

Screening for Appropriate Assessment

Carhookeal Sports Grounds

Mallow

Co. Cork

Report prepared for Cork County Council

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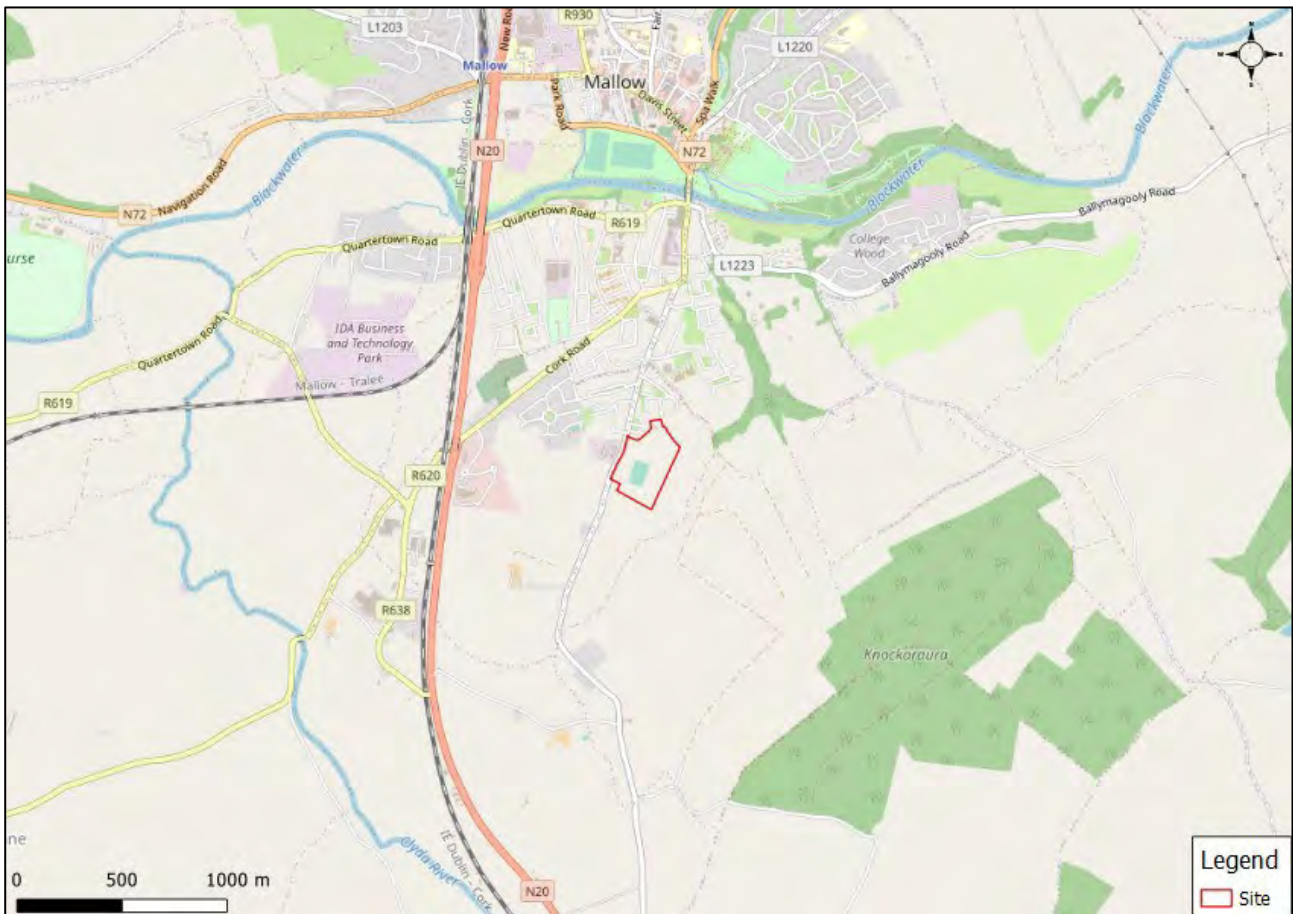
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1 Introduction

Greenleaf Ecology was commissioned by Cork County Council to prepare a report to inform Screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) for the proposed Carhookeal Sports Ground, Mallow, Co. Cork (Figure 1-1).

