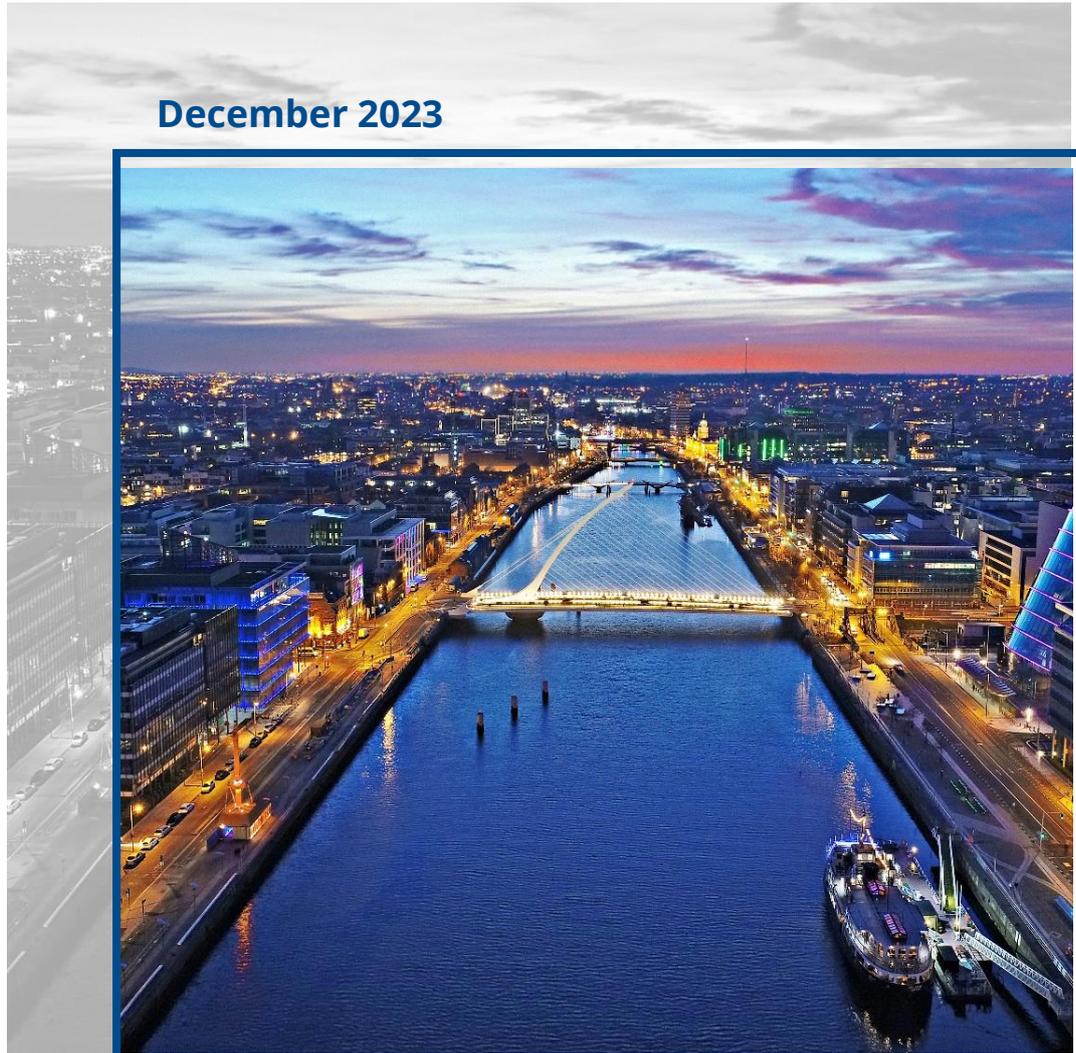


Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

Monaghan Civic Offices

on behalf of Monaghan County Council

December 2023



McCutcheon Halley
CHARTERED PLANNING CONSULTANTS

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1. Introduction

This Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report (EIASR) has been prepared by McCutcheon Halley Chartered Planning Consultants (MHP) on behalf of Monaghan County Council (the Project Proponent).

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) requirements derive from EU Council Directive 2014/52/EU (henceforth the EIA Directive). The EIA Directive applies solely to projects of a type listed in Annex I or II¹.

The Annex I and Annex II projects have been transposed into Section 5 (Parts 1 and 2) of the Planning and Development Regulations (PDRs) 2001, as amended. Part 1 projects require EIA if the stated threshold set therein has been met or exceeded or where no thresholds are set. Part 2 projects meeting or exceeding national thresholds set out therein, or where no thresholds are set, require EIA.

Sub-threshold projects in Schedule 5 Part 2 require screening for EIA, except in cases where the likelihood of significant effects can be readily excluded.

This EIASR accompanies a Part 8 application to Monaghan County Council (MCC) for the proposed development, which generally comprises a new civic office building and ancillary development including a new public road within the townland of Roosky, Monaghan Town, Co. Monaghan. A detailed description of the proposal is provided in Section 4.1 of this report.

Proposed development which falls within one of the categories of development specified in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations (PDRs) 2001, as amended, which equals or exceeds, a limit, quantity or threshold prescribed for that class of development must be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).

Where a project is of a specified type but does not meet, or exceed, the applicable threshold then the likelihood of the 'sub-threshold' project having significant effects (adverse and beneficial) on the environment needs to be considered.

The proposed development is a sub-threshold 'Infrastructure Project'. The purpose of this report is to provide supporting information to assist the competent authority, in this instance, Monaghan County Council (MCC) to determine whether an EIA of the proposed development is required in accordance with the requirements set out under Section 123 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), henceforth 'the Regulations'.

Based on a systematic appraisal, best scientific knowledge and information, together with the application of a standardised methodology as established in Schedule 7 and 7A of the PDRs and objective professional judgement and expertise, this EIASR concludes that the proposed development can be screened out from requiring EIA having regard to the criteria set out in

¹ Article 2(1) "Member States shall adopt all measures necessary to ensure that, before development consent is given, projects likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue, *inter alia*, of their nature, size or location are made subject to a requirement for development consent and an assessment with regard to their effects on the environment. Those projects are defined in Article 4."

Schedule 7 and Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

1.1 Evidence of Technical Competence and Experience

This EIASR was prepared by Anika Haget of McCutcheon Halley Planning Consultants under the direction of Paula Galvin.

Paula Galvin holds an MSc in Spatial Planning from the Technological University of Dublin, an M.A. in Geography from University College Dublin, a Diploma in EIA, and SEA Management from University College Dublin, and a Diploma in Planning and Environmental Law from Kings Inns. She is a Member of the Irish Planning Institute (IPI) and the Institute of Environmental Management Association (IEMA) and operates in accordance with their codes of professional conduct. Paula has over twenty years of professional experience and directs a diverse portfolio of projects including commercial, residential, infrastructure, retail, and renewable energy generation.

Anika holds a BEng in Geoinformation and Municipal Engineering from Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences, a MSc in Urban Planning from HafenCity University Hamburg and has over 4 years of professional experience as a planning consultant in Germany and Ireland. She is a Graduate Member of the IPI and has contributed to EIA and AA screening reports for various residential and commercial projects.

This EIASR is informed by the assessments and conclusions contained in the wide range of reports submitted with this application. The professional practices that contributed to the preparation of those reports are identified below.



2. Project Type

The first step in the EIA screening process is to examine whether the proposed development is a 'project' listed in the Annexes to the EIA Directive.

If a proposed project is not of a type covered by the Directive, there is no requirement for it to be subject to EIA.

As set out in the introduction, the proposed development is for the construction of a civic centre and ancillary infrastructural development works, including roads and a bridge.

To decide which project types are relevant in this screening process, MHP reviewed all projects listed in Annex I and Annex II of the EIA Directive as transposed by Schedule 5 (Part 1 and Part 2) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

Having regard to the fact that the proposed development includes road infrastructure, Section 50(1)(a) of the Roads Act 1993, as amended, which lists the forms of road development in respect of which there is a mandatory requirement to carry out EIA was also consulted.

2.1 Mandatory EIA

2.1.1 Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

Schedule 5 (Part 1 and Part 2) sets out the thresholds for various development classes which, if a project meets or exceeds, must be subject to mandatory EIA.

The following project type was identified as relevant in the context of the proposed development.

Schedule 5, Part 2, Class 10, subsection (iv).

10. Infrastructure projects

(iv) Urban development involving an area greater than 2 hectares in the case of a business district, 10 hectares in the case of other parts of a built-up area and 20 hectares elsewhere.

(In this paragraph, "business district" means a district within a city or town in which the predominant land use is retail or commercial use.)

The proposed development site is greenfield and covers an area of approx. 4 hectares. It is part of the presently undeveloped Roosky Masterplan lands that lie to the northeast of the town core, see Figure 1.



Figure 1 Proposed Development Site

The proposed development site is situated outside the principal business district (commercial/retail area) of Monaghan Town and consequently the applicable threshold value is 10 hectares.

Mandatory EIA is not required for the proposed development because the proposed development site is substantially (approx. 60%) below the threshold.

2.1.2 Roads Act 1993, as amended.

Section 50(1)(a) of the Roads Act, lists the forms of road development in respect of which there is a mandatory requirement to carry out EIA. Subsection (iv) is relevant in the context of this proposed development.

“any prescribed type of proposed road development consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of any existing public road.”

Article 8 of the Roads Regulations 1994 (S.I. 119 of 1994) states,

“The prescribed types of proposed road development for subsection (1)(a)(iv) of Section 50 of the Act shall be - (a) the construction of a new road of four or more lanes, or the realignment or widening of an existing road to provide four or more lanes, where such new, realigned or widened road would be eight kilometres or more in length in a rural area, or 500m or more in length in an urban area; (b) the construction of a new bridge or tunnel which would be 100m or more in length.

The proposed development does not comprise a road with four or more lanes. The bridge proposed over the River Shambles is 13m, significantly below the 100m threshold. It can be concluded, therefore, that the proposed development does not require mandatory EIA.

2.2 Sub-Threshold EIA

Where a project is mentioned in Part 2 but is classed as “sub-threshold development”, the planning authority must undertake a case-by-case examination as to whether the development will likely result in significant environmental effects. In other words, screening for whether EIA is required must be undertaken.

Schedule 5, Part 2, Class 15 of the PDRs states,

Any project listed in this Part which does not exceed a quantity, area or other limit specified in this Part in respect of the relevant class of development, but which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, regarding the criteria set out in Schedule 7.

As detailed in Section 2.1.1, the proposed development is an Infrastructure Project that does not exceed the stated limit of 10 hectares. This EIASR examines and assesses the proposed development using the criteria set out in Schedule 7 and concludes that the proposed development would not be likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

Notwithstanding, it is acknowledged that Monaghan County Council, are the competent authority on the matter, and this report has been prepared to furnish the Planning Authority with the necessary information as required by Schedule 7A of the PDRs to inform their determination.

3. Methodology

3.1 Schedule 7A Information

Schedule 7A sets out the information to be provided by the applicant for the purpose of screening for EIA.

1. A description of the proposed development including in particular:
 - (a) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole proposed development and, where relevant, of demolition works;
 - (b) a description of the location of the proposed development, with regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected.
2. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.
3. A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the proposed development the environment resulting from:
 - (a) the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant;
 - (b) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water, and biodiversity.
4. The compilation of the information at paragraphs 1 to 3 shall consider, where relevant, the criteria set out in Schedule 7.

Table 1 Information to be provided under Schedule 7A of the PDRs.

3.2 Information Required under Schedule 7

In accordance with the requirements of Schedule 7A (Part 4), the information presented should consider, **where relevant**, the criteria set out in Schedule 7. (MHP emphasis)

Schedule 7 of the Regulations details the criteria for determining whether a development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment, which are reproduced below:

1. Characteristics of proposed development
The characteristics of project, with particular regard to:
 - The site and design of the whole project,
 - Cumulation with other existing and/or approved development,
 - The use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water, and biodiversity;
 - The production of waste,
 - Pollution and nuisances,
 - The risk of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate changed, in accordance with scientific knowledge.
 - The risk to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution)
2. Location of proposed development
The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by projects must be considered, with particular regard to
 - The existing and approved land use,

- The relative abundance, availability, quality, and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water, and biodiversity) in the area and its underground,
 - The absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas;
 - (a) Wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths;
 - (b) Coastal zones and the marine environment;
 - (c) Mountain and forest areas;
 - (d) Nature reserves and parks;
 - (e) Areas classified or protected under national legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated by Member States to Directives 92/43/EEC and 2009/147/EC,
 - (f) Areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards, laid down in Union legislation and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure,
 - (g) Densely populated areas,
 - (h) Landscape and sites of historical, cultural, or archaeological significance
3. Type and Characteristics of Potential Impacts
- The likely significant effects on environment and proposed development in relation to criteria set out under paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Annex, with regard to the impact of the project on the factors specified in Article 3(1), taking into account:
- The magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),
 - The nature of the impact;
 - The transboundary nature of the impact
 - The intensity and complexity of the impact
 - The probability of the impact
 - The expected onset, duration, frequency, and reversibility of the impact.
 - The cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved projects;
 - The possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

Table 2 Criteria for determining whether development should be subject to EIA required under Schedule 7 of the PDRs.

