

# EIA SCREENING REPORT FOR WORKS AT MOYROSS AVENUE, LIMERICK

Prepared for Limerick City and County Council

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# 1 Contents

1	Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report.....	3
1.1	Introduction .....	3
1.2	Legislative background .....	3
1.2.1	Project Type and thresholds.....	4
1.2.2	Statement of Authority.....	6
2	Description of the Proposed Development .....	7
2.1	Background .....	7
2.2	Summary of the Proposed Development .....	7
2.2.1	Duration of works.....	7
2.2.2	Approach to works .....	8
2.2.3	Construction materials and personnel required.....	8
3	Summary of environmental baseline.....	10
3.1.1	Human Beings.....	10
3.1.2	Flora and Fauna .....	10
3.1.3	Summary of Habitats Present.....	12
3.1.4	Protected species .....	12
3.1.5	Invasive Species .....	14
3.2	Geology and Soil.....	14
3.3	Water .....	15
3.3.1	Surface water .....	15
3.3.2	Groundwater .....	16
3.4	Air and Climatic Factors.....	17
3.4.1	Landscape and Townscape.....	17
3.5	Cultural Heritage .....	18
3.6	Material Assets.....	18
3.7	Environmental Protection Measures.....	18
4	Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Exercise.....	19
4.1	Relevant EIA Legislation.....	19
4.2	Methodology and Guidance .....	20
4.3	Mandatory Environment Impact Assessment .....	21
4.4	Projects for the Cumulative Assessment.....	21
4.5	Assessment.....	22

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4.6	Identification of the Relevant Assessments Available .....	28
4.6.1	Planning Context and Other Relevant Environmental Assessments.....	29
4.6.2	Water Framework Directive .....	29
5	Conclusion .....	31
5.1	EIA Screening Conclusion .....	31
REFERENCES	.....	32

# 1 Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

## 1.1 Introduction

MEC Ltd have been commissioned by MRG Consulting Engineers on behalf of Limerick City and County Council undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening exercise in relation to proposed works at Moyross Avenue, Limerick City, See figure 1.1. for proposed boundary over aerial imagery.

FIGURE 1-1 SITE LOCATION AND PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARY



## 1.2 Legislative background

This EIA Screening exercise was undertaken to determine if EIA is required for the proposed development as set out in the mandatory and discretionary provisions of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) (the Act) and in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 as amended (the Regulations). Certain projects, listed in Schedule 5 of the regulations, due to their always having the potential for significant environmental effects, require mandatory EIA. Others, also listed in the Schedule 5 of the regulations, contain threshold levels and for projects that fall below these thresholds it is the decision of the competent authority to decide if an EIA (and the associated Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) is required.

Whether a 'sub threshold' development should be subject to EIA is determined by the likelihood that the development would result in significant environmental effects. Significant effects may arise due to

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the nature of the development, its scale or extent and its location in relation to the characteristics of the receiving area, particularly sensitive environments.

However, notwithstanding that the proposed development is “sub threshold”, as set out in the *Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment* (August 2018), screening is the initial stage in the EIA process and determines whether or not specified public or private developments are likely to have significant effects on the environment and, as such, require EIA to be carried out prior to a decision on a development consent application being made.

One of key amendments introduced by the 2014 EIA Directive includes strengthening of the procedures for screening, particularly through the introduction of new information requirements to be provided by the developer (Annex IIA, and transposed into Irish law by Schedule 7A to the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended ) and revised selection criteria to be used by the competent authority in making a determination (Annex III of Directive, Schedule 7 to the 2001 Regulations).

This report documents the methodology employed to complete the screening exercise, having regard to relevant legislation and guidance documents.

### 1.2.1 Project Type and thresholds

Schedule 5 Part 1 of the 2001 Regulations is aligned with Annex I of the EIA Directive and identifies those developments for which EIA and the submission of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) is mandatory. This schedule lists a range of development activities including major infrastructure projects such as airports, motorways or power stations. The proposed development does not fall within any of the classes of prescribed development contained in Part 1 of Schedule 5.

Schedule 5 Part 2 of the 2001 Regulations is aligned with Annex II of the EIA Directive and lists the type of development that may require an EIA. This depends on site area, and quantum of development in relation to thresholds listed and therefore if there is potential for likely significant environmental effects.

Paragraph 10(b) of Part 2 of Schedule 5 contains the following prescribed development:

“b) (i) Construction of more than 500 dwellings

(ii) Construction of a car-park providing more than 400 spaces, other than a car-park provided as part of, and incidental to the primary purpose of, a development.

(iii) Construction of a shopping centre with a gross floor space exceeding 10,000 square metres.

(iv) Urban development which would involve 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.)”.

In this regard, the relevant category for the proposed works would align most closely with “urban development” listed in Schedule 5 Part 2, 10b, iv. European Commission (2015) guidance provides

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information on the interpretation of definitions of project categories and details potential project types that would meet the definition of ‘urban development’. These are as follows:

- Projects with similar characteristics to shopping centres and car parks, such as bus garages, train depots;
- Construction projects such as housing development; concert halls; cultural venues;
- Projects to which the term ‘urban’ and ‘infrastructure’ may relate such as construction of sewerage and water supply networks.

The proposed project does not correspond or have similar characteristics to any of the suggested project definitions and would therefore not be considered under the ‘urban development’ criteria of Schedule 5 Part 2 as it relates to works to an existing c 700m of road at Moyross Avenue.

Furthermore, the thresholds for EIA for this project category are listed as development in a business district with a site area over 2 hectares, in a built-up area with a site area of over 10 hectares and elsewhere with a site area over 20 hectares. The project footprint is considerably under these thresholds amount to c 700m in length, relating to existing built land and artificial surfaces and is at 2.1ha. A review of the landuse zoning in the project area comprises existing low density residential to the south west, community and educational use associated with the Corpus Christ school and church. It does not represent a business district and is more accurately related to ‘built up area’. In this, the red line boundary area of 2.1 ha is well below the 10hectare threshold.

In relation to criteria applied for mandatory EIA development as listed in Section 50 of the Roads Act 1993, the project does not meet the criteria for EIA given the scale, and nature of the proposed works, relating to new school provision. In light of this, the project does not meet the criteria for such works under the Roads Act 1993, as amended.

However, notwithstanding that the proposed development is “sub threshold”, as set out in the *Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment* (August 2018), screening is the initial stage in the EIA process and determines whether or not specified public or private developments are likely to have significant effects on the environment and, as such, require EIA to be carried out prior to a decision on a development consent application being made.

One of key amendments introduced by the 2014 EIA Directive includes strengthening of the procedures for screening, particularly through the introduction of new information requirements to be provided by the developer (Annex IIA, and transposed into Irish law by Schedule 7A to the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001, as amended) and revised selection criteria to be used by the competent authority in making a determination (Annex III of Directive, Schedule 7 to the 2001 Regulations).

According to European Commission Guidance (2017<sup>1</sup>)

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<sup>1</sup> Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects Guidance on Screening (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU). European Commission 2017. Page 23.

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*“Screening has to implement the Directive’s overall aim, i.e. to determine if a Project listed in Annex II is likely to have significant effects on the environment and, therefore, be made subject to a requirement for Development Consent and an assessment, with regards to its effects on the environment. At the same time, Screening should ensure that an EIA is carried out only for those Projects for which it is thought that a significant impact on the environment is possible, thereby ensuring a more efficient use of both public and private resources. Hence, Screening has to strike the right balance between the above two objectives.”*

According to the Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (2018):

*“For all sub-threshold developments listed in Schedule 5 Part 2, where no EIAR is submitted or EIA determination requested, a screening determination is required to be undertaken by the competent authority unless, on preliminary examination it can be concluded that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. This is initiated by the competent authority following the receipt of a planning application or appeal*

*A preliminary examination is undertaken, based on professional expertise and experience, and having regard to the ‘Source – Pathway – Target’ model, where appropriate. The examination should have regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7 to the 2001 Regulations.*

*Where, based on a preliminary examination of the information submitted with the application and any other supplementary information received, the competent authority concludes that, having considered the nature, size and location of the proposed development, there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment, this should be recorded with reasons for this conclusion stated, and no EIA required or formal determination made. The recording of the competent authority’s view should be brief and concise, but adequate to inform the public. In many cases this considered view will be included in the planner’s/inspector’s report on the planning application and this may be cross-referenced in the competent authority’s decision. Normally, this will be published at the time of the decision of the competent authority.”*

For the avoidance of doubt, Section 3 of this report, provides an assessment of the project against Schedule 7 criteria of the EIA regulation to which sub threshold development is required to be assessed. Section 4 provides the EIA Screening Determination.

