

July '23

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## **Title**

*Natura Impact Statement*

## **Development Description**

*“Full planning permission for change of use from a coal yard to a recycling facility. This includes the demolition of an existing storage building (287m<sup>2</sup>) and the construction of a proposed recycling facility (1124m<sup>2</sup>).*

*The proposed development also includes:*

- *Construction of a maintenance shed (287m<sup>2</sup>),*
- *3 no. storage containers (3 x 26.5m<sup>2</sup>),*
- *skip storage areas,*
- *15 no. car parking spaces including 1 no. EV charging space and 1 no. accessible parking space,*
- *8 no. truck parking spaces,*
- *covered bicycle stand for 5 no. bicycles,*
- *1 no. new weighbridge and associated weighbridge office,*
- *security fencing on part of northwestern boundary,*
- *connections to all existing services,*
- *all ancillary site works.”*

## **Location**

*Deepwater Quay, Sligo.*

## **Applicants**

*Barna Recycling Limited*

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

This Stage 2 Natura Impact Statement (Appropriate Assessment Report) has been prepared by Colette Casey (B.Sc (Hons)) in partnership with James O' Donnell, Planning Consultant (BA, MRUP, Dip APM) on behalf of Barna Recycling Limited who is applying for planning permission to Sligo County Council for “*change of use from a coal yard to a recycling facility. This includes the demolition of an existing storage building (287m<sup>2</sup>) and the construction of a proposed recycling facility (1124m<sup>2</sup>). The proposed development also includes: Construction of a maintenance shed (287m<sup>2</sup>), 3 no. storage containers (3 x 26.5m<sup>2</sup>), skip storage areas, 15 no. car parking spaces including 1 no. EV charging space and 1 no. accessible parking space, 8 no. truck parking spaces, covered bicycle stand for 5 no. bicycles, 1 no. new weighbridge and associated weighbridge office, security fencing on part of northwestern boundary, connections to all existing services.*”. The site for the proposed development lies in Deepwater Quay, Sligo.

The site for the proposed development lies 67.8 meters west from Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) SAC 61.1 meters west from the Cummeen Strand SPA, which have been designated under the EU Habitats and Birds Directive, and so it is necessary that the potential impacts of the proposed works be assessed by the competent authority, in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. This report provides the information necessary for the competent authority to complete an Appropriate Assessment of the potential impacts of the proposed works on sites of European importance in the area.

The current project is not directly connected with, or necessary for, the management of any European Site.

The assessment in this report is based on a desk study, and a field survey undertaken on the 9<sup>th</sup> of June 2023. It specifically assesses the potential for the proposed development to impact on European sites. This Stage 2 NIS has been informed by the Stage 1 AA Screening Report, which concluded that indirect impacts on the nearby Natura 2000 network could not be ruled out at that stage. The Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) SAC and Cummeen Strand SPA have been screened in. Cummeen Strand SPA has been screened in due to the close proximity of the proposed works to the SPA. The proposed development involves the demolition of an existing warehouse on site. These demolition works could disturb and impact on the wintering bird species associated with the SPA. Therefore, mitigation measures must be implemented to block adverse impacts. It is also noted that given the close proximity to the SAC & SPA impacts cannot be ruled out during both the construction and operational phase of the proposed development.

This Report has been prepared in accordance with the European Commission guidance document Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological Guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and 6(4)

of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (EC, 2001) and the Department of the Environment's Guidance on the Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland (December 2009, amended February 2010).

## 1.2 Statement of Authority

A baseline ecological survey was undertaken on the 9<sup>th</sup> of June 2023 by Colette Casey (B.Sc. (Hons)). Colette is a qualified ecologist and a member of Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). She has been involved in the preparation of several bat surveys and assessments. She has also prepared several Appropriate Assessment Screening Reports, Natura Impacts Statements, Construction Environmental management Plan and EIA Screening reports. She has conducted a number of Bat surveys and Otter surveys in the Republic of Ireland and is a member of Bat Conservation Ireland. Colette has completed a course with Bat Conservation Trust "British bats, their ecology and conservation." Colette is a has been issued a Bat Surveying License by National Parks and Wildlife Services.

