



Summary Report

FOR

UPGRADE/INSTALLATION OF
BROADBAND NETWORK

AT

DA069, Municipal District of Portlaoise,
Co. Laois

ON BEHALF OF



National Broadband Ireland

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	4
LIST OF TABLES	4
LIST OF FIGURES.....	4
1 OVERVIEW.....	5
1.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW	5
1.2 IDENTIFICATION OF RELEVANT NATURA 2000 SITES.....	5
1.3 IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS.....	14
1.4 INTERSECTING FEATURES WITHIN NATURA 2000 SITES IN PORTLAOISE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT.....	14
2 CONCLUDING STATEMENT	17

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Drop Build poles within The Municipal District of Portlaoise and Natura 2000 sites	15
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LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Drop poles in Portlaoise Municipal District	7
Figure 2 Drop poles in Portlaoise Municipal District	8
Figure 3 Drop poles in Portlaoise Municipal District	9
Figure 4 Drop poles in Portlaoise Municipal District	10
Figure 5 Drop poles in Portlaoise Municipal District	11
Figure 6 Drop poles in Portlaoise Municipal District	12
Figure 7 Drop poles in Portlaoise Municipal District	13

1 OVERVIEW

1.1 Project Overview

This report is a summary of the appropriate assessment screening report undertaken on the proposed deployment of broadband infrastructure for Design Area (DA) 069, Portlaoise. This summary report focuses specifically on Drop poles which National Broadband Ireland (NBI) will install only when customers have placed an order for the provision of broadband service through a 3rd party reseller. This report will summarise the assessment of the installation of drop infrastructure within the Municipal District (MD) of Portlaoise and discuss any likely significant effects that may arise within Natura 2000 sites as a result of the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project entails the upgrade and installation of telecommunications infrastructure to buildings in Portlaoise and surrounding areas, covering a total area of 376km².

Drop infrastructure is defined by NBI as items of infrastructure which will not be installed until customers have placed an order for the provision of broadband service through a 3rd party reseller. Drop poles are distinct from Network Build poles i.e., items of infrastructure which are integral to the implementation of the National Broadband Plan (NBP) throughout the state.

The installation of Broadband Network Infrastructure at DA069 Portlaoise, Co. Laois including the Municipal District of Portlaoise, is comprehensively assessed in Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report ref. AA_Screening_DA069_Portlaoise_Enviroguide. The AA Screening report assesses the likelihood of significant effects arising from the Proposed Development including the installation of both network build and drop poles.

The purpose of this MD summary report and the above referenced AA Screening Report is to provide information for the relevant competent authority to carry out the screening for Appropriate Assessment and other applicable statutory functions including licences issued under Section 254 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

1.2 Identification of Relevant Natura 2000 Sites

The proposed installation location of new drop infrastructure is presented in Figure 1. The details of each of the 21 no. drop poles to be installed within the Municipal District of Portlaoise are presented in Table 1.

To identify whether any of the items of infrastructure are proposed to be installed with a Natura 2000 site the following process is undertaken on all DAs:

- Using a Geographic Information System (GIS) the locations of all new proposed items of infrastructure are overlayed onto the locations of all Natura 2000 sites in Ireland and Northern Ireland.
- Analysis is performed using the GIS which will identify each individual feature proposed to be installed within a Natura 2000 site.
- If individual features are identified they are recorded and presented on a drawing or series of drawings as required.

Using the described methodology, it was identified that inside the Municipal District of Portlaoise, none of the proposed installation locations lie within Slieve Bloom Mountains SAC,

River Barrow And River Nore SAC, Ballyprior Grassland SAC, Mountmellick SAC, Lisbigney Bog SAC, Knockacoller Bog SAC, Clonaslee Eskers And Derry Bog SAC, Coolrain Bog SAC, Charleville Wood SAC, Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA and River Nore SPA.