### 1.2.2 Statement of Authority

The EIA Screening exercise has been compiled by Ruth Minogue MCIEEM, who has twenty-four years’ experience as an environmental consultant. She has expertise in environmental assessment including EIA and Strategic Environmental Assessment. Ruth is a full member of the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management and the Irish Environmental Law Association. Recent CDP training includes the Advanced Diploma in Planning and Environmental Law (Kings Inn, 2017), GQIS for ecologists (IEEM, Feb 2019), Bats and Mitigation and Monitoring (IEEM 2021) and ongoing CPD through professional institutes.

A site visit was undertaken on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

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## 2 Description of the Proposed Development

### 2.1 Background

The proposed scheme is located in the Moyross area (See Figure 1.1), which is a large residential area to the northwest of Limerick City. The upgrade works to Moyross Avenue are proposed as part of a continuation to on-going works to the road corridor which include the link road connecting Moyross Avenue to the Coonagh to Knocklisheen Distributor Road Scheme to the west of the proposed works which received An Bord Pleanála approval in 2011 and the on-going works to the roadway being undertaken as part of the Dalgaish and Cosgrave Park developments which received Part 8 planning approval in 2015.

### 2.2 Summary of the Proposed Development

The proposed scheme will provide a high-quality road corridor comprising improved footpaths and segregated cycling facilities, parallel parking, landscaped areas including tree planting and narrowing of the existing road carriageway. The segregated cycle facilities on both sides of the road will be separated from the road carriageway and located to the rear of the parallel parking spaces with a buffer between the cycle facilities and parking. This will be achieved by re-construction of the existing footpaths, construction of cycle tracks, parking areas and re-construction of the existing road carriageway through the extents of the scheme.

Upgraded bus stop facilities in accordance with the details in the Cycle Design Manual 2023 will be provided to the existing route 303 bus stops.

Land acquisition is required at the Corpus Christi Catholic School and the Corpus Christi Church to accommodate the proposed upgrade works to Moyross Avenue with new boundary structures to be constructed along the frontage of the School and Church. The new parking to be provided within the grounds of the Corpus Christi Church will help to limit the on street parking on Moyross Avenue and will provide for improved access arrangements for parishioners to the Church.

#### 2.2.1 Duration of works

It is proposed to carry out the upgrade works to Moyross Avenue, the subject of this Report in two separate phases :

Phase one will include that 200m section of Moyross Avenue extending from the junction of Sarsfield Gardens to the western boundary of the Corpus Christi Catholic School. The re-construction of the boundaries to the School and Church will be carried out with this phase along with the provision of replacement car-parking spaces to the rear of the Corpus Christi Parish Church. The Phase one works are the subject of a Part 8 Planning submission.

Phase two will include for the remaining 500m section of Moyross Avenue from the Corpus Christi Catholic School, along the frontage of the Moyross Community Enterprise Centre (MCEC) west to the tie in with the Coonagh to Knocklisheen Distributor Road Scheme at Pineview Gardens.

The construction works to Moyross Avenue and associated junctions will include for the construction of the segregated cycle facilities on both sides of the road separated from the road carriageway. The scheme will also include re-construction of the existing road, parallel parking and footpaths. Other elements to be delivered in conjunction with the above include junction improvements as required, works to bus stops, pedestrian facilities including crossings with associated modification to drainage, lighting, utility services, line markings and signage etc.

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It is estimated that the phase one works will take up to 5 months to complete with the phase two works taking up to 6 months to complete.

### 2.2.2 Approach to works

Each phase of the works would be completed in sections to allow for access to existing properties and side roads and also to facilitate pedestrian access. The works would include for the completion of the footpath re-construction / cycle track construction on either side of the road along with drainage/utility works. Works to the road carriageway will require a one-way or stop/go traffic management arrangement to be implemented within each phase to allow for the road re-construction and re-surfacing works. The traffic management arrangements will have to be arranged to maintain safe access and egress to the School, Church and MCEC building which front the roadway.

### 2.2.3 Construction materials and personnel required

- 20 tonne excavator
- rubber tyred excavators, 6 tonne JCB
- tonne mini diggers
- 30 tonne dump truck
- 6 tonne dumpers
- 7.5 tonne multi-purpose truck
- 20 tonne and 30 tonne delivery trucks
- teleporter
- site vehicles
- compactor plates
- 6 tonne vibrating rollers
- paving machines
- bitumen boiler
- oil tanker/sprayer
- road planning machine
- road saws
- air compressors
- jack hammers
- traffic management signage, cones and barriers
- herras fencing
- road sweeper

The materials required for the works will be typical civil engineering road construction materials consisting of cement, gravels, aggregates, capping stone, block paviments, precast concrete kerbs, in-situ concrete kerbs and footpaths, precast concrete manholes, covers, plastic ducting, galvanised/cast iron chamber covers, powder coated street lighting columns and traffic signal poles, LED lighting and traffic signals, galvanised steel signage poles, metal traffic signs etc.

The site personnel would be approximately 15-20 persons.

The existing surface water runoff from Moyross Avenue is collected by road gullies and discharges to a separate piped surface water network. The existing surface water network discharges downstream of the roadway to a combined sewer system. The road drainage will remain as existing. Linear green verge spaces are to be introduced on either side of the road to separate the cycle tracks and

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footpaths from the roadway with runoff from the cycle track and footpath surfaces to drain to the grassed areas. The area of surface water drainage from the roadway will remain similar to the existing.

The use of a SuDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage System) facility is proposed for the new parking area within the grounds of the Church with the surface water drainage discharged locally on the site. There are many approaches to management of surface water that take account of water quantity (flooding), water quality (pollution), biodiversity (wildlife and plants) and amenity and these are collectively referred to as SuDS systems.

The Contract Documents will include for the following standard construction guidance and guidelines.

The Contractor shall establish and implement, during the execution and completion of the Works, an Environmental Operating Plan consistent with and analogous to the NRA “Guidelines for the Creation, Implementation and Maintenance of an Environmental Operating Plan”. All construction and operations shall be carried out in accordance with the Control of Water Pollution from Linear Construction Projects. Technical Guidance (C648) (CIRIA 2006), Control of Water Pollution from

Linear Construction Projects, Site Guide (C649) (CIRIA 2006), and in accordance with Guidelines for the Crossing of Watercourses during the Construction of National Road Schemes (NRA, 2006).

The majority of the proposed works are within the foot print of the existing road/verge/footpath with the road carriageway width being reduced to accommodate new cycle tracks.

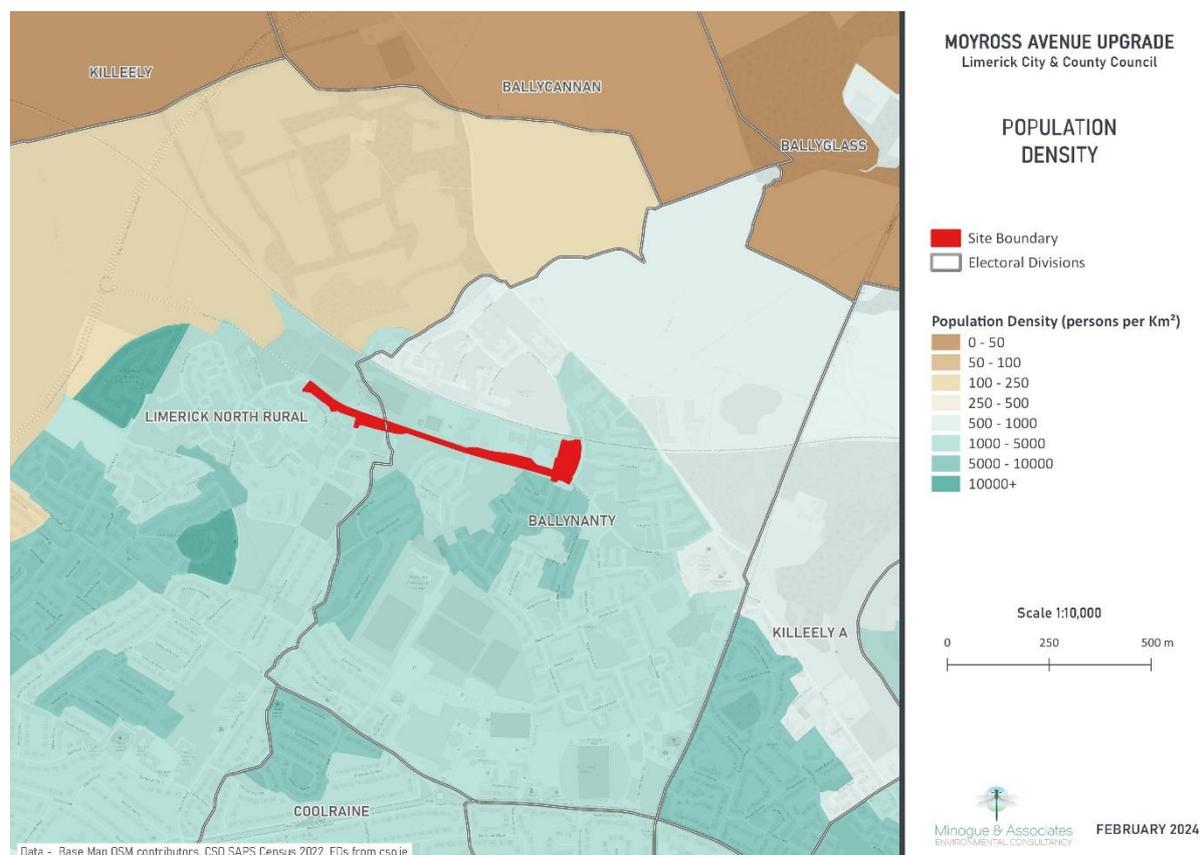
### 3 Summary of environmental baseline

The project site comprises existing built land and artificial surfaces associated with the road. Amenity grassland is present at the Corpus Christi Church, Moyross Playing Fields and grass at the school areas.

