



## **N19 Shannon Airport Access Road Improvement Scheme.**

### **Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination**

To comply with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive, and Regulation 42(1) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, as amended ("the Birds and Habitats Regulations") Clare County Council as the public authority has undertaken screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) at an early stage in the development of the N19 Shannon Airport Access Road Improvement Scheme. The screening for Appropriate Assessment assessed the potential for the proposed scheme to result in likely significant effects on any European Site, in view of best scientific knowledge and the Conservation Objectives of the associated European sites, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

### **Application Details**

This decision has been informed by information prepared by Fehily Timoney and Company/Clandillon Civil Consulting on behalf of Clare County Council who have submitted to the public authority the following documents in support of the proposed scheme; Utility/Ground Investigations results and Article 6(3) Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025) together with an updated scheme realignment. The documents describe the nature and extent of the proposed scheme and associated construction works, the European sites within its Zone of Influence (Zoi) and the relationship between the two such that any impact pathways were identified. It also identified any potential for direct, indirect or cumulative impacts of the proposed scheme on all relevant European Sites. The approach to identifying European sites which have the potential for significant effects due to the scheme follows the approach set out in the AA screening practice note (Office of the Planning Regulator. 2021).

The public authority in making this determination has also had consideration and utilised available ecological reports, online published scientific information particularly those published on the NPWS website pertaining to European sites and all available information held internally within the Local Authority.

### Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination

The proposed scheme is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of any European site(s) and it can be concluded in view of best scientific knowledge on the basis of objective information and in light of the Conservation Objectives of the relevant European sites, that the proposed scheme, individually and in combination with other plans and projects, will have likely significant effects on the European sites, or that likely significant effects are uncertain.

Therefore, having regard to:

- a) The nature and scale of the works associated with the proposed scheme which will involve temporary noise disturbance to the Special Conservation Interests of the SPA, lighting impacts, together with water quality and habitat degradation associated with the Qualifying Interest Features of the SAC.
- b) The proximity of the scheme to the European Sites and the presence of a direct pathway (surface water) connecting the European sites. The River Shannon and River Fergus SPA at its nearest point to the scheme is located 40m away, the Lower River Shannon SAC through works proposed adjacent to the Urlan-beg Stream crossing and Clonloghan Stream mean there is again a direct connection between the works and this European site (approximately 0.05m downstream).
- c) The proposed works has the potential to cause cumulative impacts when considered in combination with other developments in terms of impacts to water quality in the estuary from combined pressures associated with the proposed N19 scheme and other permitted or proposed projects.

In conclusion, in accordance with Regulation 42(1) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended), taking into account all matters relevant and in the absence of mitigation measures it has been determined that likely significant effects on the Qualifying Interests of the River Shannon and Fergus Estuaries SPA and Lower River Shannon SAC cannot be excluded on the basis of objective scientific information. Therefore, Appropriate Assessment and the preparation of a Natura Impact Statement should be undertaken.

Signed



5<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Alan Farrell  
Director of Services  
Physical Development

Signed



5<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Sheila Downes  
Environmental Assessment Officer  
Planning Department