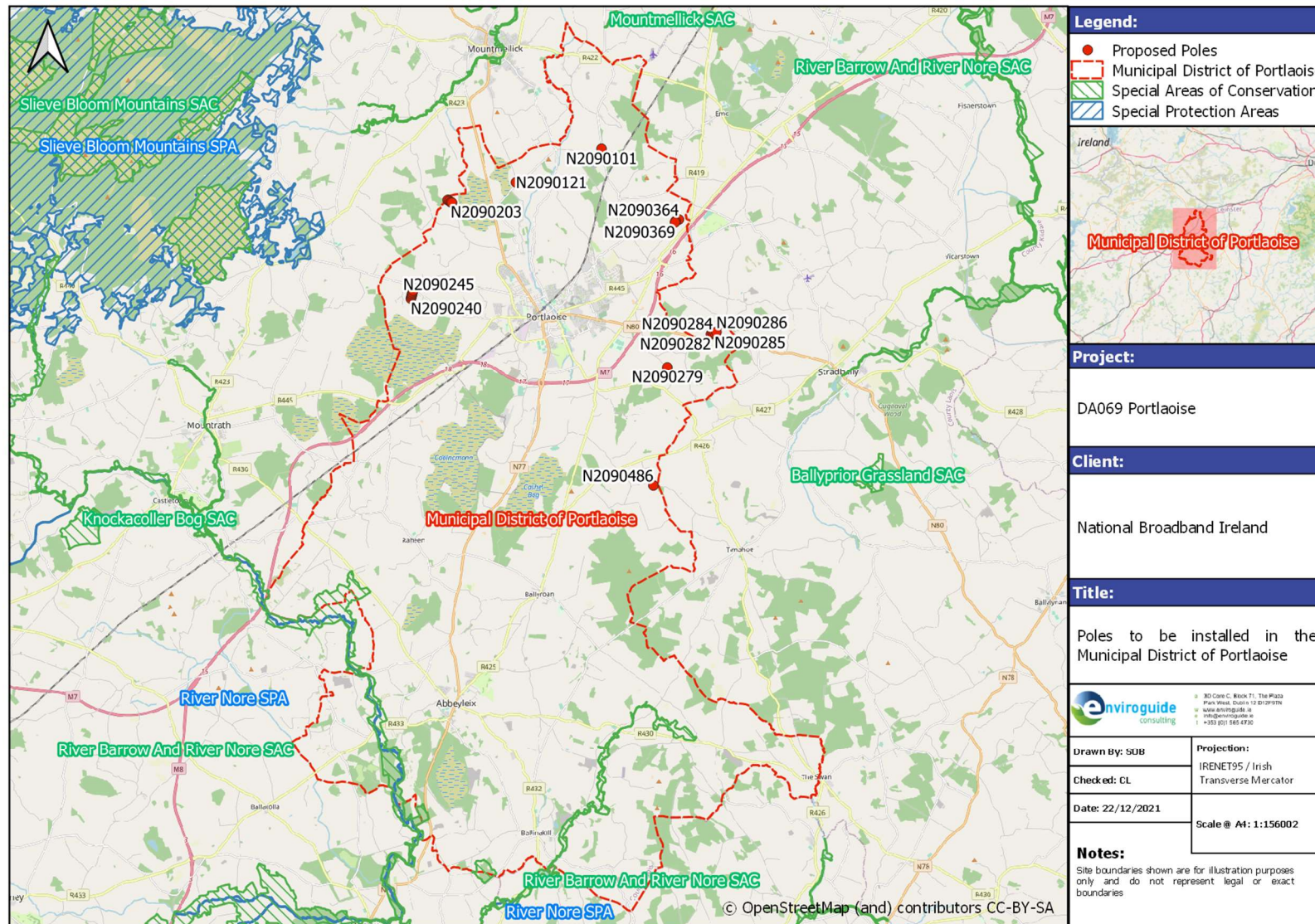


FIGURE 1 DROP POLES IN PORTLAOISE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

