

TAKA

**3 NO. NEW-BUILD SOCIAL HOUSING
AND
REFURBISHMENT OF EXISTING DWELLING**

AT

1 MUNSTER AVENUE

CO. GALWAY

**SCREENING FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
ASSESSMENT**

April 2025

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DOCUMENT APPROVAL

PROJECT	3 No. New-Build Social Housing and Refurbishment of an Existing Dwelling, Munster Avenue, Co. Galway	
CLIENT / JOB NO	Taka	7162
DOCUMENT TITLE	Screening for Appropriate Assessment	

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GALWAY CITY COUNCIL
3 NO. NEW-BUILD SOCIAL HOUSING AND REFURBISHMENT OF EXISTING DWELLING,
MUNSTER AVENUE,
CO. GALWAY

SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

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1. INTRODUCTION

This report provides an Environmental Impact Assessment screening for a 3-no. new-build social housing and refurbishment of existing dwelling at 1 Munster Avenue, Co Galway. This development is a Part 8. development which is being pursued by Galway City Council Housing Section.

The 'Part 8' measure was implemented to allow for accelerated delivery of social, affordable and cost-rental housing by local authorities by way of exemption from the local authority own development 'Part 8' process in the section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended (the Act) in strictly defined circumstances.

The amendments to the Act and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended (the regulations) are balanced with the need to provide for the accelerated delivery of social and affordable housing while also ensuring proper planning and sustainable development by means of the introduction of a temporary time-bound exemption from the 'Part 8' process for the approval of local authority own development housing projects on local authority or State owned lands. This planning amendment will assist local authorities to accelerate housing delivery and is being utilised for this screening process.

The EIA Screening Report has been prepared to assess the potential impacts on the environment of the Proposed Development at the subject site and to assess the requirement or otherwise from an EIA.

The development will consist of the partial demolition of the existing single-storey extension to the northern gable of the parent building. The demolition will create the space required for a three-storey residential development containing a one-bedroom apartment unit per floor. Each apartment will be accessed by means of an external staircase. The existing boundary wall to the north of the site will be demolished to provide bicycle storage along with pedestrian access to the existing and proposed units.

1.1 Purpose of this Statement

The purpose of this Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Statement is to determine whether an Environmental Impact Assessment Report is required for the Proposed Development and to identify any environmental issues that might arise. It is worth noting that this Proposed Development is below any threshold, and we do not consider a Schedule 7A screening process will be required as per Schedule 5 Parts 1 & 2 of the Planning Development Regulations 2001 (S.I. No. 600 of 2001), as amended.

This report is supported and informed by accompanying documentation including an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report prepared by JOD.

1.2 Statement of Authority

This Screening for this EIA Report has been prepared by Emma Yore and reviewed by David Kiely:

Emma Yore is a Graduate Environmental Scientist and holds a Bachelor (Hons.) Degree in Environmental Science from the Institute of Technology, Sligo. She has experience through various

projects since joining JOD with a current focus on the environmental sector. Emma's key capabilities are in report writing of Appropriate Assessments and Environmental Impact Assessments.

David Kiely is a Director of JOD who holds a BE in Civil Engineering from University College Dublin and MSc in Environmental Protection from IT Sligo. He is a Fellow of Engineers Ireland, a Chartered Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers (UK) and has over 41 years' experience. He has extensive experience in the preparation of EIARs and EISs for environmental projects including Wind Farms, Solar Farms, Wastewater Projects, and various commercial developments. David has also been involved in the construction of over 60 wind farms since 1997.

2. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL SENSITIVITIES

2.1 The Proposed Development

The development will consist of the partial demolition of the existing single storey extension to the northern gable of the parent building. The demolition will create the space required for a three-storey residential development containing a one bedroomed apartment unit per floor. Each apartment will be accessed by means of an external staircase. The existing boundary wall to the north of the site will be demolished to provide bicycle storage along with pedestrian access to the existing and proposed units. The existing Site Plan is shown in Figure 2.1.