James O' Donnell is a qualified Town Planner and Project Manager with over 24 years planning experience in both the public and private sector in the west of Ireland, including 6 years experience as a local authority planning officer. James has particular experience in the project management and delivery of a wide range of complex planning applications requiring environmental and ecological assessment, in accordance with the requirements of the EU Habitats Directive and EIA Directives.

## 1.3 Background to Appropriate Assessment

### 1.3.1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment

The screening exercise will be conducted in line with the recommendations and protocol set out in the Guidance from the Commission (EC, 2002). This protocol involves a four-stage process to complete an Appropriate Assessment. At each stage, the findings of certain issues and tests will determine whether the next stage in the process is required.

The four stages in the Appropriate Assessment process are outlined below

#### Stage 1: Screening

This step consists of examining the likely potential impacts of a project or plan, alone or in combination with other projects, upon a Natura 2000 site or sites, and considers whether these impacts may be considered significant. If no significant impacts are foreseen, then a 'finding of no significant effects' (FONSE) statement is issued to the appropriate authority, and the process is complete. If the effects are considered significant or their significance is unknown, then the process moves on to Stage 2.

#### Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment

Where the screening process has identified potential impacts which are considered significant or unknown, this process examines these potential impacts in detail, in relation to the conservation interests of the Natura 2000 site or sites. Mitigation measures may be suggested to reduce the likelihood or severity of these impacts. If the impacts are still considered to be significant or unknown after this stage is complete, then alternative solutions must be considered (Stage 3).

This Natura Impact Statement represents an **Appropriate Assessment** for the proposed of “change of use from a coal yard to a recycling facility. This includes the demolition of an existing storage building (287m<sup>2</sup>) and the construction of a proposed recycling facility (1124m<sup>2</sup>). The proposed development also includes: Construction of a maintenance shed (287m<sup>2</sup>), 3 no. storage containers (3 x 26.5m<sup>2</sup>), skip storage areas, 15 no. car parking spaces including 1 no. EV charging space and 1 no. accessible parking space, 8 no. truck parking spaces, covered bicycle stand for 5 no. bicycles, 1 no. new weighbridge and associated weighbridge office, security fencing on part of northwestern boundary, connections to all existing services “ in Deepwater Quay, Sligo on the Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) SAC and the Cummeen Strand SPA.

### Stage 3: Assessment of Alternative Solutions

*‘If the potential impacts are still considered to be significant or unknown after the Appropriate Assessment stage, then alternative ways of implementing the project are considered at this stage. If no alternative solutions are possible, then it is considered whether the project or plan may go ahead regardless, if imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) are found’.*

### Stage 4: Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI)

If significant negative impacts on the Natura 2000 site are unavoidable, and no alternative solutions may be found, then this stage involves the consideration of whether the project or plan may go ahead despite these effects, for ‘imperative reasons of overriding public interest’ (IROPI).

## 2 EU NATURE CONSERVATION LEGISLATION AND NATURA 2000 SITES.

There are three main types of designation for nature conservation in Ireland: Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs). NHAs are designated under the Irish Wildlife Act 1976 (amended 2000). SACs and SPAs are designated under European legislation, the EU Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (transposed into Irish law in the European Union (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997 as amended in 1998 and 2005) and the EU Birds Directive 79/409/EEC, respectively. These European designated sites (SACs and SPAs) are also known as Natura 2000 sites. This means that they are part of the Natura 2000 Network, a network of important ecological sites across the European Union.

Sites are designated on the basis of the presence of certain 'Qualifying Features', i.e. the habitats listed under Annex I and the species listed under Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive.

Once a site is designated as an SAC and publicly advertised it is legally protected and becomes a proposed candidate SAC (pcSAC). A three month period follows during which landowners may lodge an objection to the designation. Details of each proposed SAC are then given to the EU Commission, and thereafter the site is called a "candidate SAC". Once the sites are approved by the commission, they are formally designated by the Minister.

### 2.1.1 Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites

Due to the proximity of the proposed development site to a Natura 2000 site, an Appropriate Assessment may be required under the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, Article 6(3) and (4), Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites. Such assessments are required where it is identified that a proposed plan or project could have significant impact on a Natura 2000 site. Articles 6(3) and (4) of the Directive, state the following;

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... 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....'