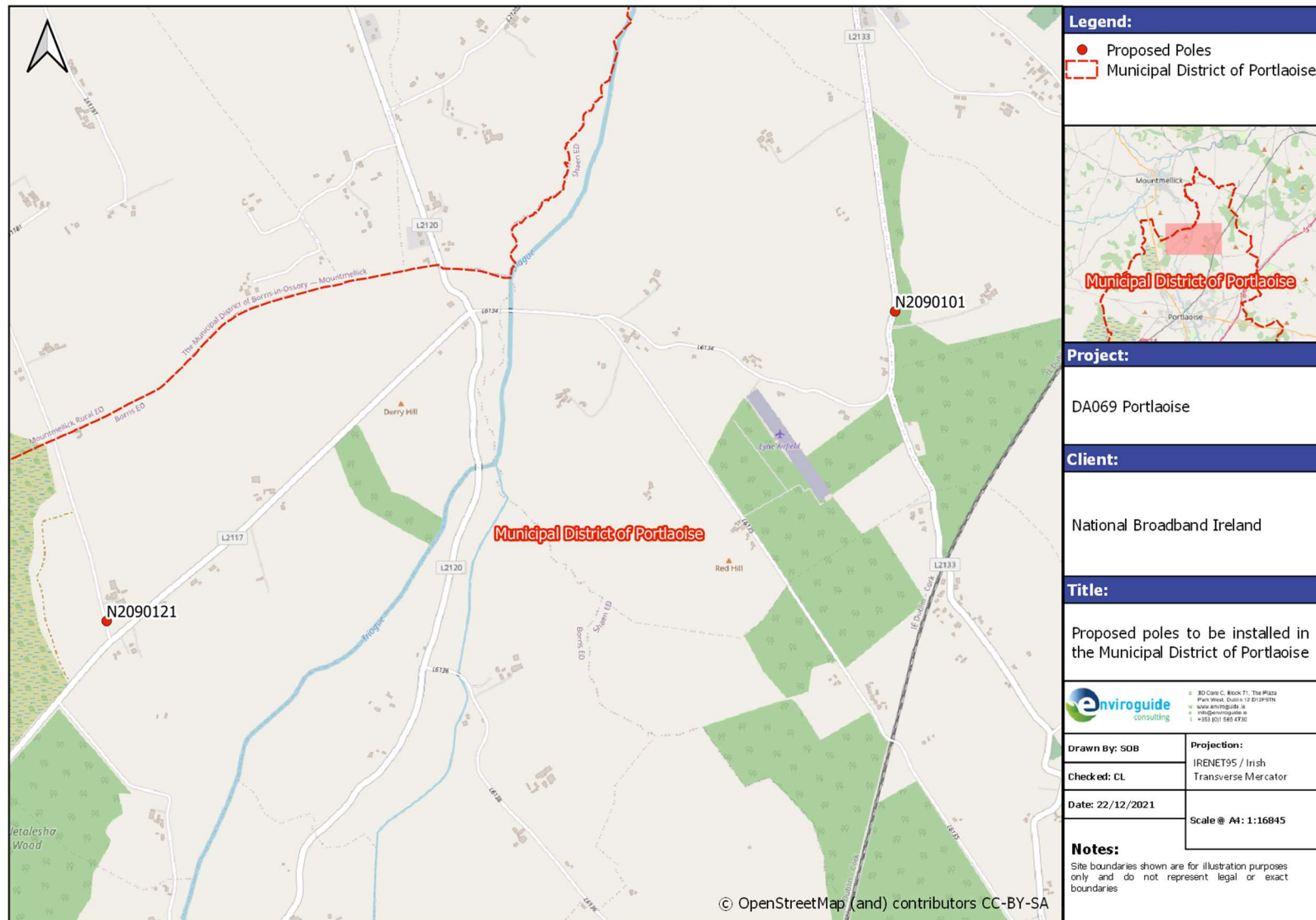


FIGURE 2 DROP POLES IN PORTLAOISE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

