

Screening for Appropriate Assessment

The Sadderly, Old Chruch Street, Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick

Prepared by: Beo Ecology
Prepared for: TA Group



Beo Ecology



Revision	Document Number	Description	Prepared By	Checked By	Date
Draft for Client	P47RP001D01	Screening for Appropriate Assessment	SM	SM/TC	24.07.23
Final	P47RP001F01	Screening for Appropriate Assessment	SM	SM	26.07.23

Sheila Murphy B.Sc. M.Sc. MCIEEM trading as Beo Ecology.
Office: Shrule, Co. Mayo
Contact: info@beoecology.ie

Table of Contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Statement of Authority	1
1.2	Legislative Context for Appropriate Assessment	1
2	Methodology	4
2.1	Stage 1: Screening for Appropriate Assessment	4
2.2	Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment (Natura Impact Statement)	4
2.3	Guidance	5
2.4	Information Consulted for this Report	6
3	Stage 1: Screening for Appropriate Assessment	7
3.1	Project Description	7
3.2	European Sites within the Project Zone of Influence	8
3.2.1	Zone of Influence	8
3.3	Summary of Connectivity	9
3.4	European Site Descriptions	13
3.4.1	Lower River Shannon SAC	13
3.5	Conservation Objectives of European Sites	13
4	Existing Environment	15
4.1	Site Description	15
4.2	Surface Water	16
4.3	Flooding	16
4.4	Geology, Hydrology and Hydrogeology	17
5	Screening for Appropriate Assessment	20
5.1	Identification and Assessment of Potential Impacts	20
5.1.1	Construction Phase	20
5.1.2	Operational Phase	20
5.2	Conclusion of Cumulative Impact Assessment	27
5.3	Screening for AA Conclusion	29
	Appendix A – Proposed Works Site & Layout	32
	Figure 1-1: Site Location of the Proposed Works	3
	Figure 3-1: European Sites within the Zol of the Proposed Works	11
	Figure 3-2: European Sites within Close Proximity of the Works	12
	Figure 4-1: Site location (red X) in relation to National Indicative Fluvial Mapping (Medium Probability) ..	17
	Figure 4-2: CFRAM Map for the Proposed Works area	19
	Table 3-1: European Sites within the Zol of the Proposed Development	9

Table 4-1: Surface Water Status within by Study Area	16
Table 5-1: Assessment of Potential Impacts to the Qualifying Interests of Lower River Shannon SAC	20
Table 5-2: Screening Assessment Criteria	24
Table 5-3: In-combination Effects associated with the Proposed Development	26
Table 5-4: Screening Assessment Criteria	27
Image 4-1: View of the building from the front (east).	15
Image 4-2: View of the building form the north.....	15
<i>Image 4-3: Waste material dumped at the rear of the house.</i>	16
Image 4-4: Example of scrub vegetation to the rear of the building.	16

1 Introduction

Beo Ecology has been commissioned by TA Group to carry out a Screening for Appropriate Assessment for the proposed construction of one residential house at The Saddlery, Old Church Street, Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick. The location of the proposed works is presented in **Figure 1-1**. See **Appendix A** for site location and site layout drawings.

This Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) has been prepared to provide the competent authority, Limerick County Council, the relevant scientific information to conduct the Appropriate Assessment (AA). This information will allow Limerick County Council to determine, in view of best scientific knowledge, if the proposed project, individually or in combination with other plans and projects is likely to have a significant effect on a European site and, where necessary, to ascertain whether or not the proposed project would adversely affect the integrity of a European site.

1.1 Statement of Authority

Sheila Murphy trading as Beo Ecology holds a B.Sc. (Hons) in Environmental Science, and M.Sc. in Biodiversity and Conservation, she has over 12 years' experience in her field. She has extensive experience in the area of Screening of Appropriate Assessments and report writing for a range of projects including road developments, wastewater treatment plants and one-off housing developments. She is a Full Member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM).

1.2 Legislative Context for Appropriate Assessment

The Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, better known as "The Habitats Directive", provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. Articles 3 to 9 provide the legislative means to protect habitats and species of Community interest through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of sites known as Natura 2000.

Natura 2000 sites are defined under the Habitats Directive (Article 3) as a coherent European ecological network of special areas of conservation, composed of sites hosting the natural habitat types listed in Annex I and habitats of the species listed in Annex II, shall enable the natural habitat types and the species' habitats concerned to be maintained or, where appropriate, restored at a favourable conservation status in their natural range. In Ireland, these sites are designated as European Sites and include Special Protection Areas (SPAs), established under the EU Birds Directive (79/409/EEC, as codified by 2009/147/EC) for birds and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), established under the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC for habitats and species.

The Habitats Directive has been transposed into Irish law by Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 - 2015 and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI ros477/2011) as amended.

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to adversely affect the integrity of European Sites (Annex 1.1).

Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for Appropriate Assessment (AA):

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 appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained

that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, transposed into Irish Law relevant to this project includes Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act, 2000-2019 and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended).

Natura 2000 sites in Ireland (herein referred to as European sites) that form part of the Natura 2000 network of protected sites include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated due to their significant ecological importance for species and habitats protected under Annexes I and II respectively of the Habitats Directive, and Special Protected Areas (SPAs), designated for the protection of populations and habitats of bird species protected under the EU Birds Directive (Council Directive 2009/409/EEC). Features for which SACs and SPAs are designated are termed Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests respectively. Collectively, Qualifying Interests and Special Conservation Interests are herein referred to as Qualifying Features. As the proposed project is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of any European Site, Limerick County Council as the competent authority, is obliged to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge, if the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, is likely to have a significant effect on European Sites.

The staged assessment process undertaken to meet Article 6(3) obligations is described in **Section 2** below.



Figure 1-1: Site Location of the Proposed Works

2 Methodology

2.1 Stage 1: Screening for Appropriate Assessment

Screening is the process that addresses and records the reasoning and conclusions in relation to the first two tests of Article 6(3):

Whether a plan or project is directly connected to or necessary for the management of the site, and whether a plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, is likely to have significant effects on a European site in view of its conservation objectives.

If the effects are deemed to be significant, potentially significant, or uncertain, or if the screening process becomes overly complicated, then the process must proceed to Stage 2 (AA). Screening should be undertaken without the inclusion of mitigation, unless potential impacts clearly can be avoided through the modification or redesign of the plan or project, in which case the screening process is repeated on the altered plan. The greatest level of evidence and justification will be needed in circumstances when the process ends at screening stage on grounds of no impact.

2.2 Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment (Natura Impact Statement)

The aim of Stage 2 of the AA process is to identify any adverse impacts that the plan or project might have on the integrity of relevant European sites. As part of the assessment, a key consideration is 'in combination' effects with other plans or projects. Where adverse impacts are identified, mitigation measures can be proposed that would avoid, reduce or remedy any such negative impacts and the plan or project should then be amended accordingly, thereby avoiding the need to progress to Step 3.

This stage considers whether the plan or project, alone or in combination with other projects or plans, will have adverse effects on the integrity of a European site, and includes any mitigation measures necessary to avoid, reduce or offset negative effects. The proponent of the plan or project will be required to submit a Natura Impact Statement, i.e. the report of a targeted professional scientific examination of the plan or project and the relevant European sites, to identify and characterise any possible implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives, taking account of in-combination effects. This should provide information to enable the public authority to carry out the AA.

