

# **Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Document**

Proposed Social Housing &  
Traveller Appropriate  
Accommodation  
Development- Lands at  
Keeraun, Knocknacarra,  
Galway





## DOCUMENT DETAILS

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Lands at Keeraun, Knocknacarra, Galway**

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# Table of Contents

1.	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>2</b>
1.1	Statement of Authority.....	2
2.	<b>DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT.....</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1	Site Location.....	3
2.2	Development Description.....	3
2.3	Construction Methodology.....	6
3.	<b>ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING EXERCISE.....</b>	<b>7</b>
3.1	Relevant Environmental Impact Assessment Legislation.....	7
3.2	Methodology.....	7
3.3	Mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment.....	8
3.4	Projects Considered for the Cumulative Assessment.....	9
3.5	Sub-threshold Development.....	9
3.6	Sub-threshold Assessment.....	10
3.6.1	Characteristics of the Proposed Development.....	11
3.6.2	Location of the Proposed Development.....	13
3.6.3	Characteristics of Potential Impacts.....	15
4.	<b>CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>18</b>

## TABLE OF TABLES

<i>Table 3-1 Characteristics of the Proposed Development.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Table 3-2 Location of the Proposed Development Matrix.....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Table 3-3 Significance of Impact According to Theme (as in EIA).....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Table 3-4 Characteristics of the Potential Impacts Matrix.....</i>	<i>16</i>

## TABLE OF FIGURES

<i>Figure 2-1 Site Location.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Figure 2-2 Site Layout.....</i>	<i>5</i>

# 1. INTRODUCTION

Galway City Council are applying to An Bord Pleanála for planning permission under Section 177AE of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) of the Planning & Development Act (2000) for the construction of 71no. residential dwellings (comprising 63no. social housing units and 8no. Traveller Appropriate Accommodation units) and all associated works on lands at Keeraun, Knocknacarra, Galway.

This Environmental Impact Assessment (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 application is also accompanied by an Article 6(3) Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (AASR) and a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) which has also been prepared by Enviroguide Consulting, along with various other reports prepared by the project team. This EIA Screening Report is cognisant of the findings of all relevant site and desk studies and are referenced where appropriate in this report.

## 1.1 Statement of Authority

The EIA Screening exercise has been compiled by Lorna Britton of MKO. Lorna holds a BA (Hons) in Geography, and a MSc (Hons) in Environmental Science. Lorna's key strengths and expertise are Environmental Protection and Management, Environmental Impact Statements, Project Management, and GIS Mapping. The report was reviewed by Owen Cahill (BSc. MSc.) who has over ten years' experience in the environmental consultancy sector. Owen completed an MSc. in Environmental Engineering at Queens University, Belfast in 2010. Owen is full member of IEMA (MIEMA) as well as a Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv).

## 2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

### 2.1 Site Location

The subject site is a greenfield and measures approximately 2.08ha in area. The site is located in the northwest of Galway City, due north of Knocknacarra. Specifically, the site is located on the eastern side of Ballymoneen Road, approximately 4.3km from the City Centre, and 1km from Knocknacarra Neighbourhood Centre (see Figure 2-1). The site is bounded to the north by agricultural lands, to the east and south-east by agricultural lands, along which the future N6 Galway City Ring Road is planned, to the south by agricultural lands and to the west by Ballymoneen Road.

### 2.2 Development Description

The proposed development involves the construction by Galway City Council, of a social housing scheme comprising a mix of standard residential units and culturally appropriate Traveller-specific accommodation. The completed project will deliver high quality residential accommodation with positive engagement with the existing sub-urban/rural context in a highly sustainable, efficient and cost-effective design with low maintenance requirements. The project also takes into account the N6 Galway City Ring Road which will pass along the south-eastern boundary when it is completed.

All site services will form part of the development including connection to existing foul water treatment plant, connection to existing water mains, and connection to surface water drainage systems in proximity to the site.

The proposed layout has been heavily influenced by the requirements of the Traveller Community Liaison Officer, who conveyed the requirements of the Traveller Community, resulting in many design iterations and the final design conclusion presented in this report. The final layout essentially comprises 2 sections (see Figure 2-2):

- 1) The standard social housing scheme of 63no. dwellings; &
- 2) The Traveller Appropriate Accommodation scheme in the northwest quadrant of the site, comprising 8no. TAA dwellings.

