

Colin Murphy

From: Christian Nea
Sent: Thursday 29 May 2025 16:37
To: O'Donoghue, Paul
Cc: Liam Duffy; ROGER RYAN (NRDO); Vincent O'Malley; Colin Murphy
Subject: FW: Re. Mullandrait Bridge (DL-N15-003.00)
Attachments: Photos_DL-N15-003.00.zip; Mullandrait Bridge (DL-N15-003.00) GIS.zip; Mullandrait Bridge (DL-N15-003.00) Non-Routine Maintenance AA Screening.xlsx

Paul,

Having performed screening for Appropriate Assessment in respect of the proposed reactive maintenance works detailed in the email received from Paul O'Donoghue dated the 21st of May 2025, and entitled 'Re. Mullandrait Bridge (DL-N15-003.00)', I accept the recommendation of AtkinsRéalis that the proposed reactive maintenance works, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, would not be likely to have a significant effect on any European site in view of the best scientific knowledge and the site's conservation objectives. I determine that an Appropriate Assessment of these proposed works is not required, as it can be excluded on the basis of objective scientific information following the screening done that the proposed works, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on any European site.

Christian Nea

From: Colin Murphy [REDACTED]
Sent: 27 May 2025 16:13
To: Christian Nea [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Re. Mullandrait Bridge (DL-N15-003.00)

Hi Christian,

I have reviewed the proposed works methodology outlined for the non-routine maintenance works on the Mullandrait Bridge.

As noted in the email below, the works will involve the repair of a section of damaged parapet, a section of damaged wing wall and the removal of debris (damaged masonry blockwork) from the watercourse following a vehicle strike. The proposed works will occur over land and over water and will require entry into the river channel.

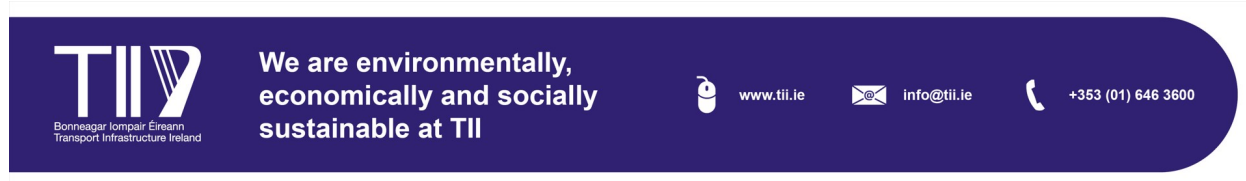
It is mentioned in the assessment that the works are situated approximately 207m upstream of the River Finn SAC and approximately 58.5km upstream of the Lough Foyle SPA. There is also hydrological connectivity to the River Foyle and Tributaries Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) in Northern Ireland, approximately 16.5km downstream from the bridge structure. The area of the River Foyle and Tributaries ASSI largely overlaps with that of the River Foyle and Tributaries SAC (NI).

The assessment notes that the instream works required to remove the debris from the watercourse are short in duration and the methodology to be followed ensures that the risk of additional debris or pollutants entering the river channel as a result of the parapet and wing wall repairs is low. Furthermore, the routine biosecurity measures to be followed ensure that the spread of invasive species will be unlikely to occur.

Based on the description of the proposed works and associated methodologies provided by AtkinsRéalis, I agree with the conclusion that the proposed works will have no significant effect on any European site.

Regards,
Colin Murphy
Ecologist
Transport Infrastructure Ireland
[REDACTED]

Address: [Parkgate Business Centre, Parkgate Place, Parkgate Street, Dublin 8, Ireland, D08 DK10](#)



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From: Christian Nea [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday 27 May 2025 13:39
To: Colin Murphy [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Re. Mullandrait Bridge (DL-N15-003.00)

Hi Colin,
Could you review and then we can discuss please?

