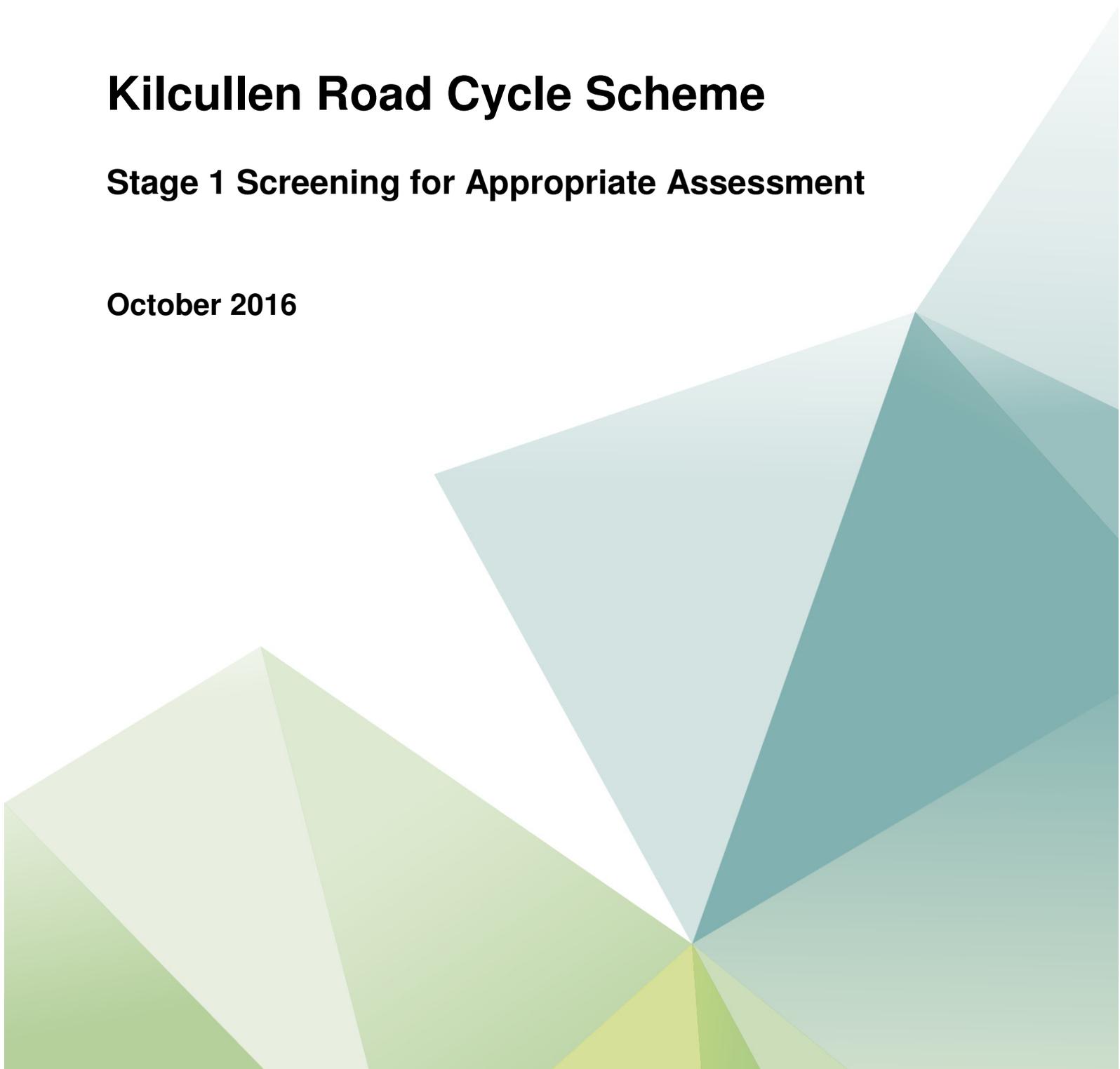


Kildare County Council

Kilcullen Road Cycle Scheme

Stage 1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment

October 2016



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1. Introduction

Scheme Overview

- 1.1 Kildare County Council (KCC) in partnership with the National Transport Authority (NTA) proposes to deliver high quality cycle routes within the Naas area. Implementing policies as set out within the National Cycle Policy Framework (NCPF), the NTA have developed a Cycle Network Plan (CNP) for the Greater Dublin Area (GDA).
- 1.2 This plan includes a cycle network for Naas, recognising the town as a significant population centre within the GDA with the potential to become an exemplar cycling town which can take advantage of its relatively flat topography to develop a network that will facilitate a significant increase in cycling for all trip purposes.
- 1.3 The Kilcullen Road Cycle Scheme, subject of this report, forms part of Route NA2 as identified within the NCP maps for the cycle network in Naas. Figure 1.1 illustrates the location of the Kilcullen Road Cycle Scheme in relation to the proposed wider cycling network for Naas.