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... the Member State shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected...'

### 3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

#### 3.1 Site Location

The application site is located at the vacant hunter coal facility located at Deepwater Quay, Sligo. The existing site comprises a vacant brownfield plot used previously to accommodate Hunter's Coal. The existing site has the Eircode of F91 WC60. The application site was previously used as a coal yard and is surrounded by industrial and commercial buildings. The application site consists of a number of warehouse, offices and hard standing areas. The existing site has the benefit of existing service including water main connection, surface water sewer connection (Via an existing petrol interceptor) and a connection to the public sewer network.

The site for the proposed development lies 67.8 meters west from Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) SAC 61.1meters west from the Cummeen Strand SPA.

#### 3.2 Characteristics of Proposed Development

##### 3.2.1 General Project Description

Permission is being sought for *“change of use from a coal yard to a recycling facility. This includes the demolition of an existing storage building (287m<sup>2</sup>) and the construction of a proposed recycling facility (1124m<sup>2</sup>). The proposed development also includes: Construction of a maintenance shed (287m<sup>2</sup>), 3 no. storage containers (3 x 26.5m<sup>2</sup>), skip storage areas, 15 no. car parking spaces including 1 no. EV charging space and 1 no. accessible parking space, 8 no. truck parking spaces, covered bicycle stand for 5 no. bicycles, 1 no. new weighbridge and associated weighbridge office, security fencing on part of northwestern boundary, connections to all existing services”*

The application site comprises an overall area of **1.3204 ha**, the proposed development floor space amounts to **1080sqm** and the demolition of **300 sqm**.

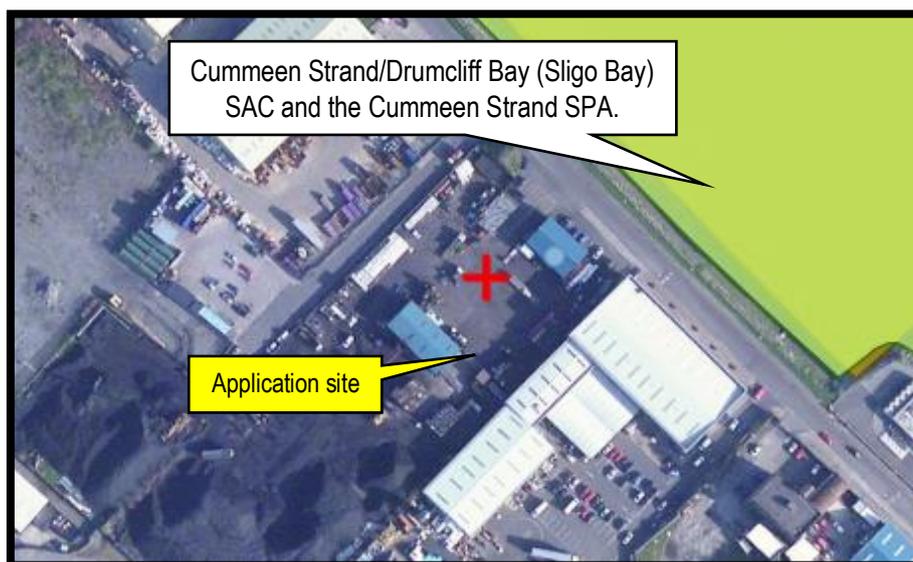


Fig 2.1 –Site location

## 4 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

### 4.1.1 Habitats

A walkover survey of the site was conducted on the 9<sup>th</sup> of June 2023. The NRA publication *Ecological Surveying Techniques for Protected Flora and Fauna* was used as a guide for surveying. Habitats were classified according to the information in *A Guide to Habitats in Ireland* (Fossit 2000), and correlated with any Annex I habitats if applicable.

The application site is located at the former Hunters Fuel Depot. The site is mainly made up of built habitats and is brownfield. The main habitat on site is Building and artificial surface (BL3).

On site there is two office buildings to the northwest, the first building is adjacent to the site entrance. The second is further northwest of the site and is surrounded by scrub, species recorded were Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) which shows signs of ash dieback disease, Butterfly Bush (*Buddleja davidii*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Fuchsia (*Fuchsia magellanica*) and Brambles (*Rubus fruticosus*).