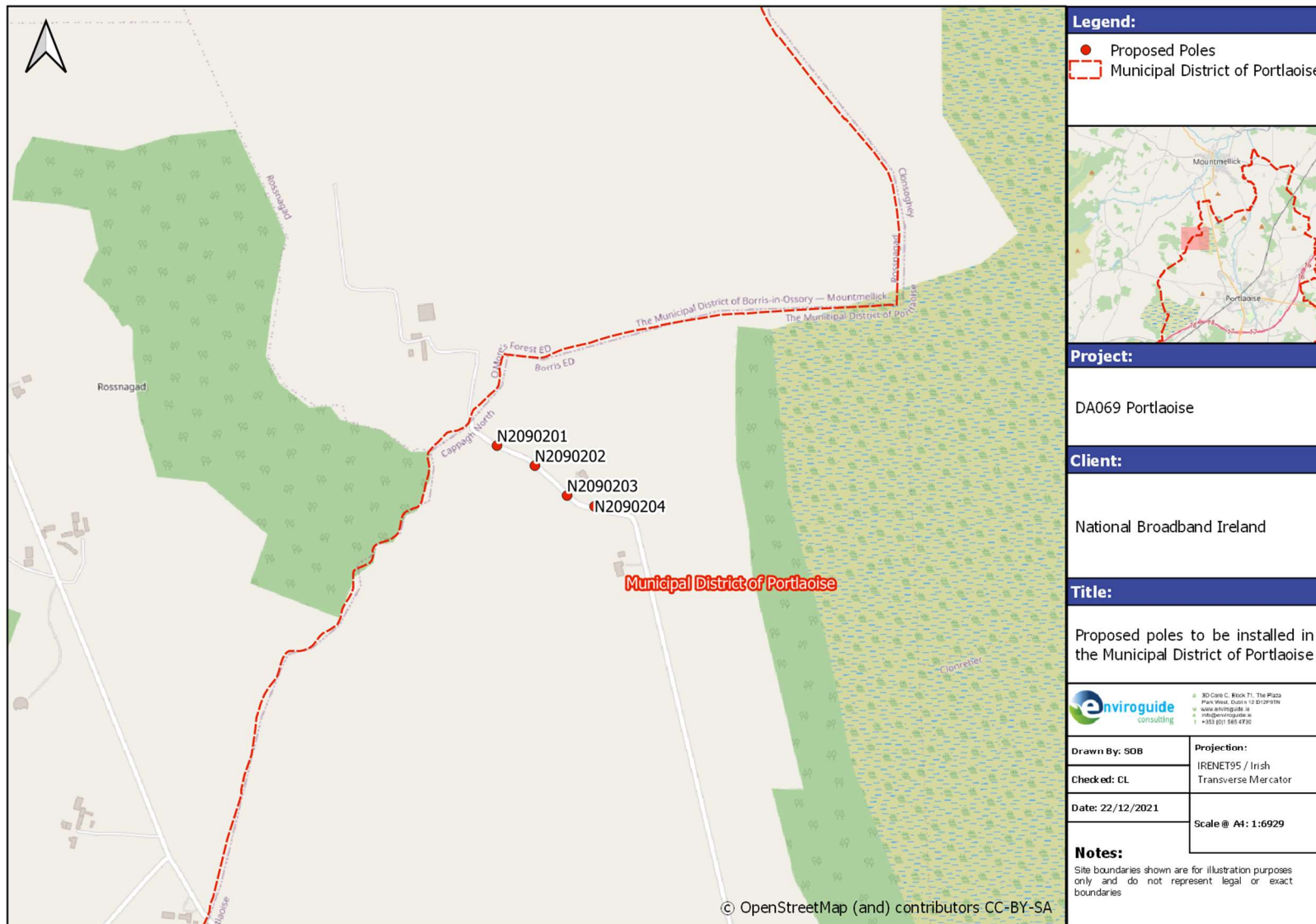


FIGURE 3 DROP POLES IN PORTLAOISE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

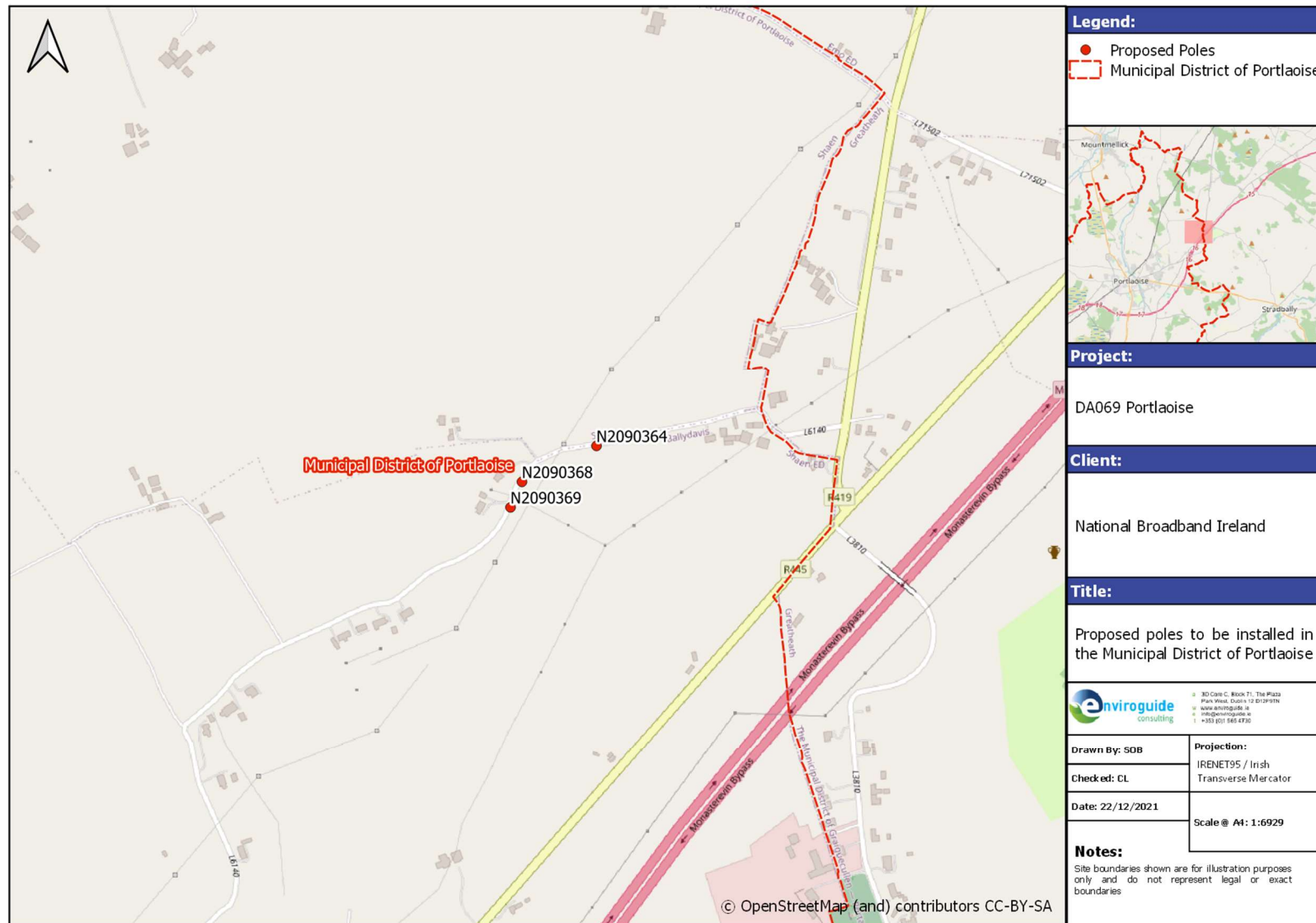


FIGURE 4 DROP POLES IN PORTLAOISE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