#### 3.1.1 Human Beings

The proposed development is located on Moyross Avenue, it is located within the neighbourhood of Moyross and landuse includes the school and church as well as a road. Population density is shown below with the site within 2 electoral divisions that have a density of between 1,000 to 5,000km<sup>2</sup>. The population of the Electoral District for the project is 26,308. See Figure 3.1 below for population density.

FIGURE 3-1 POPULATION DENSITY FOR ELECTORAL DISTRICTS AND PROJECT SITE



#### 3.1.2 Flora and Fauna

A screening for Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive has also been prepared for this project proposal and should be read in conjunction with this EIA Screening report. The closest Natural Heritage Area is Knockalisheen March, a wetland adjacent to the River Shannon, is located c 300m from the project site.

The following Natura 2000 sites are located within 15km of the project site and Figures 3.1 – 3.2 presents these sites.

TABLE 3-1 SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION AND SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS WITHIN 15KM BUFFER

Sitecode	Site Name	Distance (km)
002165	Lower River Shannon	0.31
001013	Glenomra Wood	8.99
002316	Ratty River Cave	12.04
000030	Danes Hole, Poulnalecka	12.37
002279	Askeaton Fen Complex	14.26
004077	River Shannon & River Fergus Estuaries	2.04

FIGURE 3-2 SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION AND SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS

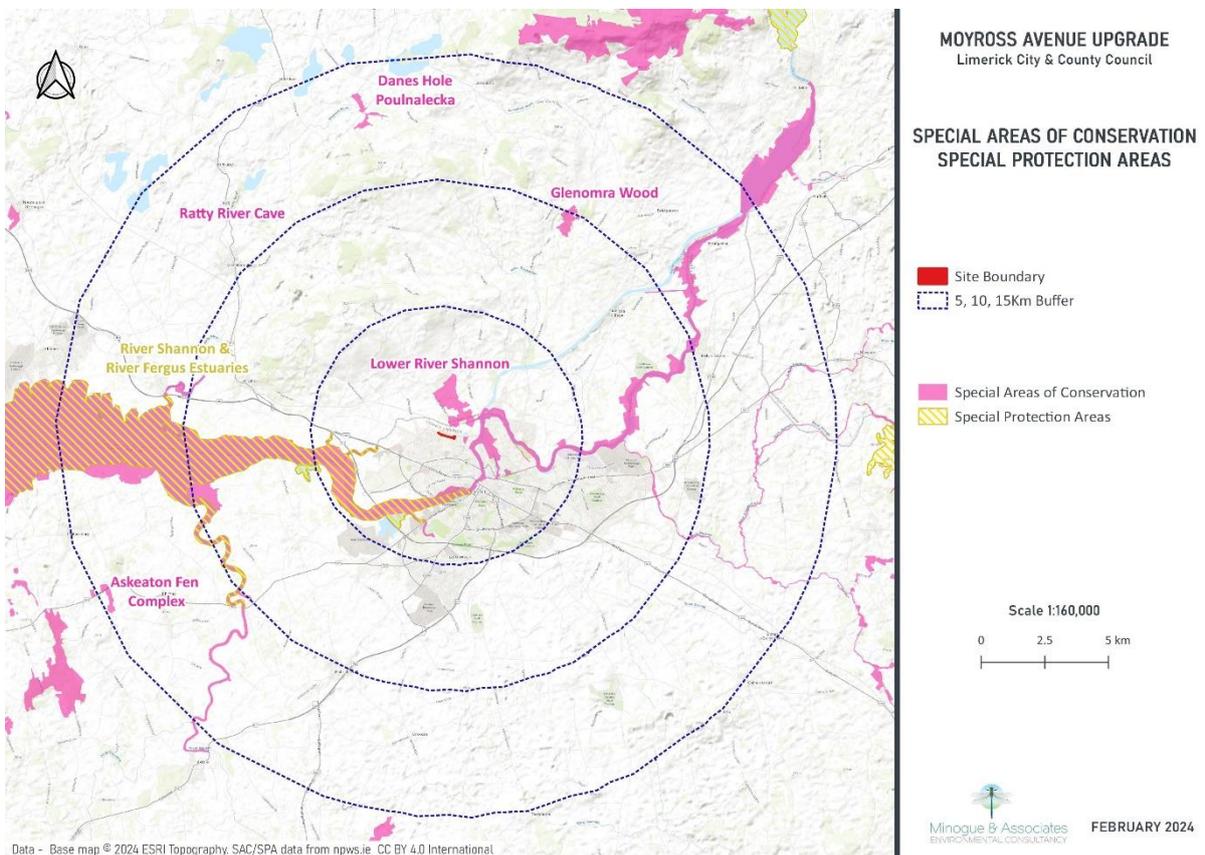
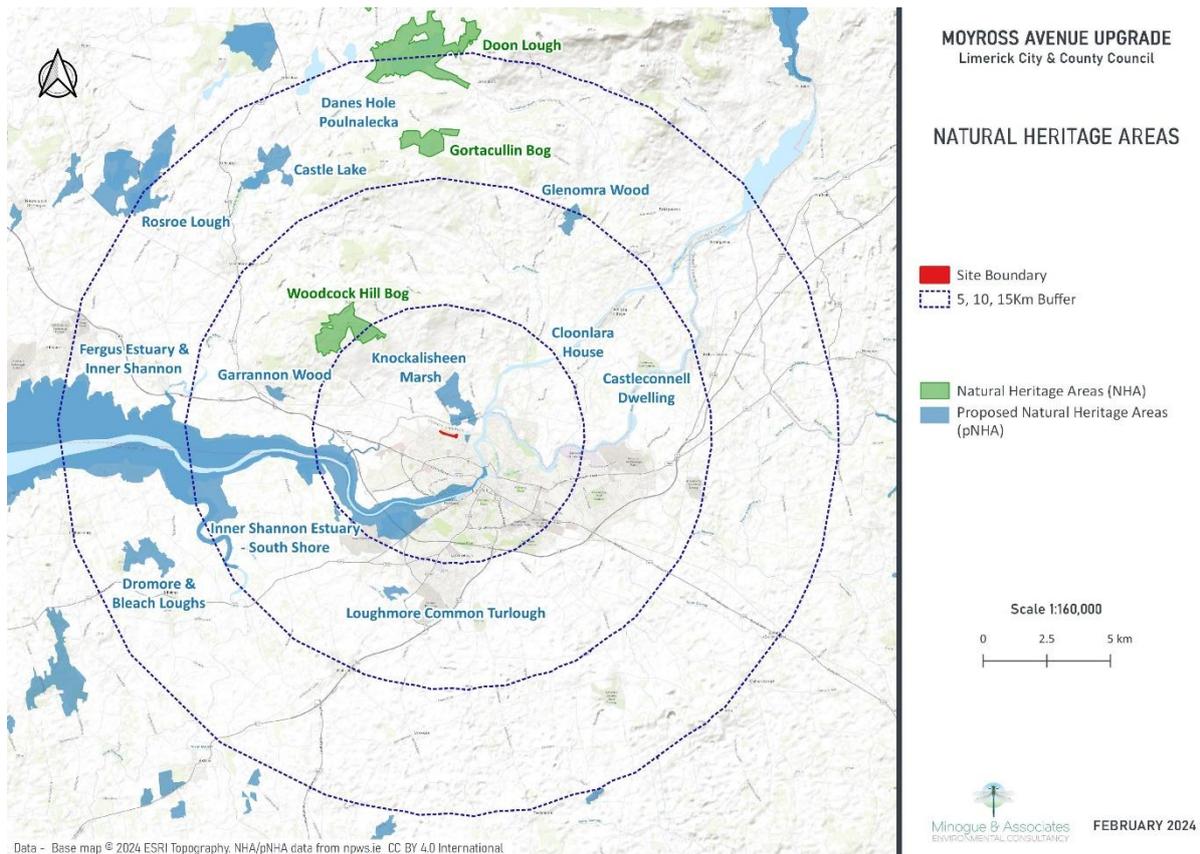


Figure 3.3 presents the proposed/Natural Heritage Areas within a 15km buffer of the project.