3.3 Approach to Screening

This report is informed by the wider application documentation, reports and drawings.

Reports
Planning Statement
Architectural Design Statement
Engineering Services Report
Infrastructure Design Report
Construction & Environmental Management Plan
Traffic and Transport Assessment
Landscape Design Statement
Photomontages
Townscape & Visual Statement
Resource and Waste Management Plan
Operational Waste Management Plan
Noise Report
TGD Part L Compliance & Sustainability Report
Lighting Impact Assessment
Archaeological, Architectural and Cultural Heritage Assessment
Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing Study
Ecological Impact Assessment
Appropriate Assessment Screening Report
Tree Survey and Report
Arboricultural Impact Statement

Table 3 Supporting Reports

This information was supplemented with a review of the following sources to understand the current baseline conditions and to determine the environmental sensitivity of the site.

- Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025
- Roosky Masterplan 2022
- Dublin street North Regeneration Plan 2022
- South Dublin Street Regeneration Project - Bord Pleanála Case Reference: JA18.314501
- Environmental Protection Agency <https://gis.epa.ie/SeeMaps>
- Office of Public Works <https://www.floodinfo.ie/>
- AIRO Environmental Sensitivity Mapping (ESM) Webtool <https://enviromap.ie/>
- Geological Survey of Ireland <https://www.gsi.ie/en-ie/data-and-maps/Pages/default.aspx>

This EIA Screening Report has been prepared having regard to the following guidance:

- Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports 2022 – Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 2022.
- Practice Note No 2 on Environmental Impact Assessment Screening - Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR), 2021.
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-threshold Development, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, 2020.
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, 2018.
- Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects: Guidance on Screening, European Commission, 2017.

3.4 Significance of Effects

The decision to be made following screening is whether the proposed development is or is not likely to have significant effects on the environment. These environmental effects can be either positive or negative².

The Monkstown Road Residents' Association & Ors v An Bord Pleanála & Ors (2023 IEHC 9) is instructive.

The question of significance is binary — it is either/or. A likely effect must be either significant, in which case EIA must assess it, or insignificant, in which case EIA need not assess it. The answer must be justifiable. Clearly, a very considerable degree of expert, scientific, and even partly subjective, judgment is brought to bear on answering that question. Nonetheless, the answer must be clear – is the likely effect significant or is it not.

² European Commission, Directorate-General for Environment, Hansen, D., Fisker, S., Kjellerup, U., Environmental impact assessment of projects: guidance on screening (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU), Publications Office, 2017.

To this end, the supporting standalone reports listed in **Table 3** respond directly to this point and for each relevant³ prescribed environmental factor the evidence presented allows a conclusion that the proposed development will not result in a likely significant effect.

Consistent with Section 103(1A)(b) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001,

*Where an applicant is submitting to the planning authority the information specified in Schedule 7A, the information may be accompanied by a description of the features, if any, of the proposed development and **the measures, if any, envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment of the development.** (MHP emphasis)*

Essentially, it is the residual effect (i.e., post application of mitigation measures) of the proposed development that is relevant to concluding whether the proposed development is or is not likely to have significant effects on the environment and this is the question answered by the technical reports included with this application.

The rating of the significance of identified impacts unless otherwise stated is as per **Table 4** below as stated in Table 3.4 of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (2022).

Quality of Effects	
Positive	A change which improves the quality of the environment (for example, by increasing species diversity; or the improving reproductive capacity of an ecosystem, or by removing nuisances or improving amenities).
Neutral	No effects or effects that are imperceptible, within normal bounds of variation or within the margin of forecasting error.
Negative/ Adverse Effects	A change which reduces the quality of the environment (for example, lessening species diversity or diminishing the reproductive capacity of an ecosystem; or damaging health or property or by causing nuisance).
Significance of Effects	
Imperceptible	An effect capable of measurement but without significant consequences.
Not Significant	An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment but without significant consequences.
Slight Effect	An effect which causes noticeable changes in the character of the environment without affecting its sensitivities.

³ Having regard to the nature of the propose development.

Moderate Effect	An effect that alters the character of the environment in a manner that is consistent with existing and emerging baseline trends.
Significant Effect	An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration, or intensity alters a sensitive aspect of the environment.
Very Significant Effect	An effect which, by its character, magnitude, duration, or intensity significantly alters most of a sensitive aspect of the environment.
Profound Effect	An effect which obliterates sensitive characteristics.

Table 4 Description of Effects

3.5 Results of Assessments carried out pursuant to National and European Legislation

Article 103(1A) (a) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, states the following:

*Where an applicant is submitting to the planning authority the information specified in Schedule 7A, the information shall be accompanied by any further relevant information on the characteristics of the proposed development and its likely significant effects on the environment, **including, where relevant, information on how the available results of other relevant assessments of the effects on the environment carried out pursuant to European Union legislation other than the Environment Impact assessment Directive have been taken into account.*** (MHP emphasis)

The following reports included with this application informed the preparation of this EIASR.

- Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (AASR) prepared by Flynn Furney environmental Consultants with respect to the Habitats Directive.
- Flood Risk Assessment Report prepared by DBFL Consulting Engineers with respect to the Floods Directive (2007/60/EC).
- Drainage Impact Assessment prepared by DBFL Consulting Engineers with respect to the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC).
- Part L Compliance Report prepared by Homan O'Brien Consulting Engineers with respect to the Energy Performance in Buildings Directive.

4. EIA Screening Statement

4.1 Proposed Development Site

The subject site consists of a greenfield site of approx. 3.9 ha in size located within the Roosky Masterplan Lands in Monaghan Town. The site is free of structures and therefore demolition is not a feature of the proposed development.

The site comprises lands located to the rear (north-east) of existing properties in Dublin Street North, to the east of the Diamond Centre and to the west of Monaghan Harps GAA Club. A narrow footpath, Infirmary Hill, connects the site from Old Cross Square to St Davnet's Hospital in the north-east. The existing residential development, Roosky Vale, is also situated to the north of the lands. See **Figure 2** below.

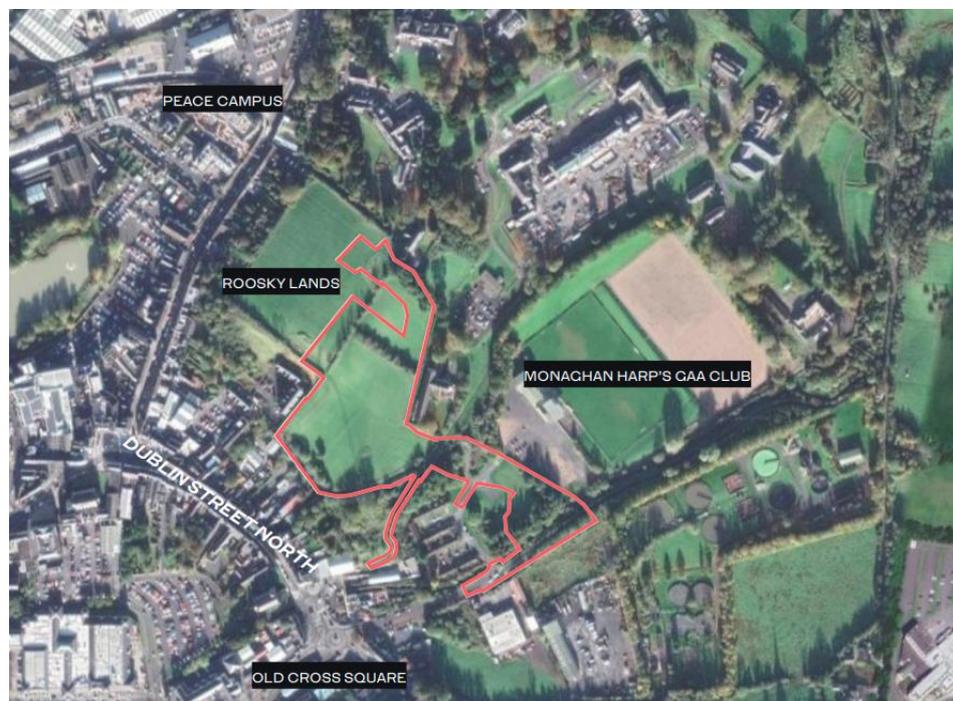


Figure 2 Subject Site Indicating red-line boundary (Source: Henry J Lyons).

Vehicular movement along Dublin Street to the south-west operates on a one-way system leading from the Diamond Centre to Old Cross Square. There are pedestrian links from St Davnet's Row within the site at the rear of the Dublin Street properties, and these create potential for pedestrian connections from the site to Dublin Street.

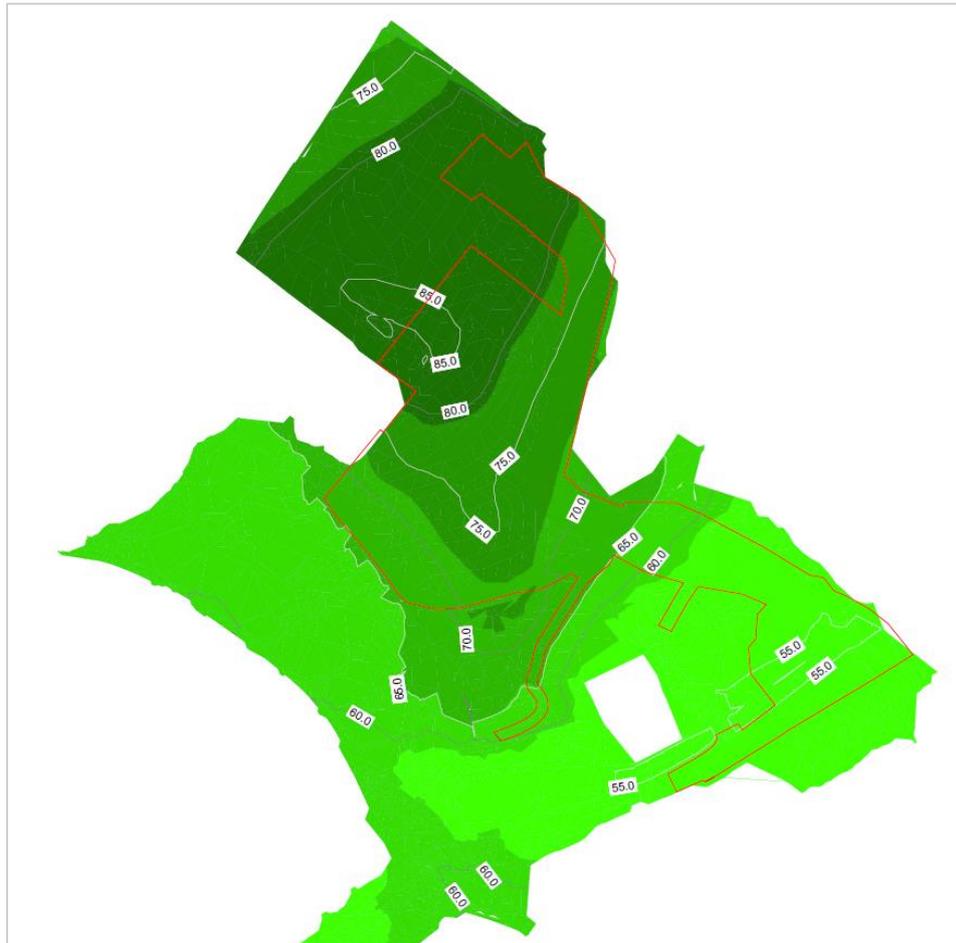


Figure 3 Elevation Map (DBFL)

The site is located on a drumlin with accessibility challenges presented by the topography. As shown in **Figure 3** above, the topography is steep travelling northwards and reasonably flat further to the south, generally ranging between 55.84m AOD to 85.89m AOD.

