

APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT

FOR
CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION
STRATEGY FOR OFFALY COUNTY
COUNCIL

August 2019

ON BEHALF OF
CLIMATE ACTION REGIONAL
OFFICE (CARO)

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Member States are required to designate Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protected Areas (SPAs) under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives, respectively. SACs and SPAs are collectively known as Natura 2000 sites. An 'Appropriate Assessment' (AA) is a required assessment to determine the likelihood of significant impacts, based on best scientific knowledge, of any plans or projects on Natura 2000 sites. A screening for AA determines whether a plan or project, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, is likely to have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site, in view of its conservation objectives.

This AA Screening has been undertaken to determine the potential for significant impacts on nearby Sites with European conservation designations (i.e. Natura 2000 Sites). The purpose of this assessment is to determine, the appropriateness, or otherwise, of the proposed development in the context of the conservation objectives of such sites.

1.2 Legislative Context

The Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) seeks to conserve natural habitats and wild fauna and flora by the designation of SACs and the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) seeks to protect birds of special importance by the designation of SPAs. It is the responsibility of each member state to designate SPAs and SACs, both of which will form part of Natura 2000, a network of protected sites throughout the European Community.

An Appropriate Assessment is required under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive where a project or plan may give rise to significant effects upon a Natura 2000 Site, and paragraphs 3 and 4 states that:

6(3) Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site, in view of the site's conservation objectives. In the 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.

6(4) If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature, the Member State shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted. Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species, the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

The current assessment was conducted within this legislative framework and the published DEHLG (2009) guidelines. As outlined in these, it is the responsibility of the proponent of the project to provide a comprehensive and objective Screening for Appropriate Assessment, which can then be used by the competent authority in order to conduct the Appropriate Assessment (DEHLG, 2009).

1.3 Stages of AA

This Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (the “**Screening Report**”) has been prepared by Enviroguide Consulting which considers whether the proposed Climate Change Adaptation Strategy is likely to have a significant effect on a European Site and whether a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is required.

The AA process is a four-stage process, with 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.

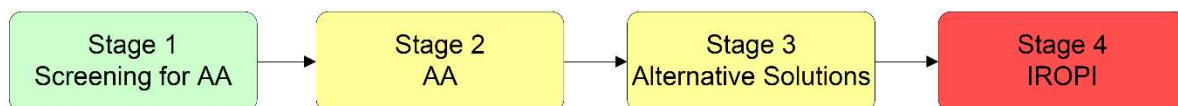


FIGURE 1. THE FOUR STAGES OF THE APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT PROCESS (DEHLG, 2010).

The four stages of an AA can be summarised as follows:

- Stage 1: *Screening*. The first stage of the AA process is to determine the likelihood of significant impacts of a proposal.
- Stage 2: *Natura Impact Statement (NIS)*. The second stage of the AA process assesses the impact of the proposal (either alone or in combination with other projects or plans) on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site, with respect to the conservation objectives of the site and its ecological structure and function. A Natura Impact Statement containing a professional, scientific examination of the proposal is required and should include any mitigation measure to avoid, reduce or offset negative impacts.
- Stage 3: *Assessment of alternative solutions*. If the outcome of Stage 2 is negative i.e. adverse impacts to the sites cannot be scientifically ruled out, despite mitigation, the plan or project should proceed to Stage 3 or be abandoned. This stage examines alternative solutions to the proposal.
- Stage 4: *Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain*. The final stage is the main derogation process examining whether there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) for allowing a plan or project to adversely affect a Natura 2000 site, where no less damaging solution exists.

The purpose of Stage 1, the Screening Stage is to determine the necessity or otherwise for a NIS. Screening for AA examines the likely effects of a project or plan alone, and in combination with other projects or plans, upon a Natura 2000 site, and considers whether it can be objectively concluded that these effects will not be significant.

If it is determined during screening stage that the proposal may have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site, or such a significant effect cannot be ruled out, then a NIS will need to be prepared. The Screening is outlined in Section 2.

1.4 Screening Steps

This Screening for AA, or Stage 1 of AA, has been undertaken in accordance with the European Commission Methodological Guidance on the provision of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2001) and the European Commission Guidance 'Managing Natura 2000 sites' (EC, 2000). Screening for AA involves the following:

- Establish whether the Plan is necessary for the management of a Natura 2000 site;
- Description of the Plan;
- Identification of Natura 2000 sites potentially affected;
- Identification and description of individual and cumulative impacts likely to result from the plan;
- Assessment of the significance of the impacts identified above on site-integrity; and
- Exclusion of sites where it can be objectively concluded that there will be no significant effects.

