

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Document

Martin Roundabout Upgrade



Planning & Environmental Consultants

DOCUMENT DETAILS

Client: Galway City Council

Project title: Martin Roundabout Upgrade

Project Number: 190244

Document Title: Environmental Impact Assessment
Screening Report

Doc. File Name: EIA SR F -2019.06.25-190244

Prepared By: McCarthy Keville O'Sullivan Ltd.
Planning & Environmental Consultants
MKO.
Tuam Road, Galway



Document Issue:

Rev	Status	Issue Date	Document File Name	Author(s)	Approved By:
01	Draft	29.05.2019	EIA SR D1 -2019.05.29- 190244	EG/OC	MW
01	Draft	14.6.2019.	EIA SR D2 -2019.05.29- 190244	EG/OC	MW
01	Draft	14.06.2019	EIA SR D3 -2019.05.29- 190244	EG/OC	MW
01	Final	25.06.2019	EIA SR F -2019.06.25 - 190244	EG/OC	MW

Table of Contents

1	Introduction.....	1
1.1	Statement of Authority.....	1
2	Description of the Propsed Development.....	2
2.1	Site Location	2
2.2	Development Description	2
2.3	Excavation and Road Upgrade Methodology.....	2
2.3.1	Solid Road Construction Methodology.....	2
3	Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Exercise	4
3.1	Relevant Environment Impact Assessment Legislation.....	4
3.2	Methodology.....	4
3.3	Mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment.....	5
3.4	Sub-threshold Development.....	8
3.5	Sub-threshold Assessment	8
3.5.1	Characteristics of the Proposed Development.....	10
3.5.2	Location of the Proposed Development.....	11
3.5.3	Characteristics of Potential Impacts	13
4	Conclusions and Recommendations.....	18

1 INTRODUCTION

McCarthy Keville O'Sullivan Ltd. (MKO) has been instructed by Galway City Council (GCC) to complete an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening exercise to accompany a Design Report for a Section 38 process for the upgrade of Martin Roundabout as part of the Ardaun LAP Phase 1 project in Doughiska, Galway.

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

This report documents the methodology employed to complete the screening exercise, having regard to relevant legislation and guidance documents. It also sets out a clear rationale for each decision made in the process.

The planning application is also accompanied by an "Article 6(3) Appropriate Assessment Screening Report" (AASR) which has also been prepared by Moore Group – Environmental Services. The findings of the AASR and the relevant site and desk studies are referenced where appropriate in this EIA Screening Report.

1.1 Statement of Authority

The EIA Screening exercise has been compiled by Owen Cahill (BSc. MSc.) who has over five years' experience in the environmental consultancy sector. Owen completed an MSc. in Environmental Engineering at Queens University, Belfast in 2010. Owen is an affiliate member of IEMA. The report was reviewed by Michael Watson (MA, PGeo, CEnv) who has over seventeen years' experience in the environmental consultancy sector. Michael completed an MA in Environmental Management at NUI, Maynooth in 1999. Michael is a professional geologist (PGeo) and full member of IEMA (MIEMA) as well as a Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv).

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Site Location

The proposed development is located in the townland of Doughiska, which is approximately 5km east of Galway City Centre. (Grid Ref: 135150, 225850). The general location of the proposed development site is provided as Figure 2.1.

2.2 Development Description

The proposed development comprises the upgrading of the Martin Roundabout to a traffic signal-controlled junction incorporating pedestrian and cycle facilities. This involves the Upgrade of entry and exit flares on the R446 dual carriageway on both approaches to tie in with new junction and inclusion of bus priority inbound. The improvement to R338 Old Dublin Rd. approach arm to improve pedestrian and cycle facilities, provision of a bus lane and to tie-in with new signalised junction layout and to tie back to the existing pedestrian facilities. The improvement of Ardaun Link Rd. The installation of new traffic signals, public lighting, positive surface water drainage. The Construction of new pavement and overlay of the existing pavement where required and the clearing of trees in the verge of the existing N67(R446) where required.

2.3 Excavation and Road Upgrade Methodology

This section describes the construction methodologies that will be used for the road upgrade works. The proposed works will be restricted to the existing roundabout, public road and the adjacent road verge.

The existing road, roundabout curbing, soil and vegetation be excavated to competent stratum on to which a granular road sub-base will be installed prior to the application of a finished road surface to the entire road width. The excavation and road widening methodologies are summarised below.

