

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

McCarthy Keville O'Sullivan Ltd. (MKO) has been appointed to provide the information necessary to allow the competent authority to conduct an Article 6(3) Appropriate Assessment of the proposed residential development of 74 no. units on lands at Cairns Road, Co. Sligo.

An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been prepared and is provided in Appendix 1 to this NIS. This Article 6(3) Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has identified the European Sites upon which the proposed development has the potential to result in significant effects and the pathways by which those effects may occur. It has also identified those qualifying interests/special conservation interests that have the potential to be affected by 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), European Communities (2018) Managing Natura 2000 Sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg. European Commission and the Department of the Environment's Guidance on the Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland (December 2009, amended February 2010).

In addition to the guidelines referenced above, the following relevant guidance was considered in preparation of this report:

1. *European Communities (2000) Managing Natura 2000 Sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg. European Commission,*
2. *EC (2007) Guidance document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitats Directive' 92/43/EEC – Clarification of the concepts of: alternative solutions, imperative reasons of overriding public interest, compensatory measures, overall coherence, opinion of the commission. European Commission.*
3. *EC (2013) Interpretation Manual of European Union Habitats. Version EUR 28. European Commission.*
4. *CIEEM (2018) Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment.*
5. *EC (2021) Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC.*

## 1.2 Statement of Authority

Baseline ecological surveys and bird surveys were undertaken on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022 and 15<sup>th</sup> February 2022 by Rudraksh Gupta (BSc., MSc.) and Cathal Bergin (BSc.) of MKO. Rudraksh and Cathal have relevant academic qualifications and survey experience and are competent experts for the purposes of undertaking this assessment. This report has been prepared by Rudraksh Gupta (BSc., MSc.) and has been reviewed by Patrick Ellison (BSc., MSc., ACIEEM). Patrick has over 6 years' experience in professional ecological consultancy, management and assessment and is an Associate member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM).