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Chartered Town Planning and Environmental Consultants

**Screening Statement for the Purposes of Determining the need
for Appropriate Assessment**

Proposed development of 74 no. residential units at Craddockstown
Road, Craddockstown Demesne, Naas, Co. Kildare

Kildare County Council



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Title:	16048 NTMA Social Housing Programme (Bundle 1) Craddockstown	
Project:	Proposed development of 74 no. residential units at Craddockstown Road, Craddockstown Demesne, Naas, Co. Kildare	
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to the requirements set out under Part XAB (*Appropriate Assessment*) of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2011 and pursuant to the transposition of the requirements of Article 6 of Community Directive 92/43/EEC (*the Habitats Directive, Article 6*)¹ consideration is given to whether the development proposals are likely to have a significant effect on a European (Natura 2000) site.

The author of this assessment holds a Masters Degree (MSc) in *Applied Science - Ecological Assessment*.

2.0 ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Purpose

The purpose is to determine whether the project is directly connected to or necessary for the management of a Natura 2000 *site* and to determine whether the project either alone or in combination with other projects or plans is likely to have significant effects on a *site*.

If upon completion of this assessment it is considered that the project alone or in combination with other plans or programmes would have potential for significant impact on a Natura 2000 site, then the subsequent stages of the Article 6 process must be undertaken including an Appropriate Assessment to identify and characterise any possible implications for the Natura 2000 site in view of its conservation objectives including any mitigation measures necessary to avoid, reduce or offset negative effects. Where the Screening assessment conclusions rule out significant impacts on the Natura 2000 network, then further assessment will not be required.

2.2 Approach

This appraisal is conducted in accordance with the methodological guidance set out within: *The European Commission (2001) 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* and with the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government Guidance for Planning Authorities: Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland (2009).

3.0 SCREENING ASSESSMENT

3.1 Characteristics of the Project Site

The project site is a green field site situated in the defined settlement of Naas Town, circa 1.2km south of the town centre. The north western corner of the site adjoins an existing newly constructed secondary school and direct vehicular access to the Craddockstown Road can also be secured at this location. The main habitats within the proposed development site have been identified and established by the NMEcology (December 2016) in accordance with the Fossitt². The project site contains five fields that are used as grazing pastures, bordered by hedgerows / treelines on all sides.

¹ Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna

² Fossitt, J.A. (2000) A Guide to Habitats in Ireland. The Heritage Council, Kilkenny. Habitats Directive Annex I habitats

There are no watercourses on or adjacent to the proposed development site. The closest major watercourse is the Castlesize river, which is approx. 320m north-east of the proposed development site. It is a tributary of the River Liffey, joining it approx. 5km from the closest point to the proposed development site. A Phase 1 Habitat survey undertaken for the ecological evaluation confirms that the project site comprises of several habitat types including Improved agricultural grassland (GA1), Dry Meadows (GS2), Hedgerows (WL1), Treelines (WL2), Scrub (WS1) and Artificial ponds (FL8). No rare or protected plants, or invasive species were recorded during that survey. Avian species recorded included Blackbird, Woodpigeon, Magpie, Jackdaw, Chaffinch and Wren indicating that the site is probably of local ecological value for these common species. Red listed species were not recorded during the survey. No protected mammals were observed during the field survey within the site nor is it likely to present suitable habitat for such species. Whilst a former badger sett was within the south west of the site, no badgers were recorded and further investigation of the sett concluded that it has since been taken over and used by rabbits. The site has been used by rabbits and fox and the present habitats might also favour hedgehogs and present local value for the Stoat. The proposed development site and its immediate surroundings are considered to have negligible value as a feeding area / commuting area for bats. The phase 1 survey confirms that it is only the existing hedgerows, Treeline habitats that are of local value and the use of the habitats to support local bird and bat populations is of local importance.

3.2 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

The proposed development comprises 74 no. residential units. Access will be from the Craddockstown Road at the north-west corner of the site, which will lead to paved internal roads and on-street parking spaces. Landscaped areas will be developed in the centre of the site and around the margins.

