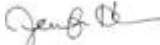


# Screening for Appropriate Assessment of the Castledermot Small Town Plan

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

This report comprises information in support of screening for an Appropriate Assessment in line with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora; the Planning and Development Act 2010; and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477/2011) of the Small Town Plan (STP) for Castledermot in Kildare categorised as a small town in the Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017. The report has taken into consideration: the European Commission's publication, *Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites - Methodological guidance on the provisions of Articles 6 (3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*; Circular Letter SEA 1/08 & NPWS 1/08 from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government; and *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Project in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities* (2010) from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

## 1.2 CASTLEDERMOT SMALL TOWN PLAN

The Kildare County Development Plan (CDP) 2011-2017 was prepared under the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000-2010 and came into effect on 2 May 2011. The adopted Plan underwent a detailed assessment of the impact of its implementation on the environment in accordance with the SEA Directive (2001/42/EEC). This Strategic Environmental Assessment is contained in Volume III of the CDP.

The CDP sets out the Core Strategy for the County for the period 2011-2017. The objectives and policies of Kildare County Council in respect of the physical planning are set out as well as the framework for coordinating the activities of the Council as service providers for, *inter alia* housing, sanitary services, roads, etc. The CDP designates smaller centres at the level of small town, rural settlement and rural nodes. Castledermot is designated within the Small Town category.

In these small towns local business will be promoted and retail will mainly be of a convenience nature to serve the town and its local catchment. These small towns will also provide services such as schools, health facilities and recreational facilities. In all cases, the level of growth in small towns is to be managed in line with the ability of local services to cater for this growth.

Variation no. 1 of the CDP 2011-2017 will be carried out incorporating detailed objectives for each town in the Small Town category. These objectives will replace the current Local Area Plans for each Small Town area once adopted. The variation will ensure that land use objectives within each town are consistent with the Core Strategy of the CDP.

## 1.3 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

The Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, better known as "The Habitats Directive", provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. Articles 3 to 9 provide the legislative means to protect habitats and species of Community interest through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of sites known as Natura 2000. These are Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (79/409/ECC).

Articles 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 (AA):

*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 or 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 implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.*

Article 6(4) states:

*If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the [Natura 2000] site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature, Member States 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.

## 1.4 STAGES OF THE APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

This Appropriate Assessment has been prepared in accordance with the European Commission Environment DG document *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*, referred to as the "EC Article 6 Guidance Document (EC2000)". The guidance within this document provides a non-mandatory methodology for carrying out assessments required under Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, and is viewed as an interpretation of the EU Commission's document *Managing Natura 2000 sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*, referred to as "MN2000".

This assessment has also taken into consideration the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government publication, *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Project in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities* (2010).

In complying with the obligations under Article 6(3) and following the EC2000 and MN2000 Guidelines, this AA has been structured as a stage by stage approach as follows:

### 1) Screening stage

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

- Screening conclusion.

## **2 SCREENING**

### **2.1 DESCRIPTION OF PLAN**

Castledermot is designated as a Small Town in the County Settlement Strategy as contained in Chapter 3 of the CDP. This STP consists of specific objectives and a land use map that will ensure the sustainable development of the town over the period of the STP. Once adopted, it will supersede the Castledermot LAP 2009. The development of Castledermot is governed by the overarching policies and objectives of the CDP, together with the relevant development management standards as outlined in Chapter 19.

Castledermot is located in the south of County Kildare on the old N9 National Primary Route. The town lies 32km from Kilcullen, 10km from Carlow Town and 11km from Athy. Castledermot originally developed as a religious centre, a role it still maintains today, but the main function of the town is as a service centre for its inhabitants and the large surrounding rural hinterland. Castledermot has also recently become a commuter centre for workers in Dublin and Carlow utilising the excellent links provided by the new M9 motorway.

The population of Castledermot was recorded as 773 persons in 1996. The town experienced population decline between 1996 and 2002 (population of 726 in 2002), but increased to 887 persons by the 2006 census. The County Settlement Strategy allocates 131 residential units to Castledermot over the lifetime of the CDP with a population target of 1,109 persons by the year 2017.