A stone wall runs to the north of the site, areas of Butterfly bush are found in pockets along the wall. Further to the south of the site is a treeline of Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*).

The south of the site is made up of recolonising bare ground, this area has a small amount of coal left over from the previous activities on site. Species recorded here are Rosebay Willowherb (*Chamaenerion angustifolium*), Dandelions (*Taraxacum spp.*), Thistles (*Cirsium spp*), Oxeye Daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*) and Common Ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*). There is some small plants of Butterfly bush in this area and saplings of silver birch.

On site there is a large warehouse located in the middle of the site, this is made of galvanised metal. There is also a small stone shed located to the east of the site, this has begun to become derelict. To the northeast of the site is a warehouse, which is split into two areas, again this is made of galvanised metal.

The rest of the site is made up concrete slabs and artificial surfaces. The site is considered of Low Local Ecological value and does not require an Ecological Impact Assessment

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Fig 3.1 Habitat map of proposed site



Plate 3.1 – Looking south east to existing warehouse on site



Plate 3.2 – Looking Northwest to existing warehouse and offices



**Plate 3.3** – Interior of warehouse to be demolished



**Plate 3.4**–Looking Southeast of the site to areas of scrub



**Plate 3.5** –Looking northwest to existing building and scrub



**Plate 3.6**– Looking west from rear of the site



**Plate 3.7**–Looking east to adjacent commercial building



**Plate 3.8** – Looking Northwest to warehouse



**Plate 3.9**—Looking west from east of the site



**Plate 3.10** – Looking North from south of the site



**Plate 3.11** – Looking west from southeast



**Plate 3.11** – Looking south from the east of the site

#### 4.1.2 Fauna

Three bird species were observed in the application site: Herring gull (*Larus argentatus*), Hooded Crow (*Corvus cornix*) and Woodpigeon (*Columba palumbus*)

There are no Annexed habitats on site, no rare or protected Flora on site and no signs of mammals. Furthermore, no Annex II species, or any signs of their presence, were recorded on site. No species associated with Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) SAC and the Cummeen Strand SPA were recorded on site.

## 5 EUROPEAN SITES IN THE LIKELY ZONE OF IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

A desktop study was conducted examining online and GIS spatial datasets for Surface Water Catchments and European designated sites on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June 2023. Information from the site was gleaned from the following source:

- The National Park and Wildlife website [www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie) was consulted for details of protected sites and rare and protected species in the area.
- The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) was consulted for information on the soils, geology and hydrology of the site.
- The website [catchments.ie](http://catchments.ie) was used to review information on groundwater
- Relevant Development Plans and Local Area Plans in the neighbouring areas.
- The planning section of the Sligo County Council's website was consulted for information on local planning applications.
- Various other publications and websites were consulted for supporting information (see References section)

European sites within the zone of likely effects of the project were identified along with potential water connectivity. The surrounding Natura 2000 sites barring the Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) SAC and the Cummeen Strand SPA were screened out (See Appropriate Assessment Screening Report submitted as part of this application)

**Table 5.1** Lists all European Sites within the zone of likely effect. The site synopsis and conservation objectives of these sites, as per the NPWS website ([www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie)), were considered at the time of preparation of this report. Details of these sites, including their distance from the proposed development, are provided in Table 5.1.