2.3.1 Solid Road Construction Methodology & Drainage

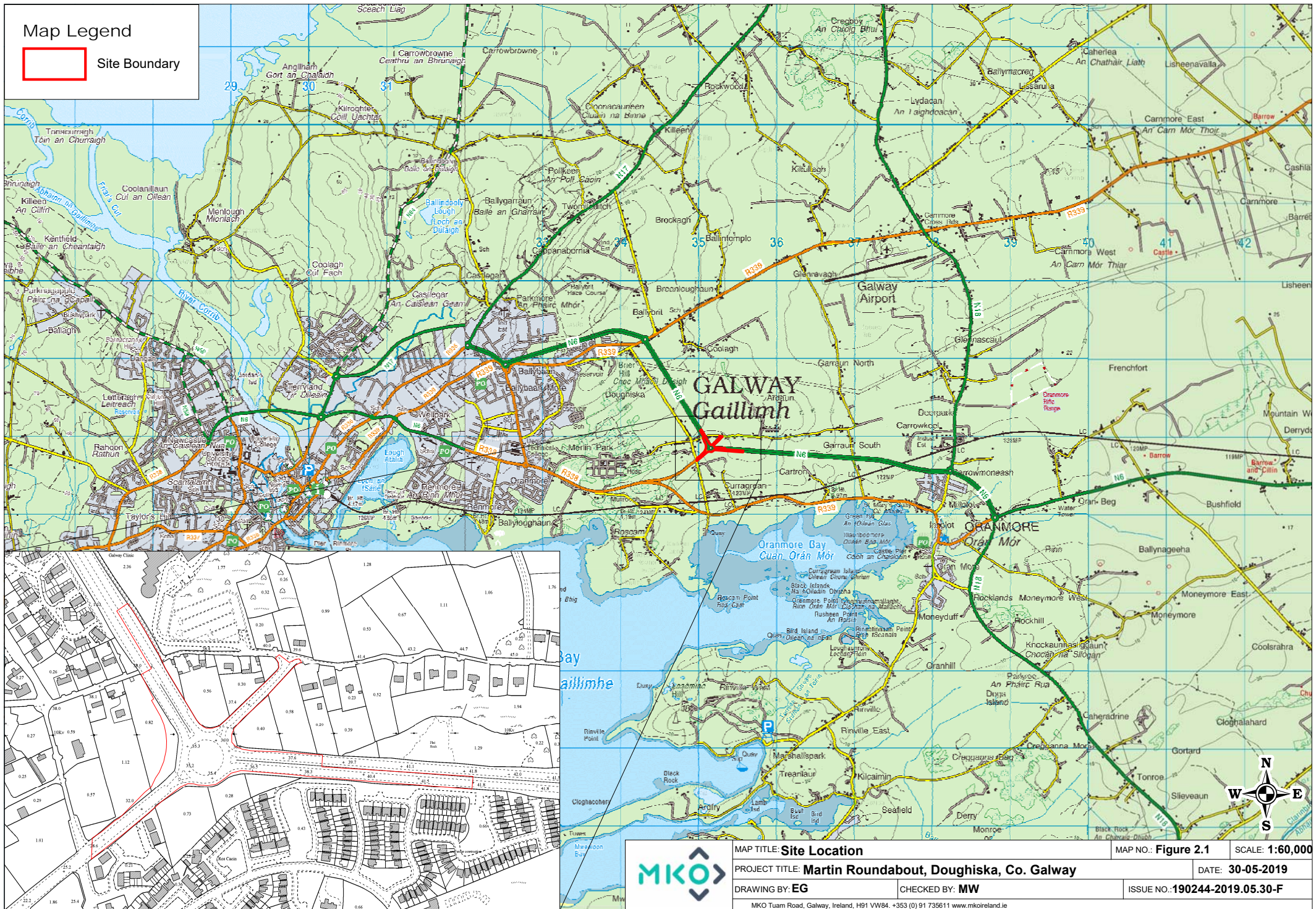
The upgrading of the road junction will utilise standard solid road construction methodology. The methodology is summarised as follows:

- Using a 13-tonne rubber tracked 360-degree excavator, the existing roundabout will be excavated to a competent subgrade to provide the running width necessary for the proposed junction as outlined in the detailed design drawings included in Appendix 1.
- The area where excavations are planned will be surveyed and all existing services will be identified.
- All relevant bodies i.e. ESB, Gas Networks Ireland, Eir, Galway City Council etc. will be contacted and all drawings for all existing services sought.
- All plant operators and general operatives will be inducted and informed as to the location of any services.
- A traffic management plan will be set up prior to any works commencing.
- The excavated material will be set aside for re-use as part of road verge re-instatement and any surplus material will be removed to an authorised waste recovery facility.