Kind regards,

Christian

From: O'Donoghue, Paul [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday 21 May 2025 12:21
To: Christian Nea [REDACTED]
Cc: O'Donnell, Cronan [REDACTED]; Schmidt, Alec [REDACTED] Daly, Vincent [REDACTED]
Subject: Re. Mullandrait Bridge (DL-N15-003.00)

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Christian

Re. Mullandrait Bridge (DL-N15-003.00)

AtkinsRéalis have been requested to undertake Stage 1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment for the proposed non-routine maintenance at Mullandrait Bridge (DL-N15-003.00) near Stranorlar, Co. Donegal (Figure 1). The proposed non-routine maintenance involves the repair of 1 no. section of damaged parapet, 1 no. section of damaged wing wall and the removal of debris (damaged masonry blockwork) from the watercourse (Figure 2). The proposed works are not related to or directly associated with the management of any Natura 2000 site.

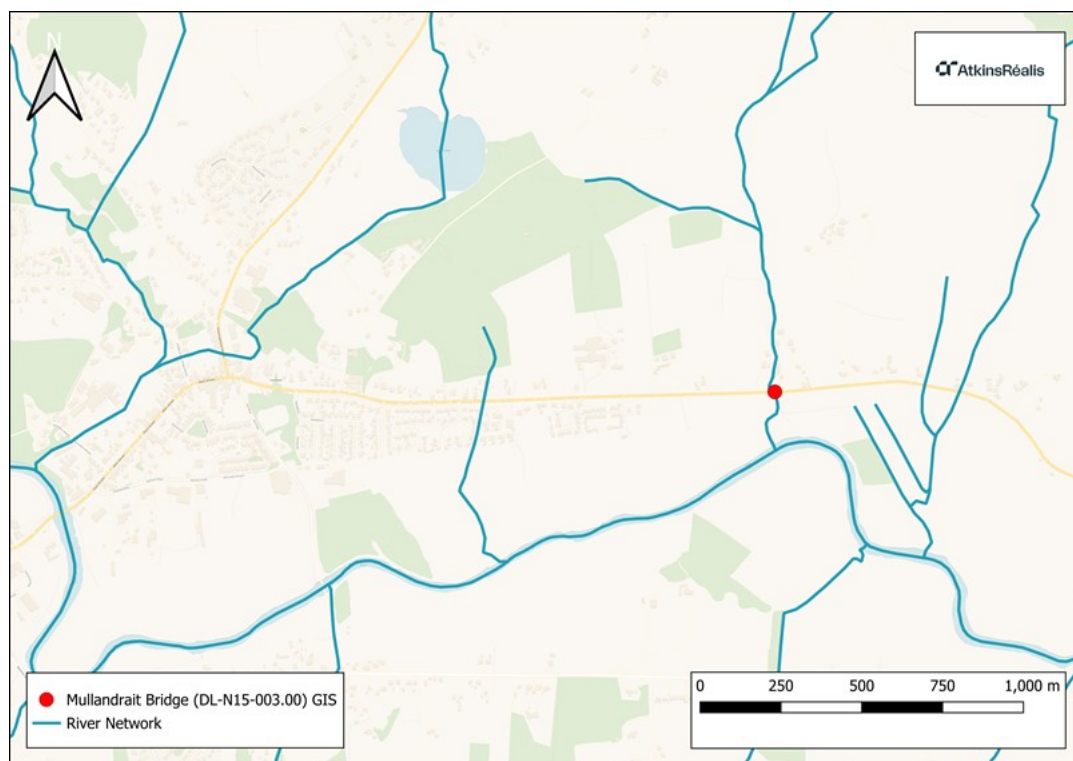


Figure 1: Location of Mullandrait Bridge (DL-N15-003.00) near Stranorlar, Co. Donegal.



Figure 2: Damaged section of the parapet to be repaired at Mullandrait Bridge, with debris in watercourse (DL-N15-003.00).