**Table 5.1 Determination of European Sites within the Likely Zone of Impact**

European Site	Qualify Interests/Special Conservation Interests for which the European Site (Sourced from NPWS online Conservation Objectives, <a href="http://www.npws.ie">www.npws.ie</a> )	Conservation Objectives	Zone of Likely Impact Determination
<b>Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)</b>			
<p>Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) SAC Site code: 000627</p> <p>The application site lies 67.8 meters from the Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) SAC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Estuaries</li> <li>• Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide</li> <li>• Embryonic shifting dunes</li> <li>• Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes)</li> <li>• Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes)*</li> <li>• Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands</li> <li>• Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (* important orchid sites)</li> <li>• Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion)*</li> <li>• Harbour Seal (<i>Phoca vitulina</i>)</li> <li>• Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail (<i>Vertigo angustior</i>)</li> <li>• Sea Lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>)</li> <li>• River Lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>)</li> </ul>	<p>Detailed conservation objectives for this site (Version 1.0 18<sup>th</sup> of September 2013) were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at <a href="http://www.npws.ie">www.npws.ie</a></p>	<p>The proposed works are located approximately 67.8 meters from the European Site and following preliminary assessment it is <b>considered to be within the Likely Zone of Impact.</b></p>
<p>Cummeen Strand SPA Site code: 004035</p> <p>The application site lies 61 meters from the Cummeen Strand SPA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>)</li> <li>• Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>)</li> <li>• Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>)</li> <li>• Wetland and Waterbirds</li> </ul>	<p>Detailed conservation objectives for this site (Version 1.0 10<sup>th</sup> of September 2013) were reviewed as part of the assessment and are available at <a href="http://www.npws.ie">www.npws.ie</a></p>	<p>The proposed works are located approximately 61 meters from the European Site and following preliminary assessment it is <b>considered to be within the Likely Zone of Impact.</b></p>

## 6 MITIGATION AND BEST PRACTICE MEASURES

The following best practice measures will be adhered to during the construction of the proposed development. These are an integral part of the design of the project and are considered standard procedure. These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the “*Preliminary Construction Environmental Management Plan*” prepared by Planning Consultancy Services and submitted as part of this planning application.

### 6.1 Site Set Up

- A solid fence will be erected around the perimeter of the proposed development site prior to the commencement of construction works. This will create a solid boundary between the site and the surrounding area
- All works will be located within the confines of these fences. No works will take place outside the fences to prevent damage to areas outside the necessary development footprint.

### 6.2 Earthworks

- Works such as soil excavations, soil depositing or soil stripping shall not take place immediately following periods of heavy or prolonged rainfall.
- All stockpile areas of sand, gravels and soils should be stored on level terrain and shall be covered during heavy rainfall periods in order to prohibit the mobilisation of sediments.
- If gravel or handstand materials are being brought onsite ensure that the source is free of invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed, *Gunnera* and *Rhododendron*.
- To mitigate potential noise disturbance to wintering birds it is proposed that demolition, ground, and earth works should avoid the wintering bird season which is October to April

### 6.3 Air Quality Dust and Emissions

- Dust and mal odours will be kept to a minimum
- The site shall be dampened down as necessary to minimise windblown dust when necessary or during periods of dry weather.
- Dust suppression equipment must be used when point source emissions are likely
- No Burning of materials will be allowed onsite
- Care will be taken from the commencement of the project that the deposition of debris on local roads is kept to a minimum

### 6.4 Refuelling, fuel and hazardous materials storage

- All machinery maintenance and re-fuelling shall be carried out off-site. Spill kits for contaminants such as fuels oils and lubricants must be used
- All petroleum products to be bunded during the construction stage of the development.

### 6.5 Environmental Approvals and Licenses

- Appropriate waste permits will be provided to and retained by the supervising engineer for the completion of demolition / waste disposal file

## 6.6 Groundwater Contamination

- All direct discharges of pollutants into groundwater is prohibited.
- Drip trays must be utilized for all machinery on site and monitoring undertaking to ensure that there is no risk of overflowing and that they are adequately sized to deal with the specific element of machinery that they are protecting against.

## 6.7 Water Contamination

- All direct discharges of pollutants into groundwater is prohibited.
- Drip trays must be utilized for all machinery on site and monitoring undertaking to ensure that there is no risk of overflowing and that they are adequately sized to deal with the specific element of machinery that they are protecting against.
- Site storage will be on an impervious base within a secondary containment system such as a bund.
- A spill kit with sand or earth will be kept close to storage areas. Staff will be trained on how to use spill kits correctly.
- Damaged, or leaking drums will be removed from site immediately and disposed of via a registered waste disposal contractor.
- No concrete or cleaning water should enter soil or the adjacent waterway.
- Construct systems to collect, convey, treat and attenuate the surface water runoff generated by the proposed development.
- During the construction phase of the development and in the event surface water runoff is contaminated with silt arises settlement ponds should be utilized. This is in to allow silt to settle and clean surface water can then be discharged from the site.
- The works will be managed to prevent silt laden runoff from leaving the site. If deemed a risk during the construction phase suitable measures should be employed to prevent silt laden surface water runoff leading the site.
- Where possible ready mixed supply of wet cement and pre cast products are to be used when possible.
- Concrete pours will be planned on days where weather is dry. In order to prevent contamination.

