



Appropriate Assessment Screening

Clones Urban Mobility Plan

Client: DBFL Consulting Engineers

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1. Introduction

Flynn Furney Environmental Consulting have been commissioned by DBFL Consulting Engineers to produce this report comprising information in support of screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) in line with the requirements of Article 6[3] of the EU Habitats Directive (EC 92/43/EEC) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora; the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010; and the European Union (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 as amended, in respect of the Draft Urban Mobility Plan for Clones Town, Co. Monagan.

This screening exercise aims to determine whether the proposed plan has the potential to significantly impact upon the conservation objectives and overall integrity of any Natura 2000 sites. This assessment is based upon a desk study carried out by suitably qualified ecologists.

The following definitions are used for the terms, “impact” and “effect”:

Impact – Actions resulting in changes to an ecological feature, e.g., the construction activities of a development removing a hedgerow.

Effect – Outcome to an ecological feature from an impact, e.g., the effects on an animal population from loss of a hedgerow.

The Competent Authority, in this case Monaghan County Council, is obliged to examine the likely significant effects individually or in combination, of the proposed development on European Designated Sites in light of their specific Qualifying Interests (QIs) and Conservation Objectives (COs). If AA screening determines that there is likely to be significant effects on one or more of these sites, or the impacts are uncertain, then full AA must be carried out for the proposed development, including the compilation of a Natura Impact Statement to inform the decision making.

For the purposes of this assessment, a “significant effect” is:

“...an effect that either supports or undermines biodiversity conservation objectives for ‘important ecological features’ ... or for biodiversity in general. Conservation objectives may be specific (e.g., for a designated site) or broad (e.g., national/local nature conservation policy) or more wide-ranging (enhancement of biodiversity).

Effects can be considered significant at a wide range of scales from international to local. A significant effect is an effect that is sufficiently important to require assessment and reporting so that the decision maker is adequately informed of the environmental consequences of permitting a project.

In broad terms, significant effects encompass impacts on structure and function of defined sites, habitats or ecosystems and the conservation status of habitats and species (including extent, abundance and distribution).”

- CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland (2018)

Sections 4 and 5 of the report comprises the AA Screening that specifically focuses on the potential for impacts on Natura 2000 sites deemed to be at risk from the proposed development.

1.1 Statement of Authority

This screening for Appropriate Assessment has been carried out by Dr Deborah McCormick from Flynn Furney Environmental Consultants. Deborah has a BSc (Hons) in Zoology and a PhD in Ecology from University College Cork; she has over 15 years of consultancy experience, specialising in freshwater habitat assessment and fisheries surveying, as well as Appropriate Assessment and Ecological Impact Assessment.

2. Background to Screening for Appropriate Assessment

2.1. European Designated Sites

Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are prime wildlife conservation areas in the country, considered to be important on a European as well as Irish level. SPAs and SACs are designated under EU Birds and Habitats Directives, transposed into Irish law by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011), as amended. Together these two designated site types for the Natura 2000 network; it is these sites that are of relevance to the Appropriate Assessment process.

All European Designated Sites (henceforth simply referred to as “Designated Sites”) that are connected to the proposed development were considered during the desktop study in order to assess the potential for significant effects upon their QIs and COs. This stage of the process is used to determine whether any of the Designated Sites can be regarded as not being relevant to the process of Appropriate Assessment of the project, having no potential to be significantly affected.

2.2. Legislative Context

The methodology for this screening statement is clearly set out in a document prepared for the Environment DG of the European Commission entitled ‘Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6 paragraphs 3 and 4 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC’ (Oxford Brookes University, 2001). This report and contributory fieldwork were carried out in accordance with guidelines given by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2009, amended February 2010).

The assessment process is given in Articles 6[3] and 6[4] of the Habitats Directive and is commonly referred to as “Appropriate Assessment” or AA.

Article 6 of the Habitats Directive sets out provisions which govern the conservation and management of Natura 2000 sites. Article 6[3] and 6[4] of the Habitats Directive set out the decision-making tests for plans and projects likely to affect Natura 2000 sites (Annex 1.1). Article 6[3] establishes the requirement for Appropriate Assessment:

“Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the [Natura 2000] site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, shall be subjected to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implication 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.”

Article 6[4] continues:

“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 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.

It is the responsibility of the proponent of the plan or project to provide the relevant information (ecological surveys, research, analysis etc.) for submission to the ‘competent national authority’. If satisfied that the information is complete and objective, the competent authority will use this information to screen the project, i.e. to determine if an AA is required and to carry out the AA, if one is deemed necessary. The competent authority shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned.”

The appropriate assessment process has four stages. Each stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required. If, for example, the conclusions at the end of Stage One are that there will be no significant impacts on the Natura 2000 site, there is no requirement to proceed further. The four stages are:

1. Screening to determine if an appropriate assessment is required.
2. Appropriate Assessment
3. Consideration of alternative solutions
4. Imperative reasons of overriding public interest/derogation.

Stage 1: Screening for AA

This report provides a stage one Screening for Appropriate Assessment. It aims to establish whether the plan or project is directly connected with or necessary to the management of Designated Sites; or in view of best scientific knowledge, if the plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans or

projects, is likely to have a significant effect on a Designated Site. This is done by examining the proposed plan or project and the COs of any Designated Sites that might potentially be affected.

The study is based on a preliminary impact assessment using both publicly available data and data collected during site surveys. This is followed by a determination of whether there is a risk that the effects identified could significantly impact any Natura 2000 sites, and if so an Appropriate Assessment (AA) is required. The need to apply the precautionary principle in making any key decisions in relation to the tests of AA has been confirmed by European Court of Justice case law. Therefore, where significant effects are likely, possible or uncertain at screening stage, a stage two AA will be required.

2.3 Relevant Case Law

The European Court of Justice has a considerable body of case law relating to the application of Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Directive; Table 1 below provides some of the rulings relevant to the current assessment.

