

**Habitats Directive Appropriate Assessment
Screening Determination**

**North Cork Local Enterprise Offices, Mallow
Part 8**



Cork County Council
Comhairle Contae Chorcaí

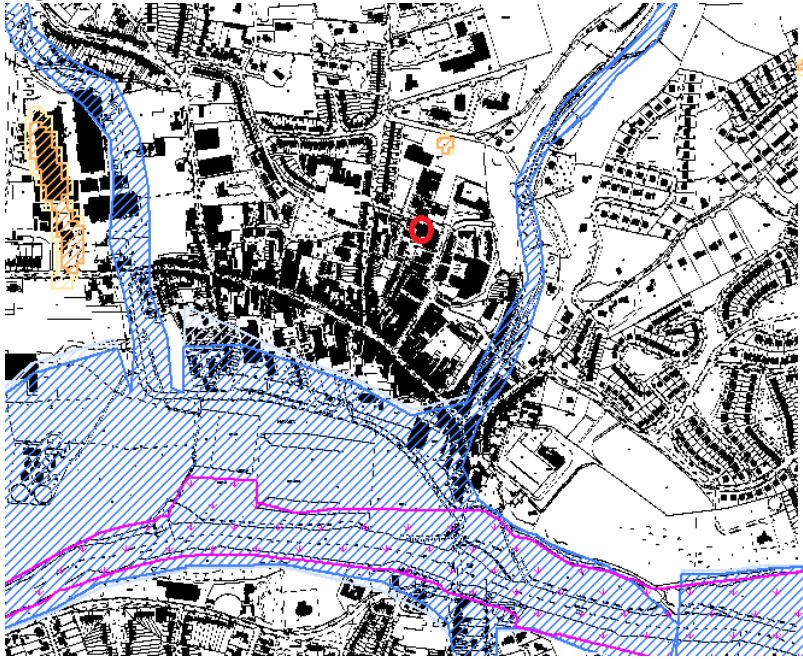
**Completed by: Joy Barry,
Cork County Council.**

Date: 25th July 2022

This document contains the Habitats Directive Screening Determination of Cork County Council in respect of new Offices proposed for the North Cork Local Enterprise Offices located at the Tower Mixed Use facility located at Fairgreen in Mallow. The determination is based on an assessment carried out by Joy Barry on behalf of Cork County Council.

<p>Name of the project</p> <p>North Cork Local Enterprise Offices (LEO), Fairgreen, New Road, Mallow Co. Cotk</p>
<p>Description of the project</p> <p>This proposal relates to the change of use of parts of an existing theatre facility located within the Tower Mixed use scheme in Fairgreen in Mallow. The proposal will require the internal conversion of the front office space of the theatre building, New Street, Mallow into offices for the North Cork Local Enterprise Offices.</p> <p>The project will substantially retain the physical layout of the existing building in the curtilage involved. The only external change to the elevation will be the replacement of a security gate with a new automatic sliding door.</p> <p>Internally, the access corridor will be retained, the theatre foyer area will become a reception office, the rehearsal space will be sub-divided into 3no. personnel offices, the box office will become an office kitchen, the green room will become an IT and training room, the foyer overflow area will become a utility space and alternative escape route and the existing toilet suite will be retained.</p> <p>New lighting, power and IT infrastructure will be installed with an air conditioning system to provide heating temperature control and ventilation set in a new acoustic tiled ceiling grid. General redecoration will be carried out internally also.</p> <p>Foul drainage from the scheme shall connect into the public sewer which is conveyed to the Mallow WWTP. Additional wastewater produced by a new kitchenette, (sink/dishwasher) will connect into the existing building drainage system and will ultimately discharge into the public sewer (there will be no change to the toilet layout(s)) and the peak usage however will be substantially reduced.</p> <p>Storm water shall connect into the public storm water sewer serving the town as per existing arrangements.</p> <p>Site Context</p> <p>The proposed development site is located to the north of Mallow Town Centre and fronts onto New Road. The site forms part of the ground floor of the Tower Mixed Use scheme which comprises of commercial space on the ground floor and apartments overhead.</p> <p>The site is not identified to be located within an area susceptible to flooding according to the Cork County Development Plan 2022 or the draft PFRA Flood Maps available for the site.</p> <p>There are no watercourses on site and the nearest watercourse is the Spa Stream [Caherduggan South – EPA Name] is located c. 200m to the east of the site and discharges into the Blackwater River 1.4km downstream.</p>