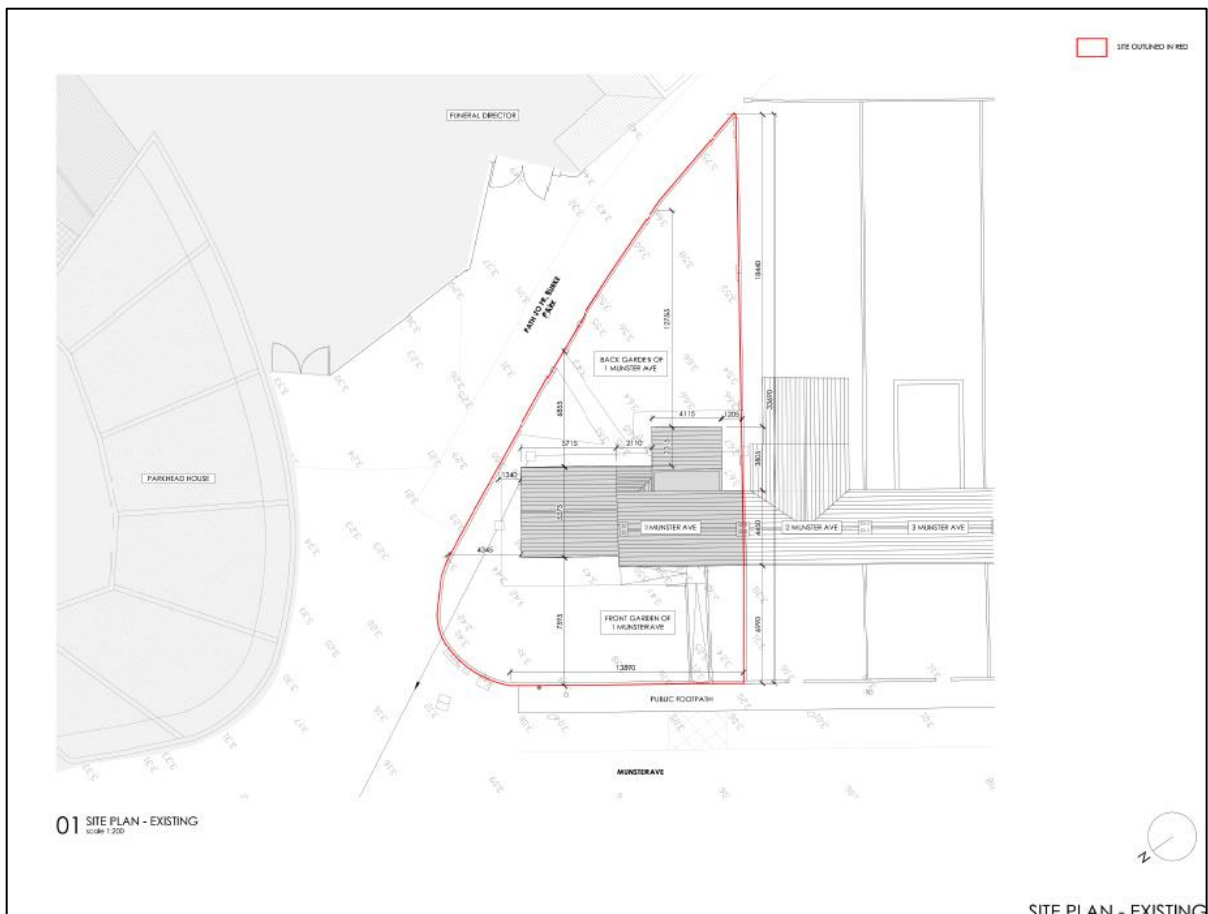


Figure 2.1: Existing Site Plan

2.2 Location

The Project is located on Munster Avenue, off William Street West, within Galway City (Figure 2.2). The proposed site is located on the southeastern side of Munster Avenue. The subject site is located approximately 175m west of the River Corrib and circa 750m north of the Atlantic Sea. The site covers an area of approximately 375m² on plan and is currently occupied by a single, end of terrace residential building. The site is bounded by Munster Avenue to the western boundary. A continuation of the residential terraced properties lies to the south of the site. Fr. Burke Park lies to the west along with a small commercial unit and associated car park. A pedestrian path extends the full length of the site boundary to the west along the length of Munster Avenue. Generally, the site has a slight fall from east to west with a finished ground level of 3.75m to the east and 3.16m to the west of the site.