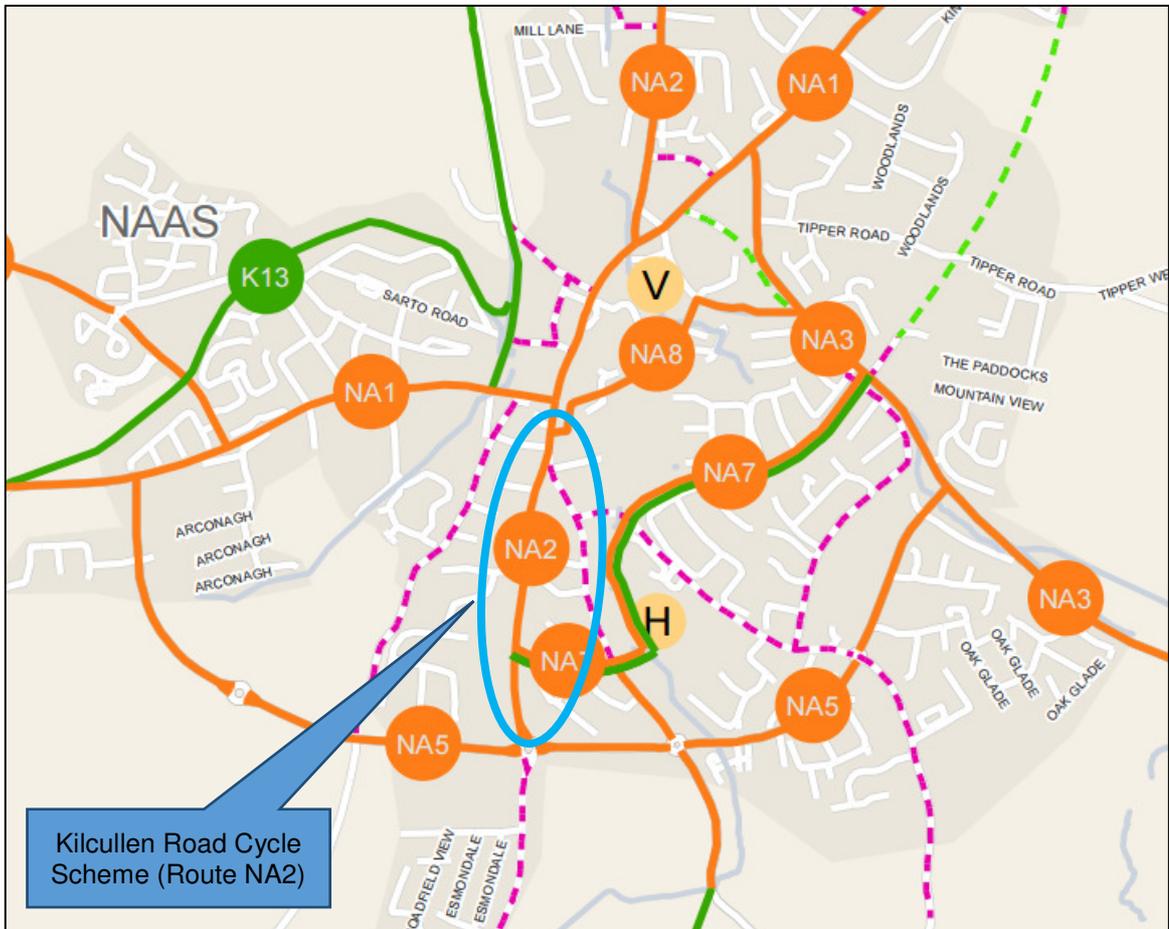


Figure 1.1: Location of Proposed Works.

- 1.4 This assessment report deals with a Stage 1 Appropriate Assessment of the Kilcullen Road Cycle Scheme and has been prepared in support of the associated Part 8 Planning Application. This assessment therefore accompanies a Part 8 Planning Report and should be read in conjunction with the planning report and the accompanying planning drawings.