Figure 1: Site Location and Context



Source: Cork County Council, Planning Enquiry System

Name and location of EU sites subject to screening

The following Natura 2000 sites to be located within 15km of the proposed development site;

1. Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 2170) – 516m to the north; and
2. Kilcolman Bog Special Protection Area (Site Code: 4096) – located 12km to the north.

A source-pathway-receptor link has been identified between the source (proposed development) and the Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC via a potential pathway by means of wastewater / stormwater discharges during the operational phase. Therefore, the Blackwater River SAC is considered further as part of this assessment.

Given the distance between the development site and Kilcolman Bog SPA and lack of a hydrological connection, potential for significant adverse impacts on this site are ruled out in relation to this site.

No other designated sites have been identified within the submitted AA Screening.

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

No.

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

Potential impacts on the Blackwater River SAC are considered as follows:

1. Loss of Habitat
2. Impacts from noise and disturbance
3. Impacts on Water Quality during construction

4. Potential increase in the discharges from Mallow WWTP (Indirect Impact)
5. Spread of Invasive Species
6. Cumulative Impacts

An assessment of significance of potential effects in relation to points outlined above has been carried out. This assessment is based on potential for significant effects on the Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC of the proposed project giving rise to significant negative effects on this designated site. Potential for significant adverse effects are ruled out for the following reasons:

1. There will be no direct interventions within any Natura 2000 site and accordingly the potential for the project to give rise to direct impacts on habitats which are qualifying interests of these designated sites is screened out.
2. Given the small scale and short-term nature of the works, no impact on qualifying species is predicted to occur during the construction phase. Likewise given the absence of suitable habitats for QI species, the existing noise environment and nature of the works, no impact from increased noise and disturbance will occur during the operational phase of the development. Therefore, no impact from the proposed development on the qualifying interests or conservation objectives for the Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC as a result of noise/disturbance is predicted to occur.
3. Given the small scale of the proposed development, the distance of the works area from the River Blackwater and the Spa Stream, no significant risk of severe silt levels being generated or major spills of hydrocarbons within Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC is predicted to occur during the construction phase. Therefore, no impact on water quality within European sites during construction is predicted to occur.
4. Having regard to the proposed development location within the town of Mallow on serviced, zoned lands and to permitted improvement works to the WWTP providing additional capacity, no significant in-combination effects from wastewater or surface water discharge during the operational phase have been identified in relation to potential effects associated with other plans or projects. Therefore, there will be no impact on the conservation objectives of the Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC from operational wastewater or surface water discharges.
5. Having regard to the nature of the works, potential for introduction or spread of invasive species to the Blackwater River SAC is ruled out.
6. Threats to the Blackwater River SAC include industrial, water and agricultural related discharges to impact water quality and increased disturbance associated with construction of flood relief works and recreational activities. However, in the absence of any predicted impacts from the proposed development, no in-combination impacts have been identified.

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

Threats to the Blackwater SAC include agricultural impacts on water quality and increased disturbance. However, in the absence of any predicted impacts from the proposed development, no in-combination impacts have been identified.

Cork County Council evaluation and overall conclusion that there are no significant adverse effects on European Sites foreseen as a result of the proposal.

In accordance with Section 177S of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) it is concluded that the proposed project does not pose a risk of causing significant adverse effects on any Natura 2000 site, alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

It is therefore determined that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 is not required.