

## Screening for Appropriate Assessment

### Screening matrix

Format from: European Commission, 2002. 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. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg. (Annex 2 p67 -68)

<b>Part 1. Screening matrix</b>	
Brief description of the project or plan	Land reclamation works, including land drainage, levelling of two soil berms, ploughing/re-seeding, and the removal of vegetation within a flood plain at
Brief description of the Natura 2000 site	<p>River Barrow and River Nore Special Area of Conservation (SAC Site code: 002162)</p> <p>The lands concerned are also within 15km of the following designated sites;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slieve Blooms SPA (0004160)</li> </ul> <p>This site is not sufficiently close, and no pathway has been identified, for potential effect by the activity. Other designated sites are ruled out of consideration for the remainder of the assessment due to the localised nature of the impacts.</p>
<p><b>Assessment criteria</b> Describe the individual elements of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the Natura 2000 site.</p>	Land reclamation to be achieved by land drainage, levelling, and clearing of scrub, in addition to ploughing and reseeded an area of 1.01 Hectares. Some works have been carried out to date, permission is sought for the remaining works but the whole project is considered in this assessment.
<p>Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the Natura 2000 site by virtue of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>size and scale;</li> <li>land-take;</li> <li>distance from the Natura 2000 site or key features of the site;</li> <li>resource requirements (water abstraction etc.);</li> <li>emissions (disposal to land, water or air);</li> <li>excavation requirements;</li> <li>transportation requirements;</li> <li>duration of construction, operation, decommissioning, etc.;</li> </ul>	<p><b>Size and scale, duration, land take:</b></p> <p>The proposal affects approx. 1.01ha of riparian grassland within a floodplain of the River Barrow and proposes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- improve drainage</li> <li>- clear scrub</li> <li>- level two earth mounds measuring approximately 75m<sup>2</sup> situated immediately adjacent to the river</li> <li>- plough and re-seed the grassland</li> </ul> <p>All of the above activities are likely to involve disturbing soil, with potential consequences for river water quality due to siltation. Re-seeding may imply an intensification of land use, with associated increased input of nutrients. Alterations to land drainage may also have water quality implications. While works are likely to be short-term in duration, they imply a long-term change in land use, i.e. agricultural intensification.</p>

<p>other.</p>	<p><b>Distance from Natura sites</b> The proposal is within River Barrow and River Nore Special Area of Conservation (SAC Site code: 002162).</p> <p><b>Resource, excavation and transport requirements</b> Excavated soil from levelled mounds will presumably be redistributed within the 1.01 Hectares.</p> <p><b>Emissions</b> Disposal of removed scrub (off-site). Potential for increase in sediments and nutrient run-off entering the river.</p> <p><b>In combination</b> There are known to be large scale unauthorized reclamation works undertaken within the vicinity, with potential consequences for total load of soil/nutrients entering the river at this location. There are also projects and activities including forestry, construction and other works, throughout the local and wider catchment which may result in silt discharges to waters. These are not itemised in detail in this screening.</p>
<p>Describe any likely changes to the site arising as a result of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reduction of habitat area;</li> <li>disturbance to key species;</li> <li>habitat or species fragmentation;</li> <li>reduction in species density;</li> <li>changes in key indicators of conservation value (water quality etc.);</li> <li>climate change.</li> </ul>	<p>The proposed activity is likely to have negative implications for river water quality during the course of the works being undertaken, as a result of quantities of soil being mobilised. There may be additional implications for water quality resulting from the change in land-use, i.e. increased nutrient input and altered drainage patterns. There may also be impacts through loss of flood plain connectivity and through change to hydrological flow patterns.</p> <p>Qualifying Interest species for the SAC likely to be influenced by this proposal - See Appendix I</p> <p>Existing habitat – rough grassland/scrub, i.e. no likely direct loss of QI habitats resulting from the proposal.</p>
<p>Describe any likely impacts on the Natura 2000 site as a whole in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site;</li> <li>interference with key relationships that define the function of the site.</li> </ul>	<p>None identified</p>
<p>Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>loss;</li> <li>fragmentation;</li> <li>disruption;</li> <li>disturbance;</li> </ul>	<p>Water quality change and potential negative consequences for QI species (e.g. increased water turbidity)</p> <p>EPA monitoring indicates that the river between Portarlinton and Kilnahown Bridge downstream currently has a good water quality status (Q Value Score = 4, Q Value Status = Good).</p> <p>Potential loss of floodplain connectivity</p>

