

Habitats Directive Project Screening Assessment

Table 1: Project Details

Development Consent Type	Strategic Housing Development
Development Location	Croker's Hill, Kennyswell Road, Kilkenny.
Planning Ref.	S.H.D. – Housing Section
Description of the project	Construct an 86-home residential development along with a community facility and associated on site car parking, bicycle storage, refuse storage, landscaping and other relevant site works including two new vehicular entrances off Kennyswell Road at Crokers Hill, Kennyswell Road, Kilkenny.

Table 2: Identification of Natura 2000 sites (SACs and SPAs) which may be impacted by the proposed development

Please answer the following five questions in order to determine whether there are any Natura 2000 sites which could potentially be impacted by the proposed development. If the answer to all of these questions is no, significant impacts can be ruled out for habitats and bird species. No further assessment is required. Please refer to tables 3 and 4 where the answer to any of these questions is yes.

		Y/N
1	ONE- OFF HOUSE /SMALL EXTENSION/ ALTERATION TO EXISTING BUILDING	N
1a	<p>Is the development a one- off house/small extension/alteration to existing building within an SAC/SPA or within 100m of an SAC/SPA and likely to discharge pollutants or nutrients of a significant nature and amount to surface water within catchments of and SAC/ SPA as part of its construction or operational phase (including the installation of waste water treatment systems; percolation areas; septic tanks within SAC/SPA or very close proximity)?.</p> <p>If the answer to the above question is: - no, then no appropriate assessment required - yes, then an appropriate assessment is required - not sure, then an appropriate assessment is required in accordance with the precautionary principle</p>	N/A
2	DEVELOPMENTS OTHER THAN THOSE DESCRIBED IN 1 ABOVE	Y
2a	<p>Impacts On Freshwater Habitats <i>Is the development within a Special Area of Conservation whose qualifying interests include freshwater habitats, or in the catchment of same and does the development propose to discharge water to or abstract water from the habitat?</i></p> <p>Sites to consider: Lower River Suir, River Barrow, River Nore.</p> <p>Habitats to consider: Alluvial Wet Woodland, (Lower River Suir), Dry Heath (some steep slopes along River Barrow and its tributaries) Rivers, Streams, Lakes and Lagoons, Old Oak Woodland, floating river vegetation,</p> <p>Species to consider: River Lamprey, Brook Lamprey, Freshwater Pearls Mussel, Nore Freshwater Pearl Mussel, Crayfish, Twaite Shad, Atlantic Salmon, Otter, Vertigo Moulinsiana,</p>	Yes
2b	<p>Impacts On Wetland Habitats <i>Is the development within a Special Area of Conservation whose qualifying interests include wetland habitats, or likely to discharge water to or abstract water from the wetland?</i></p> <p>Sites to consider: Hugginstown Fen, Galmoy Fen, The Loughans, Flood Plain wetlands</p>	No

		Y/N
	Habitats to consider: Bogs, Alkaline Fens (Hugginstown and Galmoy), Turloughs (The Loughans)	
2c	Impacts on Intertidal and Marine Habitats <i>Is the development located within a Special Area of Conservation whose qualifying interests include intertidal and marine habitats and species, or within the catchment of same and likely to discharge water to or abstract water from the habitats.</i> Sites to consider: Lower River Suir Habitats to consider: Atlantic Salt meadows, Mudflats, sandflats, saltmarsh, estuary Species to consider: Sea Lamprey, River Lamprey, Brook Lamprey, Freshwater Pearl Mussel, Crayfish, Twaite Shad, Atlantic Salmon, Otter.	No
2d	Impacts On Woodlands And Grasslands <i>Is the development within a Special Area of Conservation whose qualifying habitats include terrestrial habitats, or in close proximity to same with a likely ecological impact?.</i> Sites to consider: Spa hill and Clomantagh Hill, Cullahil Mountain, River Barrow, River Nore, Lower River Suir Habitats to consider: <i>Alluvial Wet Woodlands</i> (River Nore below Inistioge and River Suir at Fiddown Island and Carrick on Suir), Eutropic tall herb vegetation (River Suir at Fiddown Island and Carrick on Suir), and grasslands (Spa hill and Clomantagh Hill, Cullahil Mountain) Oak Woodlands in old estates next to the Nore and Barrow Species to consider: Greenwinged, Frog and Bee Orchids (Cullahill and Clomantagh Hill), Nettle Leaved Bellflower and Autumn Crocus	Yes
2e	Impacts On Birds <i>Is the development within a Special Protection Area, or likely to discharge water to same or likely to have another significant impact on the habitats of Birds in same?.</i> Sites to consider: River Nore Species to consider: River Nore: Kingfisher (Alcedo Atthis) – Nesting in river banks	Yes

Table 3: Determination of possible impacts on Natura 2000 sites.

