

Ballybane Road & Castlepark Road Cycle Scheme

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening

Galway City Council

April 2023



Notice

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This document has 28 pages including the cover.

Document history

Revision	Purpose description	Date
Rev 0	Draft for Client Comment	14/06/2021
Rev 1	Draft for Client Comment	13/09/2021
Rev 2	Draft	17/02/2023
Rev 3	Final	12/04/2023

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1. Introduction

The EIA screening for Ballybane Road & Castlepark Road Cycle Scheme project has been commissioned to Atkins by Galway City Council (GCC) in October 2019, under the National Transport Authority's (NTA) Consultancy Services framework and has been developed in consideration of current GCC policies included in the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS) (August 2016).

Ballybane Road and Castlepark Road are located to the east of Galway City, as shown in Figure 1-1. These routes are corridors along existing roads and have been identified within the GTS and within the scope of this commission as follows:

- Ballybane Road approx. 140m north of Skerritt roundabout and Monivea Road junction, excluding the N6 and Dublin Road junctions; and,
- Castlepark Road (full extent).

1.1. Purpose of this Report

This report has been prepared to support a Part 8 Planning Application by Galway City Council in relation to a high-quality cycle scheme located to the east of Galway City as shown in Figure 1-1. The purpose of this report is to determine whether the project requires the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR). The project has been screened to generate a summarised overview of the potential impacts on the receiving environment, and in the context of relevant statutory requirements.

A Stage 1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment has also been prepared (Atkins, 2023). The project has been assessed with regards to the likely significant effects of the development on Natura 2000 sites within the zone of influence of the proposed project. The project has been screened out at Stage 1 Screening for Appropriate Assessment, and therefore it has been determined that the project does not require the preparation of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS).

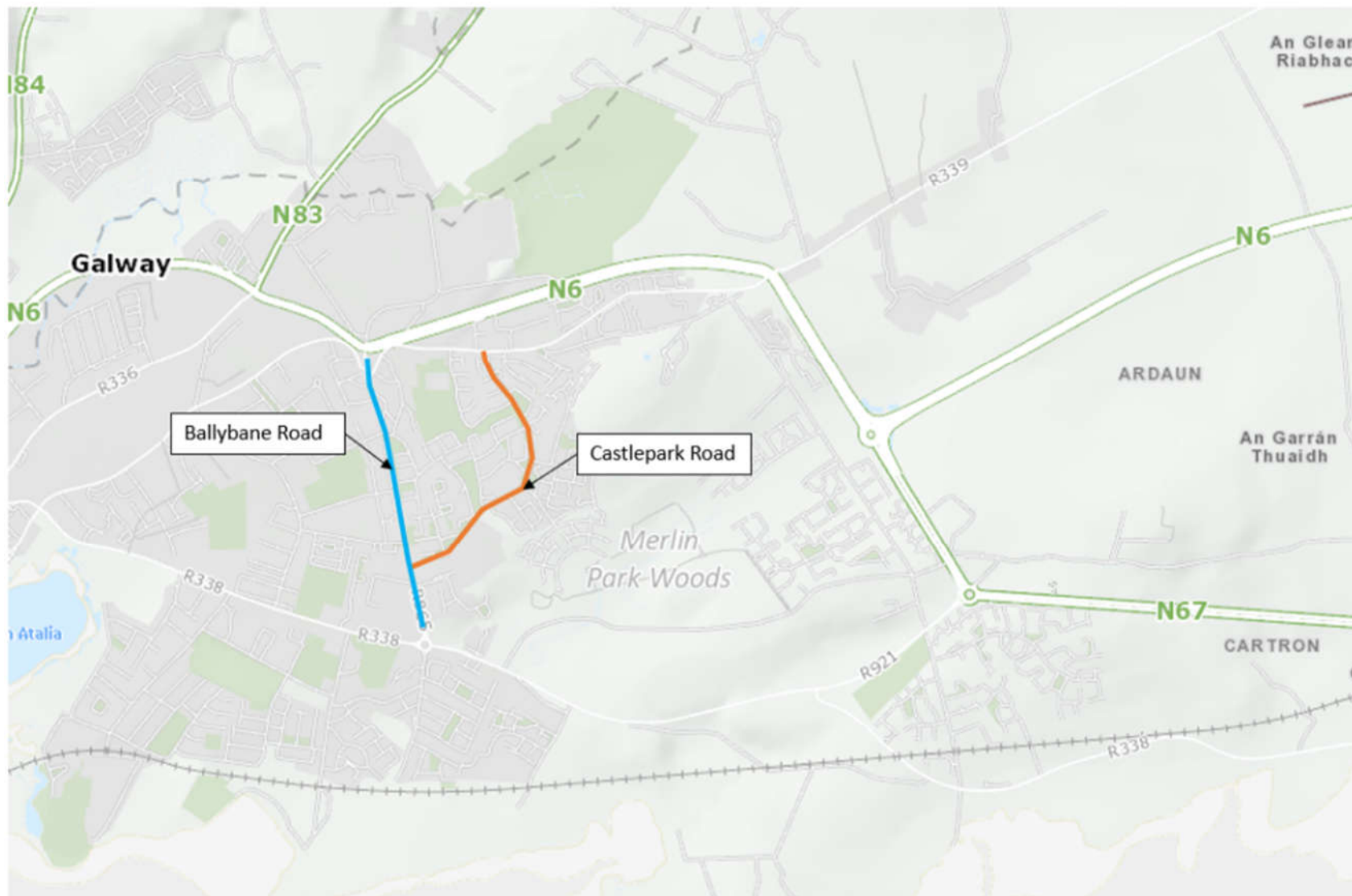


Figure 1-1: Proposed EIA screening for Ballybane Road & Castlepark Road Cycle Scheme

2. Methodology

This project has been screened in accordance with Section 3.2 of the 'Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (EPA, 2022), the Environmental Impact Directive (85/337/EEC) and all subsequent relevant amendments, Planning and Development regulations (2001-2023), including S.I. No. 296 of 2018 - European Union (Planning and Development) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018, which came into operation on 1st September 2018. The project had been screened in accordance with the Roads Act, 1993 and the European Union (Roads Act 1993) (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulation 2019 S.I. No. 279 of 2019.

As set out under the relevant legislation (detailed further in Section 2.1 of this report), there are three key steps when carrying out EIA screening for a particular project:

- **Step 1** is to determine if the proposed infrastructure works represent a project as understood by the Directive and if a mandatory EIAR is required. Such projects are defined in Article 4 of the EIA Directive and set out in Annexes I and II. Projects requiring a mandatory EIAR are included under Section 50 of the Roads Act (1993-2021), S.I. No. 279 of 2019 amendments and the prescribed projects listed in Section 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994 (S.I. No. 119 of 1994).
- **Step 2** is to determine if the project is likely to have significant effects on the receiving environment. Section 50 (1)(b) of the Roads Act (1993-2021) states that *'if An Bord Pleanála considers that any road development proposed (other than development to which paragraph (a) applies) consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road would be likely to have significant effects on the environment it shall direct that the development be subject to an environmental impact assessment.'*

Section 50 (1)(c) of the Roads Act (1993-2021) states that *'where a road authority or, as the case may be, the Authority considers that a road development that it proposes (other than development to which paragraph (a) applies) consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, it shall inform An Bord Pleanála in writing prior to making any application to the Bord for an approval referred to in section 51(1) in respect of the development.'*

Section 50 (1)(e) of the Roads Act (1993-2021) states *'where a decision is being made pursuant to this subsection on whether a road development that is proposed would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment, An Bord Pleanála, or the road authority or the Authority concerned (as the case may be), shall take into account the relevant selection criteria specified in Annex III.'* Annex III as has been transposed into Irish Legislation via Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2023.

There are no exacting rules as to what constitutes "significant" in terms of environmental impacts. The responsibility is on Planning Authorities to carefully examine every aspect of a development in the context of characterisation of the project; location of the project and type and characteristics of potential impacts. It is generally not necessary to provide specialist studies or technical reports to complete this screening process, rather to investigate where further studies may be required, and where risks, if any, to the integrity of the receiving environment may lie.

For the purposes of screening sub-threshold development for EIA, all of the relevant information as presented within EIA Planning and Development Regulations 2018 (Schedule 7A) has been provided on behalf of the applicant, Galway City Council. The potential for the project to pose a significant impact to the receiving environment has also been evaluated in accordance with criteria listed in the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001, and EIA Planning and Development Regulations 2018 (Schedule 7).

The findings of the EIA screening assessment prepared for the project has informed our professional opinion as to whether an EIAR is warranted for the proposed project, with due regard to all relevant statutory requirements and technical guidance. However ultimately it is the responsibility of the relevant planning authority to make a determination as to whether an EIAR is required for a particular project, based on screening conducted by the planning authority.

Figure 2-1 provides a summary of the main steps involved in the EIA screening process.

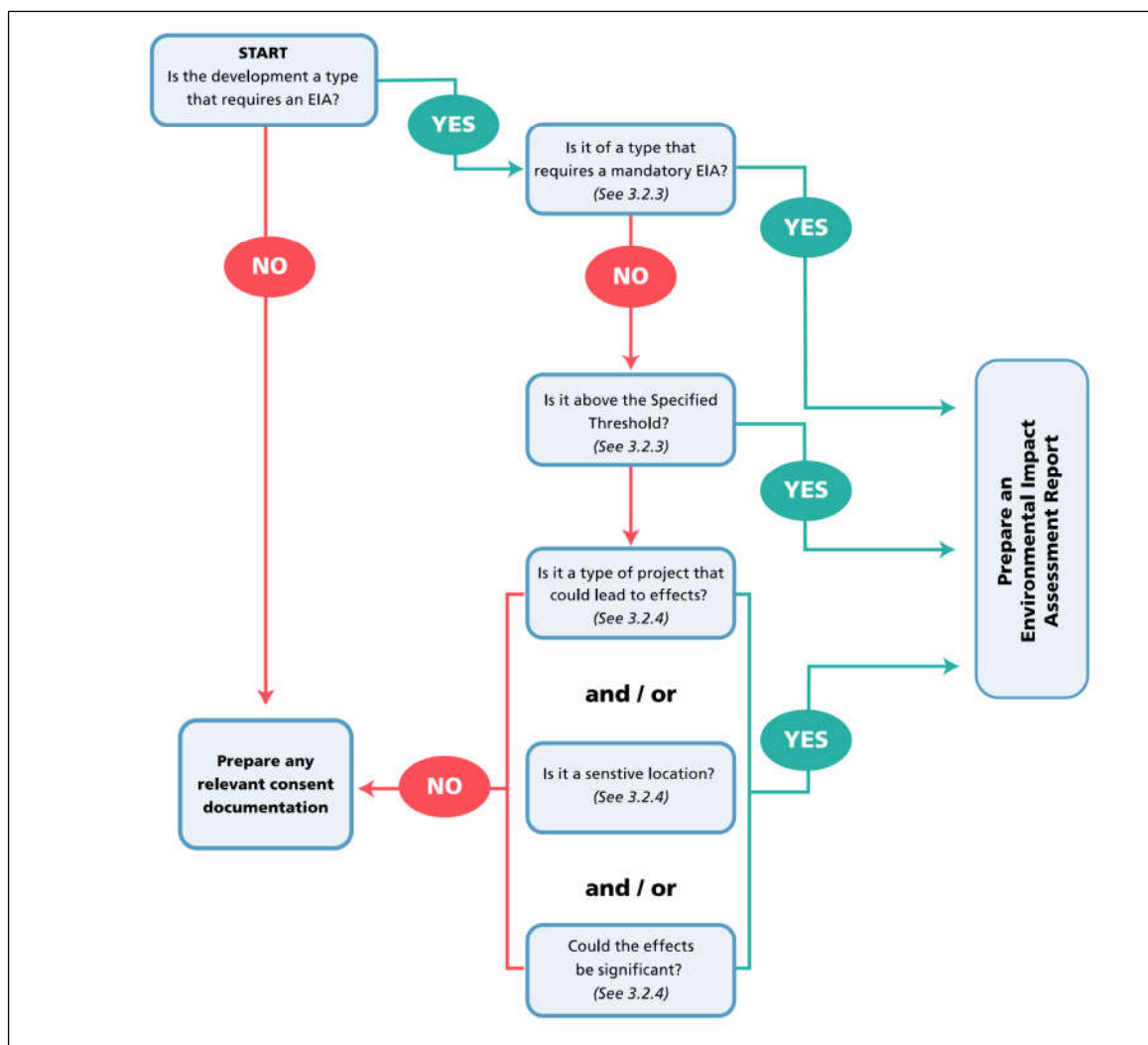


Figure 2-1 - EIA Screening Process (Source: 'Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports' (EPA, 2022)).

2.1. Relevant Legislation

The Environmental Impact Directive (85/337/EEC) was brought into force in 1985. Subsequent amendments were made with the following pieces of legislation - 97/11/EC, 2003/35/EC, 2009/31/EC, 2011/92/EU and 2014/52/EU. The Directive was originally transposed into Irish Law by the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations, 1989 (S.I. No. 349/1989). This amended the Local Government (Planning and Development Act) 1963 and introduced the requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment in certain specified circumstances. The most recent amendment to the Directive is focused on clarifying and simplifying the process of EIA. The screening criteria have been updated, and Member States have a mandate to simplify their assessment procedures. EIA reports are to be made more readily understandable to members of the general public. Section 50 of the Roads Acts 1993 and the 2019 amended Regulation outlines certain categories of roads projects which require an EIAR.

EIA Regulations ((Planning and Development) Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2018 (S.I. No. 296 of 2018)) transposing the 2014 EIA Directive were recently adopted and came into operation on 1st September 2018. These regulations amend the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (S.I. No.600 of 2001); they seek to transpose EIA Directive 2014/52/EU and to give further effect to the 2011 Directive, as follows;

- An EIAR is required as a matter of course on specified large-scale projects which have a high likelihood of impacting on the receiving environment. These projects are listed in full within the Planning & Development Regulations (2001-2023), Schedule 5, Part 1 – Development for the purposes of Part 10.
- Each EU Member State has discretionary consideration for the requirement of an EIA in relation to various processes and activities. These projects are listed in full within the Planning & Development Regulations

(2001-2023), Schedule 5, Part 2 – Development for the purposes of Part 10. If the proposed project is listed under Schedule 5, Part 2, but does not exceed the relevant stated thresholds, it is considered to be sub-threshold. Part 10, article 92 of the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001 as amended states “‘sub-threshold development’ means development of a type set out in Part 2 of Schedule 5, which does not equal or exceed, as the case may be, a quantity, area or other limit specified in that Schedule in respect of the relevant class of development”. Any sub-threshold developments should be evaluated to determine if the project is likely to have a significant impact on the environment.

- Criteria to evaluate whether significant impacts on the receiving environment will arise from a proposed development are listed under Schedule 7 of the relevant Planning & Development Regulations (2001-2023). A list of the relevant information to be provided by the applicant or developer for the purposes of sub-threshold EIA screening is presented in Schedule 7A of the Regulations, and summarised below;
 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. 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.
 4. The compilation of the information at paragraphs 1 to 3 shall take into account, where relevant, the criteria set out in Schedule 7.

3. Environmental Impact Assessment Screening

3.1. Step 1 - Mandatory Screening for EIA

The project has been screened against the criteria outlined in Section 50(1)(a) of the Roads Act 1993-2021¹ and Article 8 of S.I. No. 119/1994²- Roads Regulations, 1994 This project does not fall within any category of development requiring a mandatory EIA; hence the preparation of an EIAR is not required under Section 50 (1)(a).

3.1.1. Sub-threshold Development Likely to Have Significant Effects on the Environment

The scheme has been screened against the criteria outlined in Section 50(1)(b) and Section 50 (1)(c) of the Roads Act 1993-2023, as follows;

Section 50(1)(b) - *'If An Bord Pleanála considers that any road development proposed (other than development to which paragraph (a) applies) consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, it shall direct the development be subject to an environmental impact assessment'*.

Section 50(1)(c) – *'Where a road authority or, as the case may be, the Authority considers that a road development that it proposes (other than development to which paragraph (a) applies) consisting of the construction of a proposed public road or the improvement of an existing public road would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, it shall inform An Bord Pleanála in writing prior to making any application to the Bord for an approval referred to in section 51(1) in respect of the development.'*

Therefore, it is considered that the scheme should undergo an EIA screening to determine if an EIAR would be required in accordance with Section 50(1)(b) and 50 (1)(c) of the Roads Act 1993-2021.

3.2. Step 2- Determining if the project is likely to have significant effect on the receiving environment.³

All relevant information as required under Schedule 7A has been provided on behalf of Galway City Council and is presented within this screening report. The potential for this project to pose a significant impact to the receiving environment has also been evaluated in accordance with criteria listed in the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001, and EIA Planning and Development Regulations 2021 (Schedule 7), as presented within this screening report.

3.2.1. Description of the Proposed Development (Schedule 7A (1))

A description of the Physical Characteristics of the Whole Proposed Development and Where Relevant of Demolition Works (Schedule 7A (1) (a))

Drawings of the preliminary design are shown in Appendix A. A description of the proposed project is as follows;

3.2.1.1. Link Design

The proposed cycle network scheme consists of various cycle path or link types; raised adjacent cycle tracks, raised cycle lanes and shared path facilities, as follows:

- **Ballybane Road (1.2km)**

The proposed cycle scheme along this route is to consist of a raised cycle track. This option has a physical segregation of 100mm high kerb between the carriageway and the cycle track, and a 50-60mm high kerb between the cycle track and adjacent footway. A typical cross section of this is shown in Figure 3-1.

- **Castlepark Road (1.2km)**

¹ <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2021/si/12/made/en/print>

² <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1994/si/119/made/en/print>

³ Pursuant to Schedule 7(A) of the Planning and Development Regulations as amended 2001-2018

The proposed cycle scheme along this route is to consist of a raised cycle track. This option has a physical segregation of 100mm high kerb between the carriageway and the cycle track, and a 50-60mm high kerb between the cycle track and adjacent footway. A typical cross section of this is shown in Figure 3-1.

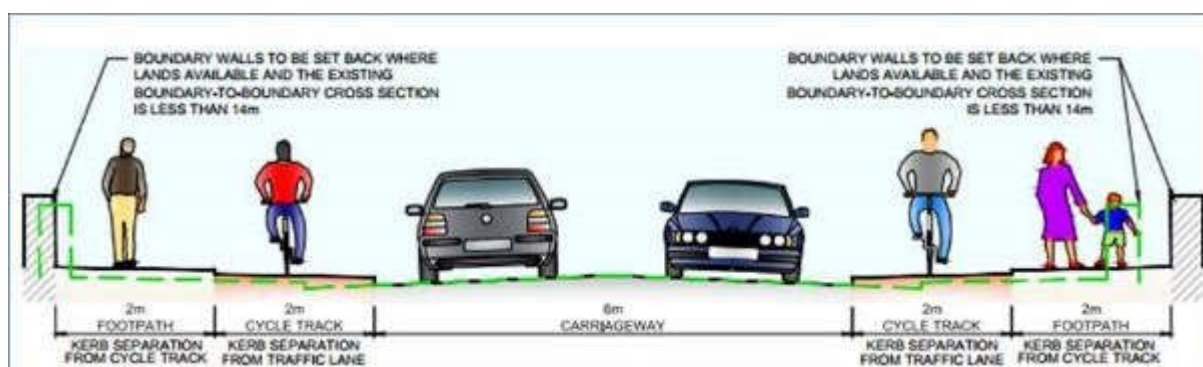


Figure 3-1: Raised cycle Track (100mm high kerb)

3.2.1.2. Construction Details

The construction period for the proposed EIA screening for Ballybane Road & Castlepark Road Cycle Scheme is estimated to be undertaken within 12 months (dependent on the procurement strategy) and can be summarised as follows: -

- The Contractor will commence the construction phase by mobilising the construction team on site. This will involve setting up a site compound in an area which will minimise potential impacts to the environment and public, whilst providing a suitable location from a construction logistics and safety viewpoint;
- Works will commence with clearing and removing (off site) all redundant items such as road signage, boundary treatment, and the temporary storage of topsoil. The works will be completed using a combination of operatives using hand tools and also mechanical excavators, dumper trucks and other plant typical to road construction schemes;
- To facilitate the main works, underground utilities which conflict with the main works will be uncovered using mechanical excavators (and hand digging where appropriate) and identified.
- Site compound location – Location to be confirmed at Tender/Construction stage; there could be multiple satellite compounds for each route given the ‘spread out’ nature of the overall cycle network scheme. While the location of the site compound is not known, the works compound for routes are to be located outside the SAC and approved by GCC at Construction Stage prior to acceptance. The Contractor will establish the site area, including site compound, set down area for vehicles, works areas, temporary set-down areas for material removed etc. prior to commencing work on the project. The Contractor will determine an appropriate location for the site compound in agreement with GCC. The compound will provide for parking, welfare facilities, canteen, site offices, storage areas and temporary utilities / services. These areas will be fenced to keep the public out of the work area and secured as appropriate to prevent pollution risk. Once appointed the Contractor will be obliged to take account of the content of this report when deciding on the fixed location of the site compound. The compound will be located away from sensitive areas such as designated conservation areas (such as Galway Bay European sites), ecologically sensitive areas (such as Merlin Park Woodlands), watercourses, hedgerows / treelines which are considered important wildlife corridors, archaeological / architectural features, identified Japanese knotweed locations (*Fallopia japonica*) (outside of the red line boundary) and adjacent private properties. Accordingly, the positioning of the site compound will be chosen so as to have no adverse environmental impacts during the construction phase. The temporary construction compound will be removed upon completion of the construction phase. Such areas are to be reinstated and all construction waste and / or scrapped building materials are to be removed from site on completion of the construction phase. Oil, fuel etc. storage areas are to be decommissioned on completion of the construction phase. Any remaining liquids are to be removed from site and disposed of at an appropriately licenced facility.
- With the utilities safely identified and diverted (if required), the initial construction phase will be ready to commence in that area. This will include removal of existing kerbs, footways and road pavement (where required), and the excavation and removal of soil to proposed design levels along the scheme – which are envisaged to be minor in nature for this scheme and will predominantly involve regrading work. The

excavation will be largely undertaken by mechanical excavators, with spoil arisings loaded into HGV tipper trucks for removal off site or reuse on the scheme where testing confirms its suitability;

- Pavement construction will be undertaken by mechanical means, using excavators to lay sub-base, graders, rollers and pavement laying machines for asphalt materials;
- Road sign poles will be erected to carry the scheme road signage. This will include statutory signage, warning signage and information signage. With the poles erected, the signs will be mounted by hand and cleaned to complete the signage installation;
- The finished surface course will be swept using a mechanical road sweeper and immediately followed by the application of road markings, which are likely to be applied using a vehicle mounted road marking machine. The individual Stop, Yield and cycle markings are likely to be laid by hand.

3.2.1.3. Drainage

All drainage for the cycle scheme will utilise the existing road drainage network. Drainage for the scheme will be provided using new gullies and existing or new storm drainage pipes where appropriate. The new facilities will generally slope towards the road in order to minimise the need for additional drainage collection measures. In some areas, where this may not be possible, additional channels or measures will be required.

A Description of the Location of the Proposed Development, with Particular Regard to the Environmental Sensitivity of Geographical Areas Likely to be Affected (Schedule 7A(1)(b)).

The infrastructure forming the EIA screening for Ballybane Road & Castlepark Road Cycle Scheme will be constructed within the city of Galway, predominantly along the existing Ballybane and Castlepark roads and verges, which are maintained by Galway City Council, with a minor portion within Atlantic Technological University lands.