Map Legend



Site Boundary



MAP TITLE: **Site Location**

PROJECT TITLE: **Martin Roundabout, Doughiska, Co. Galway**

DRAWING BY: **EG**

CHECKED BY: **MW**

MKO Tuam Road, Galway, Ireland, H91 VW84. +353 (0) 91 735611 www.mkoireland.ie

MAP NO.: **Figure 2.1**

SCALE: **1:60,000**

DATE: **30-05-2019**

ISSUE NO.: **190244-2019.05.30-F**

- The excavation will be infilled Cl 804 stone material will be laid on suitable formation
- The finished road layer will be bituminous bound surface finish or otherwise agreed with Galway City Council
- The road verge reinstatement and the road side drainage system and landscaping will be completed as the excavations are backfilled with the stone material.

The existing surface water drainage is a mixed system consisting of a positive drainage on the immediate approaches and throughout the roundabout and over the edge areas along the R446 dual carriageway and Dublin road. The existing positive drainage discharges to the main drainage system at the Doughiska Road Junction.

The proposed surface water drainage for Martin Junction is similar to the existing drainage system. Positive drainage is proposed throughout the junction and it will tie-in to the existing discharge point. Sustainable Drainage System (SuDs) principles will be applied to a detailed drainage design. Existing over the edge drainage will be retained along the R446 dual carriageway.

3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING EXERCISE

3.1 Relevant Environment Impact Assessment Legislation

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) requirements derive from Council Directive 85/337/EEC (as amended by Directives 97/11/EC, 2003/35/EC and 2009/31/EC) and as codified and replaced by Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and the Council on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment and as amended in turn by Directive 2014/52/EU.

The consolidated European Union Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (the 'EIA Directive'), was transposed into Irish planning legislation by the Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2018 and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 to 2018 (the 'Regulations'). The EIA Directive was amended by Directive 2014/52/EU which has been transposed into Irish law with the recent European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 (S.I. No. 296 of 2018). As of the 1st of January 2019, the new regulations come into operation.

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.

3.2 Methodology

Screening is a process used to establish whether an EIA is required for a proposed development. There are a number of steps in the screening process.

The mandatory requirement for an EIA is generally based on the nature or scale of a proposed development, as set out in the EIA Directive.

These identify certain types and scales of development, generally based on thresholds of scale, for which EIA is mandatory. In the case of a sub-threshold development proposed by a local authority, the authority is required to carry out a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the development. Where there is significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, the information specified in Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 for the purposes of a screening determination.

The European Commission (2017) have published a *Guidance on Screening* document (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended 2014/52/EU) which summarises the need for an EIA based on specific measures and/or limits, according to predefined criteria such as the projects characteristics, location and/or certain project features such as a projects potential impacts.

In addition, there is sometimes a requirement for EIA 'sub-threshold' developments and, in this respect, it may be necessary to undertake a screening exercise to assess whether the proposed development requires the preparation of an EIAR.

A methodology was developed to formally screen the proposed development, which was based on *Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-Threshold Development* (EPA, 2003) and the recent 2017 guidance issued by the EU. The screening exercise is divided into a section on mandatory EIA and another on sub-threshold or discretionary EIA. In each section below a screening matrix is presented which examines the requirement for EIA according to the criteria set out in the relevant legislation. The rationale behind the responses within the matrix is provided at the end of each section.

3.3 Mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment

Section 172 of the Planning & Development Act 2000, as amended, provides the legislative basis for mandatory EIA. It states the following:

“An environmental impact assessment shall be carried out by a planning authority or the Board, as the case may be, in respect of an application for consent for proposed development where either:

- (a) the proposed development would be of a class specified in –*
 - (i) Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, and either –*
 - I. such development would exceed any relevant quantity, area or other limit specified in that Part, or*
 - II. no quantity, area or other limit is specified in that Part in respect of the development concerned,*

or

- (ii) Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 and either –*
 - I. such development would exceed any relevant quantity, area or other limit specified in that Part, or*
 - II. no quantity, area or other limit is specified in that Part in respect of the development concerned,*

or

- (a) (i) the proposed development would be of a class specified in Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 but does not exceed the relevant quantity, area or other limit specified in that Part, and*
(ii) the planning authority or the Board, as the case may be, determines that the proposed development would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.”

