

Paula O'Toole
Maritime Usage Licensing Team
Maritime Area Regulatory Authority
2nd Floor, Menapia House, Drinagh Business Park,
Drinagh, Wexford.
Y35RD29

Date: 18/08/2026
Ref: 20.138
Re: MUL260005
Subject: Request for Additional Information

Dear Ms O'Toole,

On behalf of Wexford County Council, I refer to the Request for Additional Information received from the Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA) on the 05/08/2026 regarding Maritime Usage Licence Application Reference: MUL260005.

- 1) I confirm that there is no requirement to apply for a derogation licence under Regulation 54 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, as amended, for the project. Please refer to Section 5.0 of the *Risk Assessment for Annex IV Species* report, which can be found in Attachment 4.4 of the MUL260005 Application Pack.
- 2) I confirm that the saltmarsh habitat, which was identified during habitat surveys undertaken for the proposed works, was recorded along the southern boundary of the proposed MUL area, on the northern side of the existing stone wall which separates the marine and terrestrial environments (Figure 1). Surveying for salt marsh habitat was undertaken on the 19/04/2024 by ROD Ecologists. Species recorded in the Lower salt marsh (CM1) habitat included Common Saltmarsh grass (*Puccinellia maritima*) and Sea-purslane (*Atriplex portulacoides*). Note the habitat was limited in its extent and considered to be species poor. This habitat corresponds to Atlantic Salt Marsh (1330) which is a Qualifying Interest of the Slaney River Valley SAC.
- 3) Information on the otter and bird surveys undertaken for the project can be found in Sections 2.6.4 and 2.6.5 of the SISSA Report, respectively. Further information on these surveys is described below.
 - a. Otter survey methodology followed the *Guidelines for the Treatment of Otters prior to the Construction of National Road Schemes*. CC-ENV-01104 (TII, 2006). Otter surveys were conducted on the 19/04/2024 and the 04/12/2025. The otter survey was carried out on the site of the proposed Irish National Heritage Park, plus a 50m buffer surrounding the Irish National Heritage Park boundary, where accessible. Terrestrial habitats surveyed as part of the survey included the woodlands and scrublands on the northern side of the existing R730. No evidence of otter, other than a live otter sighting on the 04/12/2025 in addition to ad hoc otter sightings in the River Slaney Estuary during wintering bird surveys between 2020-2021 and 2023-2024 were recorded in the otter study area.
 - b. The wintering waterbird survey methodology followed *Bird Monitoring Methods: A Manual of Techniques for UK Key Species* (Gilbert et al., 1998), *Bird Census Techniques* (Bibby et al, 1992). Gilbert et al. (1998) and the *Irish Wetland Bird Survey* (BirdWatch Ireland, 2022). Monthly wintering bird surveys were carried out between October 2020–March 2021, October 2021–April 2022 and October 2023–March 2024. Wintering bird surveys were undertaken from six no. Vantage Points along the Slaney Estuary, from 1.4km upstream to 1.3km downstream of the Irish National Heritage Park (Figure 2). Species recorded during the wintering bird surveys are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Wintering bird species recorded in the Slaney Estuary between October 2020–March 2021 and October 2023–April 2024 for the proposed Irish National Heritage Park project. *Denotes Qualifying Interest species of the Wexford Harbour and Slob SPA.

Common Name	Latin Name
Black-headed Gull*	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>
Black-tailed Godwit*	<i>Limosa limosa</i>
Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>
Coot*	<i>Fulica atra</i>
Cormorant*	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
Curlew*	<i>Numenius arquata</i>
Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>
Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
Grey Heron*	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>
Lesser Black-backed Gull*	<i>Larus fuscus</i>
Little Grebe*	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
Mallard*	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>
Oystercatcher*	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>
Red-breasted Merganser*	<i>Mergus serrator</i>
Redshank*	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
Shelduck*	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>
Teal*	<i>Anas crecca</i>
Wigeon*	<i>Mareca penelope</i>