The information required in a Natura Impact Statement, is outlined in Regulation 42(5) (a) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477/2011) as amended, as follows: A Natura Impact Statement shall, in addition to addressing the issues referred to in the interpretation contained in Regulation 2(1), include such information or data as the public authority considers necessary, and specifies in a notice given under paragraph (3), to enable it to ascertain if the plan or project will affect the integrity of the site.

Where appropriate, a Natura Impact Statement shall include, in addition —

- i. the alternative solutions that have been considered and the reasons why they have not been adopted,
- ii. the imperative reasons of overriding public interest that are being relied upon to indicate that the plan or project should proceed notwithstanding that it may adversely affect the integrity of a European site,
- iii. the compensatory measures that are being proposed.

If the assessment is negative, i.e. adverse effects on the integrity of a site cannot be excluded, then the process must proceed to Stage 3, or the plan or project should be abandoned. The competent authority must make a determination to that effect before proceeding to the next stage.

2.3 Guidance

This Screening for AA report has been prepared with regard to the relevant provisions of the EU Council Directive 92/43/EEC and Ireland's EU (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended).

The methodology followed for this assessment has had regard to the following guidance and legislation;

- CIEEM (2018). Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management;
- CIEEM Version 1.1 (September 2019), Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland;
- DoEHLG (2009, rev. 2010) Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland Guidance for Planning Authorities. Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government;
- EC (2000). Communication from the Commission on the Precautionary Principle. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg;
- EC (2002) 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, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg. European Commission;
- EC (2007a) Guidance document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitats Directive' 92/43/EEC – Clarification of the concepts of: alternative solutions, imperative reasons of overriding public interest, compensatory measures, overall coherence, opinion of the commission. European Commission;
- EC, (2007b), Guidance document on the strict protection of animal species of Community interest under the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. European Commission;
- EC (2013) Interpretation manual of European Union Habitats – EUR28. European Commission, DG Environment, Nature ENV B.3. EC (2018). 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;
- EC (2014) Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Rulings of the European Court of Justice.
- EC (2018), 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. European Commission;
- EC (2019) Commission notice "*Managing Natura 2000 sites, The provision of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 90/43/EEC*". Brussels, 21.11.2019, C (2018) 7621 final. European Communities, Luxembourg.
- EC (2021) (Amended) Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological guidance on the provision of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, European Communities, Luxembourg.
- EC (2021) (Amended). Commission notice "*Guidance document on the strict protection of animal species of Community interest under the Habitats Directive*". Brussels, 21.10.2021, C (2021) 7301. European Commission.
- The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 as amended;
- European Union (Environmental Impact Assessment and Habitats) Regulations 2011 S.I No 473/2011 as amended,
- NPWS (2013). Ireland's Summary Report for the period 2008 – 2012 under Article 12 of the Birds Directive. National Parks and Wildlife Services. Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Dublin, Ireland;
- NPWS (2019), The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Habitat Assessments Volume 2. Version 1.0. Unpublished Report, National Parks and Wildlife Services. Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Dublin, Ireland;
- NPWS (2019), The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland. Species Assessments Volume 3, Version 1.0. Unpublished Report, National Parks and Wildlife Services. Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Dublin, Ireland;

- Office of the Planning Regulator (March 2021), Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management. OPR Practice Note PN01;
- The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended);
- The Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2022; and
- Recent Irish and European case law on the Habitats Directive.

2.4 Information Consulted for this Report

A desk study was undertaken as part of this assessment. This has been informed by the following sources of data;

- Information on the location, nature and design of the proposed project as provided by the client;
- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage online land-use mapping (<https://www.myplan.ie/zoning-map-viewer/>);
- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage EIA Portal (<https://housinggovie.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=d7d5a3d48f104ecbb206e7e5f84b71f1>);
- Office of Public Works (OPW) National Flood Hazard Mapping website (www.floodmaps.ie);
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) geoportal mapping tool (<https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>);
- EPA Catchments interactive online mapping and data (<https://www.catchments.ie/>);
- All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO) Environmental Sensitivity Mapping (<https://airomaps.geohive.ie/ESM/>);
- National Parks and Wildlife Service protected site and species information and data (<https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites>);
- National Biodiversity Data Centre (www.biodiversityireland.ie);
- Geohive online environmental sensitivity mapping tool (<https://airomaps.geohive.ie/ESM/>);
- Ordnance Survey of Ireland mapping and aerial photography (www.osi.ie);
- Geological Survey Ireland online mapping and data (<https://www.gsi.ie/en-ie/Pages/default.aspx>); and,
- Limerick County Development Plan 2022-2028.

3 Stage 1: Screening for Appropriate Assessment

This section provides the information required for the competent authority (Limerick County Council) to undertake a Screening for AA and determine in view of best scientific knowledge, whether the proposed works, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, is likely to have a significant effect on the European site. Specifically, it aims to:

- Provide information on, and assess the potential for the proposed works to significantly impact on European sites; and
- Determine whether the activities proposed, alone or in combination with other projects, are likely to have significant effects on European sites in view of their Conservation Objectives.

This screening assessment provides information to address the following elements:

1. Description of the plan or project, and local site or plan area characteristics. The description covers the full scope of the proposed plan or project (i.e. construction phase and operational phase).
2. Description of the receiving environment setting of the proposed plan or project and its surrounds.
3. Identification of relevant European sites within the projects the potential zone of influence. A preliminary assessment to determine connectivity between the proposed works and receptors (i.e. European sites and/or features for which the sites are designated). Where connectivity exists, the receptors in question are brought forward in the screening assessment process.
4. For receptors that exhibit potential connectivity to the proposed work a screening assessment is undertaken to establish whether the plan or project is likely to have a direct, indirect or cumulative effect on receptors based on a consideration of likely impacts (i.e. an assessment of significance of effect).
5. Screening statement with conclusions on whether or not an AA is necessary for the relevant a Qualifying Feature.

3.1 Project Description

Limerick Housing Department acquired a derelict building located at Old Church Street, Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick. It is proposed to demolish the existing building and replace with three bedroom two-storey building. The initial phase of the works will include demolition of the existing building, followed by vegetation/waste clearance to the rear of the building and the construction of a retaining/boundary wall. This will then be followed by standard building construction works.

The works will consist of the following:

- The building works will require demolition of the existing building. All waste material will be carried off site to a suitable licensed waste facility. There will be no stock piling of demolished material on-site due to the site size restraints.
- The ground to the rear of the house is heavily vegetation with ivy ground cover and immature young sycamores, along with dumped waste material. It is proposed to remove the material using a mini-digger and by hand. It will be removed by hand at approximately 4m from the site boundary due to access reasons.
- It is proposed that once initial onsite clearance works are completed, a proposed retaining/boundary wall will be erected along the existing site boundary. This will require the excavation of a foundation approximately 700m wide and 300-450mm in depth. This will be carried out by a mini digger.
- Excavated material will be stored to the east of the site during the wall construction i.e. the street area to the east/footprint of the propose building.
- Strip foundations are to be excavated and concrete foundations consisting of a semi-dry concrete mix will be poured. Works will be carried out in the dry.
- The residential building will be connected to the public sewer connection, which serves Abbeyfeale i.e. Abbeyfeale Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- A soakaway will be constructed to the western end of the site, this will manage surface water from the site during the operational phase, allowing it to infiltrate into the ground.