Under the Galway City Development Plan (GCDP) 2023-2029 there are a number of zoning objectives adjacent to the footprint of the proposed project:

- Ballybane Road: Along the Ballybane Road, the surrounding area is primarily zoned as 'Residential', with areas of 'Recreational and Amenity', 2no. areas of 'Enterprise, Light Industry and Commercial' and towards the south of the route the land is zoned as 'Community, Cultural and Institutional'; and,
- Castlepark Road: Along the Castlepark Road the surrounding area is zoned as 'Residential', 'Recreational and Amenity', 'Enterprise, Industrial and Related', 'Enterprise, Light Industry and Commercial' and 'Community, Cultural and Institutional'.

Under the Galway City Development Plan (GCDP) 2023-2029 there are a number of specific objectives adjacent to the footprint of the proposed pedestrian and cycle routes:

GCDP 2023-2029

- Ballybane Road: Ballybane Road has a specific objective of 'Primary Cycle Network'; and,
- Castlepark Road: Castlepark Road has a specific Objective of 'Bus Routes'.

The following objectives have been defined for each zone under the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029

- Residential: *'To provide for residential development and for associated support development, which will ensure the protection of existing residential amenity and will contribute to sustainable residential neighbourhoods';*
- Recreational and Amenity: *'To provide for and protect recreational uses, open space, amenity uses, natural heritage and biodiversity' (GCDP, 2023-2029);*
- Enterprise, Light Industry and Commercial: *'To provide for enterprise, light industry and commercial uses other than those reserved to the CC zone';*
- Community, Cultural and Institutional: *'To provide for and facilitate the sustainable development of community, cultural and institutional uses and development of infrastructure for the benefit of the citizens of the city.'*
- Enterprise, Industrial and Related: *'To provide for enterprise, industry and related uses'*

The Galway City Development Plan (GDCP) 2023-2029 sets out to promote and facilitate movement within and to the City through the integration of land use with a sustainable transport system, with priority given to public transport, walking and cycling. There are several relevant chapters in the Development Plan which relate to

Cycling and Walking. Policy 4.4 of the GCDP 2023-2029 highlight policies' relating to the proposed project, as follows:

- *“Support the Galway Transport Strategy proposals for a primary cycle network to facilitate safe and convenient medium distance journeys.*
- *Support the Galway Transport Strategy proposals for a secondary cycle network and feeder links to facilitate safe and convenient local journeys and to afford linkage into the primary cycle network.*
- *Support the National Greenway Strategy and proposed Greenways as part of the primary cycle network and as part of links to Bearna, Oranmore, Maigh Cuilinn and Oughterard.*
- *Implement a structured programme of improvements across the whole city pedestrian network and at street crossings.*
- *Facilitate cycling on the proposed Bus Connects Galway Routes where appropriate including on the proposed Cross-City Link.*
- *Support and promote initiatives such as Park and Stride, Green Schools Travel and Safe Routes to School Programmes, School Streets and the concept of having safe routes to school.*
- *Improve bicycle parking at key destinations and near bus stops /interchanges.*
- *Promote, facilitate and maintain maximum connectivity and permeability for pedestrians and cyclists in the design and management of new public and private projects and in upgrading and retrofitting existing developments in accordance with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2019) and Permeability a Best Practice Guide, NTA (2015).*
- *Ensure facilities for pedestrians and cyclists are designed in accordance with national standards.*
- *Promote the implementation of a Wayfinding Scheme with provision of directional information and signage at appropriate locations across the city as part of the implementation of the Public Realm Strategy.*
- *Promote and facilitate the development of Public Bike/other share schemes across the city.*
- *Any active-travel intervention on a road or street which requires people cycling to share the same lane with general motor-traffic, should also ensure that such roads or streets are designed and managed to create the appropriate environment as per guidance in the National Cycling Manual on "Shared/Mixed Streets" and any subsequent updates.*

It is considered that the proposed pedestrian and cycle way infrastructure is fully compatible with the zoning requirements of the Galway City Development Plan, providing a social amenity and pedestrian and cycle access, and complementing the residential, commercial, industrial, and community nature of the area. The proposed project is in line with policy 4.4 of the Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029 mentioned above.

Designated Conservation Areas

The proposed project is not within any internationally designated conservation areas. There are 10no. European sites / Natura 2000 sites within 15km of the proposed project; 6no. Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and 4no. Special Protection Areas (SPAs). The closest European sites are Galway Bay Complex SAC (Site Code: 000268) and Inner Galway Bay SPA (Site Code: 004031).

The proposed project does not lie within a nationally designated conservation area. There are 2no. Natural Heritage Areas (NHA) and 8no. proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) within 15km of the proposed project. The closest NHA site is Cregganna Marsh NHA (Site Code: 004142). The closest pNHA site is Galway Bay Complex pNHA (Site Code: 000268),

There will be no land take from any of the designated conservation sites within 15km of the proposed project. There is no hydrological connectivity through surface water features to any designated conservation area. Based on the findings of the Stage 1 Appropriate Assessment Screening report (Atkins, 2023) there will be no likely effects upon European sites arising from the proposed project.

The proposed project is located ca. 1km north of the coastline (Corrib Estuary) with no watercourses crossed by the proposed project, nor are there any watercourses within the immediate vicinity of the project site. The Terryland River is the closest river to the proposed project and is located ca. 1.20km northwest of the crossing at Ballybane Road. The Terryland River flows in a south westerly direction to the west of the proposed project joining the Corrib River (EPA Code: IE_WE_30C020600) before discharging into the Corrib Estuary (EPA Code:

IE_WE_170_0700) and subsequently to the Galway Bay (Inner Galway Bay North) (EPA Code: IE_WE_170_0000) (EPA, 2023).

The proposed project is within the Clarinbridge groundwater body (EPA Code: IE_WE_G_0008).

There are no Geological Heritage Areas within the site. The closest Geological Heritage Area from the site is Two Mile Ditch Quarry (Site Code: GY132) which is located ca. 1.70km north of the proposed project (GSI, 2023). According to the GSI, 2023 *'this quarry is a very large working quarry and the geological importance is that the site is a good representative for the Carboniferous Limestone geology of east Galway'*.

Hydrogeology

There are 5no. wells within 500m of the proposed project, none of which are intercepted.

There are no Public Drinking Water Supply and Source Protection Zones within 10km of the proposed project (GSI, 2023). The closest Public Drinking Water Supply or Source Protection Zone is the Group Project Preliminary Source Protection Area for Brockagh Lisduff located ca. 14km southeast of the proposed project (GSI, 2023). Taking account of the distance of this public water supply there is no residual risk to regional potable supplies.

The proposed project is underlain entirely by a regionally important bedrock aquifer which is karstified (GIS, 2023). Groundwater vulnerability beneath the proposed project has been classified by the GSI (2023) predominantly as 'High' and 'Extreme' with portions of 'Rock at or near Surface or Karst' intercepted.

Geology

The proposed project is predominantly underlain by till derived from limestones, with portions of karstified bedrock outcrop or subcrop also crossed.

There are numerous karst features reported by GSI (2023) within 1km of the proposed project including a borehole, springs, a swallow hole, enclosed depressions and a turlough. The closest karst feature is a swallow hole located ca. 0.45km east of Ballybane Road. Given the nature of the general area and proximity of the of karst features in the general area there is a strong likelihood that unidentified karst features may be beneath the proposed project or within its immediate vicinity. The presence of such karst features indicate that groundwater and surface water interactions are likely to exist and are therefore both vulnerable to contamination. No recorded landslides, landslide susceptibility or historic mines have been reported within the vicinity of the proposed project (GSI, 2023).

Flooding

The OPW flood maps shows that the vicinity of the proposed project is not subject to flooding. No historic flooding events are recorded on the proposed project (OPW, 2023). The closest reoccurring flood event is located ca. 1.4km north of the proposed project which is reportedly due to low lying land. The risk of flooding associated with the current receiving environment is therefore low. The nature, along with the location of the proposed project, is unlikely to give rise to any potential flood risk. No flooding or storm water management issues related to the proposed site have been identified as warranting further investigation.

Biodiversity

Merlin Park Woodlands covers a large area ca. 500m southeast of the project site and this park contains a wide range of habitats including native oak-ask-hazel woodland, mixed broadleaf woodland, conifer woodland, limestone pavement, wet grassland, and scrub. Lesser Horseshoe bats (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*) have been recorded within Merlin Park. The proposed project site is remote from Merlin Park Woodlands and no impacts are anticipated on the habitats and species of this woodland area.

A number of bird species which have been designated for protection under the Wildlife Acts and European Birds Directive have been identified within the vicinity of the proposed route from the National Biodiversity Data Centre Maps (<https://maps.biodiversityireland.ie/>), including Hen Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), Northern Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*), Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*), Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*), Common Redshank (*Tringa totanus*), Eurasian Curlew (*Numenius arquata*), and Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*) amongst others.

A number of protected mammal species including the Badger (*Meles meles*), Eurasian Red Squirrel (*Sciurus vulgaris*), Lesser Horseshoe Bat (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*) and Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) were also recorded by the NBDC within close vicinity of the proposed project. The proposed project is aligned predominantly along the urban roadways with a minor portion within Atlantic Technological University lands and as such impacts on protected species, or on habitats accommodating protected species, are not anticipated.

According to National Biodiversity Data Centre 2023, floral invasive species Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) has been recorded at Ballyloughane in 2018 and *Fallopia japonica x sachalinensis* = *F. x bohemica*

was reported in 2022 within ca. 1km of the proposed project. The proposed project site was surveyed for invasive plant species listed on the third schedule of the EC (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 S.I. No. 477/2011. Species surveyed for included Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) and associated hybrids, Giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*), Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*), Three cornered garlic (*Allium triquetrum*) – non-exhaustive list. No evidence of third schedule invasive plant species were recorded within the extents of the project site.

Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

The proposed development is located within an area which has numerous National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) and Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) features within the surrounding area including Merlin Park House and Merlin Park Castle. There are in excess of 10 NIAH and RMP features within 1km of the proposed project with the following being the closest (NMS, 2023);

- Ringfort-unclassified (GA082-010----) is located ca. 85m west of the proposed project. The Zone of Notification extends beyond this feature but is not crossed by the proposed project. NMS describes this ringfort as:
'Formerly in flat pastureland, now incorporated into a housing estate at Mervue in NE suburbs of Galway city. Subcircular rath (NW-SE 51.5m) in fair condition, defined by two earthen banks and an intervening fosse, best preserved from SE to NW. No visible trace survives of the fosse and outer bank from NW to NE. A field bank radiates from the ringfort at WNW. There is a souterrain in the interior.'
- Souterrain (GA082-010001-) is located within the above ringfort and is described by NMS as:
'Within a rath (GA082-010----). Rynne (1990) records that it 'consisted of a passage running roughly north-south with a short crawl into a fairly long gallery running eastwards from about halfway along its length'. No visible surface trace survives.'

The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed project are evaluated further within Section 3.3.2 of this report ('Location of proposed development - The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development') as required under Schedule 7 of the relevant regulations.

3.2.2. Description of Aspects of the Environment Likely to be Significantly affected by the Proposed Development (Schedule 7A (2)).

The proposed project does not lie within any European designated sites, nature reserves or existing natural heritage areas (detailed in Section 3.3.1 of this report). There are 10no. European sites within 15km of the site. It is not anticipated that there will be a significant impact on these areas.

The proposed project will be predominantly within the existing road corridor with the exception of a small section of land within the Atlantic Technological University site. As outlined previously in Section 3.2.1, the closest archaeological features are ca. 85m from the proposed project. Therefore, it is anticipated that it is unlikely that there will be a significant impact on archaeological or cultural heritage features.

Additionally, it will be the responsibility of the Contractor to determine a suitable location for the site compound within the proposed development area, but away from any identified environmental sensitive receptors so as to avoid potential impacts to the environment and the general public. The exact location will be subject to a review of all potential environmental receptors by the Contractor, once appointed, which will be documented within the Contractors Detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). The final proposed site compound location will be subject to Client approval.