The Proposed Development Consists of the following:

#### Unit Breakdown

- > 1 bed units – 4no. (16%)
- > 2 bed units – 34no. (48%)
- > 3 bed units – 22no. (31%)
- > 4 bed units – 3no. (4%)
- > 4 bed TAA units – 8no. (11%)

Houses are informed by reference to ‘Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities, whereas apartments comply with ‘Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments’.

#### Car Parking

A total of 116no. car parking spaces are proposed, in line with Development Plan Standards for Social Housing, Duplex Apartments, and TAA Housing.



**Map Legend**

- Site Boundary

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**Site Location**

Project Title: 210406

Drawn By: LB	Checked By: OC
Project No: 210406	Drawing No: Figure 1-1
Scale: 1:15298	Date: 2021.08.31

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## 2.3

## Construction Methodology

The proposed development will be completed using standard construction methodology and materials. The housing will be constructed on ground bearing reinforced concrete foundations. The foundations will be excavated to a competent stratum on to which the foundations will be installed. A tracked 360-degree excavator or similar will be used to excavate the area down to the level indicated by the designer and appropriately shuttered reinforced concrete will be laid over it. The block work walls will be built up from the foundation (including a DPC) and the floor slab constructed, having first located any ducts or trenches required by the follow on mechanical and electrical contractors. The block work will then be raised to wall plate level and the gables & internal partition walls formed. Scaffold will be erected around the outside of the building for this operation. Any concrete flooring slabs will be lifted into position using an adequately sized mobile crane. The timber roof trusses will then be lifted into position using a teleporter or mobile crane depending on site conditions. The roof trusses will then be felted, battened, tiled and sealed against the weather. Windows, electrics, plumbing and all other building components and services will be installed in as timely a manner as is possible. The housing will comprise a standard masonry build structure.

Surface and foul water drainage will connect to the existing drainage network. Prior to completion of works on the development site, the landscaping works will be carried out. The finishes include areas of amenity grassland and tree planting. The site access route via the road frontage on Ballymoneen Road will comprise paved access routes and asphalt roads which will be installed on a competent stratum the design specification of which will be provided by the Project Design Engineer on appointment. A Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been prepared which accompanies this application. Section 2.2 of the CEMP provides an overview on the construction methodologies.

The CEMP will be the subject of update by the appointed contractor in advance of construction commencing and will be issued for agreement with the local authority.

### 3. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING EXERCISE

#### 3.1 Relevant Environmental 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 (the 'amended Directive') which has been transposed into Irish law with the 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 Annex I and II of the amended Directive. This identifies 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 7 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 ELAR.

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:*

- 1. 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

- (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.

With regards to the proposed development, the provisions of Schedule 5 require an EIA to be undertaken where it is proposed to carry out the following -

“Construction of more than 500 dwelling units”, as per Class 10 (b)(i) of the Schedule and (iv) urban development which would involve an area greater than 2 hectares (business district) 10 hectares (built up area) or 20 hectares (elsewhere), and also (possibly):

Class 10 (dd) private roads of 2km in length;

Class 15 any sub-threshold project in Schedule 5 Part 2 which would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

The Proposed Development does not exceed the 500 unit threshold, does not propose urban development of an area greater than 10 hectares in a built up area and does not require greater than 2km of private roads and therefore is not subject to mandatory EIA.

Therefore, the proposed development is not subject to mandatory EIA. However, for completeness, under the provision of Class 15 for sub-threshold developments, an evaluation of the Schedule 7 criteria is provided in Section 3.5 below.

## 3.4

## Projects Considered 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 online planning system for Galway City Council, was consulted on the 13/08/2021. Any planning applications listed as granted or decision pending from within the last five years were assessed for their potential to act in-combination with the Proposed Development. Long-term developments granted outside of this time period were also considered where applicable. Results included:

- Permission for development which will consist of the following: 1) Demolition of disused two storey house on the site ; 2) Construction of 58 no. residential units comprising ; 22 no. two storey four bedroom houses, 6 no. two storey three bedroom houses, 2 no. three storey apartment blocks comprising 3 no. one bedroom apartments and 27 no. two bedroom apartments; 3) Shared communal and semi-private open space, car and bicycle parking, bin stores, site landscaping and public lighting ; 4) A new pedestrian and vehicular access from Ballymoneen Road ; 5) Provision of all associated surface water and foul drainage services and all associated site development works. The application is accompanied by a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) (Planning Ref: 20/286) (Decision: Not Decided)
- Extension of duration on (PL Ref: 14/248) & amendments (7/296,18/68,18/69, 21108.) (Planning Ref: 20327) (Decision Granted Conditional)
- Extension of duration on (PL Ref: 14/248) (Planning Reference 20327) (Decision: Granted Conditional)
- Permission for development which will consist of a total of 58 residential units made up of 32 no. 4 bedroom semi-detached 2 and ½ storey houses, 12 no. 4 bedroom 2 and ½ storey detached houses, 2 no. 5 bedroom that is part 2 and ½ storey and part 2 storey detached house, 6 no. 4 bedroom 2 and ½ storey terraced houses and 6 no. 3 bedroom 2 and ½ storey terraced houses. Six of the residential units with on-site parking are proposed to have individual vehicular access directly from the Clybaun Road. Development also to include all associated communal and private open spaces, hard and soft landscaping, site development works and services including connection to the main sewer and proposed internal road layout with 1 new vehicular access to the site from the Clybaun Road, with new paths and new boundary walls and served by 102 shared surface parking as well as the realignment/widening of the Clybaun Road for part of the length of the proposed new development fronting onto the Clybaun Road as well as the provision of a new public footpath along the Clybaun and Ragoon Road. (Planning Ref:20327) (Decision: Granted Feb 2021)
- An E.O.D on PL Ref: 14/248 was granted on the 08/02/2021. This application has also been subject to various amendments (7/296,18/68,18/69, 21108).

## 3.5

## 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.

Class 15 of Schedule 5 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.”*

The proposed residential development is a project which falls under Schedule 5 however is considered sub-threshold as the number of units is 71 rather than the 500 unit threshold, the area of the site is approximately 2.08ha in area rather than 10 hectares and significantly less than 2km of road will be required.

## 3.6 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.

- (i) *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) *A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.*
- 3) *A description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the proposed development 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 as well as within the assessment of the criteria set out on Schedule 7 which 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 the amended Directive and the checklist of criteria set out European Commission (2017) *Guidance on Screening* document.

### 3.6.1 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. Accordingly, there is no impact associated with the development post construction. The proposed active works area is a greenfield site on which the residential units will be constructed. The scale of works is not considered significant when compared to the various thresholds as set out in the EIA Directive which could pertain to the proposed development
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 Ecofact Environmental Consultants within the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (AASR) and Natura Impact Statement (NIS). As set out in Section 3.4 above the potential for cumulative environmental effects with permitted developments is low. Separately, as the construction of the proposed development is unlikely to cause significant environmental effects (as set out further below) cumulatively, it is therefore unlikely to cause significant environmental effects.
Is the nature of the proposed works significant?	No. The proposal is limited to the proposed 71 no. unit residential development and associated infrastructure. The works will be carried out in accordance with environmentally sensitive and best practice construction methodologies which are well established in this area and 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 and landscaping areas where possible. Stone material will be sourced from local quarries the quantities of which are not considered significant and will be limited to those materials used during the construction phase.
Will the proposed works produce a significant quantity of waste?	No. The proposed works will reuse excavated materials in the reinstatement of and landscaping areas where appropriate. Waste where it arises, will be source segregated to accommodate re-use and

Characteristics of the Proposed Development – Screening Questions	Comment
	recycling opportunities with provisions implemented on site in waste management areas. All waste and recyclable material 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?	<p>No. Waste water generated as part of the completed development will be diverted to the public sewer system and managed at the existing water treatment plant.</p> <p>There is an existing stream which transverses through the proposed development site in the south to north direction. The stream shall be diverted through the construction of culverts to prevent the transportation of silt laden water or pollutants from entering any of the watercourses on site or any of the wider environments including downstream watercourses.</p>
Will the proposed works create a significant amount of nuisance?	No. Limited short-term disruption may arise during the proposed construction process.
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?	<p>No. The actual environmental effects of construction projects locally are well established. The water course on the existing site shall be managed appropriately during the construction phase, thus any potential impacts to sensitive receptors including European Sites shall not incur.</p> <p>There are no factors above which when combined would result in the proposed development, due to its characteristics, having a significant effect on the environment.</p>

## 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 the EIAR threshold criteria. The proposed works will comprise the construction of approximately 71 no. residential units. The works will be undertaken according to the construction methodologies designed to reduce or eliminate the potential for environmental impacts as summarised in Section 2.3 above and within all survey reports and assessment which accompany the application. The works will involve the site excavation and the installation of foundations for dwellings. The construction works areas will be reinstated where possible with landscaped areas provided where proposed. The works will be restricted to the footprint of the site for the proposed development.