change to key elements of the site (e.g. water quality etc.).	
Describe from the above those elements of the project or plan, or combination of elements, where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale or magnitude of impacts is not known.	<p>Elements of project which may impact the SAC include redistribution of soil from berms, ploughing /re-seeding, increased land drainage and increased volumes of nutrient input to re-seeded grasslands.</p> <p>The exact scale of impacts is unknown but discharges of silt and nutrient run-off to water are likely to be significant, in combination with other discharges locally and in the wider catchment. Loss of flood plain connectivity and changes to hydrological flow through drainage may also have significant effects alone or in combination.</p> <p><b>Likely significant effects cannot be ruled out in relation to “floating river vegetation”, white-clawed crayfish, sea lamprey, brook lamprey, river lamprey, salmon, twaite shad, otter: the project screens in for Appropriate Assessment</b></p>
<b>Part 2: Summary of finding of likely significant effects</b>	
Name of project or plan	Reclamation works at
Name and location of Natura 2000 site	River Barrow and River Nore SAC
Description of the project or plan	Works to continue reclamation of riverside agricultural land
Is the project or plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site (provide details)?	No
Are there other projects or plans that together with the project or plan being assessed could affect the site (provide details)? The assessment of significance of effects Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site.	<p>Yes, other non-permitted reclamation works in nearby lands in Cooltederry and general works and activities affecting water quality and hydrology in the wider catchment.</p> <p>Likely significant effects through discharges to water, loss of connectivity to flood plain, changes to hydrology</p>
List of agencies consulted: provide contact name and telephone or e-mail address.	None
Response to consultation.	None
Data collected to carry out the assessment; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who carried out the assessment</li> <li>• Sources of data</li> <li>• Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed</li> </ul>	<p>Initial draft: Sarah Stapleton, Ranger. 21/12/20</p> <p>Re-draft and AA screening decision: Ciara O Mahony, Regional Manager. 11/1/21</p>



## Appendix I

### Qualifying Interests of the site for further assessment and consideration of impacts

Qualifying Interests of River Barrow and River Nore Special Area of Conservation (SAC Site code: 002162)	Potential for impact
Estuaries [1130]	No impact
Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]	No impact
Reefs [1170]	No impact
Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310]	No impact
Atlantic salt meadows ( <i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i> ) [1330]	No impact
Mediterranean salt meadows ( <i>Juncetalia maritimi</i> ) [1410]	No impact
Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculon fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260] ("floating river vegetation")	Distribution locally not known. Potential impact due to increased siltation /nutrient loading, within the water body, loss of connectivity to flood plain, changes to hydrology
European dry heaths [4030]	No impact
Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels [6430]	No impact
Petrifying springs with tufa formation ( <i>Cratoneurion</i> ) [7220]	No impact
Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0]	No impact
Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> ( <i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i> ) [91E0]	No impact
<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> (Desmoulin's Whorl Snail) [1016]	No impact
<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029]	No impact
<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092]	Potential impact due to impacts on hydrology and water quality
<i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey) [1095]	No impact
<i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey) [1096]	Potential impact due to impacts on hydrology and water quality
<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> (River Lamprey) [1099]	Potential impact due to impacts on hydrology and water quality
<i>Alosa fallax fallax</i> (Twaité Shad) [1103]	No impact

Salmo salar (Salmon) [1106]	Potential impact due to impacts on hydrology and water quality
Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355]	Potential impact on food availability arising from deterioration in water quality/changes to hydrology
Trichomanes speciosum (Killarney Fern) [1421]	No impact
Margaritifera durrovensis (Nore Pearl Mussel) [1990]	No impact