The only other relevant aspects of the environment (including human health), which could potentially be significantly affected by the proposed project are receiving groundwater environment, surface water environment, air quality environment, the receiving noise and vibration environment, and the receiving traffic environment, during the construction phase.

The works will mainly involve excavations to an anticipated maximum depth of 0.5m bgl along the existing road networks, the exact construction depth for the footpath and cycle track pavements is subject to the outcome of ground investigations. GSI (2023) have reported a 'High' and 'Extreme' groundwater vulnerability beneath the proposed project with portions of 'Rock at or near Surface or Karst' crossed also. These vulnerability classifications indicate that the groundwater beneath the vicinity of the proposed project may be vulnerable to contamination.

Galway Bay Complex SAC/pNHA and Inner Galway Bay SPA are within the same groundwater body as the proposed project site. The excavations associated with the construction of the cycleway will be relatively shallow (ca. <500mm) and therefore no significant impacts on groundwater are likely. As such there are no indirect impacts through hydrogeological pathways anticipated, either during the construction or operation of the cycleway routes, on designated conservation areas within Galway Bay.

There are no surface water features crossed by the cycleway routes and as such there is no hydrological connectivity to any designated conservation areas from the proposed project site. Given the lack of connectivity, significant impacts upon designated conservation areas through surface water features are precluded.

The proposed project lies within an urban area and there are sensitive receptors adjacent to the project. Dust may be generated during the construction phase. Construction will require the use of machinery such as dump trucks, loading shovels etc. The presence of such machines may result in a temporary increase in noise and dust. The air quality at the proposed development is 'good' (EPA, 2023). However, management of dust will be in line with relevant best practice measures such as those set out in 'Guidelines for the Treatment of Air Quality During the Planning and Construction of National Road Projects' (NRA, 2011). Due to the nature and scale of the project it is anticipated that the construction works, and not have a significant impact on air quality. It is anticipated that the operational phase will likely have a positive impact on air quality.

Noise levels will not exceed the indicative levels of acceptability for construction noise in an urban environment as set out in the NRA guidance 'Good Practice Guidance for the Treatment of Noise during the Planning of National Road Projects' (NRA, 2014). It is anticipated that the works will be scheduled during day-time hours. The Contractor will also be obliged to prepare a project specific CEMP prior to commencement of the proposed development, which will include specific control measures in accordance with standard industry best practice to be implemented to fully address any potential air quality / dust emissions, noise / vibration nuisance, and onsite noise / vibration monitoring should this be necessary. Construction contractors will be required to comply with the requirements of the European Communities (Construction Plant and Equipment) (Permissible Noise Levels) Regulations, 1988 as amended in 1990 and 1996 (S.I. No. 320 of 1988, S.I. No. 297 of 1990 and S.I. No. 359 of 1996), and the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Control of Noise at Work) Regulations, 2006 (S.I. No. 371 of 2006). Due to the nature and scale of the project it is anticipated that the construction works, and operation of the proposed development will not have a significant impact on noise.

Due to the scale and nature of the project it is anticipated that there may be impacts on traffic volumes during the construction phase of the project. The roadworks will be carried out on a phased basis. A traffic light system will be maintained through the works area to ensure that traffic is controlled and continues to flow through the works. It is considered that there will be no significant negative impact on traffic during the construction and operational phase of the project.

3.2.3. A Description of Any Likely Significant Effects (To the Extent of The Information Available on Such Effects) of The Proposed Development on The Environment (Schedule 7A(3)).

The Expected Residues and Emissions and the Production of Waste where relevant (Schedule 7A (3)(a)).

The proposed project may give rise to air, noise, water emissions and waste. However, the proposed project will be designed in order to minimise any potential impacts as a result of these emissions during the operational phase. Standard mitigation measures will be implemented by the Contractor to address potential air and noise emissions during the construction phase. The Contractor will ensure that onsite storm water management during the construction phase is carried out in accordance with relevant best practice measures as set out in Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA) guidance 'C532 - Control of Water Pollution from Construction Sites'.

During the construction phase the following waste streams will be generated: construction and demolition (C&D) waste, mixed municipal waste (MMW), recyclables such as plastic wrapping, wooden pallets, paper and/or waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE). All waste generated will be disposed of by the Contractor in accordance with all relevant waste management legislation. The Contractor will be responsible for segregating each waste type as per the relevant List of Waste (LoW) (also referred to European Waste Catalogue (EWC) code). All waste materials must be removed offsite by a suitably permitted waste haulage contractor who holds a current valid waste collection permit issued by the National Waste Collection Permit Office (NWCPO).

Waste Policy 9.8 within the Galway City Development Plan (2023-2029) will be implemented during the construction of the routes (relevant policies included):

“Support the objectives and targets of the Connacht Ulster Regional Waste Plan 2015-2021 relating to Galway City and any subsequent Waste Plans

Promote the implementation of the City Council Litter Management Plan and other litter management initiatives in order to minimise and control the extent of litter pollution in the city”

The Contractor will be obliged to prepare a project specific Construction and Demolition (C&D) Waste Management Plan (WMP) prior to commencement of the proposed project in accordance with the relevant guidelines ‘*Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects*’ prepared by the DoEHLG.

The operational phase of the project should be accompanied by an increase in bicycle traffic and an associated reduction in vehicular traffic. The proposed project is not likely to have a significant environmental effect with regard to expected residues and emissions and the production of waste.

The Use of Any Natural Resources in particular soil, land, water, and biodiversity (Schedule 7A (3)(b)).

During the construction of the proposed project natural resources in the area will be required to facilitate the provision of this project.

To accommodate the provision of the necessary pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure, the proposed scheme may require the removal of a number of trees at various locations along the scheme. A targeted tree survey has been undertaken based on the preliminary design and the expert advice of an arboriculturist has been used to determine the value, age, and condition of all trees along the proposed route and any mitigation required where affected. Replacement trees will be proposed at adjacent locations, where possible.

Soil will be excavated to an anticipated maximum depth of ca. 0.5m bgl to facilitate the foundation for the cycleway and the ducting for the signalling associated with the project. Soils may be reused onsite where suitable. Engineering grade fill material (hardcore or similar) will be imported to the site during the proposed works. The contractor shall employ soil stabilisation measures to minimise the quantity of remaining material being disposed offsite. All soil requiring disposal offsite will require testing in accordance with the EPA “Determining if Waste is Hazardous” criteria, (EPA, 2018), and waste acceptance criteria (WAC) for the receiving facilities before being moved offsite to an appropriate, licenced, permitted, or registered facility. The use of other natural resources with respect to soils and land will not be required arising from the proposed development.

Therefore, based on the environmental setting, and taking account of the nature, scale, and location of the proposed development other than standard construction materials, the proposed development (during both construction and operational phases) will not have a significant impact on natural resources.

3.2.4. The Compilation of The Information at Paragraphs 1 To 3 Shall Take into Account, where Relevant, the Criteria set out in Schedule 7 (Schedule 7A(4)).

All relevant criteria set out in Schedule 7 of the Regulations is presented in Section 3.2 (*Criteria for Determining Whether Development Listed in Part 2 of Schedule 5 Should be subject to an EIA*) of this screening report.

During the preparation of Sections 3.3.1 to 3.3.3 (i.e. Schedule 7A (1) to (3)) all pertinent Schedule 7 information has been taken account of as required, with specific details presented in the following section of this report (Section 3.4).

3.3 Criteria for Determining Whether Development Listed in Part 2 of Schedule 5 Should be subject to an EIA

3.3.1 Characteristics of proposed development (Schedule 7(1))

The size and design of the whole of the proposed development (Schedule 7(1)(a))

Refer to Section 3.2.1 under 'A description of the Physical Characteristics of the Whole Proposed Development and Where Relevant of Demolition Works (Schedule 7A (1) (a))'.

Cumulation with other existing development and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment (Schedule 7(1) (b))

Committed Development

A search of Galway City Planning records has been undertaken for the applications submitted within the past 5 years. This search identified over 100no. developments, given the urban location of the proposed project. The majority of these developments have already been constructed or are of small scale in nature (i.e. extension works, or property retention works) or are considered to be a reasonable distance from the proposed works) and have therefore not been considered further. 8no. relevant developments have been further evaluated with respect to cumulative impacts with the proposed project, as follows;

- **Galway Mayo Institute of Technology. Extension of Duration for the development of 2-storey multi-functional sports building, (1876). Granted 13/3/2018**

This development is located ca. 250m west of the proposed project. This planning permission is an extension of duration from a previous planning application for the same development. There may be a cumulative impact on traffic, dust and noise; however due to the nature and scale of the project it is not anticipated that these impacts will be significant. The contractor for the proposed project will provide a traffic management plan for the works to ensure minimal impact on traffic. The Contractor will also be obliged to prepare a project specific CEMP prior to commencement of the proposed project, which will include specific control measures in accordance with standard industry best practice to be implemented to fully address any potential air quality / dust emissions, noise / vibration nuisance, and onsite noise / vibration monitoring should this be necessary. No significant cumulative impacts are anticipated.

- **Galway Mayo Institute of Technology. Construction of a new stem building (19299). Granted 20/12/2019**

This development will be constructed west of the proposed project and accessed off Ballybane Road . There may be a cumulative impact on traffic, dust and noise; however due to the nature and scale of the project it is not anticipated that these impacts will be significant. The contractor for the proposed project will provide a traffic management plan f road to ensure minimal impact on traffic. The Contractor will also be obliged to prepare a project specific CEMP prior to commencement of the proposed project, which will include specific control measures in accordance with standard industry best practice to be implemented to fully address any potential air quality / dust emissions, noise / vibration nuisance, and onsite noise / vibration monitoring should this be necessary. No significant cumulative impacts are anticipated.

- **Gaelscoil Dara. Planning Permission for two storey handball pen and associated works (2014). Granted 29/07/2020.**

This development will be located within the grounds of the existing school development ca. 250m from the proposed project. Given the location and scale of the proposed project it is not anticipated to act in combination with this development to create significant environmental impacts. Additionally a CEMP and Traffic Management Plan will be implemented during the construction works of the proposed project.

- **Permission for retention of and change of use to existing enterprise building and associated site works (19370). Granted 26/3/2020.**

This development is located off, and accessed from Castlepark Road along which the proposed project will be aligned. There may be a cumulative impact on traffic, dust and noise; however due to the nature and scale of the project it is not anticipated that these impacts will be significant. The contractor for the proposed project will provide a traffic management plan for the works to ensure minimal impact on traffic. The Contractor will also be obliged to prepare a project specific CEMP prior to commencement of the proposed project, which will include specific control measures in accordance with standard industry best practice to be implemented to fully address any potential air quality / dust emissions, noise / vibration

nuisance, and onsite noise / vibration monitoring should this be necessary. No significant cumulative impacts are anticipated.

- **Permission for a new twelve bay 110kV Gas Insulated Switchgear Building (1810). Granted 15/8/2018.**

This development is located ca. 100m north of the proposed project. However, given the scale of the proposed project it is not anticipated to act in combination with this development to create significant environmental impacts. Additionally, a CEMP and Traffic Management Plan will be implemented during the construction works of the proposed project.

- **Permission for the modification to an existing building to include for construction of new floor area at first floor level and construction of a single story extension with associated works. Granted 16/12/2019 (19309 and 19308).**

These developments are located within the Ballybrit Business Park ca. 300m north of the proposed project. However, given the scale of the proposed project it is not anticipated to act in combination with this development to create significant environmental impacts. Additionally, a CEMP and Traffic Management Plan will be implemented during the construction works of the proposed project.

- **Permission for construction of Ballyban Social Housing Scheme comprising 58no. residential units and associated site works (N/A). Granted 26/3/2020.**

This development is located to the south of the proposed scheme and will be accessed Rocklands Avenue which is off Monivea Road (West). This development is currently under construction and construction is anticipated to be completed prior to the construction of the proposed development.