This Stage 1, Screening, examines whether likely effects upon a Natura 2000 site will be significant and determines whether the AA process for the proposed Plan alone and in combination with other developments in the area requires a Stage 2.

1.5 Stage 1 Screening Assessment Methodologies

1.5.1 Desk Study

A desk study was carried out to evaluate all available information on the areas natural environment. This comprised a review of a wide range of available publications, datasets and resources where applicable, including the following sources:

- Climate Change Adaptation Strategy – Offaly County Council;
- National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) datasets;
- Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) online datasets and mapping;
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) mapping and datasets;
- National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) online mapping and species records;
- OSI aerial imagery and Discovery Series mapping;
- Satellite imagery from various sources and dates (Google, Digital Globe, Bing);
- The Status of EU Protected Habitats in Ireland (NPWS);

For a complete list of the specific documents consulted as part of this assessment, see *Section 4 References*.

1.5.2 Assessment of Impacts

Once the potential impacts that may arise from Offaly County Councils Climate Change Adaptation Strategy are identified, the significance of these is assessed using key indicators:

- Habitat loss or alteration;
- Habitat / species fragmentation;

- Disturbance and / or displacement of species;
- Changes in population density; and
- Changes in water quality and resource.

In line with the EPA Guidelines (EPA, 2017), the following terms are defined when quantifying duration:

TABLE 1. DEFINITION OF DURATIONS (EPA, 2017).

Description of Duration	Corresponding Time Frame
Momentary Effects	Effects lasting from seconds to minutes
Brief Effects	Effects lasting less than a day
Temporary Effects	Effects lasting less than a year
Short-term Effects	Effects lasting one to seven years.
Medium-term Effects	Effects lasting seven to fifteen years.
Long-term Effects	Effects lasting fifteen to sixty years
Permanent Effects	Effects lasting over sixty years
Reversible Effects	Effects that can be undone, for example through remediation or restoration
Frequency of Effects	Describe how often the effect will occur. (once, rarely, occasionally, frequently, constantly – or hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, annually)

The criterion for confidence levels of the predicted likely impacts are given below in Table 2. The impact significance criteria follow EPA guidance (EPA, 2017).

TABLE 2. IMPACT SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA (EPA, 2017).

Significance of Effects	Definition
Imperceptible	An effect capable of measurement but without significant consequences.
Not significant	An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment but without significant consequences.
Slight Effects	An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities.
Moderate Effects	An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends.
Significant Effects	An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment

2 STAGE 1 SCREENING

2.1 Management of Natura 2000 Site

Offaly County Council's Climate Change Adaptation is not directly connected with or necessary for the management of Natura 2000 sites in County Offaly or elsewhere.

2.2 Description of the Plan

2.2.1 Background

The Earth's Climate is changing. While natural fluctuations in climate are considered normal, emerging research and observational records from across the world show rates of change that are far greater than those experienced in recent history. Global temperatures have risen and are projected to rise further bringing changes in weather patterns, rising sea levels and increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather. Ireland's climate is changing in line with global patterns, and these changes are bringing significant and wide-ranging economic, environmental and social impacts.

Climate change is now recognised as a global challenge with policy responses required in terms of both mitigating the causes of climate change and in adapting to the now inevitable consequences of our changing climate. Action at local level is vitally important to help reduce the risks and impacts of climate change across communities.

This local authority Climate Change Adaptation Strategy forms part of Ireland's national strategy for climate adaptation as set out in the National Adaptation Framework (NAF) which was produced under the provisions of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015.¹

It is tasked with mainstreaming climate change adaptation over time into all functions, operations and services of the local authority. It seeks to inform or 'climate proof' existing plans and policies produced and implemented by the local authority. This ensures a considered, consistent and coherent approach, facing head-on the challenges of a changing climate. Crucially, it also helps in building resilience within the local authority organisation itself as well as across all communities.