This report comprises information in support of screening for AA to be undertaken by the competent authority in line with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora; the Planning and Development Act (as amended), and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477/2011) as amended.

Figure 1-1: Location of the proposed project



1.1 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.

The Habitats Directive has been transposed into Irish law by Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 - 2020 and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477/2011) as amended. In the context of the proposed development, the governing legislation is the Birds and Habitats Regulations.

Article 6(3) 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 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.

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 competent authority is obliged to consider, in view of best scientific knowledge, whether the proposed works are likely to have a significant effect either individually or in combination with other plans and projects. If screening determines that there is likely to be significant effects on a European site, then AA must be carried out for the proposed works at Carhookeal, including the compilation of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) to inform the decision making.

1.2 Statement of Competence

This AA Screening was carried out by Karen Banks, MCIEEM. Karen is an ecologist with Greenleaf Ecology and has 16 years' experience in the field of ecological assessment. Karen has extensive experience in the production of reports to inform Appropriate Assessment screenings and Natura Impact Statements including those for transport infrastructure, small to large scale housing and mixed-use developments, flood alleviation schemes and wind farms.

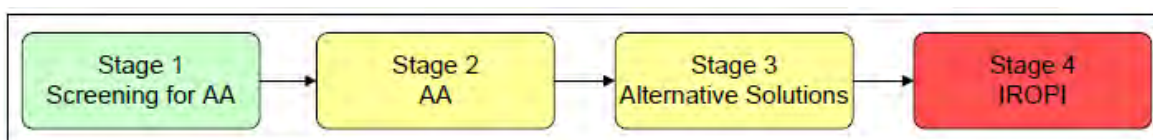
2 Methodology

2.1 Stages of Appropriate Assessment

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government guidelines (DELHG, 2009, rev. 2010) outlines the European Commission's methodological guidance (EC, 2002) promoting a four-stage process to complete the AA and outlines the issues and tests at each stage. An important aspect of the process is that the outcome at each successive stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required.

The four stages are summarised diagrammatically in Figure 2-1. Stages 1-2 deal with the main requirements for assessment under Article 6(3), and Regulation 42 of the Birds and Habitats Regulations. Stage 3 may be part of the Article 6(3) Assessment or may be a necessary precursor to Stage 4. Stage 4 is the main derogation step of Article 6(4).

Figure 2-1: Four stages of Appropriate Assessment



Stage 1 - Screening is the process that addresses and records the reasoning and conclusions in relation to the first two tests of Article 6(3):

- i. whether a plan or project (in this instance the proposed project) is directly connected to or necessary for the management of the European sites, and
- ii. whether a plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, is likely to have significant effects on the European sites in view of their 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). This report fulfils the information necessary to enable the competent authority to screen the proposal for the requirement to prepare an AA.

This report forms Stage 1 of the AA process and sets out the following information:

- Description of the proposed works;
- Characteristics of the proximal European sites; and
- Assessment of significance of the proposed works on the European sites in question.

The methodology followed in relation to this assessment has had regard to the following guidance and legislation:

- European Union Habitats Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora 92/43/EEC;
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland Guidance for Planning Authorities (DOEHLG 2009, rev 2010);
- The Planning and Development Act (as amended);
- 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, 2018);
- Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg (EC, 2021);

- Interpretation Manual of European Union Habitats. Version EUR 28. European Commission 2013;
- The European Union (Environmental Impact Assessment and Habitats) Regulations 2011; and
- The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, S.I. No. 477 of 2011 (as amended).

2.2 Information consulted for this report

The Screening assessment had regard to the following sources of data and information:

- Information on the location, nature and design of the proposed project;
- Department of Housing, Planning, and Local Government – online land use mapping www.myplan.ie/en/index.html;
- Department of Housing, Planning, and Local Government- EIA Portal <https://www.housing.gov.ie/planning/environmental-assessment/environmental-impact-assessment-eia/eia-portal>
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – Water Quality [EPA Maps](#);
- Geological Survey of Ireland – Geology, soils and Hydrogeology www.gsi.ie;
- [Water Framework Directive website – www.catchments.ie](#);
- [Inland Fisheries Ireland website and www.wfdfish.ie](#);
- National Parks and Wildlife Service – online European site network information, including site conservation objectives www.npws.ie;
- National Parks and Wildlife Service – Information on the status of EU protected habitats in Ireland (NPWS 2019);
- National Biodiversity Data Centre – www.biodiversityireland.ie;
- Ordnance Survey of Ireland – Mapping and Aerial photography www.osi.ie; and
- Site survey, undertaken on 10th October 2022.