The project development seeks to provide social housing for 74 units with a mix of one, two, three and four bed, public open space, provision of car parking and other associated development works. The foul water and surface water generated by the project shall be discharged to public mains supply infrastructure through an adjacent development (granted planning permission under planning ref: 151060) for which agreement has been provided and for which there is sufficient capacity in that infrastructure and the final outfall to accommodate loading from the project development. There are no proposals for any other for off-site of foul or surface waters.

3.3 The Natura 2000 Network in the vicinity of the project

The Natura 2000 network extends to include areas designated as 'Special Protection Areas' and 'Special Areas of Conservation' as designed under the previous mentioned EU Habitats Directive. The relationship between the site and the Natura 2000 network is illustrated in Figure 1 that confirms that there are no Natura 2000 designated sites within 5km of the project. The nearest Natura 2000 site occurs at a distance of 7km to the southeast of the project site (Red Bog Kildare SAC Site code 000397) but there appears no obvious hydrological connectivity between that (Natura 2000) site and the development site. Consideration of the network within 15km is detailed in Table 1.

Natura 2000 site	Site Code	Distance (position relative to site)	Appraisal
Red Bog SAC	000397	7.0km (East)	Not included as there is no connection between this site and the project
Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA	004063	8.2km (southeast)	Not included as there is no connection between this site and the project
Mouds Bog SAC	00233	9.3km (west)	Not included as there is no connection between this site and the project
Wicklow Mountains SAC	002122	11.4km (southeast)	Not included as there is no connection between this site and the project
Ballynafagh Lake SAC	001387	11.5km (northwest)	Not included as there is no connection between this site and the project
Pollardstown Fen SAC	00396	12.2km (west)	Not included as there is no connection between this site and the project
Ballynafagh Bog SAC	00391	12.3km (northwest)	Not included as there is no connection between this site and the project
Wicklow Mountains SPA	00404	14.6 (southeast)	Not included as there is no connection between this site and the project

Table1

3.4 Relationship between the project and Natura 2000 network

The project is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the Natura 2000 sites identified above.

4.0 ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS

4.1 Evaluation and Impact Assessment

The project site is not located within or adjacent to the Natura 2000 Network. The project site contains none of the habitats or species of special interest which have been designated for the purpose of protection and management under the Habitats Directive. The proposed development does not therefore involve the direct loss, reduction, disturbance or fragmentation of any of the habitats, species or habitats of species that are of conservation interest under the Natura 2000 network. Therefore with the absence of any direct relationship with the project site and the Natura 2000 site, the potential for significant direct effects on features of qualifying interest can be ruled out and no further assessment of them considered necessary.

With regard to the potential for secondary effects, the nearest Natura 2000 site occurs at a distance of 7km from the project site and extend up to 14km from the site. There are no hydrological pathways between the site and the Natura 2000 network for indirect impacts to arise and therefore the potential for significant indirect effects of the project on the Natura 2000 network are unlikely.

4.2 Cumulative effects

The statutory spatial plan for the area has provided spatial development and non-development objectives and these have already been subject to a plan level Habitats Directive Assessment (appropriate assessment) as part of that statutory Plan making process. This project is consistent with those Plan level spatial objectives. There are no other known plans or projects occurring that when taken together with this project, are likely to alter the conclusion of this assessment. No cumulative effects are therefore considered to occur.