### 3.6.2 Location of the Proposed Development

Table 3-2 Location of the Proposed Development Matrix

Location of the Proposed Development – Screening Questions	Comment
<p>Have the proposed works the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any site designated for conservation interest (e.g. SAC, SPA, pNHA)?</p>	<p>A detailed Article 6(3) Appropriate Assessment and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) has been completed for the proposed development. The NIS concluded that <i>“As a result of the complete, precise and definitive findings in of this NIS, it has been concluded, beyond reasonable scientific doubt, that the Proposed Development will have no adverse effects on the qualifying interests, special conservation interests and on the integrity and extent of Galway Bay Complex SAC and Inner Galway Bay SPA. Accordingly, the Proposed Development will not adversely affect the integrity of any relevant European site”</i>.</p> <p>The closest Natura 2000 sites to the proposed development are the Galway Bay Complex SAC (000268) and the Inner Galway Bay SPA (004031). The Galway Bay Complex SAC is located c. 1.8km south and the Inner Galway Bay SPA is located c. 1.9km south.</p>
<p>Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any habitats listed as Annex I in the EU Habitats Directive?</p>	<p>No. The NIS includes detailed site-specific habitat assessment and confirms that:</p> <p><i>“As noted in the AA Screening prepared by Ecofact Environmental Consultants, there is no potential for direct construction phase or operational phase effects to arise which could affect the conservation objectives of the Natura 2000 network”</i>.</p> <p><i>“There is potential for indirect effects on Galway Bay Complex SAC Inner Galway Bay SPA due to the potential hydrological pathway between the Site of the Proposed Development and the European sites in Galway Bay during the Construction Phase”</i>.</p> <p>However, taking into account the proposed mitigation measures set out in the NIS there shall be no direct or indirect impacts on any habitats listed as Annex I in the EU Habitats Directive.</p>
<p>Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any habitats listed as Priority Annex I in the EU Habitats Directive?</p>	<p>Yes. The NIS includes detailed site-specific information and confirms that <i>“Potential pathways for effects on Priority Annex I habitats via the drain on site and the Tonabrocky Stream (c. 2.5rkm upstream of the SAC)”</i>.</p> <p>However, where potentially significant effects were identified, a range of mitigation and avoidance measures have been suggested to help offset them. Thus, ensuring the avoidance and mitigation measures are implemented as proposed, the Proposed Development will not have a significant adverse effect on any habitats listed as Priority Annex I in the EU Habitats Directive</p>

Location of the Proposed Development – Screening Questions	Comment
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 NIS concludes that “ <i>Where potentially significant effects were identified, mitigation and avoidance measures have been implemented. The Appropriate Assessment concluded that, ensuring the avoidance and mitigation measures are implemented as proposed, the Proposed Development will not have a significant adverse effect on the above European sites</i> ”.
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 AASR and NIS includes detailed site-specific information and confirms that Annex IV species will not be impacted by the proposed works. Where potentially significant effects were identified, mitigation and avoidance measures have been implemented.
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 AASR and NIS includes detailed site-specific information and confirms that Annex I bird species will not be impacted by the proposed works. Where potentially significant effects were identified, mitigation and avoidance measures have been implemented.
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 AASR and NIS includes detailed site-specific information and confirms that breeding places of any species protected under the Wildlife Act will be impacted by the proposed works. Where potentially significant effects were identified, mitigation and avoidance measures have been implemented.
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on existing land use?	No. The proposed works will be restricted within the existing site which are not considered significant. Additional areas of land will be utilised for temporary works and will be reinstated after construction
Has the proposed development the potential to impact directly or indirectly on any protected structures or Recorded Monuments and Places of Archaeological Interest?	No. Based on a review of Archaeology.ie Historic Map Viewer there are no Recorded Monuments or Places of archaeological interest located on the Proposed Development site.
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 site is not located in an area which is listed as a scenic view in the Galway County Development Plan 2015 – 2021. The nearest scenic view is located 10.1km north-west of the site at Killagoola Heritage Walk.

## Conclusion

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 a Natura Impact Statement 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 and the implementation of avoidance and mitigation measures set out in the NIS, 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.

