

Appropriate Assessment Screening Report
**THE KINGS ISLAND WALLED TOWN INTEGRATED URBAN
STRATEGY**

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Forward Planning
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1 Introduction

This Screening report to inform the Appropriate Assessment (AA) process has been prepared by Limerick City and County Council (LCCC) with regard to the The Kings Island Walled Town Integrated Urban Strategy.

The report comprises information in support of the Screening of the proposal 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 (hereafter referred to as the Habitats Directive).

The evaluations presented in this Screening report have been completed by a qualified and competent ecologist utilising current guidance and scientific information, as well as ecological survey data on the ground. The baseline environment and assessment of significance of effects has been informed through consultation with NPWS.

The purpose of this Screening report is to inform the Appropriate Assessment (AA) process to determine, based on objective scientific information, whether the proposal, alone and in combination with other plans or projects, has the potential for significant effects on any designated European Site in view of the site's conservation objectives. The Screening conclusion statement is determined based on the description of the proposed measures provided herein, and is full and complete. Local ecological interests separate to any Natura 2000 designation were identified on site but are not evaluated or assessed in the context of the current document, which is restricted to the requirements for AA reporting with regard to the Habitats Directive requirements under Article 6(3).

This Screening Report complies with the requirements of Article 6 of the EC Habitats Directive (1992) transposed in Ireland principally through the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended) (referred to as the Habitats Regulations herein). In the context of the proposed project, the appropriate legislation is the Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations (2011) and the 'public authority' is the relevant local authority, in this case Limerick City and County Council. As the project proponent, L.C.C.C. has prepared this report to inform the Appropriate Assessment process to be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of Article 42 of the Habitats Regulations, which states as follows:

"A screening for Appropriate Assessment of a plan or project for which an application for consent is received, or which a public authority wishes to undertake or adopt, and which is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site as a European Site, shall be carried out by the public authority to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge and in view of the conservation objectives of the site, if that plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect on the European site".

The Kings Island Walled Town Enhanced Integrated Urban Strategy identifies a number of projects, plans, key urban spaces, streetscape enhancements, and the role of local public realm in emphasising a sense of identity in King's Island, specifically focusing on Nicholas Street. The goal is to balance brownfield regeneration, with a strong focus on conservation and the adaptive re-use of built heritage stock while addressing vacancy and dereliction while ensuring proper conservation of King's Island's archaeological remains. This IUS is a high level plan. No material change to any structures or habitats

will arise as a result of this plan. Any individual project undertaken by either LCCC or private development in accordance with the goals of this IUS will be subject to Appropriate Assessment individually and separate to this assessment.

Fig. 1. The area of The Kings Island Walled Town Enhanced Integrated Urban Strategy



2 THE APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

2.1 Legislative Context

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain habitats and species in the Natura 2000 network at favourable conservation condition. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations (in particular Part XAB of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 (S.I. 477) (referred to as the Habitats Regulations herein) to ensure the ecological integrity (i.e. Conservation Objectives) of these sites. The Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) seeks to protect birds of special importance by the designation of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for bird species and their habitats listed on Annex I of the Directive. Similarly, the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) designates Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) for habitats and species listed in Annex I and Annex II of that Directive.

Ireland has obligations under EU law to protect and conserve biodiversity. This relates to habitats and species both within and outside designated sites. Nationally, Ireland has developed a National Biodiversity Plan (DCHG, 2017) to address issues and halt the loss of biodiversity, in line with international commitments. The vision for biodiversity is outlined: "That biodiversity and ecosystems in Ireland are conserved and restored, delivering benefits essential for all sectors of society and that Ireland contributes to efforts to halt the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystems in the EU and globally".

Ireland aims to conserve habitats and species, through designation of conservation areas under both European and Irish law. The focus of this Screening is on those habitats and species designated pursuant to the EU Birds and EU Habitats Directives in the first instance, however it is recognised that wider biodiversity features have a supporting role to play in many cases where the Conservation Objectives of designated sites is to be maintained/restored.

Appropriate Assessment (AA) is an assessment of whether a plan or project, alone and in combination with other plans or projects, could have significant effects on a European site in view of the site's conservation objectives. The requirement of AA is outlined in Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive (1992). Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires that:

"Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the 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. In the 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."

Furthermore, Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive requires that:

“If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the 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, the Member State 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.”

Over time legal interpretation has been sought on the practical application of the legislation concerning AA, as some terminology has been found to be unclear. European and National case law has clarified a number of issues and some aspects of European Commission (EC) published guidance documents have been superseded by case law. Appropriate Assessment is required to utilise best scientific knowledge in the field, as determined in case law. Competent Authorities must ensure that scientific data (ecological and hydrological expertise) is utilised as appropriate. This report presents a Screening to inform the AA process, which is finalised by a determination for Appropriate Assessment, to be completed by the appropriate Competent Authority (i.e. the local authority), in compliance with their obligations under Article 42 (sub-sections 1, 6, 7, 16 and 18) of the Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations, 2011 (as amended).

