

## **AA SCREENING DETERMINATION**

### **Athlone Canal Field Back Drain Vegetation Maintenance, Co Westmeath**

The requirement to carry out an Appropriate Assessment (AA) comes from Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. The process aims to determine whether a plan or project, alone or together with other plans and projects, is likely to have significant effects on a European Site(s). This is in view of best scientific knowledge and the conservation objectives of the site(s). European Sites are those identified as sites of European Community importance designated as Special Areas of Conservation under the Habitats Directive or as Special Protection Areas under the Birds Directive.

The above requirement has been implemented in the Republic of Ireland by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011-2021 and the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2019, as amended.

Waterways Ireland has undertaken an Appropriate Assessment screening to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge and the conservation objectives of the site, if the proposed willow clearance individually or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect on any European Sites. In this context, particular attention was paid to the European Sites listed below:

- River Shannon Callows SAC [000216]
- Middle Shannon Callows SPA [004096]

In accordance with Regulation 42(7) of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, as amended, Waterways Ireland, as a Public Authority, has made a determination following screening that an Appropriate Assessment is not required. This conclusion is determined as the project is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of any European sites and, on the basis of objective information in the field, the proposed works, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, is not likely to have a significant effect on the European site listed above. This determination is based on the limited extent and scale of the works in addition to their short duration.

Signed:



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Joe McMahon  
WI Technical Services Director, Date: February 17, 2023