2.2.2 Climate Change Adaptation Strategy Objectives

The purpose of the Offaly County Council's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy is to achieve the national objective of becoming a more climate resilient society and economy by 2050. In order to help tackle current and future challenges that climate change can present, Offaly County Council has set out a number of key objectives in their strategy, under six thematic principles. The six themes are listed below:

1. Local Adaptation Governance and Business Operations
2. Infrastructure and Built Environment
3. Land Use and Development
4. Drainage and Flood Management
5. Natural Resources and Cultural Infrastructure

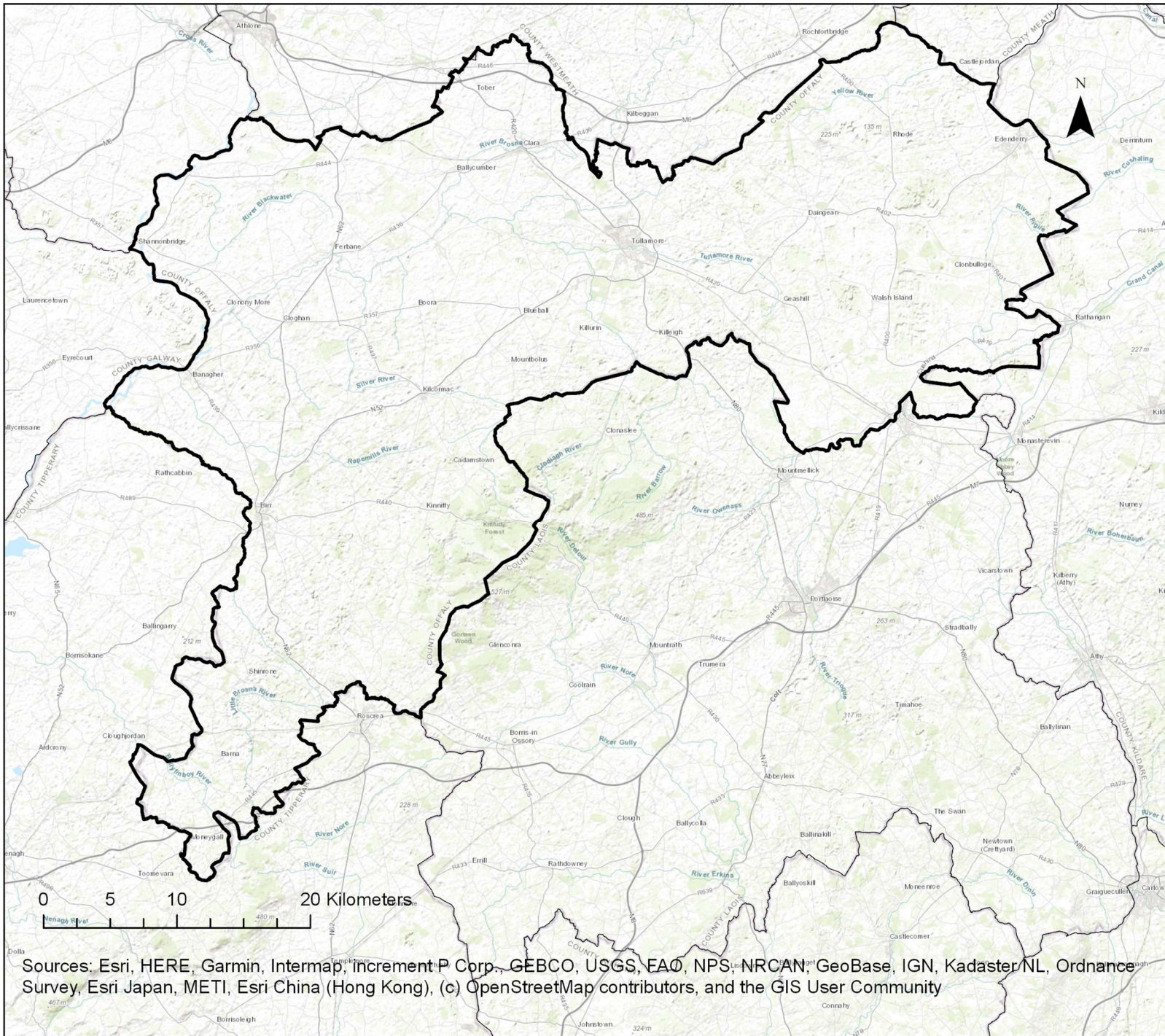
¹ *Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015* (S.I. No. 25/2016).

6. Community Health and Wellbeing




Table 3 below outlines Offaly County Councils Climate Change Adaptation Strategy objectives per theme.