#### **Principles Governing Future Development of the Town**

Future development of Castledermot will take place in the context of the Core Strategy outline in Chapter 2 of the CDP 2011-2017. In this regard, the focus of new development will be on:

- Consolidating development within the town centre, followed by the sequential development of land/sites in a logical progression from the town centre to the edge of the development boundary of the town;
- Encouraging the re-use and redevelopment of underutilised, derelict and vacant sites throughout the town centre;
- Developing the town centre as the focal point for economic, cultural and social activity;
- Seeking the retention of the historic street pattern together with the retention of stone walls throughout the town;
- Protecting and preserving the quality of the landscape in Castledermot, including open space, and in particular natural, architectural and archaeological heritage; and
- Providing adequate recreational and community facilities.

### **2.2 EXISTING ENVIRONMENT AT THE STP LANDS**

The role of Castledermot today is one of a local service centre for its rural hinterland. The construction of the new M9 motorway to the west of the town has improved environmental conditions by relieving traffic congestion in the town. Between the years 2002-2009 there has been significant residential development (approx. 21.2ha) with many people commuting to work in Carlow, Naas, Newbridge and Dublin.

Castledermot is located within the medium landscape sensitivity area identified in Chapter 14 of the CDP, which is recognised as having the ability to accommodate development pressure but with limitations in the scale and magnitude.

### **2.2.1 Water Quality / Water Framework Directive**

Castledermot lies within the South Eastern River Basin District for which a River Basin Management Plan 2009-2015 has been prepared. The River Lerr flows through the town and is a tributary of the River Barrow. The Lerr waterbody is part of the Greese Lerr Water Management Unit. The overall status of this waterbody is “Moderate” with restoration to “Good Status” required by 2015. River water monitoring is carried out by the Council and other agencies for the purpose of implementing the Water Framework Directive. Policies in relation to the maintenance and improvement of water quality are set out at Section 7.6.2 of the CDP.

The River Lerr is a valuable amenity resource in the town and is also part of the River Barrow and River Nore Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (Site code 002162), and the Council is committed to protecting and enhancing this river. The Castledermot STP includes objectives for the protection and improvement of the River Lerr and its water quality. New development will not be permitted within the SAC boundary or a minimum of 10m from either side of the watercourse measured from the top of the bank. A buffer zone of 10m of vegetation shall be retained along the river bank to mitigate against pollution risks and maintain habitat.

Any development proposal within the vicinity of or potentially having an effect on a designated site (e.g. the River Lerr, which is designated under the River Barrow and River Nore SAC) will be subject to an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS).

### **2.2.2 Water Supply**

Water in Castledermot is supplied by Carlow County Council and is sufficient to cater for the present and future needs of the village.

### **2.2.3 Wastewater Facilities**

The existing sewerage network was upgraded to a population equivalent of 2,400 in 2005. It has sufficient capacity to cater for the needs of the town over the period of the plan.

### **2.2.4 Groundwater Protection**

Castledermot is situated in the New Ross groundwater waterbody. The overall status of this waterbody is “Good” and therefore must be protected. Castledermot is situated on a locally important aquifer with groundwater vulnerability in the area classified as High. The Geological Survey of Ireland has completed a Groundwater Protection Scheme for County Kildare. The overall aim of the groundwater protection scheme is to preserve the quality of groundwater, particularly for drinking water purposes, for the benefit of present and future generations. The scheme is not intended to have any statutory authority, but provides a framework for decision-making and guidelines for the Council in carrying out its functions.

### **2.2.5 Flood Protection and Management**

In accordance with Ministerial Guidelines “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities” (2009) flood risk management will be integrated into spatial planning policies. While there are no recorded flood events in the town, the plan will ensure that the

proposed landuse planning framework will be informed by a process of screening for flood risk and any further flood risk.

In order to reduce surface water run-off and to minimise the risk of flooding, the STP lands shall be required to be developed in accordance with Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) principles in compliance with the 'Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study'. This approach using SuDS can best be summarised as offering a "total" solution to rainwater management. Water is either infiltrated or conveyed more slowly to the drainage system and ultimately to water courses using for example permeable paving, swales, infiltration trench/blanket, soakways, green roofs, rain water harvesting, detention basins, ponds and wetlands. These facilities are designed to prevent pollution of streams and rivers and to slow down runoff from sites, thereby helping to prevent downstream flooding and improve water quality. A "treatment train" approach is required to mimic natural catchment processes as closely as possible. This strategy shall comprise of a series of features which incrementally reduce pollution, flow rates and volumes of runoff.

## 2.3 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE NATURA 2000 SITES

This section of the screening process describes the Natura 2000 sites within a 15km radius of the STP area. A 15km buffer zone has been chosen as a precautionary measure, to ensure that all potentially affected Natura 2000 sites are included in the screening process. This is in line with, *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities*, produced by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

**Table 2.1** lists the SACs that are within 15km of the STP area. **Figure 2.1** shows their locations in relation to the Castledermot STP area.