Scheme Extents

- 1.5 Naas, the county town of Kildare, is located adjacent the southern side of the M7 and approximately 25km west of Dublin City. Naas is the largest town in North Kildare with a population of over 20,000 and is highlighted as a key designated settlement area in the GDA Transport Strategy. The town has grown substantially in the last ten years with much of the new housing occupied by people commuting to work in Dublin.
- 1.6 The Kilcullen Road Cycle Scheme consists of the upgrade of approximately 900m of the existing Kilcullen Road from its intersection with the South Ring Road roundabout junction to its intersection with the Naas Main Street / Newbridge Road junction. The general scheme extent is outlined in Figure 1. below, The scheme will improve the connectivity of the overall existing cycle network, specifically linking to the recently completed Piper's Hill cycle scheme and connect to the existing cycle facilities on the South Ring Road.

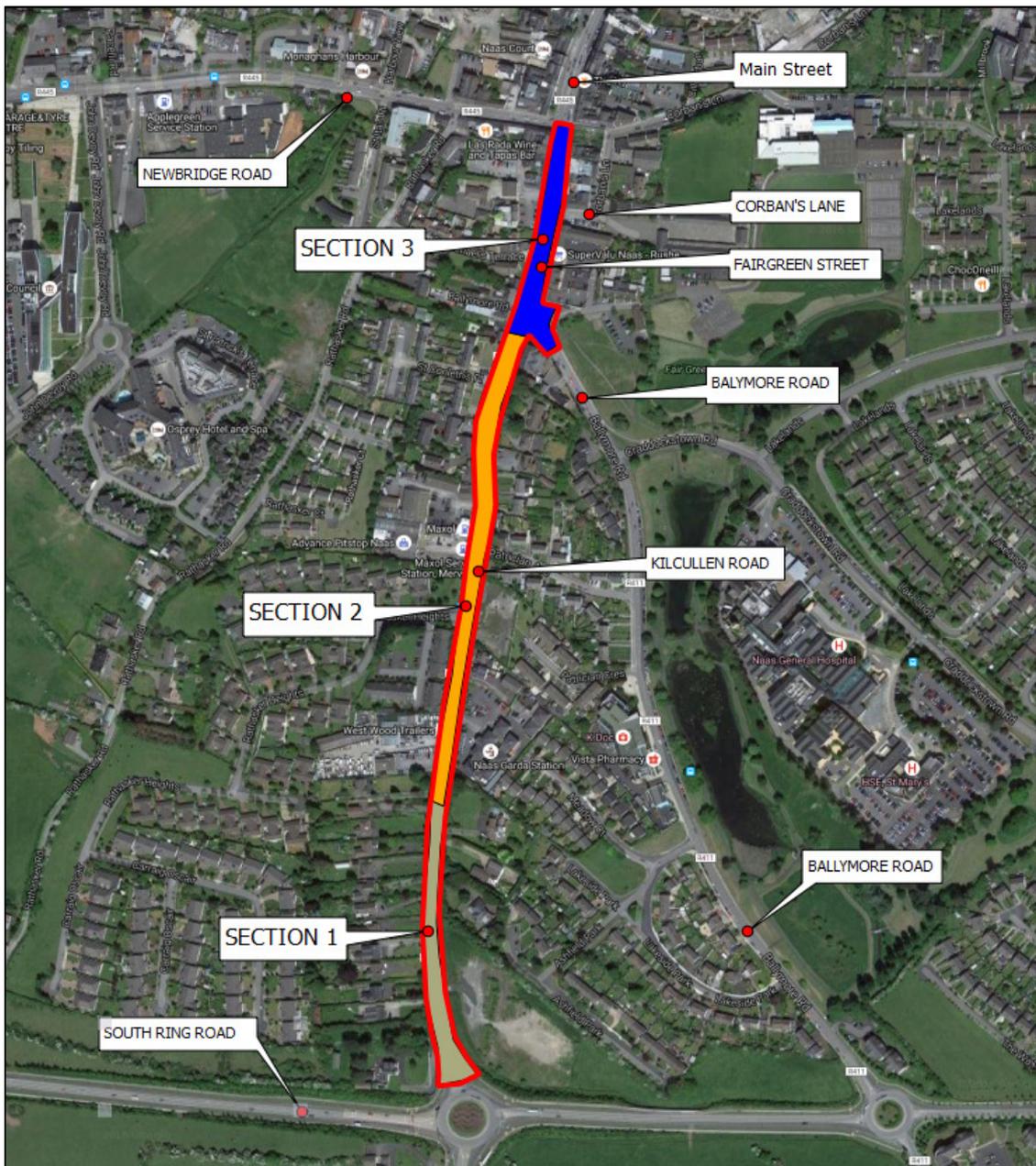


Figure 1.2: Scheme Extent.