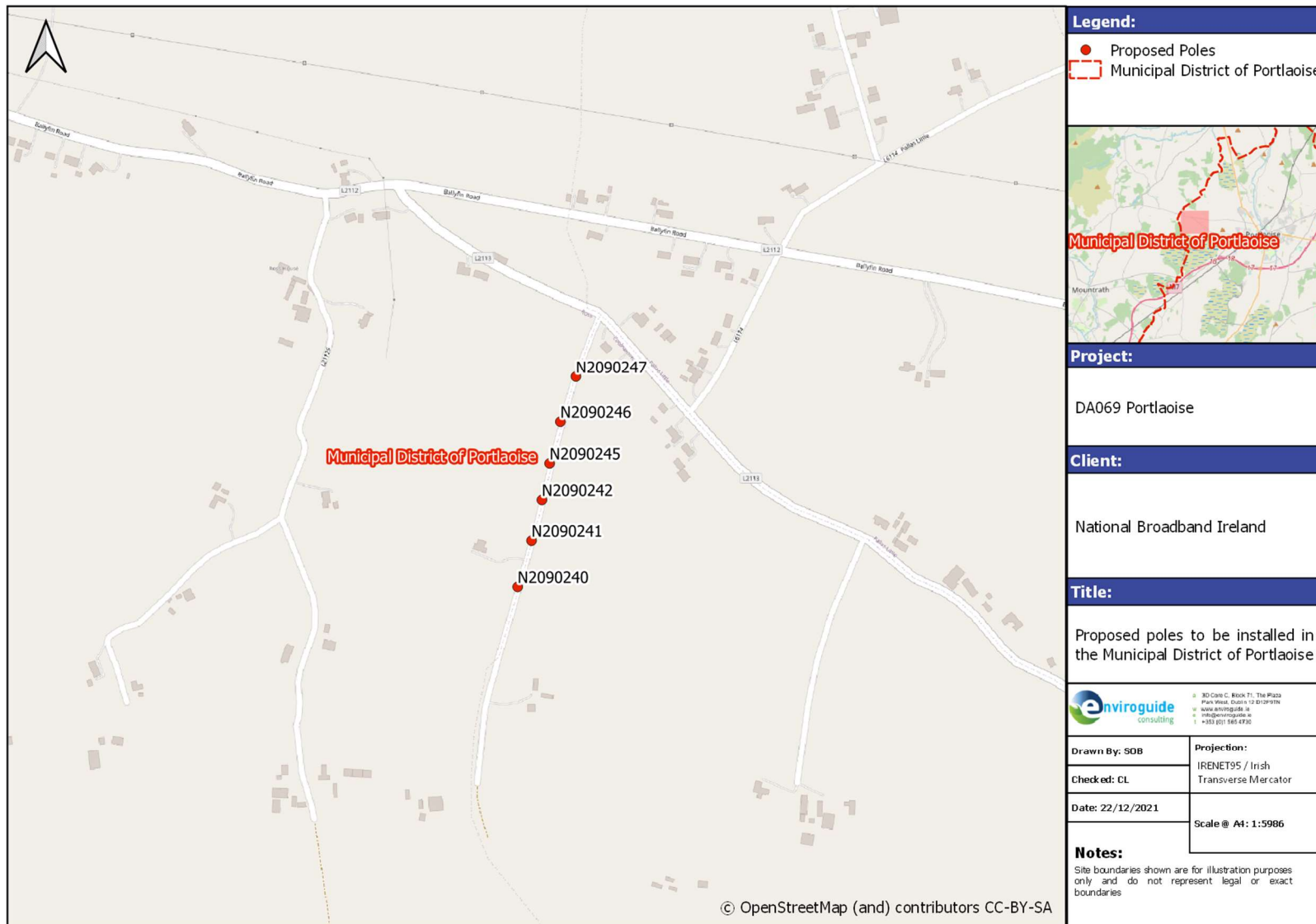


FIGURE 5 DROP POLES IN PORTLAOISE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