2.3 Screening Protocol

The sequence of events when completing the AA Screening process is provided below:

- Ascertain whether the plan or project is necessary for the management of the European site;
- Description of the plan or project and its impact factors;
- Definition of the likely zone of influence for the proposed works;
- Identification of the European sites that are situated (in their entirety or partially or downstream) within the likely zone of influence of the proposed works;
- Identification of the most up-to-date QIs and SCIs for each European site within the zone of influence;
- Identification of the environmental conditions that maintain the QIs/SCIs at the desired target of Favourable Conservation Status;
- Identification of the threats/impacts – actual or potential that could negatively impact the environmental conditions of the QIs/SCIs within the European sites;
- Highlighting the activities of the proposed works that could give rise to significant negative impacts; and
- Identification of other plans or projects, for which in-combination impacts would likely have significant effects.

2.3.1 Screening Determination

In accordance with Regulation 42(7) of the Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477/2011) as amended, the competent authority (Cork County Council), shall:

“determine that an Appropriate Assessment of a plan or project is not required where the plan or project is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site as a European site and if it can be excluded on the basis of objective scientific information following screening under this Regulation, that the plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on a European site”.

Further, under Regulation 42(8) (a):

Where, in relation to a plan or project for which an application for consent has been received, a public authority makes a determination that an Appropriate Assessment is required, the public authority shall give notice of the determination, including reasons for the determination of the public authority, to the following—
the applicant,

if appropriate, any person who made submissions or observations in relation to the application to the public authority, or

if appropriate, any party to an appeal or referral.

(b) Where a public authority has determined that an Appropriate Assessment is required in respect of a proposed development it may direct in the notice issued under subparagraph (a) that a Natura Impact Statement is required.

2.3.2 Zone of Influence

In accordance with EC (2021) *Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*, identification of the European sites that may be affected should be done by taking into consideration all aspects of the plan or project that could have potential effects on any European sites located within the zone of influence of the plan or project. This should take into account all of the designating features (species, habitat types) that are significantly present on the sites and their conservation objectives.

In particular, it should identify:

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

The range of European sites to be assessed, i.e. the zone in which impacts from the plan or project may arise, will depend on the nature of the plan or project and the distance at which effects may occur.

2.3.3 Likely Significant Effects

The threshold for a likely significant effect is treated in the screening exercise as being above a *de minimis* level¹. The opinion of the Advocate General in CJEU case C-258/11 outlines:

“the requirement that the effect in question be ‘significant’ exists in order to lay down a de minimis threshold. Plans or projects that have no appreciable effect on a European site are thereby excluded. If all plans or projects capable of having any effect whatsoever on the site were to be caught by Article 6(3), activities on or near the site would risk being impossible by reason of legislative overkill.”

In this report, therefore, ‘relevant’ European sites are those within the potential zone of influence of the construction and / or operation of the proposed development, and to which likely significant effect pathways were identified through the source-pathway-receptor model.

¹ *Sweetman v. An Bord Pleanála* (Court of Justice of the EU, case C-285/11). A *de minimis* effect is a level of risk that is too small to be concerned with when considering ecological requirements of an Annex I habitat or a population of Annex II species present on a European site necessary to ensure their favourable conservation condition. If low level effects on habitats or individuals of species are judged to be in this order of magnitude and that judgment has been made in the absence of reasonable scientific doubt, then those effects are not considered to be likely significant effects.

3 Project Description

The aim of this project is to develop publicly owned Community Sports Grounds on the 19.3-acre site at Carhookeal, Mallow. The facilities for the community and sporting clubs at this site are to include:

- Construction of a 400m eight lane athletic track, enclosing a grass pitch area suitable for track and field sports
- Development of a grass soccer pitch
- Development of an AstroTurf pitch (3Nr 30m x 50m pitches)
- Development of a rugby union size pitch
- Construction of 2 Nr Tennis Courts
- Provision of car parks – total spaces for 157 car spaces and 4 bus park spaces
- Development of an outer perimeter walking pathway
- Erection of new entrance gates
- Associated soft landscaping of the site including further native hedge planting, biodiversity planting and tree planting
- Associated groundworks including drainage, stormwater connections, watermain connections and electrical ducting

3.1 Surface Water Management

Surface water arising from the existing grass pitches percolates to grassland and drains towards a shallow drain/ditch at the east of the site. It is proposed that the new grass pitches and track will continue to percolate off to grassland and will drain to vegetated swales at the east of the site. The track level will direct water off to the inner grass area, while the astro pitch will have a drainage system under the pitch surface and be directed to grass areas within the site to naturally percolate.