- The total ground floor area of the new build will be 35m².
- It is proposed the timeline of the works will take 10 months to complete.
- Minimal material will be stored on site due to the site size and location. It is proposed to close the road in front of the building and utilise this area as a temporary compound during the demolition phase of the works, and the majority of the building construction phase.
- Building materials will be delivered to site as and when they are required.

3.2 European Sites within the Project Zone of Influence

This stage of the screening for AA process describes European Sites within the Zone of Influence (Zol) of the proposed project. A 15km buffer zone is recommended as per *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities* (DoEHLG, 2009, rev. 2010), however given the nature and scale of the proposed development it does not necessitate the adoption of this 15km buffer zone.

3.2.1 Zone of Influence

A Zone of Influence (Zol) for a project is established on a case-by-case basis with reference to the nature, size and location of the project, and the sensitivities of the ecological receptors within vicinity of the proposed development. The Zol takes into account the potential for connectivity to ecological receptors through the Source- Pathway-Receptor (S-P-R) model.

The model identifies the source of likely significant impacts, if any, the pathway (land, air, hydrological, hydrogeological pathways, etc) along which those impacts may be transferred from the source to the receiving environmental receptors (i.e. European Sites and/ or features for which the sites are designated). Functional pathways can also include the use of an application site for foraging by a QI/SCI species of an SAC or SPA i.e. otter or migratory birds.

Given the size, scale and nature of this project it is considered for the purpose of this screening exercise that the Zol is the zone immediately surrounding the proposed development works and any hydrologically or hydrogeologically connected European Sites downstream of the works, where distances would be dependent on the qualifying interests of the site. For the purposes of this Screening for Appropriate Assessment, the Zol includes European Sites located within or adjacent to the proposed works, including those which support downstream hydrological connectivity to the proposed works.

Following the above rationale, the following European sites are located within the Zol (of the proposed works (See **Figure 3-1** and **Figure 3-2**):

- Lower River Shannon SAC (site code: 002165)
- Stack's to Mullaghareirk Mountains, West Limerick Hills & Mount Eagle SPA (site code: 004161)

Where it is evident that there is no connectivity between the proposed work and receptors (i.e. European Sites and/ or features for which the sites are designated), the receptors are excluded from the AA process. Similarly, where connectivity exists between the proposed work and receptors but is deemed not to result in likely significant effects to the receptor, the receptor can be screened out (i.e. likely significant effects to receptors excluded; receptor not considered further in AA process).

Table 3-1 below list the European sites within the Zol and its Qualifying Interests (QI).

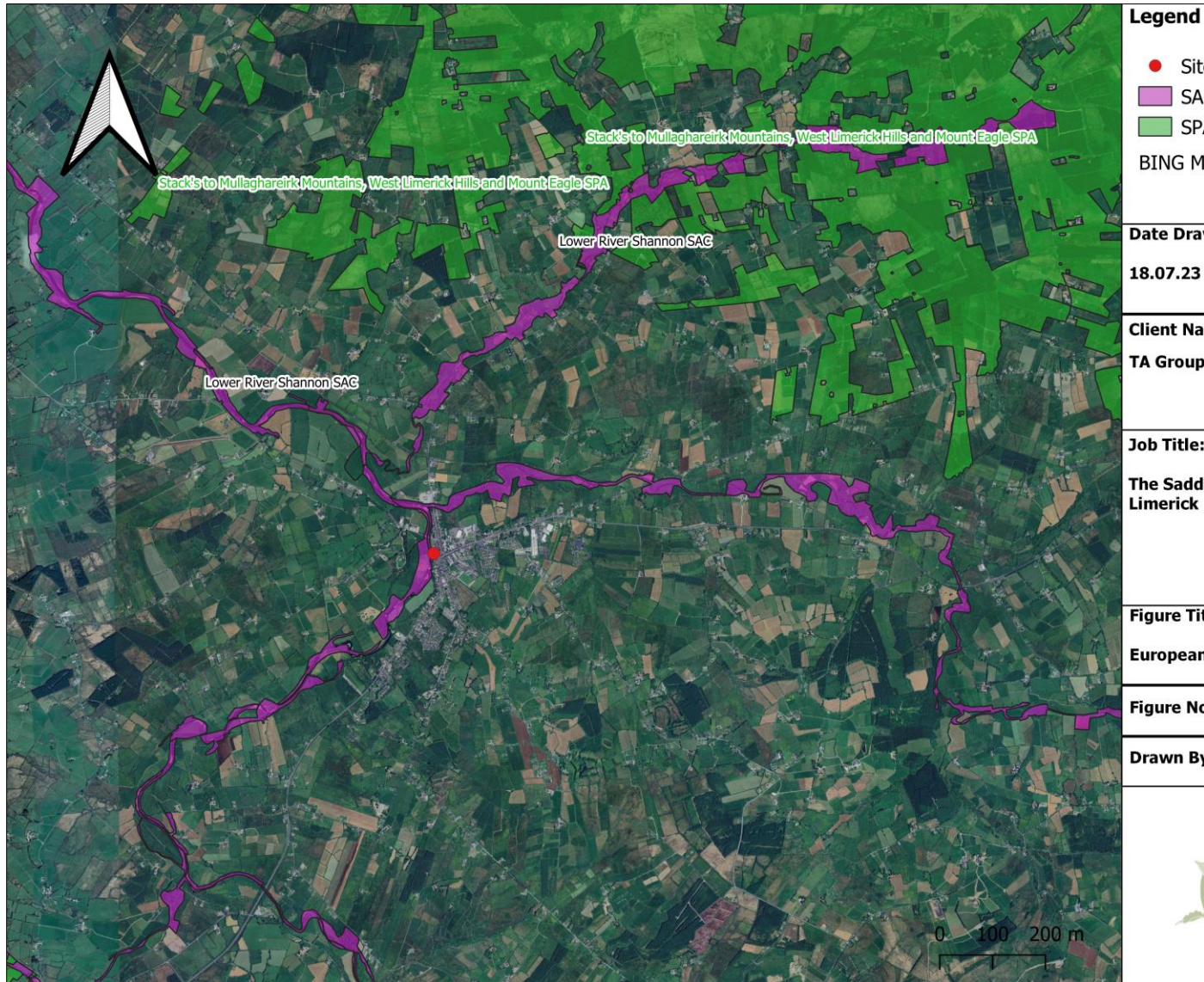


Figure 3-1 shows the European site within the Zol and downstream of the proposed works location.

3.3 Summary of Connectivity

There are two European site located within the Zol of the proposed works; Lower River Shannon SAC (site code: 002165) and Stack's to Mullaghareirk Mountains, West Limerick Hills & Mount Eagle SPA (site code: 004161). There is no hydrological connectivity between the proposed site location to European sites downstream. The Lower River Shannon SAC adjoins the west boundary of the site, encompassing the River Feale (IE_SH_23F010310).