2.2 Appropriate Assessment Methodology

The AA process follows a step-wise approach, commencing with a Screening Assessment to determine whether Appropriate Assessment is required; progression through the AA process is contingent on the potential for adverse effects on European Sites (SAC/SPA).

Screening Assessment – This process identifies the likely significant impacts upon a European site from a proposed project or plan. Its purpose is to determine, on the basis of a preliminary assessment and objective criteria, whether a plan or project which is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site as a European Site, individually or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect upon the European site. A project may be “screened-in” if there is a possibility or uncertainty of significant effects upon the European site, thus requiring AA. If there is no evidence to suggest significant effects due to the proposed plan or development the project is “screened-out” and AA is not required.

Appropriate Assessment – Consideration of the project or plan with regard to adverse effects on the integrity of designated European Sites, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, with respect to the site’s structure and function and its conservation objectives. Additionally, where adverse impacts have been identified, an assessment of the potential mitigation to reduce/minimise/avoid such impacts is required. The AA statement is the responsibility of the appropriate Competent Authority; this decision making is informed by a Natura Impact Statement (NIS). Such an assessment is required where uncertainty of the significance of effect arises or a potential effect has been defined which requires further procedures / mitigation to remove uncertainty of a defined impact.

Assessment of Alternative Solutions – Where adverse effects on a European Site are identified in the AA process (detailed in the NIS), despite the prescription of mitigation, this third stage examines

alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the European Site.

Assessment Where Adverse Impacts Remain - The fourth and final stage is required where an alternative solution is not available. In this situation, the project can only proceed for Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI), despite the plan or project resulting in adverse effects on European Site(s). This stage provides for an assessment of compensation measures to maintain or enhance the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 network.

2.3 Guidance Followed

This report has been carried out using the following guidance:

- Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities. Circular NPW 1/10 & PSSP 2/10.¹
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities. (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2010)².
- 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, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg (EC 2021) .
- Guidance document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitats Directive' 92/43/EEC – Clarification of the concepts of: alternative solutions, imperative reasons of overriding public interest, compensatory measures, overall coherence, opinion of the commission. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg (EC 2007)³.
- Office of the Planning Regulator. Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management. OPR Practice Note PN01. (OPR 2021).⁴

¹ NPWS (2010). Legislation Unit, NPWS Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin.

² National Parks and Wildlife Services (2010):

http://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/publications/pdf/NPWS_2009_AA_Guidance.pdf

³ European Commission (2007)

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/guidance_art6_4_en.pdf

⁴ <https://www.opr.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/9729-Office-of-the-Planning-Regulator-Appropriate-Assessment-Screening-booklet-15.pdf>

3 Description of the proposal

3.0 Proposal Description

The King's Island Walled Town Integrated Urban Strategy identifies key sites within the study area, including underutilised sites and vacant properties, as well as prominent landmarks and tourist attractions such as King John's Castle and St. Mary's Cathedral.

Each site underwent extensive public engagement, with local residents and stakeholders helping to identify priority sites for development and enhancement, while also suggesting potential uses.

Several sites, including the Convent Site, Sonny's Corner, and the Bridge Street Site, are brownfield locations that have remained unused for several years. High level objectives for each site outlines development potential whether that be for green spaces or for new structures like housing. Other sites such as the Fireplace and Mary Street Garda Station contain vacant and derelict structures with hopes existing buildings can be brought back into use.

While a specific proposal is already planned for the Fireplace Site at Nos. 35-39 Nicholas Street and Sonny's Corner, specific objectives for other sites is designed to guide any development proposal. Any development on sites will be subject to planning application, archaeological investigations, and ecological surveys where necessary.

Sites including the former Gaelcholaiste playground, Bridge Street Site, Orchard Site, Convent Site are identified as potential sites for housing development but there are no plans or proposals directly associated with the King's Island Walled Town Integrated Urban Strategy.

Other sites such as King John's Castle, St Marys Cathedral, Fanning's Castle and Nicholas are proposed to be upgraded/improved as part of the plan through public realm improvements, lighting schemes, shopfront improvements and events.

The proposed plan is a high level plan from which no material change to structures or habitats will arise. Any project arising in accordance with the objectives with this plan will be subject to planning permission and the appropriate level of environmental and ecological assessment in that regard.

4 Overview of the Receiving Environment

4.1 Existing Environment Description

The proposed Kings Island Walled Town Integrated Urban Strategy (IUS from this point) is a high level plan. The main aim of this plan is to provide a plan level strategy for the regeneration of the King's Island area.

This report will assess the potential for impacts to European sites arising directly as a result of this plan. Any future developments within or close to the area assessed in this report will be subject to AA during the development of that same project, and so any potential impacts to European sites will be assessed at that stage. Furthermore, the particular impacts associated with a specific development cannot be assessed until such a time as a detailed plan for that development exists. Therefore no effective AA can be completed in advance of the planning stage of any development. This plan of itself, will result in no material change within or outside the plan footprint. As a result there is no source pathway for potential impacts on European sites arising due to this plan.

The IUS is concerned with the area of Kings Island within the plan red line boundary. The plan covers an area of approximately of 17.361ha. The study area itself is an urban area that is largely comprised of residential and commercial buildings as well as the associated infrastructure of roads, footpaths and amenity features. The area is mostly built surfaces. There are some small areas of amenity grassland. There are also private gardens, some of which contain green spaces.