- **Permission for extension of duration permission 16/332 which consists of: demolition of 4243 sqm of disused glasshouses, demolition of a habitable house (266sqm), four disused sheds (714.5sqm), a glasshouse and a habitable house. Permission for the construction of 52no. houses, 80no. parking spaces, commercial building of 2786sqm and 52no. parking spaces. Granted 7/9/2022.**

This development is located west of the proposed scheme and will be accessed by Monivea Road. Given the scale and location of the proposed project, it is not anticipated to act in combination with this development to create significant environmental impacts. Additionally, a CEMP and Traffic Management Plan will be implemented during the construction works of the proposed project.

3.3.1.1 The nature of any associated demolition works (Schedule 7(1)(c))

Refer to Section 3.2.1 under 'A description of the Physical Characteristics of the Whole Proposed Development and Where Relevant of Demolition Works (Schedule 7A (1) (a))'. No demolition works are proposed as part of the proposed development.

3.3.1.2 The use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity (Schedule 7(1)(d))

Refer to Section 3.2.3 under 'The Use of Any Natural Resources in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity (Schedule 7A (3)(b))'. The proposed development is not likely to have a significant environmental effect with regard to the production of waste.

3.3.1.3 The production of waste (Schedule 7(1)(e))

Refer to Section 3.2.3 under 'The Expected Residues and Emissions and the Production of Waste where relevant (Schedule 7A (3)(a))'. All waste will be removed to an appropriately licenced/ permitted waste disposal/ recovery facility.

3.3.1.4 Pollution and nuisances (Schedule 7(1)(f))

Refer to Section 3.2.2 under 'Description of Aspects of the Environment Likely to be Significantly affected by the Proposed Development (Schedule 7A (2))'. There will be no likely impacts on the Galway Bay Complex SAC/pNHA and Inner Galway Bay SPA due to the limited nature of works and as all works will be completed on the existing road networks and work sites are remote from and unconnected to any designated conservation area. No significant impacts from pollution or nuisances are anticipated from the proposed project.

3.3.1.5 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 (Schedule 7(1)(g))

There are 2no. Seveso (COMAH) establishments within 15km of the proposed development. Colas Bitumen Emulsion (West) Ltd in Oranmore and Circle K Galway Terminal at Galway Harbour, both Upper Tier Seveso sites. Colas Bitumen Emulsion (West) Ltd is located ca. 3.20km east of route 2 and Circle K Galway Terminal is located ca. 1.60km west from the proposed project. Due to the distance of Colas Bitumen Emulsion (West) Ltd

and Circle K Galway Terminal from the proposed project, the proposed project is not located in a high-risk area with respect to major accidents/ disasters and is outside the consultation distance as per Table 2 of the Schedule 8 of the Planning and Development Regulation, 2001 (S.I. No. 600/2001). Due to the nature and scale of the proposed project, along with the control procedures to be implemented, it is not anticipated that there will be a significant impact on this Seveso site.

There is no potential for flooding along the proposed project. There are no identified watercourses or low-lying lands within the vicinity of the proposed project. Refer to 3.3.1 under '*A Description of the Location of the Proposed Development, with Particular Regard to the Environmental Sensitivity of Geographical Areas Likely to be Affected (Schedule 7A(1)(b)).*'

3.3.1.6 The risks to human health (for example, due to water contamination or air (Schedule 7(1)(h) pollution)

Dust may be generated during the construction phase. However, management of dust will be in line with best practice such as that set out in 'Guidelines for the Treatment of Air Quality During the Planning and Construction of National Road Projects' (NRA, 2011).

Noise levels, during the construction phase, will not exceed the indicative levels of acceptability for construction noise in an urban environment as set out in the NRA guidance '*Good Practice Guidance for the Treatment of Noise during the Planning of National Road Projects*' (NRA, 2014). The Contractor will be required to comply with the requirements of the European Communities (Construction Plant and Equipment) (Permissible Noise Levels) Regulations, 1988 as amended in 1990 and 1996 (S.I. No. 320 of 1988, S.I. No. 297 of 1990 and S.I. No. 359 of 1996), and the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Control of Noise at Work) Regulations, 2006 (S.I. No. 371 of 2006). No significant impact on human health due to noise pollution is anticipated to occur during the operational phase of the project.

There are no reported public drinking water supplies within a 2km radius of the proposed project (GSI, 2023). Due to the nature and scale of the project it is not anticipated to have a significant impact on groundwater.

Given the location, nature and scale of the proposed development, the overall risk to human health is low.

3.3.2 Location of proposed development - The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the proposed development (Schedule 7(2))

The existing and approved land use (Schedule 7(2)(a))

The pedestrian and cycleway will be constructed within the urban setting in the city of Galway along the existing Ballybane Road and Castlepark Road and verges which are maintained by Galway City Council with a minor portion within Atlantic Technological University lands. The proposed project and surrounding area are primarily dominated by land use zoned as 'residential', 'recreational and amenity', 'enterprise, light industry and commercial', 'community, cultural and institutional' and 'enterprise, industrial and related'.

The location of the proposed project has been detailed previously in Section 3.3.1 under Schedule 7A (1)(a).

The relative abundance, availability, quality, and regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water, and biodiversity) in the area and its underground (Schedule 7(2)(b))

Refer to Section 3.2.3 under *The Use of Any Natural Resources in particular soil, land, water, and biodiversity (Schedule 7A (3)(b)).*

During the construction of the proposed project natural resources in the area will be required to facilitate the provision of this project. To accommodate the provision of the necessary pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure, the proposed scheme requires the removal of a number of trees at various locations along the scheme. A targeted tree survey will be undertaken based on the preliminary design and the expert advice of an arboriculturist has been used to determine the value, age and condition of all trees along the proposed route and any mitigation required where affected. Replacement trees will be proposed at adjacent locations, where possible. The proposed development is not likely to have a significant environmental effect with regard to the use of any natural resources.

The absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas (Schedule 7(2)(c)):

(i) **Wetlands, riparian areas, river mouths**

There are 2no. wetland habitats located within 2km of the proposed project. Doughiska Turlough (c. 1.6km east) and Brockagh Ponds (c.1km north east), both of which have been classified by Wetlands Surveys Ireland (2023) as artificial ponds. These wetland habitats are vulnerable to changes in hydrology, hydrogeology and water quality. There are no identified connections from the proposed project to either of these sites (as they are not located within the immediate vicinity of the proposed project and they are not hydrologically linked via. surface water features). Therefore, there are no negative impacts to these wetland sites anticipated as a result of the proposed project.

(ii) **Coastal zones and the marine environment**

The proposed project is located ca.1km from Galway Bay / Atlantic coast. There is no hydrological connection to the proposed project and coastal environments.

Due to the nature and scale of the proposed project it is not anticipated that it will have a significant impact on the coastal zone or marine environment.

(iii) **Mountain and forest areas**

There are no mountain or forested areas within 2km of the proposed development. Therefore, there are no anticipated negative impacts.

There is a mixed broadleaf, conifer and mature woodland within Merlin Park which surrounds the Merlin Park University Hospital and a small broadleaf woodland just south of the Old Dublin Road. The proposed project will predominantly be constructed along existing road networks and there will be no significant impact on these woodlands during the operation and construction phases of the proposed project.

(iv) **Nature reserves and parks**

There are no nature reserves located within 15km of the proposed project.

(v) **Areas classified or protected under legislation, including Natura 2000 areas designated pursuant to the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive**

There are 10no. European designated sites within 15km of the proposed project; 6no. SACs and 4no. SPAs.

No hydrological links have been established between the proposed project and any of these designated conservation sites. The proposed project will not impact any designated conservation sites through surface pathways given the lack on connectivity.

The excavations associated with the construction of the cycleway will be relatively shallow (ca. <500mm) and therefore no significant impacts on groundwater are likely. As such there are no indirect impacts through hydrogeological pathways anticipated, either during the construction or operation of the cycleway routes, on any internationally or nationally designated conservation sites.

No hydrological links have been established between the proposed project and any of these designated sites. The proposed project is hydrogeologically linked to the Galway Bay Complex SAC and Inner Galway Bay SPA via the Clarinbridge groundwater body (EPA Code: IE_WE_G_0008) as the routes are located within the same groundwater body.

(vi) **Areas in which there has already been a failure to meet the environmental quality standards laid down in legislation of the European Union and relevant to the project, or in which it is considered that there is such a failure.**

The project lies within the Clarinbridge groundwater body (GWB) (EPA Code IE_WE_G_0008). This GWB has 'good' ecological status for the period of 2016-2021 (EPA, 2023), with its risk of failing to achieve good ecological status in accordance with the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) under 'review'. Due to the nature and scale of the works the proposed development is not anticipated to significantly impact groundwater quality.

The Terryland River (EPA Code: E_WE_30T010500) flows in a south westerly direction to the west of the proposed project and joins the Corrib River (EPA Code: IE_WE_30C020600) before

discharging to Corrib Estuary (EPA Code: IE_WE_170_0700) and subsequently into the Galway Bay (Inner Galway Bay North) (EPA Code: IE_WE_170_0000) (EPA, 2023). The Terryland River has been assigned 'moderate' ecological status under the WFD for the period of 2016-2021; and is 'at risk' of failing to meet the relevant WFD objectives. The Corrib River has been assigned 'good' ecological status under the WFD and is 'not at risk' of failing to meet the relevant WFD objectives. Corrib Estuary has been assigned 'moderate' ecological status under the WFD for the period of 2016-2021 and is 'not at risk' of failing to meet the relevant WFD objectives. Galway Bay (Inner Galway Bay North) has been assigned 'good' ecological status under the WFD for the period of 2016-2021 and is 'not at risk' of failing to meet the relevant WFD objectives. It is considered that due to the location, nature, and scale of the proposed project and that the construction will be occurring primarily along the existing road networks, the works will not have a significant impact on baseline surface water quality.

Air quality in the area is reported as 'good' (EPA, 2023). Dust may be generated during the construction phase which has the potential to impact on human health. However, management of dust will be in line with best practice such as that set out in 'Guidelines for the Treatment of Air Quality During the Planning and Construction of National Road Projects' (NRA, 2011). Due to the nature and scale of the project it is anticipated that there will be no significant impact on air quality.

It is anticipated that during construction there may be an increase in noise volumes. The Contractor will be required to prepare a CEMP and implement standard construction control measures to minimise noise levels associated with construction works. Noise levels shall not exceed the indicative levels of acceptability for construction noise in a rural environment as set out in the TII guidance 'Good Practice Guidance for the Treatment of Noise during the Planning of National Road Projects' (TII, 2014).

It is considered that due to the nature and scale of the works there will be no significant impact on baseline air and water quality from the proposed development.

(vii) Densely populated areas

The proposed development will be constructed within the city of Galway which is a densely populated area. The development will be constructed within the existing Ballybane and Castlepark roads. Galway city has a population of 79,934 (CSO, 2016). The Contractor will be required to prepare a CEMP and implement standard construction control measures to minimise noise level dust levels and interaction with the general population. It is anticipated that there will be no significant negative impact on densely populated areas during construction. The creation of the cycleway will reduce the volume of vehicular traffic using the route will improve air quality and noise levels and provide additional social and recreational infrastructure. It is considered therefore that the proposed development will potentially have a positive impact on this densely populated area during the operational phase.

(viii) Landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance

Refer to 3.3.2 under 'A Description of the Location of the Proposed Development, with Particular Regard to the Environmental Sensitivity of Geographical Areas Likely to be Affected (Schedule 7A(1)(b)).'

The proposed project will be constructed predominantly within the footprint of the existing Ballybane and Castlepark roads.

The proposed project will adhere to and comply with this policy, as the pedestrian and cycleway will attract people to the viewing areas. It is considered that due to the nature and scale of the works there will be no significant impact on landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance from the proposed development.

3.3.3 Types and characteristics of potential impacts (Schedule 7(3))

The likely significant effects on the environment of the proposed development have been evaluated taking into account the following specific criteria.

The magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example, geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected) (Schedule 7(3)(a))

The spatial extent of potential impacts is limited to the localised footprint of the proposed project (refer to Figure 1-1). Based on the location, current site setting, and the nature of the proposed development, any potential impacts (during the installation and operational phases) are not likely to be significant in magnitude.

The nature of the impact (Schedule 7(3)(b))

There will be no significant impact on the receiving environment arising from the proposed project (during the construction or operational phases).

The transboundary nature of the impact (Schedule 7(3)(c))

There is no potential for transboundary impacts as a result of the proposed project (during the construction or operational phases).

The intensity and complexity of the impact (Schedule 7(3)(d))

There will be no significant impact on the receiving environment arising from the proposed project (during the construction or operational phases).

The probability of the impact (Schedule 7(3)(e))

The probability of impacts on the receiving environment is low given the following considerations:

- The receiving environment is not considered to be at risk of significant impact due to the nature and scale of the proposed project;
- The Contractor will be obliged to implement standard best practice procedures prior to commencement of the proposed development including all environmental control measures for the onsite management of any pollution / nuisance issues which could arise during the construction phase; and,
- The Contractor will be obliged to prepare a project specific CEMP prior to commencement of the proposed development which will clearly set out all environmental control measures for the onsite management of any pollution / nuisance issues, which could arise during the construction phase.

The expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact (Schedule 7(3)(f))

The probability of impacts on the receiving environment is considered to be low, as previously outlined. Therefore, there shall be no requirement for the reversibility of the impacts caused by this development (during the construction or operational phases).

The cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A)(b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment (Schedule 7(3)(g))

As previously detailed no significant cumulative impacts associated with the project (during the construction or operational phases) have been identified, arising from other existing and/or approved projects. Refer to Section 3.3.1 under '*Cumulation with other existing development and/or development the subject of a consent for proposed development for the purposes of section 172(1A) (b) of the Act and/or development the subject of any development consent for the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive by or under any other enactment (Schedule 7(1) (b)).*

The possibility of effectively reducing the impact (Schedule 7(3)(h))

Significant effects on the receiving environment are not anticipated as a result of the provision of the proposed project (during the construction or operational phases). A project specific CEMP will be prepared by the appointed Contractor prior to the works commencing which will clearly set out all environmental control measures for the onsite management of any pollution / nuisance issues which could arise during the construction phase.

3.4 Potential for Significant Effects on the Receiving Environment

All relevant information as required under Schedule 7A has been provided on behalf of Galway City Council and is presented within Section 3.1 of this screening report. The potential for this project to pose a significant impact to the receiving environment has also been evaluated in accordance with criteria listed in the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001 and EIA Planning and Development Regulations 2018 (Schedule 7), as presented within Section 3.2 of this screening report.

Based on the information provided within Section 3.3.1-3.3.3 of this report, and summarised below, it is considered that due to the size, nature, and characteristics of the proposed development, no significant effects on the receiving environment are expected; hence the preparation of a sub-threshold EIAR is not required.

3.5 Screening Conclusion

This EIA screening report has been carried out in accordance with the Planning and Development Regulations as amended 2001- 2023 (which give effect to the provisions of EU Directive 2014/52/EU), and the Roads Acts 1993-2022. The report assessed the impact of the EIA screening for Ballybane Road & Castlepark Road Cycle Scheme, in conjunction with committed developments in the surrounding area.

Based on all available information, and taking account of the scale, nature, and location of the proposed development it is our opinion that the preparation of an EIAR is not a mandatory requirement (under Section 50 of the Roads Acts 1993-2021). The project is deemed a sub-threshold development; hence the potential for significant environmental effects arising as a result of the proposed project has been evaluated, in accordance with the requirements of Schedule 7A and Schedule 7 of the Planning and Development Acts 2001-2023.

Key findings are summarised as follows;

- Due to the limited nature of the works it is considered that there will be no significant cumulative impacts with other developments in the general area;
- Limited noise, vibration and dust emissions may be generated during construction; however, this is anticipated to be minimal in effect and will cause no significant impact;
- Soil and waste may be generated during construction; however, this is not anticipated to have significant effect;
- There will be no significant impact on biodiversity, groundwater, surface water or traffic; and,
- There will be no impact on recorded monuments or historic features;

In summary, no significant adverse impacts to the receiving environment will arise as a result of the proposed development.

Accordingly, we consider that the preparation of an EIAR is not required for the EIA screening for Ballybane Road & Castlepark Road Cycle Scheme.

4 References

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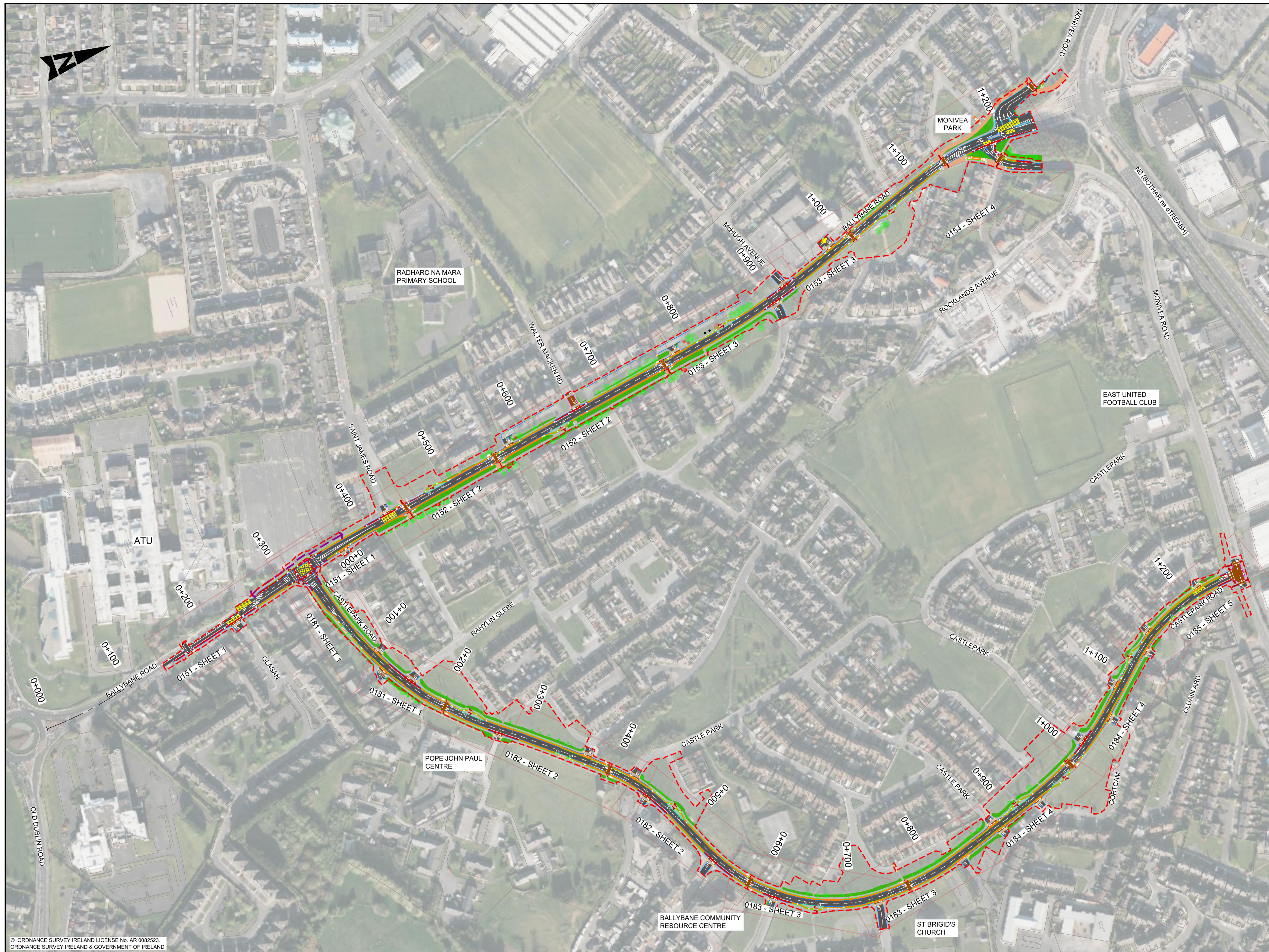
Appendices

Appendix A. Drawings

A1

DO NOT SCALE

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 4. ALL COORDINATES ARE IN METRES AND ARE TO IRISH TRANSVERSE MERCATOR
 5. DRAWINGS ARE TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SPECIFICATION

- LEGEND:**
- - - - - SITE BOUNDARY
 - EXISTING KERBLINE TO BE RETAINED
 - 25mm CONCRETE KERB
 - 60mm CONCRETE KERB
 - 60mm BEVELLED KERB
 - 75mm CONCRETE KERB
 - 100mm CONCRETE KERB
 - KASSEL KERB
 - FLUSH KERB
 - CARRIAGEWAY
 - PROPOSED FOOTPATH
 - PROPOSED SHARED SPACE
 - PROPOSED RAISED CYCLE TRACK / LANE
 - PROPOSED ON ROAD CYCLE LANE / AT GRADE CYCLE TRACK
 - PROPOSED RAISED TABLE / ENTRY TREATMENT
 - PROPOSED TACTILE PAVING (CONTROLLED)
 - PROPOSED TACTILE PAVING (UNCONTROLLED)
 - PROPOSED TACTILE PAVING (CORDUROY PAVING)
 - PROPOSED GRASS VERGE
 - EXISTING GRASS VERGE TO BE RETAINED
 - EXISTING SHRUB TO BE RETAINED
 - EXISTING FOOTWAY / CYCLEWAY
 - AREA OF LANDTAKE
 - PROPOSED CYCLE RAMP
 - PROPOSED BUS SHELTER
 - EXISTING TREES TO BE REMOVED
 - EXISTING TREES TO BE RETAINED
 - DELINEATOR POSTS
 - TRAFFIC SIGNAL POST
 - ↔ LANDTAKE REQUIRED TO FACILITATE WIDENING

- NOTES:**
1. DO NOT SCALE FROM DRAWING.
 2. PROPOSED CYCLE TRACKS, CYCLE LANES AND FOOTWAYS SHALL BE MIN. 2m WIDE UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE
 3. REFER TO LANDSCAPING PLANS FOR PROPOSED LANDSCAPING.