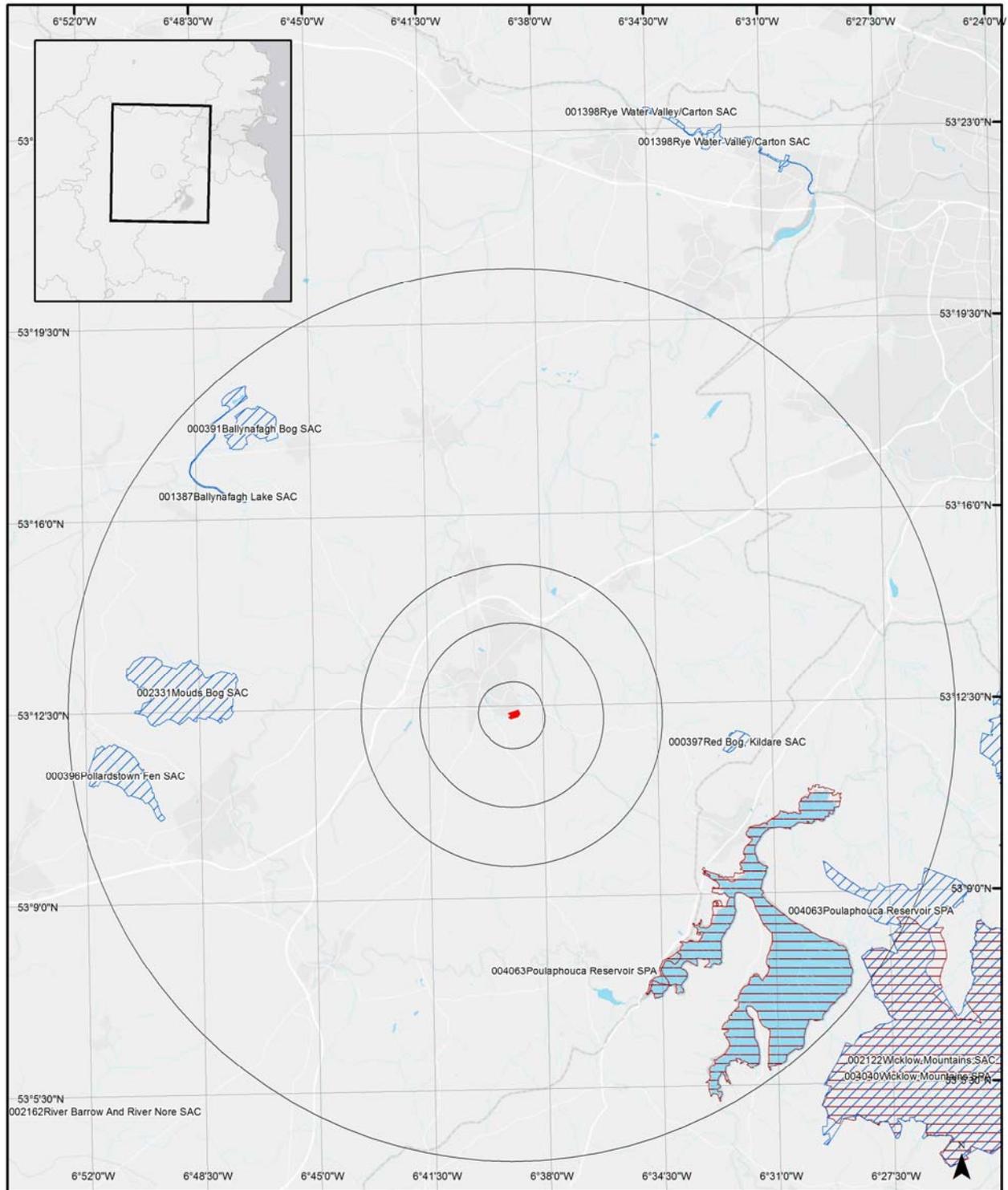
4.3 Best Practice Design Measures

With adherence to best practice site construction measures, no mitigation measures are considered necessary for the purpose of preserving the integrity and conservation features of the Natura 2000 designated sites. For clarity, the mitigation measures referred to in the ecological assessment are considered common design practice for urban development scenarios and relate to preservation of local biodiversity. They are not necessary for the purpose of this assessment or necessary for the preservation of the Natura 2000 network.

5.0 CONCLUSION

This assessment has confirmed that the project will not result in direct or indirect impacts on the Natura 2000 network either alone or in combination with other plans or projects by way of loss, fragmentation, disruption, disturbance to habitats, species, or habitats of species that are of conservation interest. The evaluation therefore concludes that it is unlikely that there will be any significant indirect effects on the Natura 2000 network.

As the project, will have no adverse effect on the integrity on any of the Natura 2000 sites, this report returns a conclusion that there is no potential for significant effects on the Natura 2000 sites and no further (stage 2) assessment is considered necessary.



Legend

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| distance | EPA River Bodies | Special Area of Conservation |
| 1km from site | Special Protection Area | EPA Water Bodies |
| 3km from site | | |
| 5km from site | | |
| 15km from site | | |



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Figure 1 Relationship with the Natura 2000 Network