The Shannon flows adjacent to the western and southern boundaries of the study area. The study area bounds the Lower River Shannon SAC and Rivers Shannon and Fergus Estuaries SPA and overlaps the sites in places in the form of bridges.

An ecological desk-based survey was conducted using existing species and habitats data records March 28th 2025. This study comprised of a review of the NPWS Article 17 and article 12 data sets, and NDBC data. A field survey for habitats and pertinent species was conducted on March 31st. Habitats were mapped according to Fossit 2000. The findings of the studies are presented in the section below and represent a comprehensive review and combination of available data and field survey results.

4.2 Data Search Results

4.2.0. Data Search Results

Habitats The available NPWS Article 17 habitats datasets were reviewed on March 28th 2025. There were no records for any EU Annex I habitats recorded within the study area. The Lower River Shannon SAC and The River Shannon and Fergus Estuaries SPA is located adjacent to the site and bridges within the study area cross the Shannon in multiple places.

The National Biodiversity Data centre database was accessed on the on 28th March 2025 and the below information was obtained. The database was also searched for records of Third Schedule non-native invasive species within the area.

There are records of Common Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus sensu stricto* and Lesser Horseshoe Bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros* in the study area. There are records for numerous QI wildfowl species within the study area. These are likely records from the nearby river habitat as there is very little suitable habitat within the built areas of the study area.

Records exist in the study area for the invasive alien species of the third schedule, Giant Hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum*, Japanese Knotweed *Fallopia japonica* and Nuttall's Waterweed *Elodea nuttallii*.

4.3 Field Survey Results

The following is a summary of the habitats and species contained within the IUS area on the day of survey. For visual representation of the same, please see Fig. 3 below. The footprint of the area of the study area consists of a number of habitats. These are described in order of declining area below. The study area footprint consists of mostly built land (BL3). Roads, houses and other buildings make up the bulk of these structures. Some of the older built structures have masonry features and holes that support plant species and could potentially provide bat roosting opportunities. The study area contains a number of amenity areas and gardens. The amenity areas are generally grassland in nature and can be classified as Amenity grassland (improved) (GA2). The gardens are inaccessible for survey and so in accordance with fossit classification are considered to be GA2 also. The Shannon flows south along the western boundary of the study area. The Abbey River flows west along the southern boundary of the study area. Both rivers are spanned by road bridges. Both rivers can be characterised as FW2 Depositing/lowland rivers.

Signs of Otter use (spraint) were observed in areas adjacent to the Shannon. A number of bird species were observed during the field survey. Some of these species namely Black Headed Gull are Q.I. of the SHannon and Fergus Rivers SPA.

Table 1: Field survey results terrestrial mammal

English Name	Scientific Name	Status
Otter	<i>Lutra lutra</i>	HD Annex II, Annex IV, WA

Table 2: Bird species found during field survey

English Name	Scientific Name	Status
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	BoCCI Green List
Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	BoCCI Green List
Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	BOCCI Amber List
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	BoCCI Green List
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	BoCCI Green List
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	BoCCI Green List
Wood pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	BoCCI Green List
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	BoCCI Green List
Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Blue tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	BoCCI Green List
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	BoCCI Green List
Coal Tit	<i>Periparus ater</i>	BoCCI Green List
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	BoCCI Green List
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	BoCCI Green List
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	BoCCI Green List
Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	BoCCI Green List
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Lesser Black Backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	BoCCI Green List

Fig. 2: Field survey photos, March 2025



Plate-1: GA2 Grassland area in carpark to the north of study area. Some bramble and willow dominated scrub in background



Plate-2: Brassicaceae species growing wild in carpark



Plate-3: Amenity area to the north of study area GA2



Plate-4: Amenity area near the convent site GA2 (Site 13 of the IUS)



