

A. Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment for Part 8 Housing Project [extension to dwelling house] at 42 Lakeglen, Portlaoise, County Laois.

Proposed Development

Refurbish and extend a terraced, two-storey dwelling unit in an urban location at 42 Lake Glen, Mountmellick Road, Portlaoise, County Laois.

In particular, the proposed development comprises the following elements:

- [a] demolition of existing single-storey extension and outbuildings to the rear of the property, including boundary wall and shed of adjacent property No. 43, and
- [b] construction of a new single-storey extension to the rear, to provide two accessible bedrooms and wet-room on the ground floor.

The proposed development also includes foul and surface water drainage works, hard and soft landscaping, new boundary treatments and all associated site works.

Site Location

The development site is located on “Residential 1. Existing Residential” zoned lands in an urban location at Lake Glen, Mountmellick Road, Portlaoise, County Laois.

Site Size

The overall curtilage is 0.0161 hectares [0.039 acres] in size.

Floor area of proposed development

The proposed extension is c. 43 square metres in size.

Identification of nearby Natura 2000 site(s)

There are no Natura 2000 sites at or in close proximity to the development site.

The nearest such sites are the River Barrow and River Nore SAC [site code 2162] which is c. 8 kms due north-west and the Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA [site code 4160] which is c. 8.3 kms due north-west.

The proposed development is located within the hydrological catchment of the Triogue River, c. 160 metres due north-east. A review of aerial photography, Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSI) mapping and OSI Geographical Information System (GIS) data for rivers and streams indicates that the development site has no direct hydrological connection with the Triogue. There is therefore no direct connectivity to any watercourse within or outside the potential zone of influence.

The characteristics of existing, proposed or other approved projects which may cause interactive/cumulative impacts with the project being assessed and which may affect the Natura 2000 site

None.

Is the application accompanied by a NIS?

No.

B. IDENTIFICATION OF THE RELEVANT NATURA 2000 SITE(S)

The reasons for the designation of the Natura 2000 site

A site synopsis is attached to this report (sourced on www.npws.ie).

The conservation objectives/qualifying interests of the site and the factors that contributes to the conservation value of the site

A site synopsis is attached to this report (sourced on www.npws.ie).

C. NPWS ADVICE

Summary of advice received from NPWS in written form

None received.

D. ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS

(Purpose of this is to identify if the effect(s) identified could be significant – if uncertain assume the effect(s) are significant).

If answer yes to any of the questions, below then the effect is significant.

Would there be any impact on an Annex 1 habitat? (Annex 1 habitats are listed in Appendix 1 of AA Guidance)

No. The development is not located within a Natura 2000 site.

Would there be a reduction in habitat area on a Natura 2000 site?

No. The development is not located within a Natura 2000 site.

Would there be direct/indirect damage to the physical quality of the environment (e.g. water quality and supply, soil compaction) in the Natura 2000 site?

No. There is a very low level of potential for connectivity of the development site with sites designated for environmental protection.

Would there be serious/ongoing disturbance to species/habitats for which the Natura 2000 site is selected (e.g. because of increased noise, illumination and human activity)?

No. There is a very low level of potential for connectivity of the development site with sites designated for environmental protection.

Would there be direct/indirect damage to the size, characteristics or reproductive ability of populations on the Natura 2000 site?

No. The development is not located within a Natura 2000 site and there is a very low level of potential for connectivity of the development site with sites designated for environmental protection.

Would the project interfere with mitigation measures put in place for other plans/projects. (Look at in-combination effects with completed, approved but not completed, and proposed plans/projects. Look at projects/plans within and adjacent to Natura 2000 sites and identify them).

No.

E. SCREENING CONCLUSION

Taking account of the following:

[i] the brownfield aspect of the development site [the existing dwelling thereon is long-standing],

[ii] the availability of public foul and surface water drainage infrastructure,

[iii] the nature and extent of the proposed development and of the site curtilage including the very low level of potential for connectivity of the development site with water bodies or with sites designated for environmental protection,

[iv] the characteristics of the conservation objectives involved and

[v] best scientific knowledge.

it can be concluded with reasonable certainty that the development in itself, or in combination with other plans or projects would not be likely to have a significant effect on the Natura 2000 sites network and therefore an appropriate assessment is not required.

Donal Kiely, SEP, 9th June 2023

B. Screening Report for Environmental Impact Assessment for Part 8 Housing Project [extension to dwelling house] at 42 Lakeglen, Portlaoise, County Laois.

Introduction

This report has been informed by:

- Schedules 5, 7 and 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended);
- ‘Guidelines for Planning Authorities and an An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environment Impact Assessment’, issued by the DHPLG (2018); and
- Part VIII plans and particulars.

Legislation

The proposed development is of a class referenced in Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended, namely:

10. Infrastructure Projects

[b] [iv] Urban development which would involve an area greater than 2 hectares in the case of a business district, 10 hectares in the of other parts of a built-up area and 20 hectares elsewhere.

[In this paragraph, business district means a district within a city or town in which the predominant land use is retail or commercial use].

In the case of [b] [iv], the district in question would not be a district in which the predominant land use is retail or commercial. Therefore, the relevant threshold is 10 hectares. With a site area of 0.0161 hectares [0.039 acres], the proposed development is significantly sub-threshold and does not automatically require EIAR.