The new roadside car park areas will be constructed at the existing car park and surface water will percolate to grassland as per the existing system. In the new proposed lower area car park the surface water will pass through a bypass interceptor before discharging to the storm water sewer.

3.2 Foul Water Network

There will be no foul water requirements as part of this planning application.

3.3 Existing Environment

A site survey was undertaken on 10th October 2022 by ecologist Ms. Karen Banks.

The proposed site consists of a disused sports ground comprising re-colonising bare ground (ED3), scrub (WS1) and species poor dry meadows and grassy verges (GS2). Treelines are present on the southern and western site boundary and a mature Oak (*Quercus robur*) and a mature Large-leaved Lime (*Tilia platyphyllos*) are present at the north of the site. Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) has been planted along the eastern and northern site boundaries.

No invasive plant species were recorded within the proposed site and its immediate environs.

For further details on the existing environment at the proposed site please refer to the Ecological Impact Assessment accompanying the planning application (Greenleaf Ecology, 2022).

3.3.1 Surface Water

3.3.1.1 Water Bodies

There are no active drainage ditches or watercourses within the proposed site. The proposed site is located within the Blackwater (Munster)_140 Sub-basin. The 2nd order ForestBear Stream (EPA name), located c.0.14km to the east of the site is a tributary of the Blackwater (Munster) River, which is located c.1.1km to the north of the site (straight line distance).

The Blackwater (Munster)_140 River Waterbodies Risk Status is 'not at risk' and is classified as being of Good status under the 2013-2018 Water Framework Directive monitoring round. Macroinvertebrate sampling for Q-value determination was conducted within the Blackwater River as part of EPA's Water Framework Directive monitoring. This nearest sampling point is located within the Blackwater River at Rly Bridge, Mallow. In 2021 (the latest available data on [EPA Maps](#)), the Q-value was 4 'Good'.

The study area overlies the Glenville Ground Waterbody (GWB).

3.4 Conservation Objectives of European Sites

The integrity of a European site (referred to in Article 6.3 of the EU Habitats Directive) is determined based on the conservation status of the qualifying interests of the SAC. European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain at favourable conservation status areas designated as SACs and SPAs. 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 the area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing,
- 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 population on a long-term basis.

3.5 Description of European Sites

This stage of the screening for AA process describes European sites within the likely zone of influence of the proposed project. The methodology for establishing the likely zone of influence is described in Section 2.3.2.

Connectivity between the proposed project and European sites has been reviewed. Connectivity is identified via the potential source-pathway-receptor model which identifies the potential impact pathways such as land, air, hydrological, hydrogeological pathways etc. which may support direct or indirect connectivity of the proposed works to European sites and/or their qualifying features.

In view of the location and characteristics of the proposed project (see Section 3) and the source, pathway and receptors of potential impacts, a 5km radius is considered an appropriate zone of influence to screen all likely significant effects that might impact upon the European sites. Establishment of the likely zone of

influence is in line with EC (2021) *Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*.

The European sites located within 2km of the proposed project are outlined in Table 3-1 and Figure 3-1 . There is 1 European site located within 2km of the proposed project:

1. Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC (Site Code: 002170).

Source – pathway – receptor dynamics were assessed for Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC and it was determined that there is no direct surface water connectivity between the proposed project and Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC. However, the site slopes towards a tributary of the Blackwater River (the ForestBear Stream), which is located c.140m to the east of the site.