Plate-5: Starlings foraging in GA2 convent site



Plate-7: Ivy growing on gable end of a house, potential bat and bird habitat

Plate-6: Ivy *Hedera helix Hibernica* growing on old stone walls

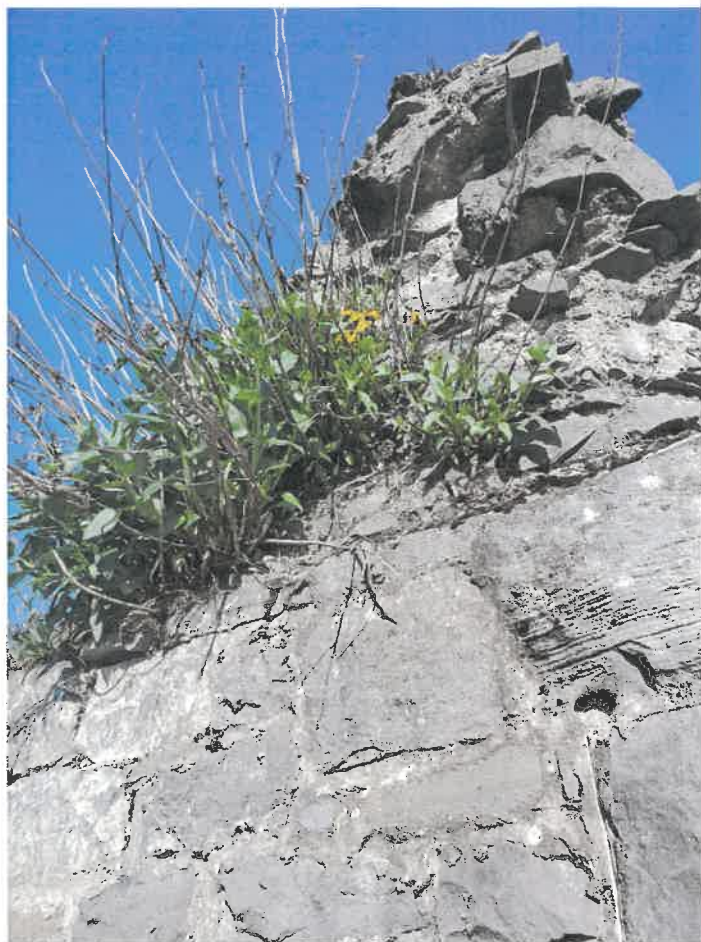


Plate-8: Wallflower *Erysimum cheiri* growing on old stonework walls in study area

Fig. 3. King's Island Area Habitat Map



5 Screening Assessment

5.1 Introduction

This stage of the process identifies any likely significant effects upon European Sites from the proposal, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans. The Screening Assessment is progressed in order to determine:

- Whether the proposal can be excluded from AA requirements because it is directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site; and
- Whether the proposal has the potential to give rise to significant effects on a European site, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, in view of the site's conservation objectives or conversely, that the potential for significant effects cannot be excluded.

In the instance of this proposal, it is not directly connected to or necessary for the management of any European site, therefore the potential for significant effects must be evaluated, as per the second test.

5.2 Identification of Relevant Natura 2000 Sites

A standard source-receptor-pathway conceptual model was used to identify a preliminary list of 'relevant' European sites (i.e. those which could be potentially affected due to connectivity via impact pathways). This conceptual model is a standard tool in environmental assessment. In order for an effect to occur, all three elements of this mechanism must be in place. The absence or removal of one of the elements of the mechanism means there is no likelihood for the effect to occur. In the context of the proposal, the model comprises:

- Source(s) – e.g. noise disturbance, habitat loss, pollution.
- Pathway(s) – e.g. drains and streams connecting to European Sites; increased human activity; creation of barriers to movement/migration.
- Receptor(s) – Qualifying habitats and species of European Sites.

The designated European Sites identified in the wider study area of the proposal are detailed in Table 4, showing the designated site name, code and distance of separation. Designated European Sites were considered within the zone of influence of the proposal, in line with published guidance (NPWS, 2010); these are identified in Figures 4 and 5. Potential pathways for impacts affecting European Sites outside of this buffer were also evaluated.

All sites which were considered are shown in Table 4; no additional SPA or SAC sites were screened in following this process. It is vital that an assessment of potential source-pathway-receptor links is undertaken to assess potential impact links between the receptor (European Sites) and source (proposed development) to establish the risk of any likely significant effects. Additional designated sites including proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA's), Natural Heritage Areas and RAMSAR sites were also reviewed, as although they do not form part of the Appropriate Assessment, they often provide important supporting functions to European Sites.

Information collected on the sensitivity of the Qualifying Interests (i.e. the stated Conservation Objectives) of each European Site identified was assessed with reference to the proposal, with regard to any likely significant effects.

The potential for hydrological pathways to connect potential impacts arising from the proposal with European Sites downstream have been examined, with regard to the potential for significant effects in the absence of protective measures or measures intended as mitigation for the avoidance of impacts on the sensitivities of a European Site.

As outlined in Table 4, two European sites identified within the zone of influence of the proposal have been evaluated in terms of potential connectivity to the proposed development by reason of proximity, hydrological pathways, supporting features of importance to qualifying interests' structure and function, etc.

