no. Self-contained apartments consisting of 2 no. 2-bed apartments and 4 no. Studio apartments and alterations to rear elevation to construct new stairwell and link and all associated site works including car park to rear and connection to existing foul and storm sewers (Planning ref: 1952002).
- Permission for (1) internal and external renovations and alterations to existing retail unit to include new shopfront & signage on ground floor (2) change of use from ancillary residential accommodation on first floor to a 1 bed apartment including internal and external renovations and alterations (3) change of use from ancillary residential accommodation on second floor to a 1 bed apartment including internal and external renovations and alterations (4) raising height and incorporation of a new flat roof to the existing rear annex and provision of private/communal amenity space to the side and rear including all associated site development works (Planning ref: 2050106).
- Permission for change of use of existing storage unit to ancillary accommodation together with the demolition of annex to the front of the building and all associated site works (Planning ref: 1751756).
- Permission for change of use from office accommodation to 2 no. Residential units and all associated site works including connection to existing public services (Planning ref: 1751312).
- Permission for change of use from coffee shop to kebab shop (Planning ref: 1951466).
- Permission for erection of 2 no. Prefabricated changing rooms (Planning ref: 1851262).
- Permission for demolition and re configuration of building elements that previously formed part of the former milan nightclub area of the hotel, construction of a new 4 storey side extension providing an additional 35 bedrooms, new fifth floor level over the existing bedroom block to provide an additional 26 bedrooms, new extension at fourth floor level over existing bedroom block to provide a new spa facility. The proposal also includes extending the main lift to 4th floor level to provide direct access from reception area to the spa area (Planning ref: 1851502).
- Permission for construction of 1 no. Full size and 2 no. Mini tennis courts, a 2.75m high reinforced concrete retaining wall, 8 no. 8.0m high floodlights and a 2.75m high boundary fence, including all associated site works (Planning ref: 1750166).
- Permission for development consisting of (a) demolition of existing vacant shed on site and relocation of existing flag poles; (b) the realignment of an existing vehicular entrance and removal of an existing secondary vehicular entrance from the r229 regional road; (c) provision of a two storey restaurant building with ancillary take-away, communal seating area and drive thru facilities, office, wc facilities, kitchen, storage, staff facilities and associated illuminated signage (floor area: 452 sq.m); (d) parking for 25 cars and coach parking; (e) 1 no. Illuminated totem pole with associated signage and (f) all other ancillary site development works, including hard and soft landscaping, lighting and boundary works (Planning ref: 1751831).
- Permission for (1) construction of a 3-storey library, it and general education building (5156m²) comprising reading rooms/book stacks, general and specialist teaching spaces (lecture theatre, classrooms, computer labs, group study rooms etc.), staff offices, administration spaces and ancillary service areas with screened roof level plant; (2) a north-south greenway (bicycle path/pedestrian walkway); (3) external works including the adaption of existing car parking spaces for accommodation of 10 no. Wheelchair accessible enlarged parking bays; (4) covered bicycle shelter for accommodation of 100 no. Bicycles and (5) all associated site development, site services and landscaping works (Planning ref: 1951977).

- Permission for Demolition of the business formerly known as the Golden Grill together with the erection of temporary security hoardings to sections of the site perimeter of said premises at Golden Grill, Port Rd, Letterkenny. (Plan.Reg.No. 21/50171 refers).
- Permission to erect photovoltaic panels and associated works on the 10-acre site of the existing car park directly opposite the existing IT campus, consisting of erection of 50 double photovoltaic panels, a 2 metre fence enclosure, 2 no. car charging stations and all associated consumer shelter to the rear of the existing car park. (Planning Ref: 2150545).
- Permission to erect a waste transfer station contained within the existing building having an annual waste intake of up to 24,500 tonnes/year. Permission also to construct a civic amenity bring centre to the east of the building and all associated site works and services to accommodate the civic amenity site and waste transfer station. Permission also to construct all associated site works and services, footpaths, upgrading of site access and boundary fence, bicycle parking racks, additional car parking spaces and landscaping. (Planning Ref: 2150424).
- Installation of an atm machine to the existing shop front to the west elevation (Planning Ref: 2151825)
- Erection of (1) a new external free standing parcel locker (2) signage, alterations to the western elevation and change of use from existing parcels office to temporary post office at rear of site Planning ref: 2050313)
- Demolition and re configuration of building elements that previously formed part of the former milan nightclub area of the hotel, construction of a new 4 storey side extension providing an additional 35 bedrooms, new fifth floor level over the existing bedroom block to provide an additional 26 bedrooms, new extension at fourth floor level over existing bedroom block to provide a new spa facility. The proposal also includes extending the main lift to 4th floor level to provide direct access from reception area to the spa area (Planning ref: 1851502)
- Change of use of existing 2 ground floor retail units & first floor office accommodation of existing commercial building to a new further educational facility to consist of entrance lobby, administration, offices, classrooms, toilets, staff room, canteen & storage rooms (planning ref: 2050669)
- Demolition of the business premises formerly known as the golden grill together with the erection of temporary security hoardings to sections of the site perimeter of said premises (Planning Ref: 2150171)
- Change of use from 2 no. Retail units previously granted under planning reference I.51/05 for revision back to the original dwelling house use (Planning Ref: 2250380)
- Part 8 Planning approval for 60,500sqft of enterprise space and supporting public realm (Planning ref: PG 21/10)

The proposed works from part of Donegal County Councils wider regeneration programme for the renewal and regeneration of Letterkenny town centre that is currently being developed under the preparation of the Letterkenny 2040 Regeneration Strategy. The Regeneration Strategy remains an ongoing process that has been the subject of three consultation periods including for the Draft Masterplan and Draft Design Concepts relating to 11 key regeneration sites. The proposed development will contribute to the achievement of the overall vision for regeneration of the town centre as it is evolving in the Regeneration Strategy. The wider Regeneration Strategy envisages future site specific projects for further public real, walking and cycling infrastructure, reuse of vacant buildings and productive use of town centre brownfield and vacant land. Future envisaged projects for the regeneration of the town centre are commensurate in nature, scale and town centre location with the proposed development, such that no potential for different (new) impacts resulting from the combination of regeneration projects was identified.

The site is identified in the County Donegal Development Plan 2018-2024 within a 'town

centre' zoning. An NIR of the County Development Plan was prepared and found no likely significant effects on any European site.

3.3.1 Conclusion of Cumulative Assessment


In the review of the projects that was undertaken, no connection, that could potentially result in additional or cumulative impacts was identified. Neither was any potential for different (new) impacts identified resulting from the combination of the various projects and plans, including the ongoing preparation of the Letterkenny 2040 Regeneration Strategy in association with the proposed works.

4.0 Concluding Statement

On the basis of the foregoing and having regard to:

- the nature and scale of the proposed development on fully serviced urban lands,
- the nature and scale of the proposed development as an enhancement of an existing paved public realm area and associated infrastructure,
- the intervening land uses and distance from European sites,
- the lack of direct connections with regard to the Source-Pathway-Receptor model,

it is concluded that the proposed development, individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, would not be likely to have a significant effect on the above listed European sites or any other European site, in view of the said sites' conservation objectives. An appropriate assessment is not, therefore, required.



Sinead McCauley
Acting Senior Executive Planner

Regeneration & Development Team
4th July 2022