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Riailtas na hÉireann
 Government of Ireland
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 Project Ireland
 2040

NTA
 Udarás Náisiúnta Iompair
 National Transport Authority

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Client: GALWAY CITY COUNCIL

Project: BALLYBANE ROAD & CASTLEPARK ROAD CYCLE NETWORK

Title: BALLYBANE ROAD AND CASTLEPARK ROAD KEY PLAN

Original Scale	Design/Drawn	Checked	Authorised
1:2000 @ A1 1:4000 @ A3	XX	XX	XX
Date	Date	Date	Date
23.03.23	23.03.23	23.03.23	23.03.23
Status	Drawing Number		Rev
P8	5193732 / HTR / DR / 0003		-

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- LEGEND:**
- SITE BOUNDARY
 - EXISTING KERBLINE TO BE RETAINED
 - 25mm CONCRETE KERB
 - 60mm CONCRETE KERB
 - 60mm BEVELLED KERB
 - 75mm CONCRETE KERB
 - 100mm CONCRETE KERB
 - KASSEL KERB
 - FLUSH KERB
 - CARRIAGEWAY
 - PROPOSED FOOTPATH
 - PROPOSED SHARED SPACE
 - PROPOSED RAISED CYCLE TRACK / LANE
 - PROPOSED ON ROAD CYCLE LANE / AT GRADE CYCLE TRACK
 - PROPOSED RAISED TABLE / ENTRY TREATMENT
 - PROPOSED TACTILE PAVING (CONTROLLED)
 - PROPOSED TACTILE PAVING (UNCONTROLLED)
 - PROPOSED TACTILE PAVING (CORDUROY PAVING)
 - PROPOSED GRASS VERGE
 - EXISTING GRASS VERGE TO BE RETAINED
 - EXISTING SHRUB TO BE RETAINED
 - EXISTING FOOTWAY / CYCLEWAY
 - AREA OF LANDTAKE
 - PROPOSED CYCLE RAMP
 - PROPOSED BUS SHELTER
 - EXISTING TREES TO BE REMOVED
 - EXISTING TREES TO BE RETAINED
 - DELINEATOR POSTS
 - TRAFFIC SIGNAL POST
 - LANDTAKE REQUIRED TO FACILITATE WIDENING

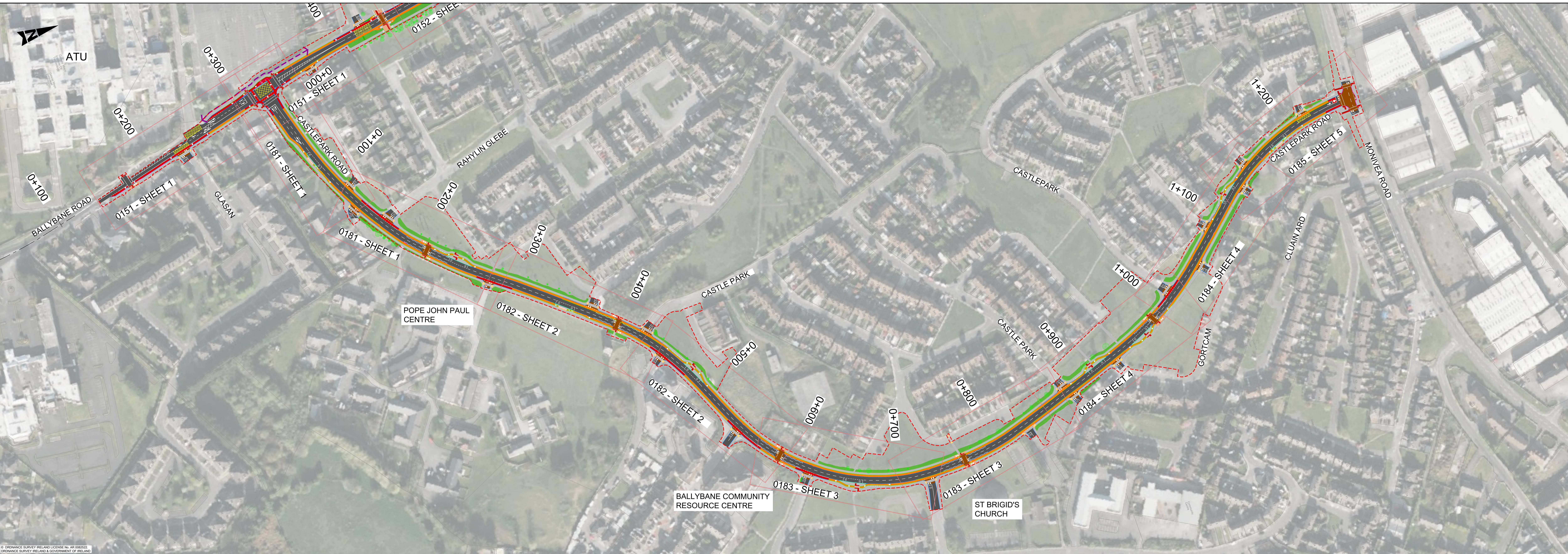
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			Project	BALLYBANE ROAD & CASTLEPARK ROAD CYCLE NETWORK
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Description By: [] Edit: [] Ck'd: [] Auth: []			Design/Drawn	XX 23.03.23
Rev: [] Description: []			Checked	XX 23.03.23
Status P8 5193732 / HTR / DR / 0004			Authorised	XX 23.03.23
Purpose FOR PART 8 SUBMISSION			Site	BALLYBANE ROAD KEY PLAN

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LEGEND:

- SITE BOUNDARY
- EXISTING KERBLINE TO BE RETAINED
- 25mm CONCRETE KERB
- 60mm CONCRETE KERB
- 60mm BEVELLED KERB
- 75mm CONCRETE KERB
- 100mm CONCRETE KERB
- KASSEL KERB
- FLUSH KERB
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- DELINATOR POSTS
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- LANDTAKE REQUIRED TO FACILITATE WIDENING

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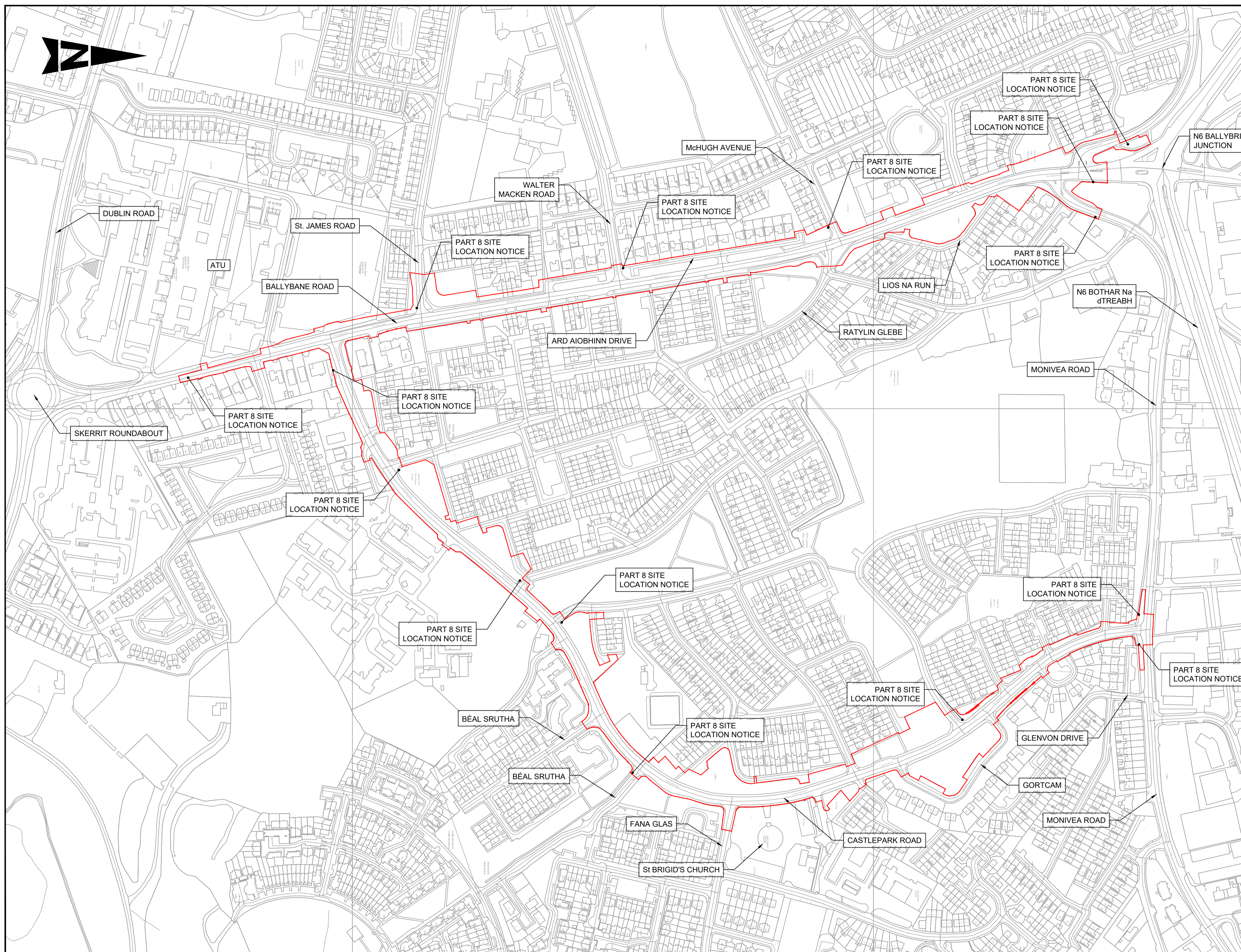
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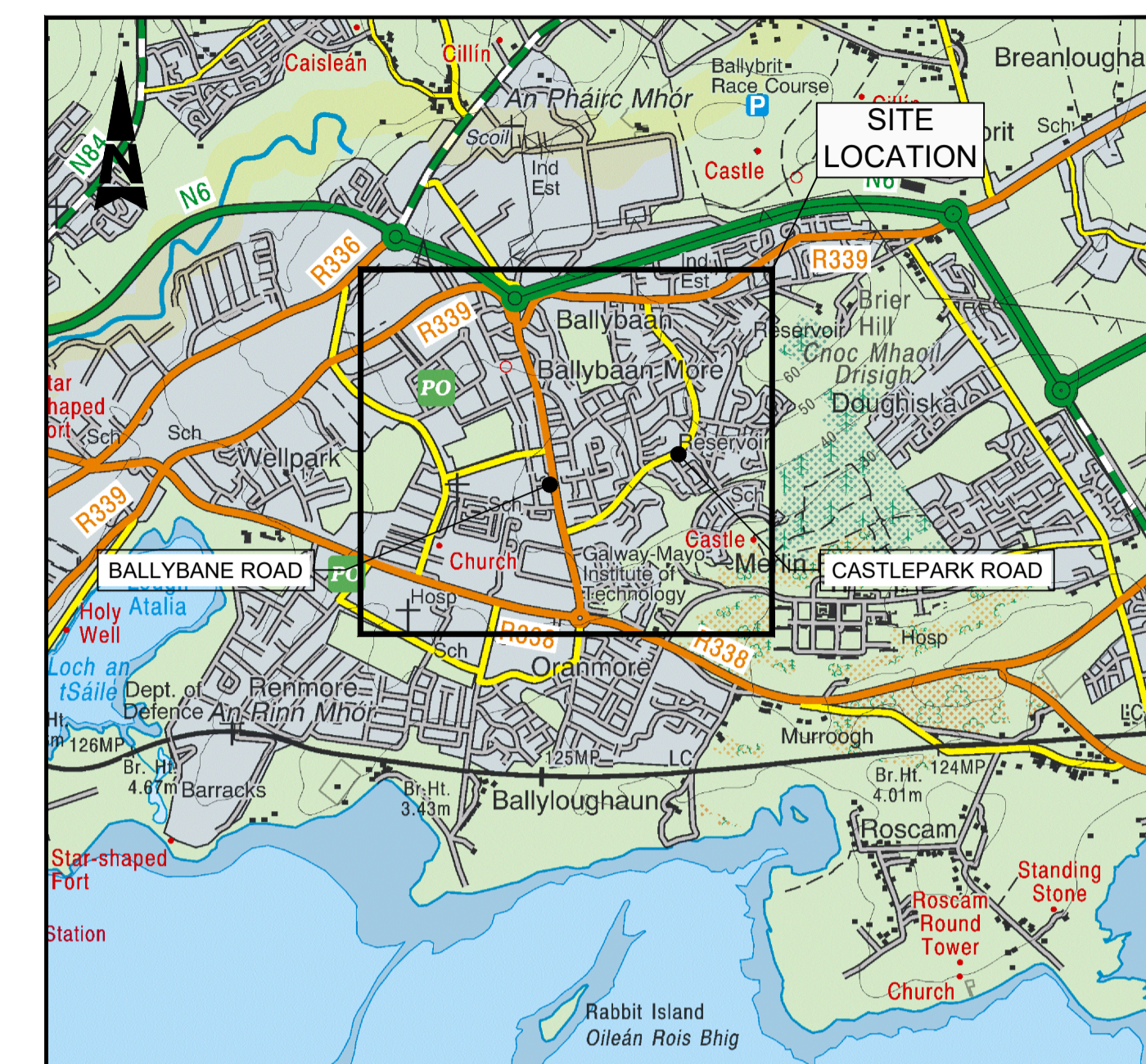
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DO NOT SCALE