Figure 2.2: General location of the Project

As per the Galway City Council City Centre Zoning Map, as part of the Galway City Council Development Plan 2023-2029 the site has been zoned “R”, “Residential”. A review of the online planning file for the site confirms that there are no current planning permissions active on the subject site.

2.3 Land, Soils and Flooding

Geology and Soils

The quaternary sediments at the site of the Project are classified as ‘Urban’. The Project is located entirely within the Metagabbro & orthogneiss suite. This bedrock formation is described by the Geological Survey of Ireland as ‘Undifferentiated Quartz-Diorite Gneiss (Qd), Quartz Diorite Gneiss & Granitic Gneiss (Qg) and Metagabbro and Related Lithologies (Mg)’. Corine 2018 denotes this area as continuous urban fabric with artificial surfaces.

Hydrology and Hydrogeology

The site overlies bedrock which is classified as 'Poor Aquifer - Bedrock which is Generally Unproductive except for Local Zones'. The groundwater vulnerability at the site is classified as 'High'.

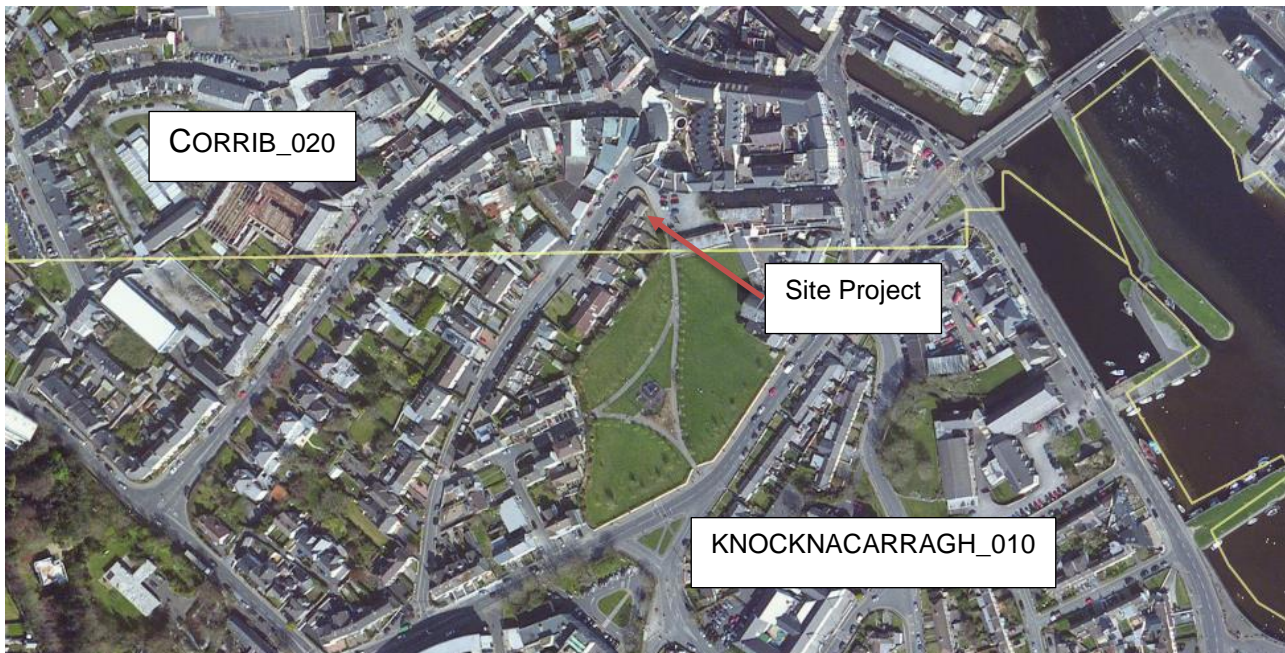


Figure 2.3: WFD River Sub Basin (RSB) and Orthographic View of surrounding Landscape

The Project is wholly located within the Corrib_020 WFD River Sub Basin (RSB) (IE_WE_31K160960) covering an area of approximately 8.31km² (Figure 2.3). The RSB had 'Good' ecological status for the 2016-2021 period.