The proposed site does not support connectivity to any features, such as drainage channels or watercourses or groundwater conduits that could transfer potential pollutant sources from the project footprint and Zone of Influence to the wider environment and its associated European sites. The identified European site is located adjacent to the proposed works. Therefore, there is potential for the proposed works to have potential negative impacts on designated European sites and surrounding environment via indirect connectivity.

Table 3-1: European Sites within the Zol of the Proposed Development

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Interests (Habitats/Species)/ Special Conservation Interest Species	Distance from Study Area	Connectivity
002165	Lower River Shannon SAC	<p>Qualifying Habitat Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time [1110] Estuaries [1130] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Coastal lagoons [1150] Large shallow inlets and bays [1160] Reefs [1170] Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi) [1410] Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation [3260] Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae) [6410] Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0]</p> <p>Qualifying Species <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) [1095] <i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey) [1096] <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> (River Lamprey) [1099] Salmo salar (Salmon) [1106] <i>Tursiops truncatus</i> (Common Bottlenose Dolphin) [1349] <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]</p>	<p>The SAC adjoins the western boundary of the proposed works.</p>	<p>Indirect Connectivity.</p> <p>There is indirect connectivity between the site location and the SAC. However, due to the nature of the works it is not anticipated that there will be any potential impacts upon the SAC.</p>

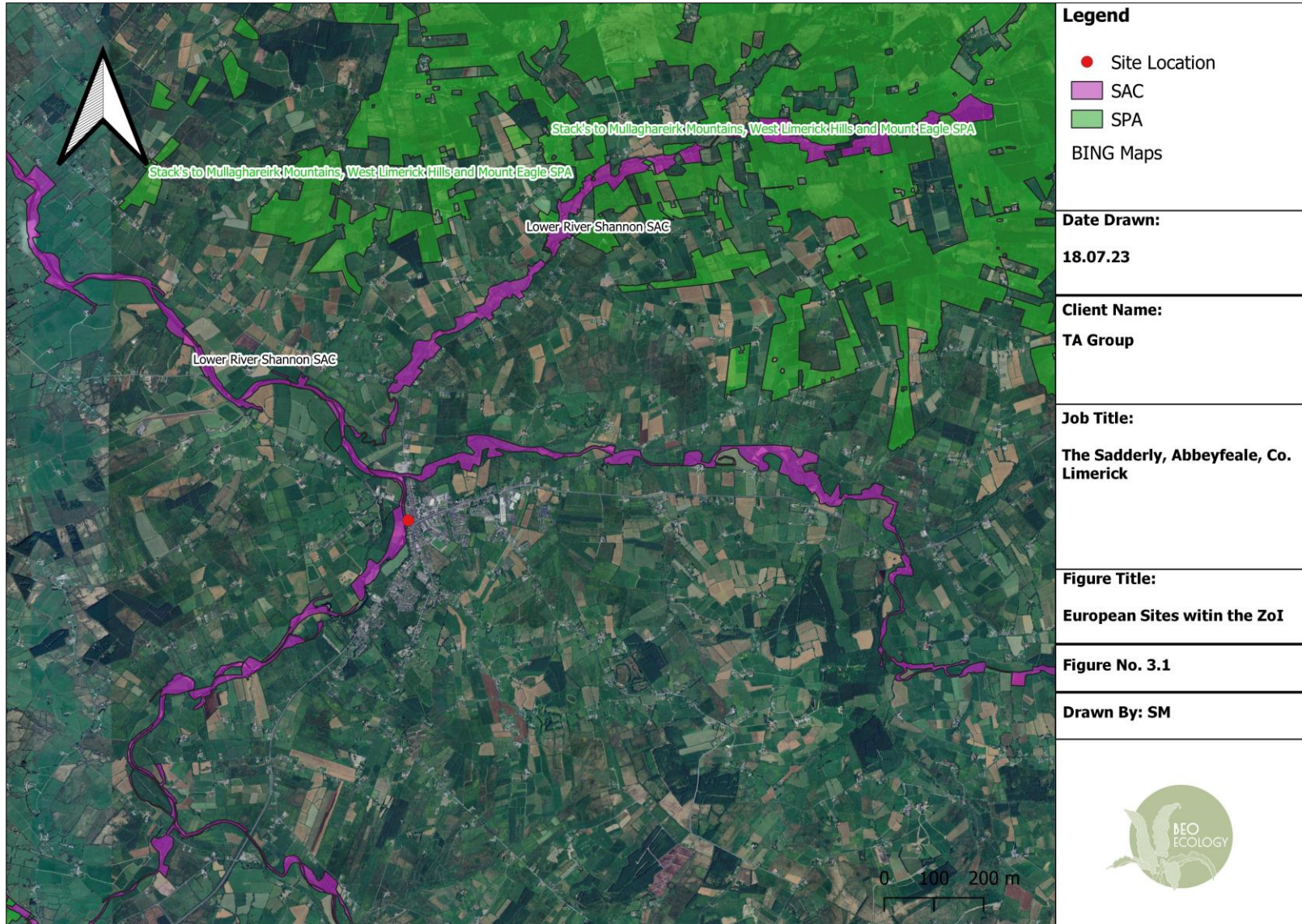


Figure 3-1: European Sites within the ZoI of the Proposed Works



Figure 3-2: European Sites within Close Proximity of the Works

3.4 European Site Descriptions

There is one European site within the project Zol, which supports potential indirect connectivity to the proposed development works. The site synopsis of the Lower River Shannon SAC is outlined below.

3.4.1 Lower River Shannon SAC¹

This site is of great ecological interest as it contains a high number of habitats and species listed on Annexes I and II of the E.U. Habitats Directive, including the priority habitats lagoon and alluvial woodland, the only known resident population of Bottle-nosed Dolphin in Ireland and all three Irish lamprey species. A good number of Red Data Book species are also present, perhaps most notably the thriving populations of Triangular Club-rush. A number of species listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive are also present, either wintering or breeding. Indeed, the Shannon and Fergus Estuaries form the largest estuarine complex in Ireland and support more wintering wildfowl and waders than any other site in the country. Most of the estuarine part of the site has been designated a Special Protection Area (SPA), under the E.U. Birds Directive, primarily to protect the large numbers of migratory birds present in winter (NPWS,2013).

3.5 Conservation Objectives of European Sites

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain at favourable conservation status areas designated as SAC and SPA. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations that will ensure the ecological integrity of these sites.

Favourable conservation status of a habitat is achieved when:

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

The favourable conservation status of a species is achieved when:

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

The integrity of a European site (referred to in Article 6.3 of the EU Habitats Directive) is determined based on the conservation objectives and of the site. The Qualifying Interests (QI) and Special Conservation Interests (SCI) are obtained through a review of the most recently published (web published or otherwise) Conservation Objective supporting documents and Site-Specific Conservation Objectives documents (where available) for the European site.