Description of Proposed Scheme

1.7 The review of the overall Kilcullen Road Cycle Scheme route has been undertaken by breaking the route down into three sections based on route characteristics, traffic conditions and place context. As such the preferred options for each section as discussed previously consist of a number of different link types as follows: -

- Section 1: 3.0m (min) Shared Use Two-Way Pedestrian / Cycle Track on both sides of a 6.5m carriageway;
- Section 2: 1.75m (min) Segregated One-Way Cycle Track and 1.75m (min) Footpath provided on both sides of a 6.5m Carriageway;
- Section 3: 3.0m (min) Footpath provided on both sides of a 6.5m Shared Street Carriageway.

Section 1: South Ring Road Roundabout – Naas Garda Station

1.8 The provision of a widened two-way shared use facility on both sides of the carriageway offers the highest Quality of service without impacting on the surrounding landowners.

1.9 As such, the southern section of the route extends from the South Ring Road roundabout to Naas Garda Station in the form of a shared pedestrian / cycle track with a desirable width of 4.0m and a minimum width of 3.0m.

1.10 The route connects to the existing pedestrian and cycle provision on the roundabout which in turn joins up with the Piper's Hill Scheme

Section 2: Naas Garda Station – Ballymore Road Junction

1.11 Beyond Naas Garda Station the route will operate as a segregated facility (from both pedestrians and vehicular traffic) in the form of a raised adjacent cycle track on both sides of the road with a desirable width of 2.0m and a minimum of 1.75m in each direction. To prioritise cycle movements at side roads, the raised adjacent cycle tracks will be dropped to cycle lanes at road level in advance of the junctions to ensure ease of egress for cyclists. Once cyclists have cycled past the side road, cyclists will transition back on to a raised adjacent cycle track.

Section 3: Ballymore Road Junction to Main Street / Newbridge Road Junction

1.12 It is acknowledged that Fairgreen Street carries a notable volume of traffic in the order of 16,000 AADT, however the current prevailing operating speed (85 percentile of 39kph) would be conducive to an integrated provision whereby cyclists would share the street in a mixed traffic regime. This type of facility is the most appropriate provision for a town centre environment and would complement the Councils aspiration to implement a 30kph zone within the town centre.

1.13 Therefore, beyond the Ballymore Road junction cyclists are transitioned on street and the route operates as a shared street facility as far as the signalised junction intersecting with Main Street. This marks the end of the proposed scheme. Traffic calming measures have been introduced to reduce vehicle speeds thereby providing a comfortable and safe environment for cyclists to travel through. Extended footpath widths improve the movement and comfort of pedestrians and improve the place context of the street.

2. Methods

Requirement for Appropriate Assessment

- 2.1 Special Protection Areas for birds (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are sites that form part of a network, known as Natura 2000 sites, to be designated across Europe in order to protect biodiversity within the EU. SACs are designated under the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC; and as amended), as transposed into Irish Law by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011)); while SPAs are designated under the EU Birds Directive (79/409/EEC, as amended and codified in 2009/147/EC) and further protected under the EU Habitats Directive as transcribed by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011).
- 2.2 Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive states that: “*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 subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives.*” Such an assessment is known as an Appropriate Assessment (AA). Further guidance on AA is provided by the European Commission (2000) *Managing Natura 2000 sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the ‘Habitats’ Directive 92/43/EEC* and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG, 2009) *Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland. Guidance for Planning Authorities.*

Habitats Directive

- 2.3 The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. These habitats and species are listed in the Habitats and Birds Directives and Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas are designated to afford protection to the most vulnerable of them.
- 2.4 Favourable conservation status of habitats is defined when a habitat(s) displays the following characteristics: -
- its natural range, and area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing, and the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long term maintenance exist and
 - are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and
 - the conservation status of its typical species is favourable.
- 2.5 Favourable conservation status of species is defined as when: -
- population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitat, and
 - the natural range of the species is neither being reduced, nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
 - there is and probably will continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

Methodology Used

- 2.6 The Appropriate Assessment process begins with Stage 1 - Screening to determine if a plan or project is likely to have an impact on a Natura 2000 site. The methodology used to complete the Appropriate Assessment screening follows best practice guidance, including: -
- European Commission (2000). Managing Natura 2000 sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC;
 - European Commission (2001) 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;
 - European Commission (2007). Guidance document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitats Directive' 92/49/EEC; clarification of the concepts of: Alternative solutions, Imperative reasons of overriding public interest, Compensatory Measures, Overall Coherence, Opinion of the Commission; and
 - Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2009). Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland. Guidance for Planning Authorities.
- 2.7 Locations and boundaries of all Natura 2000 sites within the zone of influence of the proposed works were identified and reviewed using the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) online map viewer (accessed 07/6/2016). Boundary *shapefiles* were also downloaded from this site to facilitate the preparation of project graphics.
- 2.8 Desktop information on relevant Natura 2000 sites was reviewed on the NPWS website, including the site synopsis for each SAC/SPA, the conservation objectives, the site boundaries as shown on the NPWS online map viewer, the standard Natura 2000 Data Form for the SAC/SPA which details conditions and threats to the sites, and published information and unpublished reports on the relevant Natura 2000 sites.