TABLE 3. OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION STRATEGY OBJECTIVES

Local Adaptation for Governance and Business Operations	
1.1	To support the successful and practical implementation of climate change adaptation actions
1.2	To ensure that climate change adaptation is mainstreamed into all activities and operations
1.3	To build capacity within Offaly County Council to respond effectively to extreme weather events
1.4	To build resilience within Offaly County Council to support service delivery
1.5	To identify and support opportunities that may arise from pursuing adaptation efforts through the functions of Offaly County Council
1.6	To support the development of green energy jobs and efficiencies
Infrastructure and Built Environment	
2.1	To Increase the resilience of roads and transport infrastructure
2.2	To Increase the resilience of County Council buildings and housing stock
2.3	To support the transition to a climate resilient low carbon society
Land Use and Development	
3.1	To integrate climate change adaptation considerations into landuse planning policy
3.2	To explore policies to help the transition to a climate resilient low carbon society
3.3	To promote and maximize the most efficient and sustainable use of land
Drainage and Flood Management.	
4.1	To mitigate the risk and impact of flooding
4.2	To liaise and work with other bodies, agencies responsible for flood management
4.3	To provide and plan for effective drainage systems
4.4	To provide for adequate and quality water supply in times of extreme drought conditions
Natural Resources and Cultural Infrastructure	
5.1	To protect and enhance the natural environment to work positively towards climate action
5.2	To support bio-diversity for its intrinsic value within the natural environment
5.3	To protect heritage and cultural infrastructure
Community Health and Wellbeing	
6.1	To build capacity and resilience within communities
6.2	To collaborate with other agencies and groups working with communities to enhance the effectiveness of community programmes related to climate change
6.3	To protect and encourage climate resilient community infrastructure



Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Legend	
 County Offaly	
	
Project	
Appropriate Assessment Screening Report for Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for Offaly Co Co	
Client	
Climate Action Regional Office (CARO)	
Title	
Figure 2: Area encompassed by Strategy	
	
Drawn by: ME	Projection:
Checked: JD	IRENET95 Irish Transverse Mercator
Date: 29/05/2019	Scale: 1:386.865 @A4
Notes:	
Site boundaries shown are for illustration purposes only and do not represent legal or exact boundaries.	

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2.2.3 Identification of Relevant Natura 2000 Sites

In identifying potentially affected Natura 2000 sites, it has been decided to adopt the precautionary principle and includes all SPAs and SACs within the Strategy area, including a surrounding 15km buffer zone. Within this overall area, a total of 47 SACs and 13 SPAs are found, each site name, corresponding code and qualifying interests are detailed in Table 4 below.

TABLE 4. NATURA 2000 SITES WITHIN A 15KM RADIUS OF THE STRATEGY AREA.
* = PRIORITY; NUMBERS IN BRACKETS ARE NATURA 2000 CODES

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Interests	Location
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)			
000412	Slieve Bloom Mountains SAC	- [4010] Wet Heath - [7130] Blanket Bogs (Active)* - [91E0] Alluvial Forests*	Within Co. Offaly
000566	All Saints Bog And Esker SAC	- [6210] Orchid-rich Calcareous Grassland* - [7110] Raised Bog (Active)* - [7120] Degraded Raised Bog - [7150] Rhynchosporion Vegetation - [91D0] Bog Woodland*	Within Co. Offaly
000571	Charleville Wood SAC	- [91A0] Old Oak Woodlands - [1016] Desmoulin's Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>)	Within Co. Offaly
000572	Clara Bog SAC	- [6210] Orchid-rich Calcareous Grassland* - [7110] Raised Bog (Active)* - [7120] Degraded Raised Bog - [7150] Rhynchosporion Vegetation - [91D0] Bog Woodland*	Within Co. Offaly
000575	Ferbane Bog SAC	- [7110] Raised Bog (Active)* - [7120] Degraded Raised Bog - [7150] Rhynchosporion Vegetation	Within Co. Offaly
000576	Fin Lough (Offaly) SAC	- [7230] Alkaline Fens - [1013] Geyer's Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo geyeri</i>)	Within Co. Offaly
000580	Mongan Bog SAC	- [7110] Raised Bog (Active)* - [7120] Degraded Raised Bog - [7150] Rhynchosporion Vegetation	Within Co. Offaly
000581	Moyclare Bog SAC	- [7110] Raised Bog (Active)* - [7120] Degraded Raised Bog - [7150] Rhynchosporion Vegetation	Within Co. Offaly
000582	Raheenmore Bog SAC	- [7110] Raised Bog (Active)* - [7120] Degraded Raised Bog - [7150] Rhynchosporion Vegetation	Within Co. Offaly