Table 1 Relevant case-law from the European Court of Justice

Case	Ruling
People Over Wind and Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta (C-323/17)	The ruling of the CJEU in this case requires that any conclusion of ‘no Likely Significant Effect’ on a European site must be made prior to any consideration of measures to avoid or reduce harm to the European site. The determination of Likely Significant Effects should not, in the opinion of the CJEU, constitute an attempt at detailed technical analyses. This should be conducted as part of the AA.
Waddenzee (C-127/02)	The ruling in this case clarified that AA must be conducted using best scientific knowledge, and that there must be no reasonable scientific doubt in the conclusions drawn. The Waddenzee ruling also provided clarity on the definition of ‘significant effect’, which would be any effect from a plan or project which is likely to undermine the conservation objectives of any European site.
Holohan and Others v An Bord Pleanála (C-461/17)	The conclusions of the Court in this case were that consideration must be given during AA to:

	<p><i>effects on qualifying habitats and/or species of a SAC or SPA, even when occurring outside of the boundary of a European site, if these are relevant to the site meeting its conservation objectives; and,</i></p> <p>effects on non-qualifying habitats and/or species on which the qualifying habitats and/or species depend, and which could result in adverse effects on the integrity of the European site.</p>
T.C Briels and Others v Minister van Infrastructuur en Milieu (C-521/12)	The ruling of the ECJ in this case determined that compensatory measures cannot be used to support a conclusion of no adverse effect on site integrity.
Eco Advocay CLG v An Bord Pleanála (C-721/21)	The ruling (preliminary) of the ECJ in this case related to a number of questions, regarding the requirement of the state to transparently state its reasoning when screening a project out at Stage 1, and importantly also the ability to consider mitigation that was built-in to the design of a project, i.e., ‘best practice’ to be considered at Stage 1 screening of a project.

3. Methodology

3.1. Desk Study

A desktop study was carried out as part of this screening process to gain an understanding of the surrounding human and natural environments. This included a review of available data from a range of sources on the site and its immediate environs.

The following sources of data were employed:

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Appropriate Assessment Tool.
- EPA Maps (to identify watercourses, hydrology and Natura 2000 site boundaries).
- NPWS protected species database and online mapping.
- The Geological Survey of Ireland hydrological and lidar data and map viewer
- The National Biodiversity Data Centre
- Inland Fisheries Ireland
- An Bord Pleanála’s online database

3.2. SPR Model

This assessment was carried out using the source-pathway-receptor (SPR) approach, a standard tool in environmental assessment. The SPR concept in ecological impact assessment relates to the idea that for the risk of an impact to occur, a source is needed (e.g., a development site); an environmental receptor is

present (a lake); and finally, there must a pathway between the source and the receptor (a watercourse linking the development site to the lake). Even though there might be a risk of an impact occurring, it does not necessarily mean that it will occur, and in the event that it does occur, it may not have significant effects on the receiving environment. Identification of a risk means that there is a possibility of ecological or environmental damage occurring, with the level and significance of the impact depending upon the nature and exposure to the risk and the characteristics of the receptor.

In this instance, the most relevant receptors are any relevant Natura 2000 sites with connectivity of the proposed works. These were considered during the desktop study stage of this screening assessment in order to assess the potential for significant effects upon their QIs and COs.

Establishment of the Zone of Influence of the project was evaluated following guidelines from the National Roads Authority (NRA, 2009) and CIEEM (2019). During the initial scoping of this report, a 15 km ZoI was applied for impact assessment. A conservative approach has been used, which minimises the risk of overlooking distant or obscure effect pathways, while also avoiding reliance on buffer zones within which all European sites should be considered. This approach assesses the complete list of all QIs/SCIs of European sites in Ireland (i.e., potential receptors), instead of listing European sites within buffer zones. This follows Irish departmental guidance on AA (DEHLG, 2010) which states:

'For projects, the distance could be much less than 15 km, and in some cases less than 100m, but this must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with reference to the nature, size and location of the project, and the sensitivities of the ecological receptors, and the potential for in combination effects.'

3.3 Screening Methodology

As discussed in Section 2.2, the methodology for this screening statement followed guidelines published by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2009, amended February 2010) in the document *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities*.

4. Screening of Designated Sites

4.1. Receiving Environment

The project lies within the town of Clones, Co. Monaghan, within 2km of the border with Co. Fermanagh in Northern Ireland. The surrounding landscape is dominated by a mosaic of farmland, predominately improved grassland. A network of small streams and rivers connects a series of lake clusters, several of which have important conservation value. The most significant watercourses in the vicinity of the proposal are the Lackey River, flowing north-south to the west of the town, and the Finn River, which flows northeast-southwest to the south. Both rivers are impacted in the vicinity of the town, with a water quality of Moderate under the most recent WFD assessments and are classed as being At Risk. The most significant pressure facing the river systems is diffuse and point runoff from intensive agriculture in the region. The river systems drain into *Lough Oughter and Associated Loughs SAC*, approximately 10km to the southwest of the town (Figure 1).