Consultation

- 2.9 Consultation through the Development Applications Unit of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht has not as yet been undertaken for this project.

Statement of Authority

- 2.10 The appropriate assessment was undertaken by Paul O'Donoghue. P. O'Donoghue has a BSc (Zoology), MSc (Behavioural Ecology) and a PhD in avian ecology and genetics. His is a chartered member of the Society for the Environment (CEnv) and a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM). Paul is a Principal Ecologist based in Atkins office in Cork; with over 16 years' experience in ecology; including extensive experience in the preparation of Habitat Directive Assessments / Natura Impact Statements (i.e. Appropriate Assessment under Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive).

3. Designated Sites

Connectivity of Proposed Development to Natura 2000 Sites

Special Protection Areas

- 3.1 The work site located on Kilcullen Road does not lie within or immediately adjoining any Special Areas of Conservation or Special Protection Areas for birds.
- 3.2 There is a single SPA designated within ca. 15km of the proposed works at Kilcullen Road, which is also proposed for designation as a Natural Heritage Area under the Wildlife Acts 1976-2000 (see Table 3.1; Figure 3.1).

Table 3.1 – Details of SPAs within 15km of Work Site.

Site Name	Site Code	Distance	Qualifying Interests
Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA / pNHA	004063	9.87Km SE	The qualifying interests for Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA are wintering populations of : - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>) [A043] ➤ Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>) [A183]

- 3.3 Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA / pNHA is located at a significant distance from the proposed works at Kilcullen Road, Naas (9.6km). The qualifying interests for Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA are wintering populations of Greylag Goose and Lesser Black-backed Gull. With respect to Greylag Geese Boland and Crowe (2008¹) found that birds were recorded predominantly at Threecastles to the northeast of Blessington Bridge, and also at Mountseskin in southwest County Dublin. Furthermore works at Naas will not impact on the use of Poulaphouca Reservoir by roosting gulls, including Lesser Black-backed Gull.
- 3.4 There are no likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project on Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA / pNHA; this site is therefore screened out and will not be considered further in this assessment.

Special Areas of Conservation

- 3.5 The work site at Kilcullen Road does not lie within any Special Area of Conservation (SACs).
- 3.6 There are six Special Areas of Conservation within ca. 15km of the proposed works (see Table 3.3; Figure 3.1). The majority of sites are also proposed for designation as Natural Heritage Areas under the Wildlife Acts 1976-2000 (see Table 3.2).

¹ Boland, H. and Crowe, O. (2008). An assessment of the distribution range of Greylag (Icelandic-breeding & feral populations) in Ireland. Report prepared for National Parks and Wildlife Service and Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

Table 3.2 – Details of SACs within 15km of the study area.

Site Name	Site Code	Distance	Qualifying Interests	Screening Statement
Red Bog, Kildare SAC / pNHA	000397	8.6Km E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140] 	<p>Whilst designated for wetland / water dependant habitats, these are located at a significant remove from Kilcullen Road, Naas; they are also not hydrologically linked to the works site at Kilcullen Road, Naas. No impacts on Red Bog, Kildare SAC is anticipated.</p>
Wicklow Mountains SAC	002122	13.07Km E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae and/or Isoeto-Nanojuncetea [3130] ➤ Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds [3160] ➤ Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010] ➤ European dry heaths [4030] ➤ Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] ➤ Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, on siliceous substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas, in Continental Europe) [6230] ➤ Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130] ➤ Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladani</i>) [8110] ➤ Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210] ➤ Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220] ➤ Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0] ➤ <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355] 	<p>There is no direct overlap between the proposed works and terrestrial habitats such as European dry heaths, Alpine and Boreal heath, Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, Blanket bogs, Siliceous scree, Siliceous rocky slopes and Old sessile oak woods.</p> <p>There is no direct overlap with, nor any hydrological link between the works area and Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters within Wicklow Mountains SAC.</p> <p>Otter occur widely in the Irish landscape and certainly use the Grand Canal pNHA and other watercourses in the environs of Naas. The works along the Kilcullen Road do not adjoin any such watercourses and no impacts on otter are predicted.</p>
Pollardstown Fen SAC / pNHA	000396	11.32Km W	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> [7210] ➤ Petrifying springs with tufa formation (<i>Cratoneurion</i>) [7220] ➤ Alkaline fens [7230] ➤ <i>Vertigo geyeri</i> (Geyer's Whorl Snail) [1013] ➤ <i>Vertigo angustior</i> (Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail) [1014] ➤ <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> (Desmoulin's Whorl Snail) [1016] 	<p>There is no direct overlap between the proposed works and this site. The proposed works are located on the south-eastern side of Naas; to the east of the River Liffey. They are hydrologically isolated from Pollardstown Fen SAC which is located to the west of Newbridge and the River Liffey.</p>