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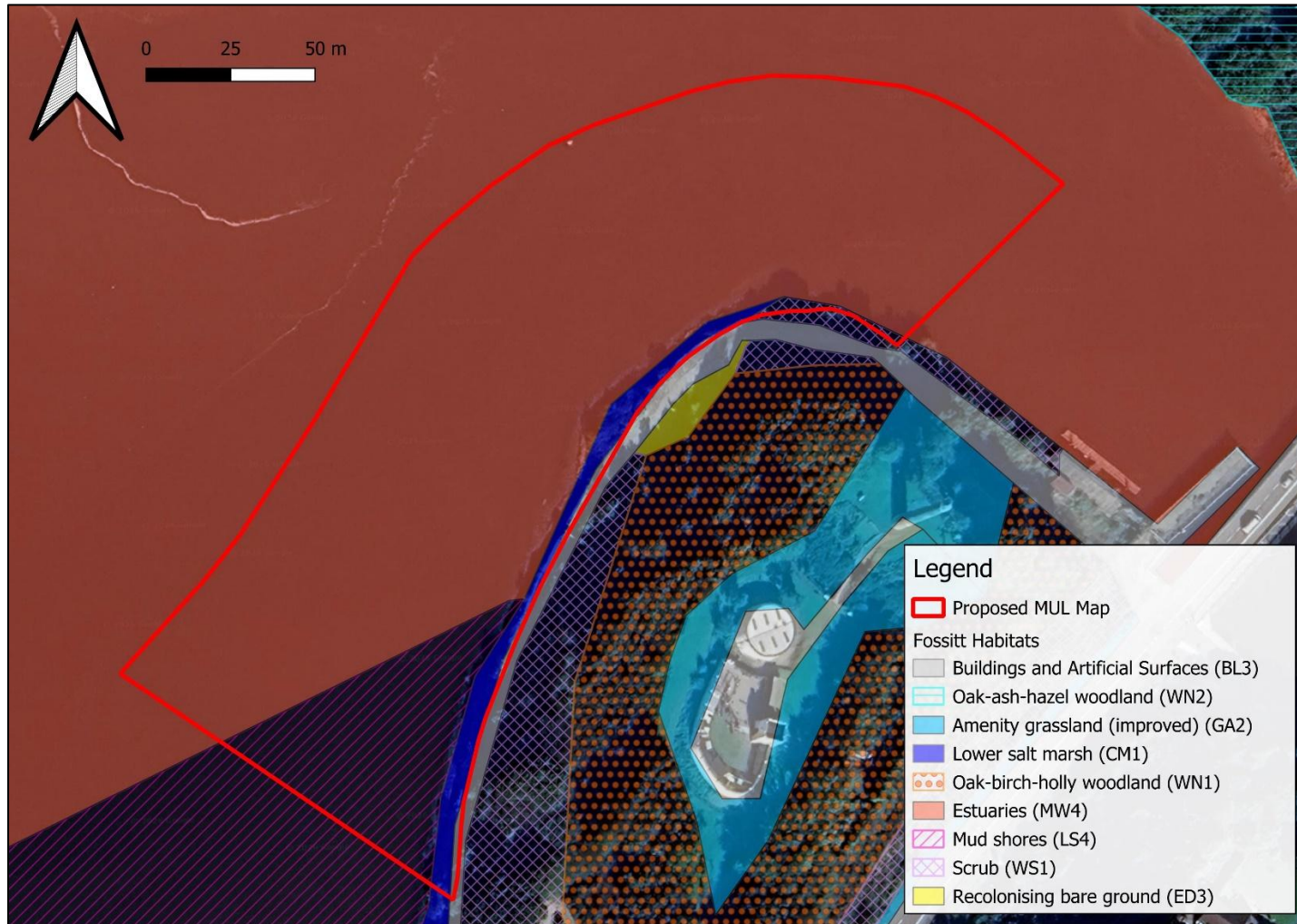


Figure 1. Lower salt marsh (CM1) habitat recorded along the southern MUL area boundary adjacent to the existing stone wall boundary separating the marine and terrestrial habitats.

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Figure 2. Wintering Bird survey locations in relation to the MUL Area boundary.

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Please let me know if you require any further additional information.

Yours sincerely,



Rachel Heaphy
Ecologist
Roughan & O'Donovan

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