

## Nea Christian

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**From:** O'Malley Vincent  
**Sent:** Thursday 6 February 2020 16:06  
**To:** Nea Christian  
**Subject:** RE: Re. Reactive Maintenance works at MO-N26-008.00 Cloongullaun Bridge

Christian,  
Further to a review of the assessments provided by Atkins, I am happy to accept the reasoned determination set out below.  
Sincerely  
Vincent

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Dr. Vincent O'Malley,  
Head of Environmental Policy & Compliance,  
Parkgate Business Centre,  
Parkgate Street,  
Dublin,  
D08 DK10,  
Ireland,

[www.tii.ie](http://www.tii.ie)

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**From:** Nea Christian [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday 6 February 2020 12:05  
**To:** O'Malley Vincent [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: Re. Reactive Maintenance works at MO-N26-008.00 Cloongullaun Bridge

Vincent,

Having reviewed Paul's email below (and having regard to previous correspondence) and noting the very minor nature of the works, I recommend that the following reasoned determination can be made:

***Having performed screening for Appropriate Assessment in respect of the proposed reactive maintenance works detailed in the email received from Paul O'Donoghue PhD dated the 30<sup>th</sup> of January 2020, and entitled 'Re. Reactive Maintenance works at MO-N26-008.00 Cloongullaun Bridge', I accept the recommendations of Atkins Limited 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.***

Kind regards,

Christian.

Christian Nea B.E., LL.B., LL.M., C.Eng., M.I.E.I.  
Chartered Engineer

Senior Engineer (Environment)  
Environmental Policy and Compliance Section,  
Transport Infrastructure Ireland, Parkgate Business Centre, Parkgate Street, Dublin 8.

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**From:** O'Donoghue, Paul [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Thursday 30 January 2020 16:08

**To:** Nea Christian [REDACTED]; O'Malley Vincent [REDACTED]

**Cc:** [REDACTED]

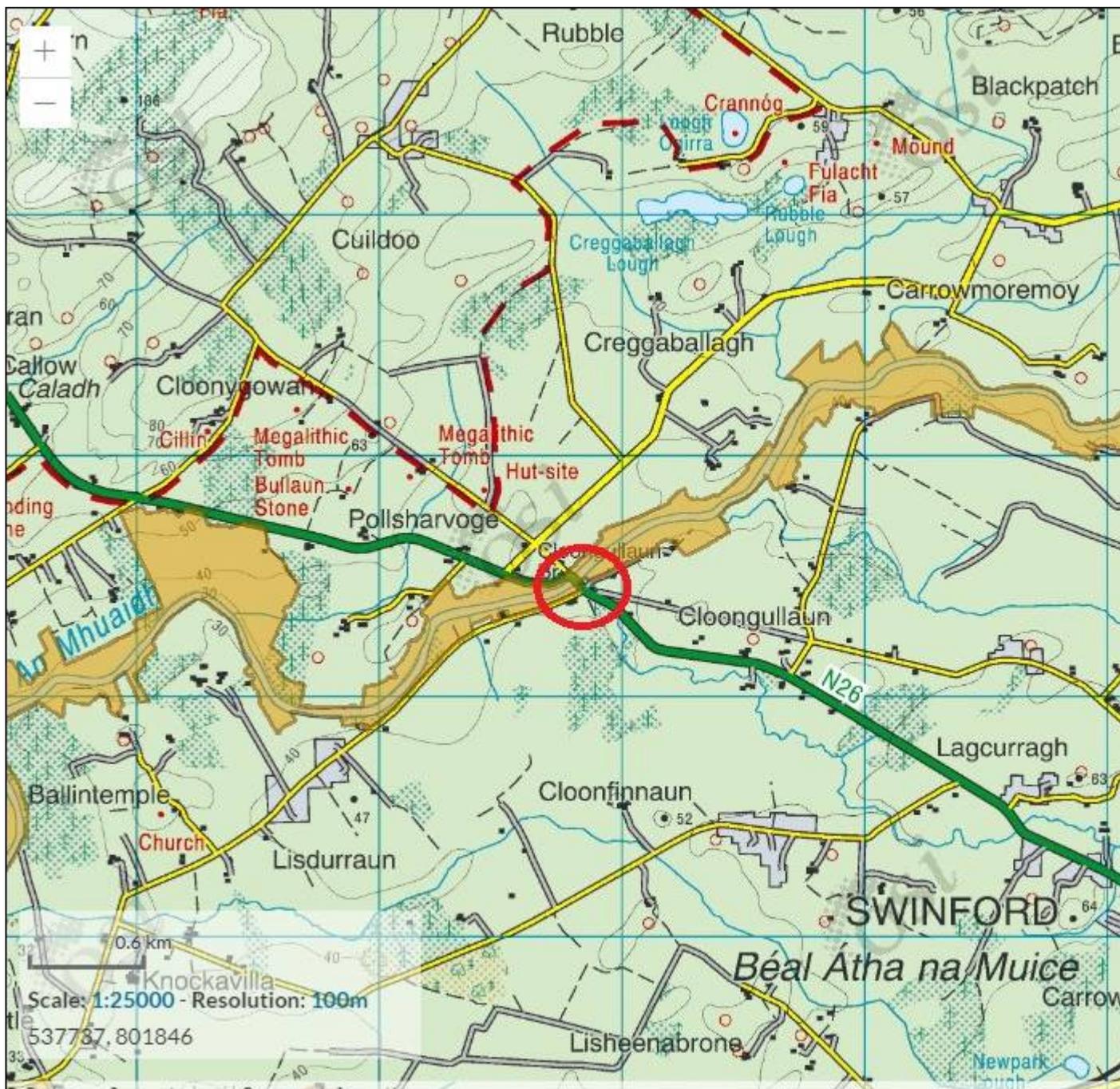
**Subject:** Re. Reactive Maintenance works at MO-N26-008.00 Cloongullaun Bridge