Fig. 4 SAC sites relative to footprint of proposal study area

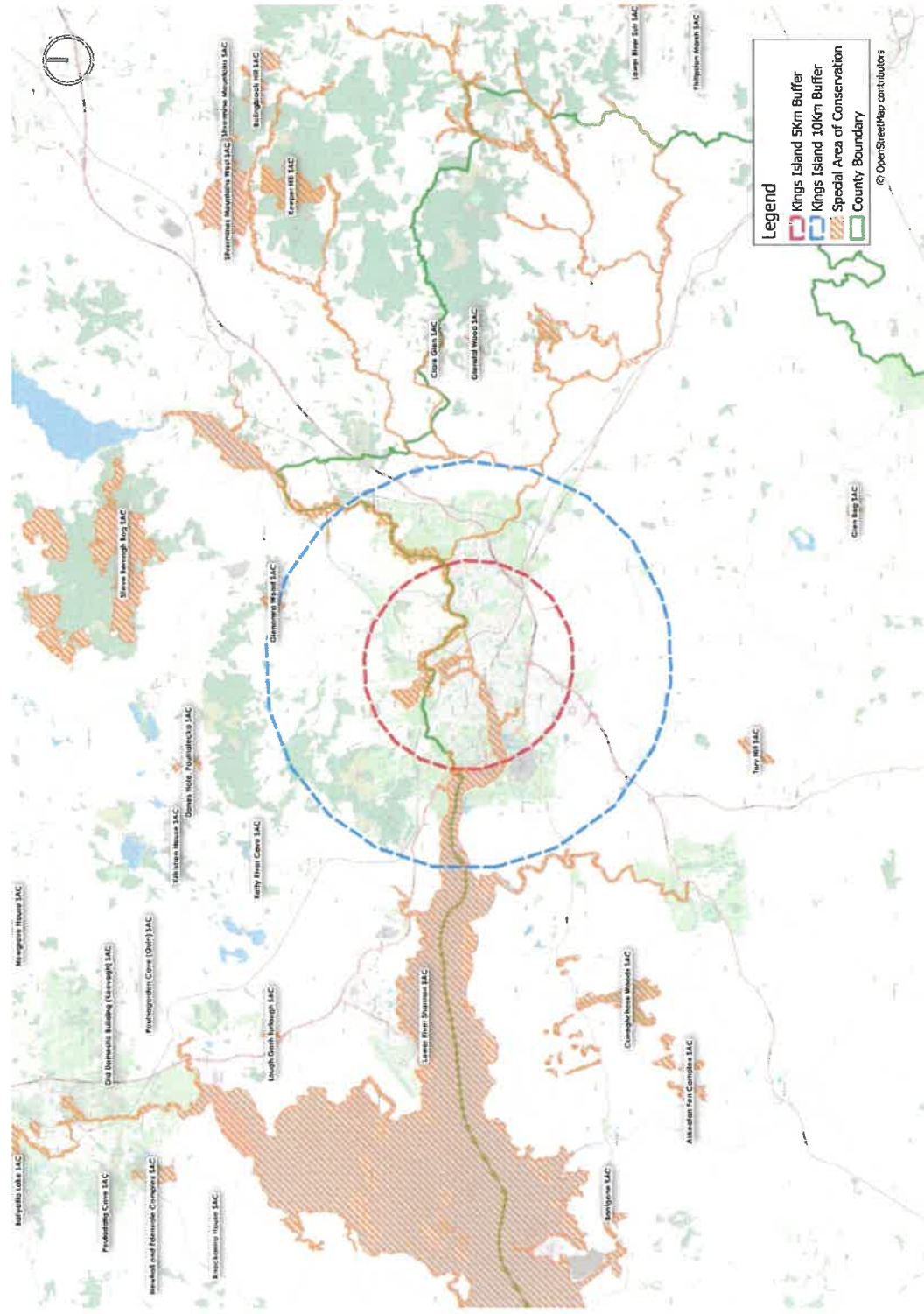


Fig. 5. SPA sites relative to footprint of proposal study area

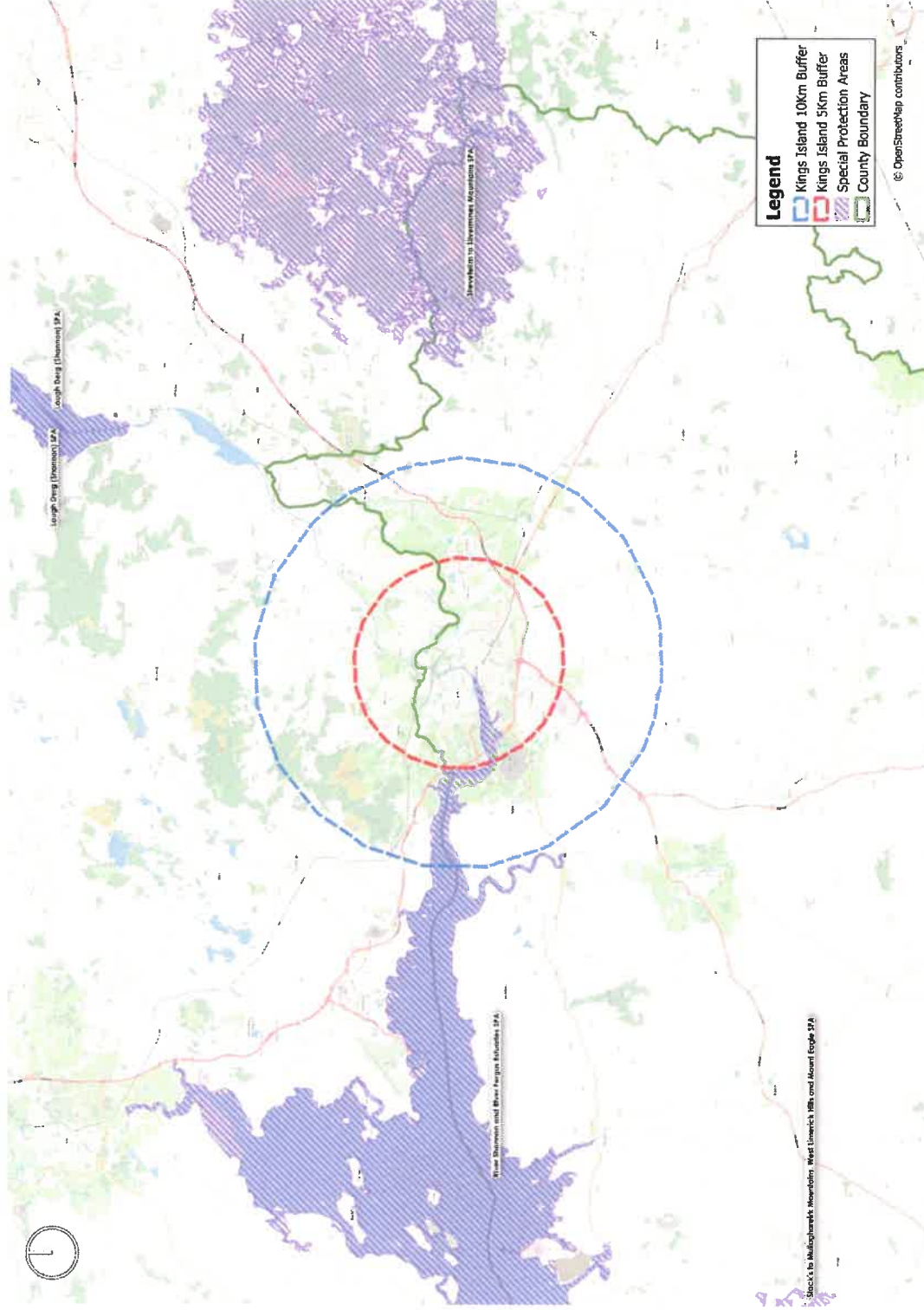


Table 4: List of designated European Sites identified within the zone of influence of the study area

European Site	Site code	Distance from area of proposed LAP extension	Qualifying interests of the European site	Identification of potential source pathway receptors for potential significant impacts	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
Special Areas of Conservation						
Lower River Shannon SAC	002165	Adjacent	<p>[1110] Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time</p> <p>[1130] Estuaries</p> <p>[1140] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide</p> <p>[1150] Coastal lagoons</p> <p>[1160] Large shallow inlets and bays</p> <p>[1170] Reefs</p> <p>[1220] Perennial vegetation of stony banks</p> <p>[1230] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts</p> <p>[1310] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand</p> <p>[1330] Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae)</p> <p>[1410] Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi)</p>	<p>This SAC is located approximately adjacent to the proposal study area.</p> <p>As this SAC falls within the Zol and there is a hydrological connection between the Kings Island area and the SAC this SAC has been assessed in this document.</p> <p>There will be no direct effects on the habitats or species within this SAC as the proposed IUS is a high level plan and will not directly result in any material change to any Q.I. species or habitats within the SAC. Any project arising in future with origins in the IUS will be subject to the planning permission process and AA using the details of the projects plans at that stage.</p> <p>As such, in the absence of any mitigation, there is no potential for any significant effect on the Q.I. receptors within the SAC arising</p>	No	No

				<p>[3260] Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation</p> <p>[6410] Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae)</p> <p>[91E0] Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae)</p> <p>[1029] Margaritifera margaritifera (Freshwater Pearl Mussel)</p> <p>[1095] Petromyzon marinus (Sea Lamprey)</p> <p>[1096] Lampetra planeri (Brook Lamprey)</p> <p>[1099] Lampetra fluviatilis (River Lamprey)</p> <p>[1106] Salmo salar (Salmon)</p> <p>[1349] Tursiops truncatus (Common Bottlenose Dolphin)</p> <p>[1355] Lutra lutra (Otter)</p>			