FIGURE 3-3 NATURAL HERITAGE AREAS AND PROPOSED NATURAL HERITAGE AREAS



### 3.1.3 Summary of Habitats Present

### 3.1.4 Protected species

The National Biodiversity Centre Database was consulted and returned records of protected species within the 2km tetrad (R552), as follows:

Species name	Record count	Date of last record	Title of dataset	Designation
Black-headed Gull ( <i>Larus ridibundus</i> )	2	23/08/2013	Local BioBlitz Challenge 2013	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Red List
Common Kestrel ( <i>Falco tinnunculus</i> )	1	08/06/2022	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Common Kingfisher ( <i>Alcedo atthis</i> )	2	30/07/2022	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts    Protected Species: EU Birds Directive    Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex I Bird Species    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List

Common Starling (Sturnus vulgaris)	2	23/08/2013	Local BioBlitz Challenge 2013	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Common Swift (Apus apus)	1	11/08/2021	Swifts of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Eurasian Oystercatcher (Haematopus ostralegus)	2	26/02/2013	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Eurasian Teal (Anas crecca)	1	31/12/2011	Bird Atlas 2007 - 2011	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts    Protected Species: EU Birds Directive    Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section I Bird Species    Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex III, Section II Bird Species    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Goosander (Mergus merganser)	1	31/12/2011	Bird Atlas 2007 - 2011	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts    Protected Species: EU Birds Directive    Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section II Bird Species    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Great Cormorant (Phalacrocorax carbo)	3	09/04/2016	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Lesser Black-backed Gull (Larus fuscus)	1	23/08/2013	Local BioBlitz Challenge 2013	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Little Grebe (Tachybaptus ruficollis)	1	31/12/2011	Bird Atlas 2007 - 2011	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Mallard (Anas platyrhynchos)	3	16/12/2022	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts    Protected Species: EU Birds Directive    Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section I Bird Species    Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex III, Section I Bird Species
Mute Swan (Cygnus olor)	1	31/12/2011	Bird Atlas 2007 - 2011	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Rock Pigeon (Columba livia)	2	23/08/2013	Local BioBlitz Challenge 2013	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts    Protected Species: EU Birds Directive    Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section I Bird Species

Sky Lark ( <i>Alauda arvensis</i> )	1	08/06/2022	Birds of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List
Tufted Duck ( <i>Aythya fuligula</i> )	1	31/12/2011	Bird Atlas 2007 - 2011	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts    Protected Species: EU Birds Directive    Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex II, Section I Bird Species    Protected Species: EU Birds Directive >> Annex III, Section II Bird Species    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern    Threatened Species: Birds of Conservation Concern >> Birds of Conservation Concern - Amber List

### 3.1.5 Invasive Species

The survey on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2024, did not identify any invasive species listed on the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011. However, it is outside the appropriate season for identification of many such species.

## 3.2 Geology and Soil

### Geology

The site is undulating and is underlain by limestone, given the urban character of the site, the soils are classified as urban land. See Figures 3.5 and 3.6 below.

**Figure 3-4 Bedrock Geology**

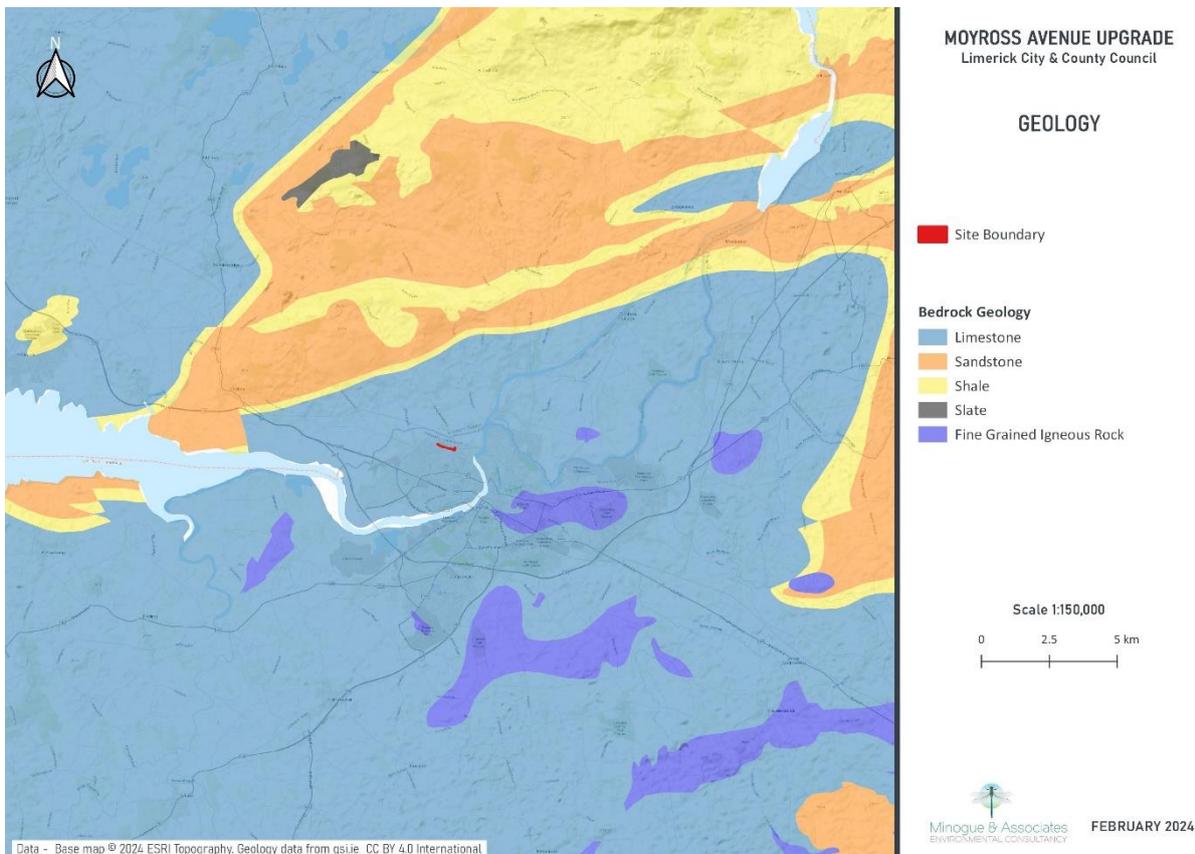
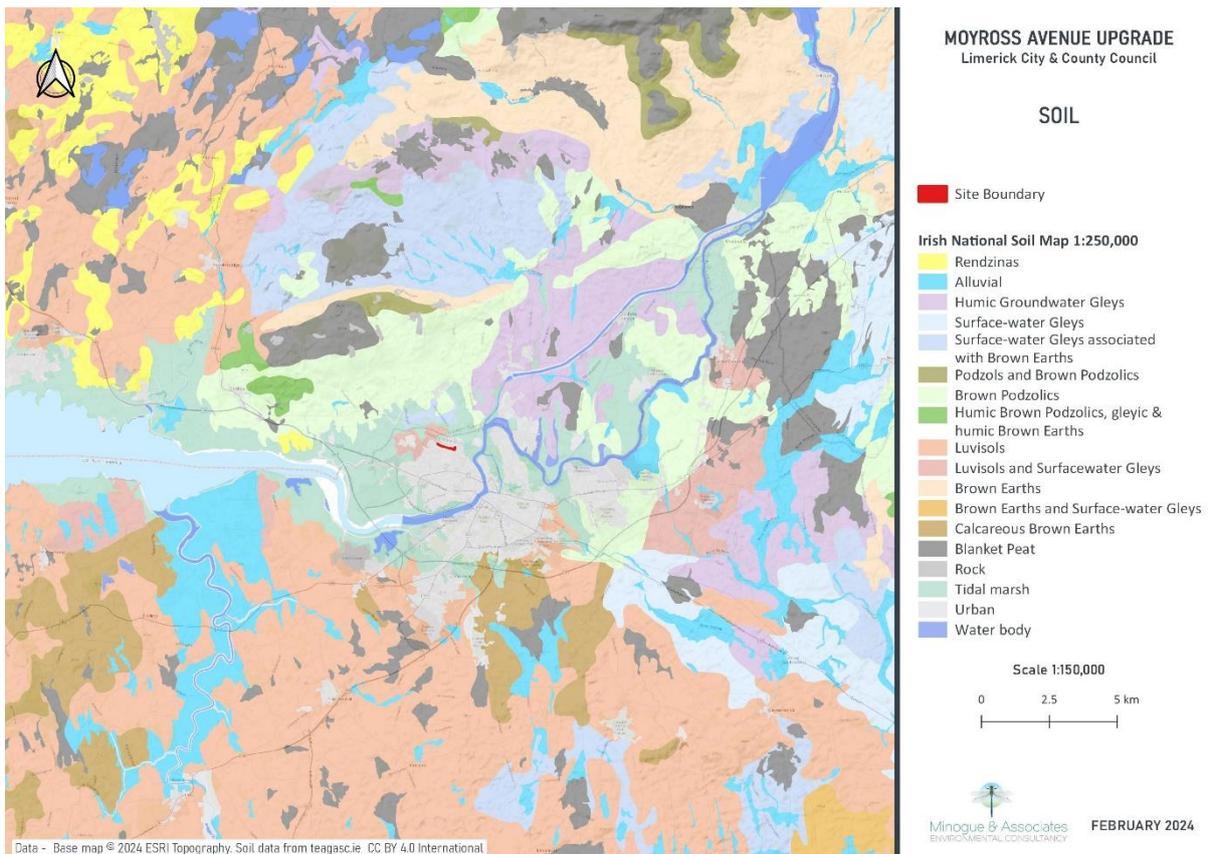