The integrity of a Natura 2000 site (referred to in Article 6.3 of the EU Habitats Directive) is determined based on the conservation status of the qualifying features of the SAC. The qualifying features for each site have been obtained through a review of the Conservation Objectives available from the NPWS.

**Table 2.1: SACs within 15km of Castledermot STP**

Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Habitats	Qualifying Species
002162	River Barrow and River Nore SAC	<p>Estuaries [1130];</p> <p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140];</p> <p><i>Salicornia</i> and other annuals colonizing mud and sand [1310];</p> <p>Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330];</p> <p>Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410];</p> <p>Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260];</p> <p>European dry heaths [4030];</p> <p>Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels [6430];</p> <p>Petrifying springs and tufa formation (<i>Cratoneurion</i>) [7220];</p>	<p>Desmoulin's Whorl Snail [1016];</p> <p>Freshwater Pearl Mussel [1029];</p> <p>White-clawed Crayfish [1092];</p> <p>Sea Lamprey [1095];</p> <p>River Lamprey [1099];</p> <p>Brook Lamprey [1096];</p> <p>Twaite Shad [1103];</p> <p>Atlantic Salmon [1106];</p> <p>Otter [1355];</p> <p>Killarney Fern [1421]; and</p> <p>Nore Freshwater Pearl Mussel [1990].</p>



Site Code	Site Name	Qualifying Habitats	Qualifying Species
		Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in British Isles [91A0]; and Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> [91E0].	
001757	Holdenstown Bog SAC	Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140].	-
000781	Slaney River Valley SAC	Estuaries [1130]; Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140]; Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche Batrachion</i> vegetation [3260]; Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in British Isles [91A0]; and Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> [91E0].	Freshwater Pearl Mussel [1029]; White-clawed Crayfish [1092]; Sea Lamprey [1095]; River Lamprey [1099]; Brook Lamprey [1096]; Twaiite Shad [1103]; Atlantic Salmon [1106]; and Otter [1355].

## 2.4 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

### 2.4.1 Direct, Indirect or Secondary Impacts

As shown in **Tables 2.1** there are 3 SACs with 15km of the STP area. All 3 SACs are water dependent ecosystems, and therefore, any changes to the groundwater regime or surface water quality as a result of the STP could have adverse effects on the habitats and species for which the River Barrow and River Nore SAC, Holdenstown Bog SAC and Slaney River Valley SAC are designated.

#### River Barrow and River Nore SAC

The boundary of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC is within the STP boundary (the River Lerr flows through the STP lands). The River Lerr is a valuable amenity resource in the town and the Council is committed to protecting and enhancing this river. The Castledermot STP includes objectives for the protection and improvement of the River Lerr and its water quality. New development will not be permitted within the SAC boundary or a minimum of 10m from either side of the watercourse measured from the top of the river bank. A minimum buffer zone of 10m of vegetation shall be retained along all river banks to mitigate against pollution risks and maintain habitats.

Any development proposal within the vicinity of or potentially having an effect on a designated site (e.g. the River Lerr, which is designated under the River Barrow and River Nore SAC) will be subject to an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS).

Such policies and measures would ensure that the developments within this STP will not impact on the River Lerr or any Annexed habitats and species which it may contain.

#### Holdenstown Bog SAC

Holdenstown Bog SAC is located approximately 9.7km to the east of the STP boundary. There are a number of major roads (e.g. N81) and elevated ground between the STP boundary and Holdenstown Bog SAC. Given the elevation of the Holdenstown Bog SAC in the surrounding landscape relative to

Castledermot, it is anticipated that the groundwater within the STP boundary drains towards the River Lerr and is not connected to the groundwater of Holdenstown Bog SAC, which is likely to drain to the Slaney River to the east. Any potential development in Castledermot is not likely to impact on the groundwater regime of Holdenstown Bog SAC and therefore, will not impact on the integrity of the Holdenstown Bog SAC or the habitat for which it is designated - Transition mires and quaking bogs.

### Slaney River Valley SAC

Slaney River Valley SAC is located approximately 8.8km to the southeast and east of the STP boundary. The topography is significantly elevated between the STP boundary and the Slaney River Valley SAC resulting in different river catchments. There are no surface waters connecting the STP lands with the Slaney River Valley SAC and therefore, any potential development in Castledermot will not impact on the Slaney River Valley SAC or the habitats and species for which it is designated.