The proposed Civic Offices require positioning at the lower rising slopes to the rear of Dublin Street North and at the junction of the proposed new access road to the south of Roosky Vale. The sloping site topography presents an opportunity to harness views and create new green networks that connect the site with Monaghan Town whilst navigating the varied site levels.

The southern boundary of the site is characterised by existing dense vegetation and has the potential to become an amenity open space linking Old Cross Square with the new civic offices.

4.2 Physical Characteristics of the Proposed Development

This section of the report addresses the information required under Schedule 7A, namely –

A description of the proposed development, including in particular:

- (a) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole proposed development and, where relevant, of demolition works;

It also responds to Schedule 7 (1) requirements as it relates to the characteristics of proposed development.

4.2.1 General Project Description

The proposed development will consist of the construction of new civic offices, together with associated infrastructural works.

It shall include the following:

- i. Construction of a new civic office building consisting of:
 - a. office accommodation with a cumulative gross floor area (GFA) of 5,601 sq.m distributed over 3 floors incorporating entrance foyer, office spaces, meeting rooms, staff canteen, Council chamber, public counter and reception desk, welfare facilities, internal landscaped courtyards and supporting spaces;
 - b. external plant enclosure and single storey ESB substation and storage room at ground level; and
 - c. covered services enclosure at ground level containing waste store room, plant, water tanks, UPS room, power distribution and supply rooms, and fire escape.
- ii. Surface car parking spaces and drop-off area.
- iii. Bicycle parking spaces.
- iv. Improvement works to existing road infrastructure and the provision of pedestrian, cycle and vehicular links comprising:
 - a. extension (approx. 120m in length) to existing vehicular route on Slí Ógie Uí Dhufaigh along the route of the existing Ulster Canal Greenway;
 - b. realignment of portion of the existing greenway;
 - c. construction of a priority junction on existing roadway serving Roosky Vale at the interface with the extended Slí Ógie Uí Dhufaigh;
 - d. provision of a new 13m clear span bridge over the River Shambles;
 - e. provision of new combined vehicular/pedestrian link, 'Quarry Walk' (approx. 460m in length) comprising a 5.5m vehicular carriageway, two-way cycle track, footpaths, and roadside SuDs swale;
 - f. provision of a replacement vehicular access to Monaghan Harps GAA club and associated pedestrian links;
 - g. upgrade of existing pedestrian route (Davnet's Row) to Diamond Centre; and
 - h. upgrades to the existing Infirmary Hill Path to improve link to Old Cross Square.

- v. Works to facilitate potential future pedestrian and cyclist connections to the adjoining Diamond Centre and the existing public right of way known locally as 'Pump Entry'.
- vi. Signage is to be erected consisting of:
 - a. Wayfinding signage at 4 locations; to the south-west at Davnet's Row Plaza, to the south along Davnet's Row, to the east at the junction between Infirmary Road and Davnet's Row and at the proposed entrance on Infirmary Road.
 - b. Building identity signage comprising 2.1m x 2.1m backlit logo panels on the north-east and south-west facades at building entry points and will include 300mm high text to read Monaghan County Council.
- vii. Provision of surface water attenuation, diversion of existing watermain infrastructure and provision of new surface water, foul and watermain infrastructure.
- viii. Associated earthworks, utilities, landscaping, boundary treatments, lighting, roof-mounted solar PV on the civic office building and all ancillary site development works.

4.2.2 Size and Design of Proposed Development

A comprehensive description of the architectural design approach for the civic offices building is presented in Henry J Lyon's **Architectural Design Statement**.

The positioning of the building and its location within the site have principally been informed by the site's topography and the aim of creating permeability via a network of pedestrian and cycle links that will enhance connectivity with surrounding lands and encourage sustainable travel.

The formation of pedestrian and cycle routes across the site will facilitate opportunities for connections to public roads in the Roosky Masterplan area and improve the connections between Monaghan Town Centre and the Roosky Lands.

In terms of the scale and massing of the proposed Civic Offices building, this has been carefully designed to provide an appropriate and sympathetic interface between the proposed site and existing properties of Dublin Street North and the apartments of The Diamond Centre, see **Figure 4**. By maintaining a generous separation distance between the proposed Civic Offices and the existing properties, a civic grassland landscape is formed around the entire site.

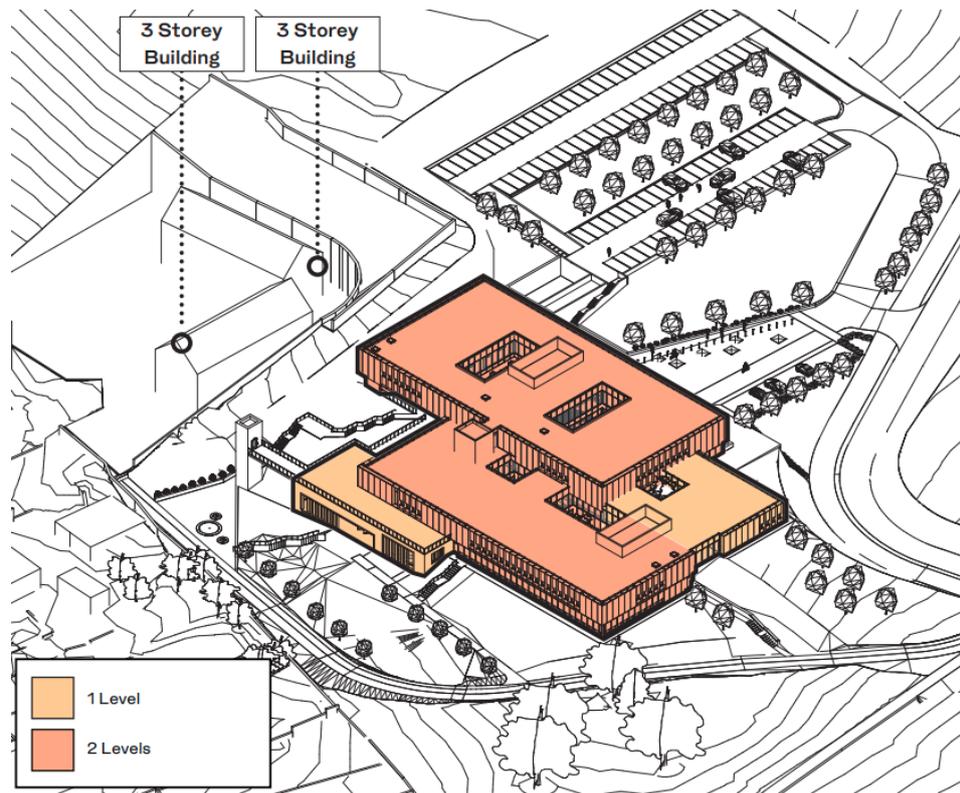


Figure 4 Massing Approach (Source: HJL Architectural Design Statement)

The proposed material palette is kept simple and clear to create order between the elements and to create a connection to its context. The selected materials have been chosen to project a warm and inviting presence, which has been done through the use of pale stone and bronze toned cladding which are in keeping with the context of the area, as seen in **Figure 5**.



Figure 5 CGI of Proposed Civic Offices (Source: HJL Architectural Design Statement)

The architectural expression is a result of a series of radiation analysis and thermal simulations to determine the appropriate shading strategies for the facades.

The design of the facades follows the principles:

- Designed to reflect the importance of Monaghan County Council while acknowledging the surrounding environment,
- Designed to be the main source of natural ventilation, with operable windows, ventilation panels and blinds,
- Designed to provide the necessary solar shading to reduce glare and heat gain, resulting in a comfortable internal environment for staff and visitors.

4.2.3 Civic Offices Access & Parking

The proposed car parking strategy has been guided by the policies and objectives contained in the Roosky Masterplan and Monaghan County Development Plan, as well as the accessibility of the site to Monaghan Town Centre.

The accessible location of the development site, coupled with the proposed active travel network that will extend pedestrian and cycle links, will support sustainable travel modes. It is therefore considered appropriate to provide for a reduced rate of car parking provision in line with policy that seeks to reduce car dependence and promote alternative modes of travel.

A total of 112 car parking spaces are proposed, being 50% of the 224 spaces that would be required under Table 15.9 of the MCDP, in line with policy that supports reduced parking provision in Designated Town Centre sites. The car parking spaces shall be provided within surface level car parking areas across a series of terraced spaces which adapt to the unique topographical conditions of the site.

A total of 91 standard staff car parking spaces are proposed, together with 12 EV staff spaces, 4 Part M spaces and 5 visitor spaces. Wheelchair accessible, drop-off and short stay visitor car parking spaces are provided for within the multi-purpose civic space of Farney Place adjacent to the main entrance. The remaining staff car parking spaces are provided across two terraced landscaped spaces. The proposed car park layout is shown in **Figure 6**.

A total of 80 bicycle parking spaces are to be provided as part of the development. 28 of these spaces would be long-term bicycle spaces located within close proximity to the main entrance of the MCC civic building. 52 additional short stay bicycle spaces would also be provided at a number of points around the site.



Figure 6 Car Parking Layout (Source: Henry J Lyons).

Movement and accessibility will be significantly improved via a permeable network of cycle paths and pedestrian priority spaces that will promote active travel and facilitate connections to the immediately adjoining network of streets, including Dublin Street and Old Cross Square.

4.2.4 Sustainability

This planning application is accompanied by a **TGD Part L - Compliance & Sustainability Report** prepared by Homan O'Brien (HOB) which confirms the proposed development achieves compliance with the TGD Part L (NZEB) 2021 requirements with an BER A2 rating.

The Civic Offices are designed to reduce both the operational and embodied carbon footprint of the development. Operational carbon is reduced by a design that optimises natural daylight and ventilation of the internal environment, whilst meeting NZEB requirements as a minimum.

Consideration has been given to balancing access to daylight with solar gain in the façade design, which is refined according to its orientation to the sun. A passive low energy environmental strategy has informed the development of the massing and façade articulation of the proposed building.

High ceilings and facades are designed to allow access to natural daylight and ventilation, creating a pleasant and healthy working environment. The orientation and proportions of the building are designed to optimise natural daylighting and minimise the reliance on artificial lighting. The facades and massing of the building are designed to optimise natural ventilation and

minimise the reliance on mechanical ventilation. The building heating system is driven by a heat-pump, minimising the use of fossil fuel. Photovoltaic panels are integrated into grey roof on top of the office building generating electricity, to be installed on a phased basis.

The external envelope is composed of low carbon raw aluminium vertical fins and perforated mesh panels.

4.2.5 Road Infrastructure, including Pedestrian & Cycle Access

Details of the proposed infrastructural works associated with the Active Travel project are set out in the **Infrastructure Design Report** prepared by DBFL Consulting Engineers which should be referred to for full details.

The proposed infrastructure for the access and active travel links consist of various components as shown in **Figure 7**. These include the extension of the existing vehicular route on Slí Ógie Uí Dhufaigh along the route of the existing Ulster Canal Greenway for approximately 120m before crossing the River Shambles. The existing greenway will be re-aligned to run parallel to the new carriageway.

From the bridge crossing provision of approximately 430m of Main Link Street (Quarry Walk) through the Roosky Lands will provide access to the MCC Civic offices and the wider Masterplan lands. Provision of active travel paths (bike and footpath) are proposed to run alongside the main Link street.

A replacement access to Monaghan Harps GAA club and associated pedestrian infrastructure links is also proposed. The existing pedestrian links to St Davnets, Glaslough Street, and to the alternative route to the Ulster Canal greenway will be incorporated into Quarry Walk, providing links to the development area and adjacent destinations.

The existing Davnet's Row pedestrian route (200m) and Infirmary Hill path (160m) will be upgraded to form active travel shared and pedestrian links to the town centre from the Diamond Apartments car park and Old Cross Square respectively. These linkages will be tied in to the proposed Quarry Walk.

The junctions along Slí Ógie Uí Dhufaigh, access, at Rooskey Vale Avenue, and the entrance to Monaghan Bottlers will be upgraded to form pedestrian and active travel priority crossings.

The permeability of the site is a defining principle of the site strategy which has resulted in the formation of pedestrian and cycle routes across the site linking to opportunities for further connections to public lands on the N11 corridor. These links will also further enhance the connection with the town centre.