FIGURE 3-5 SOILS



### 3.3 Water

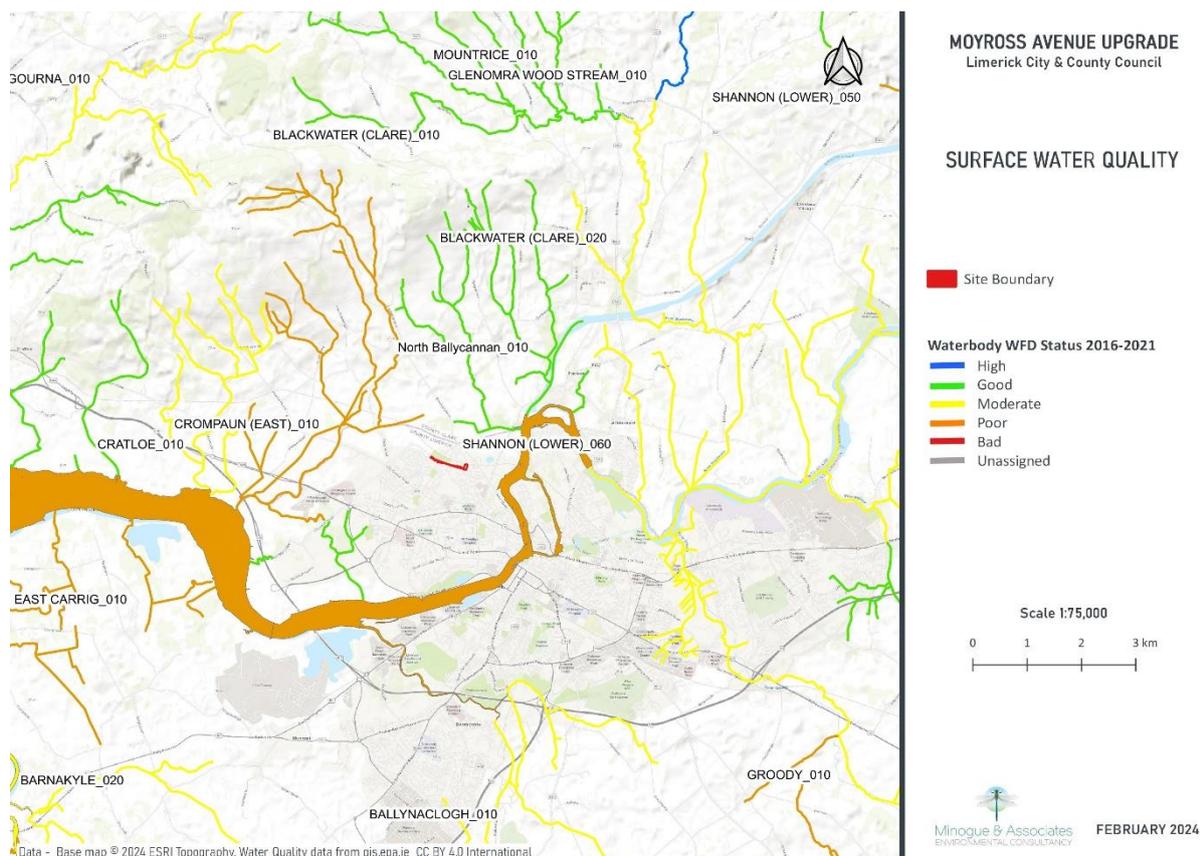
The Water Framework Directive (WFD) is a key initiative aimed at improving water quality throughout the EU. It applies to rivers, lakes, groundwater, estuarine and coastal waters. The Directive requires an integrated approach to managing water quality on a river basin basis; with the aim of maintaining and improving water quality. A catchment is an area where water is collected by the natural landscape and flows from source through river, lakes and groundwater to the sea. The study area lands are situated within the Lower Shannon Catchment (code:25D) and the sub catchment of Shannon Lower (SC10).

#### 3.3.1 Surface water

Surface water status is classified under the WFD from 'high' to 'bad' status. In measuring this status both ecological and chemical parameters are measured, and the overall status is determined by the lower threshold achieved for both ecological and chemical parameters. The River Shannon the nearest surface water body is located approximately 300m west of the project site as the crow flies and is classified as of poor quality based on the most recently available water quality data (2016-2021) and is at risk of not meeting the WFD 2027 good water quality objective.

Figure 3.6 below presents surface water quality features and Figure 3.6 shows surface water flow directions.

FIGURE 3-6 SURFACE WATER QUALITY



### 3.3.2 Groundwater

Groundwater is a further significant resource and refers to water stored underground in saturated rock, sand, gravel, and soil. Surface and groundwater functions are closely related and form part of the hydrological cycle. The protection of groundwater from land uses is a critical consideration and groundwater vulnerability is becoming an important management tool. The entire island of Ireland has been designated as a Protected Area for Groundwater under the WFD. Groundwater is important as a drinking water supply as well as the supply to surface waters. In addition, groundwater supplies surface waters. Groundwater is exposed to higher concentrations of pollutants that are retained in the layers of rock and soil. The exposure to pollutants lasts much longer as groundwater moves at a slower pace through the aquifer. The quality of our drinking water supply, fisheries and terrestrial based habitats is intrinsically linked with groundwater quality. The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) aquifer categories are based on their vulnerability to pollution, i.e. the ease at which it can enter the subsurface layers. The classification of extreme or high vulnerability means that the groundwater in these areas is very vulnerable to contamination due to hydrogeological and soil factors.

The Geological Survey of Ireland’s Groundwater Vulnerability Mapping shows the groundwater vulnerability for the study area within a catchment where groundwater vulnerability is moderate. Groundwater overall is identified as being of good status according to the WFD classification (catchments.ie). However it is at risk of not meeting the WFD objectives as stated in the draft 3<sup>rd</sup> Catchment assessment.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> [Lower Shannon and Mulkear \(catchments.ie\)](https://catchments.ie)

### 3.4 Air and Climatic Factors

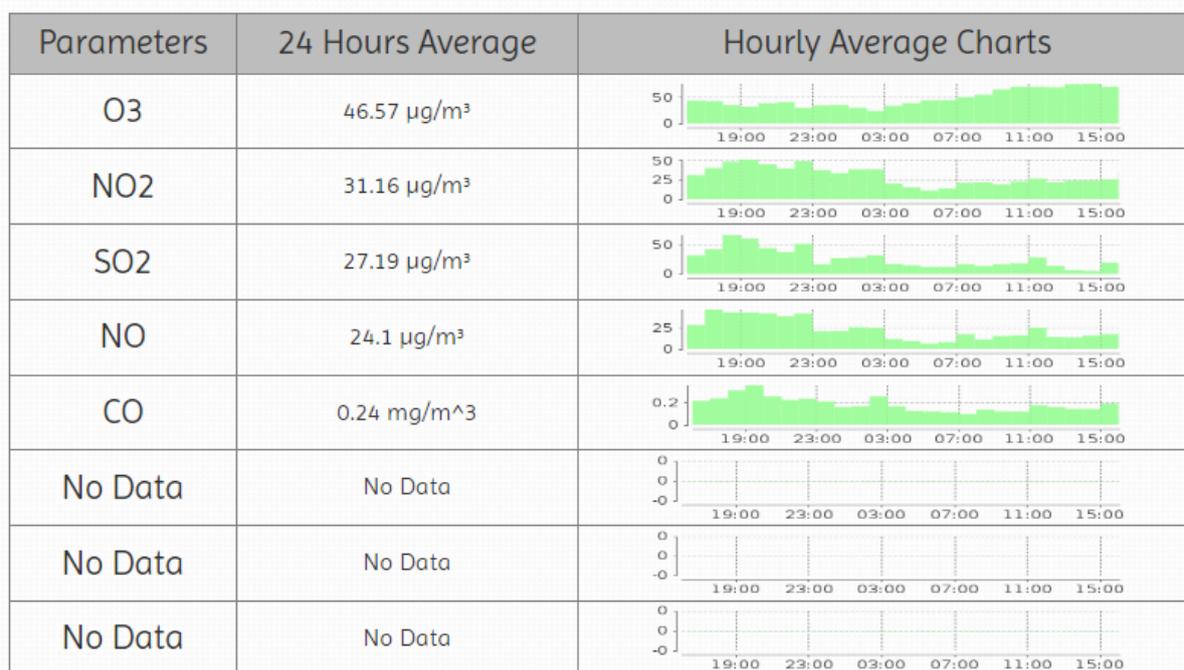
All developments, agriculture, energy generation, industry and commercial activity and waste generation contribute emissions to air and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; however, the emission of pollutants from vehicles is one of the main threats to air quality in Ireland and contributes significantly to the increase of greenhouse gases.