Proposed Works

A bridge strike has resulted in damage to the eastern parapet of Mullandrait Bridge, Co. Donegal. The bridge is a double-span masonry arch bridge which carries the N15 over a second-order stream (EPA Name: MULLAGHAGARRY). The Contractor has been commissioned by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) to demolish and reconstruct the damaged sections of the parapet and wing wall, and to remove the debris consisting of damaged masonry blockwork from the watercourse (see Figure 2). The damaged sections of parapet (0.42m^3) and wing wall (1.6m^2) will be taken to the road level and rebuilt to match the adjacent section of parapet / wing wall. The total area of parapet to rebuilt (including coping) measures 1.5m^3 . The total amount of debris to be removed from the watercourse measures 1.1m^3 . The proposed works will occur over land and over water and will require entry into the river channel. The Contractor is expected to mobilise in late June to early July 2025 and the proposed works are expected to occur over a period of several days. Access to the site of the proposed works will be from the N15, which will be closed to traffic from the nearside lane to facilitate access and create a staging area for the works. All plant and materials will be removed from the site upon the conclusion of the works.

Part of the proposed works will require the use of tools and machinery above the river channel. Oil absorbent booms and pads, grab ropes and silt trapping booms will be on-site as standard to ensure that there is no input of additional debris or pollutants into the river arising from the proposed works in the event of an oil leak or if silt is disturbed within the river channel. Forecasts will also be consulted prior to commencing works to ensure that cold temperatures do not compromise the structural integrity of the reconstructed parapet or that high winds and/or rain do not flush any debris or other material associated with the proposed works into the river channel.

Methodology

Pre-Works

1. Contractor to liaise with the landowner(s) for access and prior to the commencement of any works.
2. Gardaí and Donegal County Council Area Engineer to be notified of the works prior to commencement.
3. Review Temporary Traffic Management (TTM) requirements, if necessary.
4. Procure necessary materials and equipment.

Temporary Traffic Management (TTM)

1. Prior to the commencement of any works, the TTM system will be set up in accordance with the approved TTM drawing(s).

2. A single-lane closure is required during the duration of the works, including the removal of damaged blockwork from the parapet / wing wall, removal of debris from the watercourse, installation of scaffolding and reconstruction of the damaged parapet / wing wall. The TTM will be in place daily and then folded in at the end of each shift. Cone-mounted lighting will be in place overnight to increase visibility of the lane closure to road users in addition to the red/white barrier protecting the works.
3. TTM will be set up in accordance with the Subcontractor's RAMS or JCEL RAMS.

Parapet and Wing Wall Repair

1. A scaffolding unit will be erected across the span of the bridge to allow for access by personnel to the damaged sections of the parapet and wing wall from the riverside face. Edge protections along the entire length of the scaffolding unit will be in place to prevent mortar and other debris from entering the river channel. The scaffolding unit will be inspected and tagged when safe for use.
2. Damaged blockwork that has become loose from the existing parapet and wing wall or that has entered the watercourse will be demolished for removal off-site. Where possible, the damaged parapet and wing wall and the debris within the watercourse will be removed by manual means. In cases where this is not possible, a 3t excavator with a breaker will be used to break the damaged areas into manageable sections from the roadside for removal. These sections will then be loaded onto a HIAB and disposed of off-site.
3. Once in place, the mason will identify the works area and set up further protective measures such as tarpaulin / polythene where necessary to prevent debris from entering the river channel. All loose and/or damaged sections of the parapet and wing wall will be removed as needed and transformed into sound material prior to commencing the rebuild work.
4. Mortar will be mixed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and specification. A drum mixer will be set up on a firm, level base. Mortar will be mixed by gradually adding ingredients while ensuring that there is no build-up of unmixed materials on the sides of the mixer. Water will be added slowly during mixing to ensure that the effect of the added water can be seen in the mix.
5. The rebuild will continue back to the top of the parapet level / wing wall to match the adjacent sections using the same mixing process outlined above.
6. Weather conditions will be monitored so that the product does not exceed the temperature requirements and suitable control measures such as the correct storage of materials and use of hessian and polythene where low temperatures are expected.
7. When sustained rainfall is forecast or encountered, the mason will establish suitable polythene 'tenting' to protect the works from washing out during the rebuild activities. At the conclusion of each day, the completed work will be protected overnight using polythene that is weighed or tied down.
8. Once works are complete, the mason will remove the tarpaulin and dispose of any remaining debris off site. The TTM will be removed and works inspected by JCEL Engineer including the upload of photos to a Procore album.