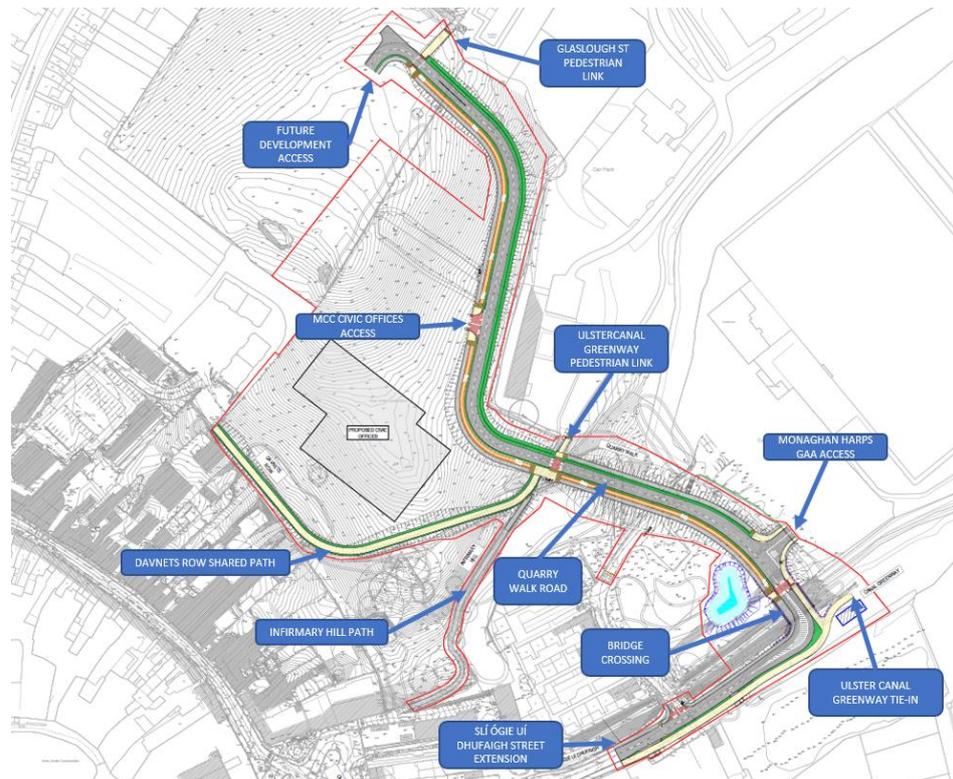


Figure 7 Overview of Road Access and Active Travel links (Source: DBFL Infrastructure Design Report).

4.2.6 Landscaping

The landscape strategy focusses on improving accessibility within the site and enhancing biodiversity. The main elements of the landscaping strategy are set out in the **Landscape Design Statement** prepared by The Paul Hogarth Company.

The landscape proposals are designed to be aligned with the principles outlined in the Roosky Masterplan and Monaghan County Development Plan. The proposal aims to provide seamless links across Monaghan Town.

The aim is to create an external environment that is:

- Practical and distinctive
- Sensitive to the site's location, gradients, views and heritage
- Considerate of high quality soft and hard materials which are appropriate to long term maintenance and sustainability
- Rich in terms of its biodiversity
- Adaptable to activation and flexibility
- Low in terms of embodied carbon

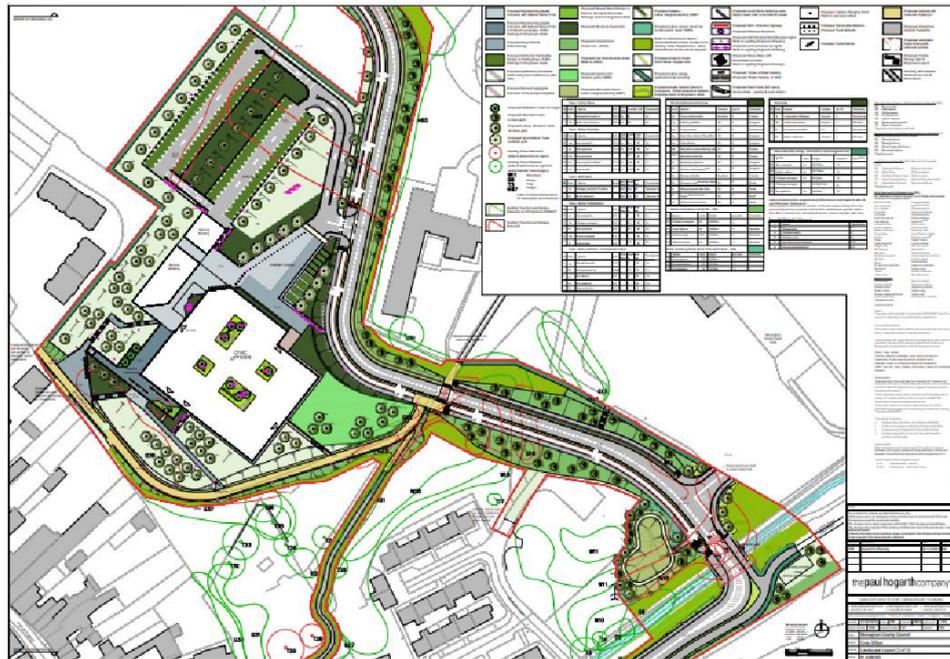


Figure 8 Landscape Strategy (Source: The Paul Hogarth Company).

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) measures are integral to the landscape strategy, incorporating permeable car parking spaces, the podium landscape and below ground attenuation tanks associated directly with the Civic Offices which feeds into the approach road of Quarry Walk with a combination of below ground and above ground SuDS solutions to attenuate the sites water while increasing native habitats and biodiversity. See **Figure 9**.

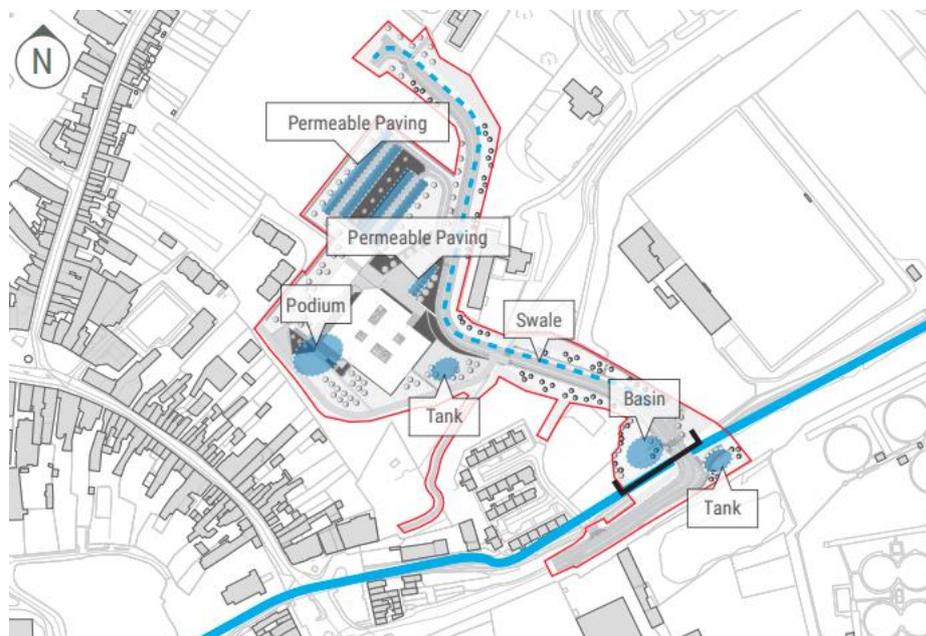


Figure 9 Proposed SuDS Measures (Source: TPHC Landscape Design Statement)

4.2.7 Drainage – Surface Water, Foul & Water Supply

This section should be read in conjunction with the **Engineering Services Report** prepared by CORA Consulting Engineers and the **Infrastructure Design Report** prepared by DBFL Consulting Engineers.

Surface Water

The proposed drainage strategy primarily involves the collection of runoff from the site via SuDS then through piped systems to attenuation storage areas. Outflows are then routed through petrol interceptors before discharging into the River Shambles.

The civic offices incorporate a grey roof made up of selected stone with a drainage barrier below the stone which will drain to the edges where rainwater will be collected via pipes and carried to the attenuation tank. The outflow from the attenuation tank is limited by a HydroBrake, limiting the flow to 4.3 l/s/ha. This attenuated flow shall be discharged into the new public sewer under Infirmary Hill/Quarry Walk where it flows into a new attenuation basin and the bottom of Quarry Walk. There is also a high-level overflow pipe from the attenuation tank into the public sewer in the event of a major rainfall event or an unforeseen blockage.

The car parking areas have a permeable surface with storage underneath taking rainwater from the area of the car park and part of the soft landscaping further uphill. The rainwater is infiltrated into the ground and there is an overflow pipe that drains to the attenuation tank in the event of a major rainfall event.

The podium area is an impermeable surface. The rainfall is collected through channels and stored under the podium where it flows to the attenuation tank. The entrance area adjacent to St. Davnet's Row is drained to a soakaway which infiltrates into the ground.

Details of the proposed surface water drainage for the civic offices are detailed on CORA drawing no. MCCCORA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-C-0004.

Refer to DBFL drawing reference 220084-RY-05-Z00-XXX-DR-DBFL-CE-1001 & 1002 for the proposed surface water layout and the Surface water longitudinal sections are shown in DBFL drawing 220084-RY-05-Z00-XXX-DR-DBFL-CE-3010 & 3011.

Foul Drainage

The strategy for foul wastewater is to provide trunk foul sewer main along Quarry Walk which will service the civic office and any future development within the Masterplan lands. This sewer main will discharge to the existing foul sewer located along Sli Ogie Ui Dhufaigh, south-west of the proposed site. This is indicated on DBFL drawings 220084-RY-05-Z00-XXX-DR-DBFL-CE-1001 & 1002.

Total foul discharge from the civic offices building has been calculated at 21,000 l/day with a peak discharge rate of 1.44 l/s based on the Irish Water Codes of Practice for Waste Water.

The foul sewer falls by gravity within the site to a final manhole where it then enters the new public sewer under Infirmary Hill/Quarry Walk.

The connection point to the public sewer has been confirmed as feasible by Uisce Eireann following a review of the pre-connection enquiry process.

Water Supply

A watermain diversion is needed to facilitate the proposed development at the Roosky Lands. This includes the redirection of the existing watermain along Davnet's Row and Quarry Walk, connecting to the existing network north of the site.

Details of the proposed water main are detailed on CORA Drawing no. MCC-CORA-ZZ-ZZDR-C-0005.

The planned diversion is indicated on DBFL drawings 220084-RY-93-Z00-XXX-DR-DBFL-CE-1401 and 220084-RY-93-Z00-XXX-DR-DBFL-CE-3401. A Diversion application has been made to Irish Water for the watermain diversion.

4.2.8 Use of natural resources

Soils

In total, 23,445m³ of topsoil and subsoils are required to be excavated to facilitate the proposed development. This is broken down as follows,

- 9,000m³ of material will be excavated to facilitate the development of the proposed civic office and approx. 78% (7,000m³) will be retained on site for landscaping and fill.
- 16,445 m³ of material will be excavated to facilitate the associated transportation infrastructure, removed off-site due to the limited opportunities for reuse on site.

The waste hierarchy states that the preferred option for waste management is prevention and minimisation of waste, followed by preparing for reuse and recycling / recovery, energy recovery (i.e. incineration) and, least favoured of all, disposal.

The excavations are required to facilitate construction works so the preferred option (prevention and minimisation) cannot be accommodated for the excavation phase.

When material is removed off-site it could be reused as a by-product (and not as a waste). If this is done, it will be done in accordance with Regulation 27 (By-products), as amended, of S.I. No. 323/2020 - European Union (Waste Directive) Regulations 2011-2020, (Previously Article 27 of the European Communities (Waste Directive) and referred to as Article 27 in this report), which requires that certain conditions are met and that by-product notifications are made to the EPA via their online notification form. The potential to reuse material as a by-product will be confirmed during the course of the excavation works, with the objective of eliminating any unnecessary disposal of material.

No likely significant effects arise.

Water Supply

The Peak Operational Water Demand is calculated by CORA Consulting Engineers as = 1.25 DWF = 1.25 x 0.24 = 0.3 l/s and this is confirmed as feasible by Irish Water (see CORA's Engineering Services Report for details).

No likely significant effects arise.

Energy

The proposed development seeks to significantly reduce the use of natural resources for generating energy. This will have a positive long-term effect as the need for fossil fuel derived energy will be significantly reduced.