The primary sources of pollutants are traffic (source of nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter), and domestic solid fuel use (particulate matter). Longer term encouraging a modal shift from cars to walking and cycling will benefit local air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transport at a local scale. The project site is located in the suburbs of the city .

The latest Air Quality at the closest air quality monitoring site is at O Connell Street, and recorded ‘good’ as of 18<sup>th</sup> February 2024. The monitor measures particulate matter (PM) which is commonly used as an indicator of dust particles in air, including total suspended particulates, PM10, PM2.5 and PM1. Figure 3.8 below presents the results of latest average data of air quality monitoring from this monitor.

FIGURE 3-7 AIR QUALITY MONITORING DATA OCONNELL STREET, LIMERICK CITY

Data from OConnell Street,Limerick (Operator : LIMERICKCOUNCIL)  
Updated at: 15:00 18-Feb-2024



The project will not include car parking give the sites central location and easy access to public

#### 3.4.1 Landscape and Townscape

The project site is located within an established suburban area of Moyross,

### 3.5 Cultural Heritage

The project site or immediate environs does not contain any archaeological features as listed on the sites and monuments records. See Figure 3.9 below.

FIGURE 3-8 CULTURAL HERITAGE FEATURES



### 3.6 Material Assets

Public transport is available along Moyross Avenue. The water drainage will connect to the main infrastructure as outlined in Section 2.1.

### 3.7 Environmental Protection Measures

The following sections present environmental protection measures that are derived from the technical reports provided under separate cover.

Standard demolition noise and dust reduction and management measures

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## 4 Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Exercise

### 4.1 Relevant EIA Legislation

EIA requirements derive from EU Directive 85/337/EEC (as amended by Directive 97/11/EC, Directive 2014/52/EU and S.I. 454 of 2011; S.I. 464 of 2011; S.I. 456 of 2011 and S.I. No 296 of 2018) <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2018/si/296/made/en/pdf> on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment. The purpose of this Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report is to determine whether this proposed development will require full Environmental Impact Assessment. The new legislation requires screening to be undertaken to determine whether or not specified public or private developments are likely to have significant effects on the environment and, as such, require EIA to be carried out prior to a decision on a development consent application being made.

The Directive outlines in Article 4 (1) 21 Annex 1 projects that require mandatory EIA. Article 4 (2) outlines Annex 2 projects that require consideration for EIA further to a case by case examination or through thresholds and criteria established by Member States. Projects requiring mandatory EIA are listed in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. Where developments are under the relevant EIA threshold, planning authorities are required under Article 103 of the 2001 Regulations, as amended, to request an EIA where it considers the proposed development is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. In these cases the significant effects of the project are assessed relative to the criteria contained in Schedule 7a of the regulations, principally:

- The projects characteristics
- Sensitivity of the project location, and
- Characterisation of potential impacts.

In addition, where the development would be located on or in an area, site etc. set out in Article 103(2), the planning authority shall decide whether the development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment for such site, area or land etc. the implication being that if it decides that it would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, it can invoke its powers to request an EIA.

Article 103(2) sites comprise the following:

- a) A European Site;
- b) An area the subject of a notice under section 16(2) (b) of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000;
- c) An area designated as a Natural Heritage Area under section 18 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000;
- d) Land established or recognised as a nature reserve within the meaning of section 15 or 16 of the Wildlife Act, 1976, as amended by sections 26 and 27 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000; or
- e) Land designated as a refuge for flora or as a refuge for fauna under section 17 of the Wildlife Act, 1976, as amended by section 28 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000.

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As stated previously a Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment accompanies this planning application and should be read in conjunction with this EIA Screening report.

## 4.2 Methodology and Guidance

According to European Commission Guidance (2017<sup>3</sup>)

*“Screening has to implement the Directive’s overall aim, i.e. to determine if a Project listed in Annex II is likely to have significant effects on the environment and, therefore, be made subject to a requirement for Development Consent and an assessment, with regards to its effects on the environment. At the same time, Screening should ensure that an EIA is carried out only for those Projects for which it is thought that a significant impact on the environment is possible, thereby ensuring a more efficient use of both public and private resources. Hence, Screening has to strike the right balance between the above two objectives.”*

As previously stated, this may be considered a sub-threshold EIA development, as EIA is not mandatory for such works to existing roads and within an urban area as described in Section 1.2 of this report.). The key issue for the competent/consent authority in the context of the possible need for EIA of sub-threshold is whether or not such development is likely to have significant effects on the environment. Consideration of significant effect should not be determined by reference to size only. The nature and location of a project must also be taken into account. This EIA Screening Report is therefore being undertaken to determine in light of the criteria listed in Schedule 7a of the Planning and Development Regulations whether or not this proposed development will require full EIA.

According to the Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (2018):

*“For all sub-threshold developments listed in Schedule 5 Part 2, where no EIAR is submitted or EIA determination requested, a screening determination is required to be undertaken by the competent authority unless, on preliminary examination it can be concluded that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. This is initiated by the competent authority following the receipt of a planning application or appeal.*

*A preliminary examination is undertaken, based on professional expertise and experience, and having regard to the ‘Source – Pathway – Target’ model, where appropriate. The examination should have regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7 to the 2001 Regulations.*

*Where, based on a preliminary examination of the information submitted with the application and any other supplementary information received, the competent authority concludes that, having considered the nature, size and location of the proposed development, there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment, this should be recorded with reasons for this conclusion stated, and no EIA required or formal determination made. The recording of the competent authority’s view should be brief and concise, but adequate to inform the public. In many cases this considered view will be included in the planner’s/inspector’s report on the planning application and this may be cross-referenced in the*

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<sup>3</sup>Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects Guidance on Screening (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU). European Commission 2017. Page 23.

competent authority's decision. Normally, this will be published at the time of the decision of the competent authority."

A methodology was developed to formally screen the proposed development, which was based on the following:

- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-Threshold Development (EPA, 2003),
- Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects Guidance on Screening (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU). European Commission 2017
- Guidance issued by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government(2018).
- OPR Practice Note PN02 Environmental Impact Assessment Screening (2021)

### 4.3 Mandatory Environment Impact Assessment

Further to the above, Schedule 5 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended sets out a number of classes and scales of development that require EIA.

### 4.4 Projects for the Cumulative Assessment

The proposed development was considered in combination with other projects in the area that could result in cumulative effects on the environment.

The Limerick City and County Council on line planning system was consulted on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2024 for the subject lands and immediate surrounds in particular development applications adjacent to the site. Table 4.1 lists the projects that have been identified during this search and provides an assessment of the potential for the proposed project to combine with these other projects to result in cumulative significant effects to the environment. The assessment outlined in Table 4.1 has found that the proposed residential project will not have the potential to combine with any other existing and/or approved projects to result in likely significant impacts on the environment. Within the past three years there has been a total of *four planning applications* to Limerick City and County Council and comprised the following as listed in Table 4.1 below. Please see the end of the table for a commentary on cumulative and in-combination effects.