Figure 3-1: European Sites Located within 5km of the Proposed Sports Ground

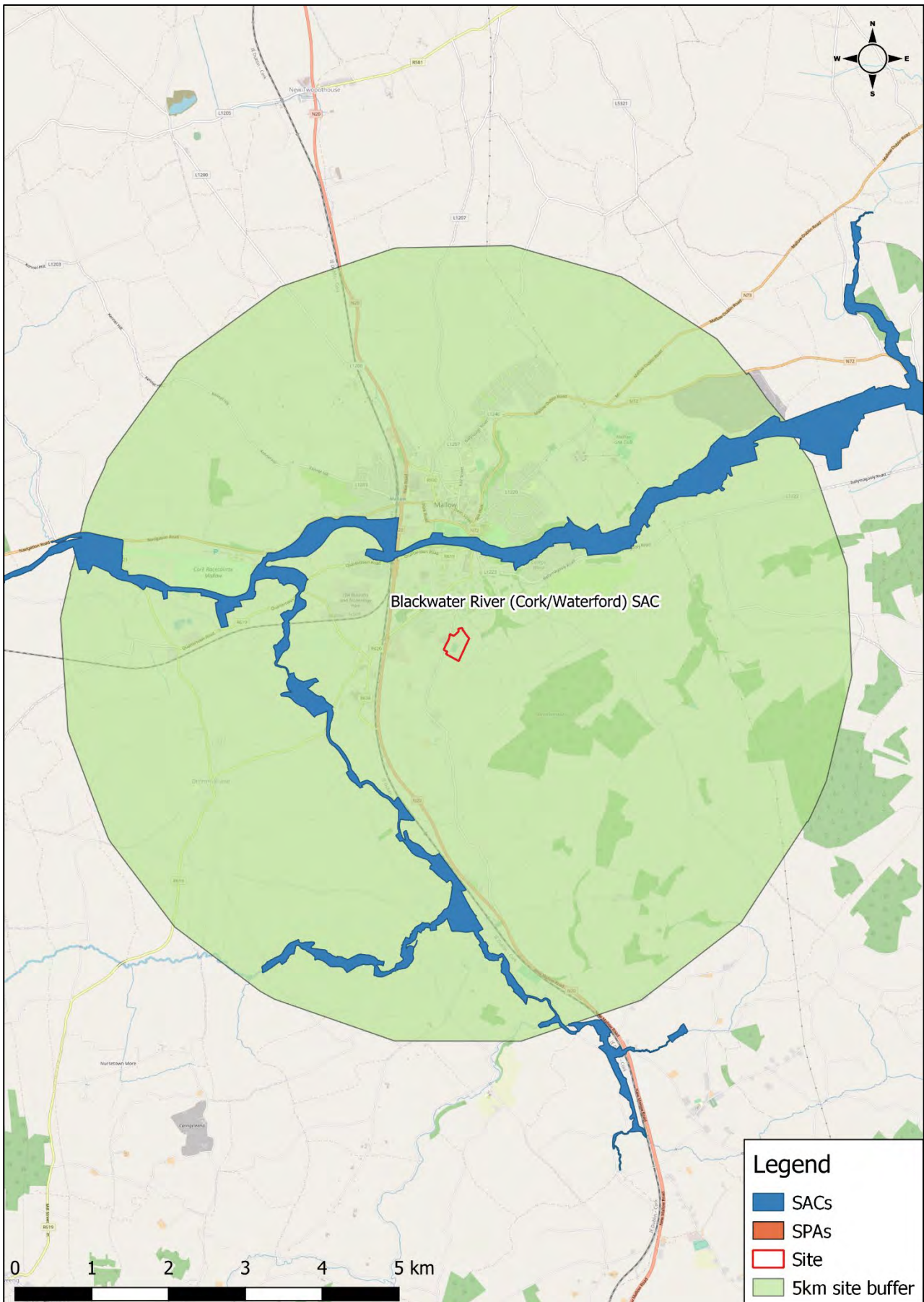


Table 3-1: European Sites within 5km of the Proposed Project

Site Name and Code	Qualifying Interests	Distance from Proposed Site (km) ²	Connectivity
<p>Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) (Site Code: 002170)</p>	<p>Annex I Habitats</p> <p>Estuaries [1130]</p> <p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]</p> <p>Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220]</p> <p>Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]</p> <p>Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330]</p> <p>Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410]</p> <p>Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranuncion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260]</p> <p>Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0]</p> <p>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]</p> <p>Annex II Species</p> <p><i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029]</p> <p><i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092]</p> <p><i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) [1095]</p> <p><i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey) [1096]</p> <p><i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> (River Lamprey) [1099]</p> <p><i>Alosa fallax fallax</i> (Twaiite Shad) [1103]</p> <p><i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106]</p> <p><i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]</p> <p><i>Trichomanes speciosum</i> (Killarney Fern) [1421]</p>	<p>1.1km</p>	<p>There is no direct connectivity via surface water. However, the site slopes towards a tributary of the Blackwater River, (the ForestBear Stream) which is located c.140m to the east of the site.</p>

² Distance measured "as the crow flies"

4 Screening Assessment Criteria

4.1 Management of European Sites

AA Screening is not required where the proposed development is connected with, or necessary to, the management of any European site. In this case, the proposed development is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of any European site(s).