The Conservation Objectives of the proximal European site identified within the Zol of the proposed residential dwelling development are as follows:

¹ [Site Synopsis: Lower River Shannon SAC](#)

Lower River Shannon SAC: The detailed conservation objectives for the Lower River Shannon SAC are provided in the Conservation Objectives document available on the NPWS website, as follows; https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/protected-sites/conservation_objectives/CO002165.pdf

4 Existing Environment

4.1 Site Description

An ecological site walkover was conducted on the 20th July 2023 by Ecologist Sheila Murphy BSc. MSc. MCIEEM. The habitats identified on site were classified in accordance with “*A Guide to Habitats in Ireland*” (Fossitt, 2000).²

The site consists of a significantly dilapidated and derelict building (BL3). The front of the building looks onto an urban streetscape. The north of the site borders a carpark, with elements of re-colonising ground (ED3) immediately adjoining the northern wall, with species such as willowherb (*Epiplobium sp.*), nipplewort (*Lapsana communis*), ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*), sycamore seedlings (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) and dandelion (*Taraxacum sp.*). The rear of the building consists of a narrow strip which at the time of surveying supported dense ivy and bramble growth, along with immature sycamore trees. The area also contains a significant amount of waste dumping. The boundary of the site borders dense ivy (*Hedera helix*) growth, bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) scrub (WS1) and mature sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) treeline (WL2). The ground beyond the boundary is level for approximately 4m after which there is a slope of 15m towards the river. This bankside area is densely vegetated supporting mature treeline and scrub. The works will not be going beyond the delineated boundary. See **Image 4-1** to **Image 4-4** of the site location.



Image 4-1: View of the building from the front (east).



Image 4-2: View of the building from the north.

² [A Guide to Habitats in Ireland \(Fossitt, 2000\)](#). Alphanumeric codes for habitat classification are provided in accordance with ‘*A Guide to Habitats in Ireland*’ (Fossitt, 2000)



Image 4-3: Waste material dumped at the rear of the house.



Image 4-4: Example of scrub vegetation to the rear of the building.

4.2 Surface Water

The EPA online mapping data (<https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/>) was consulted for the water quality status of waterbodies identified within the study area. The Feale (IE_SH_23F010310) watercourse is located approximately 20m west of the proposed works location. The waterbody flows northwards into the Shannon Estuary south of Ballybunion town.

Table 4-1: Surface Water Status within by Study Area

Waterbody	WFD River Waterbody Risk Status	EPA Latest River Q Values	River Waterbody WFD Status 2013-2018
Feale (IE_SH_23F010310)	Not at Risk	Station: FEALE - Bridge in Abbeyfeale (R16): Q4 Good	Good

4.3 Flooding

A search of the Office of Public Works (OPW) National Flood Hazard Mapping website (www.floodmaps.ie) was performed to obtain information on the flood history in the vicinity of the study area. One past recurring flood event was recorded approximately 370m south-east of the proposed works, however

neither are located within the immediate vicinity of the proposed works. See Figure X for the flood event locations in addition to the National Indicative Fluvial Mapping illustrating the medium flood probability (1:100). Flood event probabilities are referred to in terms of a percentage Annual Exceedance Probability, or 'AEP'. This represents the probability of an event of this, or greater, severity occurring in any given year.

The Flood Info database (www.floodinfo.ie) was also consulted to identify Predictive Flood Risk Areas (PFRA) mapped as part of the Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) programme for the study area. **Figure 4-2** below provides the mapped area for the Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) ranging from 1-1000-, 1-100- and 1-10-year, flooding probability, within the study area.



Figure 4-1: Site location (red X) in relation to National Indicative Fluvial Mapping (Medium Probability)

4.4 Geology, Hydrology and Hydrogeology

The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) online³ database was consulted for available edaphic, geological and hydrological information of the site and its environs.

- The underlying bedrock of the proposed works is the Central Clare Group which consists of sandstone, siltstone and mudstone.
- The groundwater vulnerability of the site is located in a mosaic of extreme, high and moderate vulnerability. No karst features are located in the vicinity of the proposed works.
- The EPA online database was searched for available information of the groundwater bodies and vulnerability.⁴ The study site is located within the Abbeyfeale Groundwater Body (IE_SH_G_001).
- The Water Framework Directive (WFD) ground waterbody risk classifies this groundwater body as not at risk.
- The WFD ground waterbody status 2013-2018 states the water body has a "Good" status.

³ <https://dcenr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=a30af518e87a4c0ab2fbde2aaac3c228>

⁴ <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/> Accessed: July 2023

- The site overlays a *Locally Important Aquifer - Bedrock which is Moderately Productive only in Local Zones (LI)*.

Groundwater and surface water interactions⁵ of Abbeyfeale Groundwater Body (IE_SH_G_001) is described as follows; *“Shallow groundwater flow paths are short (30-300 m), with groundwater discharging to the streams and small springs. Artesian conditions and deep inflow levels indicate that there are lower parts of the aquifer that are confined by low permeability layers in the rock succession. Confined flow path lengths may be considerable. Local flow directions are determined by local topography and drainage patterns. Overall, groundwater flow is to the west.*

Due to the shallow groundwater flow in this aquifer the groundwater and surface waters are closely linked. The streams crossing the aquifer are gaining.”

⁵ [Abbeyfeale Groundwater Description](#)

