

APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT FOR PLANNING APPLICATIONS



Screening is used to determine if an AA is necessary by examining:

- If the plan / project is directly connected with / necessary to the management of the European site.
- If the effects will be significant on a European site in view of its conservation objectives, either alone / in combination with other plans / projects.

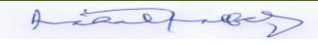
Planning Authority: Offaly County Council

Planning Application Proposed Part VIII

Tullamore Municipal District.

(A) DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT AND LOCAL SITE:			
Proposed development:	Proposal to undertake Re-Furbishment / Upgrade of Existing Bus Stops at Church Street, Clara, County Offaly.		
Site location:	Church Street, Clara, County Offaly.		
Site size:	0.050 Hectares	Floor Area of Proposed Development:	N/A
Identification of nearby European Site(s):	European Site - Site Name: Charleville Wood SAC Site Code: 000571		
Distance to European Site(s):	12km		
The characteristics of existing, proposed or other approved plans / projects which may cause interactive / cumulative impacts with the project being assessed and which may affect the site:	Given the limited scale of the development applied for it is not considered that it will have any interactive / cumulative impacts with any other plan or project in the vicinity.		
Is the application accompanied by an EIAR?	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

(B) IDENTIFICATION OF THE RELEVANT - European sites (S):	
The reasons for the designation of the European sites (s):	
<p>Charleville Wood is a large woodland surrounded by estate parkland and agricultural grassland located about 3 km south-west of Tullamore in Co. Offaly. The site, which is underlain by deep glacial deposits, includes a small lake with a wooded island, and a stream runs along the western perimeter. The woodland is one of very few ancient woodlands remaining in Ireland, with some parts undisturbed for at least 200 years. The site is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) selected for the following habitats and / or species listed on Annex I / II of the E.U. Habitats Directive (*= priority; numbers in brackets are Natura 2000 codes): [91E0] Alluvial Forests* [1016] Desmoulin's Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>). Charleville Wood is one of the most important ancient woodland sites in Ireland. The woodland has a varied age structure and is relatively intact with areas of both closed and open canopy. The understorey and ground layers are also well-represented. Alluvial forest is a priority habitat listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive, while the rare snail species, <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>, is listed on Annex II of this Directive. The wetland areas, with their associated bird populations, rare insect and Myxomycete species, contribute further to the conservation significance of the site.</p>	
<p>The conservation objectives / qualifying interests of the site and the factors that contributes to the conservation value of the site: (which are taken from the European sites synopses and, if applicable, a Conservation Management Plan; all available on www.npws.ie) (ATTACH INFO.)</p>	
<p>At Charleville Wood, approximately 10% of the woodland has been under-planted with conifers and other exotic trees, but the majority is dominated by Pedunculate Oak (<i>Quercus robur</i>). There is much Ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>) and scattered Wych Elm (<i>Ulmus glabra</i>), while birch (<i>Betula</i> spp.) is a feature of the boggy margins. The shrub layer is composed largely of Hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>), Hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>) and Blackthorn (<i>Prunus spinosa</i>). The ground layer is varied, including damp flushed slopes with Ramsons (<i>Allium ursinum</i>) and drier, more open areas with a moss sward composed largely of <i>Rhytidiadelphus triquetris</i>. The fungal flora of the woodland is notable for the presence of several rare Myxomycete species, namely <i>Hemitrichia calyculata</i>, <i>Perichaena depressa</i>, <i>Amaurochaete atra</i>, <i>Collaria arcyronema</i>, <i>Stemonitis nigrescens</i> and <i>Diderma deplanata</i>. Wet alluvial forest is found around the lake. It is dominated by Grey Willow (<i>Salix cinerea</i>) with Alder (<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>) and Ash. The ground flora is dominated by Common Reed (<i>Phragmites australis</i>) with Marsh-marigold (<i>Caltha palustris</i>), sedges (<i>Carex</i> spp.), Meadowsweet (<i>Filipendula ulmaria</i>), Yellow Iris (<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>), Gipsywort (<i>Lycopus europaeus</i>) and Water Mint (<i>Mentha aquatica</i>) present. Extensive swamps of Bulrush (<i>Typha latifolia</i>) and Bottle Sedge (<i>Carex rostrata</i>) have developed in the lake shallows. The wooded island at its centre is famed for its long history of non-disturbance. Hazel, Spindle (<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>) and Ivy (<i>Hedera helix</i>) reach remarkable sizes here. The lake is an important wildfowl habitat - it supports populations of Mute and Whooper Swan and a number of duck species, including Teal, Wigeon, Shoveler, Pochard and Tufted Duck. A number of unusual insects have been recorded in Charleville Wood, notably <i>Mycetobia obscura</i> (Order Diptera), a species known from only one other site in Ireland. The site is also notable for the presence of a large population of the rare snail species, <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>.</p>	
(C) NPWS ADVICE:	
Advice received from NPWS over phone:	None received.
Summary of advice received from NPWS in written form (ATTACH SAME):	-

(D) ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS:	
<p>(The purpose of this is to identify if the effect(s) identified could be significant – if uncertain assume the effect(s) are significant).</p> <p>If the answer is 'yes' to any of the questions below, then the effect is significant.</p> <p>(Please justify your answer. 'Yes' / 'No' alone is insufficient)</p>	
Would there be...	
... any impact on an Annex 1 habitat? (Annex 1 habitats are listed in Appendix 1 of AA Guidance).	Not likely due to the location and type of development. The site is sufficient distance from the European Site. (12km)
... a reduction in habitat area on a European sites?	There will be no reduction in the habitat area.
... direct / indirect damage to the physical quality of the environment (e.g. water quality and supply, soil compaction) in the European sites?	Not likely due to the location and type of development. The site is sufficient distance from the European Site (12km)
... serious / ongoing disturbance to species / habitats for which the European sites is selected (e.g. because of increased noise, illumination and human activity)?	Not likely due to the location and type of development. The site is sufficient distance from the European Site. (12km)
... direct / indirect damage to the size, characteristics or reproductive ability of populations on the European sites?	Not likely to have an adverse impact due to its location and characteristics
Would the project interfere with mitigation measures put in place for other plans / projects. [Look at <i>in-combination effects</i> with completed, approved but not completed, and proposed plans / projects. Look at projects / plans within and adjacent to European sites and identify them]. Simply stating that there are no cumulative impacts' is insufficient.	No.
(E) SCREENING CONCLUSION:	
Screening can result in:	
1	<i>AA is not required</i> because the project is directly connected with / necessary to the nature conservation management of the site.
2	<i>No potential for significant effects / AA is not required.</i>
3	<i>Significant effects are certain, likely or uncertain.</i> (In this situation seek a Natura Impact Statement from the applicant, or reject the project. Reject if too potentially damaging / inappropriate.
Conclusion:	
Category 2	
Justify why it falls into relevant category above:	Given the location and the nature and size of the development applied for and the characteristics of European sites in the vicinity and the appropriate assessment guidelines it is considered that the development will have no likely significant impacts on this European site.
Name:	Michael Mullarkey
Signed:	
Position:	Chief Technician
Date:	11-07-2024