The nearest watercourse the order 6 River Corrib (Segment Code: 30_3700) lies approximately 200 metres east of the Project (Figure 2.4). The River Corrib flows in a south easterly direction for approximately 870 metres before entering Galway Bay, part of Galway Bay Complex SAC and Inner Galway Bay SPA. The River subsequently discharges into the Atlantic Ocean.

Figure 3.2: Watercourses and waterbodies in the vicinity of the Project Currently, the groundwater in the area has no significant underlying pressures, including waste abstraction, agriculture, anthropogenic, aquaculture, atmospheric, extractive industry, hydro morphology, invasive species, urban runoff or otherwise (EPA Water Maps, accessed 7th April 2025). The Project is however within a groundwater area denoted as SAC habitat sensitive and SAC species sensitive, as well as SPA habitat sensitive (EPA Maps website, accessed 7th April 2025). The Project is also within the Spiddal groundwater body for the abstraction of drinking water (Article 7- EPA code IEPA1_WE_G_0004).

The EPA Maps (Water) website was also accessed (April 2025) to examine the Project area and its environs for nitrate and phosphorus loading and Pollutant Impact Potential (PIP). PIP maps for Nitrogen (N) and Phosphorus (P) have been generated by the EPA to show the highest risk areas in the Project Site.

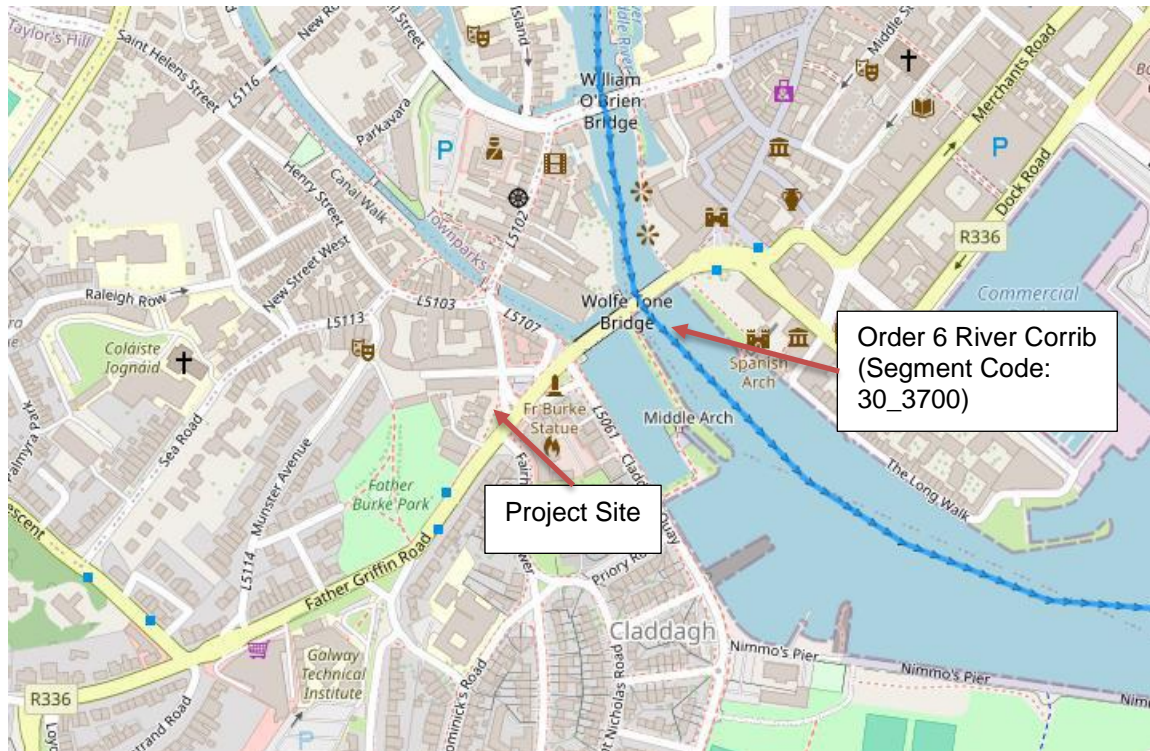


Figure 2.4: Watercourses and waterbodies in the vicinity of the Project.