The proposed civic office building will achieve compliance with TGD Part L (NZEB) 2022 with an A2 Rating. The on-site renewable energy generating requirement is achieved using an Air Source Heat Pump System as the source of heat generation for the office area.

The Architects approach to a Natural Ventilation solution guided by TransSolar has facilitated an energy efficient passive design that has negated the need for significant amounts of mechanical ventilation and mechanical cooling. This Natural Ventilation approach has saved significant amount of energy that would have been consumed by mechanical plant systems while still maintaining a high degree of occupant comfort.

The provision of supplemental renewables in the form of Photovoltaics (PV) while not required makes a significant contribution.

No likely significant effects arise.

4.2.9 Production of Waste

Construction Phase Waste

The information presented in this section is extracted from the AWN report submitted under separate cover. The estimated construction waste generation for the proposed development is based on the gross floor area of the civic office, along with indicative targets for management of the waste streams.

Waste Type	Tonnes	Reuse/Recycle		Recovery		Disposal	
		%	Tonnes	%	Tonnes	%	Tonnes
Mixed C&D	26.2	10	2.6	80	21.0	10	2.6
Timber	22.2	40	8.9	55	12.2	5	1.1
Plasterboard	7.9	30	2.4	60	4.8	10	0.8
Metals	6.4	5	0.3	90	5.7	5	0.3
Concrete	4.8	30	1.4	65	3.1	5	0.2
Other	11.9	20	2.4	60	7.2	20	2.4
Total	79.5		18.0		54.0		7.5

Table 5 Predicted on and off-site reuse, recycle and disposal rates for construction waste.

No likely significant effects arise.

Operational Phase Wastewater

CORA Consulting Engineers calculated the total foul discharge from the site using the Irish Water Codes of Practice based on an office with a canteen (100 l/person/activity/day.) The post development wastewater loading for an office with an occupancy of 210 people is,

- Average = $210 \times 100 = 21000$ l/day
- Average Discharge = $21000 / (24 \times 60 \times 60) = 0.24$ l/s (Average) DWF

- Peak Discharge = 6 DWF = 6 x 0.24 = 1.44 l/s

The connection point to the public sewer has been confirmed as feasible subject to upgrades (including new foul sewer under proposed new road) by Uisce Eireann following a review of the pre-connection enquiry process.

No likely significant effects arise.

Operational Phase Waste

A waste generation model (WGM) developed by AWN, has been used to predict waste types, weights and volumes arising from operations within the proposed development. The WGM incorporates building area and use and combines these with other data including Irish and US EPA waste generation rates.

The estimated quantum/volume of waste that will be generated for the office is based on the floor area sq.m.

Waste Type	Waste Volume (m ³ / week)
	Development (combined)
Organic	0.41
DMR	3.01
MNR	3.93
Glass	0.07
Plastic (to be baled)	2.67
Cardboard (to be baled)	3.13
Confidential Paper	3.69
Total	16.92

Table 6 Estimated Waste Generation for the proposed commercial units.

There is one Waste Storage Area (WSA) for the proposed development, which is located externally at ground floor level and all bins/containers will be clearly labelled and colour coded to avoid cross contamination of the different waste streams.

It is envisaged that all waste types will be collected on a weekly basis by a waste contractor holding a valid waste collection permit. All waste collected will be transported to registered/permited/licensed facilities only.

No likely significant effects arise.

4.2.10 Pollution and Nuisances

A **Construction and Environmental Plan Management Plan** (CEMP) has been prepared for the proposed development to provide a framework within which all final construction processes, site management arrangements, and environmental protection measures employed during construction are to be specified.

There will be guidelines and controls established for all activities that may impact on the surrounding environment for the duration of the works, including air, water, land, natural resources, flora, fauna, humans, and their interrelation. It proposes mitigation measures where appropriate for

managing noise, vibration, dust, suspended solids, accidental spillages, traffic and waste.

For the duration of the proposed works, construction activities are anticipated to occur between 07:00 to 19:00 Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays) and 08:00 to 14:00 Saturdays, subject to the restrictions imposed by the local authority. No working will be allowed on Sundays and Public Holidays. Subject to the agreement of the local authority, it may be necessary for some construction operations to be undertaken out of hours working, for example utility connections, roadworks on existing roads, resurfacing works etc.

Noise during construction may give rise to short term disturbance, however any impacts are not likely to be significant as they will be carried out in compliance with the requirements of BS 5228-1:2009+A1:2014 and BS 5228-2:2009+A1:2014 (Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites) as well as Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007, Part 5 Noise and Vibration.

Standard best practice site development controls will ensure that there is no significant change in air, noise or vibration emissions as a result of the proposed development.

During the operational stage, it is considered that the proposed development would not have any negative impact in terms of pollution or nuisance.

The design of the new Civic Offices incorporates energy efficiency measures to provide a sustainable, renewable, energy efficient and environmentally friendly building to NZEB standards. It will thus positively contribute to a reduction in fossil fuel use and associated greenhouse gas emissions.

Considering all the above, it is concluded that the proposed development would not result in significant adverse pollution and or nuisances at the construction or operational stage.

No likely significant effects arise.

4.2.11 Risk of Accidents and Disasters

The risk of accidents having regard to the nature of the proposed development is considered to be low in this case.

The design and construction of the Civic Office will be carried out in accordance with building and fire regulations. The road improvements which prioritise active travel movements will reduce the risk of road traffic collisions.

The development site is not close to any site regulated under the Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances Regulations i.e., SEVESO and so there is no potential for impacts from this source.

The OPW Eastern Catchment Flood risk assessment and management (CFRAM) mapping indicates that there is no evidence of historical flood events at or in the immediate adjoining lands. It also confirms the subject site is located within a Flood Zone C designation (low risk of flooding) where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is low (less than 0.1% or 1 in 1000 for both river and coastal flooding). Development in this zone is appropriate from a flood risk perspective and therefore, the proposed development is compliant with requirements set out in the 'Planning System

and Flood Risk Management Guidelines' and the proposed development is not likely to be subject to accidents associated with flooding.

DBFL Engineering Consultants have prepared a detailed Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). The main contractor will be responsible for implementing standard proven mitigation measures to prevent the risk of major accidents or disasters arising during the construction phase.

No likely significant effects arise.

4.2.12 Risk to Human Health

Construction sites pose potential risk to the health and safety of the public. However, access by the public would be considered trespassing and the boundary to the site will be made secure by fencing and/or hoarding and will be maintained at all times and supplemented if necessary. Assuming observance of private property, no health and safety impacts to the public as a result of construction accidents are anticipated.

To reduce the potential for health and safety risks, the project developer will require that all contractors prepare a site-specific health and safety plan before initiating construction activities. The plan will inform those on-site of the measures to take in the event of an emergency and will be maintained for the duration of the construction phase. The construction phase will adhere to the requirements of the Health & Safety Act.

The proposed development requires works to take place on the public road to facilitate connections to services. Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Regulations 2006 (as amended), Part 13, refers to Works on roads, footpaths and cycle tracks and requires adequate guarding and lighting and traffic signs, insofar as they are reasonably required for the safe guidance or direction of persons, having regard, in particular, to the needs of people with disabilities.

During the operational phase the risk to human health is considered to be negligible. The proposed design provides for the segregation of pedestrians and traffic and incorporates the principles of universal access and the requirements of Part M of the Building Regulations so that the development will be readily accessible to all, regardless of age, ability or disability.

The design has been reviewed by a Fire Consultant and has been assessed as meeting all requirements to ensure the protection of future occupants in the event of a fire.

It is concluded that subject to the proper implementation of the mitigation measures described in the various reports accompanying this application, including compliance with other codes and construction of the proposed development in line with the plans and particulars submitted, the proposed development would not pose a risk to human health.

No likely significant effects arise.

4.2.13 Transboundary Impacts

The proposed development is located in Monaghan Town which can be considered a border town to Northern Ireland. However, given the nature and scale of the proposed development and the distance of approximately 7km between the subject site and the border, it is considered there will be no

transboundary impacts, including at national, regional, or local inter-county level.

No likely significant effects arise.

4.2.14 Cumulation with other existing and/or approved development

The European Commission's publication Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects Guidance on Screening Guidance (2017) provides the following definition for cumulative effects.

Changes to the environment that are caused by an activity/project in combination with other activities/projects.

Plans

The National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Northern and Western Region Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) support consolidation of the existing built environment to achieve compact growth, including measures to promote self-sustaining economic and employment-based development. Both plans were subject to strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and the SEA Statements identify that at a broad level implementation of the NPF and RSES are expected to bring environmental improvements, as they tackle specific environmental pressures arising from urban sprawl, one-off housing, land use change etc.

The site is located within the functional area of Monaghan County Council. Development at this location is governed by the objectives and policies contained within the **Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025** (MCDP), which came into effect on the 1st April 2019. The Development Plan was subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) during the plan preparation process. The SEA concludes that avoidance of conflict with Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) and the environment is dependent upon compliance with the mitigation measures which have emerged through the SEA, Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment processes and which have been integrated into the Development Plan.

The AA concludes,

"Stage 1 Screening and Stage 2 AA of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 have been carried out. Implementation of the Plan has the potential to result in effects to the integrity of any European Sites, if unmitigated. The risks to the ecological integrity of the European Sites, taking account of the qualifying interests, special conservation interests and conservation objectives, have been addressed by the inclusion of mitigation measures that will prioritise the avoidance of effects in the first place and mitigate effects where these cannot be avoided. In addition to the measures featured within the plan, all lower-level plans and projects arising through the implementation of the Plan will themselves be subject to AA when further details of design and location are known. In-combination effects from interactions with other plans and projects were considered in the assessment and the mitigation measures incorporated into the plan are seen to be robust to ensure there will be no significant adverse effects as a result of the implementation of the Plan. Having incorporated mitigation measures, it is considered that the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 will not have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of any European Site. Therefore, no further assessment is required."

This proposed development is compliant with the relevant policies and objectives of the Development Plan as demonstrated in the Planning Statement prepared by McCutcheon Halley under separate cover. Further the AA Screening Report prepared by Flynn Furney Environmental Consultants and submitted under separate cover concludes,

“In view of the best and objective scientific knowledge and in view of the conservation objectives of the European sites reviewed in the screening exercise, the proposed development as described here, individually/in combination with other plans and projects (either directly or indirectly) is not likely to have significant effects on any of the European sites. Therefore, it is recommended to Monaghan County Council that a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment will not be required.”

The **Roosky Masterplan** for the Roosky lands was prepared and adopted on the 4th of April 2022 as Variation No. 4 of the MCDP. The purpose of the plan is to provide guidance on the development options of the Masterplan area consistent with the provisions of the MCDP. The vision for the Master Plan is to adopt a placemaking approach that makes sustainable use of this town centre area to create a desirable and convenient place to live, work and thrive through the provision of attractive, affordable urban housing, with businesses and services that will create new employment opportunities. This will be achieved with a high quality and accessible public realm with its own identity and sense of place, that promotes pedestrian and cycle movement, that integrates with the historic street network and built form to complement and enrich the architectural character of the area, creating a connected sustainable community in Monaghan Town centre and place where people choose to live, work and invest. The Planning Authority determined, using the screening criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, the DEHLG SEA Guidelines and Annex 2 of Directive 2001/42/EC, that a Strategic Environmental Assessment was not required for the Variation. An Appropriate Assessment Screening was prepared in accordance with requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). It concluded that a Stage II Appropriate Assessment was not required.



Figure 10 Roosky Masterplan Area

Any future projects taken forward for consent to fulfil the objectives of the Masterplan must be supported by environmental appraisals and AA, as appropriate. As set out in the preceding section a Stage II AA is not required for this project. Further the supporting reports submitted with this application assess the prescribed environmental criteria that are relevant to a project of this nature and all conclude that with mitigation in place, the residual effect of the proposed development is not significant.