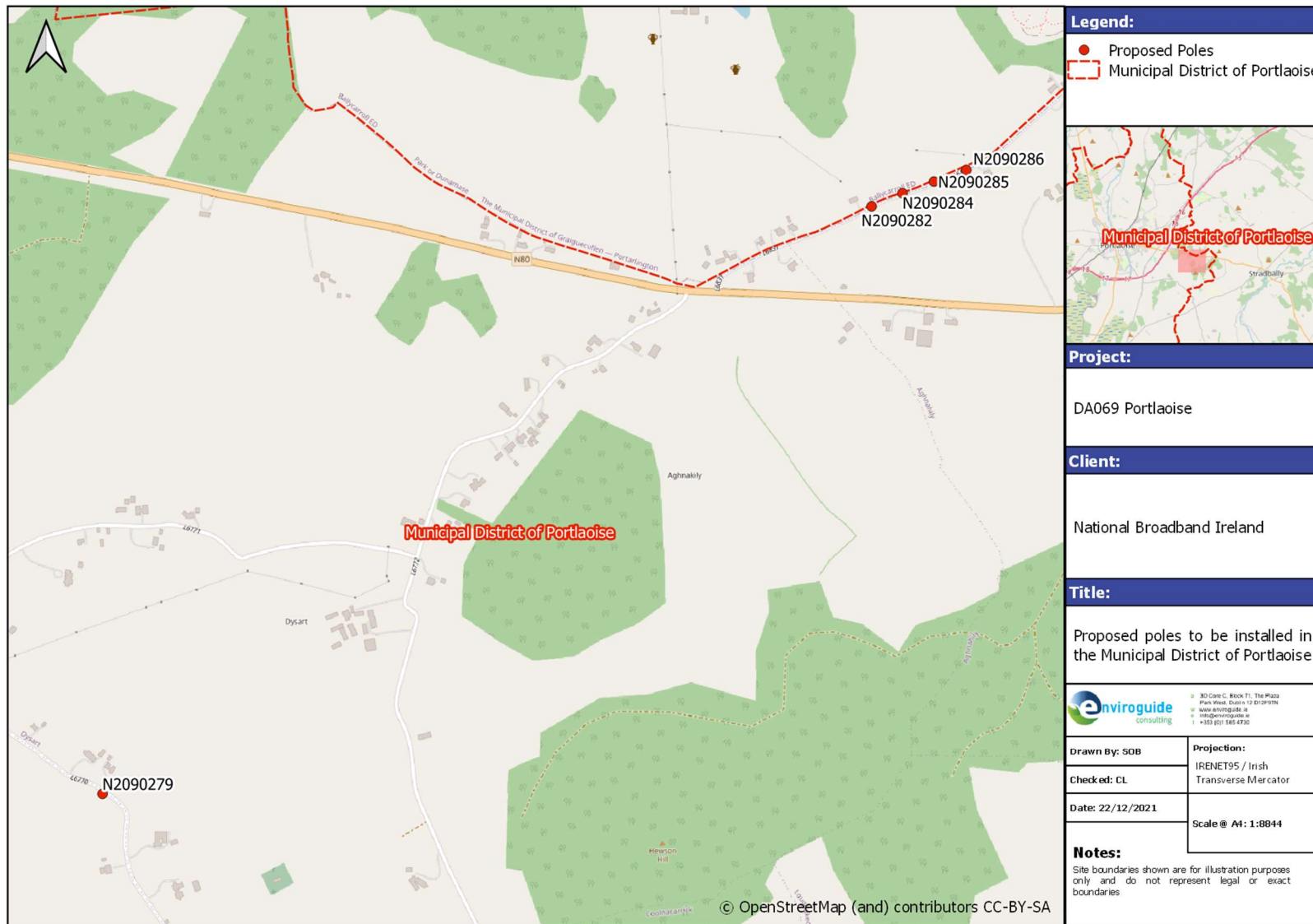


FIGURE 6 DROP POLES IN PORTLAOISE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