4.2 Likely Direct, Indirect or Secondary Impacts of the Project on the European Sites

Table 3-1 details the European site located within 5km of the proposed Carhookeal Sports Ground, Mallow. There is one European site within the zone of influence of the proposed project, namely the Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC. The proposed project is not located within any European site, therefore, no direct impacts will occur through land take or fragmentation of habitats.

The proposed site consists of a disused sports ground comprising re-colonising bare ground, scrub and species poor dry meadows and grassy verges. Treelines are present on the southern and western site boundary and Hawthorn has been planted on the eastern and northern site boundary. There are no waterbodies within the proposed site and its immediate environs. No Annex I habitats or Annex II species were recorded within the proposed site and its immediate environs. As such, the proposed site does not play a supporting role for the QI habitats of the Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC (see Figure 3-1). Further, the proposed site is not suitable to support the aquatic and semi-aquatic QI species for the Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC. In consideration of these factors, it is considered that any disturbance/ displacement or ex-situ impacts to the QI of Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC during the construction or operational phase of the proposed development is unlikely.

Potential impacts on aquatic habitats which can arise from this type of development include increased silt levels in surface water run-off and inadvertent spillages of hydrocarbons from fuel and hydraulic fluid. High levels of silt in surface water run-off from construction of the proposed sports ground could theoretically result in an increase in suspended solids within the ForestBear Stream and, in turn, the Blackwater River SAC. However, there are no watercourses or active drainage ditches present at the proposed site, therefore there is no surface water connectivity between the proposed site and the Blackwater River SAC. The ForestBear Stream and, in turn, Blackwater River SAC is buffered from the proposed site by planted Hawthorn scrub and c.140m of agricultural grassland. As such, any surface water generated during the construction phase would run-off to grassland areas on the periphery of the site. Grassland can effectively filter out solids from surface water, and in this instance, the grassland buffer between the proposed works and the Blackwater River SAC will provide effective filtration and allow surface water run-off to percolate to groundwater. The risk of significant silt levels being deposited within aquatic environments down gradient of the proposed works during the construction phase of the development is considered to be extremely low. No risk of significant siltation has been identified. Given the location of the proposed works, and the grassland buffer located between the proposed site and the ForestBear Stream, no impacts on water quality due to elevated silt levels during construction will occur.

Inadvertent spillages of hydrocarbons during construction could introduce toxic chemicals into the aquatic environment via surface water run-off or groundwater contamination and have a direct toxicological impact on habitats and fauna. However, given the relatively small scale of the development and the low risk of pollutants reaching sensitive receptors in the aquatic environment, no impacts on water quality within ForestBear Stream and, in turn, the Blackwater River SAC due to such minor spills during construction are expected.

During the operational phase, surface water run-off will be allowed to percolate to adjacent grassland areas and swales located to the east of the site. Surface water run-off from the proposed new lower car park will

pass through a bypass interceptor before discharging to the local surface water network. As such, the risk of deleterious substances reaching the ForestBear stream c.140m east of the site and, in turn, the Blackwater River (Cork/Munster) SAC during the operational phase is extremely low.

No significant adverse effects on the Blackwater River (Cork/Munster) SAC as a result of deleterious substances within surface water run-off or groundwater contamination during activities undertaken in the construction phase (e.g. excavation, stockpiling of materials etc.) or the operational phase are expected.

In view of the factors described above, no significant effects on the Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC are anticipated as a result of the proposed Carhookeal Sports Ground, Mallow, Co. Cork.

4.2.1 Cumulative Impacts with Other Plans and Projects in the Area

As part of the screening for an AA, in addition to the proposed works, other relevant projects and plans in the region must also be considered at this stage and assessed in the context of potential for in-combination effects. These plans and projects are outlined and assessed in Table 4-1 below.