Demobilisation

1. Once parapet and wing wall repair works have been inspected by the RE and approved, the scaffold will be taken down and loaded out for removal. The TTM will then be removed and crew / works equipment and materials will be demobilised from the site location.

Ecological Constraints

The Mullandrait Bridge lies above a second-order stream (EPA name: MULLAGHAGARRY), which is not within any Natura 2000 site(s) at this location. The site of the proposed works is situated approximately 207m upstream of the River Finn SAC and approximately 58.5km upstream of the Lough Foyle SPA. Therefore, there is hydrological connectivity between the proposed works and 2no. Natura 2000 sites.

The River Finn SAC (site code: IE002301) consists of almost the entire freshwater element of the River Finn and its tributaries; the Corlacky, the Reelan sub-catchment, the Sruhamboy, Elatagh, Cummirk and Glashagh, and also includes Lough Finn, where the river rises. The spawning grounds at the headwaters of the Mourne and Derg Rivers, Loughs Derg

and Belshade and the tidal stretch of the Foyle north of Lifford to the border are also part of the site. The River Finn SAC is designated for 4 no. habitats, namely 'Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (*Littorelletalia uniflorae*) [3110]', 'Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix* [4010]', 'Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]' and 'Transition mires and quaking bogs [7140]' (see - <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/002301>). While the site has not been visited, extensive photographs of the bridge environs were available for review. The habitats for which the SAC has been designated are not present within the vicinity of the works area. The SAC is further designated for 2 no. species, namely '*Salmo salar* (Salmon) [1106]', and '*Lutra lutra* (Otter) [1355]' (see - <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/sac/002301>). Of these species, Otter has been recorded within 2km of the bridge structure, including an otter spraint recorded at the bridge structure in 2020.

The Lough Foyle SPA (site code: IE004087) encompasses a section of the western shore of Lough Foyle from Muff to north of Vances Point in Co. Donegal. The Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) is designated for 24no. species, namely 'Red-throated Diver (*Gavia stellata*) [A001]', 'Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*) [A005]', 'Bewick's Swan (*Cygnus columbianus bewickii*) [A037]', 'Whooper Swan (*Cygnus cygnus*) [A038]', 'Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*) [A043]', 'Light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla hrota*) [A046]', 'Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*) [A048]', 'Wigeon (*Anas penelope*) [A050]', 'Teal (*Anas crecca*) [A052]', 'Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) [A053]', 'Eider (*Somateria mollissima*) [A063]', 'Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*) [A069]', 'Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*) [A130]', 'Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) [A140]', 'Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*) [A142]', 'Knot (*Calidris canutus*) [A143]', 'Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) [A149]', 'Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) [A157]', 'Curlew (*Numenius arquata*) [A160]', 'Redshank (*Tringa totanus*) [A162]', 'Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) [A179]', 'Common Gull (*Larus canus*) [A182]', 'Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*) [A184]' and 'Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]' (see- <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004087>). There are no records of these species within the vicinity of the bridge structure.

There is also hydrological connectivity to the River Foyle and Tributaries Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) in Northern Ireland, approximately 16.5km downstream from the bridge structure. The River Foyle and Tributaries ASSI includes the part of the River Finn which lies within Northern Ireland, the River Mourne and its tributary the River Strule (up to its confluence with the Owenkillew River) and the River Derg, along with two of its sub-tributaries, the Mourne Beg River and the Glendergan River. In total, the area encompasses approximately 120km of watercourse and is designated for the physical diversity and naturalness of the banks and channels, especially in the upper reaches, and the richness and naturalness of its plant and animal communities, in particular the population of Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*). The area of the River Foyle and Tributaries ASSI largely overlaps with that of the River Foyle and Tributaries SAC (NI). The SAC is designated for 1no. habitat, namely 'Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculus fluitantis* and *Callitriche-Batrachion* vegetation [3260]'. This habitat does not occur within the vicinity of the bridge structure. The SAC is also designated for 6no. Species, namely 'River Lamprey (*Lampetra fluviatilis*) [1099]', 'Brook Lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*) [1096]', Otter (*Lutra lutra*) [1355]', Freshwater Pearl Mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*) [1029]', 'Sea Lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*) [1095]' and 'Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*) [1106]'. Of these species, only Otter (*Lutra lutra*) has been recorded within the vicinity of the bridge structure.