**TABLE 4-1 PLANNING APPLICATIONS WITHIN THE SITE WITHIN THE PAST 3 YEARS (2019-2023)**

Planning Ref	Description	Decision
<b>22567</b>	The construction of 6 no. commercial enterprise units, access road, car parking, signage and all associated infrastructure and site development works. A Natura Impact Statement will be submitted to the planning authority with the application	Permission
<b>221171</b>	a new Special Education Needs base extension with 2 No. classrooms, central activity space, main entrance and lobby, administration offices, storerooms, toilets and ancillary spaces, and within the existing school, an extension comprising construction of a multi sensory room and 4 No. Special Education Teachers offices with a revised front elevation. Site works include new and revised ball courts, play areas, new surface parking for 23 No. cars with existing	Permission

	entrance off Moyross Avenue, including an EV charging point, upgrades to existing parking, boundary treatment, hard and soft landscaping and all associated site works	
<b>211658</b>	a development which will consist of (A) Construction of a single storey discount foodstore (to include off-licence use) with a gross floor area of c. 1,820 sqm (net retail area 1,315 sq.m.); B) New vehicular/pedestrian access from Knockalisheen Road (including connection for proposed future access to adjoining lands); C) 98 no. car parking spaces and 10 no. bicycle spaces; D) Erection of 2 no. internally illuminated, double sided, free standing, identification signs located adjacent to the proposed vehicular/pedestrian access to the site and at the entrance to the carpark; 2 no. single sided internally illuminated gable signs, 1 no. single-sided window sign at entrance door; E) 88sqm of solar panels provided at roof level; F) All Landscaping/lighting, boundary treatment, engineering and site development works (including a single storey ESB substation and switch room c. 35sqm and a deposit return scheme unit c. 62sqm). A Natura Impact Statement will be submitted to the planning authority with the application	Permission
<b>201026 Hartigan Villas</b>	The construction of an extension to existing dwelling house including all ancillary site works	Extension of duration
<p>A comprehensive review of the Limerick City and County Council planning register documented relevant general development planning applications within the past 3 years within the vicinity of the proposed development. The closest application relates to permission relating to extension of Corpus Christi National school and to the north construction of retail and other units on existing built land and artificial surfaces. The two larger grants of permission were subject to Stage 2 AA, and found that ensuring the avoidance and mitigation measures are implemented as proposed, the developments will not have significant adverse impacts on the Lower River Shannon SAC</p> <p>It is noted that given this project as proposed relates to works to upgrade an existing road and footpath along 700m, the scale and nature of this project does not give rise to in combination effects with the above two larger projects.</p> <p><i>Given the nature of the developments, the potential for ongoing environmental effects and associated potential cumulative effects with the currently proposed development are low.</i></p>		

## 4.5 Assessment

Having considered the above environmental factors, the aim of the next section is to address likely impacts on the environment by the implementation of the proposed development. Whether an EIA would be deemed relevant to the scale of the project and the environment will then be determined. The following sections presents the EIA Screening Report based on the criteria contained in Schedule 7 of S.I. 296 of 2018 and are grouped under the following headings.

1. Characteristics of the Proposed Development - Table 4.2
2. Location of the Proposed Development - Table 4.3 and
3. Characteristics of Potential Impact Tables 4.4 and 4.5

TABLE 4-2 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Screening Question	Response
<p>1. Characteristics of projects The characteristics of projects must be considered, with particular regard to:</p>	
<p>(a) the size and design of the whole project</p>	<p>The site is located on existing built land and artificial surfaces at Moyross Ave and represent minor works to improve the route for pedestrians and cyclists. Of itself the project is not identified as giving rise to significant negative environmental effects due to scale, nature and size of the proposed development.</p>
<p>(b) cumulation with other existing and/or approved projects;</p>	<p>As Section 4.4 shows the potential for cumulation with other approved projects in the study area is not identified as giving rise to significant environmental effects. It is considered that cumulative impacts, if any, are most likely to arise during the construction phase.</p> <p>During construction, the most significant potential for adverse cumulative impacts in the absence of environmental protection measures is the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emissions to air from ground works</li> <li>• Increased surface run off</li> <li>• Dust and noise emissions associated with site works.</li> </ul> <p>The adherence and full implementation of environmental protection measures including those outlined in Sections 3.7 will ensure no potential for cumulative impacts to arise.</p> <p>In conclusion, for the above reasons, the potential for adverse cumulative effects in relation to proposed and approved projects and the proposed development are not identified as significant for the reasons outlined above and in addition the provisions of the protection measures which are considered sufficient to avoid significant negative cumulative effects in relation to potential construction activities.</p> <p>It is considered that the cumulative impacts can be mitigated during construction and will not be significant during operational phases in the long term.</p>
<p>(c) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;</p>	<p>Natural resources relating to soil and water will be used as part of the works. Minor amounts of water and fuel will be used to clean machinery and fuel machinery required during construction works.</p>
<p>(d) the production of waste;</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Solid waste may be produced during construction, but materials will be only ordered as required.</p> <p>Any wastes from the demolition and construction process will either be reused within the scheme or recycled/disposed of at an authorised waste facility.</p>
<p>(e) pollution and nuisances;</p>	<p>The construction phase presents the greatest risk of pollution to water resources. Potential sources of water pollution to both surface and groundwater include fuel, lubricants, suspended solids and concrete.</p> <p>Potential pollution to water resources from operation include increased surface run off containing suspended solids.</p> <p>During the construction phase cement-based products, hydrocarbons and other aqueous solutions will be required on site. All materials will be</p>

Screening Question	Response
1. Characteristics of projects The characteristics of projects must be considered, with particular regard to:	<p>stored in a site compound and in bunded containers. Given the small scale of the project, the quantities of these materials required on site at any one time will be small and the risk of significant contamination to surface water generated within the footprint of the project site will be low. Also, in the event of contamination of surface water with these materials during the construction phase, such contaminated surface water will drain to ground. The infiltration of the contaminated surface water into the unsaturated zone in the soils and subsoils underlying the site will allow for any pollutants to be filtered through the unsaturated zones of the lower soil layer and subsoil layer.</p> <p>Surface water generated on site during the operation phase from the roadway will discharge to the existing drainage system as currently as described in Section 2.2 and will not alter run off to the existing sewer network. Surface water generated on site during the operation phase from the car-park in the Church will be drained via a SuDs system to the existing ground on site with no additional discharge to the existing sewer network.</p>
(f) the risk of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge;	The risks of major accidents are not considered to be significant subject to best construction practices being followed through the construction phase. This will include proper site management, maintenance and operation of all machinery and works associated with the construction phase.
(g) the risks to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution).	As above, significant risks to human health are not identified for this proposal. The environmental protection measures, particularly for the construction phase are detailed in Section 2 and subject to full and proper implementation, potential risks associated with construction activity will not arise.
Will the proposed development create a significant amount of nuisance during its construction or operation?	<p>The subject lands are situated within an established sub urban area comprising primarily residential and commercial use. There will be noise and dust emissions relating to the construction works though this are identified as temporary in nature and duration. Standard measures to reduce construction disturbance (such as noise, dust, traffic) on residents during the construction phase will be included as well as the works taking place during daytime hours and other measures to reduce disturbance to species in and adjacent to the site.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that significant noise levels will arise during operation given the intended use of the site. .</p>

**Conclusion:** No significant effects likely to arise associated with the characteristics of the proposed development.

**Rationale:** The scale and extent of the works proposed are minor in nature, scale and location. The works associated with the project site are minor in scale and nature, construction activities are

localised and minor; with the application of standard construction practice guidance no significant adverse effects are identified.

TABLE 4-3 LOCATION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Screening Question	Response
The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by projects must be considered, with particular regard to: (a) the existing and approved land use;	The project site is situated in an suburban area and is surrounded by built land and artificial surfaces. The project site is of low ecological value and sensitivity.
(b) the relative abundance, availability, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground	The habitats occurring within the project site is representative of the Fossitt Level 3 habitats Built Land and Artificial Surfaces (BL3), amenity grassland..
(c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas: (i) wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths; (ii) coastal zones and the marine environment; (iii) mountain and forest areas; (iv) nature reserves and parks; (v) areas classified or protected under national legislation; Natura 2000 areas designated by Member States pursuant to Directive 92/43/EEC and Directive 2009/147/EC;	The proposed development is not going to significantly increase surface run off as it is will connect to existing water services infrastructure or a SuDs system provided for new drainage areas. (i) measures are provided as outlined in Section 2.4 to avoid likely significant effects on the environment. (ii) not applicable (iii) not applicable (iv) not application (v) The Screening Statement for Appropriate Assessment that accompanies this report provides the following concluding statement:  <i>“In light of the findings of this report it is the considered view of the authors of this Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment that it can be concluded by Limerick City and County Council that the project is not likely, alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, to have a significant effect on any European Sites in view of their Conservation Objectives and on the basis of best scientific evidence and there is no reasonable scientific doubt as to that conclusion.”</i>
(vi) 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;	Whilst surface water quality within the closest surface water feature River Shannon (c 300m from the project site) is of poor quality, there are no direct or indirect effects identified for the project and potential risks to these surface waters. The greatest risk would relate to the construction phase and standard construction measures will apply in addition to the commentary provided relating to water resources in Table 3.2 above.
(vii) densely populated areas;	The subject lands are located within an established suburban area of Limerick City within immediate range of facilities including schools, transport, and retail. Given the scale and nature of the

Screening Question	Response
	proposed development, no significant negative effects are identified in relation to this criteria.
(viii) landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance	No landscapes or sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance are associated with the project lands and the proposed development will be in line with requirements of the Limerick City and County CDP 2022-2028.