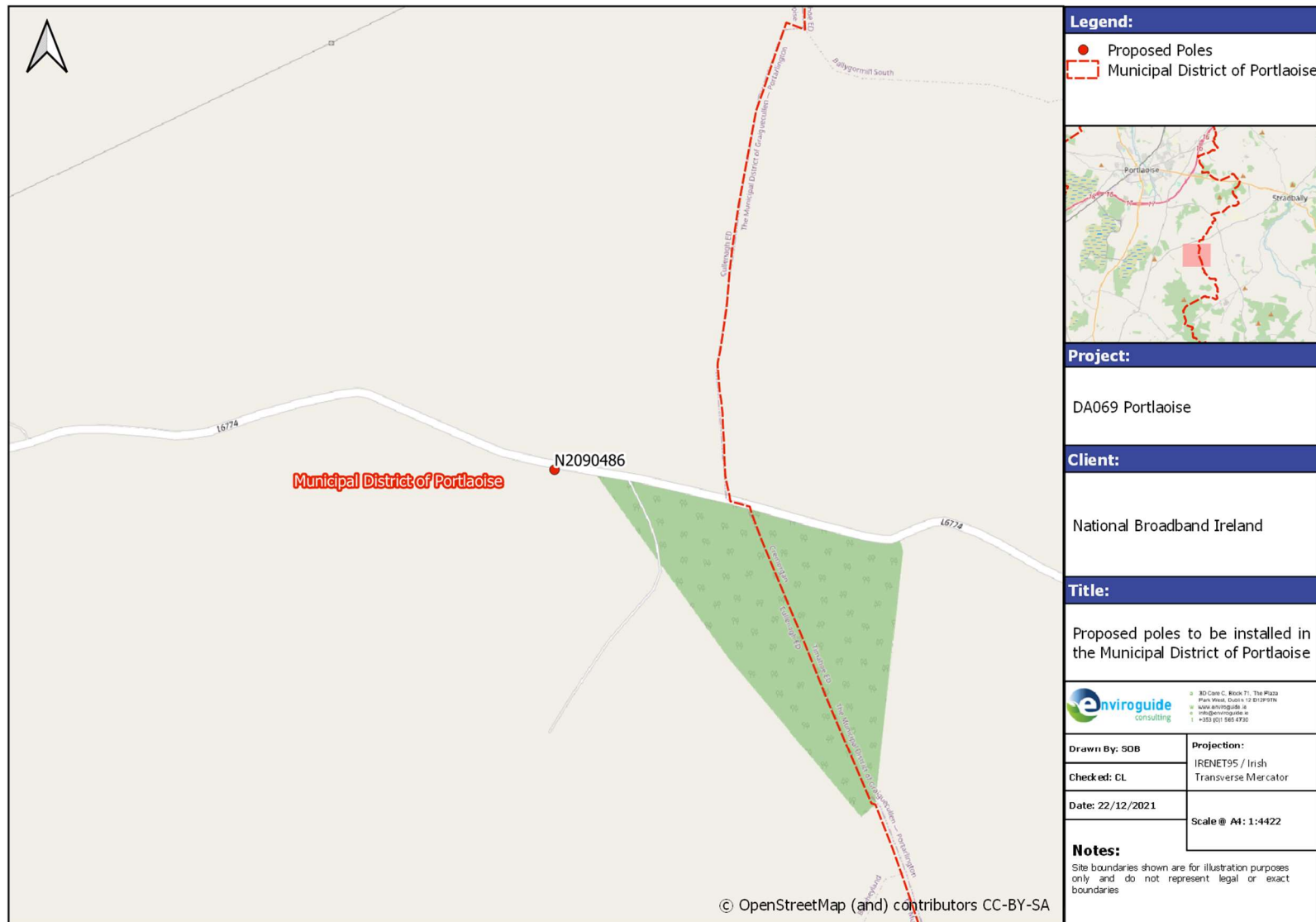


FIGURE 7 DROP POLES IN PORTLAOISE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

1.3 Identification of Potential Impacts

The AA Screening report prepared for DA069 Portlaoise reviewed and assessed Information available on the Natura 2000 network of sites to establish whether the installation and operation of the Proposed Project has the potential to have an impact on any of the conservation objectives of associated sites. The assessment framework used in the preparation of the AA Screening report was taken from the best practice guidelines issued by the European Commission “Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites – Methodological guidance”.

The installation element of this project will involve the erection of new poles, installation of new underground chambers and underground duct sections. There may be some release of suspended solids into watercourses during such excavations; however, these will be small in nature, extremely localised and of very short duration as all surplus material is removed from site for compliant waste management.

In addition, the replacement poles being erected may carry the risk of contamination of soil and/or groundwater with creosote which is used as a preservative for telecommunications poles. Creosote is a dense non-aqueous liquid (DNAPL) which is not soluble in water. Therefore, the risk associated with its use will be extremely localised by virtue of it not migrating through the watercourse or soil. The impact therefore associated with its use can be deemed imperceptible.

The potential for fugitive dust emissions will be minimal and temporary as each mini excavation required to install a pole will be completed within a short period of time with water used as a dampening down medium in cases of extreme weather.

The AA Screening report prepared for DA069 Portlaoise considered the potential for significant impacts resulting from the Proposed Project based on a range of indicators, including:

- Habitat loss or alteration;
- Habitat/species fragmentation;
- Disturbance and/or displacement of species;
- Changes in population density; and
- Changes in water quality and resource.

It was deemed by the AA Screening Report that the Proposed Project will not have a significant adverse effect on the Conservation Objectives of the following: Slieve Bloom Mountains SAC, River Barrow And River Nore SAC, Ballyprior Grassland SAC, Mountmellick SAC, Lisbigney Bog SAC, Knockacoller Bog SAC, Clonaslee Eskers And Derry Bog SAC, Coolrain Bog SAC, Charleville Wood SAC, Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA and River Nore SPA.

1.4 Intersecting features within Natura 2000 sites in Portlaoise Municipal District

The Proposed Project route passes adjacent to, intersects with or contains Slieve Bloom Mountains SAC, River Barrow And River Nore SAC, Ballyprior Grassland SAC, Mountmellick SAC, Lisbigney Bog SAC, Knockacoller Bog SAC, Clonaslee Eskers And Derry Bog SAC,

Coolrain Bog SAC, Charleville Wood SAC, Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA and River Nore SPA at localised points over several different locations combined.