It is concluded that there will be no negative in-combination effects between the proposed works and plans or project in the area.

Table 4-1: Other Projects and Plans that could result in potential cumulative impacts

Plan / Programme/Policy	Key Objectives/Policies/Proposals	Potential for In-combination Effects and Mitigation
<p>Cork County Development Plan 2022</p>	<p>The Cork County Development Plan includes the following Objectives of relevance to this report:</p> <p>BE 15-2: Protect sites, habitats and species:</p> <p>a) Protect all natural heritage sites which are designated or proposed for designation under European legislation, National legislation and International Agreements. Maintain and where possible enhance appropriate ecological linkages between these. This includes Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Marine Protected Areas, Natural Heritage Areas, proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Statutory Nature Reserves, Refuges for Fauna and Ramsar Sites. These sites are listed in Volume 2 of the Plan.</p> <p>b) Provide protection to species listed in the Flora Protection Order 2015, to Annexes of the Habitats and Birds Directives, and to animal species protected under the Wildlife Acts in accordance with relevant legal requirements. These species are listed in Volume 2 of the Plan.</p> <p>c) Protect and where possible enhance areas of local biodiversity value, ecological corridors and habitats that are features of the County’s ecological network. This includes rivers, lakes, streams and ponds, peatland and other wetland habitats, woodlands, hedgerows, tree lines, veteran trees, natural and semi-natural grasslands as well as coastal and marine habitats. It particularly includes habitats of special conservation significance in Cork as listed in Volume 2 of the Plan.</p>	<p>Policies and objectives of the Cork County Development Plan 2022 ensure that local planning applications comply with 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>

	<p>d) Recognise the value of protecting geological heritage sites of local and national interest, as they become notified to the local authority, and protect them from inappropriate development</p> <p>e) Encourage, pursuant to Article 10 of the Habitats Directive, the protection and enhancement of features of the landscape, such as traditional field boundaries, important for the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species.</p> <p>BE 15-6: Biodiversity and New Development:</p> <p>Provide for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in the development management process and when licensing or permitting other activities by:</p> <p>a) Providing ongoing support and guidance to developers on incorporating biodiversity considerations into new development through preplanning communications and the Council’s guidance document ‘Biodiversity and the Planning Process – guidance for developments on the management of biodiversity issues during the planning process’ and any updated versions of this advice;</p> <p>b) Encouraging the retention and integration of existing trees, hedgerows and other features of high natural value within new developments;</p> <p>c) Requiring the incorporation of primarily native tree and other plant species, particularly pollinator friendly species in the landscaping of new developments;</p> <p>d) Fulfilling Appropriate Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment obligations and carrying out Ecological Impact Assessment in relation to development and activities, as appropriate;</p> <p>e) Ensuring that an appropriate level of assessment is completed in relation to wetland habitats subject to proposals which would involve drainage or reclamation. This includes lakes and ponds, watercourses, springs and swamps, marshes, heath, peatlands, some woodlands as well as some coastal and marine habitats;</p> <p>f) Ensuring that the implementation of appropriate mitigation (including habitat enhancement, new planting or other habitat creation initiatives) is incorporated into new development, where the implementation of such development would result in unavoidable impacts on biodiversity - supporting the principle of biodiversity net gain.</p>	
<p>River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021</p>	<p>The project should comply with the environmental objectives of the Irish RBMP which are to be achieved generally by 2021.</p>	<p>The implementation and compliance with key environmental policies, issues and objectives of this</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure full compliance with relevant EU legislation ▪ Prevent deterioration ▪ Meeting the objectives for designated protected areas ▪ Protect high status waters ▪ Implement targeted actions and pilot schemes in focus sub-catchments aimed at: targeting water bodies close to meeting their objective and addressing more complex issues which will build knowledge for the third cycle. 	<p>management plan will result in positive in-combination effects to European sites. The implementation of this plan will have a positive impact for the biodiversity. It will not contribute to in-combination or cumulative impacts with the proposed development.</p>
<p>Inland Fisheries Ireland Corporate Plan 2021 -2025</p> <p>The Inland Fisheries Act 2010.</p>	<p>To place the inland fisheries resource in the best sustainable position possible for the benefit of future generations. To protect, manage and conserve Ireland’s inland fisheries and sea angling resources and to maximise their sustainability and natural biodiversity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To sustainably develop and improve fish habitats. ▪ To protect, maintain and enhance Ireland’s wild fish populations. ▪ To actively engage with stakeholders in the continued stewardship of our shared resource. ▪ To play a leadership role in achieving our climate action and biodiversity goals. ▪ To value our people and support their development and performance. ▪ To foster a culture of value for money and evaluation of performance in a measurable, transparent and accountable manner. ▪ Harness the power of innovation to continue to deliver a modern fisheries service. 	<p>The implementation and compliance with key environmental issues and objectives of this corporate plan will result in positive on-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 works.</p>
<p>WWTP discharges</p>	<p>Mallow</p>	<p>Discharges from municipal WWTPs are required to meet water quality standards. Irish Water Capital Investment Plan 2014-2016 and 2017 – 2021 proposes to upgrade water treatment services countrywide. The long-term cumulative impact is predicted to be negligible.</p>
<p>Mallow Community Running Track and Sports Ground, Carhookeal, Mallow (Ref: 204417)</p>	<p>The development of the Greenfield site consists of (a) construction of a 98m x 63m grass pitch, (b) provision of a 400m eight lane running track, (c) construction of a building to provide changing facilities, (d) provision of 40 car and 2 bus parking spaces, (e) widening of Sexton’s Boreen, (f) importation of clean, natural soil to grade the field, (g) installation of floodlights, and (h) diversion of water main and associated site works. The Environmental Impact Assessment Report / Natura Impact Statement will be submitted to the Planning Authority with the application.</p>	<p>The Natura Impact Statement completed for the development found that potential impacts of the development on the Blackwater River SAC primarily relate to impacts on water quality and increased noise and disturbance. The NIS concluded that the proposed development will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC or any other European sites.</p>