Special Protection Area							

due to the proposed IUS.

River Shannon and Fergus estuaries SPA	004077	Adjacent	<p>[A017] Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>)</p> <p>[A038] Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>)</p> <p>[A046] Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>)</p> <p>[A048] Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>)</p> <p>[A050] Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>)</p> <p>[A052] Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>)</p> <p>[A054] Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>)</p> <p>[A056] Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>)</p> <p>[A062] Scaup (<i>Aythya marila</i>)</p> <p>[A137] Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>)</p> <p>[A140] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>)</p> <p>[A141] Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>)</p> <p>[A142] Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>)</p> <p>[A143] Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>)</p> <p>[A149] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>)</p> <p>[A156] Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>)</p> <p>[A157] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa</i>)</p>	<p>This SAC is located approximately adjacent to the proposal study area.</p> <p>As this SAC falls within the ZOI and there is a hydrological connection between the Kings Island area and the SAC this SAC has been assessed in this document.</p> <p>There will be no direct effects on the habitats or species within this SAC as the proposed IUS is a high level plan and will not directly result in any material change to any Q.I. species or habitats within the SAC. Any project arising in future with origins in the IUS will be subject to the planning permission process and AA using the details of the projects plans at that stage.</p> <p>As such, in the absence of any mitigation, there is no potential for any significant effect on the Q.I. receptors within the SAC arising due to the proposed IUS.</p>	No	No
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			lapponica)		
			[A160] Curlew (<i>Numerius arquata</i>)		
			[A162] Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>)		
			[A164] Greenshank (<i>Tringa nebularia</i>)		
			[A179] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>)		
			[A999] Wetland and Waterbirds		