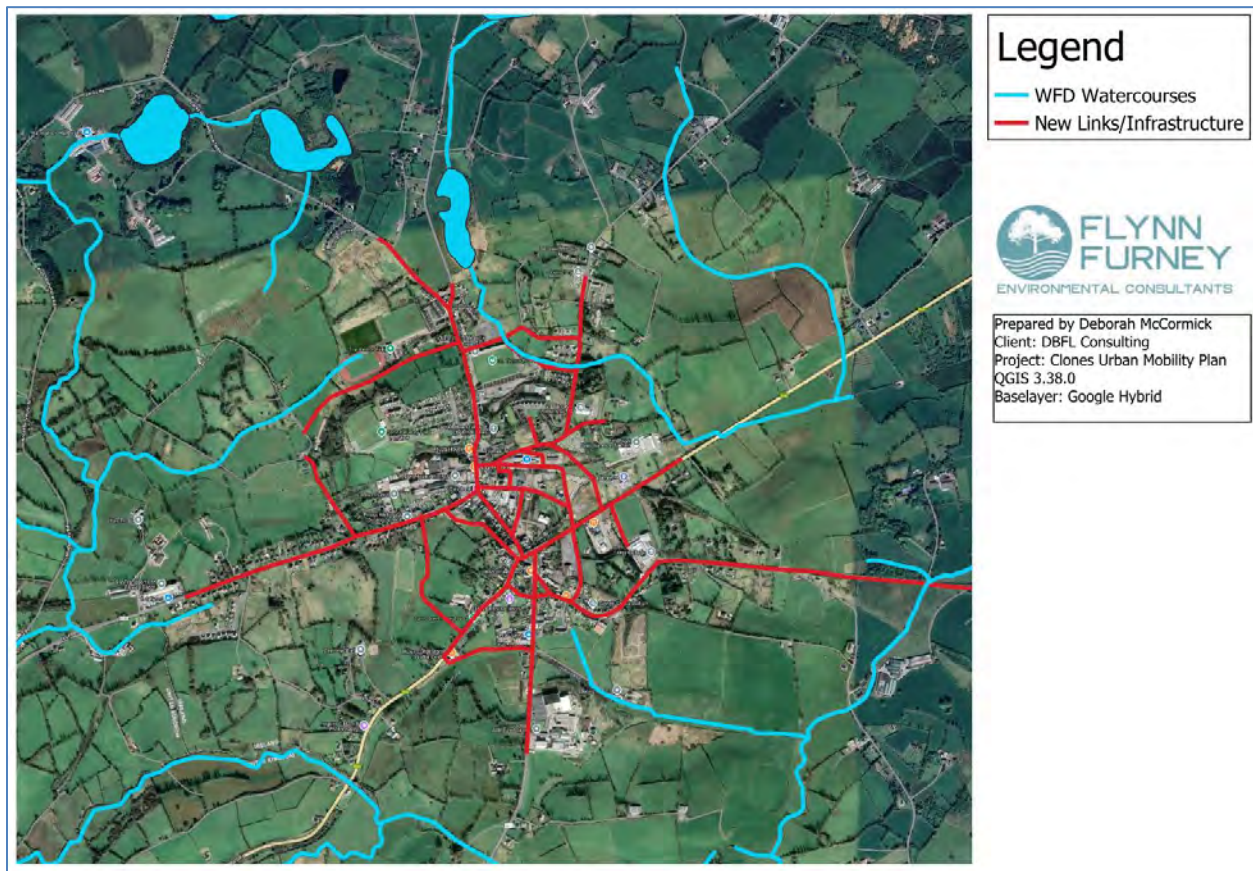


Figure 1 Overview of the works area

4.3. Proposed Works

4.3.1 Active Travel and Transport Options Development

4.3.1.1 Overview

During the preparation of the Urban Mobility Plan for Clones Town, the existing active travel network within the study area was assessed, revealing that overall pedestrians are adequately served with footpaths along the majority of streets in urban areas, but that there was a lack of designated cycling infrastructure in the town. Chapter 12 of the Plan presents a Development Plan incorporating the consideration of a number of key components, namely:

- The key origins and destinations within the town (outlined in **Chapter 3.3** of the Plan)
- Existing transport infrastructure (outlined in **Chapter 3.4**)
- The already proposed or underway active travel and infrastructure schemes within the town (listed in **Chapter 3.4** above, and outlined in **Chapter 4** of the Plan)
- SWOT Analysis (**Chapter 11** of the Plan)

The Development Plan comprises three main areas:

- **The Active Travel Network:** It focuses on identifying key areas and routes where establishing a high-quality active travel network is deemed essential.
- **Potential Off-street Car Parking Locations:** This part presents a range of potential locations identified for off-street car parking facilities. These facilities aim to alleviate on-road space and facilitate the implementation of new or improved active travel infrastructure.
- **Proposed Bus Stop Enhancements:** This section proposes enhancements to the bus stop infrastructure that is currently lacking, aiming to improve public transport accessibility.

4.3.1.2 Active Travel Network

Based on the information discussed within the Urban Mobility Plan, a high-level Active Travel Network has been identified. It comprises a network hierarchy based upon estimated demand and end user demographic.

It considers the implementation of improved active travel infrastructure across the existing transport network but also considers the utilisation of zoned lands to achieve a comprehensive active travel network introducing improved linkages. The proposed high level active travel network is presented in **Figure 2** below. This proposed network aims to prioritise dedicated infrastructure at those locations where there are expected to be more vulnerable road users (i.e. school children) via the primary routes. While the Plan is a high level, it provides a preferred infrastructure arrangement to guide future active travel schemes where more detailed design can be undertaken.

The high-level infrastructure arrangement comprises the following:

- **Primary Route:** Dedicated pedestrian and cycle infrastructure segregated from vehicular traffic – these are generally proposed along key school routes.
- **Secondary Route:** Lower grade infrastructure (e.g. shared/lower width) pedestrian and cycle facilities segregated from vehicular traffic. These routes are proposed along routes where it is envisioned to be less demand and fewer vulnerable users.
- **Traffic Calming Routes:** Dedicated pedestrian facilities with cyclists sharing the carriageway with vehicular traffic with the introduction of traffic calming measures. These routes are proposed where there is predicted to be little demand and/or no physical potential for the incorporation of improved active travel infrastructure.
- **Retain existing arrangement:** This is for locations where negligible demand is envisioned or where infrastructure cannot be implemented.