Currently, the groundwater in the area has no significant underlying pressures, including waste abstraction, agriculture, anthropogenic, aquaculture, atmospheric, extractive industry, hydro morphology, invasive species, urban runoff or otherwise (EPA Water Maps, accessed 7th April, 2025). The Project is however within a groundwater area denoted as SAC habitat sensitive and SAC species sensitive, as well as SPA habitat sensitive (EPA Maps website, accessed 7th April 2025). The Project is also within the Spiddal groundwater body for the abstraction of drinking water (Article 7- EPA code IEPA1_WE_G_0004).

The EPA Maps (Water) website was also accessed (8th April 2025) to examine the Project area and its environs for nitrate and phosphorus loading and Pollutant Impact Potential (PIP). PIP maps for Nitrogen (N) and Phosphorus (P) have been generated by the EPA to show the highest risk areas in the landscape for losses of N and P to waters. The PIP model estimates the annual nutrient losses from agricultural land at specific locations, using spatial data from farm management, soils and hydrogeology. This model estimates loads at an annual temporal resolution.

The area immediately surrounding the Project encompasses Galway City and more locally, an area where educational, industrial and residential use prevails. The wider surrounding landscape is largely comprised of the Galway City urban landscape with Galway Harbour to the east, Father Griffin Road to

the south, Colaiste Muire Mathair to the west, and the canal to the north.

The Project and immediate surrounding lands do not have a Phosphorus ranking. The wider area has phosphorus rankings between 5, 6 and 7 (7 is the lowest impact ranking). Pollution Impact Potential Nitrate (PIP N) for the lands within and surrounding the Project also do not have a ranking. The wider area has nitrate rankings between 3, 4, 5 and 6 (7 is the lowest impact ranking). The lack of an overall ranking for these parameters likely reflects little fertiliser use on the Project land in the past, with low level or no stock. Overall, the Critical Source Areas Maps for the Project and adjacent lands do not indicate a Site where either phosphorus or nitrates are a significant issue.

As noted earlier in Section 3.2, the Project is within the WFD River Sub Basin CORRIB_020. Currently, there are no significant nitrogen or phosphorus pressures from the Project site on this RSB. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared on behalf of Galway City Council by JBA Consulting (Dated January 2022). As part of the flood risk assessment, Galway City has been identified as a flood risk area, with the relevant flood zones indicated on "City Centre" mapping. The strategic flood risk assessment identifies the site as within Flood Zone A.

2.4 Biodiversity

A site visit was carried out on January 16, 2024, on a cloudy dry day with an ambient temperature of 6 degrees Celsius. The survey consisted of traversing the entire Project site being conscious of any invasive species either overhanging the Project or rooted near/within the site.

Three habitats (according to Fossitt, 2000) were noted within the survey area, namely WS1: Scrub, BL3: Artificial Surfaces and ED2: Recolonising bare ground. No Annex I habitat occurs within or adjacent to the Project.

No rare, threatened, or protected species of plants as per the Red Data Book (Curtis and McGough, 1988) were found. No species listed in the Flora Protection Order (2022) were found to be growing within or adjacent to the Project works.

Scrub (WL1/WS1)

Scrub habitat exists across the site there are a number of young tree and shrub specimens scattered around the site they reach a maximum height of approximately 2.5m and form three clusters (approximately 5m x5m) in the rear garden and one at the front of the property. These primarily consist of willow (*Salix spp.*) and buddleja (*Buddleja davidii*) they have been allowed to develop on the recolonising bare ground. A Stand of Bramble (*Rubus sp*) also exist on site in dense patch around the rear of the property. Buddleja (*Buddleja davidii*) or the butterfly bush is developing across the site and growing wild and is unmanaged. This is a non-native deciduous plant that can be highly invasive. I produce a lot of small, light seeds that spread extremely easily.

BL3: Artificial Surfaces and Stone walls (BL1).