In the case of the Portlaoise Municipal District none of the proposed new installations will occur within any of the aforementioned Natura 2000 Sites.

Each installation location was surveyed as part of the pre-build design process. Table 1 identifies each individual item of equipment within the Portlaoise Municipal District and describes the proposed installation locations and whether the proposed feature is to be installed within a Natura 2000 site.

Table 1 and Figures 1 to 7 demonstrate that the item of infrastructure for the Proposed Project within the Portlaoise Municipal District will be installed along the existing road network, in a location that consists primarily of grassy roadside verges.

TABLE 1 DROP BUILD POLES WITHIN THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF PORTLAOISE AND NATURA 2000 SITES

Barcode/Duct Label	Infrastructure Type	Location - Public	Site Name
N2090101	Utility Pole	Verge	Proposed infrastructure not located within Natura 2000 sites in the Municipal District of Portlaoise
N2090121	Utility Pole	Verge	Proposed infrastructure not located within Natura 2000 sites in the Municipal District of Portlaoise
N2090201	Utility Pole	Verge	Proposed infrastructure not located within Natura 2000 sites in the Municipal District of Portlaoise
N2090202	Utility Pole	Verge	Proposed infrastructure not located within Natura 2000 sites in the Municipal District of Portlaoise
N2090203	Utility Pole	Verge	Proposed infrastructure not located within Natura 2000 sites in the Municipal District of Portlaoise
N2090204	Utility Pole	Verge	Proposed infrastructure not located within Natura 2000 sites in the Municipal District of Portlaoise
N2090240	Utility Pole	Verge	Proposed infrastructure not located within Natura 2000 sites in the Municipal District of Portlaoise
N2090241	Utility Pole	Verge	Proposed infrastructure not located within Natura 2000 sites in the Municipal District of Portlaoise
N2090242	Utility Pole	Verge	Proposed infrastructure not located within Natura 2000 sites in the Municipal District of Portlaoise
N2090245	Utility Pole	Verge	Proposed infrastructure not located within Natura 2000 sites in the Municipal District of Portlaoise

N2090246	Utility Pole	Verge	Proposed infrastructure not located within Natura 2000 sites in the Municipal District of Portlaoise
N2090247	Utility Pole	Verge	Proposed infrastructure not located within Natura 2000 sites in the Municipal District of Portlaoise
N2090279	Utility Pole	Verge	Proposed infrastructure not located within Natura 2000 sites in the Municipal District of Portlaoise
N2090282	Utility Pole	Verge	Proposed infrastructure not located within Natura 2000 sites in the Municipal District of Portlaoise
N2090284	Utility Pole	Verge	Proposed infrastructure not located within Natura 2000 sites in the Municipal District of Portlaoise
N2090285	Utility Pole	Verge	Proposed infrastructure not located within Natura 2000 sites in the Municipal District of Portlaoise
N2090286	Utility Pole	Verge	Proposed infrastructure not located within Natura 2000 sites in the Municipal District of Portlaoise
N2090364	Utility Pole	Verge	Proposed infrastructure not located within Natura 2000 sites in the Municipal District of Portlaoise
N2090368	Utility Pole	Verge	Proposed infrastructure not located within Natura 2000 sites in the Municipal District of Portlaoise
N2090369	Utility Pole	Verge	Proposed infrastructure not located within Natura 2000 sites in the Municipal District of Portlaoise
N2090486	Utility Pole	Verge	Proposed infrastructure not located within Natura 2000 sites in the Municipal District of Portlaoise

2 CONCLUDING STATEMENT

The Proposed Project consisting of the installation of Broadband Network at DA069 Portlaoise, Co. Laois has been assessed taking into account:

- the nature, size and location of the proposed works and possible impacts arising from the installation works.
- the qualifying interests and conservation objectives of the European Sites.
- the potential for in-combination effects arising from other plans and projects.

In conclusion, upon the examination, analysis and evaluation of the relevant information and applying the precautionary principle, it is concluded by the authors of this report that, on the basis of objective information; the possibility may be excluded that the Proposed Project will have a likely significant effect on any of the European Sites listed below:

Slieve Bloom Mountains SAC (000412)

River Barrow And River Nore SAC (002162)

Ballyprior Grassland SAC (002256)

Mountmellick SAC (002141)

Lisbigney Bog SAC (000869)

Knockacoller Bog SAC (002333)

Clonaslee Eskers And Derry Bog SAC (000859)

Coolrain Bog SAC (002332)

Charleville Wood SAC (000571)

Slieve Bloom Mountains SPA (004160)

River Nore SPA (004233)

Thus, it can be concluded on the basis of the results of Stage 1 of the Appropriate Assessment process that there is no requirement to proceed to Stage 2 of said process; and the preparation of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) is not required.