## 6.8 Drainage and Water Quality

- The works shall be planned and executed in accordance with Environmental Protection Agency Guidelines.
- Wash water from on-site mixers or lorries shall be disposed of appropriately off site
- The contractor should ensure that operations do not give rise to the discharge of large quantities of dirty water into the watercourses. Measures must be in place to ensure that silt will not be allowed to enter the water system.
- To prevent run off from stripped ground, banks are to be placed on the downstream side of stock piles.
- Water from excavations shall be pumped to land and allowed to settle, or passed through silt traps, before returning into the watercourse.
- Good site management will ensure that surface water and groundwater will be protected from accidental contamination.
- Washing out of concrete trucks should not be permitted within the site and should be conducted in hard standing areas
- Works with concrete shall be done during dry conditions for a period sufficient to cure the concrete (at least 48 hours).
- Concrete pours shall occur in contained areas
- Portable toilets and sanitary facilities will be provided for site use.

- Plant will be re-fuelled away from watercourses.
- All site operatives will have immediate access to spill kits when machinery is being used.
- All construction to the south of the site and in close proximity is to be carried out in line with the Inland Fisheries Ireland 2016 Guidelines
- All manholes on site are to be water tight.

## 6.9 Drainage and Water Quality

- The works shall be planned and executed in accordance with Environmental Protection Agency Guidelines.
- Wash water from on-site mixers or lorries shall be disposed of appropriately off site
- The contractor should ensure that operations do not give rise to the discharge of large quantities of dirty water into the watercourses. Measures must be in place to ensure that silt will not be allowed to enter the water system.
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- Concrete pours shall occur in contained areas
- Portable toilets and sanitary facilities will be provided for site use.
- Plant will be re-fuelled away from watercourses.
- All site operatives will have immediate access to spill kits when machinery is being used.

## 6.10 Noise Control Measures

- While increased levels of background noise are unavoidable during the demolition and construction phase of any project, measures will be implemented to reduce the number of noise-generating activities occurring concurrently.
- A copy of the EPA 'Guidance Note for Noise: License Applications, Surveys and Assessments in Relation to Scheduled Activities (NG4)' will be available on site for the duration of the works and will be referred to as required during the works.
- To mitigate potential noise disturbance to wintering birds it is proposed that demolition, ground, and earth works should avoid the wintering bird season which is October to April

## 6.11 Operational Phase

- All skips, truck and containers entering the site should be covered to prevent any materials falling into the SAC & SPA adjacent to the entrance road during transits.
- All manholes on site are to be water tight. To prevent any risk of pollution in the event of future flood risk.

## 7 ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY EFFECTS ON EUROPEAN SITES

Any likely direct or indirect effects of the proposed development, both alone and in combination with other plans and projects, on European Sites by virtue of the following criteria: size and scale, land-take, distance from the European Site or key features of the site, resource requirements, emissions, excavation requirements, transportation requirements and duration of construction and operation have been considered in this assessment.

### 7.1 Assessment with regard to each of the European Sites located within the Likely Zone of Impact

Table 7.1 provides the assessment with regard to each of the European Sites located within the Likely Zone of Impact. The Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) SAC and the Cummeen Strand SPA is within the Likely Zone of Impact.

**Table 7.1 Assessment of pathways for potential adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites within the Zone of Likely Impact of the Proposed Works**