The **Dublin Street North Regeneration Plan 2022** is grounded on fulfilling the primary strategic objective of the Settlement Plan for Monaghan Town, MTSO 1 (Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025): *'To facilitate the development of Monaghan to maintain its position as the principal town in the County at the top of the settlement hierarchy and to ensure that its expansion takes place in an orderly and sustainable fashion that will not detract from the vitality and viability of the town centre.'*

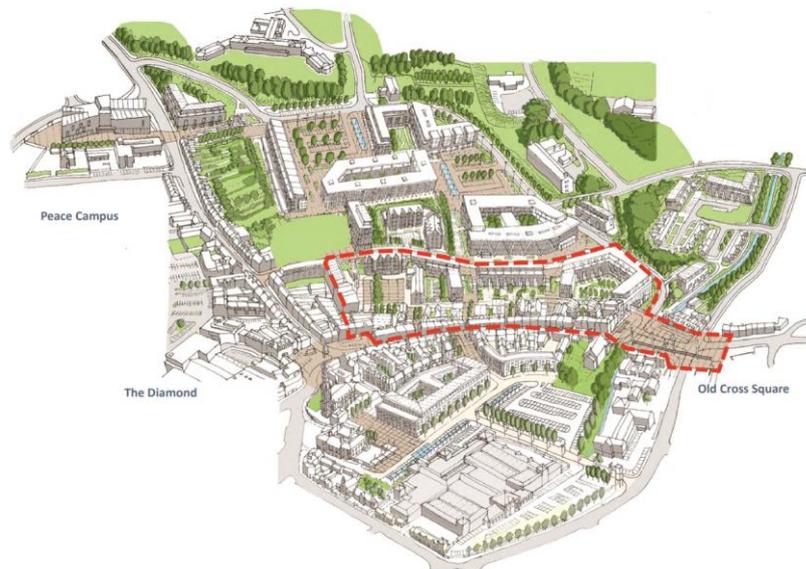


Figure 11 Dublin Street North Plan Area

The Planning Authority determined, using the screening criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2013, the DEHLG SEA Guidelines and Annex 2 of Directive 2001/42/EC, that a Strategic Environmental Assessment was not required for the Variation to the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025.

An Appropriate Assessment Screening was undertaken in accordance with requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). It was determined that a Stage II Appropriate Assessment was not required.

Notably, the Dublin Street North Regeneration Plan progressed in parallel with the Roosky Masterplan, as Variations 3 and 4 to the Monaghan County Development Plan. The cumulative effect of each plan relative to the other was considered during the screening processes for SEA and AA outlined above. In each case, no likely significant effect was identified.

As set out in the preceding section the Stage II AA is not required for this project. Further the supporting reports submitted with this application assess the prescribed environmental criteria that are relevant to a project of

this nature, and all conclude that with mitigation in place, the residual effect of the proposed development is not significant.

Having regard to the fact that neither the County Development Plan, the two relevant plans prepared as variations, nor the proposed project identify a likely significant effect, the cumulative effect is neutral.

Significantly, the proposed development is the first project to emerge from the Roosky Masterplan and there is no existing and/or approved development attached to the Dublin Street North Masterplan. It is acknowledged that the latter does have an emerging preferred proposal. However, the EIA Directive does not require a cumulative assessment of future proposals where a planning application has not been lodged. The Irish Courts, in *Ratheniska Timahoe and Spink Substation Action Group v An Bord Pleanála* [2015] IEHC 18, have held that the obligation to take into account the cumulative impact of the development, the subject matter of a planning application, with other developments is confined to existing and permitted development in the relevant area. It does not necessitate deliberation on possible future development which may be at the concept, design or early planning stage and which may not yet have been authorised.

Projects

Cumulative effects are not limited to plans, it is necessary to also consider relevant projects. A detailed Planning History of the proposed development site and surrounding area is set out in the **Planning Statement**.

As reflected in the online planning records only a small number of planning applications were submitted in the period since 1997 for the Roosky lands, one for infrastructural works and two for community uses. Of the three proposals, only the application for a community resource centre received permission. It was granted in 1999 and was never implemented. The permission is now expired.

The project of most relevance to this assessment of cumulative effects is an application that is currently before An Bord Pleanála. It relates to development identified as the South Dublin Street and Backlands Regeneration Project⁴. The proposed development covers an area of approximately 2.72 hectares and comprises urban regeneration and public realm proposals as set out below.

Live Application		
<p>ABP Case No</p> <p>314501</p> <p>Applicant</p> <p>Monaghan County Council</p> <p>South Dublin Street and Backlands Regeneration Project</p>	<p>PERMISSION for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The demolition of buildings and structures, including street frontage buildings No's 8-11 Dublin Street and associated outbuildings and structures; the building to the rear of No. 24 Dublin Street; partial removal of the rear section of the Northern Standard building fronting the Lower Courthouse car park; storage sheds, walls, and fencing. 	<p>Application Date</p> <p>31/08/2022</p> <p>Further Information Requested</p>

⁴ <https://www.pleanala.ie/en-ie/case/314501>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Construction of structural masonry walls and new facades/side elevations to No's 7 and 12-13 Dublin Street. • Creation of new urban civic spaces, streets, junctions, pedestrian pavements, steps, and cycle routes. ▪ Construction of new public realm comprising new surfaces, kerbing, street furniture, public street and feature lighting, soft landscape planting, cycle parking and signage. ▪ Clearance, regrading and creation of two potential development areas with supporting embankments, hardcore surfacing and boundary fencing. ▪ New boundary treatments comprising walls, railings and fencing. ▪ Alterations to the existing car parking layouts within the Courthouse car park and Lower Courthouse car park, and a reduction in long stay parking spaces. ▪ Upgrading and installation of new utility services, CCTV, and a new ESB substation. <p>An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) have been prepared and included as part of the application for approval in respect of the proposed development.</p>	
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It is noted the South Dublin Street and Backlands Regeneration Project is subject to EIA due to the 2.72 ha area of the application site and its location within a Business District which triggers the 2-hectare threshold for mandatory EIA.

The proposed civic offices development subject to this EIA Screening and the proposed South Dublin Street and Backlands Regeneration Project are distinct developments that will operate independently of one another, with no functional dependence between the schemes.

Each of the proposed developments is or will be subject to planning and environmental impact assessment procedures which include measures to prevent or mitigate potential environmental effects. Each project will require a construction environmental management plan to mitigate effects during the construction stage. Subject to adherence to the measures contained in the individual plans, no significant cumulative effects are anticipated.

All accompanying reports submitted with this application including the Infrastructure Design Report, Engineering Services Report, Townscape & Visual Statement and Traffic & Transport Assessment have considered potential cumulative effects during construction and operation and concluded no likely significant in-combination effects are anticipated.

Any future development proposals following this application will be assessed individually, taking into account the relevant planning history in the area.

No likely significant cumulative effects arise.

4.2.15 Environmental Sensitivity

Existing and Approved Land Use

The subject site comprises a greenfield site which is currently largely in agricultural use. The land use zoning objective pertaining to the subject site, as set out in the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019 – 2025, is 'Town Centre', which carries the objective *to provide, protect and enhance town centre facilities and promote town centre strengthening.*

The proposed development accords with the range of permissible and open for consideration uses for zoned 'Town Centre' lands as listed in the MCDP.

Absorption Capacity of Natural Environment

The following section considers the impacts of the proposed development on the surrounding natural environment.

Natural Environments	Assessment
Wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths	<p>The River Shambles is recorded in the south of the proposed development site. The river is a 3rd order tributary and flows north adjoining the River Blackwater downstream. The proposed works will include the construction of a road, including a crossing bridge which will be crossing the River Shambles next to the Monaghan Harps GAA grounds. There is a risk for pollutants from the proposal to affect water quality in the Shambles River and its tributaries downstream of the proposed development.</p> <p>Any potential spills arising during the construction phase of the proposed route, e.g. during construction of watercourse crossings, or a pollutant spill, could affect water quality in the downstream environment, but is likely to be short term in duration (e.g. limited to a short period immediately after the pollution event), and minor in scale. Standard proven mitigation measures will be implemented to address the potential effects of water quality impacts on aquatic and riparian habitats.</p> <p>Sliabh Beagh SPA is located c. 11 km north-west of the subject site and includes open bog and moorland environments. Given the scale, nature and the distance of the proposed development to the SPA it is considered unlikely that the proposed development would have a significant impact on the open bog and moorland environment.</p> <p>The AA Screening prepared for the proposed development concludes it is not likely that the development would have a significant impact on the qualifying interest/ conservation</p>

Natural Environments	Assessment
	objective of the SPA as there is no complete source-pathway-receptor chain.
Coastal zones and the marine environment	<p>The subject site is not located within or adjacent to any coastal zones or marine environments that could be affected by the proposed development.</p> <p>The closest coastal zone or maritime environment is located approximately 50 km south-east of the subject site.</p>
Mountain and forest areas	<p>The subject site is not located within or adjacent to any mountain or forest areas that could be affected by the proposed development.</p> <p>The closest mountain area (Slieve Gullion mountain and the Ring of Gullion) is located approximately 30 km south-east of the subject site and the closest forest area (Rossmore Forest Park) is located approximately 2.5 km south of the subject site.</p>
Nature reserves and parks	The subject site is not located within or adjacent to any nature reserves or national parks that could be affected by the proposed development.
Areas classified or protected under national legislation, including Natura 2000 areas	<p>The subject site is not located within or directly adjacent to protected or designated areas as described within the Planning and Development Act.</p> <p>There is only one European Site located within a 15km Zone of Influence of the subject site, <i>Sliabh Beagh SPA (004167)</i> is located 11 km west from the subject site. The AA Screening prepared for the proposed development concludes it is not likely that the development would have a significant impact on the qualifying interest/ conservation objective of the SPA as there is no complete source-pathway-receptor chain and therefore this Natura 2000 site may be excluded from further assessment.</p>
Densely populated area	The proposed development is located in the County Town Monaghan to the north-east of the Town Centre. While the site itself is largely greenfield and entirely unoccupied, Monaghan Town Centre can be considered a densely populated area.

Natural Environments	Assessment
<p>Landscape and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance</p>	<p>The subject site is located within an <i>Urban Landscape Character Type, Monaghan Drumlin Uplands Landscape Character Area</i> and a High Sensitivity Landscape Sensitivity Area as set out in the County Monaghan Landscape Character Assessment (2008).</p> <p>There are no known archaeological monuments within the area investigated, however, the zone of archaeological potential for the historic town of Monaghan (MO009-060) forms a section of the site's southwestern boundary at the back plots on Dublin Street. A walkover survey conducted as a part of this assessment identified two sites of archaeological potential (Site 1 and Site 2) however, in both instances, these have been discounted by further inspection and by archaeological testing, carried out under licence ref. 22E0956.</p> <p>There is a single protected structure, RPS No. 41001248 - the possible site of a fort, listed within the redline footprint of the development, however the walkover survey confirmed that there are no upstanding remains or traces of any remains present at that location. As part of the archaeological test trenching an investigation of the locus point for that protected structure was undertaken. That archaeological investigation confirmed that no such structure or elements relating to a structure of that type were present.</p> <p>Given the size and nature of the proposed development, it is considered appropriate and recommended that a full programme of licenced archaeological testing should be undertaken within the redline footprint of the proposed development.</p> <p>Following the programme of archaeological testing it is recommended that licenced archaeological monitoring be undertaken as part of the groundworks on site.</p> <p>In the event of the discovery of any archaeological features, further case appropriate mitigation measures can be put in place, through consultation with the regulatory authorities.</p>

4.3 Aspects Likely to be Significantly Affected

This section addresses the information required under paragraph 2 of Schedule 7A, namely –

A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.

The likelihood of significant impacts of the proposed development on the aspects set out below will be addressed later in this report.

4.3.16 Population and Human Health

The provision of a new Civic Offices Building constructed to Nearly Zero Energy Building standards (with a target Building Energy Rating (BER) of A2) and provision of active travel links and a vehicular link to the Roosky Lands will have a likely positive effect on population.

The construction stage may result in temporary to short-term nuisance for the local population. The likely causes would be;

- i. Increased traffic on the local road network (Please refer to section 4.2.3 of this EIASR for further detail).
- ii. Noise and potential fugitive dust emissions (Please refer to section 4.2.9 of this EIASR for further detail).

It is not likely that national air quality standards shall be adversely affected as a result of the short-term construction phase or the long-term operational phase, thus ensuring that the potential for adverse impacts on human health is negligible.

The construction phase will generate employment for construction workers which is likely to provide benefits for local businesses providing retail or other services to construction workers.

The proposed development including infrastructure works will also generate benefits by providing new active travel links which will positively affect health and safety for future staff and visitors of the civic offices and residents of the wider Town Centre and Masterplan area.

There are no SEVESO II Directive sites which might result in a risk to human health and safety in this area.

Overall, no likely significant effects arise.

4.3.17 Landscape & Visual

This section should be read in conjunction with the Townscape & Visual Statement (TVS) prepared by Macro Works, together with the supporting Photomontages prepared by the Paul Hogarth Company (PHC).

