

Nea Christian

From: O'Malley Vincent
Sent: Friday 20 December 2019 16:37
To: Nea Christian
Subject: RE: Re. Reactive Maintenance works at Diffreen River Bridge (LM-N16-015.00)

Christian,
Having reviewed the attachments, I am happy to accept the reasoned determination set out below.
Sincerely
Vincent

From: Nea Christian [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday 20 December 2019 16:30
To: O'Malley Vincent [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Re. Reactive Maintenance works at Diffreen River Bridge (LM-N16-015.00)

Vincent,
Having reviewed Paul's email below (with figures attached) and having regard to the 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 20th of December, 2019, and entitled 'Re. Reactive Maintenance works at Diffreen River Bridge (LM-N16-015.00)', 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.

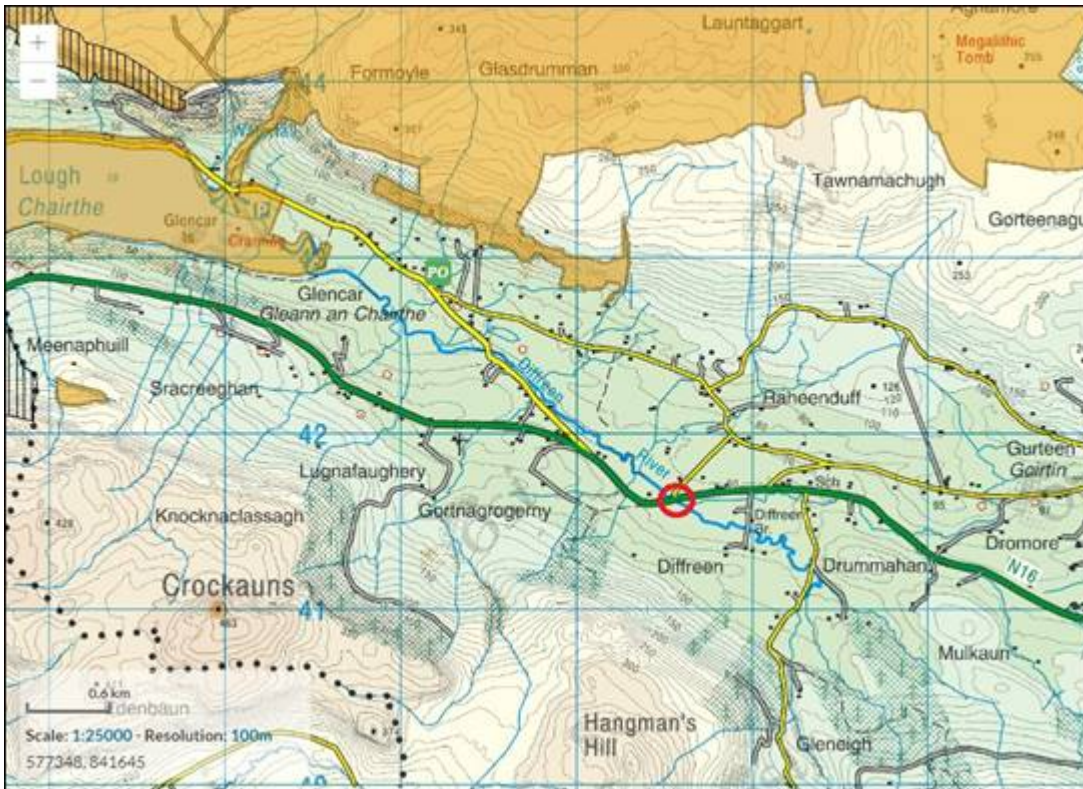
From: O'Donoghue, Paul [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 December 2019 12:52
To: O'Malley Vincent [REDACTED]; Nea Christian [REDACTED]
Cc: Phelan Sarah-Jane [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: Re. Reactive Maintenance works at Diffreen River Bridge (LM-N16-015.00)

Vincent / Christian

Sorry about the last minute email. Some trees came down night before last at a site in Leitrim and the Contractor would like to remove.

Re. Reactive Maintenance works at Diffreen River Bridge (LM-N16-015.00)

The structure location is illustrated here (bridge location circled in Red) – on the N16 east of Glencar Lough, Co. Leitrim.