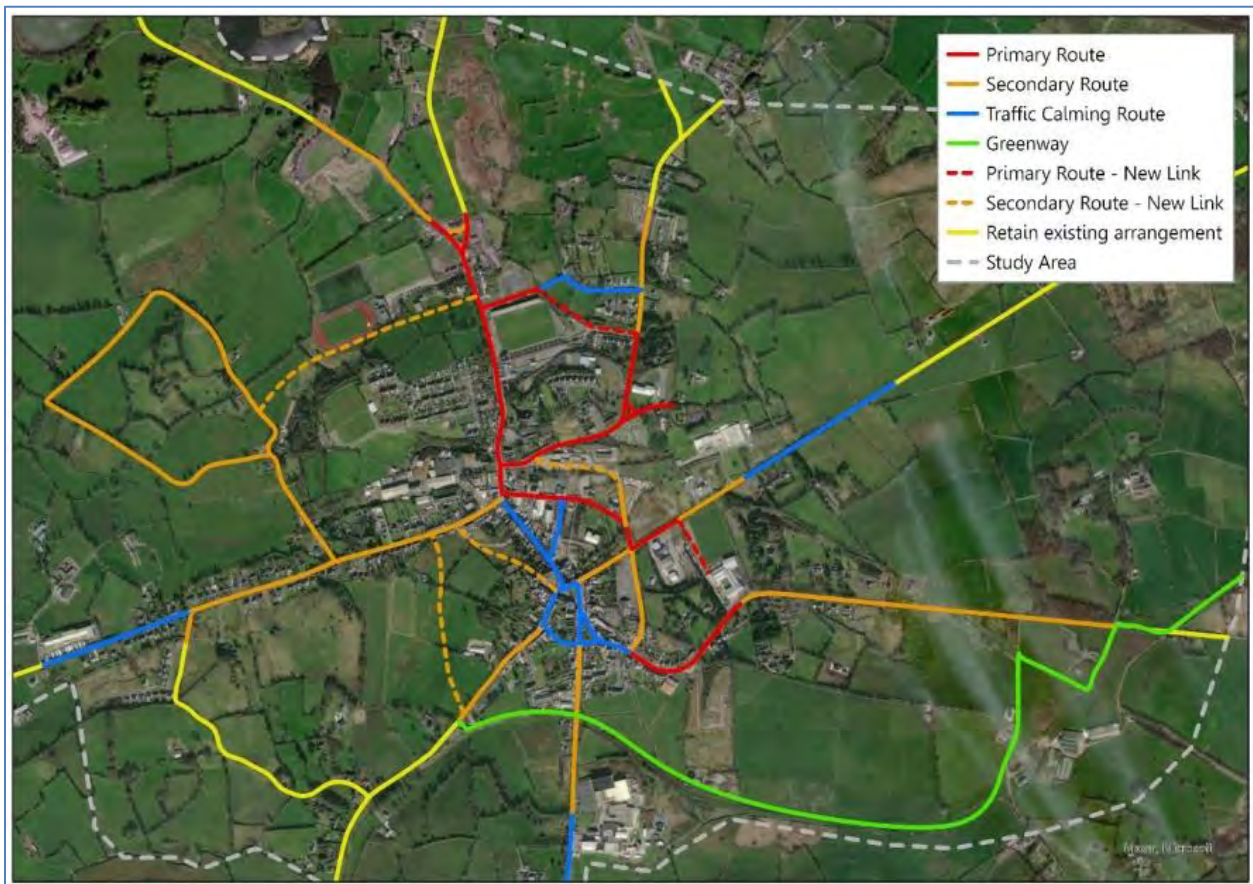


Figure 2 High-level Active Travel Network

The active travel network is very much aimed at serving the existing population and key origins and destinations within Clones Town. Significant lands within the study area boundary are zoned for development, encompassing residential, industry/enterprise/employment, community services and recreation, as illustrated in **Figure 3**.

