

**Habitats Directive Appropriate Assessment  
Screening Determination**

**Project Ballymakeera and Ballyvourney Flood Relief Scheme,  
River Sullane (Interim Works)**



**Cork County Council**  
Comhairle Contae Chorcaí

**Completed by Ecology Office  
Planning Department  
Cork County Council**

**Date: 28<sup>th</sup> June 2019**

This document contains the Habitats Directive Screening Determination of Cork County Council in respect of the Ballymakeera and Ballyvourney (River Sullane) Flood Relief Scheme. The determination is based on information provided in the screening assessment which has been prepared by RPS on behalf of Cork County Council.

**Name of the project**

Ballymakeera and Ballyvourney (River Sullane) Flood Relief Scheme.

**Name and location of Natura 2000 sites identified for screening**

0106 St. Gobnait's Wood SAC  
0108 The Gearagh SAC  
0365 Killarney National Park, Macgillycuddy's Reeks and Caragh River Catchment SAC  
1890 Mullaghanish Bog SAC  
2170 Blackwater River SAC  
4109 The Gearagh SPA  
4162 Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA

The qualifying interests and relevant conservation objectives for which these sites have been designated are set out in the RPS Screening Report. The sites are located between 110m and 10km from the proposed development site.

**Description of the project**

Per screening report and in Cork County Council (2018) Baile Mhic Ire (Ballymakeera) Interim Flood Mitigation Works: Volume A – Works Requirements.

In summary

- Deployment of interim sand bags and impermeable liners.
- Land-raising at field access points at three locations.
- Fitting of two non-return valves on the outlets of two pipe outfalls.
- Interim defences to be removed as the construction of the main scheme progresses.

## Baile Mhic Ire Interim Measures



**Is the project directly connected with or necessary to the management of the sites listed above?**

No

**Are there other projects or plans that together with the project being assessed that could affect these sites (provide details)?**

None identified.

**Describe how the project (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 Site.**

There is no potential for the proposed development to give rise to negative effects on the European sites which have been screened for the following reasons:

1. **Gearagh SAC, Mullaghanish Bog SAC, Blackwater River (Cork / Waterford) SAC, Killarney National Park, Macgillycuddy's Reeks and Caragh River Catchment SAC:** No works are proposed within these sites, therefore there will be no direct impacts to European Sites through landtake or fragmentation of habitats. There is no hydrological or habitat connectivity between the proposed works area and the. Furthermore, these sites are situated a significant distance from the proposed works (between c.4.3km and c.12.9km distance) and will not be impacted either directly or indirectly. Therefore potential impacts to these sites are ruled out.
2. **Gearagh SPA:** There is no hydrological connectivity to the site and the site is situated a significant distance from the proposed works (12.4km). Any potential disturbances arising from the proposed works would be localised, temporary and confined to the duration of the interim works only. In consideration of these factors, it is concluded that the qualifying interests of the Gearagh SPA will not be impacted either directly or indirectly as a result of

the proposed works. Therefore, the proposed interim works will not have a significant effect on the Gearagh SPA.

3. **Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA:** There is no hydrological connectivity between the proposed works and (this European Site is upstream of the proposed works). Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA is located approximately 0.74km north of the proposed interim works and is designated for Hen Harrier. In consideration of the location of the proposed works in the immediate proximity of Ballymakeera and the N22 national primary road, it is considered that any disturbance to the qualifying interests of Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA as a result of the proposed works is extremely unlikely. Furthermore, any potential disturbances arising from the proposed works would be localised, temporary and confined to the duration of the interim works only. Therefore, the proposed works will not have a significant effect on Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA.
4. **St. Gobnait's Wood SAC:** The proposed interim works include the construction of hard defence lines, land raising and minor works to outfall pipes. At its closest point, the works are located approximately 115m to the south east of. The proposed works are separated from St. Gobnait's Wood SAC by a vegetated buffer of agriculturally improved grassland and the Sullane River: the proposed works are located to the east of the Sullane River while St. Gobnait's Wood is located to the west of the Sullane River. Furthermore the works adjacent to the Sullane River are downstream of St. Gobnait's Wood SAC. Cascade Woods (part of St. Gobnait's Wood SAC) is located approximately 500m north of the proposed works and is separated from same by an industrial estate and local roads. No access to St. Gobnait's Wood SAC will be required during the construction or operational phase of the proposed works. Modelling of water levels undertaken by OPW indicates that there will not be a significant increase in the water levels of the Sullane River in the St. Gobnait's Wood SAC area (Q15: 0.05m) as a result of the proposed works.

**Explain why these effects are not considered significant.**

No potential for effects identified, therefore there is no potential for significant effects to arise.

**List of agencies consulted**

This screening document will be referred to statutory consultees including the National Parks and Wildlife Service of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. Consultation with the wider public will also take place as part of the Part 8 process.

**Who carried out this assessment**

RPS Environmental Consultants prepared the screening assessment report. The assessment has been reviewed by the ecology office of Cork County Council.

**Sources of data**

RPS Screening Assessment Report and Works Drawings.

**Level of assessment completed**

Screening.

**Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed?**

RPS Screening Assessment Report and this report.

**Overall conclusion**

In accordance with Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and on the basis of the objective information provided in this report, it is concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed works, individually or in combination with other plans/projects are not likely to have a significant effect on a European site (Natura 2000 site). It is therefore considered that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), is not required.

**Explain how the overall conclusion that there are no significant effect on European sites was arrived at**

From the findings of the screening exercise, it can be concluded on the basis of objective scientific information that

1. the proposed interim flood defence works will not give rise to significant effects on the qualifying interests of the Gearagh SAC, Mullaghanish Bog SAC, Blackwater River (Cork / Waterford) SAC, Killarney National Park, Macgillycuddy's Reeks And Caragh River Catchment SAC, the Gearagh SPA and Mullaghanish to Musheramore Mountains SPA due to the lack of physical, hydrological or any other linkage between the proposed works site and these sites;
2. the proposed works are located approximately 115m from St. Gobnait's Wood SAC. However, from the findings of the screening exercise, it can be concluded, on the basis of objective scientific information, that the proposed interim flood defence works, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not have a significant effect on St. Gobnait's Wood SAC for the following reasons:-
  - The lack of hydrological or habitat connectivity; and
  - The nature of the works (temporary, low scale works).

The report finds that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not required.