European Site	Pathways for Direct Effects	Pathways for Indirect Effects	Potential for adverse effects on the European Site
Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) SAC Site code: 000278  The application site lies 67.8 meters from the SAC	There is no potential for direct effect on the Qualifying Interests of the European Site. The proposed works are entirely outside the boundary of the European Site.	It is also noted that given the close proximity to the SAC and its impacts cannot be ruled out during the operational phase of the proposed development, due the potential for materials and surface water runoff to enter into this Natura 2000 site.  Best practice and mitigation measures are outlined in section 6 of this report.	With the proposed mitigation in place as stated in section 6, there is no potential for impact on this European site. <b>No potential for adverse effect.</b>
Cummeen Strand SPA Site code: 004035  The application site lies 61 meters from the SPA	There is no potential for direct effect on the Qualifying Interests of the European Site. The proposed works are entirely outside the boundary of the European Site.	The proposed development involves the demolition of an existing warehouse on site. These demolition works could disturb and impact on the wintering bird species associated with the SPA. Therefore, mitigation measures must be implemented to block adverse impacts on Cummeen Strand SPA.  It is also noted that given the close proximity to the SPA and its impacts cannot be ruled out during the operational phase of the proposed development, due the potential for material and surface water runoff to enter into this Natura 2000 site.  Best practice and mitigation measures are outlined in section 6 of this report.	With the proposed mitigation in place as stated in section 6, there is no potential for impact on this European site. <b>No potential for adverse effect.</b>

## 8 LIKELY CUMULATIVE IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT ON EUROPEAN SITES, IN-COMBINATION WITH OTHER PLANS AND PROJECTS

The proposed development was considered in combination with other plans and projects in the area that could result in cumulative effects on European Sites.

The online planning system for Sligo County Council, was consulted on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June 2023. 7 other local planning applications granted within a 300m radius of the site in the past 5 years.

- 1) **PI Ref no – 17243:** development consisting of an increase in the amount of waste accepted annually from 25,000 tonnes to 50,000 tonnes; the acceptance of commercial and domestic non-hazardous wastes; the acceptance of household hazardous waste at the civic amenity area and commercial hazardous waste in the transfer building; the provision of additional waste receptacles in the civic amenity area and 3 no. secure hazardous waste storage containers in the south-eastern yard at its existing Materials Recovery Facility.
- 2) **PI Ref no – 18458:** Development consisting of the demolition of a cold store extension (217 sqm gross floor area) to the rear of existing mixed use building (1,426 sqm gross floor area) with elevation alterations including a new entrance, reconfigured existing entrance with new canopies over both, new window opes, and new exterior finishes to the mixed use building, site works to include reconfigured surface car park to front and rear of building with proposed total of 42 no. car park spaces and 20 no cycle spaces along with all associated site development and landscaping works.
- 3) **PI Ref no – 20267:** Development consisting of the material change of use from office use to medical clinic
- 4) **PI Ref no – 21186:** Development consisting of redevelopment at this site of our existing school. Part of the site is in the curtilage of the Ursuline Convent, a protected structure (FPS 43). The proposed development will consist of: - Demolition of ca. 1,556m<sup>2</sup> of existing additions, extensions and temporary accommodation buildings; - Construction of New 4,357 m<sup>2</sup> part 3-, and 2-, secondary school building, connected to existing 2006 2-storey extension and Sports Hall building which is to be reconfigured, upgraded and its roof replaced; - Demolition of ca. 341m<sup>2</sup> of additions and extensions adjoining historic buildings to be retained; - Refurbishment of and alterations to existing 1,506m<sup>2</sup> 1930 3-storey building with new lift extension and accessibility interventions; - Conservation works to existing 1860's Chapel and its repurposing as a music room; - Holding works for future use to 1860's building elements adjoining the Convent, a protected structure; - Holding works for future use to the 1860's building, which is proposed to return to being a stand-alone building after demolitions of additions and extensions thereto; - Separate staff car-park with vehicular access from existing northern gate to be modified and associated traffic works; - Upgrade to existing student vehicular drop-off, set-down and parking provisions to east; - Associated hard-surface play areas, landscaping, boundary treatments; - Associated surface water attenuation, foul and surface water drainage connections, site works and ancillary services; - Associated phased construction proposals to facilitate continuance of education provision during the works
- 5) **PI Ref no – 21386:** development consisting of a Sub-division of a part of unit 10 and change of use from light industrial to warehouse with the inclusion of ancillary trade counters (for the sale of building related products principally to trade) the remainder of the building will remain light industrial. Proposed works are as follows: internally the mezzanine level in the rear return will be removed. There would be trade counters inserted along with a proposed new access to the south of the unit. Externally and to the north of the building new bollards on "goods in" entrance; new mechanical plant area; on the south elevation new opening and access doors to service the trade counters and some levelling works along the footpath as well as remarking parking spaces to create a