Table 3.2 – continued.

Site Name	Site Code	Distance	Qualifying Interests	Screening Statement
Mounds Bog SAC / pNHA	002331	8.32Km W	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Active raised bogs [7110] ➤ Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] ➤ Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150] 	Whilst designated for wetland / water dependant habitats, these are located at a significant remove from Kilcullen Road, Naas; they are also not hydrologically linked to the works site at Kilcullen Road, Naas. No impacts on Mounds Bog SAC is anticipated.
Ballynafagh Lake SAC / pNHA	001387	10.35Km NW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Alkaline fens [7230] ➤ <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> (Desmoulin's Whorl Snail) [1016] ➤ <i>Euphydrias aurinia</i> (Marsh Fritillary) [1065] 	Whilst designated for wetland / water dependant habitats, these are located at a significant remove from Kilcullen Road, Naas; they are also not hydrologically linked to the works site at Kilcullen Road, Naas. No impacts on Ballynafagh Lake SAC is anticipated.
Ballynafagh Bog SAC / pNHA	000391	11.14Km NW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Active raised bogs [7110] ➤ Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration [7120] ➤ Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150] 	Whilst designated for wetland / water dependant habitats, these are located at a significant remove from Kilcullen Road, Naas; they are also not hydrologically linked to the works site at Kilcullen Road, Naas. No impacts on Ballynafagh Bog SAC is anticipated.

Natural Heritage Areas

- 3.7 While not within the Natura 2000 network, due to the proximity of the Grand Canal pNHA, consideration was also given to the potential for overlap with proposed Natural Heritage Areas. The proposed cycle routes (and intervening section) are located adjacent to the Grand Canal pNHA (002104); along the Naas & Corbally Branch. The site synopsis for the Grand Canal pNHA highlights a number of different habitats present along the canal including hedgerow, tall herbs, calcareous grassland, reed fringe, open water, scrub and woodland and that the ecological value of the canal lies more in the diversity of species it supports along its linear habitats than in the presence of rare species. Protected species recorded from the site include otter (*Lutra lutra*), smooth newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*) and opposite-leaved pondweed (*Groenlandia densa*).
- 3.8 Whilst close to Grand Canal pNHA (at e.g. Naas Harbour) there is no overlap with the works and the canal. No direct or indirect impacts to the canal are predicted.
- 3.9 Table 3.5 lists Natural Areas and proposed Natural Heritage Areas in the immediate environs of Kilcullen Road, Naas (see also Table 3.1 and 3.3 for details of those sites which are also designated as Natura 2000 sites; see also Figure 3.1).

Table 3.5 - Details of NHAs and pNHAs within 15Km of the work site.

Site Name	Site Code	Distance	Key Features
Grand Canal pNHA	002104	0.66km N	A number of different habitats are present along the canal including hedgerow, tall herbs, calcareous grassland, reed fringe, open water, scrub and woodland. The ecological value of the canal lies more in the diversity of species it supports along its linear habitats than in the presence of rare species. Protected species recorded from the site include otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>), smooth newt (<i>Lissotriton vulgaris</i>) and opposite-leaved pondweed (<i>Groenlandia densa</i>).
Kilteel Wood pNHA	001394	9.3km NE	A good example of deciduous woodland comprised mostly of Oak (<i>Quercus</i> spp.) and Birch (<i>Betula pubescens</i>).
The Curragh pNHA	000392	10.9Km SW	The site is most unusual in an Irish, European and even global context, in that it is an extensive open plain area of lowland acid grassland, succeeding to dry heath in places. It has been grazed but unfertilised for hundreds, perhaps even thousands of years. Because of the management regime on the open grassland, nationally important populations of rare fungi are found. Their presence best highlights the continuity of the area as a grazed, unfertilised grassland for centuries, as these fungi cannot tolerate soil disturbance or fertilising and they are only found in ancient grasslands. The site is also of ornithological interest for Golden Plover, Lapwing and nesting Meadow Pipit and Skylark.
Liffey at Osberstown pNHA	001395	3Km NW	The main plant for which the site was originally designated was Black Willow, however the woodland has been cleared. The site has represents a good example of riverside vegetation with two scarce plants.
Liffey Bank above Athgarvan pNHA	001396	9.5Km SW	South facing unstable sandy slope. Assemblage of plants typical of disturbed and unstable habitats. Such areas of natural habitats are rare in Co. Kildare.