The water quality of the EPA-named MULLAGHAGARRY stream was monitored under the Water Framework Directive (2016-2021) and assessed as 'Moderate'. The latest Q-Value for water quality at the closest monitoring station to the proposed works, 1.53km upstream of the bridge structure, on the River Finn, was assessed as 4 / 'Good' in 2022.

There are no records of Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*) occurring within the stream, although with suitable spawning ground is present at numerous sites along the River Finn. Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) were contacted in relation to the proposed works and no additional works or environmental protection measures were required. As noted previously, instream works are required; however, given that the existing debris is blocking a significant cross-section of the river, its removal will improve the passage of any fish present within the watercourse. Furthermore, manual means of removal will be preferred over mechanical where possible and all necessary precautions are to be taken to prevent any material falling into the river during works.

Records of protected species including Common Frog (*Rana temporaria*), Eurasian Otter (*Lutra lutra*), and Eurasian Badger (*Meles meles*) exist within 1km of the site of the proposed works. Records of high-impact invasive species within 1km of

the proposed works include New Zealand Flatworm (*Arthurdendyus triangulatus*) (Source: NBDC Biodiversity Maps - <https://maps.biodiversityireland.ie/Map/Terrestrial/Dataset/397>). The routine biosecurity measures to be followed would ensure that the inadvertent spread of such species is avoided. The bridge structure was last surveyed for bat roost potential in 2020, for which no suitable crevices were identified, and risk of potential disturbance is further minimised given that there are no proposed works to the arch. [REDACTED]

Attached to this Stage 1 Screening are: -

- Bridge Location – Mullandrait Bridge (DL-N15-003.00) GIS.zip
- AA Screening – Mullandrait Bridge (DL-N15-003.00) Non-Routine Maintenance AA Screening.xlsx
- Photos of Damage– Photos_ DL-N15-003.00.zip

[Note: The 2nd tab of the attached spreadsheet shows the most recent AA Screening from 2025].

Screening Determination

The proposed works will not occur within any Natura 2000 site. The site of the proposed works is ca. 207.1m from 1 no. designated site, the River Finn SAC. There is also hydrological connectivity to the Lough Foyle SPA (>30km downstream from bridge structure) and 2no. protected areas within Northern Ireland (16.5km upstream of River Foyle and Tributaries ASSI, and River Foyle and Tributaries SAC). Instream works are required to remove the debris from the watercourse; the works are of a short duration and the methodology to be followed ensures that the risk of additional debris or pollutants entering the river channel as a result of the parapet and wing wall repairs is low. The removal of debris from the watercourse will restore the stream's normal capability for fish passage. Otter, which is a Qualifying Interest of the River Finn SAC, and for which records exist in the vicinity of the bridge structure, will not be impacted by the proposed works. The immediate area surrounding the bridge is unsuitable for holting, and the removal of the existing debris is a positive intervention as it will restore the stream's normal flow pattern. Furthermore, the routine biosecurity measures to be followed ensure that the spread of invasive species will be unlikely to occur.

This Stage 1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment is based on the best available scientific information. If the scope of the proposed works changes, a new screening determination may be required. It is concluded that the works, as currently proposed, will result in no likely significant effects on the aforementioned Natura 2000 sites, either alone or in combination with other projects. Thus, it is recommended that it is not necessary for the proposed project to proceed to Appropriate Assessment.

Don't hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Regards

Paul O'Donoghue BSc MSc PhD MCIEEM CEnV
Associate Director (Ecologist)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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