### 3.6.3 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, Population and Human Health	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. The proposed development comprises of developing a residential area with 71 no. units of housing, however this should have minor effects on overall population patterns.
Biodiversity, Flora & Fauna	No. Flora and fauna of ecological significance or sensitivity were recorded on the site. Designated sites in the vicinity will not be impacted upon as mitigation measures set out in the Appropriate Assessment Screening and Natura Impact Statement prepared.
Soils & Geology	Imperceptible impact, the development will be carried out in accordance with the environmentally sensitive construction methodologies and environmental management systems. Excavated overburden and subsoils will be reused in reinstatement and landscaping 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 as to ensure that potential impacts on water are eliminated any potential impacts on water quality are considered to be imperceptible.  Surface water run-off will not be attenuated on site. All waste water will be connected to the existing water treatment plant.  There will be no release of suspended solids to any watercourse as a direct or indirect result of the proposed works. The Mitigation measures set out in the CEMP will be put in place to prevent the transportation of silt laden water or pollutants from entering any of the watercourses on site or any of the wider environments including downstream watercourses.
Air & Climate	Potential short-term low probability impact on air quality in particular dust emissions during construction activities however this will be managed through best practice measures. No significant impact anticipated
Noise & Vibration	Potential short-term noise impact during construction activities however this will be managed through best practice measures. No significant impact anticipated.
Landscape	Long Term, Slight Neutral landscape and visual Impact. The subject works relate to the provision of a residential development in an already urban landscape.
Material Assets	Potential short-term low probability impact. During construction there is the potential for temporary minor impacts related to traffic inconvenience on the adjacent Ballymoneen Road.
Cultural Heritage	No impact on protected structures or archaeological features.

Interaction of Foregoing	No impact.
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Table 3-4 Characteristics of the Potential Impacts Matrix

Characteristics of Potential Impacts – Screening Questions	Comment
Would a large geographical area be impacted as a result of the proposed development?	No. The geographic extent of the proposed works are confined to the immediate site area. Accordingly, there is no significant impact associated with the operational phase of the residential development.
Would a large population of people be affected as a result of the proposed development?	No. The proposed 71 no. unit residential development is not considered significant in terms of the number that will be housed within the finished development. Therefore, any impacts on a large population will only have the potential to occur during the construction phase of the development. Any potential impact will be short-term and not considered significant
Are any transboundary impacts likely to arise as a result of the proposed development?	No. The proposed works are confined to the immediate site area.
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 and Natura Impact Statement 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 works are required to remain in place as part of the permanent development.
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 and, indeed, the proposed works are considered to represent a long-term and permanent positive impact. Whilst temporary noise levels and disturbance are typical of any

construction phase, the proposed works are generally remote from sensitive receptors and any potential impact 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 AASR and NIS has been prepared which demonstrates that the proposal will not impact on designated sites. The Proposed Development will have no adverse effects on the qualifying interests, special conservation interests and on the integrity and extent of Galway Bay Complex SAC and Inner Galway Bay SPA. Accordingly, the Proposed Development will not adversely affect the integrity of any relevant European site.

4.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A summary of conclusions is presented as follows:

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 that requires an EIA as it is unlikely to have '*significant effects on the environment*'.

The relevant legislation requires EIA for a number of classes of project that could potentially relate to the proposed development including the construction of more than 500 dwelling units, the development of an urban area greater than 10 Hectares and/or the construction of a private road greater than 2km however the proposed residential development does not fall within any of these classes.

An EIA Screening exercise was carried out to determine the potential for the proposed development to have significant environmental effects or not. This exercise has been informed by the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and Natura Impact Statement Report completed for the proposed development and review of the proposed development proposals.

The nature or characteristics of the proposed development are not considered likely to have significant effects on the environment. The geographic extent of the proposed residential development is small and there will be no impacts during the operational phase.

There is one water course within the site of the proposed development, however mitigation measures have been set out to ensure no release of suspended solids to any watercourse as a direct or indirect result of the proposed works.

The Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and Natura Impact Statement Report has also concluded that the proposed development, by itself or in combination with other plans and projects, in light of best scientific knowledge in the field, will not, in view of the sites' conservation objectives, have significant effects on any European Site.

The characteristics of the potential impacts are not considered significant, as standard best practice will be adopted in the design and construction of the proposed works.

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