Table 3.5 – continued.

Site Name	Site Code	Distance	Key Features
Liffey Valley Meander Belt pNHA	000393	8.8Km N	Site includes Ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>) woodlands which merge into a dense growth of Lesser Pond-sedge (<i>Carex acutiformis</i>). Important chironomid communities have been recorded from these areas. Ashwood and marshy areas are rare in Co. Kildare.
Newtown Marshes pNHA	001759	12.3Km N	Site consists of marshes and ponds. Area is of ornithological interest due to a breeding colony of Black-headed Gulls (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>). Mute swan (<i>Cygnus olor</i>), Little Grebe (<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>), Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) and Coot (<i>Fulica atra</i>) are also recorded as breeding here.
Slade of Saggart and Crooksling Glen pNHA	000211	14.35Km W	The site includes a good example of a wooded river valley (Beech (<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>), Ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>), Oak (<i>Quercus</i> spp.), Birch (<i>Betula</i> spp.)) and a small wetland system. Shoreweed (<i>Littorella uniflora</i>), a rare aquatic plant, is found in Brittas Ponds, a Wildfowl Sanctuary. The chalcid <i>Halticoptera patellana</i> (Hymenoptera) was recorded from the site in 1981, the only Irish record for this species up to at least 1989. The presence of a Rare plant, a Rare invertebrate and a variety of wildfowl species adds to the interest of the site.
Donadea Wood pNHA	001391	14.3Km NW	The site is notable for the presence of two rare species of Myxomycete fungus, namely <i>Diderma chondrioderma</i> and <i>Licea testudinacea</i> , the latter in one of only two known Irish sites. This site is of interest as, although highly managed, it has a significant proportion of deciduous trees and parts of the site have been wooded for a long period.
Hodgestown Bog NHA	001393	13.8 NW	This site is of conservation significance as it is comprised of a raised bog, a rare habitat in the E.U. Much of the high bog has vegetation typical of a Midland Raised Bog, consisting of Ling Heather (<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>), White Beak-sedge (<i>Rhynchospora alba</i>), Cranberry (<i>Vaccinium oxycoccos</i>) and Bog-rosemary (<i>Andromeda polifolia</i>). This site supports a good diversity of raised bog microhabitats, including hummocks.

Figure 3.1 – Designated Sites

4. Appropriate Assessment Screening Matrix

Matrix

1. Description of the project or plan	
<i>Location</i>	Kilcullen Road, Naas, Co. Kildare
<i>Distance from designated site</i>	While there are a number of Natura sites located with 15km of the proposed works (Table 3.1 & 3.2) no direct or indirect impacts on any of these sites is predicted. [Natura 2000 sites within 15km included; - Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA (004063); Red Bog, Kildare SAC (000397); Wicklow Mountains SAC (002122); Pollardstown Fen SAC (000396); Mounds Bog SAC (002331); Ballynafagh Lake SAC (001387); Ballynafagh Bog SAC (000391)].
<i>Brief Description of the project or plan</i>	Extension of pedestrian facilities and incorporation of a cycleway along the Kilcullen Road to Main Street, Naas. For full description see paragraphs 1.7-1.13.
<i>Is the plan directly connected with or necessary to the site management for nature conservation?</i>	No

2. Brief Description of the Natura 2000 site(s)	
<i>Name</i>	While there are a number of Natura sites located within 15km of the proposed works (Table 3.1 & 3.2) no direct or indirect impacts on any of these sites was predicted. [Natura 2000 sites within 15km included; - Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA (004063); Red Bog, Kildare SAC (000397); Wicklow Mountains SAC (002122); Pollardstown Fen SAC (000396); Mounds Bog SAC (002331); Ballynafagh Lake SAC (001387); Ballynafagh Bog SAC (000391)].
<i>Site designation status</i>	[Natura 2000 sites within 15km included; - Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA (004063); Red Bog, Kildare SAC (000397); Wicklow Mountains SAC (002122); Pollardstown Fen SAC (000396); Mounds Bog SAC (002331); Ballynafagh Lake SAC (001387); Ballynafagh Bog SAC (000391)].
<i>Qualifying interests</i>	See Tables 3.1 & 3.3.
<i>Unit size</i>	n.a.