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.

There is no class set out under schedule 5 in relation to the provision of upgrade to existing road.

Under the provisions of Schedule 5, the closest type of project to the subject development is for the provision of “*all private roads which would exceed 2,000 metres in length*”, as per Item 10 (a)(dd) of the Schedule.

The proposed development is an upgrade of an existing road and not the construction of a new road and therefore is not subject to EIA.

Part 1 and Part 2 of the Schedule 5 also describe implications of changes and extensions to projects listed.

Part 1

21. Any change to or extension of projects listed in this Annex where such a change or extension in itself meets the thresholds, if any, set out in this Annex.

Part 2

13. Changes, extensions, development and testing

(a) Any change or extension of development already authorised, executed or in the process of being executed (not being a change or extension referred to in Part 1) which would: -

(i) result in the development being of a class listed in Part 1 or paragraphs 1 to 12 of Part 2 of this Schedule, and

(ii) result in an increase in size greater than –

- 25 per cent, or

- an amount equal to 50 per cent of the appropriate threshold, whichever is the greater.

The proposed development is an upgrade to the existing public road and does not trigger the requirement for mandatory EIA under Classes Part 1, 21 or Part 2, 13.

In addition, Section 50 of the Roads Act, 1993 to 2007 (as amended) and Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994 outline the legislative requirements that determine whether an EIA is mandatory for a proposed road development.

Section 50 (1) (a) of the Roads Act, 1993 as substituted by Section. 9(1)(d)(i) of the Roads Act, 2007

A road authority or the Authority shall prepare a statement of the likely effects on the environment ('environmental impact statement') of any proposed road development it proposes consisting of—

(i) the construction of a motorway,

(ii) the construction of a busway,

(iii) the construction of a service area, or

(iv) any prescribed type of proposed road development consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road.”,

Article 8 of S.I. No. 119/1994 Roads Regulations, 1994 (The prescribed types of proposed road development for the purpose of subsection (1)(a)(iv) of Section 50 of the Roads Act, 1993 to 2007 (as amended)).

- (a) The construction of a new road of four or more lanes, or the realignment or widening of an existing road so as 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 500 metres or more in length in an urban area*
- (b) The construction of a new bridge or tunnel which would be 100 metres or more in length*

Assessment of the legislative requirements that determine whether an EIA is mandatory for a proposed road development under Section 50 of the Roads Act, 1993 to 2007 (as amended) and Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994.:

Does the proposed upgrade involve:

(i) the construction of a motorway,

Answer – No

(ii) the construction of a busway,

Answer - No

(iii) the construction of a service area, or

Answer - No

(iv) any prescribed type of proposed road development consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road.”,

Answer – No

The prescribed types of road are:

(a) The construction of a new road of four or more lanes - NO, or the realignment or widening of an existing road so as 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 500 metres or more in length in an urban area – NO, Although the project involves the realignment of an existing four lane roadway and an existing two lane roadway it does not involve the provision of a four lane roadway.

(b) The construction of a new bridge or tunnel which would be 100 metres or more in length

Answer - No

Therefore, the mandatory trigger for EIA has not been reached

3.4 Sub-threshold Development

Section 172 of the Planning & Development Act 2000, as amended, also sets out the basis for EIA for developments which may not be of a scale included in Schedule 5 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended. This allows a consenting authority to require EIA where it is of the opinion that a development (although sub-threshold) is likely to have significant effects on the environment and therefore should be subject to EIA. In this context, the consideration of 'significant effect' should not be determined by reference to size only and the nature and location of a project must also be taken into account.

Item 15 of Schedule 5 Part 2 provides for EIA/EIAR for developments under the relevant threshold, where the works would be likely to have significant effects on the environment. This states the following:

"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, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 7."

It is considered that the type of project subject to EIA remains those listed in Schedule 5 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended. The proposed road upgrade, as outlined in Section 2 above, is not a project type listed in either Part 1 or Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended and therefore does not constitute a 'Project' that falls beneath any of the specified thresholds in Part 2.

As the proposed development is not a 'Project' listed in Part 1 or Part 2 of Schedule 5 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended, EIA is not required.

