

## Colin Murphy

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**From:** Vincent O'Malley  
**Sent:** Thursday 18 September 2025 12:15  
**To:** Colin Murphy  
**Subject:** RE: Re. New Bridge (GC-N63-013.00)

Colin,

Having reviewed the content of your email, I accept the reasoned determination as set out below.

Sincerely  
Vincent

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*Dr Vincent O'Malley*  
*Head of Environmental Policy & Compliance,*  
*Transport Infrastructure Ireland*  
[www.tii.ie](http://www.tii.ie)

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**From:** Colin Murphy [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday 18 September 2025 08:14  
**To:** Vincent O'Malley [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Christian Nea [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: Re. New Bridge (GC-N63-013.00)

Hi Vincent,

We have received an AA screening from AtkinsRéalis for proposed non-routine maintenance at New Bridge (GC-N63-013.00) situated just south of the village of Newbridge, Co. Galway. I would be grateful if you could review the information below and provide a reasoned determination.

As noted below, the proposed works involves the repair to the bridge parapet, following a vehicular strike. The repair works will involve a like-for-like parapet repair with stone masonry and NHL5 mortar. Re-use the existing stone masonry where possible. Damaged masonry units will be replaced with similar stone. Part of the proposed works will require the use of tools and machinery adjacent to a 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. In stream works will be very limited with no heavy machinery access allowed. The Contractor is expected to mobilise in mid-September 2025 and the proposed works are expected to occur over a period of four days. Access to the site of the proposed works will be from the N63, which will be closed to traffic from the nearside (westbound) 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.

The New Bridge lies over the River Shevin which is situated approximately 8.5km upstream of the River Suck Callows SPA. Therefore, there is hydrological connectivity between the proposed works and one

no. Natura 2000 site. The River Suck Callows SPA is designated for 6 SCI species, including waterbird and wader species and supporting wetland habitat.

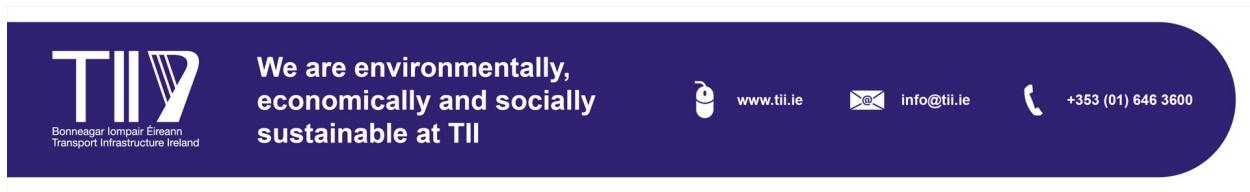
As noted below, AtkinsRéalis have determined the works will not result in likely significant effects on any European site due to 'the fact there will be limited instream works, the remote hydrological connectivity to the nearest European Sites and the standard works methodology that will risk of additional debris or pollutants entering the river channel is low'.

Based on the description of the proposed works and associated methodologies provided by Atkins Réalis, along with the small nature and scale and short duration and best practice methodologies that will reduce the potential for impacts on the river, I agree with the conclusion that the proposed works will not lead to likely significant effects on the River Suck Callows SPA any other Natura 2000 site.

Having performed screening for Appropriate Assessment in respect of the proposed emergency repair works detailed in the Appropriate Assessment Screening received in an email from Paul O'Donoghue dated the 8<sup>th</sup> of September 2025, and entitled 'New Bridge (GC-N63-013.00)', I accept the recommendation of AtkinsRéalis that the proposed 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.

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:** O'Donoghue, Paul [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday 8 September 2025 12:32  
**To:** Christian Nea [REDACTED]; Colin Murphy [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** ROGER RYAN (NRDO) [REDACTED]; THOMAS KERR (NRDO) [REDACTED]; Schmidt, Alec [REDACTED]; Chambers, Mark [REDACTED]; Jennings, Martin [REDACTED]; Gilsenan, Mark [REDACTED]; Healy, Colm [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re. New Bridge (GC-N63-013.00)