		No potential for significant adverse in combination effects on European sites has been identified.
Residential Applications³	No local developments ⁴ that may contribute to potential cumulative or in-combination effects on European sites were identified during the review of local planning applications.	There is no potential for significant adverse in combination effects on European sites.

4.3 Screening Assessment

Table 4-2 identifies the potential direct, indirect and secondary impacts of the proposed project on European sites within a 5km radius.

Table 4-2: Potential Significant Effects on European Sites from the Proposed Project

Site Name and Code	Direct Impacts	Indirect / Secondary Impacts	Resource Requirements	Emissions (Disposal to land, Water or Air)	Excavation Requirements
Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) (Site Code: 002170)	No impact on QI	No impact on QI	No impact on QI	No impact on QI	No impact on QI

4.4 Likely Changes to the European Site(s)

The likely changes that could arise from the proposed Carhookeal Sports Ground, Mallow, Co. Cork have been examined in the context of a number of factors that could have a significant effect on the relevant European Sites (Table 4-3)

Table 4-3: Likely Changes to European Sites

Site Name and Code	Reduction of Habitat Area	Disturbance to Key Species	Habitat or Species fragmentation	Reduction in Species Density	Changes in Key Indicators of Conservation Value (Water Quality, etc.)	Climate Change
Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) (Site Code: 002170)	None	None	None	None	None	None

4.4.1 Elements of the Project where the Impacts are Likely to be Significant

No elements of the proposed Carhookeal Sports Ground, Mallow, Co. Cork are likely to cause significant effects to the relevant European sites.

³ The Local Planning Applications included in this potential in-combination impacts assessment support the following criteria: planning applications granted within the past five years that may contribute to potential cumulative impacts on European sites of concern.

⁴ <http://maps.corkcoco.ie/planningenquiryv3/MainFrames.aspx> (accessed 21/11/2022)

5 Conclusion

This AA screening report has been prepared to assess whether the proposed development, individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, and in view of best scientific knowledge, is likely to have a significant effect on any European site(s).

The screening exercise was completed in compliance with the relevant European Commission guidance, national guidance and case law. The potential impacts of the proposed development have been considered in the context of the European sites potentially affected, their qualifying interests or special conservation interests, and their conservation objectives.

Through an assessment of the source-pathway-receptor model, which considered the zone of influence of effects from the proposed development and the potential in-combination effects with other plans or projects, the following findings were reported:

- The proposed Carhookeal Sports Ground, Mallow, Co. Cork, either alone or in-combination with other plans and/or projects, does not have the potential to significantly affect any European site, in light of their conservation objectives. Therefore, a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is deemed not to be required.

6 References

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