Notwithstanding the above an evaluation of the Class 15 criteria is provided below in the interests of completeness.

3.5 Sub-threshold Assessment

The 1997 amending Directive (97/11/EC) introduced guidance for Member States in terms of deciding whether or not a development is likely to have 'significant effects on the environment'. The criteria have been transposed in full into Irish legislation, in the Third Schedule to the EC EIA (Amendment) Regulations 1999 (S.I. No. 93 of 1999) and in Schedule 7 to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (S.I. No. 600 of 2001) as amended.

Article 120 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 "Sub-threshold EIAR" requires a local authority proposing to carry out a sub-threshold development carry out a preliminary examination of, at least the size or location of the development. Where there is significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development, it shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, the information specified in Schedule 7A for the purposes of a screening determination.

Schedule 7A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended sets out the information to be provided by the applicant or developer for the purposes of screening sub-threshold development for environmental impact assessment.

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, and*
 - (b) *a description of the location of the proposed development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected.*
2. *2. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.*
3. *3. A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the proposed development on the environment resulting from—*
 - (a) *the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant, and*
 - (b) *the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity.*

The information required by the Schedule 7A has been set out in Section 2 of this EIA Screening Report. The assessment of the criteria set out on Schedule 7 provides the description and assessment of any likely significant effects from the proposed development

The Schedule 7 criteria are grouped under three headings as follows:

1. Characteristics of the Proposed Development
2. Location of Proposed Development
3. Characteristics of Potential Impacts

Each of the above groupings includes a number of criteria for consideration. The assessment of the likelihood of significant environmental effects is based on the overall consideration of all criteria and requires clear and rational judgment. The DoEHLG Guidance Document 'Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-Threshold Development' states that *'those responsible for making the decision must exercise their best professional judgment, taking account of considerations such as the nature and size of the proposed development, the environmental sensitivity of the area and the nature of the potential effects of the development. In general, it is not intended that special studies or technical evaluations will be necessary for the purpose of making a decision.'*

The Schedule 7 criteria to be reviewed are discussed in more detail, with reference to the proposed development, in the following subsections. The screening questions are based on the criteria listed under each grouped heading in Schedule 7.

In addition, the likelihood of the project having significant effects on the environment has been assessed under the criteria set out in Annex III of Directive 2014/52/EU and the checklist of criteria set out European Commission (2017) *Guidance on Screening* document.

3.5.1 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

Table 3.1 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

Characteristics of the Proposed Development – Screening Questions	Comment
Could the scale of the proposed works be considered significant?	No. The geographic extent of the proposed works are largely confined to the immediate area, with the size of the proposed route is relatively modest in comparison to the existing road network. Accordingly, there is no impact associated with the operational phase. The active works area comprises the existing junction which will be excavated and re-finished in the new design. This scale of works is not considered significant.
Considered cumulatively with other adjacent proposed developments, would the size of the proposed works be considered significant?	No. The proposed works have been assessed cumulatively by McCarthy Keville O'Sullivan within this Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report and by Moore Group within the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (AASR) and concludes that potential cumulative effects are negligible.
Is the nature of the proposed works significant?	No. The proposed road upgrade works will be carried out in generally within the confines of the existing road corridor which will ensure that any potential for significant impacts are either eliminated or reduced to low risk.
Will the proposed works utilise a significant quantity of natural resources?	No. The proposed works will reuse excavated materials in the reinstatement of the road verges where possible. Imported stone material will be used for reinstatement the quantities of which are not considered significant.
Will the proposed works produce a significant quantity of waste?	No. The proposed works will reuse excavated materials in the reinstatement of the road verge where appropriate. Waste where it arises, will be dealt with through a suitably licensed contractor and sent to appropriately permitted waste facilities.
Will the proposed works create a significant amount or type of pollution?	No. No significant water or air borne pollution are envisaged as a result of the proposed works.
Will the proposed works create a significant amount of nuisance?	No. Limited <u>short-term</u> disruption may arise during the proposed construction process, but this will not be significantly different to routine road maintenance works.
Will there be a risk of accidents, having regard to substances or technologies used?	No. The proposed works and construction methods to be used are well established and will be subject to contractor's safety statements and risk assessments.
Would any combination of the above factors be considered likely to have significant effects on the environment?	No. See Reasoning section below.

Conclusions:

It is concluded that the nature of the proposed development is not considered to have likely significant effects on the environment.