Sub-threshold EIA

The key issue with regard to the possible need for EIA of sub-threshold development is whether the development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Article 120 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended states the following:

120. (1) (a) Where a local authority proposes to carry out a sub threshold development, the authority shall carry out a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the development.

(b) Where the local authority concludes, based on such preliminary examination, that—

(i) there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall conclude that an EIA is not required,

(ii) there is significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, the information specified in Schedule 7A for the purposes of a screening determination, or

(iii) there is a real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall—

(I) conclude that the development would be likely to have such effects, and

(II) prepare, or cause to be prepared, an EIAR in respect of the development.

(1A) (a) Where the local authority prepares, or causes to be prepared, the information specified in Schedule 7A,

For sub-threshold developments listed in Schedule 5 Part 2, a screening determination is required to be undertaken by the competent authority unless, on preliminary examination it can be concluded that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.

Schedule 7

The proposed development is considered against the criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. This is based on the existence of realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment and considering the nature, size and location of the proposed development in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 7 to the 2001 Regulations,

The competent authority must proceed to a further examination to determine whether EIA is required pursuant to Schedule 7A to the 2001 Regulations in order to facilitate a formal screening determination.

Characteristics of the proposed development

Size of the proposed development

The area of the application site is given as 0.0161 hectares [0.039 acres].

The cumulation with other proposed development

Impacts caused by one project, which may be considered minor and insignificant, can combine with other environmental impacts from existing or planned development. When taken in combination, these impacts could be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Existing development in the surrounding area predominantly comprises residential development.

Subject to appropriate restrictions on the proposed development in relation to traffic movements, noise and dust emissions, mostly during the construction phase, it is considered that the potential for significant impacts on the environment from cumulative effects will not arise.

Nature of any associated demolition works

There will be some relatively minor demolition works on site and on the adjacent site, no. 43 Lakeglen. All demolition waste will be disposed of to an authorized facility.

The Use of Natural Resources

Natural resources on the site and in the surrounding area include:

- River Triogue – c. 160 metres due north-east.

This stream connects to the River Barrow and River Nore SAC [site code 2162] c. 8 kms due north-west. The nearest SPA, Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA [site code 4160], is c. 8.3 kms due north-west.

Given the separation distances involved, it is considered that there will be no likely significant effect on any European Site. Also, as the proposed development has no discharges of note and is connected to the public foul and surface water drainage infrastructure, it is considered that there will be no potential for significant impacts on watercourses.

Similarly owing to the brownfield nature of the site, it is considered that there will be no negative impact on soils or flora and fauna.

Soil excavated for construction will be reused on site or removed off site for re-use elsewhere.

Production of Waste

The proposal will not generate significant quantities of waste. Waste produced during the construction phase will be managed by a site-specific construction and demolition waste management plan.

During the operational phase there will be non-hazardous waste and packaging waste, WEEE, empty containers and landscaping waste.

Pollution and Nuisances

The proposed development has the potential to result in pollution and nuisances in the area during the construction phase due to dust and noise. Mitigation measures will be proposed to deal with these issues including proper construction methodology.

It is considered that soil and water pollution impacts are insignificant and will not result in pollution or nuisance.

Subject to the implementation of the best practice measures, it is considered that these impacts would not be significant.

Risk of Accidents, having regard to substances or technologies used

None identified.

Risks to Human Health

Risks to human health from the proposed development can principally arise from noise and dust emissions during construction principally.

Subject to the implementation of the mitigation and best practice measures it is considered that these impacts would not be significant.

The characteristics of the development do not require EIAR to be carried out.

Location of the proposed development

The development site is located on “Residential 1. Existing Residential” zoned lands in an urban location at Lake Glen, Mountmellick Road, Portlaoise, County Laois.

The relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area

The proposed development is not likely to have significant effect on any Natura 2000 site owing to the separation distance, the lack of discharges and the proposed connection to the public sewer network.

The absorption capacity of the natural environment

In terms of absorption capacity, the site is a brownfield site. The site is not located in any upland or wetland area.

The development site is outside the confines of the critical Flood Zones A and B as indicated in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment of the Laois County Development Plan 2021-2027 and Portlaoise Local Area Plan 2018-2024.

There are no protected structures on site or in the surrounding lands.

Types and Characteristics of the Potential Impacts

Potential impacts can arise in relation to:

- Operational noise, vibration, dust and related nuisances for lands and adjoining properties the site mainly during the construction phase.
- Pollution of groundwater and surface water from during construction.

Transfrontier nature of impact

The proposed development will be localised and will take place fully within the administrative area of Laois County Council.

Magnitude and complexity of impact

It is not considered that impacts from the proposed development would have the potential to affect a large range of receptors over a wide geographical area. The spatial extent of impacts would be more localised and the size of the population likely to be affected would not be significant.

Probability of impacts

Impacts from the proposed development can arise over the duration of the construction works, particularly with respect to noise and dust emissions, potential pollution of groundwater and surface water, and traffic impacts on the local road network. Subject to the strict implementation of the mitigation and best practice measures, it is considered that these impacts would not be significant.

Expected Onset, Duration, frequency and reversibility of impact

It is considered that the duration of any impacts will be during the construction phase of the development which may extend to a 6-month time period.

SCREENING CONCLUSION

I consider that the proposed development does not require an Environmental Impact Assessment as it is not likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue, inter alia, of its nature, size or location.

Donal Kiely, SEP, 9th June 2023