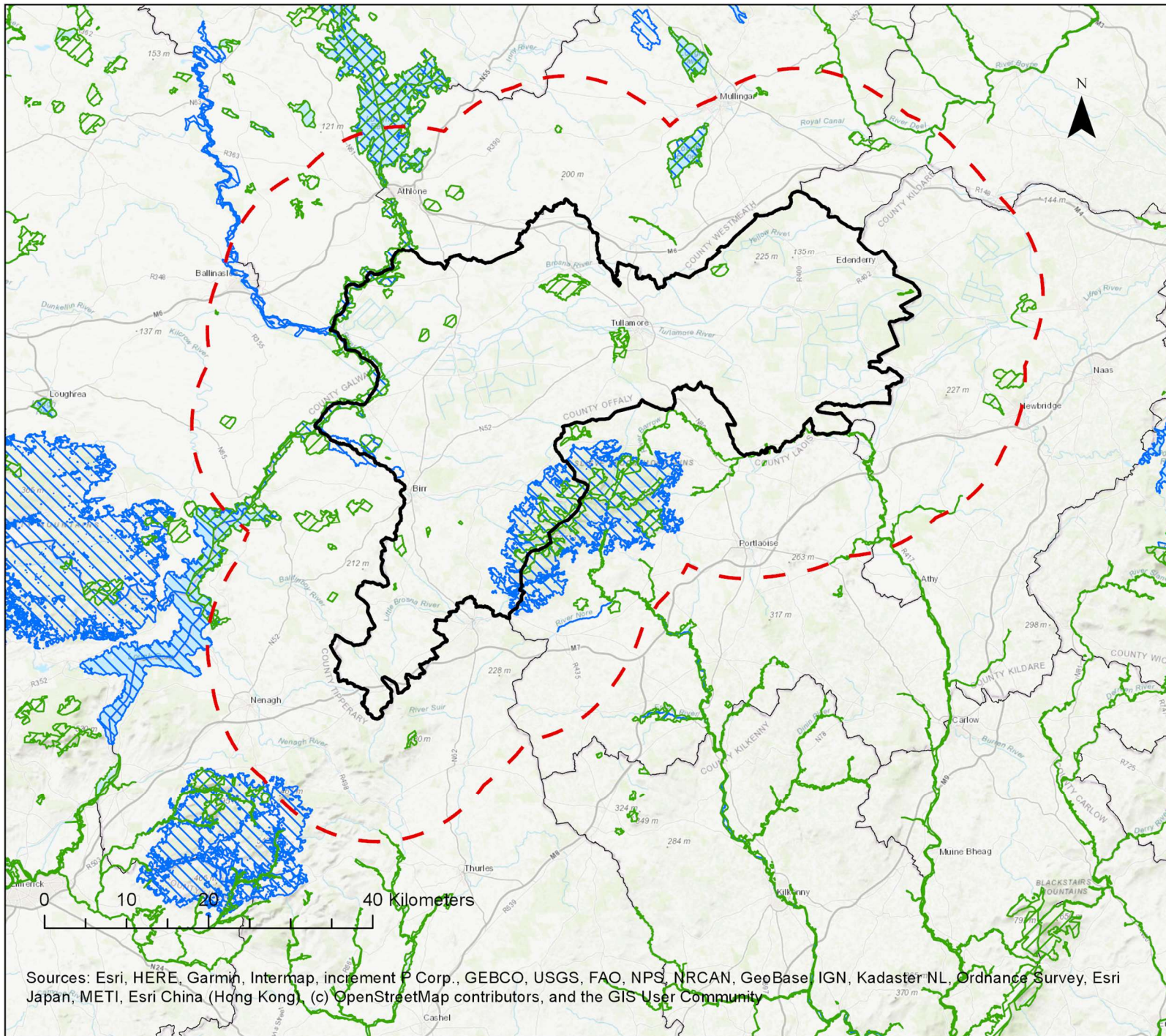
000585	Sharavogue Bog SAC	[7110] Raised Bog (Active)* [7120] Degraded Raised Bog [7150] Rhynchosporion Vegetation	Within Co. Of-faly
000919	Ridge Road, SW of Rapemills SAC	[6210] Orchid-rich Calcareous Grassland*	Within Co. Of-faly
000925	The Long Derries, Edenderry SAC	[6210] Orchid-rich Calcareous Grassland*	Within Co. Of-faly
001776	Pilgrim's Road Esker SAC	[6210] Orchid-rich Calcareous Grassland*	Within Co. Of-faly
002147	Lisduff Fen SAC	[7220] Petrifying Springs* [7230] Alkaline Fens [1013] Geyer's Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo geyeri</i>)	Within Co. Of-faly
002162	River Barrow And River Nore SAC	[1130] Estuaries [1140] Tidal Mudflats and Sandflats [1170] Reefs [1310] Salicornia Mud [1330] Atlantic Salt Meadows [1410] Mediterranean Salt Meadows [3260] Floating River Vegetation [4030] Dry Heath [6430] Hydrophilous Tall Herb Communities [7220] Petrifying Springs* [91A0] Old Oak Woodlands [91E0] Alluvial Forests* [1016] Desmoulin's Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>) [1029] Freshwater Pearl Mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>) [1092] White-clawed Crayfish (<i>Austropotamobius palipes</i>) [1095] Sea Lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>) [1096] Brook Lamprey (<i>Lampetra planeri</i>) [1099] River Lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>) [1103] Twaite Shad (<i>Alosa fallax</i>) [1106] Atlantic Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) [1355] Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) [1421] Killarney Fern (<i>Trichomanes speciosum</i>) [1990] Nore Freshwater Pearl Mussel (<i>Margaritifera durrovensis</i>)	Within Co. Of-faly
002236	Island Fen SAC	- [5130] Juniper Scrub - [7230] Alkaline Fens	Within Co. Of-faly
000216	River Shannon Callows SAC	- [6410] Molinia Meadows - [6510] Lowland Hay Meadows - [8240] Limestone Pavement* - [91E0] Alluvial Forests* - [1355] Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>)	Within Co. Of-faly
002213	Glenloughaun Esker SAC	- [6210] Orchid-rich Calcareous Grassland*	Within the 15km buffer