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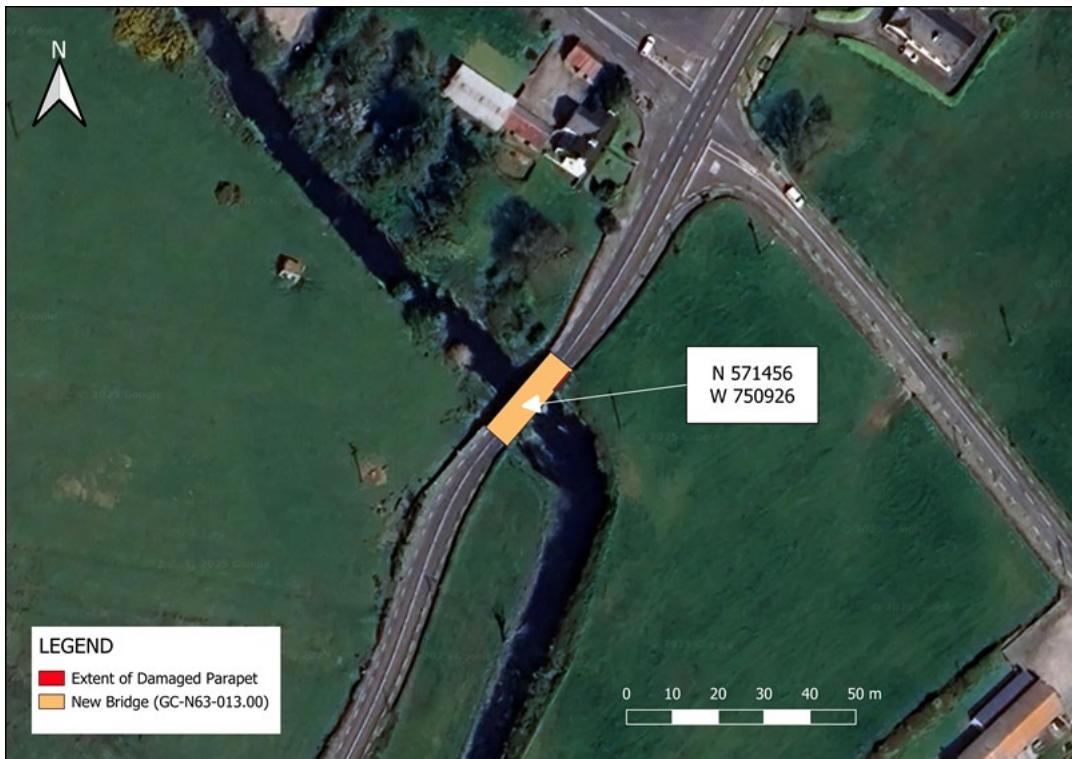
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Christian / Colin

Re. New Bridge (GC-N63-013.00)

AtkinsRéalis have been requested to undertake Stage 1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment for the proposed non-routine maintenance at New Bridge (GC-N63-013.00) situated just south of the village of Newbridge, Co. Galway (Figure 1). The proposed non-routine maintenance involves the repair of a damaged section of parapet (Figure 2). The proposed works are not related to or directly associated with the management of any Natura 2000 site(s).



**Figure 1:** Location of New Bridge (GC-N63-013.00) near Newbridge, Co. Galway. [Coordinates in ITM. Basemap: Google].



**Figure 2:** Damaged section of the parapet at New Bridge (GC-N63-013.00).

#### Proposed Works

A vehicular impact has resulted in damage along the eastern parapet of New Bridge (GC-N63-013.00), near the village of Newbridge, Co. Galway. The bridge is a five-span masonry arch bridge which carries the N63 over the River Shiven. The Contractor has been commissioned by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) to demolish and reconstruct the damaged section of the parapet (see Figure 2). The full scope of works is as follows: -

- A like-for-like parapet repair with stone masonry and NHL5 mortar. To re-use the existing stone masonry where possible. Damaged masonry units to be replaced with similar stone.
- 7.8m length of parapet shall be rebuilt, i.e. between the masonry blocks placed on top of the parapet in Figure 2. The parapet is to be built up from sound masonry only (not cracked or loose).
- The parapet is 1.0 to 1.2m high and 0.45m wide. The expected volume of masonry to be rebuilt is approx. 4.1m<sup>3</sup>.

The proposed works will occur at height and adjacent to a watercourse. The Contractor is expected to mobilise in mid-September 2025 and the proposed works are expected to occur over a period of four days. Access to the site of the proposed works will be from the N63, which will be closed to traffic from the nearside (westbound) 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 adjacent to a 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 notify the landowner for access and receive approval from relevant stakeholders (IFI, TII, MCC, etc.) prior to the commencement of any works.
2. Gardaí and Galway County Council Area Engineer to be notified of the works prior to commencement.
3. Review and prepare 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 will be required for the duration of the works. This will be set up for the initial clearance of damaged masonry in the riverbed, scaffold install and subsequent masonry repairs to the parapet. TTM set up will be in accordance with the Subcontractor's Risk Assessment & Method Statement (RAMS).
3. With TTM in place, excavator/tractor/trailer will be positioned within the lane closure. Utilizing the grab and/or bucket, damaged parapet & wingwall sections will be lifted up to road level and loaded out for disposal. Material that can be salvaged will be staged on the road and sorted for reuse.
4. Once the riverbed is clear, the scaffold material will be offloaded at the work location. Scaffold gang will then build out the access platform while following their specific RAMS. On completion, the scaffold will be inspected and tagged for use.

### Parapet Repair

1. Once in place, the mason will identify the works area and set up controls such as tarpaulin/polythene to catch debris on the scaffold and prevent material from falling into the river. All loose/damaged stone and mortar will be removed as needed back to sound construction prior to commencing rebuild work. If necessary, vegetation will be removed from existing construction, the joints are to be routed out with a wire brush and cleaned by hand. The joints shall then be dampened and newly mixed lime mortar placed and pointed to match existing joints of the masonry and brushed back to the desired finish.