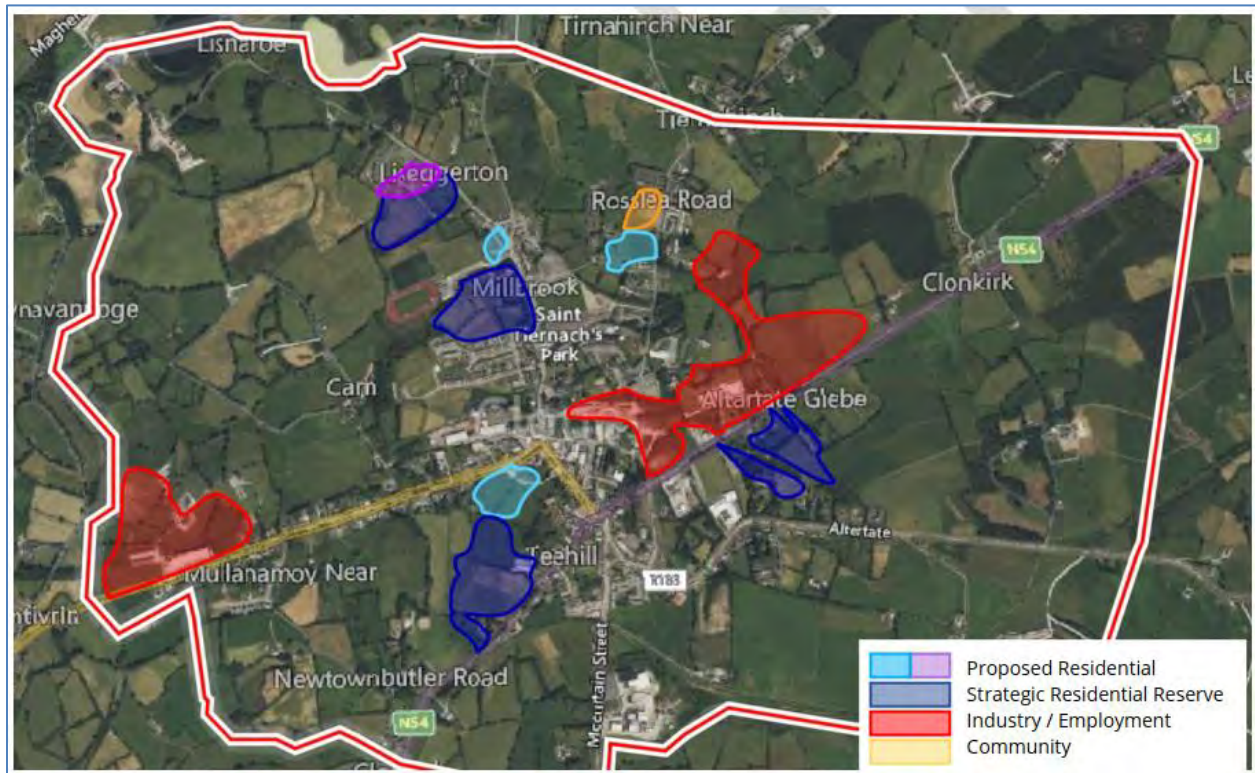


Figure 3 Key Land Use Zoning

4.3.1.3 Potential off-street car parking locations and bicycle parking locations

Chapter 3.4 of the Plan identified several locations where informal parking is present, with cars often obstructing footpaths. The SWOT Analysis identified potential locations for the introduction of off-street car parking facilities to alleviate inappropriate parking practices and create space for the implementation of new or improved active travel infrastructure. The proposed streets where on-street parking could be banned, and the locations of these off-street parking facilities is depicted in **Figure 4**.

This figure also distinguishes those locations that could serve as Park & Stride for the schools. These areas would allow parents to drop off/collect children at a location away from the school grounds thereby minimising vehicular traffic in the vicinity of the school entry points.

The existing Roslea Road Car Park could serve St. Tiernach's Primary School and Gaelscoil Eois, while a portion of lands within a site on Analore Street could serve Largy College and act as a parking facility for residential properties along here.



Figure 4 Proposed off-street car parking and Park & Stride locations

Regarding cycle parking, the Plan identified the current car parking locations within Clones. The following locations are proposed to incorporate cycle parking facilities, as outlined in Figure 5.

1. O'Neill Park/Carn View/Carron Heights residential estate
2. St. Tiernach's Park
3. Scoil Eois
4. Fitzpatrick Square, as a cycle facility for the north side of Fermanagh Street
5. Diamond south, near the Clones Credit Union Car Park
6. Largy College
7. Ulster Canal Visitor Centre



Figure 5 Proposed cycle parking locations

4.3.1.4 Proposed Bus Stop Enhancements

There are four bus stops in Clones Town Centre of which only one, located on 98th Avenue, has adequate bus stop infrastructure. It is proposed to improve the infrastructure of the other three bus stops in the Town Centre (**Figure 6**). This enhancement would include installing bus stop poles with flags and carousels as well as a designated hardstanding area for passengers to wait safely. Such improvements would bring several benefits to the community, including:

- Improved visibility: Bus stop poles act as visual markers, making it easier for both bus drivers and passengers to identify designated stops.
- Enhanced safety: Clearly marked bus stops with poles can help improve safety for passengers waiting for buses, as it reduces the likelihood of confusion or accidental waiting in unsafe locations.
- Increased accessibility: Bus stop poles can include signage indicating the bus route numbers and destinations, making it easier for passengers to navigate the transit system, particularly for newcomers or visitors to the area.

- Promotion of public transit usage: Clearly marked bus stops can serve as a visual reminder of the availability of public transportation, potentially encouraging more people to use buses instead of personal vehicles, thus reducing traffic congestion and environmental impact.
- Tourism and visitor experience: For towns with tourist attractions or visitors, clearly marked bus stops can enhance the overall experience for tourists, making it easier for them to navigate the area and access popular destinations.



Figure 6 Proposed Bus Stop infrastructure

4.3.2 Proposed Urban Mobility Plan Implementation

A phased implementation of the subject Urban Mobility Plan is proposed. It is recommended that the identified primary routes and traffic calming routes are progressed in the early phases and the secondary routes later. For the purposes of this high-level strategy, the identified proposals have been categorised into short-, medium- and long-term delivery.

With the aim of identifying sections of the network to be implemented within each phase, the network has been broken up into sections with each section given a unique ID as presented in **Figure 7** below. Whilst this study is at a high level and therefore does not comprise detailed design of active travel infrastructure, a description of the nature of infrastructure that is recommended on each section of the network has been summarised in **Table 2** and **Table 3** for the short-, medium- and long-term proposals respectively and depicted in **Figure 8** below.



Table 2 Proposed Active Travel Network Implementation - Short-/Medium-term proposals

Link ID / Location	Description
1a	Dedicated pedestrian and cycle infrastructure between the N54 / 98 th Ave junction and a proposed new non-vehicular access to Largy College
P1	New non-vehicular access to Largy College from the N54
9d	Dedicated pedestrian and cycle infrastructure along 98 th Avenue
4a	Dedicated pedestrian and cycle infrastructure between Creighton's Hotel junction and Roslea Road junction
2a, 2b	Dedicated pedestrian and cycle infrastructure along Roslea Road between Church Hill junction and St. Tiernach's Primary School and Gaelscoil Eois. This includes a park and ride facility along this section.
4b	Dedicated pedestrian and cycle infrastructure along Church Hill between the Roslea Road junction and O'Neill Park.
Ped Infrastructure improvements	This includes improved pedestrian infrastructure and crossing points at the locations identified in Section 9.4.2. Analore Street, Roslea Rd / Church Hill junction and Town Centre junctions.
4c	Dedicated pedestrian and cycle infrastructure along Church Hill between O'Neill Park and St. Tiernach's Park. This includes the section in the vicinity of St. Tiernach's Park that is included in a Part VIII planning application for improved pedestrian facilities. The proposals could be built upon to incorporate dedicated cycle infrastructure.
10c,10d,10e,10f, 10h	Improvements in the Town Centre area comprising proposals included in two Part VIII schemes in the Diamond and Ball Alley/Abbey Street. These include improved pedestrian infrastructure including crossings, new/improved footpaths and traffic calming measures.
8a	Traffic calming along Analore Street
8b	Dedicated pedestrian and cycle infrastructure along Newbliss Road between the O'Duffy Street junction and Largy College
P6	Dedicated pedestrian and cycle infrastructure along the northern boundary of St. Tiernach's Park and a new non-vehicular link to Roslea Road at a location immediately to the north of Largy Court
2c	Dedicated pedestrian and cycle infrastructure along Roslea Road between the new P6 link and St. Tiernach's Primary School and Gaelscoil Eois
4d, 4e, 4f	Dedicated pedestrian and cycle infrastructure to the Peace Link and residential settlements Eanaigh Ealta, Cherry Park and An Tuachtariann.
9a	Shared ped / cycle facilities along O'Duffy Street.
P9	Segregated pedestrian / cycle facilities between Roslea Road and the N54. Includes a traffic calming feature on the N54
Bus Stops	Bus Stop Enhancements identified
P7,P8	Pedestrian / cycle facilities providing permeable links.