5.3 Potential Cumulative and In-combination Effects

5.3.1 Other Plans and Programs

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires an assessment of a plan or project to consider other plans or programmes that might, in combinations with the plan or project, have the potential to adversely impact upon European Sites. The characteristics of the LAP are foreseen to have no effects to any European Sites. It is thought that the proposed LAP in-combination with the project listed below are not likely to have significant effects on any European Site. However, following a precautionary approach relevant plans and projects have been assessed. A list of the plans and projects considered are as follows:

- Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028;
- Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy;
- Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future, A new Transport policy for Ireland, 2009 –2020;
- Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan 2023-2029;
- Adare Local Area Plan 2024 – 2030;
- Askeaton Local Area Plan 2015 – 2021 (Extended to February 2025);
- Caherconlish Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029;
- Castleconnell Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029;
- Kilmallock Local Area Plan 2019-2028;
- Newcastle West Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029;
- Patrickswell Local Area Plan 2024 – 2030;
- Rathkeale Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029;

Table 5. Outlines plans or projects that were considered under the precautionary principal with regards to possible interaction with the LAP to cause in-combination effects to European Sites.

Plan or project	Status	Overview	Possible significant effects from plan or project	Possible significant in-combination effects	Risk of significant in-combination effects with the proposed extension of IUS
Limerick Development Plan 2022 -2028	Published	The Plan sets out Limerick City & County Council's policies for the sustainable development of the County to 2028 and beyond.	No Appropriate Assessment carried out	None	Development proposals which arise as a result of the Development Plan are subject to Appropriate Assessment. This will provide specific project level detail to ensure no adverse significant effects to European Sites.
Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future, A new Transport policy for Ireland, 2009 – 2020;	Published	A framework for actions aimed at ensuring that alternatives to the car are more widely available, mainly through a radically improved public transport service and through investment in cycling and walking. Actions aimed at improving the fuel efficiency of motorised transport through improved fleet structure, energy efficient driving and alternative technologies, and actions aimed at strengthening institutional arrangements to deliver the targets.	No Stage 1 Appropriate Assessment carried out	None	The overarching aim of this document is the reduction of travel and the associated emissions through the reduction of private transport. No potential cumulative impacts can arise as a result of this.

Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan 2023-2029	Published	The overall purpose of this Local Area Plan is to set out a strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Abbeyfeale area.	No AA was undertaken.	No	No impacts are foreseen as arising as a result of the proposed IUS due to the conceptual nature of the plan. Any projects that occur within the footprint of this plan in the future will be subject to AA and should be impacts can only be assessed then. As the Abbeyfeale Local Area plan contains similar high level concepts and information, in- combination impacts can arise. Thus, in- combination effects cannot arise. Therefore, no in- combination effects are foreseen.
Adare Local Area Plan 2024 - 2030	Published	The overall purpose of this Local Area Plan is to set out a strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Adare area.	No AA was undertaken.	No	No impacts are foreseen as arising as a result of the proposed IUS due to the conceptual nature of the plan. Any projects that occur within the footprint of this plan in the future will be subject to AA and should be impacts can only be assessed then. As the Adare Local Area plan contains similar high level concepts and information, in- combination impacts can arise. Thus, in- combination effects cannot arise. Therefore, no in- combination effects are foreseen.
Askeaton Local Area Plan 2015 – 2021 (Extended to February 2025);	Published	The overall purpose of this Local Area Plan is to set out a strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Askeaton area.	No AA was undertaken.	No	No impacts are foreseen as arising as a result of the proposed IUS due to the conceptual nature of the plan. Any projects that occur within the footprint of this plan in the future will be subject to AA and should be impacts can only be assessed then. As the Askeaton Local Area plan contains similar high level concepts and information, in- combination impacts can arise. Thus, in- combination effects cannot arise. Therefore, no in- combination effects are foreseen.

Caherconlish Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029	Published	The overall purpose of this Local Area Plan is to set out a strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Caherconlish area.	No AA was undertaken.	No No impacts are foreseen as arising as a result of the proposed IUS due to the conceptual nature of the plan. Any projects that occur within the footprint of this plan in the future will be subject to AA and should be impacts can only be assessed then. As the Caherconlish Local Area plan contains similar high level concepts and information, in-combination impacts can arise. Thus, in-combination effects cannot arise. Therefore, no in-combination effects are foreseen.
Castleconnell Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029;	Published	The overall purpose of this Local Area Plan is to set out a strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Castleconnell area.	No AA was undertaken.	No No impacts are foreseen as arising as a result of the proposed IUS due to the conceptual nature of the plan. Any projects that occur within the footprint of this plan in the future will be subject to AA and should be impacts can only be assessed then. As the Castleconnell Local Area plan contains similar high level concepts and information, in-combination impacts can arise. Thus, in-combination effects cannot arise. Therefore, no in-combination effects are foreseen.
Kilmallock Local Area Plan 2019-2028; as amended	Published	The overall purpose of this Local Area Plan is to set out a strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Kilmallock area.	No AA was undertaken.	No No impacts are foreseen as arising as a result of the proposed IUS due to the conceptual nature of the plan. Any projects that occur within the footprint of this plan in the future will be subject to AA and should be impacts can only be assessed then. As the Kilmallock Local Area plan contains similar high level concepts and information, in-combination impacts can arise. Thus, in-combination effects cannot arise. Therefore, no in-combination effects are foreseen.