Reasoning:

The scale of the proposed works, when viewed individually and cumulatively, is small in the context of both the EIA threshold criteria and types of projects listed in the regulations which require EIA.

The proposed works will involve an existing public road junction which will be upgraded. The upgrade will comprise to change of a roundabout to a traffic signal-controlled junction incorporating pedestrian and cycle facilities. This involves the Upgrade of entry and exit flares. The improvement of road and approach arms to improve pedestrian and cycle facilities, the provision of a bus lane and the installation of new traffic signals, public lighting, positive surface water drainage

Any waste arising on site will be taken from the site for reuse or disposal, subject to normal statutory controls. Any noise and nuisance associated with the proposed works will be short term and subject to appropriate best practice procedures.

3.5.2 Location of the Proposed Development

Table 3.2 Location of the Proposed Development Matrix

Location of the Proposed Development – Screening Questions	Comment
Have the proposed works the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any site designated for conservation interest (e.g. SAC, SPA, pNHA)?	<p>A detailed Article 6(3) Appropriate Assessment Screening report has been carried out on the proposed works. The conclusions of this report find that “Significant effects on any European sites as a result of the proposed Project have been ruled out and potential significant effects on European sites have been excluded at a preliminary screening stage.”.</p> <p>The nearest European Site to the proposed development works is the Galway Bay SAC (800m south).</p> <p>There will be no impacts on this SAC as the proposed works will take place entirely within the existing road corridor with no pathways for impact on this European site.</p>
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or	No. The works will be completed generally within the road corridor and no Annex 1 species will be affected.

Location of the Proposed Development – Screening Questions	Comment
indirectly on any habitats listed as Annex I in the EU Habitats Directive?	
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any habitats listed as Priority Annex I in the EU Habitats Directive?	No. The works will be completed generally within the road corridor and no Annex 1 species will be affected.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any species listed as Annex II in the EU Habitats Directive?	No. The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report includes detailed site-specific information and confirms that Annex II species will not be impacted by the proposed works.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any species listed as Annex IV in the EU Habitats Directive?	No. The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report includes detailed site-specific information and confirms that Annex IV species will not be impacted by the proposed works.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any species listed as Annex I of the EU Birds Directive?	No. The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report includes detailed site-specific information and confirms that Annex I bird species will not be impacted by the proposed works.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on the breeding places of any species protected under the Wildlife Act?	No. The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report includes detailed site-specific information and confirms that Annex I bird species will not be impacted by the proposed works.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on existing land use?	No. The proposed works will be restricted to the road junction and will remain in this use.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any protected structures or Recorded Monuments and Places of Archaeological Interest?	No. No monuments are located directly adjacent to the works and no large monuments clusters are located immediately adjacent to the subject site. In this regard, the predicted impacts are likely to be none.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on listed or scenic views or protected landscapes as outlined in the County Development Plan?	No. The proposed upgrade will comprise the upgrading of the existing road junction.

Conclusions:

It can be concluded that there will be no significant direct or indirect impacts by virtue of the location of the proposed development on the receiving environment.

Reasoning:

The European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997 requires that an Article 6(3) assessment be carried out where it is considered that a development is likely to have a significant effect on Natura 2000 sites (SAC/SPA). In this regard an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been completed for the proposed works. This report concludes that based on a consideration of the likely impacts arising from the proposed works, no likely significant impacts on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000

site has been identified. There will be no impacts on any other designated sites as a result of the proposed development.

3.5.3 Characteristics of Potential Impacts

A further screening exercise was completed to assess the most significant potential impacts, as outlined in Table 3.3 below. These are the sections that would be covered in any EIA as specified in the EU Directive 85/337/EEC (as amended by Directive 97/11/EC).