Table 3 Proposed Active Travel Network Implementation - Long term proposals

Link ID / Location	Description
3a	Traffic calming measures along River Lane.
2d, 2e	Pedestrian / cycle facilities along Roslea Road as far north as Clonkeencole.
4g	Pedestrian / cycle facilities along Roslea Road as far as the Lios A Ghoirtin residential settlement.
P2	New pedestrian /cycle connectivity between 98 th Avenue and the Roslea Road
P5	A new non-vehicular link between the Carn Lane walk to Millbrook Upper via (adjacent to) The Peace Link
10a	Pedestrian / cycle facilities along N54 between 98 th Avenue junction and The Diamond
10b	Traffic calmed link between 98 th Avenue and Fermanagh Street
Ulster Canal Greenway	Section between Newbliss Road and the N54
8c	Pedestrian / cycle facilities along the Newbliss Road between Largy College and the proposed Ulster Canal Greenway.
7a	Pedestrian / cycle facilities along the Scotshouse Road between the Ball Alley junction and ABP Foods.
7c	Traffic calming measures along Scotshouse Road.
6a	Pedestrian / cycle facilities along the N54 between the Ball Alley junction and the Ulster Canal Greenway tie-in on the N54.
P4	A new non-vehicular link between the N54 to Newtownbutler Road via zoned residential lands
5a, 5c	Pedestrian / cycle facilities along the Newtownbutler Road
1b	Pedestrian / cycle facilities along the N54 between the proposed new non-vehicular link to Largy College and Feldhues and then traffic calming measures as far as the 50kph demarcation.
5d	Traffic calming measures along Scotshouse Road.
5b	Upgrade section of Carn Lane between Newtownbutler Road the proposed new non-vehicular link to Millbrook Upper (P5).
P3	A new non-vehicular link between the N54 to Newtownbutler Road via zoned part residential lands / part Landscape Protection/Conservation.

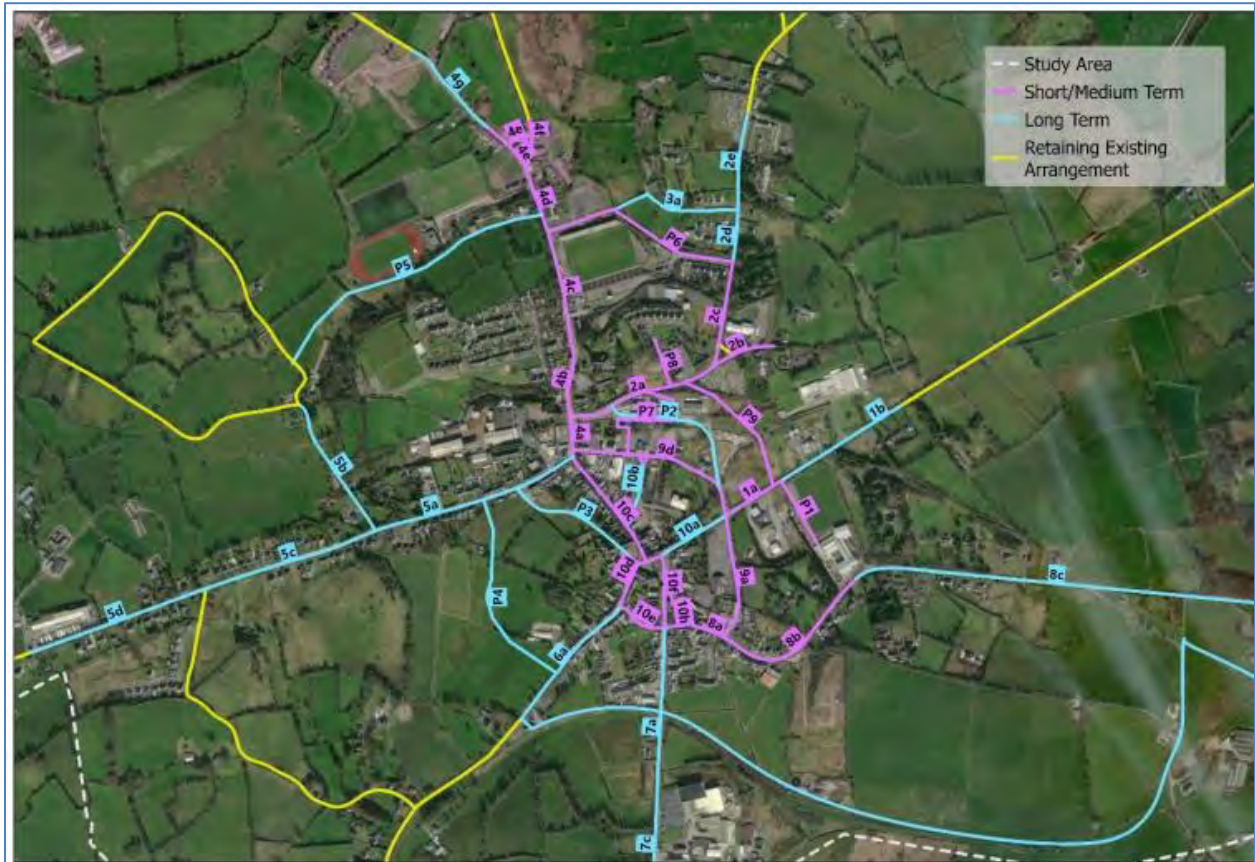


Figure 8 Proposed Active Travel Network Implementation - Short-/Medium- and Long-term proposals

4.4. Nearby Designated Sites

All sites within 15km of the proposed works were initially considered as part of this screening exercise, as well as those with any hydrological linkages beyond that radius were considered as part of this screening. Following the methodology given above in Section 3.2, the relevant sites are considered below in Figure 10 and Table 4.