002356	Ardgraique Bog SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [7110] Raised Bog (Active)* - [7120] Degraded Raised Bog - [7150] Rhynchosporion Vegetation 	Within the 15km buffer
002241	Lough Derg, North-east Shore SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [5130] Juniper Scrub - [7210] Cladium Fens* - [7230] Alkaline Fens - [8240] Limestone Pavement* - [91E0] Alluvial Forests* - [91J0] Yew Woodlands* 	Within the 15km buffer
000391	Ballynafagh Bog SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [7110] Raised Bog (Active)* - [7120] Degraded Raised Bog - [7150] Rhynchosporion Vegetation) 	Within the 15km buffer
000396	Pollardstown Fen SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [7210] Cladium Fens* - [7220] Petrifying Springs* - [7230] Alkaline Fens - [1013] Geyer's Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo geyeri</i>) - [1014] Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo angustior</i>) - [1016] Desmoulin's Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>) 	Within the 15km buffer
002331	Mouds Bog SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [7110] Raised Bog (Active)* - [7120] Degraded Raised Bog - [7150] Rhynchosporion Vegetation 	Within the 15km buffer
001387	Ballynafagh Lake SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [7230] Alkaline Fens - [1016] Desmoulin's Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>) - [1065] Marsh Fritillary (<i>Euphydryas aurinia</i>) 	Within the 15km buffer
000859	Clonaslee Eskers And Derry Bog SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [7230] Alkaline Fens - [1013] Geyer's Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo geyeri</i>) 	Within the 15km buffer
002141	Mountmellick SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [1016] Desmoulin's Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>) 	Within the 15km buffer
002332	Coolrain Bog SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [7110] Raised Bog (Active)* - [7120] Degraded Raised Bog - [7150] Rhynchosporion Vegetation 	Within the 15km buffer
002333	Knockacoller Bog SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [7110] Raised Bog (Active)* - [7120] Degraded Raised Bog - [7150] Rhynchosporion Vegetation 	
002342	Mount Hevey Bog SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [7110] Raised Bog (Active)* - [7120] Degraded Raised Bog - [7150] Rhynchosporion Vegetation 	Within the 15km buffer
000440	Lough Ree SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [3150] Natural Eutrophic Lakes - [6210] Orchid-rich Calcareous Grassland* - [7110] Active Raised Bog* - [7120] Degraded Raised Bog - [7230] Alkaline Fens 	Within the 15km buffer