3. Assessment Criteria	
<i>Other plans or projects which may have a cumulative impact</i>	There are no likely impacts arising from the proposed development on Natura 2000 sites and therefore cumulative impacts with other projects will not occur. As discussed above there are plans for other cycle / pedestrian facilities in Naas.
<i>Describe the individual</i>	There are no likely impacts arising from the proposed development on

3. Assessment Criteria	
<i>elements of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the Natura 2000 sites.</i>	Natura 2000 sites due to the fact that all road works are to be undertaken within the footprint of the existing road at a significant remove from Natura 2000 sites (see Table 3.1 & 3.2). Furthermore, strict implementation of best practice construction methods will be a requirement of all works to be undertaken.
<i>Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the Natura 2000 site by virtue of:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Size and scale - Land-take - Distance from Natura 2000 site or key features of the site - Resource requirements - Emissions - Excavation requirements - Transportation requirements - Duration of construction, operation etc. - Others 	There are no likely impacts arising from the proposed development on Natura 2000 sites.
<i>Describe any likely changes to the site arising as a result of:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction of habitat area - Disturbance of key species - Habitat or species fragmentation - Reduction in species density - Changes in key indicators of conservation value - Climate change 	There are no likely impacts arising from the proposed development on Natura 2000 sites.
<i>Describe any likely impacts on the Natura 2000 site as a whole in terms of:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site - Interference with key relationships that define the function of the site. 	There are no likely impacts arising from the proposed development on Natura 2000 sites.
<i>Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loss - Fragmentation - Disruption 	Not applicable, as no effects have been identified.

3. Assessment Criteria			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Disturbance</i> - <i>Change to key elements of the site</i> 			
<p><i>Describe from the above those elements of the project or plan, or combination of elements, where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale of magnitude of impacts is not known.</i></p>		<p>There are no likely significant direct or indirect impacts arising from the proposed development.</p>	
Data collected to carry out the assessment			
<i>Who carried out the assessment</i>	<i>Sources of data</i>	<i>Level of assessment completed</i>	<i>Where can the full results of the assessments be accessed and viewed?</i>
<p>Atkins Unit 2B 2200 Cork Airport Business Park, Cork</p>	<p>Desktop Research NPWS Data Request; site map from Sites & Designations office Natura 2000 conservation objectives; Natura forms & site synopses - downloaded Design details & photo audit from Atkins engineering Online data from nbdc.ie; online mapping from OSI.ie; Google; Bing etc.</p>	<p>Screening</p>	<p>Atkins, Unit 2B 2200 Cork Airport Business Park, Cork</p>

Finding of No Significant Effects

<i>Name and location of Natura site(s)</i>	While there are a number of Natura sites located within 15km of the proposed works (Table 3.1 & 3.2) no direct or indirect impacts on any of these sites was predicted. [Natura 2000 sites within 15km included; - Poulaphouca Reservoir SPA (004063); Red Bog, Kildare SAC (000397); Wicklow Mountains SAC (002122); Pollardstown Fen SAC (000396); Mounds Bog SAC (002331); Ballynafagh Lake SAC (001387); Ballynafagh Bog SAC (000391)].
<i>Brief description of the project or plan</i>	Extension of pedestrian facilities and incorporation of a cycleway along the Kilcullen Road to Main Street, Naas. For full description see paragraphs 1.7-1.13.
<i>Is the project or plan directly connected with or necessary to the site management for nature conservation?</i>	No
<i>Are there other projects or plans that together with the project or plan being assessed could affect the site?</i>	There are no likely impacts arising from the proposed development on Natura 2000 sites and therefore cumulative impacts with other projects will not occur.

Assessment of significance of effects	
<i>Describe how the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site.</i>	There are no likely direct impacts to the SAC as a result of the proposed development due to the fact that all road works are to be undertaken within the footprint of the existing road. Furthermore, strict implementation of best practice construction methods will be a requirement of works to be undertaken.
<i>Explain why the effects are not considered significant</i>	There are no effects to Natura 2000 sites identified.
<i>List the Agencies consulted</i>	Formal consultation with NPWS via the Development Applications Unit (Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht) has not been undertaken at this time. The Stage 1 AA Screening will, however, be circulated to statutory consultee's as part of the Application for Part 8 planning (i.e. under section 82(3) of the Planning Act).
<i>Response to Consultation</i>	n/a.

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