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Christian

Re. Reactive Maintenance works at MO-N26-008.00 Cloongullaun Bridge

The structure location is illustrated here (bridge location circled in Red).



[Source: NBDC online maps]

Clongullaun Bridge is located on the N26 in Clongullaun, Co. Mayo 3.5km north-west of Swinford town. It spans the River Moy a fifth order river. This is the main channel of the Moy which flows out into Killala Bay circa 42km downstream. At Clongullaun Bridge the Moy is part of the River Moy SAC (002298).

#### Proposed Works:

Removal of 1 large tree which has fallen and entered the water course across the arch span on the upstream elevation. The Contractor proposes to access left hand bank looking downstream (upstream side) through field/amenity grassland (refer also attached photo 1938.jpg) with a 13T excavator and track to the edge of the riverbank (refer also attached photo 1950.jpg). A Contractor operative will walk through the river wearing waders and place a chain around the tree and the excavator to then pull the tree to the river bank. The tree will then be cut into sections on the river bank and removed from site. Work will take up to 1 day to complete.

## Ecological Characteristics

As noted above the bridge is located within the River Moy SAC (002298) and is upstream of the Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SAC (000458) SAC and Killala Bay/Moy Estuary SPA (004036) SPA. The bridge is also upstream of the Moy Valley and Killala Bay/Moy Estuary pNHA.

### Qualifying interest of the River Moy SAC

[1092] White-clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*)

[1095] Sea Lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*)

[1096] Brook Lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*)

[1106] Salmon (*Salmo salar*)

[1355] Otter (*Lutra lutra*)

[7110] Active raised bogs\*

[7120] Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration

[7150] Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion

[7230] Alkaline fens

[91A0] Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles

[91E0] Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae)\*

At this point the main channel of the River Moy is designated under the Salmonid Regulations (S.I. No. 293 of 1988). Downstream of the bridge the IFI carried out fish stock assessments at Gweestion in 2010, where the river was found to have good ecological status for fish. High number of salmon were recorded in multiple age ranges. All three species of lamprey have been recorded in the main channel of the Moy (O'Connor, 2004). White-clawed crayfish has been recorded 100m upstream of the Moy River by EPA Biologists in 2010 - on the Swinford River. There are historical records of otter spraints upstream of bridge from 1980 (Otter survey of Ireland 1982 - Vincent Wildlife Trust). Otter has been widely recorded in this catchment and it is likely that they use the river for foraging and commuting.

Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) or Indian balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) have not been recorded from the bridge location (Source: NBDC).

Water quality data from Cloongullaun Bridge recorded by the EPA gave a score of Q4-5 (High) at the bridge; decreasing to a value of Q4 (Good) immediately downstream of the bridge. The river has been give 'Good' status under WFD monitoring WFD monitoring 2013-2018.

## N26 at Cloongullane

### *Pearl Mussel*

A Realignment of the N26 at Cloongullaun, Swinford, Co. Mayo has been proposed by Mayo County Council. As part of the associated ecological assessment a Freshwater pearl mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*) survey of an 820m stretch of the Moy River at Cloongullane was undertaken by Eugene Ross (Freshwater Bivalve Investigations Ltd.) on behalf of Roughtan O'Donovan (for Mayo County Council) in 2018 (Ross, 2018 in ROD, 2018). This started a short distance upstream of the existing Cloongulluan bridge and extended just over 700m downstream of the bridge (a total length of 820m); the area within which the tree is located was therefore covered by this survey.

No live pearl mussel were recorded. Dead shells were however recorded; these were occasionally common or abundant in some areas. All appeared to have been dead for several years. With respect to habitat conditions, Stations 3 & 4, immediately upstream and downstream of the bridge were mostly unsuitable for

pearl mussel due to the presence of bedrock and mobile substrates ( [REDACTED] [REDACTED] ). In general the habitat conditions observed over the 820m survey area were not ideal for pearl mussel, with virtually all areas showing heavy growth of filamentous algae and heavy silt; as well as significant areas of exposed bedrock (ROD, 2018). Away from bedrock river substrate tended to be unstable, consisting of mobile boulders, cobble and gravel.

Ross (2018) notes that it is not known if pearl mussel are located downstream of the 820m survey stretch; dead shells have, however, been recorded. All due care will be taken in removal of the tree from the river.