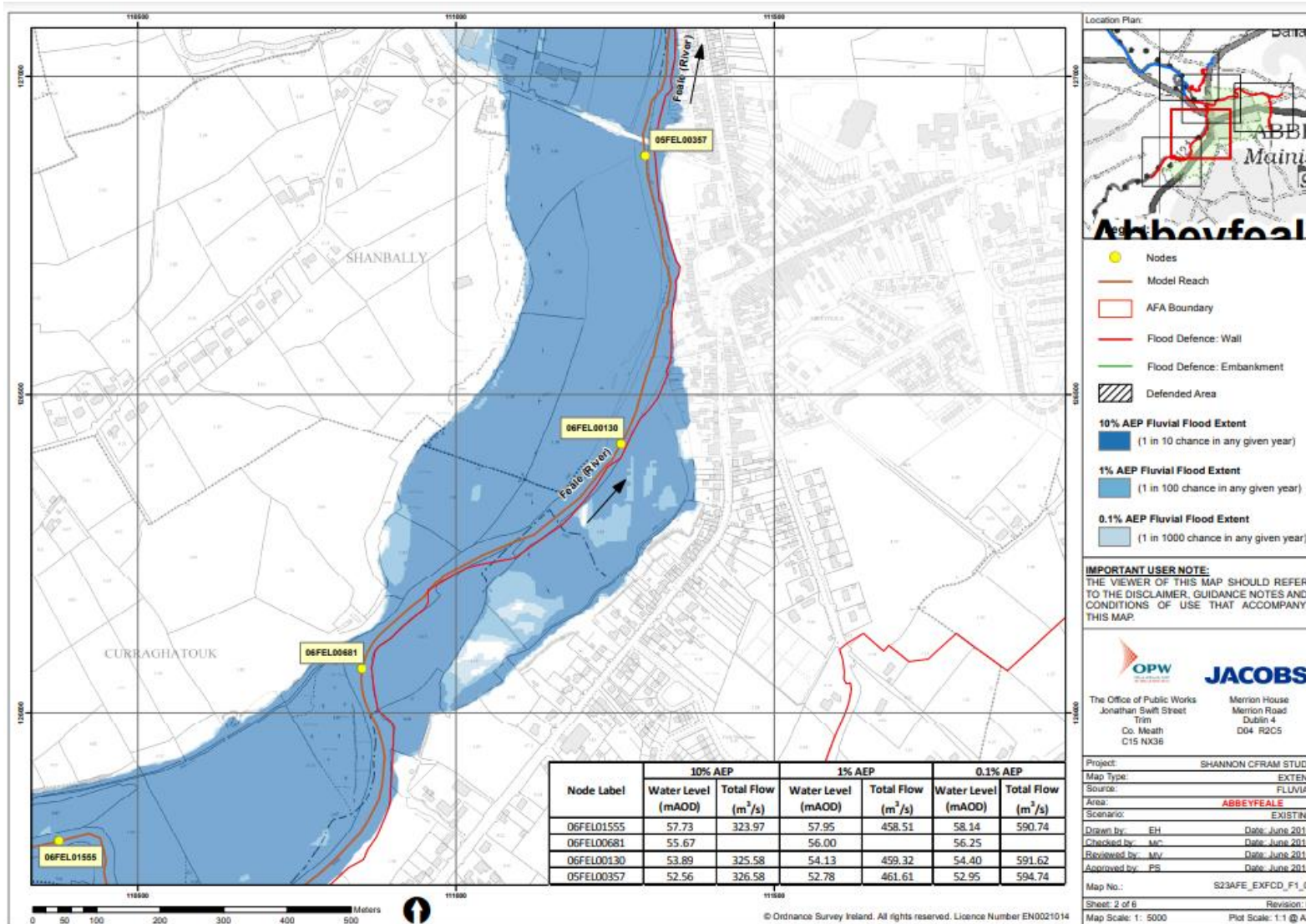


Figure 4-2: CFRAM Map for the Proposed Works area.

5 Screening for Appropriate Assessment

5.1 Identification and Assessment of Potential Impacts

This section assesses the potential impacts upon the Qualifying Interests (QI) of Lower River Shannon SAC as a result of the potential impacts associated with the demolition and construction of a residential building within the vicinity of the identified designated site.

5.1.1 Construction Phase

Works will be carried out as per outlined in **Section 3.1** and the project’s method statement. Potential impacts include:

- Potential for the spread of invasive alien plant species (IAPS) during the construction works.
- Potential overland flow and surface water run-off as result of the proposed construction works.

The habitats located within the study area are not Annex I habitats and will not be significantly altered as a result of the proposed works. The proposed construction phase of the works will be small scale, non-intrusive and short-term in nature. As a result, is not anticipated that there will be a direct or indirect impact upon the QIs of the adjoining European site; Lower River Shannon SAC during the construction phase of the project.

5.1.2 Operational Phase

It is not anticipated that there will be impacts to the QIs or SCIs of the identified European site as a result of the operational phase.

5.1.2.1 Assessment of Likely Significant Impacts

Table 5-1: Assessment of Potential Impacts to the Qualifying Interests of Lower River Shannon SAC⁶

Site Name	Qualifying Interests (Habitats/Species)/ Special Conservation Interest Species	Conservation Objective	Distance from Study Area	Connectivity
Lower River Shannon SAC	Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time [1110]	Maintain the favourable conservation condition.	Located 31km northwest of the proposed works.	Given the distance of the Annex I habitats from the proposed works, any indirect connectivity is tenuous. Due to the nature, project description (see
	Estuaries [1130]		Located 17km west of the proposed works.	

⁶ [Site specific cons obj \(npws.ie\)](http://www.npws.ie) Conservation Objectives: Lower River Shannon SAC (002165)

Site Name	Qualifying Interests (Habitats/Species)/ Special Conservation Interest Species	Conservation Objective	Distance from Study Area	Connectivity
	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]		Located 25km northwest of the proposed works.	Section 3.1) and location of the works it is not anticipated that the identified QIs of the SAC or the surrounding environment will be impact as a result of the proposed works.
	Coastal lagoons [1150]		Located 36km northwest of the proposed works.	
	Large shallow inlets and bays [1160]		Located 29km northwest of the proposed works	
	Reefs [1170]		Located 29km northwest of the proposed works	
	Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220]		Located 28.5km northwest of the proposed works	
	Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230]		Located 29km northwest of the proposed works.	
	Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]		Located 25km northwest of the proposed works.	
	Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330]	Restore the favourable conservation condition	Located 25km northwest of the proposed works.	
	Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]	Restore the favourable conservation condition	Located 25km northwest of the proposed works.	
	Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260]	Maintain the favourable conservation condition.	Located 40km northeast of the proposed works.	
	<i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410]	Maintain the favourable conservation condition.	This habitat has been recorded on the eastern bank of the Shannon, just north of Castleconnell, Co. Limerick (NPWS internal files). Full distribution of this habitat in this site is currently unknown and it almost certainly occurs elsewhere (NPWS).	
	Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0]	Restore the favourable conservation condition.	Located approximately 32km north of the proposed works.	The FPM catchment is located upstream of the proposed works, along with the nature, adherence to methodology (see
	<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029]		FPM catchment located approximately 32km north of the proposed works.	

Site Name	Qualifying Interests (Habitats/Species)/ Special Conservation Interest Species	Conservation Objective	Distance from Study Area	Connectivity
				Section 3.1) and location of the works it is not anticipated for impacts to occur as a result of the proposed works.
	<i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) [1095]		Specific barriers serve to constrain the up- river migration of sea lamprey. The upper extent of the SAC in the R. Fergus is delineated by a barrier to migration. Barriers are also present in the Mulkear and Feale (NPWS).	Due to the various instream barriers to the species movement, the nature, adherence to methodology (see Section 3.1) and location of the works it is not anticipated that the identified QIs of the SAC or the surrounding environment will be impact as a result of the proposed works.
	<i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey) [1096]	Maintain the favourable conservation condition	Artificial barriers can block or cause difficulties to brook lampreys' migration, both up- and downstream, thereby possibly limiting the species to specific stretches (NPWS).	
	<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> (River Lamprey) [1099]	Maintain the favourable conservation condition	Artificial barriers can block or cause difficulties to lampreys' upstream migration, thereby limiting the species to lower stretches and restricting access to spawning areas. Barriers are also present in the Mulkear and Feale. (NPWS)	
	<i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106]	Restore the favourable conservation condition	No such obstacles, causing significant fish passage issues for salmon are present on the Feale and Mulkear rivers.	
	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i> (Common Bottlenose Dolphin) [1349]	Maintain the favourable conservation condition.	Critical habitat located 29km northwest of the proposed works ((NPWS)	

Site Name	Qualifying Interests (Habitats/Species)/ Special Conservation Interest Species	Conservation Objective	Distance from Study Area	Connectivity
				the works and project description (see Section 3.1), it is not anticipated that the identified QIs of the SAC or the surrounding environment will be impact as a result of the proposed works.
	<i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]	Restore the favourable conservation condition	Commuting buffer located 22km west of the proposed works.	It is acknowledged that otter are a mobile species and may utilise the River Feale, however due to the nature, location of the works and project description (see Section 3.1), it is not anticipated for impacts to occur to the Annex species as a result of the proposed works.

Table 5-2 presents Screening Assessment Criteria considering the proposed development.