Any visibility of construction related plant and works is normal for construction projects. Prior to commencement, the site will be secured with boundary hoarding to screen the works. Notwithstanding, taller plant and the emergence of the new office building will be visible locally. It is reasonable to conclude that impacts during the construction phase will be not significant and temporary to short term.

Effects to townscape character will naturally occur as a result of the change to the site's undeveloped character. However, the proposed development is of a high-quality architectural finish, and has been considered carefully in

relation to its integration with the natural topography of the site, and its visual relationship with the wider townscape.

The TVS concludes that the proposed development, although noticeable, and potentially influencing an appreciable segment of the overall view, due to the scale of the proposed built form, and the distances at which it is located from existing properties, the proposals are not considered to have the potential to be visually obtrusive or overbearing from properties nearest the site.

Despite the development's location on the lower slopes of a hillside, from the vast majority of publicly accessible locations in the wider landscape/ townscape views of the proposed development will not be possible due to the screening influence of built form and vegetation.

In all views where the development is visible, these are influenced by extensive human intervention in the landscape, and both the architectural and landscape proposals are considered to complement the existing context.

Overall, no likely significant effects arise.

4.3.18 Material Assets – Traffic & Transport

The Construction & Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and Resource and Waste Management Plan (RWMP) submitted with the application incorporate a range of integrated control measures and associated management initiatives with the objective of mitigating the impact of the proposed development's on-site construction activities.

In addition, on appointment of a main contractor, a Construction Stage Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) will be prepared, the details of which will be agreed in full with MCC prior to the commencement of construction activities on site. The principal objective of the CTMP is to ensure that the impacts of all building activities generated during the construction of the proposed development upon both the public (off-site) and internal (on-site) workers environments, are fully considered and proactively managed / programmed respecting key stakeholders thereby ensuring that both the public's and construction worker's safety is maintained at all time, disruptions minimised and undertaken within a controlled hazard free / minimised environment.

In general, the impact of the construction period will be short-term in nature and less significant than the operational stage of the proposed development due to the reduced traffic volumes generated during the construction stage compared to the operational stage. HGV vehicle movements are not expected to exceed 50 vehicles per day during the busiest period of construction works. On-site employees will generally arrive before 08:00, thus avoiding morning peak hour traffic. These employees will generally depart after 18:00.

All construction traffic will enter the site from the south from Old Cross Square roundabout via Slí Ógie Uí Dhufaigh road which crosses the Shambles River into Rooskey Vale Avenue. Security facilities will be provided at each entry point with adequate off-road queuing facilities to avoid construction traffic queuing onto the existing road network.

Peak construction arrivals / departures will be outside of the road network peak hours and therefore will not exacerbate any existing delays encountered during peak times. It is anticipated that the generation of HGV's

during the construction period will be evenly spread throughout the day, and as such will not impact significantly during the peak traffic period.

A **Traffic and Transport Assessment** (TTA) has been prepared in respect of the proposed development to quantify the existing transport environment and to detail the results of assessment work undertaken to identify the potential level of any transport impact generated as a result of the proposed development while operation. The scope of the assessment considers pedestrian, cycle, public transport and vehicular access arrangements with a specific focus upon the potential impact generated upon the operational performance of the key local junctions as located on the surrounding road network.

The purpose of the proposed active travel and vehicular links within the Roosky lands is to provide access to the Civic Building, enhance connectivity to the Roosky Masterplan lands and provide improved non-vehicular connectivity to Monaghan Town Centre thereby improving the 10-minute town concept within Monaghan which aims to have all community facilities and services within a 10-minute walk or cycle from homes.

Based on the network impact assessment undertaken as part of this TTA report, a subthreshold impact has been predicted at all junctions considered as none of the junctions surpass the 10% impact threshold that would require further detailed assessment. However, an impact of approx. 5% is predicted at the Old Cross Square junction and therefore this junction has been subjected to more detailed analysis.

The results reveal that with the introduction of the proposed Civic Office development, there is predicted to be a modest impact on the Old Cross Square roundabout's operational performance.

In conclusion, it is considered that the impact on the surrounding road network, as a result of the proposed development will be negligible. This is based on the anticipated levels of traffic generated by the proposed development. The introduction of the proposed active travel links as part of the scheme is expected to improve the active travel network in this part of Monaghan Town allowing for shorter journey times for active travel modes.

It is concluded that the proposals represent a sustainable and practical approach to development on the subject lands and with no material traffic or road safety related reasons that should prevent the granting of planning permission for the proposed civic offices development.

Overall, no likely significant effects arise.

4.3.19 Material Assets – Waste

The proposed Development will generate a range of waste materials during site excavation and construction. General housekeeping and packaging will also generate waste materials, as well as typical municipal wastes generated by construction employees, including food waste. Waste materials will be required to be temporarily stored on-site pending collection by a licensed waste contractor.

According to the EPA, the majority of construction and demolition waste generated is recovered by backfilling. Backfilling refers to a recovery operation, carried out at authorised facilities, where suitable waste is used for land improvement, for reclamation purposes in excavated areas or for

engineering purposes in landscaping; and where waste is a substitute for non-wasted materials. Backfill sites include worked out quarries that are in the process of being restored or sites where soil and stone is imported to raise natural ground levels. There are licensed facilities in the region which are suitable to accept excavated material. Having regard to the nature and estimated quantities of waste that will be generated during the construction phase (see project specific RWMP) it is reasonably concluded that there is sufficient capacity available within the Region.

With respect to the operational stage, the subject site is located close to an urban area and will therefore benefit from a managed waste collection service. There are numerous private contractors that provide waste collection in the area.

Waste contractors servicing the proposed development will hold a valid waste collection permit for the specific waste types collected and all waste collected will be transported to registered/permitted/licensed facilities only.

Overall, no likely significant effects arise.

4.3.20 Land and Soils

This section should be read together with the Infrastructure Report, Engineering Services Report, Site Investigations Report, Construction Environmental Management Plan, and Resource and Waste Management Plan.

There will be a change in land use of an undeveloped greenfield site to an extension of the established Town Centre of Monaghan which is in keeping with the land use zoning objective as per the Monaghan Development Plan and with the pattern of development in the surrounding area.

The site is not within a Geological Heritage Area.

The site investigation indicates that rock excavation is not anticipated to be required to facilitate the proposed development. However, the works will include stripping of topsoil and excavation of subsoil layers. These activities have potential to expose the soils and geological environment to pollution.

The contractor will obtain approval of their proposed erosion and sediment control measures from MCC's Environment Section prior to commencing works on site and implement mitigation measures as set out in the CEMP.

There will be topsoil, subsoil, stones and clay excavated to facilitate construction of new foundations, underground services and portions of the structure of the development. In total, 23,445m³ of material will need to be excavated; 9,000m³ of material will need to be excavated to facilitate the development of the proposed civic office and 16,445m³ of material will need to be excavated to facilitate the associated transportation infrastructure.

The proposed development has been designed to minimise the impact of land movement. It is currently envisaged that approx. 7,000m³ of material excavated as part of the civic offices portion of the proposed development will be retained and reused onsite for landscaping and fill. The balance of material will need to be removed offsite due to the limited opportunities for reuse on site. This will be taken for appropriate offsite reuse, recovery, recycling and / or disposal.

Overall, no likely significant effects arise.

4.3.21 Water & Hydrology

Watercourses present in the proposed development lands consist of the River Shambles, a 3rd order tributary, which runs along the Ulster Canal and is located at the southern boundary of the subject site which connects downstream to the River Blackwater which eventually discharges into Lough Neagh.

The proposed development includes a new 13m clear span bridge crossing the river Shambles. There is a risk for pollutants from the proposal to affect water quality in the Shambles River and its tributaries downstream of the proposed routes and developments. Any potential spills arising during the construction phase of the proposed route, e.g. during construction of watercourse crossings, or a pollutant spill, could affect water quality in the downstream environment, but is likely to be short term in duration (e.g. limited to a short period immediately after the pollution event), and minor in scale. Standard proven mitigation measures will be implemented to address the potential effects of water quality impacts on aquatic and riparian habitats.

As detailed in the AA Screening Report prepared by Flynn Furney, no deterioration in water quality is predicted in the Natura 2000 sites as no in-stream works will be required. Further, the location of the proposed development is not immediately hydrologically connected to the Natura 2000 sites. The significant remove of the works from any Natura 2000 site (60km downstream) precludes any likelihood of impacts. Any suspended solids or any other potential pollutants which may enter the watercourse adjacent to the works area are likely to be minor in nature and settle within close proximity to the works area downstream.

The proposed development site is located within the 'Monaghan Town' groundwater body (Ground Waterbody Code: IEGBNI_NB_G_012) which is classified under the Water Framework Directive 9WFD Status 20132018 (EPA, 2021) as having 'Good status'. The site is also located in WFD Catchment 'Lough Neagh & Lower Bann' (District Code GBNIENB); WFD SubCatchment 'Blackwater[Monaghan]_SC_010' and WFD River Sub Basins 'SHAMBLES_010'.

The subject site is located within a Regionally Important Aquifer - Fissured bedrock. Aquifer vulnerability is a term used to represent the intrinsic geological and hydrological characteristics that determine the ease with which groundwater may be contaminated generally by human activities. The GSI guidance classifies the bedrock aquifer vulnerability in the northern part of the subject site as 'Low', in the southern part as 'High' and in the balance of lands as 'Moderate'. The subsoil vulnerability is recorded as low within the entirety of the proposed development site. There are no pathways to any designated sites. The proposed development site is located within a Drinking Water Protection Area.

The OPW Eastern Catchment Flood risk assessment and management (CFRAM) mapping indicates no evidence of historical flood events at or in the immediate adjoining lands. It also confirms the subject site is located within a Flood Zone C designation (low risk of flooding) where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is low (less than 0.1% or 1 in 1000 for both river and coastal flooding). Development in this zone is appropriate from a flood risk perspective and therefore, the proposed development is compliant

with requirements set out in the 'Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines' and the proposed development is not likely to be subject to accidents associated with flooding.

Overall, no likely significant effects arise.

4.3.22 Biodiversity

This section should be read in conjunction with the Ecological Impact Assessment (EIA). The Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening should also be referenced.

A summary of the key points as they relate to the environmental sensitivity are:

- No pNHA, NHA, NNR will be impacted from the proposed development. The sites mentioned are at a great remove and / or have no identifiable connectivity with the proposed works.
- The all-Ireland Wetland survey maps identify three areas of wetlands that are along the Blackwater River and Ulster Canal which are connected hydrologically to the site. Two of the wetlands are hydrologically connected to the proposed site of works and have the possibility to transport pollutants to the sites affecting water quality and associated biodiversity with no mitigation measures in place.
- Three patches of Third Schedule invasive species, Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) (JK), were found in the area. Furthermore the Eastern Grey Squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*), Butterfly Bush (*Buddleia sp.*) and Himalayan Honeysuckle (*Leycesteria formosa*) were noted in the area.
- No Annex I habitat types were recorded within or surrounding the proposed development area. Habitat types encountered were typical of agricultural and urban habitats within the county.
- No mammal refugia were found within the survey area. No evidence of mammal activity such as holes, trails, burrows or scatt, was found during the course of the survey, though it is possible that mammals use this area for navigation and occasionally foraging. No impacts to any protected mammal species are therefore considered likely with the correct implementation of mitigation.
- A dedicated breeding bird survey was not carried out as part of the surveys as it was not deemed an important site for birds based on the poor suitability of the habitats present. Although, all bird species seen and heard during the surveys were noted. It is likely that some will nest within the hedgerows and mature trees during summer months.
- Bat surveys included an activity survey, a visual inspection during daylight hours of mature trees within the area and an assessment for roosting bats. There are no buildings or other man-made features within the site boundary and overall, the trees on site were considered to have low suitability or roosting bats. The surveys revealed no evidence of any bat roosts within or adjacent to the site. Some common bat species feed within the site, particularly around the hedgerows and woodland.
- No evidence of breeding activity of Amphibians and Reptiles was recorded within the site.
- None of the habitats present around the proposed site of development were deemed especially suitable for invertebrates and or protected invertebrates. Invertebrates seen were typical of an agricultural and urban area.

Section 7 of the EclA sets out a catalogue of Mitigation Measures to address the potential impacts from the proposed development on habitats and fauna within and surrounding the proposed development.