Where it has been identified in table 2 that there is a Natura 2000 site within the potential impact zone of the proposed development, it is necessary to try to determine the nature of the possible impacts. Please answer the following questions as appropriate.

1.	Impacts on designated freshwater habitats (rivers, lakes streams and lagoons).	
	<i>Please answer the following if the answer to question 2a in table 2 was yes.</i> <i>Does the development involve any of the following:</i>	
1.1	Impacts on watercourses (tributaries, streams, drains) which are remote from the SAC/SPA but may still impact on the SAC/SPA by reason of the nature or quantity of the discharge	Yes
1.2	Abstraction from surfacewater or groundwater within 1km of SAC/SPA.	No
1.3	Removal of topsoil within 100 m of watercourses with potential for surface water runoff.	No
1.4	Infilling or raising of ground levels within 100m of watercourses with potential for surface water runoff.	No
1.5	Construction of drainage ditches within 1km of SAC/SPA.	No

1.6	Construction within a floodplain or within an area liable to flood.	No
1.7	Crossing or culverting of rivers or streams within 1km of SAC/SPA.	No
1.8	Storage of chemicals hydrocarbons or organic wastes within 100 m of a watercourse.	No
1.9	Development of a large scale which involves the production of an EIS.	No
1.10	Development of quarries, particularly where abstraction is below water table.	No
1.11	Development of windfarms within 1km of an SAC or with the risk of runoff to an SAC/SPA, particularly during construction.	No
1.12	Development of pumped hydro electric stations.	No
2	<p>Impacts on designated wetland habitats (bog, heath, marsh, fen).</p> <p><i>Please answer the following if the answer to question 2b in table 2 was yes.</i></p> <p><i>Does the development involve any of the following:</i></p>	
2.1	Impacts on watercourses (tributaries, streams, drains) which are remote from the SAC/SPA but may still impact on the SAC/SPA by reason of the nature or quantity of the discharge.	N/A
2.2	Construction of roads or other infrastructure on peat habitats within 1km of a Natura 2000 site of which qualifying interests include peat, fen or marsh. (Only Peat habitat at Bruckana – consider Galmoy fen – impact unlikely	N/A
2.3	Development of a large scale within 1km within a Natura 2000 site, whose qualifying features include fen or marsh, which involves the production of an EIS.	N/A
3	<p>Impacts on designated intertidal and marine habitats (mudflats, sandflats, estuaries, reefs and sea cliffs).</p> <p><i>Please answer the following if the answer to question 2c in table 2 was yes.</i></p> <p><i>Does the development involve any of the following:</i></p>	
3.1	Impacts on intertidal and marine habitats from potential development which are remote from the SAC/SPA but may still impact on the SAC/SPA by reason of the nature or quantity of the discharge	N/A
3.2	Development of piers, slipways, marinas, pontoons or any other infrastructure within 5km of a Natura 2000 site whose qualifying features include intertidal or marine habitats.	N/A
3.3	Dredging within 5km of a Natura 2000 site whose qualifying features include intertidal or marine habitats.	N/A
3.4	Impacts on watercourses (tributaries, streams, drains) which are remote from the SAC/SPA but may still impact on the SAC/SPA by reason of the nature or quantity of the discharge.	N/A
3.5	Removal of topsoil or infilling within 100m of Natura 2000 sites whose qualifying features include intertidal or marine habitats where potential for surface water runoff exists.	N/A
3.6	Development of a large scale within 1km of Natura 2000 sites whose qualifying features include intertidal or marine habitats, which involves the production of an EIS.	N/A

4	Impacts on other designated woodlands and grasslands (woodland, upland grassland, lowland grassland, coastal grassland including dunes). <i>Please answer the following if the answer to question 2d in table 2 was yes.</i> <i>Does the development involve any of the following:</i>	
4.1	Works within the boundary of a Special Area of Conservation whose qualifying interests include woodland or grassland habitat types.	No
4.2	Development within 200m of Natura 2000 site with woodland or grassland habitats.	No
4.3	Development of a large scale within 1km of Natura 2000 site with woodland, grassland or coastal habitats which involves the production of an EIS.	No
5	Impacts on birds in SPAs <i>Please answer the following if the answer to question 2e in table 2 was yes.</i> <i>Does the development involve any of the following:</i>	
5.2	Erection of wind turbines within 1km of an SPA.	No
5.3	All construction works within 100m of SPA (River Nore), including the development of cycle ways or walking routes	No
5.4	Infilling of coastal habitats within 500m of intertidal SPA.	No
5.5	Works within 1km of coastal SPA which will result in discharges to rivers or streams that are directly connected to designated sites.	No