**Conclusion:** No significant effects likely to arise associated with the location of the proposed development.

**Rationale:** The proposed development relates to a site of c 2.1ha in an established sub urban area.

The screening process assesses the most significant potential impacts in relation to the themes outlined below in Table 3.4. These are considered as follows:

The likely significant effects of projects on the environment must be considered in relation to criteria set out in points 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:

- (a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
- (b) the nature of the impact;
- (c) the transboundary nature of the impact;
- (d) the intensity and complexity of the impact;
- (e) the probability of the impact;
- (f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;
- (g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved projects;
- (h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

TABLE 4-4 CHARACTERISTICS OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON ENVIRONMENTAL PARAMETERS

Environmental Topic	Potential Impact
Human Beings	Potential temporary negative impacts to residents associated with construction activities. However, given the scale and nature of the development, this is not identified as significant. Longer term of the provision of cycle paths and safer access for pedestrians is positive..
Flora and Fauna	The habitats that dominate the site are built land and artificial surfaces, with amenity grassland. This are identified as low ecological value and are not of a scale (amenity grassland) that would support mobile species.
Soil and Geology	Minor only given scale and type of project.
Water	Surface water quality impacts arising from the construction and operation stage could arise in the absence of standard best practice construction measures. However due to a range of measures these effects are not identified as significant or likely.
Air Quality and climate	. Given the scale and nature of the development these are identified as minor. Emissions during works phase will be minimized through best practice and the construction approach reduces overall construction time. .
Noise and Vibration	Noise during the construction phase may result in temporary daytime nuisance however, noise and vibration during works phase will be minimized through best practice, please see Section 2.4 above.
Cultural Heritage	None identified given the absence of known archaeological finds or architectural features.
Landscape	No significant adverse effects are identified.
Material Assets	Project will provide for safer access for pedestrians and cyclists, particulary students and parishioners of the local school and church.
Interrelationship between above parameters	The key interrelationship arises between water, biodiversity, soil and material assets.  Measures to avoid adverse effects on these parameters are included in Section 2.4 Environmental Protection Measures The significance of any potential negative interactive effects is predicted to be slight and predominantly of a temporary nature. Measures as outlined in Section 2.4 will provide effective management of the project will eliminate the potential for any significant negative interactive effects to occur.

**Conclusion:** No significant effects likely to arise associated with the potential impacts on environmental parameters.

**Rationale:** As the preceding table shows, potential impacts relate primarily to temporary impacts at construction stage and the implementation of the Best Practice Construction measures will provide safeguards to avoid significant impacts at this stage.

TABLE 4-5 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POTENTIAL IMPACTS

<b>Characteristics of potential impacts</b> <b>The potential significant effects of proposed development in relation to criteria set out under Tables 3.3. and 3.4 above, and having regard in particular to:</b>	
(a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	Minor and localized temporary impacts are identified primarily at construction stage only. .
(b) the nature of the impact;	The potential impacts relate primarily water quality. Measures to avoid potential effects on water quality are identified and subject to their full adherence and implementation, no significant effects are identified.
(c) the transboundary nature of the impact;	Potential transfrontier impacts are not identified subject to full application and implementation of measures in Section 2.4.
(d) the intensity and complexity of the impact;	Best practice guidelines and adherence to statutory requirements will address and mitigate for environmental parameters during the design, construction and operation process; no such effects are identified.
(e) the probability of the impact;	The design of the proposals, best practice construction measures mitigates against significant effects arising.
(f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;	Subject to implementation and adherence to measures in Section 3.9 impacts identified for topics are not significant and will be temporary in nature relating to the construction phase.
(g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved projects;	The cumulative impact of the permitted developments and the proposed project are predicted to cause Negligible impacts during the construction and operational phase
(h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.	Measures are detailed in Section 2 and are derived from best practice guidelines.

**Conclusion: No significant effects likely to arise associated with the characteristics of the potential impacts.**

**Rationale:** Localised and temporary impacts are identified associated with construction. Measures as outlined in Section 3.9 are designed to ensure that should construction commence on the project, significant adverse effects are avoided.

## 4.6 Identification of the Relevant Assessments Available

In consideration of a recent high court case (Waltham Abbey Residents Association v. An Bord Pleanala & ORS), the following statement was made:

“The kind of assessments that should be brought together in the statement under 299B(1)(b)(ii)(II)(C) include those under the following directives:

- (i) directive 92/43/EEC, the habitats directive: see EC EIA, Guidance on Screening, 2017, p. 44;
- (ii) directive 2000/60/EC, the water framework directive: see EC EIA, Guidance on Screening, 2017, p. 44;
- (iii) directive 2001/42/EC, the SEA directive: see EC EIA, Guidance on Screening, 2017, p. 44;
- (iv) directive 2002/49/EC, regarding environmental noise;

- (v) directive 2008/50/EC, the clean air for Europe directive;
- (vi) directive 2007/60/EC, regarding the assessment and management of flood risks; as well of course as
- (vii) any other relevant provision of EU law.”

For this EIA Screening Report, the following sources are pertinent:

- (i) Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Limerick City and County Development Plan 2022-2028
- (ii) Natura Impact Report for the Limerick City and County Development Plan 2022-2028
- (iii) Draft 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle Catchment assessment for Water Framework Directive
- (iv) Relevant Planning applications

#### 4.6.1 Planning Context and Other Relevant Environmental Assessments

The site is not subject to landuse zonings in the above CDP given it is an existing road, no mitigation measures are identified in the SEA or NIR that accompanies same.

#### 4.6.2 Water Framework Directive

The following is from the draft 3<sup>rd</sup> catchment assessment:

“In total, there are 81 waterbodies in the Lower Shannon and Mulkear Catchment and 26 (32%) are currently At Risk, 16 (20%) in Review and 39 (48%) are Not At Risk.

For the 48 rivers waterbodies, 18 (38%) are At Risk, five (10%) are in Review and 25 (52%) are Not At Risk.

The largest proportion of At Risk waterbodies are found in river waterbodies, accounting for 18 (69%) of 26 At Risk waterbodies. Figure 7 gives an overview of the breakdown of risk across waterbody types for both Cycle 2 and Cycle 3.

◆ Overall, there is an increase in two At Risk waterbody and five Not At Risk waterbodies, while there is a reduction of seven Review waterbodies between Cycle 2 and Cycle 3. 14 Figure 7: Number of waterbodies in each risk category

Table 2: Natura 2000 Network Assessment Summary

Water Body Type	Total No.	Meeting the Requirements	Did not meet the Requirements	Unknown*
Rivers	26	18	3	5
Lakes	2	1	1	0
Transitional & Coastal	1	0	1	0

\*As the waterbody status was unassigned.

- ◆ There are no river waterbodies with FWPM habitats in the catchment.
- ◆ There are no groundwater bodies delineated and assessed as Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems for this catchment.

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Excess nutrients and morphological impacts remain the most prevalent issues in the Lower Shannon and Mulkear catchment.

The significant pressure affecting the greatest number of waterbodies is agriculture, followed by hydromorphology, forestry, other , domestic waste water, mines and quarries, urban waste water, urban run-off and industry.”

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## 5 Conclusion

### 5.1 EIA Screening Conclusion

The proposed development does not trigger the threshold for mandatory EIA/EIAR as set in EU Directive 85/337/EEC (as amended by Directive 97/11/EC, Directive 2014/52/EU and S.I. 454 of 2011; S.I. 464 of 2011; S.I. 456 of 2011 and S.I. No 296 of 2018) and has been assessed as a sub threshold EIA development. This EIA Screening Assessment has determined that the characteristics of the proposed development are considered not significant due to the scale and nature of the proposed development and its footprint, which is confined to an area of 2.1 ha, the characteristics and sensitivities of the receiving environment and design and measures that will be implemented as part of the construction phase and operation phase of the proposed development.

Given the scale and nature of the project and taking account of all available information, the overall probability of impacts on the receiving environment arising from the proposed development (during the construction or operational phases) is considered to be low, as summarised in the preceding tables in Section 4 above.

Significant environmental impacts are not identified, given the scale, nature and duration of the project and the Screening Statement in support of Appropriate Assessment has found that the project does not have the potential to result in likely significant effects to the qualifying features of interest of the River Shannon SAC and will not have the potential to undermine the conservation objectives for these qualifying feature of interest.

The implementation of the measures in Section 3.7 includes measures that are representative of standard industry environmental management that are implemented to minimise the impact of projects to the environment.

In coming to this conclusion, with which the Limerick City and County Council is invited to agree in making its EIA screening determination, the consultants engaged by Limerick City and County Council have considered the following:

- the criteria set out in Schedule 7 to the 2001 Regulations;
- information specified in Schedule 7A to the 2001 Regulations;
- further relevant information on the characteristics of the proposed environment and its likely 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 EIA Directive have been taken into account; and
- description of the features of the proposed development and measures envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment of the development.

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## REFERENCES

Limerick City Development Plan 2022-2028, and SEA environmental Report and Natura Impact Report.

Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (2018)

Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects Guidance on Screening (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU). European Commission 2017.

OPR Practice Note PN02 Environmental Impact Assessment Screening (2021)

Irish Water, Annual Environmental Report for Limerick WWTP (2021)

3rd Cycle Lower Shannon and Mulkear Catchment Report (HA 25D)