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [8240] Limestone Pavement* - [91A0] Old Oak Woodlands - [91D0] Bog Woodland* - [1355] Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) 	
001625	Castlesampson Esker SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [3180] Turloughs* - [6210] Orchid-rich Calcareous Grassland* 	Within the 15km buffer
002339	Ballynamona Bog And Corkip Lough SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [3180] Turloughs* - [7110] Raised Bog (Active)* - [7120] Degraded Raised Bog - [7150] Rhynchosporion Vegetation - [91D0] Bog Woodland* 	Within the 15km buffer
000641	Ballyduff/Clonfinane Bog SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [7110] Raised Bog (Active)* - [7120] Degraded Raised Bog - [7150] Rhynchosporion Vegetation - [91D0] Bog Woodland* 	Within the 15km buffer
000647	Kilcarren-Firville Bog SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [7110] Raised Bog (Active)* - [7120] Degraded Raised Bog - [7150] Rhynchosporion Vegetation 	Within the 15km buffer
000934	Kilduff, Devilsbit Mountain SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [4030] Dry Heath - [6230] Species-rich Nardus Grassland* 	Within the 15km buffer
001683	Liskeenan Fen SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [7210] Cladium Fens* 	Within the 15km buffer
002137	Lower River Suir SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [1330] Atlantic Salt Meadows - [1410] Mediterranean Salt Meadows - [3260] Floating River Vegetation - [6430] Hydrophilous Tall Herb Communities - [91A0] Old Oak Woodlands - [91E0] Alluvial Forests* - [91J0] Yew Woodlands* - [1029] Freshwater Pearl Mussel (<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>) - [1092] White-clawed Crayfish (<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>) - [1095] Sea Lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>) - [1096] Brook Lamprey (<i>Lampetra planeri</i>) - [1099] River Lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>) - [1103] Twaite Shad (<i>Alosa fallax</i>) - [1106] Atlantic Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) - [1355] Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) 	
002206	Scohaboy (Sopwell) Bog SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [7120] Degraded Raised Bog 	Within the 15km buffer
002207	Arragh More (Der-rybreen) Bog SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [7120] Degraded Raised Bog 	Within the 15km buffer
002353	Redwood Bog SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [7110] Raised Bog (Active)* - [7120] Degraded Raised Bog - [7150] Rhynchosporion Vegetation 	Within the 15km buffer

000685	Lough Ennell SAC	- [7230] Alkaline Fens	Within the 15km buffer
001831	Split Hills And Long Hill Esker SAC	- [6210] Orchid-rich Calcareous Grassland*	Within the 15km buffer
002205	Wooddown Bog SAC	- [7120] Degraded Raised Bog	Within the 15km buffer
002299	River Boyne And River Blackwater SAC	- [7230] Alkaline Fens - [91E0] Alluvial Forests* - [1099] River Lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>) - [1106] Atlantic Salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>) - [1355] Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>)	Within the 15km buffer
002313	Ballymore Fen SAC	- [7140] Transition Mires	Within the 15km buffer
002336	Carn Park Bog SAC	- [7110] Raised Bog (Active)* - [7120] Degraded Raised Bog	Within the 15km buffer
002337	Crosswood Bog SAC	- [7110] Raised Bog (Active)* - [7120] Degraded Raised Bog	Within the 15km buffer
Special Protection Areas (SPA)			
004017	Mongan Bog SPA	- [A395] Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>)	Within Co. Of-faly
004086	River Little Brosna Cal-lows SPA	- [A038] Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) - [A050] Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) - [A052] Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) - [A054] Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) - [A056] Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) - [A140] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) - [A142] Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) - [A156] Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) - [A179] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridi-bundus</i>) - [A395] Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) - [A999] Wetland and Waterbirds	Within Co. Of-faly
004096	Middle Shannon Cal-lows SPA	- [A038] Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) - [A050] Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) - [A122] Corncrake (<i>Crex crex</i>) - [A140] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) - [A142] Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) - [A156] Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>) - [A179] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridi-bundus</i>) - [A999] Wetland and Waterbirds	Within Co. Of-faly
004103	All Saints Bog SPA	- [A395] Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>)	Within Co. Of-faly