## 2.4.2 Cumulative and in Combination Impacts

This step aims to identify at this early stage any possible significant in-combination or cumulative effects/impacts of the proposed STP with other such plans and projects on the 3 Natura 2000 sites. Other plans and projects specific to the 3 relevant Natura 2000 sites are the following:

- Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017;
- Greater Dublin Area Regional Planning Guidelines 2010;
- National Spatial Strategy;
- South Eastern RBD Management Plan;
- Water Services Investment Programme;
- IPPC Programme;
- Local Authority Discharge;
- Groundwater Pollution Reduction Programmes;
- Surface Water Pollution Reduction Programmes;
- Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study; and
- Catchment Flood Risk Management Plans.

No other pathway has been identified by which any of the plans and projects identified could have a significant 'in combination' effect on any of the 3 Natura 2000 sites identified. In fact, the in combination effect of the above water related plans and programmes would have positive effects on water quality resulting in positive indirect impacts on the River Barrow and River Nore SAC.

## 2.4.3 Likely Changes to the Site

The likely changes that could arise from the implementation of the STP have been examined in the context of a number of factors that could potentially affect the integrity of the identified Natura 2000 sites. It has been determined that no Natura 2000 sites will be potentially impacted as a result of the STP. **Table 2.2** shows the Likely Changes to Natura 2000 Sites as a result of the STP.

**Table 2.2: Likely Changes to Natura 2000 Sites**

Site Name	Reduction of Habitat Area	Disturbance to Key Species	Habitat or Species Fragmentation	Reduction in Species	Changes in Key Indicators of	Climate Change

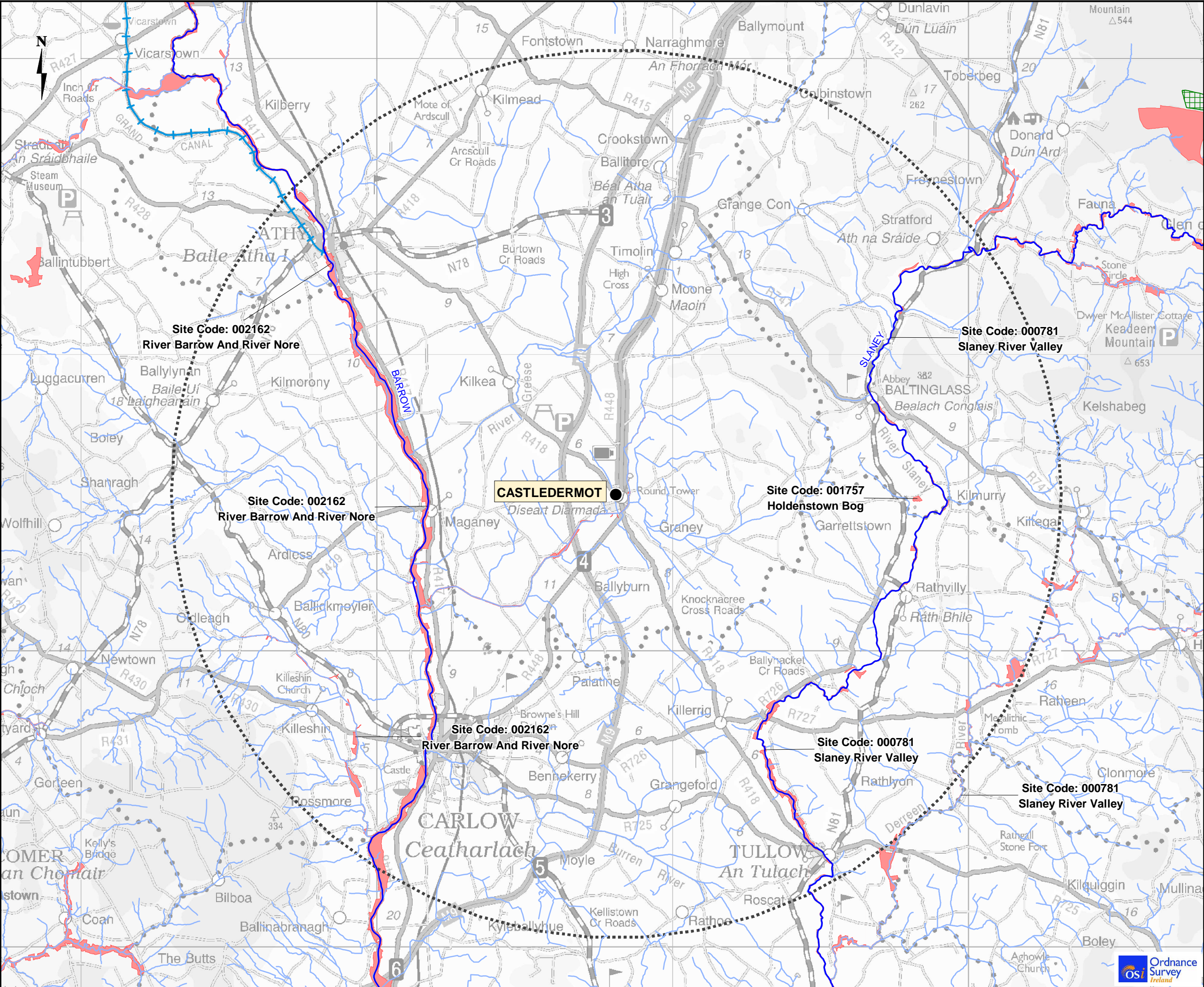
				Density	Conservation Value (Water Quality Etc.)	
River Barrow and River Nore SAC	None	None	None	None	None	N/A
Holdenstown Bog SAC	None	N/A	None	None	None	N/A
Slaney River Valley SAC	None	None	None	None	None	N/A