There are several walls bordering the site. There first is a short single block wall at the front of the property separating the front garden from the adjacent property boundary. This wall is approximately 1.1m in height and extends for approximately 5 meters. There is limited vegetation associated with this wall as the plaster is largely intact and there are limited opportunities for plant footholds. The garden wall which extends along the outer perimeter of the site approximately 54m in length and approximately 1m in height. This wall is comprised of a single block plaster wall which is capped. There is limited vegetation associated with this wall as the plaster is largely intact and there are limited opportunities for plant footholds. However, it has been noted there are a several lichens and mosses species growing along the crevices and margins of the wall structure.

Along the southwestern boundary wall separating the rear garden from the adjacent property. This wall is comprised of single block wall approximately 1.6m in height and approximately 17m in length. There is limited vegetation associated with this wall as the plaster is largely intact and there are limited opportunities for plant footholds. There is an ornamental climbing shrub growing on the length of the wall and small patches of Ivy (*Hedera sp.*).

Around the immediate perimeter of the property there is a small path area extending approximately 1m from the house and to the front gate, this path consists of solid concrete slabs. There are a few crevices between the blocks allowing some vegetation growth. The following species were recorded Dandelion (*Taraxacum sp.*) and Herb-Robert (*Geranium robertianum*). In addition, moss growth was also noted growing along the margins and crevices.

ED3: Recolonising Bare Ground

The vast majority of the site at the front and rear of the property (approximately 70m²) is covered by gravel substrate and recolonising vegetation with over 50% ground cover. These grounds cover predominantly consists of Creeping Buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*) which covers most of the site.

Other species included ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), Herb-Robert (*Geranium robertianum*), daisies (*Bellis perennis*) and patches of Ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*). In addition, some young growth of Buddleja (*Buddleja davidii*) was scattered across the site and at the front of the property a single Himalayan honeysuckle (*Leycesteria formosa*) were also noted (See, section 3.4 invasive species).

Invasive Species

Two non-native invasive species were recorded within the proposed Project site, namely Buddleja (*Buddleja davidii*) and Himalayan honeysuckle (*Leycesteria formosa*), also known as pheasant berry.

Neither of these species are listed on the Third Schedule of the Regulations or as a species of Union Concern. However, Buddleia (*Buddleja davidii*) is listed within the Guidelines on the Management of Noxious Weeds and Non-native Invasive Plant Species on National Roads. An Outline Invasive Species Management Plan has been developed to address these non-native plants onsite and I attached as Appendix IV.

2.5 Air and Climate

The EPA designate the area as Air Zone C: Other Cities and Large Towns. Co. Galway has one air quality monitoring station located in Galway city (53.2740 °N, -9.0485 °E). Particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) and nitrogen oxide are measured at the Galway city station. The monitoring station is located at Eyre Square, Galway.

In relation to the Proposed Development, the monitoring station is located approx. 910m northeast. The EPA Air Quality site was accessed on 8th April 2025 and the following ratings noted: 1. The latest recording at Galway City air monitoring station 105. Eyre Square, Galway had an Air Quality Index for Health (AQIH) of 1 (Good) with latest PM_{2.5} average of 3.95 µg/m³, PM₁₀ of 8.03 µg/m³ and NO₂ of 25.1 µg/m³.

There is no significant impact on air pollution expected from the Proposed Development outside of potential temporary dust impact. Air and Climate are not likely to be significantly affected by the Proposed Development.

3. EIA SCREENING

Establishing if the proposal is a '3 No. New-Build Social Housing and Refurbishment of Existing Dwelling, Munster Avenue, Co. Galway':	
Development Summary:	The development will consist of the partial demolition of the existing single storey extension to the northern gable of the parent building. The demolition will create the space required for a three-storey residential development containing a one bedroomed apartment unit per floor. Each apartment will be accessed by means of an external staircase. The existing boundary wall to the north of the site will be demolished to provide bicycle storage along with pedestrian access to the existing and proposed units.
Was a Screening Determination carried out under Section 176A-C?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, no further action required. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, Proceed to Part A
A. Schedule 5 Part 1 - Does the development comprise a project listed in Schedule 5, Part 1, of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)? (Tick as appropriate)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, specify class _____	
EIA is mandatory. No Screening required	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
Proceed to Part B	
B. Schedule 5 Part 2 - Does the development comprise a project listed in Schedule 5, Part 2, of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) and does it meet/exceed the thresholds? (Tick as appropriate)	