SITE LOCATION MAP - BALLYBANE / CASTLEPARK ROAD - CYCLE NETWORK
Scale at A1 1:2500
Scale at A3 1:5000



**SITE MAP - BALLYBANE / CASTLEPARK ROAD
CYCLE NETWORK**
Scale at A1 1:25,000
Scale at A3 1:50,000

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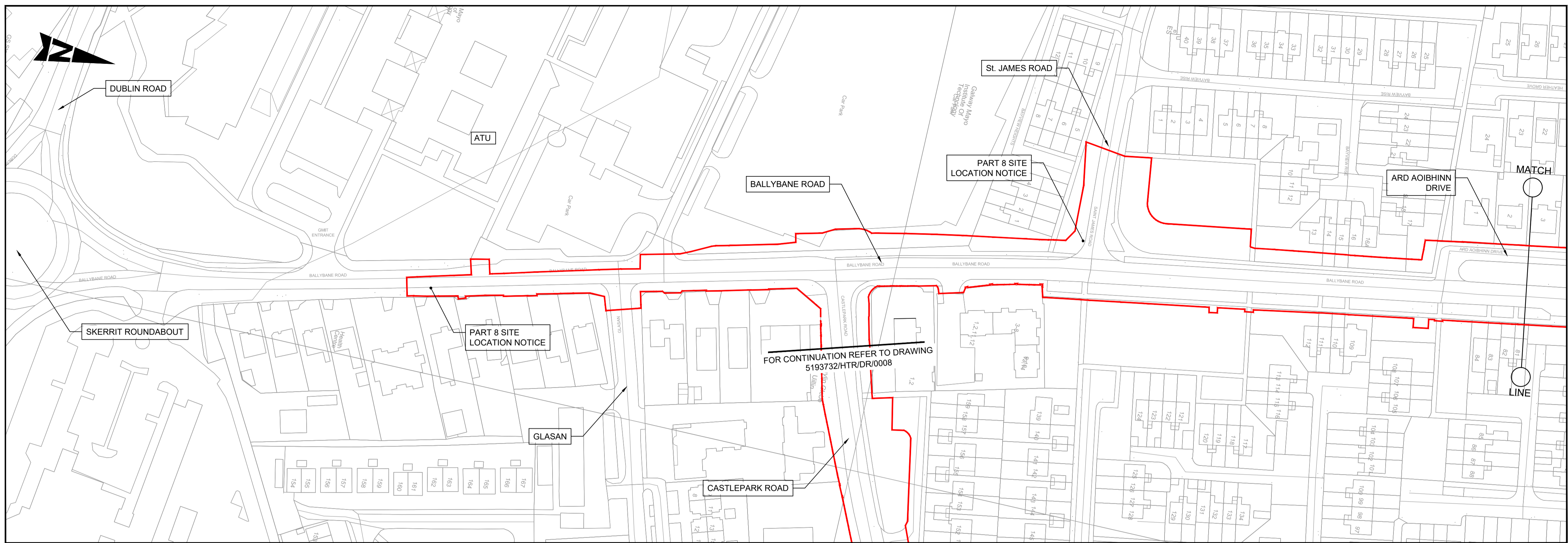
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Purpose	FOR PART 8 SUBMISSION		
Title	BALLYBANE / CASTLEPARK ROAD SITE CONTEXT AND SITE LOCATION MAP		
Client	GALWAY CITY COUNCIL		
Project	BALLYBANE ROAD & CASTLEPARK ROAD CYCLE NETWORK		

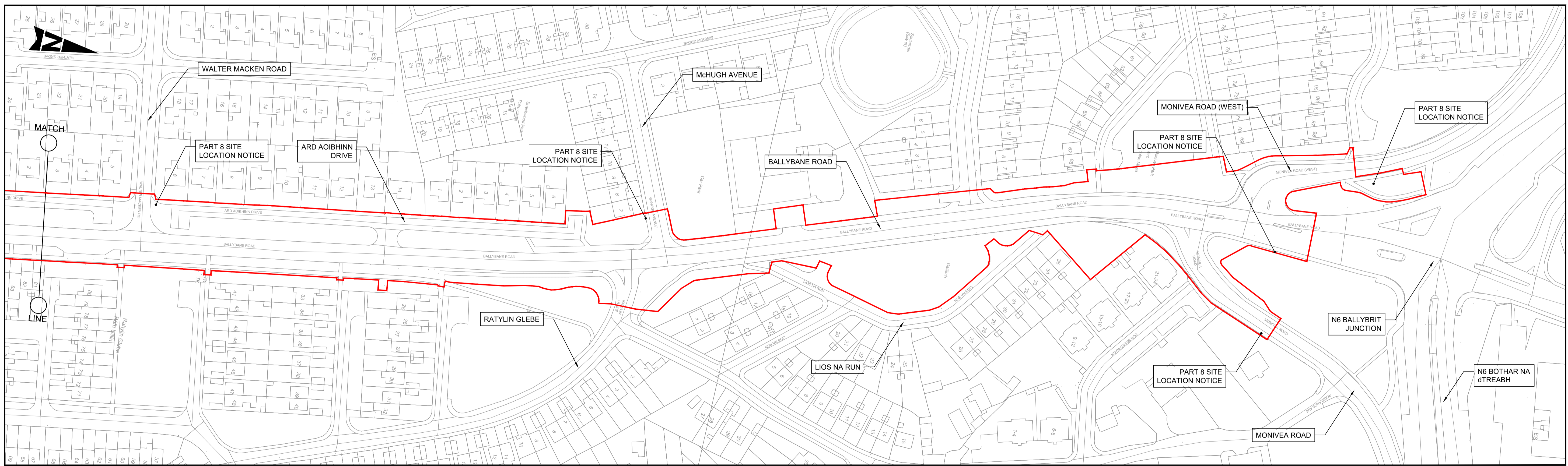
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Status	Drawing Number	Rev			
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SITE LOCATION MAP - BALLYBANE ROAD - CYCLE NETWORK

Scale at A1 1:1000
Scale at A3 1:2000

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Client	GALWAY CITY COUNCIL		
Project	BALLYBANE ROAD & CASTLEPARK ROAD CYCLE NETWORK		

Purpose				FOR PART 8 SUBMISSION			
Title				BALLYBANE ROAD SITE LOCATION MAP			
Original	Scale	Design/Drawn	Checked	Authorized			
AS SHOWN		XX	XX	XX			
Date	Date	Date	Date	Date			
23.03.23	23.03.23	23.03.23	23.03.23	23.03.23			
Status	Drawing Number	Rev					
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Rev	Description	By	Date	Chk'd	Auth
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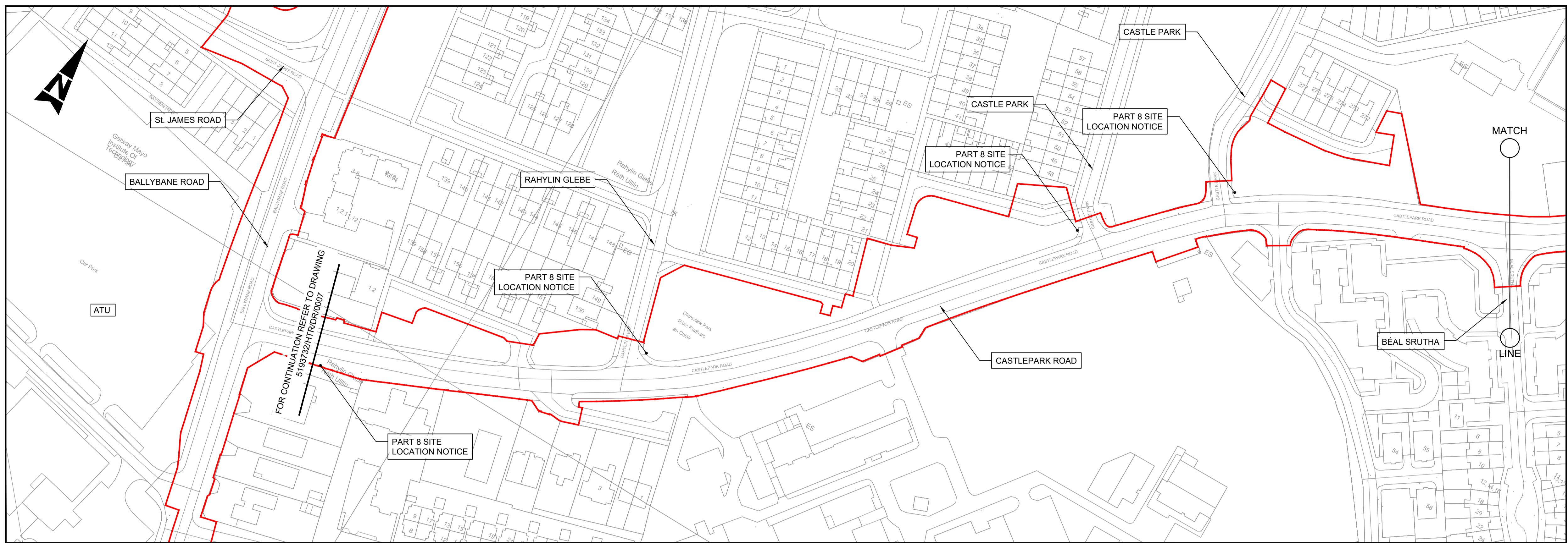
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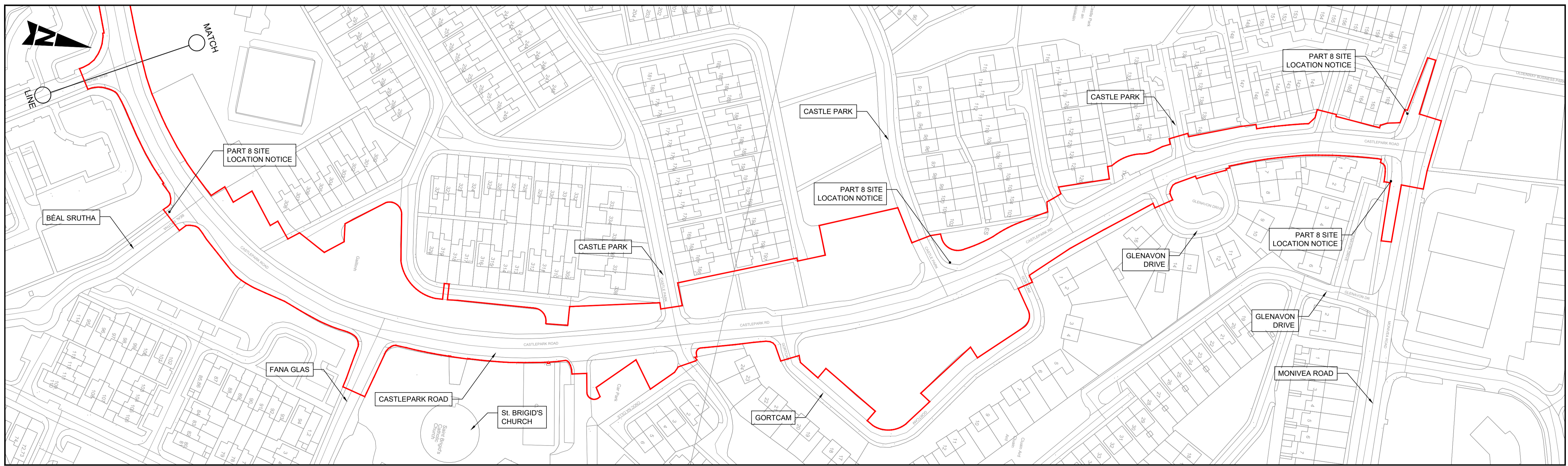
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SITE LOCATION MAP - CASTLEPARK ROAD - CYCLE NETWORK

Scale at A1 1:1000
Scale at A3 1:2000

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Client	GALWAY CITY COUNCIL		
Project	BALLYBANE ROAD & CASTLEPARK ROAD CYCLE NETWORK		

Purpose				FOR PART 8 SUBMISSION			
Title				CASTLEPARK ROAD SITE LOCATION MAP			
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Shown	Date	Date	Date	Date			
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