#### 2.4.4 Elements of the Plan Where the Impacts are Likely to be Significant

The development of these lands could potentially yield additional residential units within Castledermot town, which may cause additional load on waste water treatment systems, water supply, surface water run off, etc. However, the level of growth in Castledermot will be managed in line with the ability of local services to cater for future growth. No development shall be permitted to proceed if the local services are not sufficient to cater for the development. Therefore, it is envisaged that no elements of the STP are likely to cause significant impacts on Natura 2000 sites.

In addition, the Council will have regard to its responsibilities in relation to the requirements of the Habitats Directive, and any development proposal within the vicinity of or potentially having an effect on the designated site (e.g. the River Lerr) will be subject to an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS).





### Legend

- Special Protection Areas (SPAs)
- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)
- Main River
- Small River/Stream
- Grand Canal
- Castledermot
- Buffer (15km)

Data Source:  
Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) was downloaded from National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) website. Data was last updated 17/08/2011.

Rivers data was downloaded from Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Client  
**Kildare County Council**

Project  
**Appropriate Assessment of Castledermot Small Town Plan**

Title  
**Natura 2000 Designated Areas**

Figure **2.1**

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Notes

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### **3 SCREENING CONCLUSION AND STATEMENT**

The likely impacts that will arise from the STP have been examined in the context of a number of factors that could potentially affect the integrity of the Natura 2000 network. None of the sites within 15km of the STP area will be adversely affected. A Finding of No Significant Effects Matrix has been completed and is presented in Section 4 of this Screening Statement.

On the basis of the findings of this Screening for Appropriate Assessment of Natura 2000 sites, it is concluded that the proposed STP will not have a significant effect on the Natura 2000 network and a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not required.

## 4 FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS REPORT MATRIX

Name of project or plan	Castledermot STP
Name and location of Natura 2000 site	River Barrow and River Nore SAC; Holdenstown Bog SAC; and Slaney River Valley SAC.
Description of the project or plan	<p>Castledermot is designated as a Small Town in the County Settlement Strategy as contained in Chapter 3 of the CDP. This STP consists of specific objectives and a land use map that will ensure the sustainable development of the town over the period of the STP. Once adopted, it will supersede the Castledermot LAP 2009. The development of Castledermot is governed by the overarching policies and objectives of the CDP, together with the relevant development management standards as outlined in Chapter 19.</p> <p>Castledermot is located in the south of County Kildare on the old N9 National Primary Route. The town lies 32km from Kilcullen, 10km from Carlow Town and 11km from Athy. Castledermot originally developed as a religious centre, a role it still maintains today, but the main function of the town is as a service centre for its inhabitants and the large surrounding rural hinterland. Castledermot has also recently become a commuter centre for workers in Dublin and Carlow utilising the excellent links provided by the new M9 motorway.</p> <p>The population of Castledermot was recorded as 773 persons in 1996. The town experienced population decline between 1996 and 2002 (population of 726 in 2002), but increased to 887 persons by the 2006 census. The County Settlement Strategy allocates 131 residential units to Castledermot over the lifetime of the CDP with a population target of 1,109 persons by the year 2017.</p> <p><b>Principles Governing Future Development of the Town</b></p> <p>Future development of Castledermot will take place in the context of the Core Strategy outline in Chapter 2 of the CDP 2011-2017. In this regard, the focus of new development will be on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidating development within the town centre, followed by the sequential development of land/sites in a logical progression from the town centre to the edge of the development boundary of the town;</li> <li>• Encouraging the re-use and redevelopment of underutilised, derelict and vacant sites throughout the town centre;</li> <li>• Developing the town centre as the focal point for</li> </ul>