<input type="checkbox"/> No, the development is not a project listed in Schedule 5, Part 2	No Screening required
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the project is listed in Schedule 5, Part 2 and meets/exceeds the threshold, specify class (including threshold): [specify class & threshold here]	EIA is Mandatory No Screening required
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, the project is of a type listed but is <i>sub-threshold</i> :	Proceed to Part C

	Preliminary Examination:	The planning authority shall carry out a preliminary examination of, at the least, the nature, size or location of the development.
	Yes/No/Uncertain:	Comment:
<p>Nature of the development: <i>Is the nature of the proposed development exceptional in the context of the existing environment?</i></p> <p><i>Will the development result in the production of any significant waste, or result in significant emissions or pollutants?</i></p>	No	<p>The existing environment is 3 No. New built housing and refurbishment of existing dwelling.</p> <p>Waste:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General household waste. • Constructional waste and materials which may be excavated from site during development. <p>Emissions: none</p> <p>Pollutants: low risk of pollutants</p>
<p>Size of the development: <i>Is the size of the proposed development exceptional in the context of the existing environment?</i></p> <p><i>Are there cumulative considerations having regard to other existing and/or permitted projects?</i></p>	No	<p>There are other apartments complexes within the vicinity of the site (Market Close Apartments are within 100m). There are many mixed-use buildings (residential and commercial) around the site.</p> <p>Having regard to the scale of the permitted developments in the vicinity, the AA Screening Assessment noted that there will be no in-combination effects with local planning applications.</p>
<p>Location: <i>Is the proposed development located on, in, adjoining or does it have the potential to impact on an ecologically sensitive site or location?¹</i></p> <p><i>Does the proposed development have the</i></p>	No	<p>An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (AASR) has been prepared. The AASR found that: "It can be objectively concluded that there are not likely to be any significant effects on any European Site as a result of the construction or operation of the Project at Munster Avenue, Co. Galway."</p>

¹ Sensitive locations or features includes European sites, NHA/pNHA, Designated Nature Reserves, land designated as a refuge for flora and fauna, and any other ecological site which is the objective of a CDP/LAP (including draft plans).

<i>potential to affect other significant environmental sensitivities in the area?</i>		The proposed development will be constructed in accordance with the design and best practice that is described within this report, therefore significant effects on biodiversity are not anticipated at any geographic scale.
Conclusions		
Based on a preliminary examination of the nature, size or location of the development, is there a real likelihood of significant effects on the environment?		
There is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.	EIA is not required	X
There is significant and realistic doubt in regard to the likelihood of significant effects on the environment.	Screening Determination Required	N/A
	Schedule 7A information required	N/A
There is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.	EIA not required	N/A
The preliminary examination as required by Article 120 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) has determined that formal EIA Screening is not required therefore it is not necessary to proceed to Step 3. It is considered that a sub-threshold EIAR is not required for the Proposed Development as the proposal is below the thresholds of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations.		

4. CONCLUSION

This EIA screening report has been prepared in relation to a Part 8. residential development on land situated at Munster Avenue, Co. Galway in accordance with Article 120 (1) (b) of the Planning & Development Regulations, 2001 as amended, having regard to the following:

- The location, size and nature of this serviced site located in an urban setting and distanced from protected and/or environmentally sensitive sites.
- The proposed development is below the threshold of a mandatory EIA which would require an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR)
- The modest scale and quantum of the residential development proposed and integration with the adjoining community of Galway city.
- The description of possible effects on the environment are not considered significant and therefore further assessment pursuant to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 as amended are not considered necessary.

- An Appropriate Assessment Screening has been carried out. It concluded that the proposed development will not cause direct or indirect impacts on any Natura 2000 sites, and that an Appropriate Assessment is not required.

All standard practices will be employed throughout the construction and operation phase of the development to ensure that the Proposed Development will not create any significant impacts on the quality of the surrounding environment.