Newcastle West Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029;	Published	The overall purpose of this Local Area Plan is to set out a strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Newcastle West area.	No AA was undertaken.	No	No impacts are foreseen as arising as a result of the proposed IUS due to the conceptual nature of the plan. Any projects that occur within the footprint of this plan in the future will be subject to AA and should be impacts can only be assessed then. As the Newcastle West Local Area plan contains similar high level concepts and information, in- combination impacts can arise. Thus, in- combination effects cannot arise. Therefore, no in- combination effects are foreseen.
Patrickswell Local Area Plan 2024 – 2030;	Published	The overall purpose of this Local Area Plan is to set out a strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Patrickswell area.	No AA was undertaken.	No	No impacts are foreseen as arising as a result of the proposed IUS due to the conceptual nature of the plan. Any projects that occur within the footprint of this plan in the future will be subject to AA and should be impacts can only be assessed then. As the Patrickswell Local Area plan contains similar high level concepts and information, in- combination impacts can arise. Thus, in- combination effects cannot arise. Therefore, no in- combination effects are foreseen.
Rathkeale Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029;	Published	The overall purpose of this Local Area Plan is to set out a strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Rathkeale area.	No AA was undertaken.	No	No impacts are foreseen as arising as a result of the proposed IUS due to the conceptual nature of the plan. Any projects that occur within the footprint of this plan in the future will be subject to AA and should be impacts can only be assessed then. As the Rathkeale Local Area plan contains similar high level concepts and information, in- combination impacts can arise. Thus, in- combination effects cannot arise. Therefore, no in- combination effects are foreseen.

From an evaluation of the nature of the proposed IUS, no European Sites were considered to be subject to potential cumulative or in-combination impacts which may lead to likely significant effects. As there is no potential for the proposal to result in any individual effect on any European Site, therefore it cannot contribute to any cumulative effect. There are no likely significant residual effects and no significant cumulative and/or in-combination effects on any of the QIs within the European sites identified with regard to the proposed IUS.

6 Conclusion

The proposed IUS will benefit the King's Island area through the provision of a strategy for future sustainable development.

From an evaluation of the proposal description, and the consideration of potential impact pathways with connectivity to the wider environment, there are no pathways for impacts are identified whereby direct or indirect effects may occur affecting other European sites at a distance from the proposed IUS.

On the basis of the description of the proposed extension of the IUS and taking account of the ecological information and data provided to inform this assessment, it has been evaluated that the potential for likely significant effects on the special conservation interests of SACs and SPAs within the zone of influence of this proposal can be excluded in the absence of protective measures or mitigation measures to avoid significant effects, and in view of best scientific evidence in the field.

This Screening for AA report has determined that there is no potential for significant direct, indirect or cumulative impacts which could affect the qualifying interests/special conservation interests of the European sites within the study area. It is therefore concluded, beyond reasonable scientific doubt, that the proposal will not give rise to significant effects, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, within the identified European Site(s).

On the basis of objective scientific information, this Screening has therefore excluded the potential for the proposed IUS; individually or in combination with other plans or projects, to give rise to any significant effect on a European site. Consequently, it is concluded that the IUS, does not require Appropriate Assessment.

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7 Appendix 1. AA Determination

Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination

under

Section 177U and Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended,

for the

THE KING'S ISLAND WALLED TOWN INTEGRATED URBAN STRATEGY

In order to comply with the requirements of Section 177U and Sections 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and pursuant to Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive as to whether or not a plan or project would adversely affect the integrity of any European site(s), this Appropriate Assessment determination is being made by Limerick City and County Council relating to the potential for the proposed KING'S ISLAND WALLED TOWN ENHANCED INTEGRATED URBAN STRATEGY to have any likely significant effects on any European Sites.

In carrying out this Appropriate Assessment (AA) Final Determination, the Council is taking into account the matters specified under Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

The proposed King's Island Walled Town Enhanced Integrated Urban Strategy is a high level strategy giving rise to no material change of environment and so is not of a nature, which could have a likely significant effect on the Natura 2000 Network. In-combination effects from interactions with other plans and projects were considered in this assessment.

The conclusion of the AA Screening Process is "This Screening for AA report has determined that, in the absence of mitigation, there is no potential for significant direct, indirect or cumulative impacts on the qualifying interests/special conservation interests of any European sites. It is therefore concluded, beyond reasonable scientific doubt, that the proposal will not give rise to significant effects, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, within designated European Site(s)." As such, a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment / Natura Impact Report is not required.

The undersigned, having carefully considered the information referred to above agrees with and adopts the reasoning and conclusions presented.

Signed: 
Position: Director of Services
Date: 14-04-2025