Conclusion: If the answer to question 1 and 2a-e are no or n/a, significant impacts on habitats within Natura 2000 sites and on SPAs can be ruled out. No further assessment is required in relation to habitats or birds. If the answer to any question in table 2 is yes, you may require further information, unless you are satisfied that the project proponents have incorporated adequate mitigation into their design to avoid impacts on the Natura 2000 site (eg water pollution protection measures). Such information should be provided in the form of a Natura Impact Statement which should address the particular issues of concern as identified through the above.

Table 4: Consideration of potential impacts on protected species

Many of our Special Areas of Conservation are designated for species as well as for habitats. These are listed below, alongside the sites for which they are designated. Included is a short list of the types of activities which could have an impact on these species. Please tick if you are concerned that the proposed development could have an impact on these species.

Species	Relevant Sites	Activities which could have impacts on species	Possible Impacts Identified? Y/N
Otter	River Nore River Barrow Lower River Suir Note: Otters are a strictly protected species. All breeding sites and resting places are protected regardless of whether or not they are within or external to Special Areas of Conservation.	Activities that interfere with river banks.	No
Atlantic	River Barrow	Activities that interfere with water quality,	No

Species	Relevant Sites	Activities which could have impacts on species	Possible Impacts Identified? Y/N
Salmon	River Nore Lower River Suir	levels or the river bed;	
River Lamprey	River Barrow River Nore Lower River Suir	Activities that interfere with water quality, levels or the river bed;	Yes
Brook Lamprey	River Barrow River Nore Lower River Suir	Activities that interfere with water quality, levels or the river bed;	Yes
Sea Lamprey	River Barrow River Nore Lower River Suir	Activities that interfere with water quality or the river bed – estuarine areas;	Yes
Twaite Shad	Lower River Suir	Activities that interfere with water quality or the river bed – estuarine areas;	No
Crayfish	Lower River Suir	Activities that interfere with water quality or the river bed;	No
Freshwater Pearl Mussel	River Barrow River Nore Lower River Suir	Activities that interfere with water quality, levels or the river bed ;	Yes
Nore Freshwater Pearl Mussel	River Nore	Activities that interfere with water quality, levels or the river bed ;	Yes

Conclusion: If the answer to all of the above is no, significant impacts on species can be ruled out. If the answer to any of the above is yes, then further information is likely to be required in relation to potential for impact on that particular species. Where potential impacts are identified on Otters or on Bats outside designated sites, then further information should be sought in the form of a species specific survey. In these cases, appropriate assessment is not required.

Habitats Directive Screening Conclusion Statement

Development Type	Strategic Housing Development
Development Location	Crokers Hill, Kennyswell Road, Kilkenny.
Natura 2000 sites within impact zone	Breagh River in close proximity to site, which is directly feeding into River Nore SAC / SPA.
Planning Ref	S.H.D. – Housing Section
Description of the project	
Construct an 86-home residential development along with a community facility and associated on site car parking, bicycle storage, refuse storage, landscaping and other relevant site works including two new vehicular entrances off Kennyswell Road at Crokers Hill, Kennyswell Road, Kilkenny.	
Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) could affect Natura 2000 site(s).	
Hydrological pathways exist to the River Nore therefore significant effects cannot be ruled out to the River Barrow and River Nore SAC	
If there are potential impacts, explain whether you consider if these are likely to be significant.	
The conservation objective set for Atlantic Salmon in this SAC is “no decline in the number of spawning beds (redds); water quality at least Q4 at all sites”. Given the potential effects to water quality during construction (particularly sediment pollution) significant effects to this qualifying interest cannot be ruled out. This may affect the integrity of the SAC. It is therefore concluded that a full AA will be required	
Conclusion of assessment	
Having regard to the precautionary principle, it is considered that:	
<p style="padding-left: 40px;">Significant impacts can be ruled out or AA not required (if project is directly connected or necessary to Management of Natura 2000 site (determined in consultation with NPWS).</p>	
or	
<p style="padding-left: 40px;">√ Significant impacts are certain, likely or uncertain (cannot be ruled out), Natura Impact Statement (NIS) is required. Project must be subject to appropriate assessment.</p>	
Documentation reviewed for making of this statement.	
Appropriate Assessment Guidelines, 2009 / Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2014 – 2020 / AA Screening Statement by OPENFIELD Ecological Services dated February, 2019.	
Completed By	Arlene O’ Connor, Senior Executive Planner
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