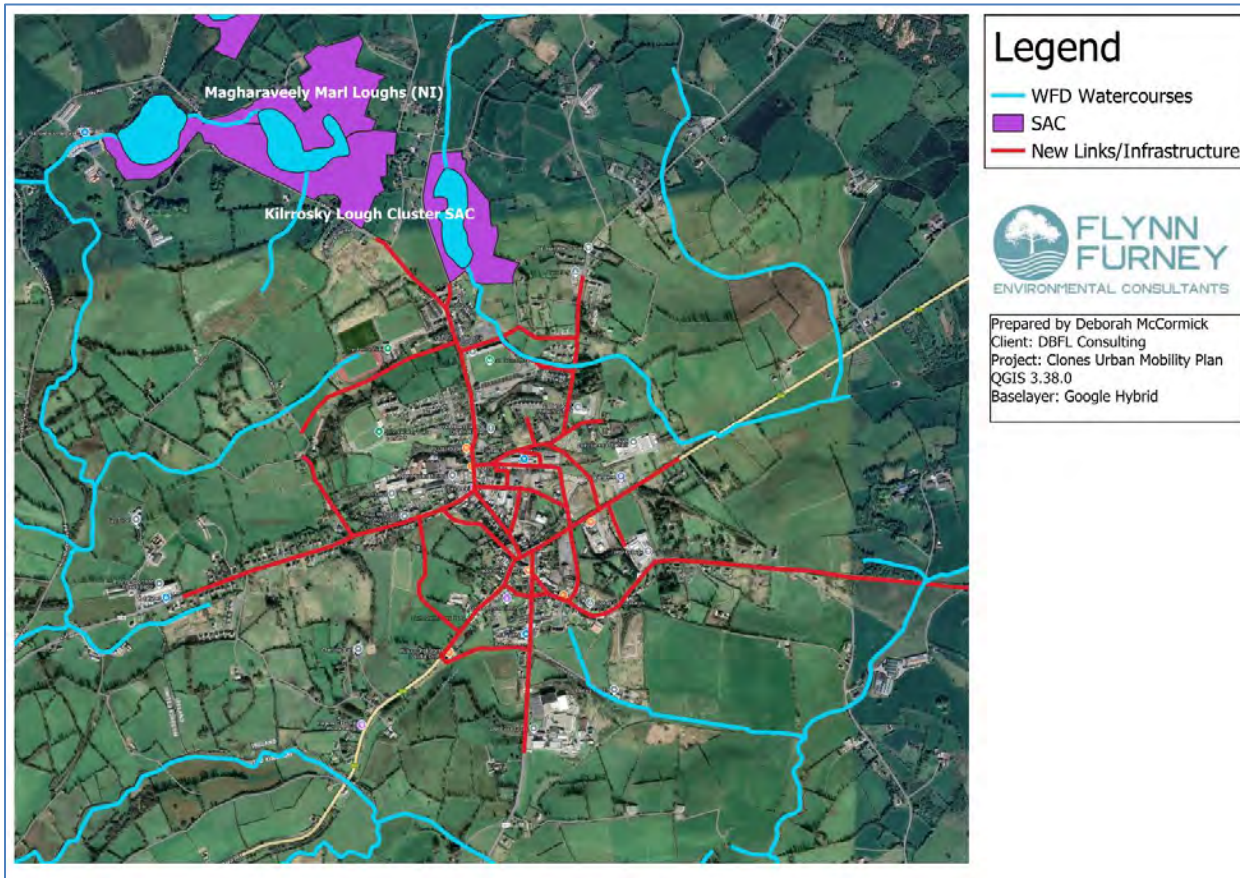


Figure 9 Natura 2000 sites in the vicinity of the proposed works

Table 4 Assessment of Natura 2000 sites within the zone of influence of the proposed works. Distance is overland unless denoted with a *, in which case it is hydrological.

Site	Distance (km)	Qualifying Interests	Screening Assessment	Potential for significant impact
Kilroosky Lough Cluster SAC	0.05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp. [3140] • Calcareous fens with Cladium mariscus and species of the Caricion davallianae [7210] • Alkaline fens [7230] • Austropotamobius pallipes (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092] 	The European Site is located within 50m of the proposed works but is not hydrologically connected to it via surface waters. A part of the proposal includes plans for the extension of cycle facilities to Cherry Park at the north end of Millbrook Upper. This is just to the south of a part of the SAC, an area of wetland (marked as Ramage Lough) on some maps, that is currently in succession having been almost completely overgrown with Phragmites and Salix spp. This area holds none of the qualifying habitats for which the SAC is designated, due to its overgrowth, and additionally the proposal lies entirely downstream from the connecting watercourse, the Tirganach stream, which drains the wetland area and runs through the town a short distance to the southeast. Additionally, the proposed works in this area are likely to be small of scale, constrained within the existing road/drainage footprint and are well buffered from the wetland area by urban infrastructure. No impacts are predicted due to the nature and scale of the works, the nature of the qualifying interests and the lack of surface water connectivity.	No

5. ARTICLE 6(3) SCREENING ASSESSMENT

This section of the report focuses solely on the potential for the proposed works to impact upon Natura 2000 sites. The European Commission has set guidelines for the assessment of a project's potential to impact on a designated site (EC, 2001). The consideration of this project in this context is detailed below. The following sites are under consideration in this statement:

- *Kilroosky Lough Cluster SAC*

5.1 Article 6(3) Assessment Criteria

Description of the individual elements of the project likely to give rise to impacts on the Natura 2000 sites.

