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

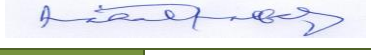
Tullamore Municipal District.

(A) DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT AND LOCAL SITE:			
Proposed development:	Proposed Traffic Calming Measures at: (1) Junction of Clara Road / Clontarf Road, Tullamore. (2) Junction of O'Molloy Street / Pearse Park, Tullamore & (3) Kilbride Street, Tullamore.		
Site location:	As Above		
Site size:	N/A	Floor Area of Proposed Development:	N/A
Identification of nearby European Site(s):	European Site - Cloncrow Bog NHA (Site Code = 000677)		
Distance to European Site(s):	15km		
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: ☐	No: √	

(B) IDENTIFICATION OF THE RELEVANT European sites **(S):**		
The reasons for the designation of the European sites (s):		
Cloncrow Bog (New Forest) NHA is situated approximately 1 km west of Tyrellspass, in the townlands of Cloncrow and Tyrellspass in Co. Westmeath. The site comprises a raised bog that includes both areas of high bog and cutover bog. The site consists of a raised bog which has developed in a basin. The bog has good hummock/hollow microtopography, pools, quaking areas, a swallow hole, a small flush and forestry on high bog. The cutover supports humid grassland, improved grassland, small areas of Downy Birch (Betula pubescens) woodland and scrub, and forestry. This NHA is a site of considerable conservation significance, comprising as it does, a raised bog, a rare habitat in the E.U. and one that is becoming increasingly scarce and under threat in Ireland. The site supports a good diversity of raised bog microhabitats, including pools, quaking areas, hummock/hollow complexes, a swallow hole and a small flush, as well as a number of scarce plant species. Ireland has a high proportion of the total E.U. resource of raised bog (over 50%) and so has a special responsibility for its conservation at an international level.		
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.)**		
Much of the high bog has vegetation typical of a Midlands Raised Bog and supports such species as Ling Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), Common Cottongrass (*Eriophorum angustifolium*), White Beak-sedge (*Rhynchospora alba*), Bog Asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*) and a range of bog mosses including *Sphagnum imbricatum, S. pulchrum, S. fuscum* and *S. cuspidatum.* Midland Raised Bog indicator species include Bog-rosemary (*Andromeda polifolia*) and Cranberry (*Vaccinium oxycoccos*). The northern half of the bog is firm but wet and with a hummock/hollow microtopography, while in the southern and eastern sections the bog is wetter and spongy with good hummock/hollow microtopography, pools, inter-connecting pools, quaking areas and a flush. The pools and channels are filled with the aquatic bog moss *Sphagnum cuspidatum*, White Beak-sedge, Common Cottongrass and Bog Asphodel. The hummocks are composed of the bog mosses *Sphagnum fuscum, S. imbricatum, S. papillosum* and *S. capillifolium.* The tops of the hummocks support Ling Heather, Common Cottongrass, the moss *Hypnum jutlandicum* and lichens (*Cladonia* spp.) The bog moss *Sphagnum pulchrum* has been recorded in the far east of the site. A small flush dominated by Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*) occurs in the middle of the south-eastern section of the bog. It supports a range of mosses including the bog mosses *Sphagnum fimbriatum, S. squarrosum* and *S. palustre.* A ridge on the high bog has Scot's Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*). The south-western section of the high bog has been afforested with Lodgepole Pine (*Pinus contorta*). The cutover has a range of habitats including Downy Birch woodland, birch and Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) scrub, humid grassland, improved grassland, forestry and abandoned		
(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:	
(The purpose of this is to identify if the effect(s) identified could be significant – if uncertain assume the effect(s) are significant). If the answer is 'yes' to any of the questions below, then the effect is significant. (Please justify your answer. 'Yes' / 'No' alone is insufficient)	
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. (15km)
... 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 (15km)
… 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. (15km)
... 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 *in-combination effects* 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	*AA is not required b*ecause the project is directly connected with / necessary to the nature conservation management of the site.
2	*No potential for significant effects / AA is not required.*
3	*Significant effects are certain, likely or uncertain.* (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:**	**25-07-2024**