Table 5-2: Screening Assessment Criteria

Screening Assessment Criteria Screening Questions	Impacts
Describe the individual elements of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the European Sites.	<p>There is one European site within the proposed works Zol; Lower River Shannon SAC which supports potential indirect connectivity. The Feale (IE_SH_23F010310) watercourse is located approximately 20m west of the proposed works location and is designated as part of the SAC.</p> <p>The proposed works support potential indirect connectivity due to their location adjoining the SAC. However due to the existing barriers on site in the form of vegetation, scale of the works and the proposed works description it is not anticipated for the proposed works to give rise to impacts to European sites during the construction phase.</p> <p>Surface water run-off from the building's hard surfaces will be directed to a storm water soakaway area within the proposed residential site. The site will be connected to the local public wastewater treatment plant (Abbeyfeale WwTP) facilities and the wastewater generated during the project operational phase will be treated appropriately.</p>
Likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project on the European Sites:	
Size and Scale	The size and scale of the proposed works are small when compared with the surrounding environment. The proposed works area is approximately 162m ² or 0.0162ha. The Lower River Shannon SAC is a total of 68300.00 ha, in comparison.
Land Take	The proposed development will not result in land take of Annex I habitats within a SAC and or SPA. It will not result in land take from a European Site.
Distance from European Sites or Key Features of the Site	<p>There is one European sites within the proposed works Zol; Lower River Shannon SAC. The SAC is located adjacent to the proposed works site.</p> <p>The proposed works support potential indirect connectivity due to their location adjoining the SAC. However due to the existing barriers on site in the form of vegetation and the project description (see Section 3.1) it is not anticipated for the proposed works to give rise to impacts to European sites during the construction phase.</p>
Resource Requirements	The proposed works will require use of standard construction methods and materials. The use of these materials will not contribute to significant negative effects to European sites, due to the nature of the proposed works and project description and methodology.
Emissions	<p>Aqueous emissions are the key item to be considered in this assessment and are considered below under construction and operational phases of the proposed development.</p> <p>Construction phase: The proposed works will require use of standard construction methods and materials. Waste material will be appropriately disposed of via skips to a licenced waste facility. Stock piling of</p>

Screening Assessment Criteria Screening Questions	Impacts
	<p>excavated material will be limited and to the east of the site. Construction works will follow the project description.</p> <p>Operational Phase: The residential building will be connected to the local public wastewater treat plant (WwTP) (Abbeyfeale WwTP) and all surface water run-off associated with the site will be directed to localised soak pits.</p>
Excavation Requirements	<p>It is envisioned minimal localised excavations within the proposed footprint will be required during the project's construction phase.</p> <p>Excavations will be readily confined to the project footprint; where removal is required from site, materials will be exported to a suitably licensed waste facility. There will be limited stockpiling of materials on-site, stock-piling will be to the east of the site.</p> <p>Excavations will be undertaken in line with the project description as per Section 3.1. There will be no significant effects to European Sites as a result of excavations.</p>
Transport Requirements	<p>Transport requirements as part of the proposed development construction will utilise the existing road network. Transport of construction materials will be ad-hoc, intermittent and restricted to working hours during the project's construction phase. Such requirements will be small scale and localised and will not impact European Sites within the project Zol.</p>
Duration of construction, operation and decommissioning	<p>Duration of construction will be approximately 10months. The project's operational phase will be medium to long term; i.e. > 50 years. Minimal material will be stored on site due to the site size and location, the primary construction compound for the project will be to the street on the eastern side of the site.</p>
Cumulative impact with other plans and projects in the area	<p>As part of the Appropriate Assessment, in addition to the proposed development, other relevant projects and plans in the area must also be considered at this stage. These plans and projects are considered further in this respect in Table 5-2 below.</p>

Table 5-3: In-combination Effects associated with the Proposed Development

Programmes, Plans and Projects	Potential for In-combination Effects
<p>Limerick County Development Plan 2022 - 2028</p>	<p>A number of strategies, policies and objectives are set out in the Limerick County Development Plan 2022-2028 with the aim of protection of the counties natural heritage and biodiversity.</p> <p>A number of policies and objectives provide for the protection of the integrity of sites designated under European and National legislation and ecological works. Such policies highlight the council’s policy to support the protection, conservation and enhancement of natural heritage and biodiversity, including the protection of the integrity of European sites. The below outlines a selection of such policies:</p> <p>Policy EH P1: Protection of Natural Heritage and Biodiversity It is a policy of the Council to: a) Protect and conserve Limerick’s natural heritage and biodiversity, in particular, areas designated as part of the European Sites Natura 2000 network, such as Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservations (SACs), in accordance with relevant EU Directives and national legislation and guidelines. b) Maintain the conservation value of all Natural Heritage Areas and proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) for the benefit of existing and future generations.</p> <p>Objective EH O1: Designated Sites and Habitats Directive It is an objective of the Council to ensure that projects/plans likely to have significant effects on European Sites (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) are subject to an appropriate assessment and will not be permitted under the Plan unless they comply with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. The Council, will through the planning enforcement process where applicable, seek to restore the ecological functions of designated sites, where they have been damaged through inappropriate development.</p> <p>Objective EH O3: Ecological Impact Assessment It is an objective of the Council to require all developments where there are species of conservation concern, to submit an ecological assessment of the effects of the development on the site and nearby designated sites, suggesting appropriate mitigation measures and establishing, in particular, the presence or absence of the following species: Otter, badger, bats, lamprey and protected plant species such as the Triangular Club Rush, Opposite Leaved Pond Weed and Flora Protection Order Species generally.</p> <p>The adherence and implementation of this plan within the Development Plan area will ensure that European sites are protected, and that Appropriate Assessment is undertaken for all plans, projects or programmes that have the potential for significant effects to European sites.</p>
<p>River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2027</p>	<p>The implementation of the RBMP seeks compliance with the environmental objectives set under the plan, which will be documented for each water body. This includes compliance with the European Communities (Surface Waters) Regulations S.I. No. 272 of 2009 (as amended). The implementation of the RBMP and achievement or maintenance of environmental objectives which will be set for the receiving water bodies will have a positive impact on water dependent habitats and species within European sites.</p>
<p>Inland Fisheries Ireland Corporate Plan 2021 - 2025 The Inland Fisheries Act 2010</p>	<p>The implementation and compliance with key environmental issues and objectives of this corporate plan will result in positive in-combination effects to European sites. The implementation of this corporate plan will have a positive impact for biodiversity of inland fisheries and ecosystems. It will not contribute to in-combination or cumulative impacts with the proposed development.</p>
<p>Local Planning Applications</p>	<p>Adherence to the policies and objectives of Limerick County Development Plan 2022-2028 ensure that local planning applications and subsequent grant of planning comply with the core strategy of proper planning and sustainability and with the requirements of relevant EU Directives and environmental considerations, there is no potential for adverse in-combination effects on European Sites.</p>

Programmes, Plans and Projects	Potential for In-combination Effects
	<p>A search of the Limerick County Council Planning Applications was conducted. No recent planning applications for Old Church Street, Abbeyfeale was identified.</p> <p>https://www.eplanning.ie/LimerickCCC/searchresults (Accessed July 2023)</p>

5.2 Conclusion of Cumulative Impact Assessment

Provided adherence to the overarching policies and objectives of the plans and programmes and best practice and mitigation measures* are implemented for individual projects, there is no potential for the mentioned plans and projects to have a cumulative impact to European sites, in combination with the proposed development (*this refers to projects which were permitted via full Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment).

Screening Assessment Criteria is further assessed in **Table 5-4** below.