Given the nature of the proposed works in the context of the European sites in question the principal risks posed by a project of this type are related to surface water contamination from construction works entering hydrologically linked watercourses and affecting the water quality of the receiving sites. The proposed works area is not hydrologically linked with any European Site; any emissions from construction will be entirely constrained within the existing drainage network of the wider urban environment and will be small of scale. The works area does not contain any habitat suitable for any SCI species for which *Kilroosky Lough Cluster SAC* is designated.

No elements of this project are considered to be likely to give rise to impacts on any European Site.

5.1.1 Description of any likely direct, indirect, or secondary impacts of the project on the Natura2000 sites

Any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the proposed works, both alone and in-combination with other plans or projects, on the designated sites by virtue of the following criteria: size and scale, land take, distance from the Natura 2000 site or key feature thereof, resource requirements, emissions, excavation requirements, transportation requirements and duration of construction, operational and decommissioning phases of the works are detailed in the table below (Table 5).

Table 5 Assessment of likely impacts on any European Site.

Assessment of Likely Impacts	
Size and scale	The proposed works footprint is spread out across the urban footprint of Clones Town, but the actual works area is small of scale relative to any European site.
Landtake	No works take place within any European Site.
Distance from Natura 2000 site or key features of the site	The closest sites are within 50m but are not linked hydrologically
Resource requirements	No materials for construction will be sourced from within any Natura 2000 site. No water will be abstracted from the site during the construction or operation of the site.
Emissions	No other emissions to air or water other than those associated with a small construction project are likely, and none that will impact on any Natura 2000 site. No instream works are necessary as part of this Plan
Excavation requirements	No excavation of material or landscaping will take place within the boundary of any European site.
Transportation requirements	No access requirements are necessary for the proposed projects that will impact upon any Natura 2000 site.
Duration of construction, operation, decommissioning	As yet unknown
Timing of works	As yet unknown
Cumulative or In-combination Impacts with other Projects and Plans	A search of Planning Permissions for the area within which the project is located did not indicate any plans for projects that are likely to lead to significant cumulative or in-combination impacts to any Natura 2000 sites, given the already intensively managed urban environment, and the lack of any pathway for impact.

5.1.2 Description of any Likely Changes to the Natura 2000 sites

Any likely changes to the Natura 2000 sites are described in the table below (Table 6) with reference to the following criteria: reduction of habitat area, disturbance to key species, habitat or species fragmentation, reduction in species density, changes in key indicators of conservation value and climate change.

Table 6 Likely changes to any European Site

Assessment of Likely Changes	
Reduction of habitat area	No works take place within any European Site.
Disturbance of key species	No species associated with any European site will be disturbed by the proposed works.

Habitat or species fragmentation	No habitat within any European site, or that any species associated with any European site will be fragmented.
Reduction in species density	No reduction in the density of any species associated with any European site will be reduced.
Changes in key indicators of conservation value	No impact on any key indicators of value associated with any Natura 2000 site is considered likely.
Climate change	No damage to any Natura 2000 site as a result of or in combination with enhanced climate change is predicted as a result of the proposed development.

5.1.3 Likelihood of interference with the key relationships that define the structure and functions of the Natura 2000 site as a whole.

It is considered that there will be no interference with the key relationships that define the structure and functions of any Natura 2000 site. As noted above, no changes in water quality or habitat that could impact any European Site are considered likely.

5.1.4 Indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects

Indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects are set out below in terms of loss, fragmentation, disruption, disturbance and changes to the key elements of the site (Table 7).

Table 7 Indicators of significance of impact to any European Site

Indicators of Significance	
Loss	No habitat will be lost as a result of the proposed works.
Fragmentation	No habitat fragmentation to any Natura 2000 sites is predicted.
Disruption	No risk of disruption to any Natura 2000 site is predicted, due to the nature and scale of the proposed works.
Disturbance	No risk of disturbance to any Natura 2000 site is predicted, due to the nature and scale of the proposed works.
Change to key elements of site (e.g., water quality etc.)	No potential for change to the key elements of any European site exists due to the scale, nature of, connectivity or distance to any European Site

5.1.5 Description of any likely significant impacts or indeterminate impacts of the project on the Natura 2000 site

Based on a consideration of the likely or potential impacts arising from the proposed works and a review of their significance in terms of the conservation interests of the European Sites named above, it is considered that the project does not have the potential to impact the European site significantly negatively.

6. Screening Conclusions

This report presents the information for the relevant authority, Monaghan County Council, to carry out a screening for AA. A recommendation that a stage II is/is not required is made below, based on the findings of this assessment. It is for the relevant authority to reach one of the following conclusions:

- (i) A stage II AA of the proposed development is required if it *cannot* be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not have a significant effect on any European Designated Sites.
- (ii) A stage II AA of the proposed development is not required if it *can* be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not have a significant effect on any European Designated Sites.

Name of project or plan: Urban Mobility Plan for Clones Town

Name and location of Natura 2000 sites:

- *Kilroosky Lough Cluster SAC*

Description of project or plan: A series of proposals aimed at improving the active travel infrastructure within Clones Town, creating off-street parking and enhancing bus stop infrastructure.

Is the project or plan directly connected with or necessary for the management of the site? The project is not directly connected with or necessary for the management of any Natura 2000 sites.

Are there other projects or plans that together with the project or plan being assessed could affect the site (provide details)? No plans or projects were found that are likely to lead to cumulative or in-combination impacts to any Natura 2000 site.

Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site:

No negative impacts on any Natura 2000 site are predicted.

In conclusion, no impacts are likely as a result of the proposed works on the conservation objectives or overall integrity of the above-named European Sites due to the scale and nature of the works, lack of connectivity or distance to any European site.

It is therefore recommended that Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not required, and the project is screened out.

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