#### References: -

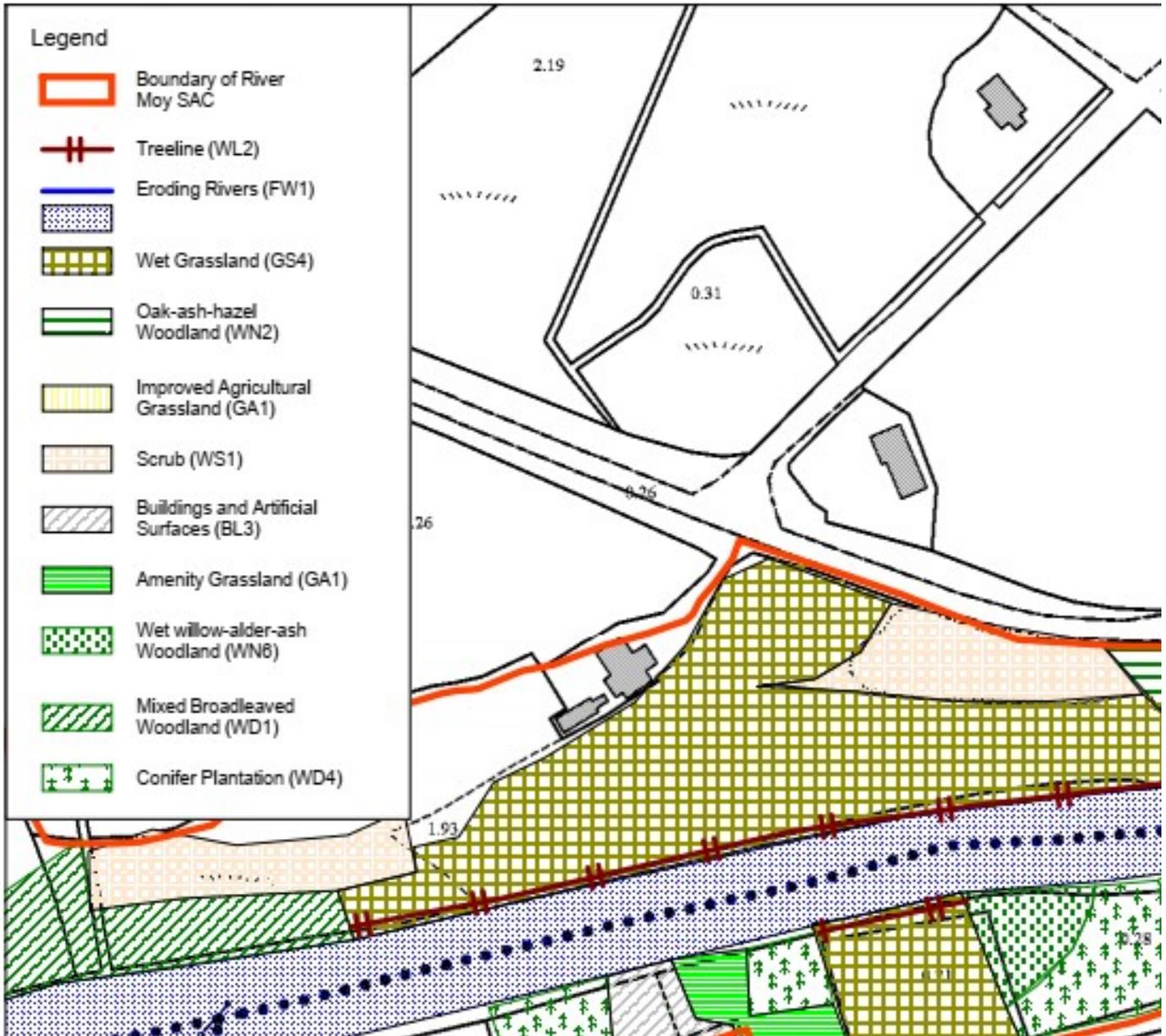
Ross, E. (2018). A freshwater pearl mussel survey of an 820m stretch of the Moy River at Cloongullane, Co. Mayo in advance of works associated with the realignment of the N26. Report prepared for Mayo County Council / Roughan O'Donovan Consulting Engineers.

ROD (2018). *Proposed Realignment of the N26 at Cloongullane, Swinford. Natura Impact Statement*. Prepared for Mayo County Council.

#### ***Alluvial Woodland***

In addition to pearl mussel, clarification was also sought regarding the distribution and status of Annex I Alluvial Woodland 91E0. Included below is a habitat map included in an AA Screening of proposed ground investigation works prepared by MKOS (May 2015). As you can see the right hand bank (looking downstream) includes areas of oak-ash-hazel woodland (WN2). There is no alluvial woodland on the northern bank of the existing bridge. However, due to the presence of WN2 woodland access is not permitted from the northern bank

On the southern bank the bridge is adjoined by an area of amenity grassland and built land. Access to the fallen tree is proposed from this point. There is no alluvial woodland at this location.



### Otter

Evidence of Otter was recorded on both the Moy and Swinford River by Woodrow Ecology on behalf of ROD. There was no evidence of a holt close to the bridge. Numerous signs were recorded, especially on the south bank of the river close to the areas of wet woodland at a distance from where the tree and access area is located. The duration of works is such that negative impacts on otter are not anticipated.

In summary, negative impacts to the qualifying interests of River Moy SAC are not anticipated.

### Atkins Findings -

This Screening for Appropriate Assessment is based on the best available scientific information. It is concluded that the proposed project poses no likely significant effects on Natura 2000 sites. Thus, it is recommended that it is not necessary for the proposed project to proceed to Appropriate Assessment.

### Findings of TII Appropriate Assessment -

Can you please provide a Reasoned Determination?

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**Paul O' Donoghue** *BSc PhD CEnV MIEEM*  
Principal Ecologist  
Ireland

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