Table 5-4: Screening Assessment Criteria

Screening Assessment Criteria Screening Questions	
Describe any likely changes to the site arising as a result of the following;	
Reduction of Habitat	The proposed works are adjacent to the Lower River Shannon SAC, however due to the nature of the works and location, the works will not result in the reduction of habitat associated with European Sites within the project Zone of Influence i.e. Annex I habitats designated as qualifying interests. Habitats on site are primarily immature scrub (WS1) development of dense ivy overgrowth and built surfaces (BL3).
Disturbance to Key Species	The commuting zone for otters within the SAC does not highlight the River Feale, given the mobile nature of the species there is a possibility it is present in the watercourse. Due to the nature, location and project’s description, it is not anticipated that proposed development will not result in the disturbance of key species associated with European Sites within the project Zone of Influence.
Habitat or Species Fragmentation	<p>Due to the nature, location and project’s description, the proposed works will not result in habitat or species fragmentation to European Sites within the project Zone of Influence. See QI Assessment in Table 5-1.</p> <p>The works will not result in habitat or species fragmentation with European Sites within the project Zone of Influence i.e. Annex I habitats or Annex II species designated as qualifying interests. The site’s COs does not highlight any Annex I habitats within the SAC location adjoining the proposed works.</p>
Reduction in Species Diversity	The proposed works will not result in the reduction in species diversity to European Sites within the project Zone of Influence.
Changes in Key Indicators of Conservation Value	The proposed development works will not contribute to changes in Key Indicators of Conservation Value to European sites within the project Zone of Influence as it has been concluded that substantive pathways for transmission of hydrological impacts into do not exist.

Screening Assessment Criteria Screening Questions	
	Therefore, there will no impact to European sites that could influence the key indicators of conservation value of the site.
Climate Change	The proposed works will not result in significant negative effects contributing to climate change that could in turn affect the conservation objectives of those European Sites within the project Zol.
Describe any likely impacts on the European sites as a whole in terms of Interference with key relationships that define the structure and function of the site;	There will no impact to European sites that could influence the structure and function of the site. Pollution events would need to be large scale and sustained to contribute towards negative effects to downstream European sites during the project's construction phase.
Provide Indicators of Significance as a result of the identification effects set out above in terms of;	
Loss	There will be no direct or indirect loss of habitats or species of European Sites within the project footprint of its Zol.
Fragmentation	The proposed works do not support qualifying habitats or species of European Sites within the potential project Zone of Influence. Therefore, the proposed development site will not result in fragmentation to European Sites or their associated species and habitats of Qualifying Interest. Habitats on site are primarily immature scrub (WS1) development of dense ivy overgrowth and built surfaces (BL3).
Disruption	There will be no direct or indirect disruption of habitats or species of European Sites within the project Zol. The site primarily does not support habitats or species of European Sites within the potential project Zone of Influence. Therefore, the proposed works will not result in disturbance of disruption to European Sites or their associated species and habitats of Qualifying Interest.
Disturbance	There will be no direct or indirect disturbance of habitats or species of European Sites within the project Zol. The site does not support habitats or species of European Sites within the potential project Zone of Influence. Therefore, the proposed works will not result in disturbance of disruption to European Sites or their associated species and habitats of Qualifying Interest.
Changes to Key elements of the site	It has been concluded that substantive pathways for transmission of impacts European sites do not exist. Therefore, the proposed development works will not contribute to Changes to Key Elements of European sites within the project's Zone of Influence.
Describe from the above those elements of the project or plan, or combination of elements, where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale or magnitude of impacts are not known.	It has been concluded that substantive pathways for transmission to European sites do not exist. Therefore, there will be no changes to key elements of European Sites and no potential for in-combination effects to arise.

5.3 Screening for AA Conclusion

This screening for AA identifies and assesses potential significant effects which are likely to occur as a result of the proposed construction of two residential houses at The Sadderly, Old Church Road, Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick.

The screening identified two European sites located within the zone of influence of the proposed works. However, there are no ecological or environmental vectors linking the proposed development works to European Sites.

Through an assessment of the Source-Pathway-Receptor model, which considered the ZoI of effects from the proposed works and the potential in-combination effects with other plans or projects, the following findings have been reached:

- The application site is not directly connected with, or necessary to, the management of any European site;
- The proposed development works do not support direct connectivity with any European site via ecological or environmental vectors;
- Substantive pathways for transmission of impacts into European sites do not exist; and
- The proposed project will not give rise to likely significant effects on the qualifying interests of any European Site, in view of best scientific knowledge and in view of the conservation objectives of the European sites concerned.

On the basis of objective scientific information, this Screening for Appropriate Assessment finds that the proposed development works, either individually or in combination with other projects and plans, is not likely to have a significant effect on any European site.

Findings of No Significant Effects Matrix			
Name of Plan or Project		The proposed demolition and construction of a new residential dwelling at The Sadderly, Old Church Road, Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick.	
Names and locations of relevant Natura 2000 sites		There is one European site located within the project's immediate ZoI, Lower River Shannon SAC, this site is adjoining the site boundary of the proposed works. However due to the location, the existing on-site vegetation, nature of and proposed works methodology it is not anticipated for the works to support indirect or direct connectivity via hydrological or hydrogeological pathways to the European site.	
Description of Plan or Project		The proposed demolition and construction of a new residential dwelling at The Sadderly, Old Church Road, Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick.	
Is the project or plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site (provide details)?		No	
Are there other projects or plans that together with the project or plan being assessed could affect the site (provide details)		No	
The Assessment of Significance of Effects:			
Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site.		There is one European site located within the project's immediate ZoI, Lower River Shannon SAC, this site is adjoining the site boundary of the proposed works. However due to the location, the existing on-site vegetation, nature of and proposed works methodology it is not anticipated for the works to support indirect or direct connectivity via hydrological or hydrogeological pathways to the European site. Therefore, it is not anticipated that impacts will occur to European sites as a result of the proposed works.	
Explain why these effects are not considered significant		There is one European site located within the project's immediate ZoI, Lower River Shannon SAC, this site is adjoining the site boundary of the proposed works. However due to the location, the existing on-site vegetation, nature of and proposed works methodology it is not anticipated for the works to support indirect or direct connectivity via hydrological or hydrogeological pathways to the European site during the construction phase. The operational phase of the works include the connection to the Abbeyfeale WwTP network for the processing of wastewater and the inclusion of an soakaway to manage on-site surface water.	
List of agencies consulted: provide contact name and telephone or e-mail address		N/A	
Response to consultation.		N/A	
Data Collected to Carry Out the Assessment:			
Who carried out the assessment?	Sources of Data	Level of Assessment	Where can the full results of the completed assessment be accessed and viewed?

Findings of No Significant Effects Matrix			
<p>Sheila Murphy B.Sc. M.Sc. MCIEEM</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Site visit conducted on the 20th July 2023. 2. NPWS Site Synopses, Conservation Objectives and backing documents and NATURA 2000 Forms for the relevant Natura 2000 sites 3. Remote sensing images and aerial photographs. 4. Drawings and information of the proposed works as supplied by the client. 	<p>Stage 1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment</p>	<p>The full results of the completed assessment should be available to be viewed through Limerick County Council.</p>

Appendix A – Proposed Works Site & Layout