	<p>economic, cultural and social activity;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seeking the retention of the historic street pattern together with the retention of stone walls throughout the town;</li> <li>• Protecting and preserving the quality of the landscape in Castledermot, including open space, and in particular natural, architectural and archaeological heritage; and</li> <li>• Providing adequate recreational and community facilities</li> </ul>
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)?	<p>Kildare County Development Plan 2011-2017;          Greater Dublin Area Regional Planning Guidelines 2010;          National Spatial Strategy;          South Eastern RBD Management Plan;          Water Services Investment Programme;          IPPC Programme;          Local Authority Discharge;          Groundwater Pollution Reduction Programmes;          Surface Water Pollution Reduction Programmes;          Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study; and          Catchment Flood Risk Management Plans.</p>
<b>The Assessment of Significance of Effects</b>	
Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site.	The proposed development is not likely to affect Natura 2000 sites.
Explain why these effects are not considered significant.	<p>All 3 SACs are water dependent ecosystems, and therefore, any changes to the groundwater regime or surface water quality as a result of the STP could have adverse effects on the habitats and species for which the River Barrow and River Nore SAC, Holdenstown Bog SAC and Slaney River Valley SAC are designated.</p> <p><b>River Barrow and River Nore SAC</b></p> <p>The boundary of the River Barrow and River Nore SAC is within the STP boundary (the River Lerr flows through the STP lands). The River Lerr is a valuable amenity resource in the town and the Council is committed to protecting and enhancing this river. The Castledermot STP includes objectives for the protection and improvement of the River Lerr and its water quality. New development will not be permitted within the SAC boundary or a minimum of 10m from either side of the watercourse measured from the top of the river bank. A minimum buffer zone of 10m of</p>

	<p>vegetation shall be retained along the river bank to mitigate against pollution risks and maintain habitats.</p> <p>Any development proposal within the vicinity of or potentially having an effect on a designated site (e.g. the River Lerr, which is designated under the River Barrow and River Nore SAC) will be subject to an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS).</p> <p>Such policies and measures would ensure that the developments within this STP will not impact on the River Lerr or any Annexed habitats and species which it may contain.</p> <p><b>Holdenstown Bog SAC</b></p> <p>Holdenstown Bog SAC is located approximately 9.7km to the east of the STP boundary. There are a number of major roads (e.g. N81) and elevated ground between the STP boundary and Holdenstown Bog SAC. Given the elevation of the Holdenstown Bog SAC in the surrounding landscape relative to Castledermot, it is anticipated that the groundwater within the STP boundary drains towards the River Lerr and is not connected to the groundwater of Holdenstown Bog SAC, which is likely to drain to the Slaney River to the east. Any potential development in Castledermot is not likely to impact on the groundwater regime of Holdenstown Bog SAC and therefore, will not impact on the integrity of the Holdenstown Bog SAC or the habitat for which it is designated - Transition mires and quaking bogs.</p> <p><b>Slaney Rievr Valley SAC</b></p> <p>Slaney River Valley SAC is located approximately 8.8km to the southeast and east of the STP boundary. The topography is significantly elevated between the STP boundary and the Slaney River Valley SAC resulting in different river catchments. There are no surface waters connecting the STP lands with the Slaney River Valley SAC and therefore, any potential development in Castledermot will not impact on the Slaney River Valley SAC or the habitats and species for which it is designated.</p>
List of agencies consulted: provide contact name and telephone or e-mail address.	N/A
Response to consultation.	N/A
<b>Data Collected to Carry Out the Assessment</b>	
Who carried out the assessment?	RPS
Sources of data	NPWS database Information from Kildare Water Services
Level of assessment completed	Desktop



Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed?	Kildare County Council Planning Department
Overall Conclusion	Stage 1 Screening indicates that the proposed STP will not have a significant negative impact on the Natura 2000 network. Therefore, a Stage 2 'Appropriate Assessment' under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC is not required.