

**APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT
AND
CONCLUSION STATEMENT**

(A) Project Details

Planning File Ref	Part VIII
Applicant name	Laois County Council
Development Location	Ha’Penny School, Church Avenue, Portlaoise
Site size	0.0018 ha
Application accompanied by an EIS (Yes/No)	No
Distance from Natura 2000 site in km	The site is located approximately 10km west of the River Barrow And River Nore Special Area of Conservation, 10km east of the Slieve Bloom Mountains Special Area of Conservation and 9km west of the Slieve Bloom Mountains Special Protection Area.

Description of the project/proposed development

The proposed development will include the following:

1. Refurbishment works to the existing former Ha’Penny School building (a Protected Structure, RPS number 900) to provide a tourism space/hub (c.64sqm).
2. The forming of a new shopfront opening facing chapel street (c.4m x 2.5m).
3. Installation of new solar panels on the southwest facing roof face
4. Light internal work (reconfiguration of toilet space.
5. Associated refurbishment works.

(B) Identification of Natura 2000 sites which may be impacted by the proposed development

	Yes/No
	If answer is yes, identify list name of Natura 2000 site likely to be impacted.

1	<p>Impacts on sites designated for freshwater habitats or species.</p> <p><u>Sites to consider:</u> River Barrow And River Nore SAC</p> <p>Slieve Bloom Mountains SAC</p>	<p><i>Is the development within a Special Area of Conservation whose qualifying interests include freshwater habitats and/or species, or in the catchment (upstream or downstream) of same?</i></p>	<p>No</p>
2	<p>Impacts on sites designated for wetland habitats - bogs, fens, marshes and heath.</p> <p><u>Sites to consider:</u> River Barrow And River Nore SAC</p> <p>Slieve Bloom Mountains SAC</p>	<p><i>Is the development within a Special Area of Conservation whose qualifying interests include wetland habitats (bog, marsh, fen or heath)</i></p>	<p>No</p>
3	<p>Impacts on designated terrestrial habitats.</p> <p><u>Sites to consider:</u> River Barrow And River Nore SAC</p> <p>River Nore SPA</p>	<p><i>Is the development within a Special Area of Conservation whose qualifying interests include woodlands, dunes or grasslands, or within 100m of same?</i></p>	<p>No</p>
4	<p>Impacts on birds in SPAs</p> <p><u>Sites to consider:</u> River Nore SPA</p> <p>Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA</p>	<p><i>Is the development within a Special Protection Area?</i></p>	<p>No</p>

Conclusion:

If the answer to all of the above is **No**, significant impacts can be ruled out for habitats and bird species.

No further assessment in relation to habitats or birds is required.

If the answer is **Yes** refer to the relevant sections of **C**.

(G) SCREENING CONCLUSION STATEMENT
Selected relevant category for project assessed by ticking box.

1	AA is not required because the project is directly connected with/necessary to the conservation management of the site	
2	No potential significant affects/AA is not required	X
3	Significant effects are certain, likely or uncertain. Seek a Natura Impact Statement Reject proposal. (Reject if potentially damaging/inappropriate)	
Justify why it falls into relevant category above (based on information in above tables)		
<p>Based on the distance and lack of pathways the proposed works will not impact on any designated sites.</p> <p>Based on the above it is considered that there is no need to proceed to a stage 2 NIS.</p> <p>The Planning Authority concludes that the works proposed, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on any European Site.</p>		
Name:	Olive O'Donnell	
Position:	Executive Planner	
Date:	24/11/2023	