" clear area" and disabled space to the south of the building; block up the entrance on the east elevation. Proposed signage on the south elevation. All other ancillary works to complete the development

- 6) **PI Ref no – 21471:** Development consisting of replacement of 2 no perimeter wall mounted flood lit signs with 2 no internally illuminated free standing podium signs on lands
- 7) **PI Ref no – 21473:** development consisting of change of use from warehouse to offices and clean room, floor area 1,080 sq.m. in existing factory. The development will include alterations to the north elevation to provide glazing

After the assessment of impacts was undertaken in Table 7.1, no pathways for effect were identified after the design and mitigation of the proposed project were identified when the project is considered individually. In the review of other plans and projects described above, no additional pathways for effect on European sites were identified as a result of those plans or projects. Neither was there any potential for additional effects resulting from the combination of the various projects and plans in association with the proposed development.

No potentially significant cumulative and/or in-combination pollution disturbance, displacement or habitat loss effects on any QI of any European Site have been identified with regard to the Proposed Development

## 9 CONCLUDING STATEMENT

### 9.1 Characteristics of the Site and Development

This report details the results of an Appropriate Assessment carried out for *“the demolition of existing single storey section to the front of the existing building, and construction of new replacement single storey extension, including all associated site development works and services (as previously granted under Planning Permission 19/1494).”* in Deepwater Quay, Sligo.

The site for the proposed development lies 67.8 meters west from Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) SAC 61.1 meters west from the Cummeen Strand SPA, it is not expected that the proposed development, will give rise to any direct impacts on the Natura 2000 sites in question.

a) *Is the project directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site?*

The project is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of any European Site.

b) *Cumulative Impact Assessment - Are there any other projects or plans that together with the project being assessed could affect the site?*

A search in relation to plans and projects that may have the potential to result in cumulative impacts on European sites was carried out as part of the Appropriate Assessment Process. As detailed above in section 7, the proposed development will have no individual or in-combination impacts on any European site in any regard.

### 9.2 Assessment of Significance of Effects

Describe how the project is likely to affect the Natura 2000 sites

- a) The project as planned will not adversely affect the integrity of any European site. During the assessment, pathways for potential significant indirect impacts/effects on Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) SAC and the Cummeen Strand SPA were identified in the form of disturbance. This report has provided an assessment of all potential pathways for direct impacts/effects and indirect impacts/effects on European Sites. Any identified potential pathways for impacts/effects are robustly blocked through the mitigation proposed, avoiding the potential for any adverse impacts via any of the pathways identified.
- b) Explain why these effects are not considered significant
- There will be no negative direct impacts or reduction in Annex I habitat area or Annex II species within any European Site.
  - There will be no reduction in key habitats supporting populations of Annex II species and no reduction in the populations of any Annex II species.

- Any potential pathways for impact have been blocked through good design, mitigation measures and a suitability assessment of the lands for development of this type.
- The works themselves will involve little disturbance or disruption to the ecological processes in the area during construction, operation or decommissioning.

### 9.3 Data Collected to Carry Out Assessment

In preparation of the report, the following sources were used to gather information:

- Review of NPWS Site Synopses and Conservation Objectives for European sites.
- Site Visit on 6<sup>th</sup> of June 2023.
- Desk study of relevant ecological information.

### 9.4 Concluding Statement

With the implementation of the best practice and mitigation measures described in section 6 of this report, it is not expected that the proposed development will give rise to any direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) SAC and the Cummeen Strand SPA that all construction works are to be carried out in a manner that prevents and blocks any contaminants entering into the Garavogue River.

- To mitigate potential noise disturbance to wintering birds it is proposed that demolition, ground, and earth works should avoid the wintering bird season which is October to April
- All skips, truck and containers entering the site should be covered to prevent any materials falling into the SAC & SPA adjacent to the entrance road during transits.
- All construction to the south of the site and in close proximity is to be carried out in line with the Inland Fisheries Ireland 2016 Guidelines
- All manholes on site are to be water tight.

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