The EclA concludes the following:

- The proposed development will not result in the loss of an internationally, nationally, regionally important habitat area.
- No protected mammal species were found to occur within or surrounding the proposed development area. It is unlikely that any protected mammal species will be impacted upon as a result of the construction and operation of this development.
- A survey of bat habitat within and surrounding the study area found no potential bat roost habitat areas. A number of measures have been described to mitigate against any impacts on bat populations during the construction and operation of this development.
- All birds seen and heard during surveys were recorded. All of these were species typical of farmland, woodland and hedgerows species. No Annex II (Birds Directive) bird species or red-listed species were recorded during bird surveys of the site and surrounds. Mitigation measures have been drawn up to address any potential impacts on local bird populations. These include the limiting of work areas and the protection of woody vegetation during the bird nesting season.

Please refer to the Ecological Impact Assessment for further detail.

The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (AASR) included under separate cover identifies that there is one European site within 15km of the proposed works, Sliabh Beagh SPA (approximately 11km). Lough Neagh and Lough Beg SPA is approximately 60km away and is assessed due to the potential pathway for impacts through hydrological connections.

The AASR identifies that the main threats to the Lough Neagh and Lough Beg SPA includes water pollution, habitat loss and degradation, climate change, habitat disturbance and recreation, invasive species and overfishing. It states that although the site is heavily dependent on water quality, it is unlikely that the SPA would be significantly impacted by any works associated with the proposed development due to the large hydrological distance (over 60km) between the proposed development and the SPA.

The proposed development does not include for instream works, and so due to the distance from Natura 2000 sites located downstream, short duration of works and significant opportunity for dilution from other rivers downstream (in particular the Monaghan Blackwater), it is considered unlikely that any likely significant effects will be incurred upon any Natura 2000 sites downstream.

Overall, no likely significant effects arise.

4.3.23 Air Quality & Climate

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) manages the ambient air quality monitoring network. According to the EPA air pollution is the single biggest environmental health risk in Europe. As part of the implementation of the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2002 (S.I. No. 271 of 2002), four air quality

zones have been defined in Ireland for air quality management and assessment purposes (EPA, 2020a).

In order to protect our health, vegetation and ecosystems, EU directives set down air quality standards in Ireland and the other member states for a wide variety of pollutants. These rules include how to monitor, assess and manage ambient air quality.

Information on air quality was accessed from the EPA website and interactive mapviewer. An indicative Air Monitoring Site (TNO3952) is located c. 150m south of the subject site close to Monaghan Water Treatment Plant. The EPA air quality index identifies that the site is located within a "Small Town" area where the air quality is rated as "3 - Good". Monaghan is located in Air Zone D "Rural Ireland" under the Air Quality Regulations (SI 180 of 2011).

The construction phase of the development has the potential to generate short term fugitive dust emissions during ground preparation and enabling works and from general site construction activities. The Principal Contractor or equivalent must monitor the contractors' performance to ensure that the proposed construction phase mitigation measures as per CEMP are implemented and that construction impacts and nuisance are minimised. A programme of air quality monitoring shall be implemented at the site boundaries for the duration of construction phase activities to ensure that the air quality standards are not exceeded. Where levels exceed specified air quality limit values, dust generating activities shall immediately cease and alternative working methods shall be implemented.

The development will see the operation of a modern, well insulated thermally efficient building in which energy efficiency shall be achieved by implementing sustainable features into the building design. The building was designed and constructed to achieve compliance with the Irish Building Regulations TGD Part L (Buildings other than Dwellings) Near Zero Energy Buildings with an A2 Rating.

Overall, no likely significant effects arise.

4.3.24 Noise & Vibration

A Noise Impact Assessment Report has been prepared by AWN consulting to present a review of potential environmental noise and vibration impacts from the proposed development. This section should be read in conjunction with AWN's report.

An environmental noise survey was undertaken as part of the Noise Impact Assessment to quantify the existing noise environment and identified no significant sources of environmental noise in the vicinity of the site. The main source of noise was distant traffic noise, occasional local traffic on the surrounding road network and occasional distant construction site noise. Overall, the noise levels were low, with little interference at the time of the survey.

During the construction phase, a variety of items of plant will be in use for the purposes of site clearance/groundworks, and construction. There will be vehicular movements to and from the site that will make use of existing roads. During periods of the construction there will be a potential for the generation of elevated levels of noise and vibrations due to the nature of the activities.

The proposed hours for normal construction activities are set out in the Construction and Environmental Management Plan prepared by DBFL. These hours are 07:00hrs to 19:00hrs Monday to Friday and 08:00hrs to 14:00hrs on Saturdays.

The greatest potential for noise impact will be when construction works occur along the boundary in proximity to noise sensitive locations (NSLs), or when on-site activity is expected to produce noise levels higher than those associated with typical construction activities.

The main potential source of vibration during a construction phase is typically associated with rock-breaking. Rock breaking is not anticipated at the site but may be required should rock be encountered during stripping and excavations. The likely levels of vibration from this activity are expected to be significantly below the lower adopted criteria for building damage based on experience from other sites. Therefore, vibration levels will be below the proposed threshold for all construction activities.

The main contractor for the works will ensure that all best practice measures relating to the control and minimisation of noise and vibration are employed during all phases of construction. With regard to construction activities, best practice operational and control measures for noise and vibration from construction sites are found within BS 5228 (2009 +A1 2014) Parts 1 and 2. Full details are provided in the Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

Once the development becomes operational, a variety of electromechanical plant will be required to service the buildings which can be considered a potential source of noise. A potential additional source of noise is typically associated with cars coming to and from the site, and occasional deliveries and collections.

It is confirmed that the predicted noise from new mechanical plant at the nearest noise sensitive locations will not give rise to adverse impacts at noise sensitive locations when assessed in accordance with the British Standard BS 4142: 2014.

Additionally, an assessment of the noise impacts from the addition of traffic on public roads arising from the proposed development has been undertaken. The predicted increased traffic flows are relatively low and calculations have confirmed that the predicted noise level at the nearest NSL from all traffic along the '*Sli Ogie Ui Dhufaigh*' is 44 dB(A) which is not significant, as it is in line with typical ambient noise levels measured in the vicinity of the site and below assessment thresholds identified as 55 dB during daytime and 45 dB during night time. It is therefore considered that additional traffic noise introduced onto the local road network due to the proposed development is not significant.

Considering the distances to the nearest noise sensitive locations to activity on site and the levels of vibration that may be generated by proposed activities during the operational phase, any vibration is expected to be significantly below any thresholds for perceptibility.

Overall, no likely significant effects arise.

4.3.25 Cultural Heritage

This section should be read in conjunction with the Archaeological, Architectural and Cultural Heritage Assessment included with the application.

Having regard to the assessment, the subject site was discounted as being non archaeological and modern in nature. Possible archaeological features identified by an initial walkover survey were also revealed to be completely non archaeological in origin. Equally, there were no findings in historic, cartographic or documentary sources which suggested the presence of a 'fort' or 'site of a fort' at the subject site.

Notwithstanding, given the size and nature of the proposed development, it is considered appropriate that a full programme of licenced archaeological testing should be undertaken within the redline boundary of the proposed development and licenced archaeological monitoring be undertaken as part of the groundworks on site. In the event of the discovery of archaeological features further case appropriate mitigation measures can be put in place through consultation with the regulatory authorities.

Overall, no likely significant effects arise.

4.4 Description of Likely Significant Effects

This section addresses the information required under Schedule 7A, namely –

A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, or the project on the environment resulting from:

- (a) The expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant;*
- (b) The use of natural resources, in particular soil, land and water and biodiversity.*

The following criteria of Schedule 7 (Paragraph 3), Characteristics of Potential Impacts, are also noted:

The potential significant effects of proposed development in relation to criteria set out under paragraphs 1 and 2 above, and having regard to:

- the extent of the impact (geographical area and size of the affected population),*
- the transfrontier nature impact*
- the magnitude and complexity of the impact,*
- the probability of the impact,*
- the duration, frequency, and reversibility of the impact.*

These criteria are dealt with in the report above and Table 5 summarises the predicted post-mitigation significance, quality, and duration of the identified likely effects.

Table 7 - Description of Effects

Aspect	Phase	Potential Effect	Probability	Extent	Significance of Effect	Quality of Effect	Duration
Landscape	C	Loss of open character of greenfield area	Likely	Site	Moderate	Neutral	Permanent
	O	Change in Land Use from Agricultural to built environment	Likely	Site	Moderate	Neutral	Permanent
Visual	C	Emergence of plant & machinery associated with the construction phase	Likely	Local	Slight	Neutral	Short-term
	O	Change of existing landscape character.	Likely	Local	Moderate	Neutral	Permanent
Biodiversity	C	Disturbance due to construction activity	Likely	Local	Moderate	Neutral	Short-term
		Loss of foraging habitat	Likely	Site	Moderate	Neutral	Permanent
	O	Biodiversity value of the site will improve as landscaping matures	Likely	Local	Moderate	Positive	Long-term
Land & Soil	C&O	Land use change, greenfield to built environment	Likely	Site	Moderate	Positive	Permanent
		Loss of topsoil & subsoils to facilitate development	Likely	Site	Moderate	Neutral	Permanent
	C	Contamination due to accidental spillage	Unlikely	Site	Imperceptible	Neutral	Temporary

Aspect	Phase	Potential Effect	Probability	Extent	Significance of Effect	Quality of Effect	Duration
Population & Human Health	C	Construction Noise, Fugitive Dust, Traffic	Likely	Local	Moderate	Negative	Short-term
		Construction Employment	Likely	Region	Slight	Positive	Short-term
	O	Impacts on amenity for nearby residential receptors	Likely	Local	Slight	Neutral	Permanent
		New and improved Active Travel links	Likely	Local	Moderate	Positive	Permanent
		New office building with nearly Zero Energy Building standards (with a target Building Energy Rating of A2)	Likely	Local	Slight	Positive	Long-term
Water	C	Dust and contaminated surface water runoff to enter the River Shambles	Unlikely	Region	Moderate	Negative	Temporary - Short-term
	O	Risk of flooding	Unlikely	Site	Significant	Negative	Temporary
Air Quality & Climate	C	Reduction in air quality because of construction traffic and HGVs, and emissions from construction and plant machinery.	Likely	Local	Not significant	Negative	Temporary
	O	Improved air quality associated with modal shift due to active travel scheme	Likely	Local	Moderate	Positive	Permanent
		Improved air quality associated with	Likely	Local	Slight	Positive	Permanent

Aspect	Phase	Potential Effect	Probability	Extent	Significance of Effect	Quality of Effect	Duration
		new nearly Zero Energy office building with energy efficient design measures					
Noise	C	Construction Noise	Likely	Local	Slight	Negative	Short-term
	O	Slight increase in noise levels due to increased traffic	Likely	Local	Not significant	Neutral	Long-term
Cultural Heritage	C	Damage to unrecorded, subsurface archaeological features that may exist within the study area	Unlikely	Site	Imperceptible	Negative	Permanent
Traffic	C	Construction traffic resulting in harm to human health from emissions	Unlikely	Local	Imperceptible	Negative	Short-term
		Traffic congestion and/or public safety hazard	Unlikely	Local	Not Significant	Negative	Short-term
	O	Traffic congestion affecting the operation of the surrounding transport network	Unlikely	Local	Imperceptible	Neutral	Long-term
		Operational traffic resulting in harm to human health from emissions.	Unlikely	Local	Imperceptible	Neutral	Permanent
		Scheme will contribute to increased use of active	Likely	Local	Moderate	Positive	Long-term

Aspect	Phase	Potential Effect	Probability	Extent	Significance of Effect	Quality of Effect	Duration
		transport modes					

5. Summary & Conclusion

The proposed scheme has been reviewed against prescribed criteria for determining whether or not a sub-threshold development is required to be subject to EIA. A global consideration against all of the criteria, taking account of measures to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment, finds that the environmental effects of the proposed development will be short-term and are not likely to be significant within the meaning of the Directive.

Development of the site for the proposed office and infrastructure development is appropriate in the context of the site's zoning objective and national policy. With proposed mitigation measures in place, it is not anticipated that the construction or operational phases of the proposed development, whether considered on its own or together with in-combination projects or plans, will give rise to likely significant environmental effects. It is therefore concluded that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed scheme and accordingly the proposed development does not need to be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment and no Environmental Impact Assessment Report is required for it.

This conclusion is based on an objective review of the proposed development, including its characteristics, location, and the likelihood of it causing significant environmental impacts. The screening has followed the relevant legislation and has had regard to the relevant guidance.

Mitigation measures for the proposed development during the construction and operational phase are set out in the suite of reports that accompany this application. All these mitigation measures have been taken into account in the context of this EIA Screening Report.