Diffreen River Bridge is located on the N16 in Driffreen, Co. Leitrim; 10km west of Manorhamilton town. It spans the Diffreen River which is the main inflow to the Glencar lake. It ultimately outflows to the Drumcliff River and Estuary. The Glencar Lake is designated as Ben Bulbin, Gleniff and Glenade Complex SAC (000623); while Drumcliff Bay is designated as Cummeen Strand/Drumcliff Bay (Sligo Bay) SAC (000627) and Drumcliff Bay SPA (004013). The bridge is 2.6km upstream of the Ben Bulbin, Gleniff and Glenade Complex SAC boundary.

Proposed Works: 2 large trees have fallen and entered the water course on the upstream side of the bridge measuring 40m² (20m² X 2) - see attached photos. In order to prevent the buildup of further debris or damage to the bridge from material becoming wedged / backed up on the bridge it is proposed to remove the trees as soon as is practical. The Contractor envisages this would take 3 men to complete the task; 1 man cutting using a chain saw and 2 removing the debris / off cuts. It will all be completed by hand without the use of any plant. Access will be from the bank of the stream into the water and it will probably take 1 full day to safely complete the work.

Ecological Characteristics

The bridge is not within a SAC or SPA; nor is it within a NHA/pNHA. It spans the main channel of the Diffreen River which ultimately flows into Glencar Lake; this in turn discharges to the Drumcliff River and Estuary. As noted above the bridge is 2.6km upstream of the Ben Bulbin, Gleniff and Glenade Complex SAC (this site is also a pNHA).

Qualifying interests of the Ben Bulbin, Gleniff and Glenade Complex SAC are as follows: -

- [3260] Floating River Vegetation
- [4010] Wet Heath
- [4030] Dry Heath
- [4060] Alpine and Subalpine Heaths

- [5130] Juniper Scrub
- [6210] Orchid-rich Calcareous Grassland*
- [6230] Species-rich Nardus Grassland*
- [6430] Hydrophilous Tall Herb Communities
- [7220] Petrifying Springs*
- [7140] Transition Mires
- [7230] Alkaline Fens
- [8110] Siliceous Scree
- [8120] Calcareous Scree
- [8210] Calcareous Rocky Slopes
- [1013] Geyer's Whorl Snail (*Vertigo geyeri*)
- [1355] Otter (*Lutra lutra*)

None of the habitats for which the Ben Bulbin, Gleniff and Glenade Complex SAC has been designated occur at Drifteen Bridge. From photos of the site no Floating River Vegetation appears to be present within the river at this location or immediately downstream of the bridge; the removal of the blockage would be beneficial for instream vegetation.

Otter (*Lutra lutra*): signs of otter have been recorded within the Glencar Lough area. Otter has been recorded at a bridge over the Diffreen River in 1998 (Source: NBDC; Atlas of Mammals in Ireland 2010-2015). Otter is likely to use the river at the proposed location. However, the tree is currently partially blocking free passage under the bridge. Its removal would therefore be of benefit to otter.

Geyer's Whorl Snail (*Vertigo eyeri*) has not been recorded at the Bridge or within the Diffreen River, records are present for *Vertigo* west of the works (G7542; Source: NBDC; All Ireland Non-Marine Molluscan Database); however this area has no connectivity with the works site.

The Diffreen River is not designated under the Salmonid Regulations; nor does it support populations of Freshwater pearl mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*). The bridge is not in a *Margaritifera* Sensitive Area.

White clawed crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*) has been recorded downstream of Glencar Lough and in the neighbouring Bonet_SC_010 sub-catchment; however it has not been recorded within the Diffreen River.

Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) or Giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) have not been recorded from the bridge location (Source: NBDC). Indian balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) has been recorded in a 2km grid square (G74V) encompassing the bridge; this record dates from 1987 – 1999. On viewing google street view no Indian balsam was visible (imagery date – May 2018).

Water quality on the stream – labelled by the EPA as DIFFREEN_010 – is detailed as ‘*Not at Risk*’ under the Water Framework Direct risk assessment of river and has been classified as ‘*High*’ status during WFD monitoring 2010-2015. The nearest EPA monitoring station is on the Diffreen River at a ‘Bridge u/s Glencar Lake’ which is downstream of the bridge and in 2018 water quality at this location was Q4.

There are no works to the bridge itself – while the obstruction is predominantly upstream of the bridge - hence no risk to bats from its removal.

Drifteen Bridge is located upriver from Sracreeghan Bridge – repairs to the wall at Sracreeghan Bridge have been the subject of a Natura Impact Statement. There will be no overlap in timing of works.

Diffreen Bridge Upstream (Google Street View June 2018)



Diffreen Bridge Downstream (Google Street View June 2018)



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?

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

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