004137	Dovegrove Callows SPA	- [A395] Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>)	Within Co. Of-faly
004160	Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA	- [A082] Hen Harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>)	Within Co. Of-faly
004165	Slievefelim to Silvermines Mountains SPA	- [A082] Hen Harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>)	Within the 15km buffer
004044	Lough Ennell SPA	- [A059] Pochard (<i>Aythya ferina</i>) - [A061] Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>) - [A125] Coot (<i>Fulica atra</i>) - [A999] Wetland and Waterbirds	Within the 15km buffer
004064	Lough Ree SPA	- [A004] Little Grebe (<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>) - [A038] Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) - [A050] Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) - [A052] Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) - [A053] Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>) - [A056] Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) - [A061] Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>) - [A065] Common Scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>) - [A067] Goldeneye (<i>Bucephala clangula</i>) - [A125] Coot (<i>Fulica atra</i>) - [A140] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) - [A142] Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) - [A193] Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>)	Within the 15km buffer
004232	River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA	- [A229] Kingfisher (<i>Alcedo atthis</i>)	Within the 15km buffer
004233	River Nore SPA	- [A229] Kingfisher (<i>Alcedo atthis</i>)	Within the 15km buffer
004097	River Suck Callows SPA	- [A038] Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) - [A050] Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) - [A140] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) - [A142] Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) - [A395] Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) - [A999] Wetland and Waterbirds	Within the 15km buffer
004058	Lough Derg (Shannon) SPA	- [A017] Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) - [A061] Tufted Duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>) - [A067] Goldeneye (<i>Bucephala clangula</i>) - [A193] Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) - [A999] Wetland and Waterbirds -	Within the 15km buffer



Legend	
	Special Protection Areas
	Special Area of Conservation
	County Offaly
	County Offaly 15km Buffer
Project	
Appropriate Assessment Screening Report for Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for Offaly Co Co	
Client	
Climate Action Regional Office (CARO)	
Title	
Figure 3: Natura 2000 sites within 15km of Strategy area	
<small>3D Core C, Block 71, The Plaza Park West, Dublin 12 D12F9TH www.enviroguide.ie info@enviroguide.ie +353 (0)1 555 4730</small>	
Drawn by: ME	Projection:
Checked: JD	IRENET95 Irish Transverse Mercator
Date: 29/05/2019	Scale: 1:629,146 @A4
Notes:	
Site boundaries shown are for illustration purposes only and do not represent legal or exact boundaries.	

Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

2.3 Assessment of Significance of Potential Impacts

The potential for significant impacts resulting from the Offaly County Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy has been assessed in relation to Natura 2000 sites within the precautionary zone of potential impact.

Impacts that require consideration are categorised under the following headings, as outlined in *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* (European Commission, 2001).

- Habitat loss or alteration;
- Habitat / species fragmentation;
- Disturbance and / or displacement of species;
- Changes in population density; and
- Changes in water quality and resource.

Following assessment, it is considered that the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy will not result in any significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites.

Offaly County Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy is designed to inform responses throughout the local authority to the effects of climate change and does not identify specific areas for development. Any future projects resulting from the objectives laid out in the Strategy will need to comply with the relative legislation in relation to Appropriate Assessment, where appropriate.

2.3.1 In-combination Effects

The following planning and policy documents were reviewed and considered for possible in-combination effects with the proposed Plan:

- Offaly County Development Plan 2014 - 2020; and
- Offaly's Heritage Plan 2017 - 2021

3 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, further to a screening of Offaly County Council's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for possible significant effects on Natura 2000 sites no significant effects were identified.

The screening outlined in this report included an assessment of possible in-combination effects. Based on the objective information contained in this report and applying the precautionary principle, it is concluded that the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy will not have a significant effect on Natura 2000 sites.

Other Local Authority documents such as Offaly's Development Plan will take their lead from the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy. These, as part of the plan preparation process will be subject to SEA and AA that ensures that objectives and actions that result will be adequately examined for ecological effects.

Furthermore, should specific actions from Offaly's strategy or plan arise, they will be subjected to both AA and EIA process when sufficient design details exist. The AA and EIA process will

ensure that any possible environmental and ecological effects of any outcomes from resulting actions will be adequately assessed.

3.1 Reason for Conclusion

The reasons for the above conclusion are summarised as follows:

Due to the nature of Offaly's County Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, and in particular its main objective of mainstreaming Climate Adaptation into all functions within Offaly County Council, there is no possible effects identified to any Natura 2000 sites as a result of the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy.

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