Table 3.3 Significance of Impact According to Theme (as in EIA)

EIA Section	Brief Assessment of Impacts
Human Beings	The potential impacts are not considered to be significant. During construction there is the potential for temporary minor impacts related to traffic inconvenience, dust and noise. The active works area will be limited so potential impacts will be restricted in their geographic extent as well as their duration.
Biodiversity, Flora & Fauna	A detailed Article 6(3) Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been prepared for the proposed works by Moore Group – Environmental Services who concluded that the proposed development will not result in any significant effects on Designated sites. The works area is confined to the road corridor and verges all of which comprise previously disturbed ground. There will be no significant impact on biodiversity, Flora or Fauna.
Land, Soils & Geology	Imperceptible impact, the development will be carried out in accordance with the environmentally sensitive construction methods and environmental management systems. Excavated soils and subsoils will be reused in reinstating the road verge where appropriate or dealt with in an appropriate manner i.e. sent for soil recovery if appropriate.
Water	The construction phase will be carried out in accordance with best practice construction methodologies to ensure that potential impacts on water are eliminated. Potential impacts on water quality are considered to be imperceptible as there are no watercourses or drains onsite.
Air & Climate	No significant impact. The proposed road upgrade will replace the existing road but will not result in increased use of the route.
Noise & Vibration	Potential short-term noise impact during construction activities however this will be managed through best practice measures. No significant impact anticipated.
Landscape	No significant impact. The subject works relate to the provision of the upgrade of an existing road
Material Assets	No impact.
Cultural Heritage	No impact on protected structures or archaeological features.
Interaction of Foregoing	No impact.

Table 3.4 Characteristics of the Potential Impacts Matrix

Characteristics of Potential Impacts – Screening Questions	
Would a large geographical area be impacted as a result of the proposed development?	No. The geographic extent of the proposed works are largely confined to the immediate area. Accordingly, there is no impact associated with the operational phase.
Would a large population of people be affected as a result of the proposed development?	No. The proposed development is not located in a heavily or densely populated area.
Are any transboundary impacts likely to arise as a result of the proposed development?	No. The proposed road upgrade will be confined to the junction of the existing public road
Would the magnitude of impacts associated with the proposed development be considered significant?	No. All impacts on areas of ecological sensitivity will be minimised to insignificance. Full details of the ecology of the site is presented in the Appropriate Assessment Screening that has been prepared. The proposed works will be carried out in line with environmentally sensitive construction methodologies therefore no significant impacts will arise.
In considering the various aspects of the environment, would the impacts of the proposed development be considered complex?	No. All impacts on areas of general environmental sensitivity will be minimised to insignificance and therefore any interactions between sensitive receptors such as water quality and aquatic ecology and noise or air pollution, are not anticipated to be complex.
Is there a high probability that the effects will occur?	Whilst temporary impacts relating to construction activities are likely to occur, best practice measures will result in any impacts being insignificant
Will the effects continue for a long time?	No Any effects are only associated with the temporary construction period which will be temporary and short term.
Will the effects be permanent rather than temporary?	The potential effects during construction are considered temporary, with no operational phase effects anticipated.
Will the impacts be irreversible?	No. The proposed upgraded junction will remain a permanent part of the local public road network
Will it be difficult to avoid, or reduce or repair or compensate for the effects?	The construction process will avoid any significant effects of the proposed development through the implementation of standard best practice construction methodologies.

Conclusions:

It is concluded that, the characteristics of the potential impacts are not considered significant. There are no long-term negative impacts. Whilst temporary noise levels and disturbance are typical of any construction phase, any potential impact on sensitive receptors will be short term and effectively managed through best practice measures. No impact interactions have been identified and it is considered that any minor impacts will be avoided through the implementation of best working practices. No likely significant long-term or permanent negative environmental impacts have been identified in the course of the screening process.

Reasoning:

An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been prepared which demonstrates that the proposal will not impact on designated sites. The potential for any direct or indirect impact on habitats is low and the likelihood of any significant effects occurring as a result of the works can be excluded.

4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A summary of conclusions is presented below:

The proposed works are not a development for which EIA is mandatory. It is also considered that the proposed development is not a sub-threshold development. The relevant legislation makes no reference to upgrade of existing roads but explicitly requires EIA for the provision of private roads which exceed 2,000 metres in length for which the proposed road upgrade does not fall within as it is an upgrade of an existing public road.

An EIA Screening exercise was however carried out to determine the potential for the proposed development to have significant environmental effects or not. This exercise has been informed by an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report completed for the proposed development.

The nature or characteristics of the proposed development are not considered likely to have significant effects on the environment. The geographic extent of the final upgraded road is small and there will be no long-term impacts.

All works will be carried out within or adjacent to the existing public road junction.

The proposed works have been screened in the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report which has concluded that the proposal will not adversely impact any Natura 2000 sites.

The characteristics of the potential impacts are not considered significant, as standard best practice will be adopted.

The overall conclusion of this screening exercise is that there is no specific requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment of the proposed works.