2. 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. A conventional cement mixer can be used although for larger projects a paddle mixer is preferable. Measuring the material for mixing is to be done be with a gauging box or bucket for consistency with quantities.
3. Where rebuilding is required, existing stones are to be used to rebuild. If there is a shortfall in stone, supplementary stone will be sourced to match existing as best as possible. Mason will remove the existing stones one by one, cleaned off on the surface and set to one side. The stones will be removed down to a suitable course or the foundation as required. The mason will mix mortar as prescribed above and rebuild the stone with mortar bedding and pointing between stones to match existing.
4. Weather conditions to be monitored so that the product does not exceed these requirements and suitable control measures put in place such as correct storage of materials and use of hessian and polythene where low temperatures are expected/experienced.
5. When sustained rainfall is forecast/encountered, mason to set up suitable polythene "tenting" to protect works from washing out during pointing/rebuild activities. Completed work for the day to be protected with polythene overnight ensuring it is correctly weighed or tied down.
6. Where cold weather conditions are to be encountered, protect the build overnight using hessian sheeting.
7. Testing for flexural and compressive strength will be conducted as required by Appendix 24/1 of the Specification. Employer's Representative (ER) to be invited for attendance when sampling and making prisms. In consultation with test house, care to be taken with prism samples so they are correctly transported and stored prior to testing.
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 repair works have been inspected by the Resident Engineer (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 New Bridge lies above the River Shevin, which does not lie within a Natura 2000 site at this location. The bridge is situated approximately 8.5km upstream of the River Suck Callows SPA. Therefore, there is hydrological connectivity between the proposed works and one no. Natura 2000 site.

The River Suck Callows SPA (site code: 004097) is a linear, sinuous site comprising a section of the River Suck from Castlecoote, Co. Roscommon to its confluence with the River Shannon close to Shannonbridge, a distance of approximately 70 km along the course of the river. The SPA is designated for 6 no. Qualifying Interest species, namely 'Whooper Swan (*Cygnus cygnus*)' [A038], 'Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*)' [A140], 'Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*)' [A142], 'Greenland White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons flavirostris*)' [A395], 'Wigeon (*Mareca penelope*)' [A855], 'Wetland and Waterbirds' [A999]. (see - <https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/spa/004097>). While the site has not been visited, extensive photographs of the bridge environs were available for review. There are no records of these Qualifying Interest species in the vicinity of the bridge structure.

The water quality of the River Shevin was monitored under the Water Framework Directive (2016-2021) and assessed as 'Good'. The closest Q-Value monitoring station lies within 50m downstream of the bridge structure and was last monitored in 2005, receiving a Q-Value score of 4 / 'Good'. A monitoring station located 3.4km downstream of the bridge was monitored more recently in 2023, also receiving a Q-Value score of 4 / 'Good'. As mentioned previously, there are no in-stream works and any access into the watercourse would be brief and minimally intrusive (such as to retrieve a small amount of fallen stonework).

Records of protected species including Common Frog (*Rana temporaria*), Eurasian Otter (*Lutra lutra*), Brown Long-eared Bat (*Plecotus auritus*), Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) exist within 1km of the site of the proposed works. The bridge structure was last surveyed for the presence of such bats in 2021, when it was deemed that the existing guniting of the arch barrels was not conducive to supporting bat roosts of any capacity. There are no records of any high-impact invasive species within the vicinity of the bridge structure (Source: NBDC Biodiversity Maps - <https://maps.biodiversityireland.ie/Map/Terrestrial/Dataset/397>). Furthermore, the routine biosecurity measures to be followed would ensure that the inadvertent spread of such species is avoided.

Attached to this Stage 1 Screening are: -

- Bridge Location – New Bridge (GC-N63-013.00) GIS.zip
- AA Screening – New Bridge (GC-N63-013.00) Non-Routine Maintenance AA Screening.xlsx
- Photos of Damage– Photos\_ GC-N63-013.00.zip
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*[Note: The 2nd tab of the attached spreadsheet shows the most recent AA Screening from 2024].*

#### **Screening Determination**

The proposed works will not occur within a designated site. There is hydrological connectivity (although remote) to the River Suck Callows SPA, which is situated ca. 8.5km downstream of the bridge. There are no instream works; works will be undertaken from the roadside or from a scaffolding unit established on the riverbank (at most minimal in-stream access may be required to install the scaffolding unit and to collect any fallen stonework that has entered 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 is low. Furthermore, the routine biosecurity measures to be followed ensure that the spread of invasive species will be unlikely to occur. Otter, while present in the River Shevin, is not a Qualifying Interest of the relevant Natura 2000 sites, and there is unlikely to be any impact from the works due to the lack of couching sites and extensive in-stream works. The bridge is located in the vicinity of the small rural village of Newbridge and thus experiences a relatively low level of traffic. Works will be during daylight hours. This, in-combination with the lack of in-stream works, will not lead to any significant disturbance. Thus, no significant impact on Natura 2000 sites is predicted.

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.

Regards

Paul

**Paul O'Donoghue** BSc MSc PhD MCIEEM CEnv

Associate Director (Ecologist)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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